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Canadian Antique

Posted by : MimiAntiques

Posted on : 2016/5/12 5:50:00

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Jean-Pierre Dion

In this note, we solve the mystery of the white ware (ironstone) syrop jug which bears under its base the stamped mark BENNETT'S PATENT, jan 28 1873. We take this opportunity to dispel some inaccuracies about the Bennett family activities.

Several molasses or syrop jugs bearing the stamped mark BENNETT'S PATENT, jan 28 1873 are known to exist, generally attributed to the famed Baltimore Queensware Pottery of Edwin Bennett. However, this patent was not issued to Edwin Bennett, although many take it for granted, but to Mark J. Bennett, of Braddocks, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. What was the patent about and what was the relationship, if any, between Mark and Edwin Bennett?



Syrop jug with pewter top, white ware of the ironstone variety with hand-colored flowers and gold bands and the stamped mark on the bottom. H. 18 cm. A similar undecorated syrop jug with the same mark is shown and discussed in the recent book on Philip Pointon, a master potter in Baltimore and elsewhere (Beaudry Dion & Dion, 2013, p. 102). Photo Jacqueline B. Dion.

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The second and fourth paragraphs of the USPO Letters Patent states clearly the improvement claimed by Mark J. Bennett on that date:

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~ My invention relates to that class of molasses jugs or pitchers provided with an inner spout, an outer lip or ange to catch the drip, and a channel between the outer lip and inner spout, through which the drip can run back into the body of the jug or pitcher~the said spout and shoulder being formed in one piece and of the same material~ as the body of the jug~

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

MARK J. BENNETT, OF BRADDOCK, PENNSYLVANIA.

IMPROVEMENT IN MOLASSES JUGS OR PITCHERS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 125,260, dated January 28, 1873.

To all whom it may concern :

Be it known that I, MARK J. BENNETT, of Braddock, Allegheny county, Pennsylvania, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Molasses Jugs and Pitchers, of which the following is a specification:

My invention relates to that class of molasses jugs or pitchers provided with an inner spout, an outer lip or flange to catch the drip, and a channel between the outer lip and inner spout, through which the drip can run back into the body of the jug or pitcher.

It has been usual heretofore to form the above-specified parts, which, in conjunction with the lid or cover, form the top of the jug, of metal cast in one solid piece. This is objectionable on the score of both economy and durability, and, further, because the sirup is brought in contact with metals which are liable to corrode, and thus injure the quality of the sirup.

My invention consists in providing the top of the glass or earthenware jug with a spout or mouth, a shoulder, and a notch or its equivalent, the said spout and shoulder being formed in one piece with and of the same material as the body of the jug. The spout is designed to permit the pouring of the sirup; and the object of the shoulder is to form, in conjunction with the metal cap, a channel along which the drip can run back through the notch or its equivalent into the body of the jug.

In the drawing, Figure 1 is a side elevation of a jug made in accordance with my invention. Fig. 2 is a vertical central section of the same.

A is the body of the jug, made of glass or earthenware. Near its top it is formed with a neck, *a*, to receive the cylindrical part *b* of the metal cap. Above the neck *a* is an annular shoulder or ledge, *c*, and above the shoulder rises a spout or mouth, *d*. The parts A *a c d*

are all of glass or earthenware, as the case may be, and are molded in one piece. If the mouth or spout is cylindrical or tubular, as shown in full lines in the drawing, then at the rear or toward the handle of the jug I form a notch, *e*, through the mouth, just at the point where it rises from the shoulder *c*. If, however, the mouth or spout is formed, as it may be, following the dotted line *f*, then this formation will leave at the rear of the jug a passage or opening the equivalent of notch *e*. Above the cylindrical part *b* of the metal cap is an annular flaring flange or lip, *g*, and at a point, *h*, on the back portion of this lip is hinged a cover, *i*, which fits down on the lip and over the spout *d*. The shoulder *c* forms the bottom of a channel, along which the drip from the spout *d* will run until it reaches notch *e*, through which it will pass back into the body of the jug.

The jug, formed as above described, can be readily made of glass or earthenware, in iron, wooden, or plaster molds, or by hand, and will be much cheaper and better than those made entirely of metal or those having all-metal caps or tops.

What I claim, and desire to secure by Letters Patent in a molasses jug or pitcher of the kind above described, is—

The formation of the glass or earthenware body of the jug or pitcher with a spout or mouth, a shoulder, and a notch or its equivalent, substantially as and for the purposes described.

In testimony whereof I have signed my name to this specification before two subscribing witnesses.

MARK J. BENNETT.

Witnesses:

WESLEY BENNETT,
J. HALEY.

The Bennett Brothers, James, Daniel, Edwin and William, are associated with the first East Liverpool pottery, Ohio, which produced Rockingham and Yellow Ware. James (1812-July 31, 1862), a potter from England, left for the USA while in his early 20's. After some work at the Jersey City Pottery, and the Indiana Pottery Co., he settled in East Liverpool to erect, in 1839, a pottery. His first kiln of ware was burned in 1840. Foreseeing success, he asked in April 1841 his three brothers, all practical potters in England, to join him in the manufacture of pottery and they in turn arrived in America in September 1841, as an Ancestry.com photo of the ship manifest of Daniel and William Bennett so indicates (Hawkins, 2009, p. 139, gives a wrong arrival date of 1842). In 1844, they moved to Birmingham, now a part of Pittsburg, PA, to establish another pottery (see Barber, 1893, p. 194-198; Barth,

1926, p. 196-197; Cushing, 1889, p. 499; Jervis, 1902, p.43-45; Spargo, 1926, p. 321-323 as well as the East Liverpool Historical Society website <http://www.eastliverpoolhistoricalsociety.org/bennet.htm>).

Daniel (1815- April 6, 1892) had arrived to the USA with his wife Catherine Bates, his son Mark J. and daughter Ely. (Cushing, 1889, p. 499 and p. 574). Mark J., aged 21 at the 1860 US census, was thus born c.1839. At the 1870 census, Mark J. Bennett's occupation is described as Glass Manufacturer. Effectively, by 1869, William and Daniel stopped manufacturing pottery and became involved, with Mark J., with the Crystal Glass Co (1870-1888), located nearby in Pittsburg, (Southside). An advertisement of 1870, given in Hawkins, (2009, p. 142), indicates Daniel Bennett as President of the Crystal Glass Co., William Bennett as secretary and treasurer, Mark J. Bennett as Business Agent and John Henderson as factory Superintendent. Clearly Mark J. Bennett's motivation for the patent was to have the production of glass syrop jugs at the Crystal Glass Co., but it could be used also, as stated in the letters patent, for earthenware containers.

Meanwhile, Edwin Bennett (1818-June 13,1908) moved to Baltimore; he erected a pottery at that place in 1847 (not in 1846 as inferred by Barber on p. 195, and repeated by Spargo, p. 224, Ramsay, p. 164 and many others). We take this opportunity to establish firmly that fact. The following two extracts from Newspapers of 1847 are self-explanatory.

Queensware Manufactory—We understand that Mr. Edward Bennett, who has been successfully engaged in the manufacture of Queensware in the city of Pittsburg, has in contemplation to erect a similar manufactory in our city. From the examinations he has made of the clay in the vicinity of Baltimore, he thinks a superior article can be manufactured therefrom. His application to the Council for permission to erect his establishment at the corner of Eastern avenue and Albemarle street, has failed, from the objections made by the citizens of that neighborhood, who are prejudiced against the erection of it, from the supposition that it would be similar to an ordinary pottery; we are, however, informed that a manufactory of this kind is entirely free from all such objection, as the smoke and vapor is carried off by a lofty chimney. We hope Mr. Bennett will obtain a suitable situation for his works, where there can be no opposition to its erection.

A Decided Improvement—We are always glad to note the erection of buildings for manufacturing purposes in our city, and especially are we pleased to notice anything which promises the introduction of a new branch of manufacture. We yesterday remarked that Mr. Bennet, whose application to the City Council last session, for the privilege, will be remembered, has commenced and progressed considerably in the erection of his contemplated Queensware Pottery, at the corner of Canton avenue and Canal street. He expects to be able to be at work in the course of six or eight weeks. We learned from him that so far as his experiments have gone, he will have an abundance of suitable clay, in this immediate vicinity, for all the purposes desired. Mr. B. is an enterprising man, and we trust he may succeed in this new branch of manufactures—it cannot but be of advantage to our city.

Edwin Bennett

William (1821- August 24, 1889) was Edwin Bennett's partner in Baltimore from 1848 (or 1849) to 1856, before returning to Carrick, a neighborhood of Pittsburg. Then in 1863 William again united with Daniel in the pottery venture. During the civil war, according to Revi, p. 163, Edwin Bennett left Baltimore for Philadelphia where he became partner in a glass factory accordingly called Gillinder & Bennett (1863-1867). His involvement and close ties with William T. Gillinder is attested by several glassware patents attributed to Bennett alone or jointly with Gillinder, during the period 1865-1869 (improvement for fruit jars, 1865; for glass bottles, 1866; for preserve jars, 1866; for lamp chimneys, 1869; for a machine for cleaning sand, 1869). One patent dated July 13, 1869, indicates that Edwin Bennett is once more a resident of Baltimore, having returned since a while to take care of his Queensware Pottery. But his relation with the Gillinder family would continue: his own daughter Martha married James Gillinder, son of William T. Gillinder, in April 1867 and they had a son in 1870 which they named Edwin

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Bennett Gillinder...

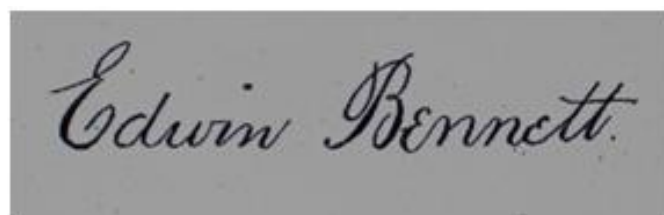
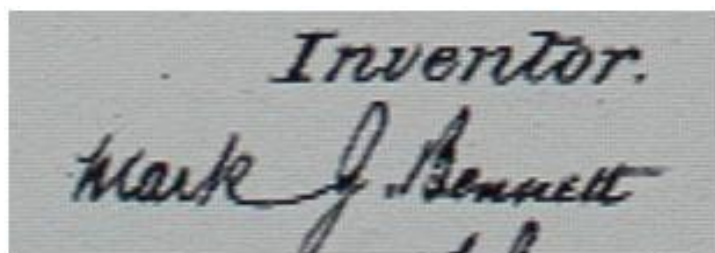
White ware was introduced in 1868 (not 1869 as stated by Barber, p. 195 and others) at the Edwin Bennett Queensware Pottery. Philip Pointon, who was then Superintendent at the Queensware Pottery, did produce, already in August 1868, white granite as well as cream color ware (see Beaudry Dion & Dion, 2013, p. 42). Both Bennett and Pointon are recorded in the alphabetical section of the Woods' Baltimore City Directory for 1868-69, published in Nov. 1868.

At the time of the patent for the Bennett's syrop jug, Edwin Bennett was the only member of the family still involved with pottery, notably white ware, plain and decorated. It is more than likely that he is the one responsible for the production of the earthenware jug pictured here, using freely his nephew's patent.

The exhibition *The Potter's Craft in Maryland* held in Baltimore from March to May 1955, presented a white ware syrop jug with pewter top, marked Bennett's Patent 1886 [1873?], lent by Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Bennett Filbert (exhibit no 54 in the 1955 catalogue of the Maryland Historical Society). The exhibition also contained a copy of the resolution of the Mayor and Council of Baltimore, dated May 20, 1847, granting Edwin Bennett permission to erect a queensware factory at the corner of Caton [Canton] Avenue and Canal Street. [In fact, this resolution was amended and passed already on May 13, 1847, according to *The Sun*, May 14, 1847, p. 4]. Despite that information, the catalogue repeats the date of 1846 for the erection of the pottery in Baltimore.

This Pottery had a long and fruitful life, as did its founder and owner. Edwin Bennett, born March 6, 1818, was said to be the oldest potter alive in America before he died on June 13, 1908, being 90 years old. (*Trenton Evening Times*, June 16, 1908).

In conclusion, the stamped mark *Bennett's Patent jan 28 1873* on the syrop jug does refer to letters patent issued to Mark J. Bennett, of Braddocks, Pennsylvania. Mark was only involved, at that time, with glass ware, not pottery. The white ware syrop jug itself was most likely produced at the Baltimore Queensware Pottery of his uncle Edwin Bennett, sometimes after that date. One such syrop jug was reportedly offered to Wallace Nutting as a wedding gift on Oct. 28, 1884 (*The Palm Beach Post*, West Palm Beach, Florida, March 25, 2001).



Signatures of Mark J. Bennett, 1873 and of Edwin Bennett, 1874, both from USPO documents.

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

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