

350 PINWHEEL & FAN CREAM AND SUGAR

Eric Tankesley-Clarke

Where do you put 350 Pinwheel & Fan in the Heisey scheme of things? Based on its appearance, you might give one answer, but based on its dates of production, you might give another. In the Bredehoft book that covers the second color era of Heisey, Heisey Glass 1925-1938, they have a section on colonial patterns in color. Almost in passing, they mention that 350 Pinwheel & Fan is included for the sake of completeness. That sounds like a polite way of saying, "We don't know where else to put it, either."

I know what they mean. Here is a pattern that is clearly imitation-cut in appearance. It has everything - fans, hobstars, chrysanthemums, pinwheels, diamond hatching - just about anything that was an imitation of cut glass was used to create this pattern. It seems desperate to please.

On the other hand, Pinwheel & Fan came late to the imitation cut party. As far as Heisey was concerned, at least, most of the patterns that fit in this loosely defined group were dropped by about 1910. Catalog 56, from about 1909, still shows 335 Prince of Wales Plumes and 343 Sunburst. By the time Cat. 75 came out, only four years later; these ornate patterns had been dropped. Heisey had bet most of its output on the colonial market. Only a few scattered imitation cut pieces can be found. But there must have been some demand, because it is here we first see 350 Pinwheel & Fan.

While the pattern clearly is inspired by old cut patterns, there is something different about it. This was at the time that Andrew J. Sanford was designing for A. H. Heisey & Co. Most design patents of the period have his name on them. I haven't seen the patent on this pattern, but he did design the similar 460 Pinwheel & Fan basket, so presumably this one is his work, too.

Perhaps that is why, with Sanford's obvious flair for the relatively austere colonial patterns, he made the individual elements of the Pinwheel & Fan design so they aren't as hard-edged as the earlier imitation cut patterns. This may be a combination of the way the moulds were designed and more emphasis on fire-polishing.

The primary feature, of course, is the large pinwheel, repeated three times around the cream and twice around the sugar. Each pinwheel is centered around an eight-pointed star, the star drawn by connecting every third point. Opposite points of the star are also connected, creating yet another very small eight-pointed star in the middle of the larger one. Separating the pinwheels is a device with several long imitation cuts, topped by a fan, with an oblong lozenge at the bottom with a diamond-pointed surface. Such a complicated pattern hadn't been seen since the days of Fancy Loop. You can almost hear the Sanford reaction to this design assignment: "You want fancy? I'll give you fancy!"

By the time Pinwheel & Fan was brought out, most Heisey patterns had simple rayed stars on the bottom, the classic "Heisey star." Keeping in step with the older fancy patterns, however, Heisey designed a special star for the base of the Pinwheel & Fan set. (I amused myself one winter's day with looking at the bottoms of many pieces. It was fascinating to notice how nearly every one of those early elaborate patterns had its own star. You might also note that it takes so little to amuse me.) The Pinwheel & Fan star is a "chrysanthemum" star with a hobstar center. But on the center itself is another chrysanthemum in miniature. The star echoes but doesn't copy the center of the pinwheel seen on the sides of the pieces. The star is pressed very deeply into the bottom. That way, the grinding and polishing there doesn't obscure the design of the star. Mr. Sanford certainly paid attention to detail for something that was going to be sitting directly on the table most of the time. Evidently, it didn't take much to amuse him, either.

Just in case all this isn't fancy enough for you, both the cream and the sugar are topped off by double-scalloped rims. Mr. Sanford pulled out all the stops for this one. The only thing missing is a lid. The sugar does not have a cover. I'd like to have seen what the Sanford design for that would have been.

The one thing left plain is the handles. For both the cream and the sugar, they are designed to look stuck, but are in fact pressed in the mould. Each handle is topped by a flattened thumb rest. The thumb rests appear to have been hand-tooled after the piece was removed from the mould, as was the cream's spout.

The 350 Pinwheel & Fan cream and sugar set is very heavy glass and also rather large. The catalogs and price lists consistently called these hotel creams and sugars, but Pinwheel & Fan is nearly as large as some of the older ones that were part of table sets. There never was a true "table" size in Pinwheel & Fan, nor was there an individual size. Once you have the hotel set, you're done with this pattern.

Production of the creams and sugars appears to have ended in the late 1920s. Cat. 102 (about 1924) illustrates them, but Cat. 109 (late 1920s, exact year depending on the edition) does not. A few price lists in the intervening period still show them. It is tempting to think that they might be available in color. While a few other pieces can be found in color (punch bowls and cups in Moongleam and nappies in Canary, Moongleam, Flamingo, and Marigold, for instance), I am unaware of any 350 Pinwheel & Fan cream or sugar in anything other than crystal.

Being such a busy design, Pinwheel & Fan isn't prone to decorations, at least not Heisey ones. Fortunately (or not, depending on your taste), the pattern came along too late to be dolled up with heavy gold trim on Heisey's order. So don't expect to find AA Heavy Gold such as was used on 1205 Fancy Loop or 1255 Pineapple & Fan. That isn't to say that some other company might not have done the honors for their own

purposes. I haven't seen decorated examples myself, but some may exist. I'd say that if you have examples, send me pictures, but I'm not sure I want to know how much more could have been piled on.



350 Pinwheel & Fan Cream and Sugar

Vital Statistics

350 Pinwheel & Fan hotel cream and sugar:

Cream: Height (to top of spout), 3½"; width (side to side), about 3 3/8"; length (tip of spout to handle), 5".

Sugar: Height, 3"; diameter, about 3 5/8"; width (handle to handle), 6¼".

Both pieces marked on the inside bottom (large < H >). Ground and polished bottoms.

Some decorators couldn't help but gild the lily when it came to Heisey glass. What's your favorite overdone example? Let me know, at heisey@embarqmail.com.



350 Pinwheel & Fan Punch Bowl, Flared