

# 150 BANDED FLUTE AND 600 OLD GOLD MATCH STANDS

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I've mentioned before how I am not a true collector of ash trays and smoking gear. That probably means I've ignored some good pieces of Heisey, but *c'est la vie*. All the same, along the way I bought a 600 Old Gold match stand ash tray (fig. 1). (Or ash tray and match stand. It depended on the Heisey mood on any given day, it seems.) Part of the fun in collecting Heisey is to research it. Whether the ID is obvious or the provenance impeccable (to use the language of the swell antique dealers), no matter, I like to track the new item down, whenever possible, to an original Heisey source, or as close as I can come. Tracing the Old Gold ash tray brought up some questions. I found that looking through the various catalogs, the illustrations did not make it clear just what was the difference between Old Gold and its predecessor, the 150 Banded Flute match stand. Certainly they were related, but how did they differ? (I see the hands up in back, but bear with me.)



600 Old Gold

150 Banded Flute as a pattern doesn't appear in Catalog 50 (about 1905); that's where Vogel got most of his Vol. 1. The pattern does show up in Catalog 56 (about 1909), and there is the match stand. Or perhaps I should say "a" match stand. Shown twice in the same book, but with the same illustration both times, the drawing

displays the low, fluted sides and, evidently, a plain interior for the ash tray. In Cat. 75 the Banded Flute match stand again appears twice. At least this time, there are two distinct drawings, although they differ only in minor details of shading. So we know that some artist(s) had two chances to draw the thing, and still the interior is shown as smooth and unlined. Continuing the search for drawings, Cat. 102 simply repeats the same drawing that originally appeared in Cat. 56.



150 Banded Flute

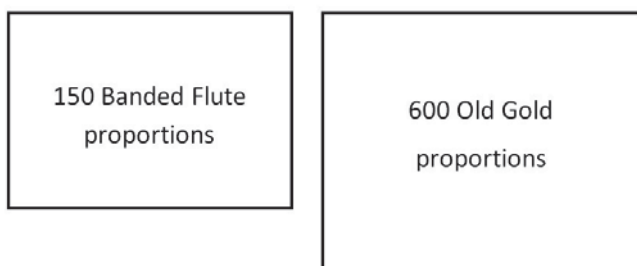
Then, we get to Cat. 109. That's the one from the late 1920s where they went to chic white-line drawings on black background. At last, a fresh take on the 150 Banded Flute piece, and here the ash tray portion is clearly shown with fine ribs descending from the match stand and sweeping across the bottom. (In defense of the earlier artists, the ribs are on the underside of the ash tray, so perhaps they didn't see the need to show that particular detail. Yet they usually showed stars when present; maybe stars were more fun to draw.) That was the last time this ash tray was illustrated, and we can be grateful that it made it into that catalog.

The early versions of Cat. 109 included a drawing of 600 Old Gold. It also illustrates the 150 with its drawing on a different page. If you place the two drawings side by side, there isn't much difference. The sizes and proportions appear to be about the same, if not identical. The only obvious distinction between 150 Banded Flute and 600 Old Gold is that Old

Gold does not show the underlying ribs we see on Banded Flute.

Are those sweeping, radiating central ribs the only difference? No. Had I thought of it (but I didn't), I would have *measured*. Thankfully, the older Heisey catalogs were rather persnickety about showing everything to scale. It's an invaluable tool in determining sizes, especially for jugs, stemware, and other pieces described by capacity, rather than dimension. We all know that Heisey, for tormented reasons forever lost, were exceedingly casual about how much a thing could hold. But you can usually count on the illustrations for being straight-forward in showing how tall or wide something is.

Of course, the match stand isn't going to be measured by volume, but it has a length. And sure enough, if you do the calculations by scale from any of the sources I mentioned up through Cat. 102 (or from Vogel, Vol. 2), you'll find that the 150 Banded Flute match stand is 4" long. In fact, that is the actual measurement I took of a real one the other day (fig. 2). 600 Old Gold comes in at a whopping 4½". The proportions are different, too. It turns out that Old Gold, at 3 5/8" wide (or about 80% of its length), is broader by comparison than the 150 Banded Flute piece, which forms a more narrow rectangle 2¾" across, a bit less than 70% of its length (fig. 3).



### Relative Proportions of Two Ashtrays

None of this is obvious looking at the catalogs. By the time Old Gold was on the market, the catalogs threw scale out the window (look out below!) so you can't make clear judgments as to size just based on a drawing. Yes, everything was drawn to scale (few things were obviously

out of proportion, at least), but it isn't always obvious to which scale, and whether the scale applied to everything on the page, let alone different pages. In the later catalogs, Heisey had more scales than a striped sea bass. You see the problem.

For Catalog 211, 600 Old Gold got a new illustration which was carried over for Cat. 212. While it shows up more clearly in those last two catalogs, it still doesn't help much to distinguish size and proportion between the similar 150 and 600 match stands. Anyway, the Banded Flute match stand had been dropped by that time so there is no comparable re-done image of it. Old Gold also appears in Price List 217 (1944), but that one illustrates hardly any pressed ware, so that doesn't help, either. After that, neither one is listed.

So, what we can learn from this research adventure? Well, for one thing, especially in the older catalogs, Heisey was particular about showing accurate illustrations—*most of the time*. In the 150 match stand, I had stumbled across an instance where they had omitted a key detail, those ribs spanning the bottom. For another thing, *size matters*, so measure when all else fails, or even sooner. And finally, *don't ignore the pieces outside your interest*, because you never know when you'll learn something you can use somewhere else. Oh, yes. You in the back? You can put your hands down now.

### Vital Statistics

150 Banded Flute match stand: Width, 2¾"; length, 4". Fire-polished base. Marked, on top of match stand.

600 Old Gold match stand: Width, 3 5/8"; length, 4½". Fire-polished base. Unmarked (although some are said to be marked).

*Still have your hand up? OK, I'm calling on you. Tell me about your Heisey research adventures at [heisey@embarqmail.com](mailto:heisey@embarqmail.com).*