

SALTY COMMENTS #17
(Facts and opinions on open salt dish collecting)

We are often asked, "Is this salt a reproduction"? When the dish comes from an new mold that imitates an old open salt, the answer is easy to give. When the dish comes from a mold that has been run for 35 years or more, we hesitate. If we say "no", the questioner thinks the salt is old, even though it might have been made last week. We cannot say "yes", because "repro" means (to us) that someone copied an old design, or revived a long-inactive mold from a defunct glass company. A number of the open salts from the Degenhart Crystal Art Glass Co. fall into this "neither yes nor no" category.

Degenhart Crystal Art Glass was founded by John Degenhart in 1947. He was the son of a moldmaker, and started working with Dalzell, Gilmore & Leighton Glass Co. in Findlay, Ohio at the age of 9. When he was 17, he moved to Cambridge, Ohio and helped build the Cambridge Glass factory. In 1908, 7 years later, he married Elizabeth Garrett who worked in the packing department at the plant. He worked for Cambridge until he retired at the age of 62. During the latter part of his Cambridge career, he and his brother made paperweights and a few pressed novelty items in the plant after working hours - a practice that was encouraged in the days before multi-million dollar lawsuits. They paid the plant for the materials they used, and built up a respectable small business.

After retirement, John built a small factory in Cambridge, Ohio and continued the type of work he had previously done after hours. He and one helper made mostly paperweights, but the line of pressed novelties was continued and expanded. By 1964 when he died, the factory was making 24 pressed items in about a dozen different colors.

After 1964, Elizabeth took over the business. She soon hired Zack Boyd to help her, and began to make new colors. The business started to grow, and they never looked back. When Zack died in 1968, his son Bernard C. Boyd stepped in. By 1978, one item - their owl - had been made in 246 different colors. Some of the shades are so close that you can't tell them apart unless they are sitting beside one another, but the Degenhart catalog lists 246 color names and shows pictures of them all.

When Elizabeth died in 1978, the factory and equipment were sold to Bernard C. Boyd and his son, Bernard F. They went into business as Boyd's Crystal Art Glass, using some of the Degenhart molds and introducing new designs of their own. They specialize in new colors, and have made a different one almost every month without repeating. Not all of the items are made in each color, but there are plenty to choose from if you want to concentrate on only one shape. Today Bernard F. and his wife, Sue, are running the business, and son John is playing a key role.

Open salts were made by Degenhart Crystal Art Glass starting in 1952. Their first was the DEWDROP AND STAR master. Other salts were added until a total of 7 were in the line. Their glass was unmarked until about 1972, when Elizabeth adopted the letter D in a heart. This was used on all their salts after that date. All of their open salt molds were sold to Boyd's except for the cylindrical DAISY AND BUTTON, which is in the Degenhart Museum.

Boyd's Crystal Art Glass have continued the Degenhart open salt designs, and have purchased open salt molds from defunct glass companies. They also designed a rabbit top to fit on the same nest as the hen. They have been very careful to mark all production - B in a diamond for the first 5 years, and the same with a line at the bottom of the diamond after 1983. We should all be grateful for their efforts to do this.

The following pages give details on both Degenhart Crystal Art Glass and Boyd's Crystal Art Glass open salts. If you want a challenge, pick a design you like and try to get all the colors. The Degenhart Paperweight and Glass Museum, Rte. 22, Cambridge, OH 43725 has information on the Degenhart production, and you can write to Boyd's Crystal Art Glass, 1203 Morton Ave., Cambridge, Ohio 43725 to see what they have available. And if you are ever near Cambridge, be sure to stop in at Boyd's for a glassmaking tour. Bernard, Sue and John are friendly, hospitable people who enjoy showing others how their glass is made, and you can buy salts in their showroom.

OPEN SALTS BY DEGENHART AND BOYD

1. STAR AND DEWDROP - A master size. No information on source of the mold, but a dish this size is shown in Clark W. Brown's book (his #343) which was published in 1937. We don't know how to identify the pre-Degenhart ones, though we have examined dozens like this. Degenhart may have bought the old mold. If you find someone who can prove their dish was made before 1940, we'd like to buy it or at least see it. All production marked after 1972.

2. BIRD WITH SEED - Degenhart's mold made for him in 1958, copying an old design. Most prominent identification is a bump on the left corner of the tail. Kanawha Glass makes a similar one without the bump, but the back of its head is very flat. Old birds have much thicker necks, the bottom of the bowl is not round in the back, and some have protruding eyes. Degenhart birds marked since 1972, all Boyd birds marked.

3. BASKET - Reproduction of a 1930-40 design by Lornetta Glass. Shown in the open salt books, but advertised as a toothpick by Degenhart and as just a basket by Boyd. Marked since 1974.

4. HEN ON NEST - Called "Chick Salt", it has the head pointing straight ahead. Westmoreland's and Vallerysthal's have their heads turned slightly. The Taiwan hen is not on a basket-weave nest. Summit's is slightly larger. Marked since 1978, perhaps earlier.

5. DAISY AND BUTTON SALT - Designed by Elizabeth Degenhart, copied by L.G. Wright. Ours has a D&B bottom, but early ones were made with a plain bottom. The Wright and Degenhart designs are very close, but Wright has the daisies on the bottom with their centers at the edge; the Degenhart centers are 2mm. in from the edge. Marked since 1972. Not made after 1978 - the mold has been retired to the Degenhart Museum.

6. POTTIE - Listed as a salt by Degenhart, as just a pottie by Boyd. Origin of mold uncertain, but we have seen no old ones with the embossed design around the bottom. Marked since 1972.

7. RABBIT ON NEST - Made by Boyd to fit on the same nest as the hen. Summit makes a similar one with slightly lower ears, marked V in a circle. All Boyd rabbits have the B mark.

8. TUB WITH NOTCHED HANDLES - A Cambridge mold, acquired from Imperial in 1985. Tub has 8 sides, and the handles have a U-shaped notch for a spoon rest. Boyd tubs are marked, Summit makes a similar ones with V notches which are unmarked. Unmarked U-notch tubs are old Cambridge glass.

9. SWAN - The old Cambridge Type 1 3" swan mold, with wing tips well below the tail. Acquired from Imperial in 1985. Boyd swans all marked, older Cambridge production sometimes marked C in triangle, sometimes unmarked.

10. CANNONBALL - Old Cambridge mold, acquired from Imperial in 1985. All Boyd production in color, marked B.

11. MOUNT VERNON - A Cambridge pattern, usually seen as the pedestal shape. This design is also in the Cambridge catalogs, but we have never seen an old one. Acquired 1985 from Imperial; all marked with the B.

12. CANDLEWICK - An Imperial pattern, acquired in 1985. This size (2-1/2" diameter) shown in Imperial catalogs as a strawberry dip, although celery dippers probably preferred it to the 2" open salt. All Boyd production marked, Imperial production unmarked.

13. PEDESTAL, BEADED RIM - Imperial design, acquired 1985. Boyd dishes marked; Imperial dishes unmarked.

14. EGG CUP SHAPE - Ruth Potter, a collector from Columbus, Ohio, discovered the source of this design. The mold was made about 1972 for Techniglas in St. Louisville, Ohio. They did not stay in business long, but produced some open salts with it. Boyd bought the mold several years ago, and has not yet made dishes to sell.

OPEN SALTS BY DEGENHART AND BOYD

Shape No.	Smith No.	H&J No.	Description	Introduced	Degenhart Colors	Boyd Colors
1	362-4-2	925	Star & Dewdrop, master size	1952	38	14+
2	44-5-1	998	Bird with Seed	1958	100	33+
3	465-6-2	2040	Basket	1963	5+	18+
4	44-1-2	968	Hen on Basket Nest	1966	51	46+
5	36-4-2	905	DAISY & BUTTON Cylinder	1970	29	*
6		581	Pottie Salt	1971	21	12+
7	**	**	Rabbit on Basket Nest	?	0	***
8	89-2-2	832	Tub, notched handles	1985	0	***
9	44-7-4	935	Swan, low wing tips	1985	0	***
10	478-3-2	2643	CANNONBALL	1985	0	***
11			MOUNT VERNON, round	1985	0	***
12	124-1-2	2641	CANDLEWICK Strawberry Dip	1985	0	***
13	18-3-2	882	Pedestal, Beaded Rim	1985	0	***
14	485-4-3		Egg Cup Shape			Boyd Owns, Not Yet Used

Notes:

* - Mold in Degenhart Museum, not used since 1978

** - Like Smith 310-5-1, H&J 1002 but ears are lower, less detail in body

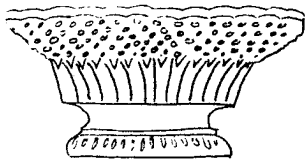
*** - In production, exact number not available

References: H&J - "5000 Open Salts" by William Heacock and Patricia Johnson
 10 books "Open Salts Illustrated" by Alan & Helen Smith
 "Degenhart Glass & Paperweights" by Gene Florence
 "Boyd's Crystal Art Glass", catalog published by the factory
 "Salt Dishes" by Clark W. Brown, published 1937.

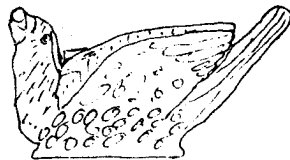
Ed Berg
 401 Nottingham Rd., Newark DE 19711

January 1988

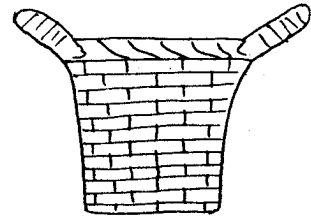
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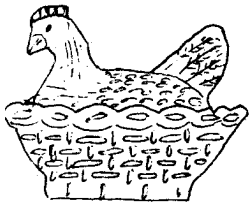
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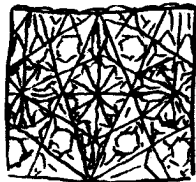
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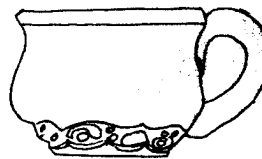
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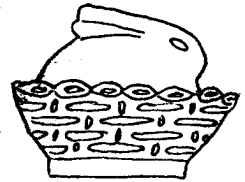
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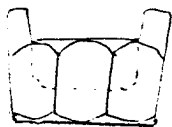
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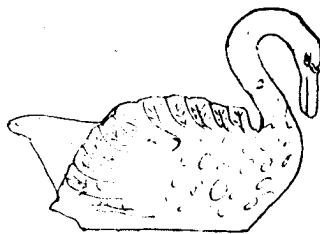
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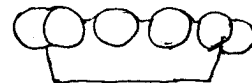
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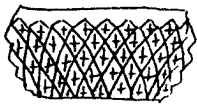
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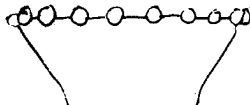
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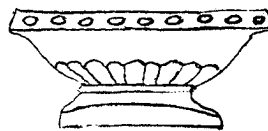
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11



12



13



14

MARKS USED



1972-78



1984-



1978-83

Boyd
Scratched on glass -
first production of
Imperial molds
limited use