

View from the Salt Box - #39

Last week we saw a salt that looked very familiar in an antique mall. It was freehand glass with a deep blue/purple iridescence on the outside and a gold/blue iridescence inside. The bottom had been scratched to obscure a mark that originally was there, and in an unscratched area the letters "L.C.T." had been added. The label on it said "Tiffany, \$300". Many of you may recognize it from the picture -- it is the 1995 National Convention salt made in California by Lundberg. We told the lady at the desk of the mall about it, and she said, "Oh really?", and went on about her business. When we got home we looked at ours and confirmed that the bottom originally read, "Lundberg Studios 4th NOSC '95". The alteration confirms that our National Convention salts are extraordinary creations, and that you have to be careful about what a seller tells you. It also leaves us with a bad taste in our mouth for the antique mall where the salt is offered.

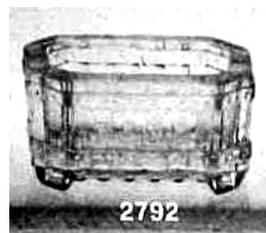


This is not the first time a Tiffany mark has been added to a piece of art glass. We are privileged to know a nationally-recognized expert on Tiffany, and he declares that there are as many fake marks out there as originals. In some cases the glass is really Tiffany made without a mark, and a shop dealer added the L.C.T. to make it more salable. Too often it is not the genuine article, however, and you and I are faced with the problem of deciding whether or not the salt ever saw the inside of the Tiffany studios.

The same kind of misidentification can be achieved with an acid stamp. We recently bought a Fostoria ALEXIS salt with the Heisey "diamond-H" acid stamped on the bottom. The people selling it were Heisey experts, and advertised it as a fake. We bought it just for that reason - we wanted a fake mark to show people what can be done with an acid stamp. The dish is so obviously Fostoria that few people would ever question where it really came from. A novice collector might be fooled by it, however.



Sometimes a salt is altered to hide damage. This is the work of the "Glass Doctor", who can be found at many antique shows. The classic example of this is in our Heacock & Johnson book, No. 2792, the PICKET FENCE salt. The picture shows no scallops on the rim. Of course some salts might have been made this way, but every other one we have seen has an uneven rim like the other dishes in the pattern.



There are times we can't be sure what we are looking at. The nice old master at the right is an example. It is Anglo-Irish glass made almost 200 years ago with a pressed foot and blown bowl, cut and polished all over. We don't understand why there is a large "V" notch cut into each end of the bowl. Maybe it the notch has a use we haven't heard about. Maybe it is a recent addition by the Glass Doctor to hide chips. If you know the purpose, we'd love to hear about it.



It is fascinating to do detective work on salts and discover what some folks try to get away with. We're sad that there are people who do such things, but we get much satisfaction when we can uncover and publicize what is going on.