

SALTY COMMENTS #18

(Facts and Opinion on Open Salt Dish Collecting)

If you are ever in or near Cambridge, Ohio, try to find time for a tour of the glass factories and museums there. The Boyd Crystal Art Glass and the Degenhart museum have been mentioned in earlier issues of this newsletter. This time we will cover two more Cambridge companies - Guernsey and Mosser.

Guernsey Glass gets its name from Guernsey County, where Cambridge is located. It was started in 1967 by Harold Bennett and his two brothers. At first they made their own glass, but during the past 10 years they have contracted out the manufacturing and sell from a showroom in the old factory. If it is open, you can spend an interesting hour with Harold talking about the glass business. Their operation appears to be winding down - they seem to be selling out their inventory and have not been making open salts recently. Some of their salts are already collectors items - you cannot buy their squirrels in the showroom any more, and the available colors of the CAPRICE and TEUTONIC patterns are quite limited. Some of their salts are marked - the marks are described on the next page.

Harold Bennett has led an interesting life. Many years ago he became fascinated with Cambridge glass, and started accumulating some of the special pieces that looked attractive. He stored them in boxes, and when his mother asked him what in the world he was going to do with all that stuff, he said, "Maybe I'll open a museum someday". His words proved to be prophecy - the Cambridge Glass Co. went out of business and their glass became highly collectible. He and his family now operate the Cambridge Glass Museum, showing a fantastic collection that outdoes even the Cambridge Collectors Club Museum on the edge of town. It is a nice place to visit if you want to see a lot of beautiful glass. Harold has co-authored one of the books on Cambridge Glass, along with his wife, Judy, who operates an antiques shop nearby. Lately we have found his showroom closed more often than than it is open, so you will have to take pot luck on finding him.

Tom Mosser started work at the Cambridge Glass Co. at the age of 16. His father also worked for Cambridge. The factory closed in 1958, and in 1959 he helped establish a small business to make scientific and medical glassware. In 1971 he started a new and separate glass business to make pressed items, including several open salts. These were made using old molds acquired from Cambridge and some new molds using original designs. Their mark was originally the letter M, later M in a circle, and currently is M in an outline of the state of Ohio. All salts we have seen are available unmarked, and most are also available with their mark. The unmarked ones make it very difficult to tell the difference between their production and the original Cambridge, some of which is unmarked, when an old Cambridge mold is involved. This is especially true of the swan - be sure you know how to tell the difference before you pay a Cambridge price for one of these birds.

The Mosser factory is the largest maker of hand-pressed glassware in Cambridge. They offer tours of the operation during working hours, Monday through Friday, and you can learn a lot about making pressed glass if you take one. The factory is on the edge of town, and the original house that came with the property is their showroom.

The open salts made by Guernsey and Mosser are described on the following pages. Most are readily available in a variety of colors. We like to have at least one of each shape in our collection to help identify differences between the old and new, and to help add a bit of color to our shelves.

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Reference: Glass Collectors's Digest, February/March 1988, article on glass companies in Cambridge, Ohio.

OPEN SALTS BY GUERNSEY AND MOSSERGUERNSEY GLASS CO.

1. - TEUTONIC pattern. New mold, a direct copy of an old salt. Made in many colors. All we have seen are fire-polished (edges smoothed by a flame) while old ones have sharp edges. No easy way to identify the old ones that we know.
2. - Atterbury basket on pedestal. New mold copying the old individual size. Made in several colors, but not in milk glass like the old one. All have the Guernsey B in a triangle on the bottom.
3. - Squirrel on tree trunk. New mold, closely copying the old one. Bark texture slightly different, and there is a B on the lower left side (squirrel's left) that is hard to find but it's invariably there. Made in several colors.
4. - CAPRICE pattern. New mold, using the Cambridge CAPRICE pattern in a size that Cambridge never made. Mimics the larger nut dish. Has a B on the inside of one leg. All dishes like this are by Guernsey.
5. - TEUTONIC with flanged rim. Called the Wells Potto by Guernsey. Initially made by accident when Eddie Wells used the wrong cap ring on the TEUTONIC mold. They liked it well enough that they did it deliberately from then on. Made in a variety of colors. All dishes like this are by Guernsey.

MOSSER GLASS CO.

6. - ENGLISH HOBNAIL pattern. Called their #116 Sawtooth salt dip, it is a design made by in many colors by Mosser, Summit Art Glass and Crystal Art Glass. Some are marked, but many are not. Only way to identify who made this design is by finding a mark on the dish.
7. - Bird on Branch. Mosser says this is their original mold. We have been told it was a Sandwich design, but the Sandwich Museum says that there is no record of any salts with birds ever being made there. We don't think that anyone made this design before Mosser started. Made in many colors and crystal, some marked and some unmarked.
8. - Hen. Called their #112 hen salt dip. One-piece hen on nest, with hole in her back for the salt. This is a Mosser original mold, no old ones like it. Made in several colors, both marked and unmarked.
9. - Oval, 10, panel sides. Called their #115 Oval salt dip. This uses an old mold acquired from the Cambridge Glass Co. Made in several colors, marked and unmarked. No way to tell the unmarked from the original Cambridge.
10. - WILDFLOWER pattern. This is a recent issue by Mosser, and is made with the same mold that L.G. Wright used. The pattern on the dish is the old one, but the shape of the dish we believe is original with Wright. We have only seen this shape from Mosser in crown tuscan color, unmarked.
11. - Swan. Their #118 swan salt dip. This uses one of the old Cambridge swan molds, but the mold has been reworked so that now there are small bumps on the neck just behind the head. The neck is bent by hand after the swan comes out of the mold, so you can find many different head positions. Made in a variety of colors, marked and unmarked. Since the old Cambridge one is also unmarked, be sure you know it's not Mosser before paying a Cambridge price.
12. - Hexagonal. Their #106 salt dip. Made in an old Cambridge mold, so there is no good way to be positive what is new and what is not. All the Mosser dishes we have seen are fire polished. We have what is probably a Cambridge dish (bought from Judy Bennett who co-authored one of the books on Cambridge) that is not fire-polished. Made in many colors, marked and unmarked.
13. - Two-piece hen on vertically-ribbed nest. The nest is unlike the basket-weave type that others use, and there is more detail on the body. The head is turned sharply, and our copy is signed with an underlined M.

GUERNSEY AND MOSSER SALTSGUERNSEY GLASS CO.

<u>Sketch No.</u>	<u>Smith No.</u>	<u>H&J No.</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
1	23-4-1	914	TEUTONIC pattern, crosshatched diamonds & fans
2	40-4-1*	4482*	Atterbury basket on pedestal, rope handle
3	90-5-1	929	Squirrel on tree trunk
4	307-4-1	915	CAPRICE pattern, 4 stubby legs, round bowl
5		913	Wells Potto, TEUTONIC pattern with flange rim

MARKS:

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MOSSER GLASS CO.

<u>SKETCH NO.</u>	<u>SMITH NO.</u>	<u>H&J NO.</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
6	36-3-3	515	#116 Sawtooth salt dip, ENGLISH HOBNAIL pattern
7	54-5-1	940	#131 Bird salt dip, bird on branch
8	215-6-2	944	#112 Hen salt dip, one-piece hen on nest
9	261-2-1	828	#115 Oval salt dip, low, 10 panel sides, oval bowl
10	262-6-1	898	WILDFLOWER pattern, rectangular dish, flaring rim
11	462-6-1*	937	#118 Swan salt dip, reissue of Cambridge mold
12	474-2-2	888	#106 salt dip, 6-sided, star impressed each side
13	54-2-1*		Hen on ribbed nest

MARKS:

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NOTES:

1. Most of the salts illustrated are shown several times in both Smith and H&J. We have listed only one of several possible references.

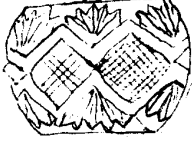
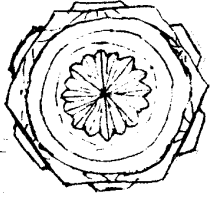
2. Pictures in Smith and H&J sometimes show the old dish rather than the current production. Where this is obvious, we have marked the reference with an asterisk (*).

3. The contemporary versions are usually in color with fire-polished rims. Original versions we have seen are not fire-polished.

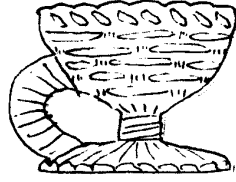
REFERENCES: "5000 Open Salts" by William Heacock and Patricia Johnson
10 books "Open Salts Illustrated" by Alan & Helen Smith

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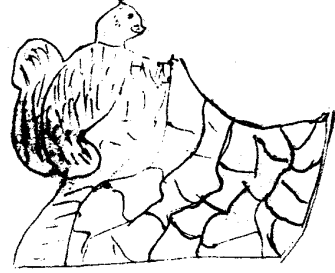
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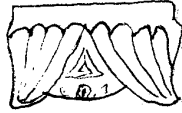
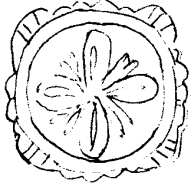
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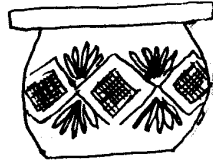
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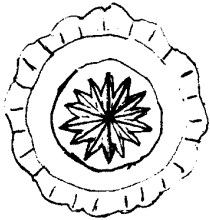
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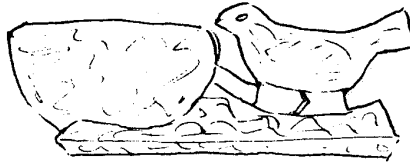


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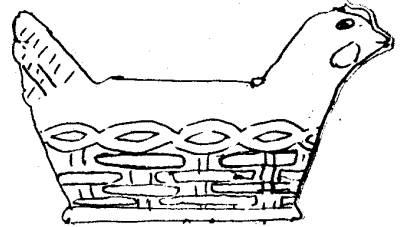


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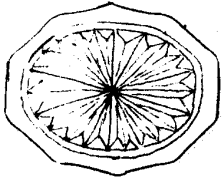
MOSSER GLASS CO.



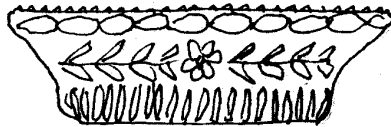
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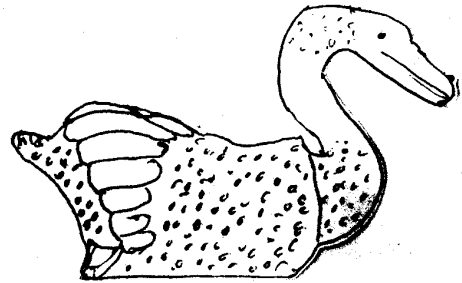
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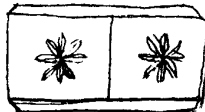
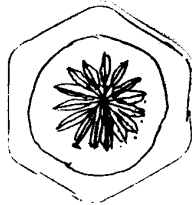
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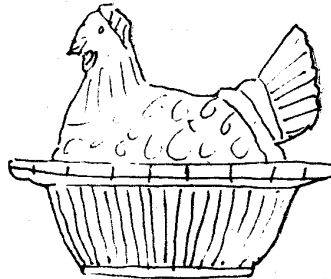
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