OPEN SALT COLLECTORS

NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

ISSUE #12 **SPRING, 2007**

OPEN SALTS FROM A VANISHED EMPIRE

by Gerald J. Berghold

A

The Austro-Hungarian Empire or Dual Monarchy of the Hapsburgs was formed after the unsuccessful Hungarian revolt of 1848 by a restructuring of the Austrian Empire which had existed since 1526. This in turn had been based on even earlier Hapsburg and Babenburg dynastic lands dating from 976 AD. It all came to an end following the defeat of the axis powers in WWI. It was a 900-year odyssey.

The monolithic Dual Monarchy extended from Switzerland to Russia and from the German states to Greece, including parts of northern Italy. It was split into 10 independent countries plus parts of 3 others. A large area, but open salt production was mainly restricted to what later became Austria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. You may have pre-1918 salts that are marked Austria or Wien, but if they also carry names like Karlsberg or Turn, they were made in what became Czechoslovakia. Within these countries, production is and was clustered around the imperial capitols, Prague, Vienna and Budapest plus a few provinces with power resources. While Venice fell within the Empire for a brief period, I've opted not to include Venetian glass. I have also mostly ignored pre-19th century items due to astronomical cost and the fact that most are in museum collections and unavailable to collectors.

My interest in the history, culture and genealogy of Austro-Hungary is due to it being the birth place of all four of my grandparents. They were part of a great eastern European emigration which occurred some 100 years ago. During the period 1890-1910, over 40 thousand people emigrated to the US from their homeland, now called the Austrian Province of "Burgenland" (Hungary pre 1921). Early in our salt collecting days, I began seeing single and double china salts carrying Austrian and other empire marks. We searched for more and a collection within a collection has resulted.

In my remarks, I'll be moving west to east. The political winds have shifted often and it's easy to get bogged down in history or geography so I'll refer to given areas by the names in use between WWI and WWII. Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia as examples have recently fragmented into 8 more countries. The Empire had vast rural areas and was a breadbasket for Europe; production of consumer goods was restricted to areas having

Vanished cont'd on pg 4

Wedgwood and Open Salt Examples

By Linda Drew

Creamware with berries and leaves 3.5" long by 1.5" high; embossed Wedgwood w/paper label of Etruria; c1907

Josiah Wedgwood was born in Burslem, Stoke in the Staffordshire region of England in 1730 to Thomas Wedgwood (a potter) and was one of 13 children. His grandfather and great-grandfather had also been potters. He went to school 8 miles away everyday and when Thomas passed away in 1739, Josiah went to work as an apprentice to his older brother in order to learn the craft of potting. When he was 11, he contracted smallpox, which left him with a severely disfigured right leg which was later amputated (1762). He was interested in the science of pottery more than the actual production, so 1754 he partnered with the leading potter of the time, Thomas Whieldon, to establish their own operation in Burslem.

Josiah was really a pioneer in manufacturing. He kept two separate divisions - one for fine quality ornamental designs and one for everyday designs and use. He set up a 'weekly wage' for his employees versus a per piece payment; he employed hundreds of people to perform a

Wedgwood....cont'd on pg 14

Notes From the Editor

The first thing I would like to note is that Dick Marsden has decided to sell at auction the remaining salts from the collection of his wife, the late Cackey Marsden. The Auction will be Saturday May 5th at Conestoga Auction in Manheim, PA, with a preview on Friday May 4th. Collectors should receive a flyer on this auction in the near future.

Once again I would like to encourage all collectors to consider submitting an article for inclusion in this newsletter. Undoubtedly there is some facet of open salt collecting that you find particularly interesting so why not write an article and share your interest and knowledge?

And if you're not quite ready to author an article yet, please let me know of any topics you believe would make an interesting article for the newsletter. One of the goals for this newsletter is to publish articles that are not only interesting but also informative as well, so your ideas on how to best accomplish this would be of great value.

It is time to again select a recipient for the OSC Achievement Award. Please see the article on page 9 and get in touch with Linda Drew if you have a good candidate.

Lastly, the 10th National Convention promises to be an exciting one. In addition to all the planned activities, the leaders of the regional clubs will meet to select national officers. If you are interested in such a position, please talk with the President of your club. Lastly, I hope to see everyone in Indianapolis.

Thanks, Rod Elser

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CONTRIBUTIONS PLEASE!

Debi Raitz, webmaster *extraordinaire* for Open Salt Collectors, has made a number of changes to our www.opensalts.info web site, giving it a "new look." If you haven't visited the site recently, please check it out and send her your thoughts. Additionally, she is looking for photos of reproduction salts that she can post to the site, catalog pictures of newer salts, favorite links for researching salts, links to webpages of individual collectors, and anything else that might be suitable content for one of the newly created pages. You can send your contributions to Debi through the link on the website.

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While we encourage the dissemination of information about open salt collecting, we do like to know in advance when and where material originally appearing in the ***National Newsletter*** will be used. Please contact either the editor (rcelser@aol.com) or publisher (al@agencyconsulting.com) if you would like to reprint anything from this newsletter. When the publication occurs, we also ask that a copy of it be sent to either the editor or the publisher.

The ***National Newsletter*** is the official publication of Open Salt Collectors, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting and encouraging the study, collecting and preservation of open salts. This is done through the publication of a national newsletter, maintaining an informational web site, promoting membership in open salt collecting clubs, publishing informational and educational articles in collector publications, and through other means as may be appropriate from time to time. The officers of Open Salt Collectors are: Rod Elser, President; Al Diamond, Vice President; Mike Zagwoski, Treasurer; Linda Drew, Marketing Director; and Debi Raitz, Web Master.

The ***National Newsletter*** of Open Salt Collectors is published twice per year, in the spring and fall. Subscriptions are available either directly or through any of the collector's clubs. The subscription rate is $10/year. Information about the clubs is located on p.3. Direct subscriptions can be made by sending your name, address and check to Mike Zagwoski, OSC Treasurer, 2 White Birch Lane, Horsham, PA 19044.

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OPEN SALT COLLECTOR'S CLUBS IN THE UNITED STATES

New England Society of Open Salt Collectors NESOSC):

Meetings/Newsletters: Two meetings per year, generally held in the MA, CT, NH, and northern NY areas plus two club newsletters and two National Newsletters per year for Regular Members; Associate Members do not receive the National Newsletter.
Dues $20/yr./family for Regular Membership; $10/yr./family for Associate Membership; due in January.
Send to NESOSC, c/o Karen Wetmore, 4 Clear Pond Drive, Walpole, MA, 02081.
Officers: Maria Martell, President; Donna Kidman, Vice President; Warren Pilling, Secretary; Karen Wetmore and Sue Brown, Co-Treasurers.
Future Meetings: For further information about the meeting or the club, contact Maria Martell (richdmartell1@netzero.net or 508-833-0633).

Open Salt Collectors of the Atlantic Region (OSCAR):

Meetings/Newsletters: Four meetings per year generally held in the PA, MD, NJ, DE, and VA area; 4 club newsletters per year plus the two issues of the National Newsletter for Regular Membership; Associate Members do not receive the National Newsletter.
Dues: Dues $15/yr./family for Regular Membership; $5/yr./family for Associate Membership; due in January.
Send to OSCAR, c/o Linda Kump, 71 Clearview Lane, Biglerville, PA, 17307-9407.
Officers: Al Diamond, President; Mike Zagwoski, Vice President; Sally Hegedus, Secretary; Linda Kump, Treasurer.
Future Meetings: For further information about the meetings or the club, contact Al Diamond at Al@agencyconsulting.com or 856-779-2430.

Midwest Open Salt Society (MOSS):

Meetings/Newsletters: Two meetings per year. Two club newsletters plus membership roster mailings each year.
Dues: $6.00 year includes second household member, payable January 1st.
Send to MOSS, c/o Ed Bowman, 2411 West 500 North, Hartford City, IN 47348.
Officers: Don Rabourn, President; Debi Raitz, Vice President; Nola Jende, Secretary; Ed Bowman, Treasurer.
Future Meetings: For further information about the club or meetings, contact Ed Bowman at the address above or edbowman@opensalt.net.

Chicago Area-Midwest Open Salt Society (C-MOSS):

Meetings/Newsletters. There are three meetings a year.
Dues: are voluntary to cover the cost of mailings and door prizes.
For further information about the club or meetings, please contact Keith Tucker, 285 Geraldine Ct, Somonauk, IL.; phone 815-498-1940 or kntwalnutfen@webtv.net.

Open Salt Seekers of the West-Northern California (OSSOTW-NC):

Meetings/Newsletters: Four meetings per year--January, April, July and October-that are generally held in the northern California area. Also, four newsletters per year, distributed in accordance with the meetings.
Dues: $10/year/family, due January 1st of each year. A subscription to the National Newsletter through the club is available for an extra $10/year. Send to OSSOTW-NC, c/o Claragene Rainey, 950 Whispering Pines Dr., Scotts Valley, CA 95066.
Officers: Sarah Kawakami, President; Linda Witt, Vice President; Claragene Rainey, Treasurer; Joan Wrenn, Secretary; Jim Wrenn, Gazette editor.
Future Meetings: Meetings in January, April, July and October. For further information about the meetings or the club, contact Sarah Kawakami (925-757-9603 or hgsalts@earthlink.net).

Open Salt Seekers of the West-Southern California (OSSOTW-SC):

Meetings/Newsletters: 3 meeting a year: the second Saturday in January, April and October, held in the Southern California area. Club members currently receive the Northern California newsletter.
Dues: $10 per year per family + $10/year for the National Newsletter if desired.
Officers: Mary Kern, President; Robin Grube, Program Chairman; Elaine Cooper, Secretary; Dolli Cohen, Treasurer.
Future Meetings: Please contact May Kern for additional information about the club or its meetings-marykernsd@cox.net or (619) 286-6058

Hosting a Collectors Meeting:

There are few aspects of collecting open salts more enjoyable than getting together with fellow collectors, whether to trade stories, share knowledge or show off favorite salts. Unfortunately not everyone lives near enough to one of the existing clubs to participate regularly in their meetings. It isn't necessary, however, to have a club to host a meeting with other collectors. Few collectors live so remotely that there aren't fellow collectors in at least nearby states. If you would be interested in hosting a get-together with some other collectors, Open Salt Collectors is ready to help. We'll work with you to identify and invite other regional collectors and even provide a program around which the meeting can be developed. Just let us know how we can help. You can contact Linda Drew (lindadrew@aol.com or 650-598-0190), Rod Elser (rcelser@aol.com or 804-598-8771) or Al Diamond (Al@AgencyConsulting.com or 856-779-2430) and we'll

Note: All this information - **plus more** - about the salt clubs can be found on the web at: **www.opensalts.info**

Grateful thanks for Debi Raitz for developing and maintaining this site.

Vanished...cont'd from pg 1

the necessary labor and raw materials. One of these areas was Bohemia, part of what became Czechoslovakia.

Making glass as early as the 13th Century, Bohemia had ample supplies of wood and later coal. It is renowned for its glass, particularly colored cut to clear produced since early in the 17th century.

B

Their cut reds became a great favorite when a way to produce red without using gold was discovered in 1827 (they may have used zinc sulfide). Much glass was exported to the US; 3 million dollars worth during 1876-1880 alone. This greatly influenced the design of American art glass. Our favorite Bohemian piece **(A - on front cover)**, red cut to clear was purchased from Mamie Rudnick, during our first convention. This blue cut to clear salt **(B)** is a favorite. Another is cased, cut to cranberry **(B1)**. One of the best known names of Czech glass is Ludwig Moser.

B1

C

C1

D

His work features enameling on color. We have one salt **(C)** plus another **(C1)** that is probably a liquor glass no matter how often I say it's a salt. Ruby flashed glass **(D)** is another Bohemian type, frequently copied in the US. A glass making school, the Skrdlovice Glassworks was founded in Prague in 1920. They had 28 workshops and studios. During the 1920's, the Czechs also copied and exported examples of early American colonial glass. They are also renowned for clear cut glass-here are two Czech marked clear diamond cut pedestals **(F & F1).** While there is some debate over origin, we feel the so-called "Doppelwand" (double walled salts) **(G)** may also be Bohemian (recently verified). I'm not sure if these are a product of the so-called "Zwischengold" (gold between glass) period 1670-1720 or not. If so, they are among the oldest salts appearing in general collections. Historically I think they are the last word in salts.

F

F1

G

H

A favorite with everyone are the intaglios **(H)**, with their gem like colors and pressed and etched engraving. The "butterfly" trademark of Heinrich Hoffmann is desirable because of high quality. Red is rare and we're fortunate in having two examples.

J

I

Pottery, china and porcelain salts were produced in quantity. Most are marked "Czechoslovakia" or "Czech Republic" since 1918. Earlier pieces may be marked R.S.K. (Riessner, Stellmacher and Kessel), Turn, Teplitz, Bohemia, Erphila (Phila. Importers), Amphora or Peasant Art pottery. Two individuals **(I)** and a double **(J)**. A wreath mark with the word "royal" is often found with "Austria" underneath and the initials of the maker on top. One is "O & EG", Oscar & Edgar Gutherz who produced salts from 1889-1918. Many others will be found in Kovels' Dictionary of Marks.

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Vanished...cont'd from pg 4

K

K1

K2

The silver mines of Bohemia-Moravia made kings and emperors rich. As a result many silversmiths worked the area around Prague. Salts were part of their output. Four Biedermeier period (mid 1800's) salts **(K, K1 & K2)** were found in Austria and in the US with Prague markings.

Moving to Vienna we find a ready market for all types of artwork. The Hapsburg Court encouraged and strongly supported the arts. Although glass artists have worked in Vienna and elsewhere in Austria, much salt glass found here was made in Bohemia. There is a possibility however, that old Austrian glass exists. An Austrian friend who did his University of Vienna master's thesis on certain phases of Austrian industry found that two villages in Southern Burgenland, called "Glashütten" (one near Castle Schlaining and one near Castle Lockenhaus) did originate from glass plants. Both were founded towards the end of the 17th century. The Counts Batthyany owned Schlaining Glashütte (this is the old German word for a glass plant) which was active ca. 1682-1840, while the Princes Esterhazy owned Lockenhaus Glashütte which seems to have stopped production around 1800. There was an early glass house at Bernstein (Holzschlag, ca. 1633 - 1682).

You may also find salts made of Edelserpentine, a type of green jade which has been mined and worked here for centuries. Glass was also made at Glashütten bei Langeck (ca. 1670- ca. 1800), Schreibersdorf (ca. 1850-1870) and Ödenburg (Sopron, Hungary-around 1800). I don't have a photo of this type of salt and my toes would curl if I ever found one traceable to any one of these companies.

There are at least three large current consumer glass plants in Austria. STÖLZLE in Bärnbach, Styria is the largest producer of bar glass in Europe. We visited their plant and museum. No salts but they do have an art glass consortium. Another firm is RIEDEL. The Riedels are Sudeten-Germans who came to Austria (Tyrol) around 1945. Today they are especially known for their sophisticated (& very expensive) wine glasses. Another is SWAROVSKI, also in the Tyrol. The Swarovskis came from Bohemia some time ago. They are probably the biggest Austrian company in the business, and purchased a US-glass-retailer a few years ago. They are especially known for their crystal. I've seen references to salts marked Swarovski but don't own one.

N

Unfortunately we have only one glass salt **(N)**, a double that we can definitely attribute to Austria. It was bought from a rural antique dealer near Heiligenkreuz, Burgenland, not far from my ancestor's home place.

N1

I was dickering over some local pottery when Molly asked the owner's wife if she had any salts. She went to her kitchen, dumped the salt and brought out two; the glass one just shown and china double **(N1)**! Molly bought them on the spot. The glass double has lots of wear and reminds me of early pressed Boston & Sandwich--many bubbles, polished bottom, very ornate. I like to think it's early pressed Austrian from maybe Schlaining.

Vanished cont'd on pg 6

Vanished...cont'd from pg 5

O

O1

O2

O3

Austrian china, porcelain and pottery are something else. Vienna abounds with fine china and porcelain salts. Hundreds of dainty little individuals, hand painted with flowers, some gold and silver washed **(O, O1, O2 & O3)**.

The china doubles **(P)** and pedestal masters **(P1 & P2)** are not as well known to US collectors, but have been used until just recently in Austrian inns and homes. Most of ours were bought in Austrian flea markets. The sellers nodded yes whenever I held one up and asked "Salz Schüssel" (salt dish). A salt cellar by comparison is a Salzfässchen. The blue "Beehive" Vienna mark from the Royal Porcelain Manufactory of Vienna is well known. Found on better quality porcelain, it is an adaptation of the center of the Hapsburg (Babenberg) coat of arms. Used from 1744-1864, it has frequently been faked. Six well known Viennese makers used this mark. The original is hand painted and always under the glaze. If it's printed or over the glaze it's a fake but probably still a nice salt. The double superimposed "W" (Wiener Werkstäte) or Vienna Workshops mark was used from 1905-1932. "FG and anchor over Wien" from 1885 to present (with various initials) is from the Vienna Manufactory. There are others-if it says Vienna or Wien it's probably Austrian. While I haven't seen any, there are supposed to be earthenware table sets incorporating double salts made by the Wiener Keramik Studio. The greatest open salt of all time "The Cellini Salt Cellar" (gold & enamel, ebony base ca. 1539) is in the Museum of Fine Arts in Vienna. There are also some potteries in the Provinces; Lichtenstern Bros. have one in Frauental, Styria and another in Wilhelmsburg, Lower (Nieder) Austria.

P

P1

P2

Salt during the days of the Empire was a government monopoly and heavily taxed. The region around Salzburg, the Salzkammergut, has been producing salt continuously since before 200 BC. As part of the Roman Province of Noricum salt was even then exported in huge quantities. Very early roads led from Austrian salt mines to all parts of Europe. One came to the village of Zahling, on the Styrian-Hungarian border, near Poppendorf, the village of the Bergholds.

Salt was off loaded, stored in special cellars, weighed and taxed and loaded on to Hungarian transport, then taken to Kormend, Zagreb, Trieste and points east.

My great-grandfather Berghold, his father and his father's father were blacksmiths and carters who worked the salt caravans. My great-grandfather was later involved in smuggling and made enough money to build a Gasthaus which still stands. I have a copy of a local newspaper article from 1903 that mentions that he had a team of horses and a wagon confiscated for evading customs.

Earthenware potteries have always existed in Austria. Archaeologists speak of a pre-historic Bell Beaker Culture from pottery shards found in the area. Local potters have copied the same styles for centuries. My great-grandfather Sorger and some of his ancestors were potters. They made roof tiles, wine jugs, flasks, milk containers and other such consumer goods. I don't know if they produced master salts. How I'd like to find one. I know that large kitchen type salts (marked German "Salz" under the glaze or Hungarian "Sö") were used in peasant homes but I've not seen open master salts or trenchers. Peasants of course would have had no use for individual salts. A friend, who grew up in Hungary near the Austrian border told me their salt came in large chunks, was kept on a large flat dish and they hammered pieces from it with a block of wood. The Hungarian word for salt cellar is "Sötartö". Both German and Hungarian languages as well as Croatian were used along the border.

Vanished con't on pg 7

Vanished...cont'd from pg 6

There is an art glass presence in the Burgenland today. Glass "flaschensachen" or decorative "schnapps" bottles of every conceivable design and color are much in demand by local producers of fruit brandies. Some of the best are produced by glass artist Herta Kollar of Sieggraben in the district of Mattersburg. I'd like to interest her in producing salts if I could find an early one to copy.

Leaving Austria proper and again heading east along the Danube, we come to the third capitol of the Empire, Budapest-a relatively new city, created by the merger of Buda and Pest in 1873. While there is lots of industry, consumer china and glass are rarely mentioned. My sources are silent concerning other than industrial Hungarian glass.

I don't have a glass salt attributed to Hungary but there well may be glass doubles. They show up throughout the Balkans, but I don't know the source.

Q

Q1

Q2

Q3

Q4

Q5

Q6

Q7

Porcelain is another matter. The manufacturing firm of Herend at the village of Herend just south of Budapest, not far from Lake Balaton, is world renowned.Started by Moritz Fischer in 1839, it is a Hungarian National Treasure. British Queen Victoria's favorite dinner ware was made by Herend and she acquired numerous sets. The Herend museum has one gigantic set in her pattern and salts are included. I often see open salts in British period television. Maybe someday they'll set a banquet table with Queen Victoria's china. Although we visited Herend, our pieces **(Q, to Q7)** were mostly acquired here in the states. Herend salts from large dinner sets can not be purchased individually at the factory. Hand painted in intricate patterns, signed and numbered, both individuals and doubles are always a work of art. The marks (over and under glaze) are blue adaptations of the Hungarian coat of arms with crown and the words Herend -Hungary. There is also a green mark used from 1891-97 and a mark with a horse as well as a few others. Another Fischer, Emil established a porcelain factory which worked in Budapest 1866-1980. One dealer who set up shop outside of the Herend Museum carried a new ceramic salt with a different mark. It carries the name "Kanculer" over a wine jug, with Keramis-Herend underneath. Well made and a bargain, we bought all he had and quickly traded the duplicates. Not many collectors have a salt made in Hungary.

Another porcelain maker of salts is Zsolnay of Pecs, Hungary who has made luster ware and art pottery since 1862. We have no salt, but this is one of their miniature wine canteens. A "tower" mark above a shield with Zolnay-Pecs is common. Another maker of fine china (unknown) uses "Holohaza" (a village near Transylvania) under a pine tree. Again no salts found. The "Granit" firm also operates a large plant in Budapest.

Everyone is familiar with the Hungarian spice called paprika. Dried and ground from both hot and sweet red peppers, it is a favorite condiment worldwide. At one time Hungarian double salts were filled with salt in one side, paprika in the other, or hot and sweet paprika. I guess I could say "I collect open paprika dishes and form OPCAR!" Introduced to Hungary by the Turks in the 16th Century (via India), paprika frequently replaced black pepper because it was much cheaper.

The French chef Escoffier introduced it to the rest of Europe in 1879 when he made a Hungarian goulasch and a chicken paprikasch for some guests at Monte Carlo--instant success. Maybe open salt-paprika dishes were on the table.

Vanished con't on pg 8

Berghold...cont'd from pg 7

I'll briefly mention the Balkans, specifically Romania and the countries that comprised former Yugoslavia. Both of these places have extensive pottery works and Yugoslavia (Croatia and Serbia) has a native cut glass industry. Visiting both, we saw double salts in use in restaurants. No idea where made.

They were also in use in Romania and I'm sure the same can be said for Bulgaria and Albania. The Georg Mladenk firm in Bulgaria may have made some; their mark is an anchor with letters G & M left and right. On a recent trip to Greece, we found open salts had been replaced by plastic and glass shakers. This may be happening elsewhere in the Balkans. It was in Greece that we saw a pair of the oldest open salts in our experience, a pair of silver pedestals from a royal tomb dated 310 B. C. Not for sale. Old Balkan double salts may end up in the antique shops and flea markets of Europe and hence to the US.

This concludes my coverage of the open salts of this vanished empire. Having a few of these salts is a link with the world of my ancestors, a world of peasants and pots of goulasch on plank tables as well as a world of titled aristocracy and ornate ball room dinners. When I pick up an Austro-Hungarian salt, I hear the music of Strauss and Gypsy violins. Thanks for your patience. I'll be happy to answer questions.

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Biographical note: Gerry Berghold, BS Lehigh University 1957, is a retiree of the DuPont Company, Wilmington DE. He and his wife Molly have lived in the Shenandoah Valley since 1985 and spend a lot of their time with genealogy and their collections (open salts, books, weapons, bar implements, walking sticks, tooth picks and Duncan & Miller Sandwich glass among others). His philosophy of collecting is that the ownership of ten or more similar esoteric items should be considered a collection that requires study. He has written for Heritage Quest Magazine, edits a 20 page monthly genealogical Internet newsletter and contributes to other newsletters including NESOSC and the Glasshoppers, a Winchester, VA Depression glass club, of which he has been a director. Programs presented before that organization have included "Open Salts-Before the Shaker", "Sandwich Glass" "Whiskey Tasters & Shot Glasses" and "Flower Frogs."

In 1996, he founded and now coordinates the "Burgenland Bunch", an internet group researching family history in the Province of Burgenland in Austria. His genealogical articles have been translated into German for Austrian publication. He and Molly have also privately published "History of Bethel Lutheran Church-175 Years" and two family genealogies. They have traveled extensively in the lands of the Austro-Hungarian Empire where they add to their 25 year collection of open salts. They are also both long-term members of OSCAR.

Note: This article was written, at the suggestion of the late Cackey Marsden, as a program for OSCAR, when Molly and I hosted a meeting and open house in Winchester, VA in 1999.

In just a few short weeks we will be Starting our Engines and racing to Indy for the 10th National Open Salt Convention.

The convention will be held at the Radisson Hotel Indianapolis Airport, which is located adjacent to the Indianapolis Airport with immediate access to I-465 and I-70. It is a First Class Hotel, with free Airport shuttle, free guest parking, and free shuttle 3 times a day to downtown Circle Center Mall.

A learning experience - Our speakers will be Mary McCaslin on Royal Bayreuth & R.S. Prussia, Deborah Truitt on Bohemian Glass, Rod Elser on Irradiated Glass, Linda Drew on Mexican Silver, and, Michael J. Amis (Convention Salt Glass Artist) on making of the salt.

Buying and Selling both Friday morning and evening in a dedicated room.

Salt Display Competition, bring your salt display and win one of the prizes.

Great Raffle Drawing of a Russian Shaded Enamel with Spoon and a great Steuben Blue Aurene. For raffle tickets contact DRaitz@aol.com . You do not need to be present to win.

Another great "Reverse Auction". If you have not yet sent the ones you want to auction, you still have time, so send the information to Al Diamond so they can be listed in the catalog or bring to the convention.

Liners and Lids - Mix and Match. Bring your extra lids and liners and those you need lids and liners for as this will be an opportunity to find a lid or liner you have been looking for.

Short trip to Indianapolis Motor Speedway and Museum.

Displays of previous conventions.

Hospitality Room and Great Door Prizes. Please bring a nice salt for door prize.

Within walking distance and access to Airport shops and Classic French Restaurant across the street.

Open house at Ed Bowman's prior to and after the Convention. .

And most importantly make new friendships and renew old ones.

Registration forms were mailed to all on the National Newsletter mailing list. If you did not receive one, or want more information on the Convention please contact Ed Bowman at (765) 348-4542 or edbowman@opensalts.net

The Convention Committee

Open Salt Collectors
Outstanding Achievement Award

Starting with the 4th National Convention in 1995, the clubs have collectively presented an award to the individual or individuals who have, in the opinion of their collecting peers, made the most significant contribution to the hobby during the previous two years. The award was created to honor Mimi Rudnick, a collector of and dealer in open salts. She had passed away earlier in 1995, and the Mimi Rudnick Award was established. The first award went to Ed and Kay Berg for their many contributions, including helping create new collectors' clubs, publishing numerous articles and for their unfailing willingness to help other collectors in any way possible. At the 5th National Convention in 1997, it was won (in a tie) by Donna Wolfe and Elmer and Barbara Guilmartin. At the 6th National Convention it was won by Ed Bowman, and at the 7th National Convention, Linda Drew took home the award. At the 8th National Convention in 2003, the award went to Sandra Jzyk and Nina Robertson for their publication of The Open Salt Compendium.

Beginning with the 9th National Convention, several changes were initiated. The first was to have the national organization, Open Salt Collectors, take over the responsibility for both the selection process and the presentation award. Secondly, because several of the individual clubs already have Mimi Rudnick Achievement Awards, it was decided to rename this award the OSC Outstanding Achievement Award. The first recipients of the OSC Outstanding Achievement Award were Debi Raitz, for her wonderful work with our web site (www.opensalts.info), and to Rod Elser for his leadership at the national level.

It is now time to determine who the award should go to at the 10th National Convention. The nomination process is open to all open salt collectors with the final selection being made at the convention by a committee selected by the club presidents. Keep in mind the criteria for this award: it should go to the individual (or, at times, individuals) who has made the most significant contribution to our hobby during the last two years.

To nominate someone, all you need to do is either complete the nomination form below and send it to Linda Drew, OSC Marketing Manager, 791 Crestview Dr., San Carlos, CA 94070; or send Linda an email (lindadrew@aol.com) with the same information; or simply give her a call (650-598-0190) and review this information with her personally. Linda will then present the completed nomination forms to the Selection Committee (which will consist of one representative from each club, selected by that club's president) at the Convention. The Committee will then be responsible for reviewing the nominations and determining to whom the award will be presented. The presentation will continue to be made at the final banquet.

So, if you haven't previously had the opportunity to participate in who is selected to receive this award, now is your opportunity. Remember, the award is intended to recognize the individual (or individuals) who has made the most significant contribution to open salt collecting during the last two years.

Note: The deadline for submission is May 31, 2007

****

OSC Outstanding Achievement Award Nomination Form

Name of Individual(s) Nominated: _____

Please detail what this individual's contributions have been (use additional space if required):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Your Name: _____ Date: _____

Return to Linda Drew, OSC Marketing Manager, 791 Crestview Dr., San Carlos, CA 94070; or send Linda an email (lindadrew@aol.com) with the same information; or simply give her a call (650-598-0190)

ASK MARY

By Mary Kern

I would like to start with a Thank You to Jane Koble for making us aware of an American pottery salt that was produced by Zanesville Pottery. This one is master size, unsigned and due to limited production is considered quite rare. We are still looking for extremely early-American pottery companies that produced open salts.

Regarding the enamel pieces similar to those pictured in The Open Salt Compendium on Plate 457, Tina Sullivan lived in Isfahan, Iran from 1975 - 1979 and started collecting these Persian enamel pieces. She said her mother refers to them as "painted enamel" because, compared to the Chinese baked enamel, these have layers of paint on top of the copper. Thank you Tina for some added information on these beautiful open salts.

Now to admit an error in a statement I made in the last issue - I boldly stated that the Conta & Boehme company did not to my knowledge intend for any of their pieces to be open salts. Well, not only did they make open salts, double salts and condiment sets, I am rather embarrassed to admit that the examples shown here are from my personal collection! Yes Sarah Kawakami, our little girls and boys with their adorable hats riding the shuttle-shaped salts are Conta & Boehme and are listed in catalogs as such.

Please send Mary any questions you might have about open salt collecting and she will put on her research hat to try to find the right response. Mary can be contacted by email at marykernsd@cox.net, or by mail at 6889 Glenroy St., San Diego, CA 92120-1217.

A TALE OF TWO AUCTIONS

By Al Diamond

August and September of 2006 was memorable for Sherry and me because it marked our longest "pseudo-vacation" ever beginning on August 20 and lasting until the Tucker and Van Winkle auctions on September 6-10. While Sherry was "conventioning" in Boston, I antiqued New England (thanks Leslie for the great shopping trip). Then we spent a week in Nova Scotia touring. Finally, we landed at home to change out clothes and were on our way to Keith Tucker's Auction at the Clum Auction House at Rushville, Ohio (near Columbus) for 3 days of pattern glass and salts followed immediately by the Van Winkle Auction at Horst in Ephrata, PA.

Auctioneer at Work

The Tucker Auction featured two days of wonderful pressed glass and a day of nothing but salts. Although there were only 30 or so participants at the auction each day (about ½ glass people and ½ salt people for the dedicated salt day), Keith and the Clums (the company running the auction) did a great job advertising so there were plenty of absentee bids. The accompanying pictures reflect the range of salts available for sale at the Tucker Auction.

The Van Winkle sale also only had around 30 participants with a phone bidder purchasing the most valuable item, a Lacy Sleigh.

$11,000 Sleigh Salt

Mike Clum indicated that Keith was pleased with the auction results that totaled (informally) $82,000 of which $43,000 was Open Salts. The Van Winkle sale yielded $49,000 of which the Lacy Sleigh (pictured below) represented $11,200.

The participants in both auctions all came away with boxes full of salts and empty pockets but a satisfied feeling that their own collections had grown from the collections of two dedicated 'salters'.

Al is President of OSCAR and Vice President of Open Salt Collectors and always manages, despite a busy professional schedule, to be everywhere doing everything when it comes to open salt collecting.

Battersea Closeup

Unusual Salts

Case Full of Salts

Art Glass Salts

Lacy and Steuben-type salts

Pattern Molded Blown Salts

These three salts were made by Art Reed of Sweetwater Glass; the first two were made for the 8th Convention

The theme for the Montage Page for the next issue will be Wedgwood Open Salts. If you have any in your collection you would like to share with the collecting community, please send digital photos of them with descriptions to the editor at rcelser@aol.com or by mail to Rod Elser, 1470 Morewood Drive, Powhatan, VA 23139.

Wedgwood....cont'd from pg 1

specific task along his assembly line instead of one person completing the entire piece. Wedgwood developed 'clocking in' for reporting to work and was the inventor of the pyrometer which measured temperatures in the kiln. Josiah set an example in his factories of care for his employees, good working conditions and insistence on fine quality. This gave the workers motivation to be part of the community and feel proud of their work, and this work ethic continues today.

Pedestal creamware salt with embossed flowers; embossed Queensware, Made in England; c1905

Over the years, Wedgwood developed many types of pottery and had benefited greatly from the expertise of Whieldon, who is famous for his relief-molded wares, figures and also tortoiseshellware. When Wedgwood and Whieldon parted ways, Josiah was allowed to retain the formulas of his experiments. In his first ten years on his own, he developed fine-grained stoneware called Basalt. He is most closely associated with blue and white jasper, but his creamware transformed the tables of Europe. Creamware, which was patented in 1765, became a particular favorite of Queen Charlotte and after getting permission from the Queen, he called this type of ceramic "Queens Ware".

In 1769 Wedgwood formed two partnerships, one of which was with Thomas Bentley. Together they produced decorative ware marked 'Wedgwood and Bentley'. The second partnership was with his cousin Thomas Wedgwood; they made utilitarian items that bear the 'Wedgwood' mark.

Making Wedgwood

ALL WEDGWOOD WARE CAN BE DIVIDED INTO THREE CERAMIC CATEGORIES:

Earthenware is opaque and remains porous after the first firing. The main ingredients are calcined flint, ball clay, china clay (kaolin) and china stone. Examples of earthenware are Queen's Ware, Pearl ware and majolica.

Tortoiseshellware; 3.5" long by 1.5" high; impressed Wedgwood; c1874

Majolica with solid turquoise bottom; Impressed Wedgwood with no other marks

Flowers; 1.5" high by 2" dia.; c1900

Stoneware is a hard, vitreous and generally opaque body mid-way between earthenware and porcelain. Clay and fusible rock are used as ingredients. Wedgwood's stonewares (dry bodies) include: Jasper, Black Basalt, Rosso Antico, Cane and Drab Ware. Stoneware isn't porous, but it may be stained by liquids, so frequently items are glazed to protect them.

Black Basalt; 1.75" high by 1.75" high; c1920

Dark Jasperware; 1.75" high by 1.66" dia.; impressed Wedgwood V; c1919

Basalt pedestal salt; 2" high by 2.75" dia.; c1927

Dancers; not marked but probably Wedgwood

Wedgwood....cont'd on pg 15

Wedgwood....cont'd from pg 14

Bucket with silver handle and rim; 2" wide by 1.5" high; c1900

Porcelain is a vitreous semi-translucent body, originally made from white clay, feldspathic stone and silica (Chinese porcelain). Bone china is English porcelain of which about 50% is calcined animal bone, the rest being china stone and clay. It is renowned for its great strength, whiteness and translucency.

Small silver rimmed salt; 1" high by 1.25" dia.; c1891

THE ITEM SHAPES ARE FORMED BY TWO PRINCIPLE METHODS, THROWING AND CASTING:

Candycane striped pedestal; 1.75" high by 2" dia.; c1900

Throwing - one of the oldest methods of shaping clay vessels, throwing remains almost unchanged since its invention except the thrower's wheel is now turned by an electric motor. The foot pedal controls the speed of the wheel, which leaves the potter's hands available to work the clay. A ball of weighted clay is set in the center of the wheel and the potter works the rotating mass into the shape desired. A wire is then used to remove the formed clay and it is set aside to dry until it reaches a 'cheese-hard' state. When the clay is in this state, it may be refined by shaving (turning) it on a lathe.

Light blue Jasperware; 1.75" h. by 2" dia.; c1924

Square Wedgwood with silver rim; 1.75" square; c1912-16

Casting - when pottery isn't being formed into a circular shape or when it has a molded decoration, the piece is most easily made by pouring liquid clay (slip) into a plaster mold. The mold then absorbs much of the water from the clay. Some clay is left in the mold depending on the length of time it stays in the mold; it is up to the designer to determine when to pour away the surplus slip, leaving the correct thickness of clay sticking to the mold. As the slip dries, it contracts and is removed when the mold is opened. The piece is then cleaned, joined together with additional slip and then the handles, feet, etc. are added. This part of the process is all done by hand.

Dipped Jasperware; c1932

Finishing and Decorating:

Green bucket; 1.5" high by 2" dia.; c1922

Ornamenting or 'sprigging' is the process of applying small figures and other kinds of reliefs that are themselves made in separate molds. The clay used is fireclay and is able to withstand extremely high temperatures. The ornaments are applied to a slightly moistened surface and affixed with a gentle pressure from the fingers. This is a difficult task and requires much skill. This form of decoration is the one most commonly associated with Wedgwood.

Green salt and pepper; salt 1.5" high by 2.75" dia. at base; c1919

Wedgwood....cont'd on pg 16

Wedgwood....cont'd from pg 15

Transfer-printing is the process of applying prints taken from engraved copper plates or cylinders to glazed ware. Even though Josiah Wedgwood bought the right to do his own printing in 1763, he continued to send enormous quantities of creamware to another company, Sadler & Green, for decorating because of their quality of work.

Black Transferware; 2" high by 2.5" wide; c1900

Pedestal salt with transfer bird decoration; 1.5" high by 1.75"

Transferware pepper and open salt; salt is 2" high by 2.5" dia.

Gold Florentine salt; drag-on design; 1.5" high by 1.5"

Gold is used in many of Wedgwood's patterns especially on the border patterns of bone china. High quality gold shows beautifully while poor quality has a reddish, brassy color and soon shows signs of wear. Many of the early Wedgwood pieces from the Wedgwood & Bentley era tended to wear badly and Josiah thought that gold was an unsuitable decoration for earthenware.

Dipping - This is the process of covering solid-color jasper with a darker jasper slip. Some pieces are dipped on one side only while some on both sides with the base color showing at the edges. Jasper dip was introduced in 1777 when the rising price of cobalt made the cost of staining deep-blue solid jasper prohibitive. The dip process is still in use today, especially for high-end objects.

Jasperware Colors-Both Solid and Dipped

Black - Dip - 1778 to 1854 with reduced quantities thereafter
Solid - for bas-relief work and for small ornamental pieces in the 20th century
Crimson - Dip only - 1920 and 1925-32; the color was discontinued due to bleeding
Green - Dip - Sage green 1778-1854; Dark olive green - 1920-30
Solid - Sage green - 1775-78 and reintroduced 1957
Lilac - Dip 1778-1854; Solid - 1960-62
Primrose yellow - Solid only, introduced 1976
Terracotta - Solid - used for bas-relief work in 1775; didn't go into full production until 1957-9
Turquoise - Dip - 1875 to approximately 1885
Yellow Buff - Dip - yellow from 1778 in small quantities; Solid with black bas-relief work 1929-33

Lustre Decoration - It is the deposition of a thin film of metal on the surface of a glaze using and oxide or sulphide of the metal fired in a kiln is which the oxygen is removed. It was made famous by the designs of Daisy Makeig-Jones, a skilled painter who worked for Wedgwood in the first quarter of the 20th century.

Open salts with Lustre Decoration (also called Fairy Lustre); 1.5" high by 1.5" dia.; all c1900

Wedgwood....cont'd on pg 17

Wedgwood....cont'd from pg 16

Note: Salty Comments #32 by Ed and Kay Berg shows some wonderful drawings of typical Wedgwood shapes. If you are interested in Wedgwood marks, the following web site is a great resource: http://www.thepotteries.org/mark/w/wedgwoodj.html. The same website also has reference information for dating different Wedgwood marks.

As a quick reference for determining age, if the mark only says "Wedgwood" it was made before 1891; "Wedgwood England" was used starting in 1891.

If it says "Wedgwood Made in England", it was made after 1910.

Wedgwood luster; 2" high by 1.5" dia.; After 1915

Mystery Salt - I'm convinced this salt is Wedgwood, but it is unmarked. Most all of Wedgwood was marked. The quality of the workmanship is exquisite. The other unusual part of this salt is the pewter interior. I have never seen another salt like it.

Mystery Salt; 2" wide by1.5 "

The Dancing Hours Salt Cellar - Pale blue and white jasper drum salt cellar, ornamented with the Dancing Hours.

Height 2 1/8 inches. C.1790

Linda is an active member of Open Salt Seekers of the West-Northern California and is also Marketing Manager for the national organization Open Salts Collectors. All the photos were from the author's collection with the exception of two which belong to Lorraine and Fred Ayers.

BACK ISSUES FOR SALE

We're pleased to report that we have had reprints made of the earliest issues of the National Newsletter and are now able to offer them to anyone who wasn't able to enjoy them when they first came out. You can either use the order form below or send the same information to the noted address; the cost is $5/issue, which includes postage. If you're a new subscriber, these earlier issues are as packed with articles, information and beautiful photos as are our current issues.

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#3-Fall, 2002	Spratling Silver Salts; Pairpoint Glass; Bird & Berry Master Salts	_____
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#5-Fall, 2003	8th National Convention; Crider Art Glass Salts; Mimi Rudnick Award	_____
#6-Spring, 2004	Salty Observations; Chick Salts; Lusterware Salts; Trip to England	_____
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OPEN SALTS FROM CATALINA CLAY PRODUCTS COMPANY--1927 to 1937

BY JANE & DAN AUSTIN

Catalina Island Open Salts.

Santa Catalina Island is one of the Channel Islands just off the coast of Southern California. Its only city is Avalon, a mere square mile area. Most of the interior of the island remains natural. In the first half of the 20th century, Catalina Island was the playground of the Hollywood stars. Today it is a popular tourist resort visited by more than a million people a year.

William Wrigley, Jr., of chewing gum fame, purchased the island from the Banning Brothers in 1919. Wrigley loved the island and soon built a vacation home high up on Mt. Ada on the sunny side of the bay.

In 1927, Wrigley began operating a factory on the island at Pebbly Beach to produce clay building products, including roof tiles and a variety of bricks and pavers. The factory provided jobs for the local workers and also produced wonderful building materials and decorative multi-colored tiles that were used to develop the island and build the Casino, Avalon's "signature building." After the completion of the Casino in 1929, the factory evolved into Catalina Clay Products Company, turning out beautiful tiles, painted plates, art pottery and brightly-colored dinnerware pieces. Clay products were only produced on Catalina Island for 10 years, ending in 1937 when the company was sold to Gladding McBean & Company in Los Angeles.

Catalina Pottery was made from two different types of clay, red clay in the early years and white clay in the later years. In general there were 8 different glaze colors:

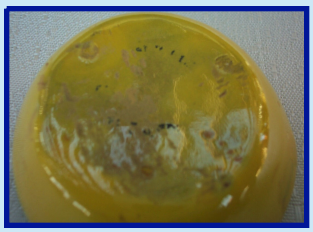
#1 Catalina Blue (Matte Glaze)
#2 Descanso Green (Matte Glaze)
#3 Toyon Red (Matte Glaze) 10% extra
#4 Mandarin Yellow (Shinny Glaze)
#5 Monterey Brown (Shinny Glaze)
#6 Pearly White (Matte Glaze)
#7 Turquoise (Shinny Glaze)
#13 Seafoam (Shinny Glaze)

Catalina Island Octagonal Open Salt.

Catalina Island Clover Leif Open Salt.

Catalina Open Salts were made in two patterns: Clover Leaf is 2-5/8" across by ¾" tall and Octagonal is 2-5/8" long by 1-7/8" wide by ¾" tall. They were signed on the bottom with two types of markings: a circular CATALINA ISLAND ink stamp and a straight line CATALINA impressed in the clay. The ink stamp seems to have been used the most on these salts. The sad part is that the ink stamp rubs or washes off easily, making most of them unmarked today. From the examples that exist, there is every reason to believe that the clover leaf was made in both clays and all 8 colors. However, the octagonal only came in red clay and all 8 colors. This makes 24 different collectable varieties. Unfortunately, these two delightful varieties of open salts are missing from most Catalina Island Pottery collections and are virtually unknown to open salt collectors due to their rarity.

Example of to the Catalina Island Ink Stamp.



Back of Clover Leif showing remnants of the CATALINA ISLAND ink stamp.

Back of the Octagonal showing the straight line impressed CATALINA into the clay.

Catalina Island Sterling Salt Spoon.

Sterling Silver Catalina Island salt spoons of 2-½" also exist. There seem to have been two varieties depicting common Catalina scenes: a cutout of a flying fish and a cutout of the Casino. They were not made by the Catalina Island Clay Products Company but were probably sold by themselves just as souvenirs. Happy hunting!

We are new to open salt collecting but have been avid collectors of Catalina pottery and tile for many years. As such, we welcome any questions you may have about the pottery or tile made on Catalina Island. Feel free to send inquiries, comments or requests for further information about Catalina pottery or tile to: dwaustin@cox.net

SILVER SALTS

By Giorgio Busetto

The salt was the principal article of domestic plate in English houses of whatever degree. The massive salt cellar, which adorned the centre of the table, served to indicate the importance of the owner and to divide the lord and his nobler guests from the inferior guests and menial, who were entitled to places 'below the salt' and at the lower ends of the table only. It seem rather to have served this purpose than to hold salt for the meal, a supply of which was usually placed near each person's trencher in a smaller salt-cellar, called a 'trencher salt'.

The great salt was, therefore, an object of considerable interest, and it was often of great magnificence and of curious device (... in the shape of a dog, an olifant, a dragon, a lion ...). Fifteenth century wills mention salts of every shape and size and kind. Salts square, round, plain, high, low, with covers and without, in silver and silver gilt are found.

The All Souls' College, Oxford has a fifteenth century salt called the 'Huntsman salt' from the standing figure bearing upon his head the receptacle for salt (a rock-crystal box with hinged lid).

The salt use is widely illustrated in Sixteenth century treatise containing suggestion on how the chief salt-cellar should be placed (... in the middle of the table according where the principal sovereign shall seat ... the second salt at the lower end ...) or how to use the salt (only with 'kleen knife' and avoiding to dip the meat into the salt-cellar).

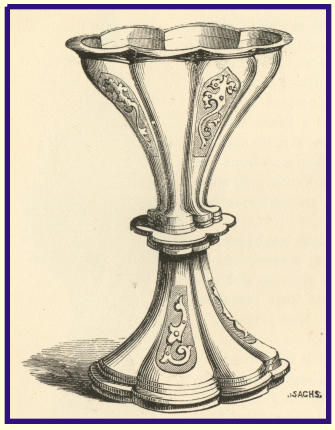
The 'Huntsman salt' at the All Souls' College, Oxford

The New College, Oxford, salt dated 1493

There are four patterns of Old English salt-cellars of which examples have been come down to our time.

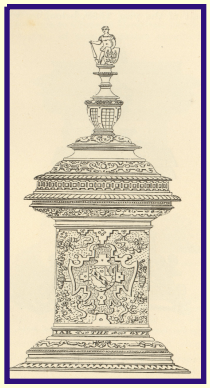
First come the hour-glass salts of the reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII (five or six hallmarked and a pair undated). Two are at Oxford, Corpus Christi College and New College. The New College salt is dated 1493 and was given by Walter Hill. It serves well as an illustration of these beautiful salts.

Another pair of this class of salt are of 1518 and 1522 and are in the possession of the Iron-mongers' Company in London. They are six-sided in plan, with raised lobes alternately ornamented and plain.



The six sided Iron-mongers' Company, London, salt

By the middle of the sixteenth century we come to the second type, and the earliest of this class again is at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. It is a 1554 cylindrical standing salt ornamented with repoussé and engraved work in a pattern formed of three principal cartouches with central bosses, the intervals filled with foliated scrolls. The cover is surmounted by a statuette of a boy with a staff of shield. These cylindrical salts occur oftener than the square ones and an example is one in the possession of the Corporation of Norwich, given by Peter Reade and made in Norwich in 1569.



The Corporation of Norwich cylindrical salt

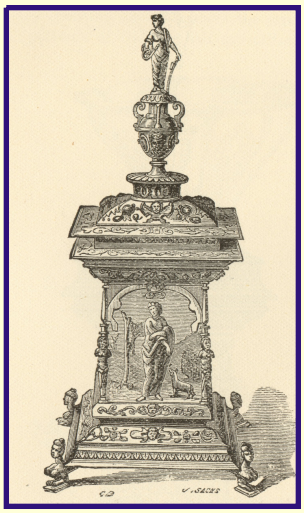
Silver....cont'd on pg 20

Silver....cont'd from pg 19

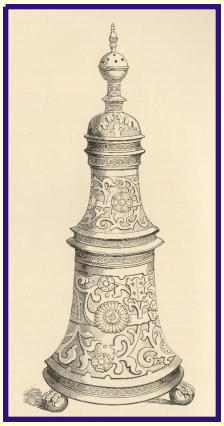
The Haberdashers' Hall 1595 salt cellar

The Hammersley salt at Haberdashers' Hall is of 1595 and it presents a drum repoussé with pastoral subjects contrasting with the conventional decoration common in this period.

The square type is represented by the 1569 salt belonging to the Vintners' Company. It has four panels at the sides, in bold relief, with four female figures representing Virtues and the cornice and foot boldly molded and richly embossed. The whole rests on four sphinxes and the cover is surmounted by a female figure standing on a vase.



The 1569 Vintners' Hall salt-cellar

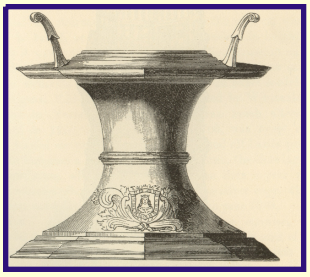


The 1607 Christ's Hospital, London, salt

At the very end of the sixteenth century we find a circular bell-shaped salt (or spice box) in three tiers or compartments. This shape was much in fashion but only for a few years. The example illustrating this shape belongs to Christ's Hospital, London and is very representative of its period. The two lower compartments form salt-cellars, and the upper one serves as a pepper-castor.

Next comes the simple and well-known form of salt from 1638 (the date of one of the earliest known) to 1685, when circular examples as this in the in possession of the Worshipful Company of Mercers was made. Other similar salt-cellars of this period are square or octagonal.

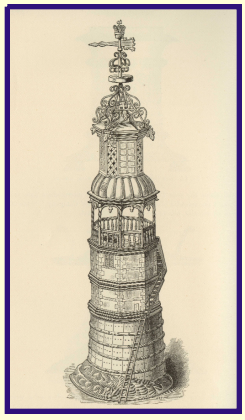
It will have been observed how carefully the earlier salts were covered to preserve cleanness of the salt, and perhaps to prevent the introduction of poison; in these later ones the small projected arms were for supporting a napkin with which it now became usual to cover the salt-cellar with the same object.



Mercers' Hall, London, 1685 octagonal salt

Last of all must be described the curious and unique salt-cellar built 1698 in the shape of a llighthouse. It has three storeys: the upper one empty, the next with a lid perforated for pepper and the lowest as a large box, empty as the uppermost.

This article was largely based on Old English Plate by Wilfred Joseph Cripps, sixth Edition, John Murray, London, 1899.



The lighthouse salt 1698

Mr. Busetto is Secretary of the Association of Small Collectors of Antique Silver (ASCAS). Additional information about this organization, including membership and newsletter details, can be found at the following web site: www.ascasonline.org. We are very grateful to him for giving us permission to publish this article, which can also be found on his personal web site www.silvercollection.it.