



OBJECT ID	2011.7.202
OBJECT NAME	Set, Salt & Pepper
OBJECT COLLECTION	Alex's Candy Shop (is part of)
DATE CREATED	1920 – 1940
MATERIAL	Glass; Metal
OBJECT ENTITIES	Rassogianis/Franks families, By (owned by) Franks, Rassogianis; (is related to)

OBJECT DESCRIPTION

This pepper/salt shaker is made out of white milkglass and a metal lid. The glass itself is in a rectangular shape and has ridges on the flat edges because the corners are rounded. The ridges provide grip and more dimension to the functional aspects of the object. On one of the sides there is a diagonal strip where the glass is smooth so a label could have been attached there. The label is gone now which is why it is not certain what substance was held in it. On the sides there is a yellwoish substance that is is many places and makes the shaker look somewhat dirty.

The cap is a silver metal that screws onto the bottle by spiral ridges. On the top there are holes for the pepper or salt to come out. Due to age and wear there are also some stains and rust on the top and in the grooves on the sides. It is unable to fully screw on the bottle because one side is a little dented. The top also has two dents along the seam while the rest of the metal bulges up.

ORIGIN

Paulina Franks' grandfather, John Rassogianis, came to Chicago in the 1890s. He began his life in the new city by peddling fruits and later, with the help of his sons Alex and George, would open a candy store. In the 1920s Paulina Franks' father Constantine became a part of the family business and the store was able to prosper. When the second business closed Paulina Rassogianis chose to hold as many of the candy store's items as possible and, later, donate them to the National Hellenic Museum.

The Rassogianis family began their candy business in Chicago proper, working out of their own shop named "St. Louis Ice Cream Parlor." Eventually, the shop was closed and the Rassogianis' chose to continue their candy store venture in Berwyn, Illinois. The new shop they chose to open was named Alex's Sweet Shop.

Paulina Franks' father was a key contributor to the success of the Rassogianis candy stores. While Constantine Rassogianis was a noteworthy entrepeneur, he also had many other accomplishments. Among these was his four years of involvment in the Greek national military during World War I wherein he obtained the rank of sergeant. Also, he was a published author and poet, an experienced mandolin player, a church officer and had extensive knowledge of psalti.

Salt and pepper shakers (or in the UK, salt and pepper pots) are condiment holders used in Western culture that are designed to allow diners to distribute grains of edible salt and ground peppercorns. Salt and pepper shakers can be made from a variety of materials, including plastic, glass, metal, and ceramic. Salt and Pepper Shakers have a long and rich history. Before salt and pepper shakers as we know them today, people in the Victorian era placed their salt in open cellers. Salt came in rock form, and it had to be chipped off to be put on food. Early salt shakers were actually salt mills. They contained a piece inside the shaker that broke the salt into pieces. This feature may also be found in some salt shakers now. As salt production improved, salt shakers no longer needed the arm to break the salt up. These are still produced today, however, for those who prefer their salt, like their pepper, freshly ground. Salt may be a common-or-garden product to us today, but historically its high value merited a container of equal standing, as they would have been symbolic of social standing and economic status not only among families, but within a single household. It's sometime said that salt shakers were invented in 1858 by John Mason, the man who invented the screw-top Mason jar. He created a receptacle to hold salt that would evenly distribute it on food, by shaking it through several holes punched into a tin cap. This piece could be either a salt or a pepper shaker.

Milk glass is an opaque or translucent, milky white or colored glass, blown or pressed into a wide variety of shapes and is a popular type of glass collector's item made into dishes and cups, vases and figurines and anything in between.

Milk glass originated in Venice in the 16th century. However, back then milk glass came in all different colors including yellow, brown, black, pink and blue. All of these colors still project a 'milky' color as the tone is thick and coated. Some of these colors still exist in milk glass, especially blue, but the opaque color remains the most popular.

Since the 16th century, milk glass has remained a popular collector's item as well as a useful item around the house. However, most of the collectable milk glass of today dates back to the 1700's or newer.

Although milk glass came from the 1500's, the term 'milk glass' did not actually come into play until relatively recently. During the 19th century glass makers referred to milk glass as 'opaque glass' and was still considered a luxury item and a great collectable.

Milk glass became popular during the end of the 19th century in France. Often considered a product of the 'fin de siecle', the milk glass goes hand in hand with French cultural awareness and symbolists that paved the way for modernism and expressionism.

During the early 20th century, also known as the American Gilded Age, milk glass was synonymous with the cultural prosperity of the wealthy American culture. Milk glass made in the Gilded Age still remains some of the best ever made. It is known for the delicacy and elegance and were often seen on dressers and shelf tops in upper-class American homes.

However, during the 1930's, milk glass made during the Depression was considered less elegant and delicate and more a production of the harsh times. Because of this, milk glass made during the 1930's and 1940's is often considered of lesser quality.

These days, milk glass still remains a popular collectable for around the home. Although it is not as expensive as porcelain, it makes a beautiful alternative for all sorts of decorations and decor items. These include cups, dishes, plates, vases, figurines, boxes, perfume bottles, glass holders, lanterns and much more. Milk glass can also be used for entire pieces such as dresser sets or salt and pepper shakers. Milk glass also makes its way into themed occasions with some Christmas bulbs and Christmas decorations made from milk glass as well.

CITATION
Set, Salt & Pepper, 1920 – 1940, Alex's Candy Shop, *National Hellenic Museum*, https://collections.nationalhellenicmuseum.org/Detail/objects/. Accessed 11/10/26.