

1486 COLEPORT INDIVIDUAL ASHTRAY

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Among the smaller ash trays made by Heisey is the 1486 Coleport individual ash tray. Some of the little ash trays were made of rather thin glass, but in this one, the company did not stint.

Proportionately, it is as massive as its heavier, larger relatives. The glass is brilliant and refractive, much like we find in 1489 Puritan.

The ash tray never appears in the catalogs, at least not in any of the ones I have. However, one can go back to a Table Talk (Heisey's house organ to its dealers), this one dated March, 1937. (For those playing along at home, this issue is reproduced in the Heisey Newsletter, June, 1975.) The cover shows the Coleport cigarette set, consisting of a round cigarette holder and four individual ash trays, all nicely gift boxed in sparkling red and white. (In fact, a major point of this particular Table Talk issue wasn't so much to sell the glass, but to promote the boxes! They were pushing boxes for Ridgeleigh cheese dishes, Fern relishes, even Kohinoor and New Era candelabra. Oddly, the boxes don't seem to have had any sort of Heisey imprint, inside or out.) Not that there is a great need for proof of what this piece is. Even without those gift box listings, there can be no doubt. The ash tray is marked, it clearly is an ash tray (since it has two cigarette rests—hmm, doesn't sound exactly individual, does it? More like a cozy tête-à-tête, perhaps?) and has the characteristic four cut-away sides that gave Coleport its modernity. Given that the individual ash tray escaped the catalogs and most price lists, one wonders if a larger one was ever made. Has anyone seen one in a larger size?



1486 Coleport Ashtray and Cigarette Holder

In 1937, times were still rough, but the glass companies were trying new patterns to stimulate business. Then came war, and items in production were cut back. Looking at a 1945 price list, 1489 Puritan's heavy little ash tray was still represented, but the comparably weighty 1486 ash tray is nowhere to be found. A few items not currently in production were listed in 1945 as unavailable "for the duration," as the phrase of the time had it, evidently to forestall inquiries about unavailable items still in demand. Coleport ash trays, however, are not mentioned at all. Immediately after the war, one looks in vain for them, and we never see them in subsequent lists, either.

The Coleport ash tray is not particularly common. Not only was its production cut short, but, if the gift box promotion is a guide, the Coleport cigarette holder was also offered with 1489 Puritan ash trays, cutting further into the Coleport share of the sales.

In the 1950's, a couple of 1486 Coleport pieces were made in Dawn (and when so made, they were re-numbered 1487). It is doubtful that the ash tray was among this lot. If you should come across one in a color other than crystal, be either very surprised or very dubious. Imperial continued the Coleport barware, but there are no records that they made the ash tray.

The entire ash tray is fire-polished, although it shares a square, concave base with some larger pieces that were ground. Possibly the less expensive ash tray wasn't thought worth the extra cost that grinding entailed. I'm waiting. As soon as I say that, one of you is going to show up with a ground one. (Sigh.)

Vital Statistics

1486 Coleport individual ash tray - Diameter (top), 2 5/8"; diameter (base, side-to-side), 1 1/2"; height, 1 3/8". Fire-polished base. Marked outside.

1486 Coleport cigarette holder - Diameter (top), 2 1/4"; diameter (base, side-to-side), 1 1/2"; height, 2 3/8". Ground base. Marked outside.

Do you have grounds to brag? Polished bragging welcome at heisey@embarqmail.com.