

OPEN SALT COLLECTORS



Issue # 38 - Winter 2017

More Reports from the 2017 San Diego National Convention

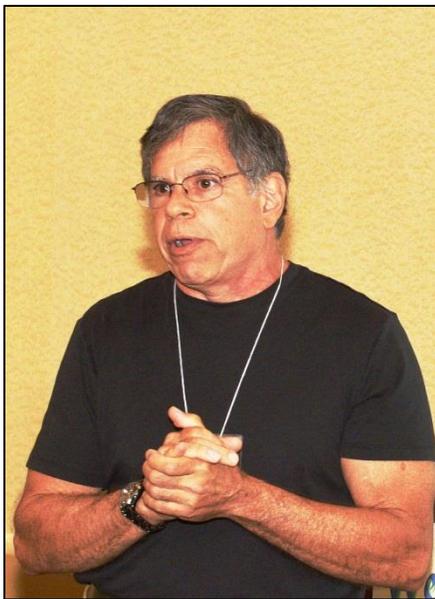
Little Wheels

The Art of Copper Engraving

Mike Manginella

Ever see a piece of engraved glass that looked just wonderful?

Then you look at the price and wish you knew more? In this presentation Mike Manginella showed us how glass engraving has been accomplished over the centuries, the



Mike Manginella

tools used, and how they are used. We learned to spot various motifs, understand how they were done and what makes value. Included are some names of masters, both current and antique, and the nomenclature used to describe glass engraving. In a short period of time we learned more than most dealers, and get to enjoy the great deal you got on some future masterpiece of glass.



Figure 1 – Example of Copper Wheel Engraving

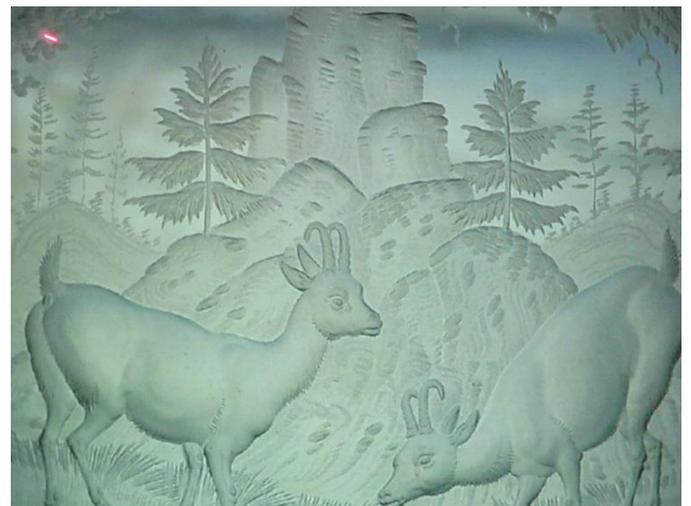


Figure 2 – Example of Copper Wheel Engraving

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President's Message

I hope you've all enjoyed the summer and found some "special" salts to add to your collection. Signs of change are evident as winter approaches. The vibrant fall colors of gold, scarlet and orange have come and gone, clocks have been turned back, Jack Frost has reappeared, and across the county open salt collector clubs have held their fall meetings. With change in the air Connie & I drove up to Corning, NY, in mid-October to attend the OSCAR meeting, and see the spectacular "*Tiffany's Glass Mosaics*" exhibition (it's open through January 7, 2018) at the Corning Museum of Glass. In early November we went to Chantilly, VA, to attend the CASC meeting and, as part of the day's events went to the nearby DC Big Flea & Antiques Market. This coming weekend we're planning to drive to Carlisle, PA to see the Eastern National Antique Show where we hope to find another "special" open salt.

It's important that we continue to reach out to others who may be interested in open salts. We can do this by sharing our joy and love for open salts with others, and, by inviting a friend to come with us to an open salt collectors meeting. For many years we've had an active internet website that has allowed people to exchange information about open salts. In September Brenda M posted a message on our "Chat" page that open salt collectors got a "shout out" from Harry Rinker, when he wrote in his October 2nd column of *Antique Weekly* that Open Salt Collectors has an active internet website (www.opensalts.info). Also, as some of you know, about nine years ago, Nina R, Judy J and Brenda M set up a Facebook page for Open Salt Collectors of the World, which also enables people to share information about open salts. Today that group has about 330 members in 8 countries, and it's continuing to grow. Earlier this year the OSC Board placed an ad in the *Journal of Antiques & Collectibles*, a monthly publication in an effort to reach out to potential new regional club members.

Best wishes to all on a wonderful holiday season and a joyous New Year!

George

A Note from the Editors

This edition of the newsletter features more reports from the 15th National Convention held in San Diego in May 2017. Again, special thanks to Diane Lynch for her pictures, but also gratitude to Robert Rogers, Don Rabourn and Nina Robertson who also contributed pictures. Salts She Wrote, an article on Black Forest Carving submitted by Jane Koble, and more examples "Outside the Curio Cabinet" round out the newsletter.

Co-editors Mary Kern and Kent Hudson

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While we encourage the dissemination of information about open salt collecting, we do like to know in advance when and where material originally appearing in the National Newsletter will be used. Please contact the Editor (khudson639@verizon.net) if you would like to use anything from this newsletter. When publication occurs, we also ask that a copy be sent for our archives.

The National Newsletter is the official publication of the Open Salt Collectors, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting and encouraging the study, collecting and preservation of open salts. This is done through the publication of a national newsletter, maintaining an informational website, promoting membership in open salt collecting clubs, publishing informational and educational articles in collector publications and through other means as may be appropriate from time to time.

The National Newsletter of Open Salt Collectors is published three times per year—in April, August and December—in both electronic and hardcopy versions. Subscriptions are available through the organization's website (www.opensalts.info).



15th NOSC Convention Open Salt

**A handmade limited edition
enameled copper open salt
designed to commemorate the
convention in San Diego, CA 2017**

For the first time, the convention salt is a beautifully enameled copper bowl, measuring approximately 2 ¾" in diameter, and 7/8" in height.

The design included the bell tower of the nearby Mission San Diego de Alcalá, which was the first of 21 California missions, founded July 16, 1769, by Father Junipero Serra. Today, it serves as an active parish church as well as a cultural center for people of all faiths, and is a National Historic Landmark. Also included are California poppies, the state flower which is often seen along the roads in San Diego.

The open salt was designed, formed, and painted by Pat Aiken, a working artist and art teacher for many years. She works in the Enameling Studio in the Spanish Village in Balboa Park. Each piece is signed by the artist on the bottom along with "NOSC 2017".

Convention Open Salt Order Form

Please return completed form with check or money order payable to OSSOTW to:

Stacey Cunningham, 2271 N. Milburn Ave., Fresno, CA 93722

Questions? Email to Elaine Cooper – Jecooper9090@yahoo.com

I enclose \$75 +\$6 each for _____ Salts.

NAME _____ PHONE _____

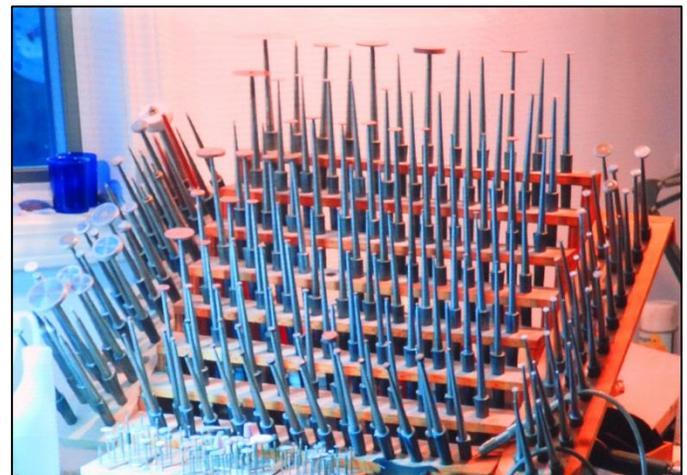
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Little Wheels

The Art of Copper Wheel Engraving

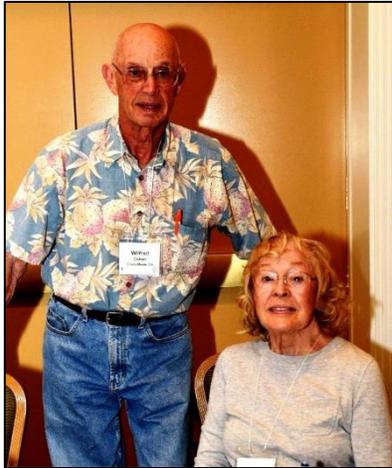
On this page are shown more examples of copper wheel engraving. The final picture in the lower right shows an array of copper wheel engraving tools.



Copper Wheel Engraving Tools

An Alternative to Glass Moorcroft Pottery Wilfred Cohen

William Moorcroft was born 1872 and he died 1945. His father was an artist, it seemed to run in the family, his brother was also artist and came to USA. His father died when he was 12 and his mother died when he was 13. At the age of 7, he went to the Wedgwood Institute and won his first prize at the age of 8. at age of 12 he was in an art and design class



Wilfred and Dollie Cohen

at the Wedgwood Institute. Later Wedgwood touted the fact that Moorcroft was a student at this institute. In 1895, he studied at the National Training School in England with a heavy interest in ancient art and pottery. He graduated and went to the British Museum and to Paris to study pottery. In 1897 he got his certificate in art. Most people who receive this certificate became teachers, but he wanted to become a potter rather than



**Figure 2 – Macintyre
Gesso Ware**

a teacher. In 1897, he was offered a job as a designer at the Macintyre Pottery. This pottery had started in 1830. He followed a man named Harry Barnard who worked in Gesso, (Figure 1) which used heavy slip around the edges of the design. Barnard left, and Moorcroft was offered the job of artistic director in 1897. Moorcroft started

a kind of pottery called Florian ware (Figure 2) which showed some similarity to Gesso, but was starting to change. The women in the department that he took over already knew the technique of using slip to outline

the flowers, almost like cloisonné, and kept the colors inside the cells.

Moorcroft, also studied pottery chemistry and was able to execute his own design and supervise the complete manufacturer of his pottery. He corrected the designs when it was necessary, outlined the designs for the girls to use; he was involved in every way. He signed the work with his signature or initials. Some of his first work was called Aurelian Ware which was partly transfer printed and finished by hand. (Figure 3) In 1898 he was promoted to manager of the designers, workers who worked only for him. He experimented with the colors and the glazes. He was Interested



**Figure 2 – Florian Ware
Vase**

in the organic form; on all his pots the flowers fit exactly with the form of the pots. He drew the designs himself to fit the size and shape of the pots. At first, the slip was very heavy but less so later with fluorian ware. He used



**Figure 3 – Macintyre
Aurelian Ware Pitcher**

all sorts of English flowers and foliage for his designs. He used a fine porcelain body that would stand high temperatures; it was fired a couple of times at 1100 degrees with a final glaze that brought out the depth of the colors. he developed colors that would stand the high firing temperatures, first

blue, green, and pink other colors. Most people do not think that he did all the designs.

His fame grew very quickly. About a year after he introduced his pottery, it started selling all over the word: at Tiffany in NY, in Liberty which is a big depart-



Figure 4 – A Display of Moorcroft Pottery

ment store in England, in Paris, in San Francisco where the retailer added silver mounts, in Chicago in Marshall Fields, in south America and Germany and Scandinavia. Some retailers had their own designs. It was so popular that he could not keep up with the orders; smaller retailers send letter begging for him to fill their orders, but he couldn't keep up with the demand.

In 1904 he won a gold medal at the World's Fair in St Louis, then in 1910 a gold medal in Brussels. He



Figure 5 – Moorcroft Pomegranate Pattern Pot with Tudric Pewter Mounting.

was so well known locally that in 1909, 25 of his pots were shown at a Manchester art gallery, it was unusual for so much to be shown at one time.

He developed a very close relationship with Liberty and Company.

People were dealing directly with Moorcroft and not Macintyre, and eventually it rubbed the wrong way with Macintyre. Macintyre told him in 1912 they were going to wind down the factory, so Moorcroft went on his own and Liberty funded the new factory. Unfortunately, World War I began which caused much trouble keeping work-

ers. To keep the factory in business, they started the powder blue line of tableware. It was used at Liberty in their tea room and they sold thousands of pieces of the powder blue table ware. It does not carry his signature. During the war he did a lot of things for the armed forces that they needed for the war effort. In 1918 he had 32 women and 15 men working and he was in control of the whole business. His stationary said he was potter, designer, chemist, manager, secretary. The business continued to expand, and orders would come in for pieces leaving the choice up to Moorcroft. A hammered pewter mounting called "Tudric" and design called pomegranate was developed and when people think of Moorcroft that is what they think of.



Figure 6 – Moorcroft Flambé Vase.

(Figure 5) He thought his highest achievement was using a personal kiln to fire a glaze known as Flambé. (Figure 6) It was kept a secret; he would let no one except his son Walter see the process which he did all on his own. In 1913, queen Mary bought some pots and attended a show and in 1928 she gave Moorcroft the royal warrant. He became Potter to the Queen, which was stamped on the pottery and printed on paper labels. Different designs included waving fish, corn, pansies,

In 1945 William Moorcroft died and his son Walter took over, and it's never been the same as far as the speaker is concerned. He has restricted his collec-



Figure 7 – A William Moorcroft Salt

tion to William Moorcroft pieces.

William Moorcroft salts are difficult to find. A favorite of Dolly's is pictured in Figure 7.

Note

Wilfred mentioned in his presentation that Kent had shown him pictures of several early Macintyre Moorcroft salts. These salts are pictured here: two early salt with the Macintyre label that show the Moorcroft Florian Ware design, (Figures 8 and 9) a Moorcroft Pomegranate Pattern salt with a Tudric Pewter base, (Figure 10) and a Moorcroft Powder Blue Salt. (Figure 11)



Figure 10 – Pomegranate Pattern with Tudric Pewter Base



Figure 8 and 9 – Two Macintyre Salts with Moorcroft Florian Design



Figure 11 – Moorcroft Powder Blue Salt



Figure 7 – A Display of William Moorcroft Pottery.

Desvres Style of French Faience Open Salts Mary Kern

What started me on the Rouen décor was their dragons. I justified the candlesticks saying the tray was for the salt which would be used with the carrot sticks held in the other hand. These two are a prime example of the Rouen work being done and copied by Quimper. (Figures 1 - 4)



Mary Kern



Figure 2 – Side view Dragon Candle Sticks



Figure 1 – Dragon Candle Sticks with tray for holding salt. On the left is Rouen and on the right, is Quimper



Figure 3 above – Décor Rouen Mark

Figure 4 below – Breton Quimper Mark



Though Rennes is in the Breton Center, its factories have been influenced by the Rouen movement as shown in the basket on top of the elephant. It is also a double as the tiny basket is divided. Figures 5-6

Although not a salt, I must share this dragon, she is total Rouen and unmarked. Her whimsy, colors and crest just scream CUTE and of course Rouen. (Figure 7)

I was extremely lucky to find an actual dragon double salt which carries the St. Mark signature. (Figure 8).

This jolly monk was one that was farmed out to another factory but to be sold in Rouen. (Figures 9 and 10)



Figure 5 –Rennes Elephant Double Salt, basket with Rouen Style decoration



Figure 6 – Rennes mark on Elephant

Figure 10 below Rouen mark on the Monk



Figure 7 – Unmarked Rouen Candle stick



Figure 8 – Dragon Double salt marked St. Mark.



Figure 9 – Monk Salt, farmed out to another factory but sold in Rouen.

The Other British Art Potteries Doulton Wasn't the Only One Kent Hudson

John Ruskin and William Morris were two of the driving forces behind the British Art Pottery movement that ran from 1870 thru 1920. John Ruskin, who was born in 1819 and died 1900, was an author and art critic and one of the most influential men of the Victorian age. He believed in the power of art to transform the lives of people, his passionate de-

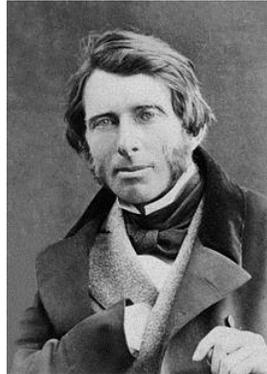


Fig. 1 - John Ruskin

sire was to open the people's eyes to the free beauties surrounding them, his creed was "there is no wealth but life". William Morris was born in 1834 and died in 1896. He was from a wealthy middle-



Fig. 2 -William Morris

class family and founded a decorative arts firm that profoundly influence interior decorating throughout the Victorian period. His rules for pottery included: Articles should not be molded if they can be made

on a wheel of some other way by hand, pottery should not be finished by turning on a lathe, excessive neatness is undesirable, especially in cheap ware, potter should not be decorated by printing, and painted decorations should be confined to what can be done on pottery.

The Great Exhibition of 1851 which celebrated the accomplishments of the industrial revolution left many artists horrified by the lack of innovative design. The popular revival gothic, neo-

rococo, Renaissance designs all suffered from over-decoration because mechanism and mass production could pile on additional decoration without making cost prohibitive.

Against this background, the Esthetics



Fig. 3 – Fulham Pottery Salts designed by C Cazin

Movement, Arts and Crafts Movement and Art Nouveau flourished and contributed to the success of British Art Pottery. There were five stages in the development of Art pottery: Stoneware and Terracotta, Painted Wares, Country Potteries, the Chemists and the hand painting movement. Everyone



Fig 4 – Fulham Pottery Salts

seems to think of Doulton who produced many examples from each of these five periods, but here we want to examine other potteries that produced Art Pottery as well.

Fulham Pottery, Lambeth

Perhaps the oldest of these potteries is the Fulham Pottery where John Dwight first produced salt glazed stoneware around 1670. John Doulton worked here before founding Doulton and Company. C. J. C. Bailey & Co. ran the pottery from 1864 to 1889, and hired the French artist Jean-Charles Cazin from 1871-1874 as a designer. Salts bearing

the Cazin mark (figure 3) as well as other salts produced by this pottery. (figure 4)

Martin Brothers

Robert Wallace Martin worked for the Bailey Fulham Pottery but left in 1873 to begin his own company. (Figure 4) He was soon joined by his brothers Walter, Edwin and Charles. They fired their pottery at Fulham pottery before moving to Southall in London and establishing their own pottery in 1877. Martin wares



Fig 4 – Marked R. W. Martin, Fulham



Fig. 5. Martin Brothers. London

public, the pottery was not as colorful as some of the other potteries and some found it dull in comparison. Martin Brothers Stoneware is valued by collectors not only for its rarity, but for its simplicity of design and individual style. I feel very fortunate to have this piece even though it is broken and glued together. (Figure 5)

C. H. Brannam, Barnstaple

Charles H. Brannam was born in 1855 and received his artistic educa-

tion from the Barnstaple Art School. He worked at his father’s pottery. His father did not like his desire to made artistic pottery and charged him for the cost of materials and firing. In 1779, the business was suffering and Thomas Brannam allowed his son Charles to rent the Litchfield pottery to make art pottery. It was an immediate success. In 1881, Thomas retired, and the name was changed to C. H. Brannam. Brannam chose to name his art pottery Barum ware because it was the Roman name for Barnstaple. The retail store Liberty became the sole agent for Barum ware in London. A Selection of C. H. Brannam salts are pictured, my favorite is the lover right with a fish design. (Figure



Figure 7 – A selection of Linthorpe Pottery salts

6).

Linthorpe Pottery, Middleborough

John Harrison established an art pottery at his brick-works at the suggestion of Christopher Dresser, whom he had invited to lecture locally in 1878. Henry Tooth was brought in as



Fig. 6 – A collection of C. H. Brannam Salts.

manager and Dresser was appointed art Director. Because of Dresser’s involvement, the company got a lot of favorable press from the beginning. John Harrison died in 1889 and the pottery, which had never been very profitable closed. The pottery has always been very collectable, probably because of its short life, and the connection to Christopher Dresser. Pictured is a selection of Llnthorpe Pottery salts. (Figure 7)



Fig 9, A Selection of Rye Pottery miniature Lustre-

Belle Vue Pottery, Rye Pottery

In 1876, Mitchell established the Belle Vue which specialized in rustic ware whose surface imitated tree bark, with applied sprigged pieces, most often Hops. Pictured is a Rustic ware basket, marked Rye. (Figure 8) This pottery also made a line of lustre ware, deep blue with a gold lustre finish which are available in miniature size. Perhaps not intended for salts, but the miniature size fits per-



Fig. 8, Rye Pottery Rustic ware

a small kiln and later at his uncle’s pottery factory. He established the Ruskin Pottery in 1898 with financial aid from his father. The Ruskin pottery was very proud of all the beautiful glaze effects that it obtained without the use of lead, which was known to be poisonous. Pictured are a selection of miniature bowls that demonstrate the beautiful glazes. (figure 10). Next is a Ruskin Pottery salt in a basket shaped silver-plated holder. (Figure 11) Although the bowl is the same shape as other min-



Fig. 10 – Ruskin Pottery Miniature bowls. Left

fectly in a salt collection. (Figure 9)

Ruskin Pottery, William Howson Taylor

William Howson Taylor was the son of a famous educator and painter and member of a family of potters. He studied at the Birmingham School of Art and experimented with pottery using



Fig. 11 Ruskin Pottery Salt in a silver-plated holder.

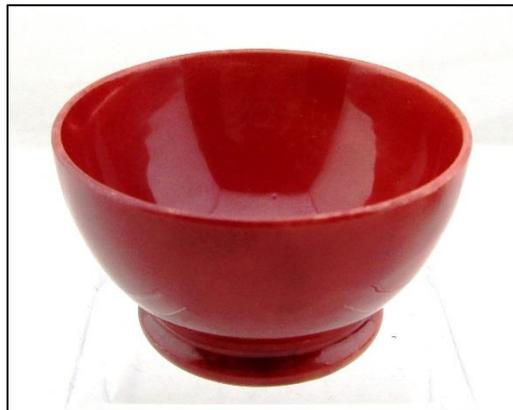
iatures, the fact that it is fitted with a silver holder leaves no doubt that it was intended to be used as an open salt.

Bernard Moore

Bernard Moore and his younger brother Samuel Vincent Moore Junior ran the St Mary’s Works in Longton beginning in 1870 and were very successful. Bernard controlled the production and

Samuel handled the business side. Samuel died in 1890, and Bernard was forced to sell the business in 1905, apparently because he was not a very good manager.

Bernard Moor then set up a consultancy and art pottery in Stoke and employed his nephew Reginald Moore to handle the business side.



**Figure 12 – Bernard Moore Bowl
Rouge Flambé Glaze**

Bernard Moore had been experimenting with sang-de-beouf and rouge flambé glazes for some years.

Bernard was soon producing remarkable pots at his new pottery. Porcelain bodies were used, earthenware would not withstand the high temperatures used to obtain the glaze effects. The blanks were acquired from many Staffordshire Firms including Minton’s and J Wedgwood. This bowl is marked BM for Bernard Moore in the rouge flambé glaze. (Figure 12)

Upchurch Pottery

Seymour and Sidney Wakely were coal merchants who purchased or built a pottery around 1907 to 1909 and were manufacturing brick and tiles and agricultural drain pipes. In 1913, Seymour started

the manufacture of art pottery in Upchurch. He hired Edward J. Baker who had worked for Doulton & Co at one time to run the pottery.

By 1915, the Upchurch Pottery was exhibiting at the British industries

Fair. Described as “very arty”, The decorative bowl and vases with silk like glazes.

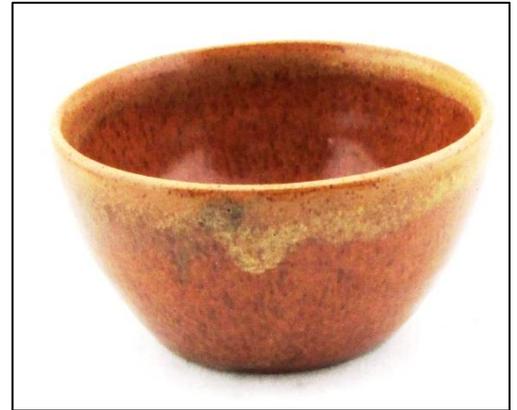


Fig. 13 – Upchurch Pottery Bowl

Baker’s surviving recipe books show him to have been an avid experimenter. The pictured bowl is marked Upchurch. (Figure 13).

Wilshire & Robinson, Carlton Ware

The Carlton Works were established about 1890 by Wilshire and Robinson. Carlton China was produced there which was mostly of a domestic nature. During the 1920’s art pieces were produced in a wide variety of styles. Most of the art pieces contained lustre and Wilshire and Robinson became known for their beautiful lustre ware. Pictured are three Wilshire bowl, the center bowl is mounted on a Sterling base. (Figure 14)



Figure 14 – Wilshire and Robinson, Carlton ware lustre bowls.

Salts, She Wrote ***Doubles***

Mary Kern

Double trouble – that is my game right now. Were they for salt and pepper? Salt and papri-



Figure 1 Blue Glass Double

ka, which the Hungarian side of me yells YES? Salt and salt, this one I adore the most but then I



Figure 2 Herend Bird

salt potato chips? One of the true baffling questions of the ages. I can see Plato in a private moment mulling this over, not discussing it with a sole as he does not seem to have the answer. Sherlock Holms baffled and ironically amused. Perry Mason won't take the case! Nick and Nora have turned it over to Asta. Charlie

Chan uses soy sauce and is quite befuddled at even our interest in the subject.

So, I have decided to question the sources. Ask my doubles, pure simple and direct. What were you made to hold??

I started with one that had been my grandmother's remembering my mother's constant reminder that with age comes wisdom. (Figure 1) I posed the question and was told he was too blue to have a clue.

Since it was my first attempt, I shrugged my shoulders and sallied forth. People always say, "a little birdie told me" so I asked my Herend little birdie (Figure 2) to which he responded. "I thought I saw a puddy tat". Of course, you did dumb bird we have three and I can see you have no answer for me.

I am not easily discouraged and as you know, the third times the charm. Never worked for me before but I am still determined to find the answer to the double trouble. Perhaps the Blue was not old enough and did not come from the right region. I'll ask my Leipzig Eagle. (Figure 3) He is from 1790 so well before ole Morton started to shake and from Germany. I mean right century and certainly the right area of the world. Speaking ever so small an amount of German, I asked him



Figure 3 Double Leipzig with Griffin

just one time and he replied "nein".

On to one that has seen the

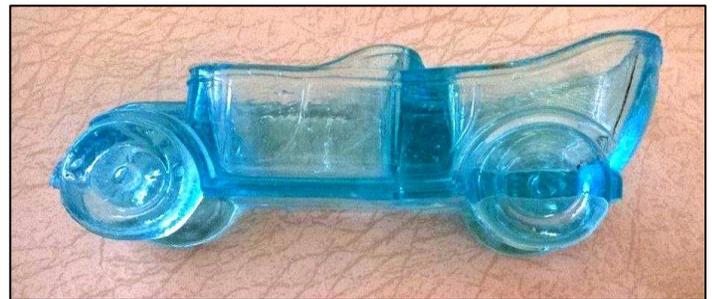


Figure 4 Vallerysthal Traveling Car

sights and smelled the roses, or run over them. My Vallerysthal traveling car. (Figure 4)



Figure 5 Double Faience Rabbit



Figure 6 Puppy Dog



Figure 8 Great Horned Goat



Figure 9 Elephant Strong

which came first – The chicken or the egg... or which are served together: salt, pepper, paprika or mustard



Figure 7 – Tiny Lion

Heavy motion, but no notion, certainly not an information star.

So, may faience pieces to interrogate. Bunny rabbit tall and straight, a fluffy puppy dog, a great horned goat and a tiny lion, An elephant strong and mighty. All have no answers. Personally, I think no one's tryin'. (Figures 5-9)

An intaglio of great beauty and a big brown bear of heft and

might. I asked them both so slowly as to what they held. A smirk and a growl were all that I received. Silence would have been better.

I know my answer's in the last, a lacy of clear and brown glass. I have dug so deep and there's the answer right before my eyes.

No question asked, just a statement stated: Salt and Pepper! The silence was not golden but instead led me to believe I am playing a no hitter (Figures 10-12)

Looking at my babies, I am not really sure if I care much



Figure 11 Big Brown Bear



Figure 10 Jeweled Double Intaglio



Figure 12 Neal DI 9 – Priceless

BLACK FOREST CARVING (Brienzware)

Elizabeth Jane Koble

Earlier research seemed to indicate that Black Forest carving originated in the Black Forest (or Schwarzwald) area of Baden-Württemberg of southwestern Germany. Research done in the 1980's revealed that all – or most – of the carvings were probably made in Switzerland. The person who did this research believed that they were all made by a family named Tauffer. If that is correct, it must have been a very large family, or the members of the family carved almost non-stop. Unfortunately, other than some having place names most were not signed.

The area of Switzerland where these carvings were done was Brienz which is located at the eastern shore of Lake Brienz at the foot of Rothorn Mountain and near the cantons of Bern, Luzern, and Oberwalden. Brienz, with pleasing weather year-round, was along ancient trade routes from northern to southern Europe. It is close to railways and excursion boats on the lake.

After a serious famine in 1816 the population searched for new ways to make a living. The Swiss government encouraged them to combine their abundance of timber with traditional wood crafts. At first, they produced arti-

cles for locals such as bowls. As more and more tourists came to the area, they began carving more artistic pieces. Among the visitors were young people from Europe on The Grand Tour. They were interested in music and art and meeting the fashionable people of Europe. These tours could last from months to several years. The Brienz area was very popular with wealthy Europeans who collected finely crafted souvenirs.

Christian Fischer (1790-1848), not only an artisan but a businessman, soon came to realize



the value of tourists to the area. He was a self-taught carver, first making bowls and simple animals and people. He sold his carvings near Giessbach Falls, a popular destination near Brienz. The myth that the carving was done in the Black Forest as a cottage industry came about because the Swiss government had the idea of bringing in carvers from that area who could teach the craft to locals. The fact that most pieces were unsigned reinforced the belief that anonymous carvers worked in their spare time and

during the winter in the Black Forest. Many of the artisans were pillars of their communities and churches and were well off, prompting others to aspire to this work. Another prominent carver in the area was Peter Grossman. He studied under one of the most renowned sculptors in Bern and then under Bertel Thorwaldsen who was the most famous sculptor in Europe.

There are about a dozen families who appear in record books from the time. The family who stands out was named Huggler. Johann, whose work is often signed, is very popular among collectors. There were even



Black Forest Carved Pin Cushion, Thread Holder and Thimble holder

producing and selling souvenirs in that area.

Some of the best work resembled bronze sculptures. The Swiss government opened a trade school to train future carvers in 1884. It was called The School of Wood Carving, Brienz.

Along with wild animals, many tourists were also attracted to domesticated Swiss animals, including St. Bernard's, goats, and other farm animals. They also created whimsical pieces such as bears playing mandolins and accordions. Some were even made with music boxes.

During WWI they were able to adjust their products to their customers. U. S. soldiers on leave in the area admired their work, and they began carving North American animals.

What types of animals were carved? The



Black Forest Carved Smoking set and Ash Tray

larger enterprises such as Gebrüder Wirth that had as many as 580 employees from the 1860's to the 1880's. After them Ed. Binder & Cie was the largest firm employing 200 carvers. This company is still in business and is now known as Ed. Jobin & Cie. These large companies were run by men who came from other countries. The Wirth's were Alsations, the Binder's were from the Tyrol. They moved to Brienz because they appreciated the opportunities for



Black Forest Carved Blotter. Desk Set. and Calendar



Black Forest Carved Bear Salts

Brienzen area has a large diversity of wild animals. Although bears were the animals of choice, there were also eagles, ibexes, chamois, deer, boars, and owls. The School of Wood Carving had a zoo so that the students could observe the animals they wanted to carve.

Later in the 20th century, when there was no longer a demand for those types of carvings, production turned to other things such as toys.

In the late 1970's there was a revival of the early styles of carvings. Many young people be-



Salt with Bear playing Accordion

came interested in carving. Today the school also teaches wood turning, basket making, and coopering in addition to carving, and is still a well-respected venue for the teaching of these crafts.

What types of items were carved? As well as open salts, there were clocks, jewel boxes, desk sets with inkwells, separate inkwells, blotters, thermometers, bears that held bottles and glasses, bottle stoppers, smoking sets, tobacco jars, sewing accessories, brushes, lamps, benches, chairs, hall trees, and desks as well as just plain decorative items.

How were these carvings made and what types of wood were used? The carvers didn't just pick up a piece of wood and start carving. The first thing they did was pick out a suitable tree. The criteria they used was a secret which was only

shared with their sons or

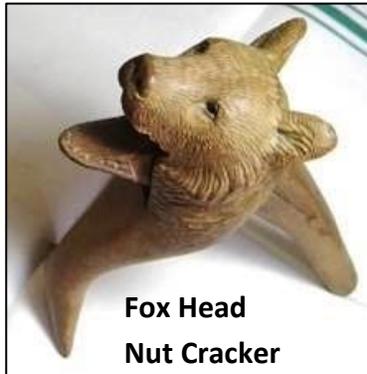
apprentices. The best trees grew in the shade with less sunlight, resulting in smaller cells and rings closer together – the ideal wood for carving. They were harvested in the winter while they were dormant. Much of the beauty of the pieces resulted from the selection of the

trees. No two trees were alike so none of the carvings were alike. Each carver had a place in the forest that he preferred.

There were four favorite types of wood:

Linden – *Tiliae lignum*

Linden trees were abundant in Switzerland. They have been used for carvings since the Middle Ages. It is a soft wood with little grain and an appropriate density for carving. They are often tall making them an excellent choice for furniture and large bears.



**Fox Head
Nut Cracker**

Pear – *Pyrus communis*

European pear may be found in central and eastern Europe. They are small and slow growing. Carvers valued it for its density and lack of grain. Pear wood was expensive because of the smallness of the trees. It was mostly used for small carvings. It could be delicately carved with no splitting or fracturing.

Maple – *Acer pseudoplatanus*

This wood benefited carvers in several



**Jewelry Box, Exterior
and interior views.**

different ways. Stains and finishes made a great contrast to the color of the wood. Many chisel strokes and techniques were more attractive because of the texture of the wood resulting in a more accurate representation of fur and the illusion of movement.

Walnut – *Juglans regia*

Walnut was only used for the most expensive and detailed carvings. This wood can be identified by black dots in its golden-brown grain.

Swiss wood carvers work was shown at international expositions including:

- Great Exhibition, London – 1851
- Centennial Exposition, Philadelphia – 1876
- Chicago World Fair, Chicago – 1893
- Exposition Universelle, Paris - 1900

The finest pieces found their way to Royal collections and wealthy collectors' homes.

What affects a carving's value?

1. Quality
2. Signature – although I have never seen a signed piece, the author of this article states that the most desirable pieces are from the Huggler family.
3. Subject of the carving – animals other than bears can be worth two to three times more.



Clothes Brushes

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(The author of this article is Peter F. Blackman, an attorney and historical researcher whose interest in Brienzware developed through visits to the region. He conducted the research, interviews and study for this book over many years.)



Displays Outside the Curio Cabinet

Debi Raitz

Right: I have a rather unique cabinet with glass front drawers for my glass individuals. It was an embroidery thread cabinet. It has a label on the back or I would not have known.

Below: My kitchen wall with blue and white salts. Old soda bottle and pop crates work well. They could be done in a more symmetrical pattern, but I like the random look. They are different sizes and widths, so this worked for me.

