

# View from the Salt Box - #47

One of the nicer salts in many collections is a Crown Milano. This is a type of glass patented in 1886 by the Mt. Washington Glass Co. It is a grayish white and translucent, but is not opalescent and is not as stark a white as most milk glass. It has been dipped in acid so there is a satin finish on the outside. The Wavecrest salts like H&J 47 have similar glass. We don't know of any companies making this today.

Crown milano glass is very collectible today. Larger pieces, like vases, are valued in the hundreds and even thousands of dollars, depending on the size, shape and decoration. Our salts generally cost \$100-125 today. The decorations were mostly done by the Smith Bros., decorators who left Mt. Washington to set up their own company. They painted mostly flowers on the salts, often in gold but also in natural colors. Some were good representations of the natural blooms, like pansies, violets and fuchsia. Others were just "flowers" that we can't identify. All we have seen have beads of paint on the rim.

The crown milano salts come in two sizes – individual and master, both referred to as the "melon rib" type. Some have the Smith Brothers mark on the bottom, which increases their value about 25%.

A surprising thing is a pair of melon rib salts in porcelain. The walls are much thinner than the glass version, and there are no dots on the rim. The mark on the bottom is from the New York & Rudolstadt Pottery Co. of Rudolstadt, Germany. The book says it dates from 1887-1918. We don't know who copied who on the shape, since both firms operated in the same time frame, and the Mt. Washington patent is for the glass, not the shape.

We have one other melon rib salt in porcelain, heavily decorated in gold. It has no mark, unfortunately, but it fits right in with the crown milano ones.

We hope you have at least one of the Mt. Washington salts in your collection. If you want a research project, try to see how many different decorations you can identify on this type. We see 10 different ones in H&J – perhaps there are many more.

Ed Berg

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