

Pretender or Actual Example?

By Barry L. Bernas

Problem

I've known for quite some time that sale's personnel from the Perfection Glass Company advertised non-flanged tumblers without an outer pattern right alongside their scalloped flange models¹. Until just recently, however, it never occurred to me how I would recognize a flangeless specimen if I came across one.

As fate would dictate, I came face to face with this perplexing dilemma quicker than I anticipated or would have liked. The encounter happened on January 25th, 2008 when my wife and I attended the first day of the Sixth Annual Winter Auction of Glass and Lighting at the Green Valley Auctions' complex situated a few miles southeast of Harrisonburg, Virginia. In full sight within a box lot of early twentieth century milk glass mustard containers and tumblers was the possible candidate. At the time, I was so sure that I had discovered a Perfection Glass plain tumbler without a flange that I bought the box to get the potential contender. This article will evaluate if my purchase proved to be an actual model or if my mind only convinced me that it was the "real deal."

How did I tell the Difference?

Usually, I take my identification material with me to any auction, sale or show that I attend. It is my support system and crutch. But on this occasion, those documents were neatly but uselessly stowed at home. As a result, I was forced to rely upon an aging memory that can be outright deceptive, if given the slightest chance.

To decide on the spot if I had a contender or pretender, I was forced to use several major characteristics of the tumbler as my working aid. One was its construction. To the feel, the clear candidate was formed out of a good size gob of metal and had the weight and thickness to prove it. Its slight tinge of sun colored amethyst added more certainty to my deliberation. The prominent thickness of its base along with a circular concave depression underneath and a familiar petal design molded thereon kept me going down the path of certitude. With these data points firmly in hand, I compared them to a conjured image of a scalloped flange edition in my mind. Almost immediately, I was both convinced and unsure my tentative alignment of factors was correct. Let's explore the same process after the fact with an expanded set of criteria to see if my purchase was a great addition to my collection or just another very old dust collector.

Flangeless and Flanged Tumblers

Figure 1 has my Green Valley purchase on the left and a scalloped flange example to its right.

The contender is 3 15/16th inches tall and 3/16th inch in thickness. Its right-hand potential mate is 4 1/6th inches in height and 3/16th of an inch thick. Aside from a slightly

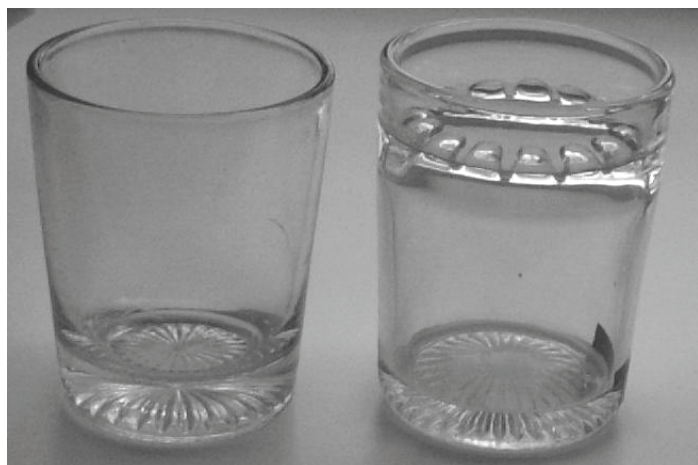


Figure 1

angled inward side wall and no scalloped flange, the left side model is quite similar in construction to its possible counterpart. One noticeable difference is the thickness of its base. It is 11/16th inch in length while the opposite tumbler has a smaller 1/2 inch measurement.

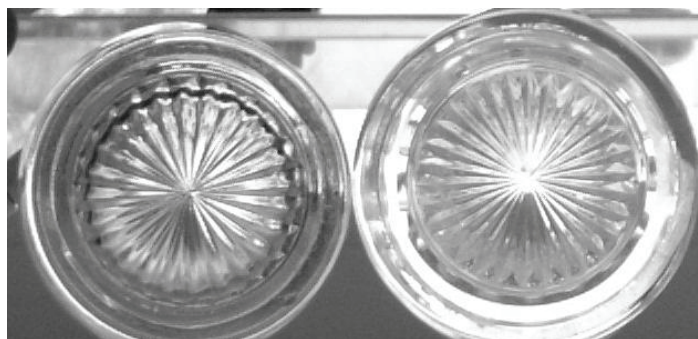


Figure 2

The underside of the base on each edition has more clues to consider. Figure 2 has my new acquisition on the left with a scalloped flange specimen on the right. At first look, both appear to be the same. However, upon closer inspection, there are several differences.

For one, the level surface upon which the left glass sits is 1/4th inch in width. The same flat area on the right-hand model is 1/8th of an inch wide.

Secondly, the circular concave depression begins at the innermost point after the 1/4th inch flat surface on the left side edition. This impression is 1 15/16th inches across and 5/16th of an inch deep in the center. The same feature on the right sample commences directly after a 1/8th inch slanted down and inward segment that follows the 1/8th inch wide flat surface. Its outer diameter is 1 7/8th inches with a center depth of 3/8th inch.

A third dissimilarity is the design within the circular concave depression. The left edition is embossed and shows twenty-four petals around a central point. Opposite

it, the same motif is debossed and consists of thirty petals oriented around a center spot.

The last telltale difference can be seen in Figure 3. My non-flanged candidate on the left has an outer side wall that angles gradually inward until about 1/8th of an inch from its bottom end. At this spot, a radical slant inward and down ensues. On the right-hand example, its side wall starts a gentle curved inward segment about 3/8th inch above the bearing surface.



Figure 3

Pretender or Actual Example?

In spite of all my hopes, I believe my acquisition is a pretender vice an actual example. I presume a flangeless edition would have been made out of the same mold as one

which had the scalloped flange applied later in the production process. If this thought is valid, then the characteristics of each should be quite similar if not an exact match. In this case, there are too many different characteristics to account for any tolerances in the manufacturing process. Alas, it looks like I'll have to continue my search because my mind was up to its old tricks!

If you have a possible contender, please don't hesitate to contact me directly so that your find can be documented and reported.

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¹Have You Seen A Scalloped Flange Tumbler?

Part Two of Two, Barry L. Bernas, *Bottles and Extras*, November-December 2007, pgs. 54-55.

This article contains more information about the advertised and known styles of this unique piece of tableware

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