

T. Clarence Heisey 1882-1967

by JOSEPH D. LOKAY

Clarence Heisey was born on November 4, 1882 in Idlewood, Pa., just outside of Pittsburgh. He was the youngest of six children and the third son of Susan and Augustus H. Heisey. At the time of his birth, his father was co-owner of the George Duncan & Sons Glass Company in Pittsburgh. His initial name was only Clarence Heisey and Thomas was added to his name sometime in the early 1900's.

Clarence completed his high school education at the Mt. Pleasant Military Academy in Ossining, New York. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry from Amherst College, Amherst, Mass. in 1908 at the age of 25. While at Amherst, he was active in the Psi Upsilon Fraternity, the Cotillion Club, the Archangels Luncheon Club, and was a member of the football squad. He had a strong interest in his college and attended many of his class reunions. He was active on the corporate board of his fraternity for many years.

The Heisey family moved to Newark, Ohio around 1898 when Clarence was at the age of 16. His mother, Susan, and his sister, Mary, were in Arizona for about two years (1899 and 1900) because Mary had TB. Indications are that he may have been with his mother in Arizona for the approximate 2 year period, thus delaying his educational plans for the 2 years. Clarence had his own horse while in Arizona which led to his later interest in horses.

He was a first lieutenant in the Ohio National Guard and served as Battalion Adjutant from 1902 till 1908.

Clarence began working at the A. H. Heisey Glass Company in 1908 after his graduation. The four Heiseys; Augustus-his father, George Duncan-his older brother and Edgar Wilson-his next brother, were all with the firm at this time. George was President of the Heisey Company till 1918 when he left the Company. Augustus passed away in 1922 and his son, Edgar Wilson Heisey was President until his death in 1942. T. Clarence then took over and was President till the plant closed in late 1957. He spent his total career with the A. H. Heisey Company.

T. Clarence met Anne Augusta Davis in Newark, Ohio and they were married on October 9, 1912. They had two children Thomas C., Jr. (Tim) and Mary. Tim was born on June 6, 1918 and Mary was born on May 17, 1923; both in Newark, Ohio. They purchased their residence on Granville Road in 1916 and Anne and Tim still reside there.

Tim went to the same college as his father, T. Clarence, where he also majored in Chemistry and was also a member of the Psi Upsilon fraternity.

During the period when Edgar Wilson and T. Clarence were running the Heisey Company (circa 1920 to 1942), Edgar was mainly interested in glass technology and T. Clarence was mainly interested in glassware design and pattern line makeup. Clarence liked to get out in the sales field to see how things were going. On occasion he would visit the purchasing agents of several of Heisey's large accounts in the larger cities to get their comments on current pattern lines, items within a pattern line and ideas of future interest.

Clarence was responsible for the filing of over 80 US design patents.* His first patent was #42,665 granted on May 1, 1912 for the #393 Narrow Flute pitcher and his last design patent was #169,314 granted September 13, 1953 for a bowl similar to the #1632 Lodestar design. He held 8 design patents for various items in the #411 Rib & Panel pattern granted in 1923, 8 for various items in Crystolite #1503 granted in 1939, 7 for various items in Whirlpool #1506 granted in 1939 and 12 for various items in Waverly granted in 1948 to 1950.

He was also responsible for the design of the first few Heisey animals in the late 1930's and early 1940's. Because of his interest in horses, he was responsible for the production of the horse head bookends and some of the horse related animals. He filed and was granted a design patent for the standing pony on May 27, 1941.

The A. H. Heisey Company was well known for its fine glassware and for its quality patterns. Clarence was personally invited by the Czechoslovakian Chamber of Commerce to represent the American Glassware Association at its Annual Fair in 1955. I'm told that he had some difficulty getting his passport for this trip as they could not find

a record of his birth in 1992 in the Pittsburgh, Pa. records. He flew over to Europe and came back via the Queen Mary. This was T. C.'s first time to fly in an airplane.

James Duncan, II of the Duncan/ Miller Glass Company in Washington, Pa. was a cousin to T. C., and I understand that he stopped by in Newark and visited several times. The late Carl Gutski, a past President of the Imperial Glass Co., was also a good friend.

As a civic leader, Clarence had been Director, President, Vice President, Delegate and member of various organizations and clubs. These affiliations include the Newark Board of Trade, Ohio Chamber of Commerce, American Protective Tariff League, Restoration Committee of the first American Glass Plant at Jamestown, Virginia, the Symposiarch Club, Queen City Club, Moundbuilders Country Club, Buckeye Lake Yacht Club and the Columbus Club.

Clarence was active on the Board of Directors of the Ohio National Life Insurance Co. of Cincinnati, Ohio from 1922. Besides serving on the Board for 45 years, he was also a member of their Executive Finance Committee from 1930.

Another of Clarence's interests was horses. He was the Director of the American Horse Shows Association for thirty five years. He was a recognized Senior Saddle Horse Show Judge and was registered with the A.H.S.A. He did most of his show horse judging in the 1930's and 1940's. He was also a member of the American Saddle Horse Breeders Association.

As well as Clarence, Edgar Wilson had several horses. These were originally stabled in a barn behind the Heisey plant. Clarence's interest was in show horses, and he had show horses with names like Shadow, Ghost, Sandy and Marigold. His best show horse was named Rexanna H. Peavine. This particular show horse won some big stakes for T. C. at the Atlantic City Horse Show of 1932. Another fine show horse of T. C.'s that he bought for his son Tim was named Goodness Gracious.** This mare also won a first place at one of the Atlantic City horse shows in the mid 1930's. Tim is shown sitting on Goodness Gracious on the cover of the Heisey News for February 1978 and on page 13 of the May 1978 issue.

T. C. died of a heart attack on October 16, 1967 in Newark, Ohio at the age of 85. He and his wife had just celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary. He is buried at the Cedar Hill Cemetery in Newark. Anne will be 92 this year, and is an honorary member of the Heisey Collectors of America, Inc. His son and daughter, Tim and Mary Heisey Merrill are also honorary members.

*Ed. note - Many of these were designs of others which were assigned to the Company which is very often done, even today.

** This horse was the model for the famous crystal show horse.