

View from the Salt Box - #36

When we visited the Jones Museum near Portland, ME this summer we learned a new term from Dorothy Lee Jones, the curator. In the distant past we used the term "Repro" (reproduction) indiscriminately for anything made during the last 50 years. Later we backed off a little and added the term "Reissue", to our vocabulary. This describes a situation where the original firm starts using their original mold after a substantial lapse of time. An example of this is the Cincinnati type of faceted salt that Viking produced in red and green several Christmases ago. (Figure 1). This was their own old mold, and they took it out of storage for the purpose. When a new mold was made that copied the old design in any way, it was still a Repro to us. An example is the L.G. Wright WILDFLOWER pattern salt shown in Figure 2. Dorothy Lee pointed out that salts like this are not true Repros, but are "Adaptations". Although this one has the old pattern, it is quite different from the original where the bowl sits on the back of a turtle.

With this term in our vocabulary, we have revised our view of L.G. Wright's product line. Most of his salts were from new molds, and a large portion were Adaptations, not copies. This is not to say that he didn't make copies that we consider Repros. Examples of this are the Fish, the THREE FACE and the Bird With Seed master (Figures 3-5). Most of his other ones are enough different that they cannot be passed off as old to unwary open salt collectors. They are Adaptations.

Beyond Wright's salts, there are still a lot being made that qualify for the "Repro" category. This includes most of the ones from Summit Art Glass, where they have purchased old molds and use them without any changes or additional markings.. They have even made some of the ENGLISH HOBNAIL pedestals with the original WG (Westmoreland Glass) mark, which was in the mold when they bought it. Boyd Crystal Art Glass. also uses old molds to male Repros, but marks everything, bless their souls. Guernsey Glass has sold a number of direct copies in the past, with a mark so hard to find that it might as well not be there. A. A. Imports has commissioned Repros from factories in Asia. Fortunately much of the work is crude enough that the new salts can be identified, although recently a bird with seed from China is extremely close to the original McKee version.

Very few people we can think of other than L.G. Wright have made true Adaptations of open salts. When they do, we think their dishes should be spared the inferior "Repro" designation. Let's leave that term to unmarked copies that are made to fool collectors.

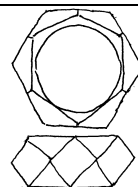


Figure 1



Figure 2

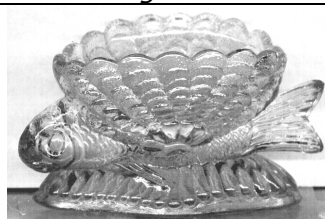


Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5