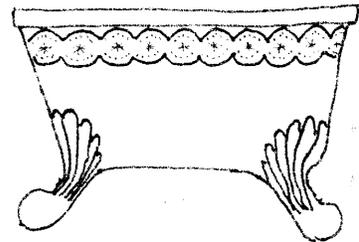


View from the Salt Box -- #28

The message on our answering machine was from Cackey Marsden, and she said it was urgent that we call her. When we did we received a pleasant surprise - she had found a BANDED STAR master for us. For years we have admired the one she has, and we spread the word that we wanted one too. There were apparently none to be had - at least none anyone could find. Cackey's was apparently the only one that survived the hundred years plus since they were made. We heard of one with a leg broken off, but we weren't willing to take that much damage. Now Cackey had found one for us at Val and Bill Karpen's booth in the Black Angus mall, and had asked them to please hold it for us. We called them immediately and picked it up the next weekend.

The BANDED STAR pattern was made by King, Son & Co. about 1880. It came in an extended table service, including pitchers, celery vases, compotes and two sizes of open salts. These latter look like old-fashioned bathtubs, rectangular with legs at the lower corners. These legs are easy to break, which is why we see so little of the pattern around today. The small individual salts are uncommon and expensive, but not rare. The master size is extremely rare in our opinion.



BANDED STAR Master

After the years of wondering if more than one BANDED STAR master with 4 intact legs really existed, Cackey found the one we bought. Then the next week we got a letter from a lady who had just found one for her own collection. She wanted to know how much it might be worth. How do you put a value on something when only 3 of them seem to exist? It all depends on how badly collectors want it. Daum Nancy salts sell for \$1000 or more, and they are not as scarce as the BANDED STAR master. You can't establish a value for something until a number of them have been sold by sellers who know what they have to buyers who realize what they are getting. We don't envy the people who write price guides when they have to put a value on an open salt that seems to be one of a kind.

In answering the lady's letter, we said that we're not sure what we would have been willing to pay for our BANDED STAR master. We certainly wouldn't have gone up to the Daum Nancy range. As it was the Karpens charged us \$70. We thought that a very fair price, and that's all we could say. The next one might sell for half or twice that amount, if it exists. If you want one, we can give you the lady's name and you can make her an offer. Just don't bother making an offer for ours - it's not for sale at any price.

Ed Berg
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