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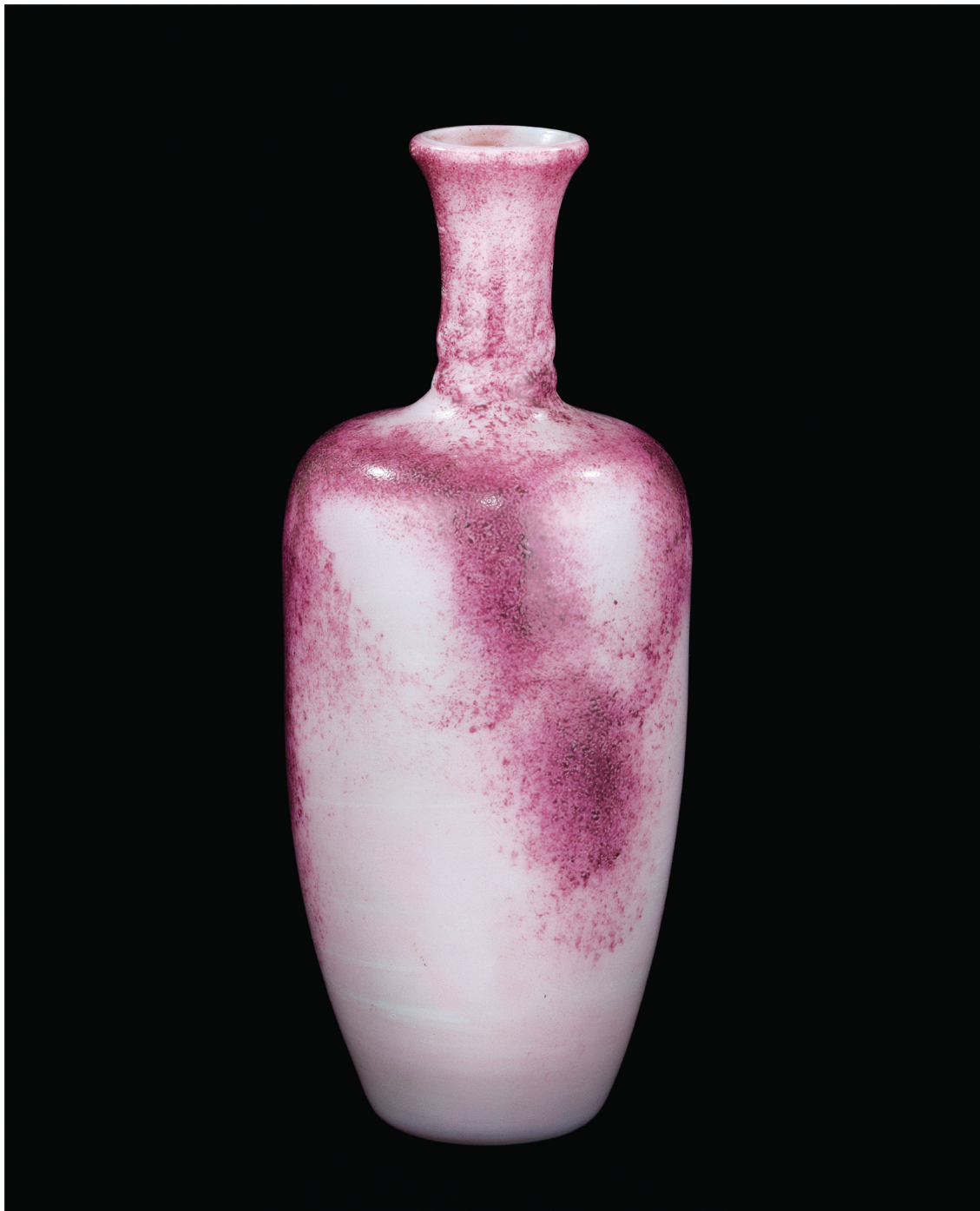




Figure 5
Verre de Soie glass roemer made by Carder Steuben,
1915–1920.

While the Bohemians did not traditionally make roemers, they made many versions of them from the late 19th century to the 20th century. The late 19th-century roemers are quite different from the simple early ones. They are highly decorated in historical styles and were made by many companies such as Moser, Josephinenhutte, Riedel, and the German Theriesenthal. They are usually olive green, sometimes gilded, and/or enameled, some

molded, some blown. Most of the early 20th-century roemer types were made by lesser companies (i.e., other than Moser, etc.), and are very poor in quality and decoration.

Occasionally there are old oddities. I have a brown roemer and one that the dealer insisted that was from 1820 made at the New England Glass Company. And I have one with a pink cup and green lower part.

A few late 19th-century/early 20th-century companies made some good interpretations of roemers. Salviati, a Venetian Company with Anglo connections in the late 19th century, made a grayish one in the 1890s, Frederick Carder made one in the 1920s, and Blenko made one in 1936. I have a few others that are not identified.

I don't have much American competition collecting roemers because it was a form rarely used in the U.S. The nostalgic feeling is not there for collectors. And, no one drinks wine from little two- or three-ounce wine glasses.

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Birds And Butterflies: Copied from Some Factory's Pattern Book, Possibly Sandwich

by

Ian Simmonds

Two compotes, bearing the monograms of different owners yet engraved in a design that is otherwise remarkably similar, provide useful insights into the practices of even the most skilled engravers in 19th-century America (Figure 1). Monogrammed *E* and *AIC* respectively, these compotes show that this whimsical pattern of birds, butterflies and vines, must have been a stock pattern of

some factory, rather than a unique creation that was prepared for a single client.

Since 1930, when Lura Woodside Watkins published sample pages from the "sketchbook" of New England Glass Company engraver Henry S. Fillebrown, it has been known that American engravers maintained catalogs of designs that they would copy onto glass when required for a particular



Figure 1

Two compotes engraved with the same pattern of birds and butterflies in vines. Left is monogrammed *E* (private collection); right is monogrammed *AIC* (2013.4.28, collection of The Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, New York, purchased with funds from the Martha J. Herbst Estate). Photographs by the author.

customer.¹ This was the practice even if, as Watkins assumed, the designs were of the engraver's own invention. The Fillebrown sketchbook was acquired by the Rakow Research Library of the Corning Museum of Glass in 2010.²

The Fillebrown sketchbook provides a much-needed, if still mostly unpublished, guide for attributing engraved glass to the New England Glass Company. Specifically, it contains 477 numbered sketches of designs to be copied by an engraver. Several of these designs have been recognized on period objects allowing them to be attributed to the Company. For example, the compote shown in Figure 2 is engraved with seven copies of a floral swag that appears in the sketchbook as design No. 327 (Figure 3).

Objects identified using the sketchbook alone should be attributed broadly to the New England Glass Company, rather than to Fillebrown or any other individual engraver. Remarkably, Fillebrown's sketchbook is not the only such design book to survive. Another, which belonged to New England Glass Company engraver Louis Vaupel, is in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.³ By



Figure 2

Compote decorated with floral swags in pattern No. 327 from the Fillebrown sketchbook. Overall H: 24.2 cm, Diam. (max): 24 cm. (2010.4.13, collection of The Corning Museum of Glass). Photograph by the author.



Figure 3

Pattern No. 327 in the Fillebrown sketchbook. Bib. no. 69885(327), Fillebrown scrapbook, collection of the Rakow Research Library, Corning, New York.

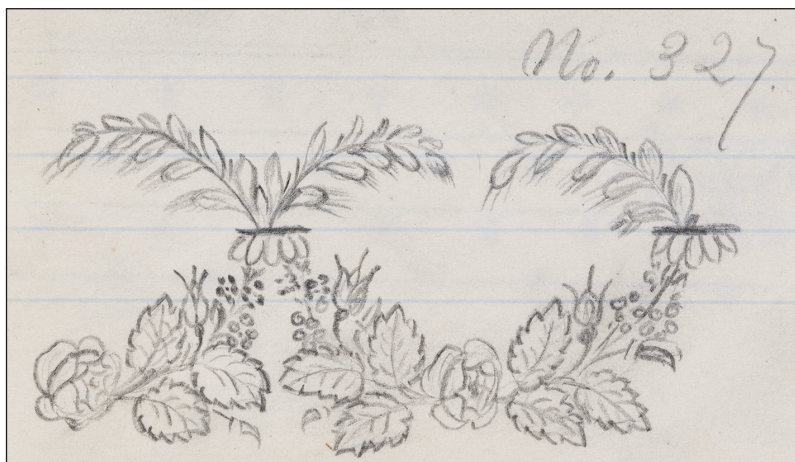


Figure 4

Pattern No. 327 from the Louis Vaupel sketchbook. Sketch book: design for glass engraving, No. 327. Louis F. Vaupel, American (born in Germany), 1824–1903. Graphite on lined paper. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, gift of Mrs. Mildred M. V. March. APP.1976.18. Photograph courtesy of Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, © 2014.

comparison, Vaupel's copy is incomplete. It contains hand drawn copies of only some of the designs, yet they are all consistent, with the same numbers—e.g., No. 327 (Figure 4)—referring to the same designs in both books.⁴ This proves that while the sketchbooks may have been personal, these were the *company's* designs.

Consistent designs and design numbers across the company no doubt supported all aspects of the placement and fulfillment of orders for engraved glass. A customer in a retail store might look through a store copy of the design book, or at store samples,⁵ and select design number 327 to be engraved on a particular blank. The store keeper

would forward the order to the company who would then assign it to an engraver. That engraver would then proceed to decorate an appropriate blank with that design. The finished object would then be delivered to the customer or picked up in the store.

Many engraved products of the New England Glass Company can be identified through the company's engravers' design books.

Strikingly Similar, Yet Different

The two compotes shown in Figures 1 and 5–8, engraved with the same attractive Renaissance



Figure 5

Side view of compotes shown in Figure 1. Left: private collection; right: 2013.4.28, collection of The Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, New York, purchased with funds from the Martha J. Herbst Estate. Photographs by the author.

Revival pattern with birds and butterflies in vines, are among many engraved objects surviving from the 1860s and 1870s with engraved patterns that do *not* appear in the New England Glass Company's design books.

However, their very similarity to each other, while being engraved for different clients, confirms that at least one other company also used pattern books to support the ordering and fulfillment of fine engraved tableware. At the same time, their differences reveal that company designs left considerable room for interpretation. From a distance (Figure 5), the two compote's blanks are similar, with rounded bowls sitting on top of hollow, molded, hour-glass stems. Both bowls were hand-tooled and retain tooling marks, especially near their rims. At the same time, the blanks are quite different. The compote monogrammed with an *E* has a proportionately wider and shorter stem and its bowl is wider and shallower than that monogrammed *AIC*.⁶

As to the engraving, again it is superficially similar, with similar birds and butterflies occupying alternate loops in the vines. Working left from the monogram, alternating loops contain: a bird with raised tail facing to the right (Figure 7, top); a bird facing to the left (Figure 7, center); a butterfly

with scalloped wings decorated with waves and spots (Figure 6, top); a bird with lowered tail facing to the right (Figure 7, bottom); and a butterfly with smooth wings with circles and spots (Figure 6, bottom). Clearly, the same pattern was copied twice from the same design.

Figure 6 shows the butterflies. The two butterflies on the *E* compote (left column) are remarkably similar to each other in their body shapes, and the angles of the bodies on the compote. Indeed, it as if the engraver of this compote thought of different varieties of butterfly as being anatomically identical, but varying primarily in the decoration and shape of their wings—almost as if they were different patterns to be engraved and cut on identical, butterfly-shaped glass blanks. The same can be said for those of the *AIC* compote (right column), although the bodies are at a different angle to the compote.

While each compote's two butterflies are remarkably similar to each other, they are quite different from those of the other compote. For example the heads of the *E* compote's butterflies (Figure 6, left) each have three large eyes with polished centers, while those of the *AIC* compote (right) are missing the polishing. Similarly the "feet" by the



Figure 6

Butterflies from the *E* compote (left column) and the *AIC* compote (right column).

Top row: butterflies with scalloped wings decorated with waves and spots, five spaces left of monograms.

Bottom row: butterflies with smooth wings decorated with circles and spots, immediately to right of monograms.

Left column: private collection; right column: 2013.4.28, collection of The Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, New York, purchased with funds from the Martha J. Herbst Estate. Photographs by the author.

head of the butterflies of the *E* compote have "claws" that curve inwards, towards the head, while those of the *AIC* compote curve outwards towards the wings.

Figure 7 compares the three birds on each compote, which seem to be different views of the same species of bird. On the whole, the birds of the *E* compote (left) have longer legs while the feet of



Figure 7

Birds from the *E* compote (left column) and the *AIC* compote (right column). Top row: birds with raised tails facing to right (left of monogram). Center row: birds facing to left (three to left of monograms).

Bottom row: birds with lowered tails, facing to right (seven spaces to left of monograms).

Left column: private collection; right column: 2013.4.28, collection of The Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, New York, purchased with funds from the Martha J. Herbst Estate. Photographs by the author.



Figure 8

The monograms, from Figure 1. Left: private collection; right: 2013.4.28, collection of The Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, New York, purchased with funds from the Martha J. Herbst Estate. Photographs by the author.



Figure 9

Detail of engraving of compote shown in Figure 2, showing floral swags in pattern No. 327 from the Fillebrown sketchbook. 2010.4.13, collection of The Corning Museum of Glass. Photograph by the author.

those of the *AIC* compote (right) attach more tightly to the vines beneath them. The birds on the right have more clearly defined tail feathers that seem to have been separately imagined, while those on the left were sketched out on a single, paddle-shaped tail. The wings on the right seem to have more rows of feathers.

What accounts for the difference in the engraving between the two compotes?

One explanation might be the need to adapt the vines and designs to two different blank compotes, which differed due to the different amount of available space on bowls that were of different heights. While this explanation is appealing, it does not account for the close similarity between the two butterflies on each compote.

A better explanation might be something akin to Chinese whispers, with variations appearing due to successive rounds of copying and interpretation. Each piece of engraving was copied from a design book by an engraver who had developed a style of engraving as personal as if it was handwriting. Moreover, the design book that he was copying from was probably his own hand-made copy of the company's design book, which may have been made by copying another engraver's copy. Each round of copying introduced errors and idiosyncrasies.⁷

This raises the intriguing possibility not only of associating objects with individual engravers, but of tracing the line of descent of copying and error introduction. For example, an object engraved with design number 327 might be seen to more closely



Figure 10

The form and etched decal of this pitcher both appear in the Sandwich catalog of 1874. Sandwich Glass Museum, 2013.16. Photographs by the author.

match that design in a particular copy of the design book, perhaps by repeating errors and interpretations that were introduced in that copy of the book.

Figure 9 shows a more detailed view of the compote of Figure 2, allowing its engraving to be more closely compared to the two variants of design 327 from Fillebrown's (Figure 3) and Vaupel's (Figure 4) sketchbooks. Neither is a perfect match, although fig. 9 might be closer to Fillebrown's variant than Vaupel's.

Dating and Attribution

As to the dating and attribution of the two compotes in Figure 1, the answer is far from certain. The form of the blanks is typical of the late 1850s through to the 1870s, while the monograms suggest a date later in that period. The vines that meander around the compotes are typical of that period also, and are commonly seen upon period glass made by the Boston and Sandwich Glass Company, such as the sugar bowl, Figure 11, which

is of a form shown in the company's 1874 trade catalog.

Birds are not unusual in glass of this period, including among the acid-etched wares shown in the same 1874 Sandwich trade catalog (Figure 10). The pose of the acid-etched bird is not unlike the mirror image of the top design in Figure 7, although missing its tail and upper wing. A bird sits in the branch of an engraved, covered compote that descended in the Chipman family of Sandwich.⁸

An attribution of the birds and butterflies pattern to the Boston and Sandwich Glass Company is therefore at least possible.

For the purposes of this article, however, the precise attribution of this pattern is less important than the fact that this is *not* a one-off pattern, made as a special commission. Rather, it must be a company pattern, copied from some company's engraver's design book. Unlike the New England Glass Company, for which there are two surviving copies, the company whose design book included this birds and butterflies pattern remains unknown. That said, that company must be one that we are



Figure 11
Typical vine engraving of the Boston and Sandwich Glass Company, circa 1874. Private collection. Photograph by the author.

very familiar with, possibly Sandwich, the Brooklyn Flint Glass Company, or Dorflinger, all of whom no doubt participated in this period's fashion for engraved work.

References:

1. Lura Woodside Watkins. *Cambridge Glass: 1818–1888: The Story of the New England Glass Company*. Marshall Jones Company Inc., 1930, p. 116. "There are more than four hundred numbered designs in this book, most of them being Mr. Fillebrown's own."
2. The sketchbook was earlier borrowed by Corning to allow a copy to be made on microfilm. Jane Shadel Spillman discussed it in her article *A Glass Engraver's Design Book, 1860–1880*, *The Magazine Antiques*, August 2005, pp. 64–69.
3. Parts of Vaupel's design book were reproduced by Donald Ferland, *Elegant Simplicity as Created by Louis Friedrich Vaupel, Master Copper-Wheel Engraver*, The Acorn, v. VI, 1995/6, The Sandwich Glass Museum, pp. 93–104.
4. The Vaupel copy also has prices for engraving each pattern on different vessels.
5. Ferland [note 3], p. 92.
6. Additionally, the AIC compote retains evidence of gilding, which is missing from the E compote. Traces of gilding can be found throughout the engraved design.
7. This can be seen by comparing corresponding designs in the Fillebrown and Vaupel copies.
8. See Barlow and Kaiser, *The Glass Industry in Sandwich*, v. 5, 1999, no. 5085-6.

Morgan Vases: 1886 and Later

by

Jane Shadel Spillman

Most of us are familiar with the American "Morgan Vase," created by Hobbs, Bruckner & Company of Wheeling, West Virginia, from 1886 to about 1891 (Figures 1 and 4). It was created in imitation of an 18th-century Chinese porcelain vase from the Mary Morgan collection that was sold at auction in 1886 for \$18,000 (Figure 2), an astonishing amount at the time. The sale made headlines all over the country because of the price, and the buyer, William T. Walters of Baltimore, didn't admit that he was the buyer because of all the publicity. The original "Peach Bloom" as well as one very much like it (Figure 3) is currently in

the collection of The Walters Art Museum in Baltimore. Its wooden stand is copied by the pressed glass one created by Hobbs (Figure 4). The Walters has some similar Chinese porcelain pieces as well, showing that this was a standard shape and color for 18th-century porcelain. In Chinese terms, it is called a "three string vase" because of the collar around the neck. The Chinese color was called "Peach Bloom."

The American "Peachblow" glass and its' variations, was made by several companies and in a variety of shapes, but copies of the vase were also made in other art glass colors. Such is the case