

The Great Cover-Up *or* Sugars Exposed

A long time ago, before I was deep into Heisey, I was in an antique mall and there, two aisles away, brilliant glass compelled me to skip all the intervening merchandise and give it my full attention. (I learned later, unsuspecting naïf that I was, that Heisey lay in wait for me.) The price was small, another trick to reel me in. An antique dealer friend was with me and advised against buying it. "It's missing the lid," he warned with flinty scorn. I bought the piece anyway, rescuing it from the bad company of inferior glass into which it had fallen. From behind me, I could hear my friend's eyes rolling.

Covered sugars. Such a problem for collectors. When you find a sugar without a cover, is it missing the lid? Was it offered both ways? Was there a lid at all? What do you do if you don't have that irritatingly knowledgeable friend along with you? Those questions are not always easy to answer.

If Heisey made no lid for it, you're home free and you can rejoice in your open sugar. If you know it always had a lid, at least you can be on the watch for that missing piece. It's those in-between ones that cause the problems. If a sugar was offered both with and without cover, some collectors will still insist on having it with a lid, while others will be content to declare their lidless example perfectly good. Some will want one of each. If domino sugars are your thing, you can just turn the page, because none of them, of course, had covers. Off you go.

One way to sort out which ones required covers or not is to consider their sizes. Roughly speaking, Heisey's sugars can be grouped into three sizes: table, hotel, and individual. Table sizes typically had covers, individuals typically did not, and hotels, depending on the pattern, were AC/DC; they could go either way. These are rough and somewhat arbitrary groupings with some overlap: there are some sugars that Heisey called "individual" that are as large as others they called "hotel." Heisey never actually used the term "table" to designate sugars, but in patterns with table sets as well as other sizes of sugars, it makes it easier to know which one you're talking about. The table sugars are frequently really big ones, huge by today's standards. (Heisey did make one sugar that was part of a table set they specifically called "small," the #150 Pointed Oval in Diamond Point. Sure enough, it is quite a bit smaller than Heisey's other table sugars.) By about 1930, Heisey had mostly stopped making "table" sugars. After that time, they sometimes had an individual size and a regular size in a pattern, but the regular size was certainly smaller than the old table sugars but no longer called a "hotel" sugar.

Sugars that belonged to table sets always had covers. Some have a seating rim around the top of the sugar, as in #310 Ring Band. In others the lid completes the shape; when the cover is in place, the line of the profile remains unbroken. Think of #335 Prince of Wales, Plumes. Some, however, have lids very distinct from the body that just sit on top, as in #1225 Plain Band. Regardless, you can assume that a large, table-size sugar, especially in an EAPG style, should have a lid.



Table sugars always required covers (#310 Ring Band, #1225 Plain Band, and #335 Prince of Wales, Plumes).



Table, Hotel, and Individual Sugars (#393 Narrow Flute).

On the other end of the size range are the individual sugars. Life is easier for the collector, since Heisey's rarely had lids. A few exceptions come to mind. The #352 Flat Panel individual sugar is one. The Revere individual sugar is another, #1183 when it doesn't have a lid, #1183½ when it does. The uniquely designed #1189 Yeoman footed individual sugar is another. (I suppose we could include the #1225 Plain Band toy sugar here, because it's small. Or up above in the table set discussion, because, well, you know. Either way, it has a lid.) Both #1183 Revere and #1189 Yeoman are

larger than typical individual-sized sugars, more like hotel sugars, so the cover is more understandable with them. Since Heisey gave the Revere sugar a different number when covered, the lid is obviously optional. Price lists show that the Flat Panel and Yeoman lids were not requirements, either. I'll write more about each of these in later articles. Other than these patterns, Heisey didn't put covers on the individual sugars.

It's when you get into the hotel-sized sugars that the problems arise. Some hotel sugars obviously required lids, because the rims had some sort of internal seating to support the covers. These sugars look naked without lids. #1025 Sharon and #1023 Yeoman have that sort of rim. Sugars with those rims were always sold with lids. On the other hand, if the rim of the sugar is uneven or sloped, there was no cover ever made for it. The #354 Wide Flat Panel hotel sugar and the #1511 Toujours sugar are two of those.

But Heisey offered many hotel-sized sugars (whether so called or not) with perfectly flat rims. These are the ones that may have had covers all of the time, part of the time, or not at all. Again, the age of the sugar helps to some extent. Older, EAPG patterns that are flat-rimmed in the hotel size, such as #325 Pillows or #335 Prince of Wales, Plumes, are incomplete without the covers.

Along come the colonial and post-colonial patterns and the scenery changes. Cream and sugar collectors will know that some flat-rimmed patterns (such as #1180 Debra or #1170 Pleat & Panel) just aren't seen with covers that often. #479 Petal is an even more extreme example, with covers hardly ever seen in crystal, and never in color. It isn't necessarily because the lids were lost or broken, although some surely were. It is again a matter of fashion. By the late 1910's, lids were no longer seen as essential for sugars.

Collectors sometimes assume that however a sugar was illustrated in a catalog, that is the only way it was offered. It is quite rare for a Heisey catalog of the 1900-1930 era to mention whether a sugar came both ways. Now and then, one catalog would show a sugar one way, and another the other way. The #411 Tudor has a cover in Cat. 102; in Cat. 109 the cover is gone. #473 Narrow Flute with Rim hotel sugars are shown both ways in other catalogs. For the most part, though, the catalogs don't have the final word. The price lists tell the real story. They offered many plain-rimmed sugars with or without covers, regardless of whether the accompanying catalog showed a cover or not. In fact, there are some sugars that are widely assumed to have no covers, yet price lists and the occasional lucky find



Few individual sugars were offered with covers, and those were optional (#352 Flat Panel, #1183 Revere [#1183½ when covered] and #1189 Yeoman)



Some hotel sugars required covers (#1025 Sharon and #1023 Yeoman).



Other hotel-sized sugars never had covers (#354 Wide Flat Panel and #1511 Toujours).



A few hotel sugars are shown with and without covers in catalogs (#1180 Debra and #411 Tudor).



Plain rims on hotel sugars often mean an optional cover (#1080 Debra) but an interior ledge means a cover was required (#1023 Yeoman).



Some hotel-sized sugars are seen frequently with their optional covers (#1951 Cabochon and #1170 Pleat & Panel).



Other hotel sugars are seen with covers so rarely that some collectors don't know they exist (#479 Petal and #433 Greek Key round hotel).

#429 Plain Panel Recess is a plain-rimmed hotel sugar, larger than most, and never sold without cover.



verify they were offered both ways. The #433 Greek Key round hotel sugar is an example of that. The catalog doesn't mention a cover, but the price lists do (and so does at least one illustrated ad), with the cover being seen only rarely.

Ah, now you may be thinking that most of the later hotel sugars can be thought of as complete with no lid and you're getting off easy. Before leaping to any conclusions, however, there are exceptions. Some flat-rimmed hotel-sized sugars were never offered without covers. The massive #429 Plain Panel Recess is one of those patterns. A sugar in that pattern without a cover is truly missing its lid and you, dear collector, have more work to do. (Never mind that there is a patent drawing of this sugar without the cover. No one said this was going to be easy.)

Once you get into patterns from the 1930's and later, maybe you can get off easy. Covers become even less common. Many patterns had no covers at all. In some later designs, a cover was available as an option that many buyers did not choose. Think #1485 Saturn or #1951 Cabochon. By that time, Heisey had largely dropped the "hotel" designation and made very few really large sugars. In a sense, then, these later, smaller sugars were standing in for the old large table sugars. But that did not mean the sugars required lids.

You see what I mean about answers being hard to come by. As in most things, the apparent inconsistency of Heisey makes it difficult to say without a little research whether your lidless hotel sugar is "complete" or not. As I write about each pattern of sugar, I try to make sure I mention when lids were *de rigueur* for the piece. In my series of sugar and cream articles that I started in 2010, only three hotel-sized sugars discussed so far have had lids that are optional, and all have been mentioned here: #1180 Debra, #433 Greek Key round hotel, and #1951 Cabochon. All the rest have been lidded either all the time or none of the time. More hotel-sized sugars with optional covers will surface soon, though.

At least one Heisey salesman claimed, speaking long after the factory closed, that Southerners preferred the covered sugars, in part because of the flies. I will guess there was also a stronger preference for formality in the South that made the lidded sugars seem more proper. Besides regional differences, lids added to the cost, of course. A cover increased the cost of the sugar by as little as 15-25% in earlier price lists or as much as 55% in later price lists, depending on the pattern. If your budget was limited (or you were appealing to customers whose budgets were) or you lived in a part of the country where a lid didn't matter you probably didn't spring for a cover for your sugar.

This has some implications for the collector. First, some sugars just don't come with lids that often, and you'll have to pay quite a bit for that added little topper. Second, just because your set doesn't have a cover doesn't necessarily mean it is incomplete. It may well have been sold that way. Third, maybe you'll be luckier finding lids if you shop in Alabama instead of Vermont!

None of this will make a difference to the collector who always wants a sugar to have its cover if one was available. If anything, it might make such collectors nervous about some of their lidless sets. "What if there's a cover for it that's never been seen?" But it's nice to know that some of the time you can still claim a coverless sugar and cream set is complete without everyone rolling their eyes.

Why could Phyllis go topless but Eileen could not? Did Sharon resent either of them? Ponder these and other troubling questions by writing me at heisey@embarqmail.com.

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