

Mr. Carder's Correspondence with J. Stanley Brothers, Jr.

by

Ed Bush

The Rakow Library has a file containing the correspondence between J. Stanley Brothers, Jr. and Frederick Carder. Stanley Brothers lived in Kalamazoo, Michigan, where he was a professional musician, a violin player. He was a composer of popular songs and poems, and for many years provided greeting card publishers with verses for their cards.

(SLIDE 1) He collected art deco Christmas cards that had been sent by Hollywood stars. This figure is from an announcement for an exhibition of this card collection at Kalamazoo. It shows his picture as a young man, his distinctive signature on a music staff, and his composer's logo that he designed. (SLIDE 2) This is the cover of one of his songs from 1919. Note the vase with supporting figures, remarkably similar to some of Frederick Carder's creations a few years later.

But what Brothers was really interested in was the American glass industry. From the late 1920's until his death in 1976 at age 80 he traveled the country gathering information about American glass businesses. After his death a large portion of this immense collection of information was acquired by the Rakow Library. A person researching any American glass company at the Rakow is likely to be presented with a file for that company from the Brothers archive.

Brothers also used this information in writing articles for publication in collectors' magazines and scholarly journals. In 1944 he collected articles that he had written for Hobbies Magazine in a booklet entitled "Thumbnail Sketches".

(SLIDE 3) In July, 1940, Brothers sent this letter to the Steuben Glass office in New York City. He explained that the enclosed tear-sheets and reprints were articles that he had written about Steuben glass. He then asked "Do you have data concerning the various types of colored glass which Mr. Carder created for Steuben? I would like to have this material in my files for use in the near future."

(SLIDE 4) In Mr. Tredennick's reply he thanked Brothers for the articles, and then said "Unfortunately, we have no data concerning the colored glass created by Mr. Frederick Carder prior to 1933. We are, however, forwarding your letter to Corning in the hope that this material is available there, and we trust you will receive a satisfactory reply from them."

(SLIDE 5) Four days later, Brothers received this letter from Mr. Tredennick who reported that "In this morning's mail, I received word from our factory in Corning that all information concerning the early Steuben glass has been destroyed. I am unable, therefore, to be of any further help to you in this matter." Bobby Rockwell told me that the records were destroyed in a flood in 1936.

Three years later, in 1943, an article about glass appeared in the National Geographic Magazine. It included a photograph of Frederick Carder with a piece of Diatreta in his hands and shelves of his glass in the background. In November of that year Brothers sent him this letter:

(SLIDE 6) "My dear Mr. Carder, Ever since the appearance of the January National Geographic I have contemplated writing you. The article, as you know, depicted a portion of your collection, and since I have been intrigued by the beauty of what is shown, I want to express, particularly, my appreciation of the sculptured subjects. Glass is a glorious medium for all kinds of expression, and you have succeeded in some outstanding

achievements. I wonder if you would be interested in corresponding with me concerning some of the glass made at the Steuben works while you were associated there?"

(SLIDE 7) Carder replied 4 days later with the following:

"Dear Sir, Answering your letter of the 13th instant relative to sculptured glass and also the glass that was made at the Steuben Glass Works from the time I started the works until my retirement.

What are the specific items of information that you wish to be informed upon. Possibly I may or may not be able to help you. Yours truly, Frederick Carder."

This was the beginning of correspondence between Brothers and Carder that took place over the next 20 years. It consists largely of Brothers' typewritten questions and Carder's brief handwritten replies. Most of Brother's questions appear to have been designed to elicit information for an article he was writing at the time, rather than to acquire material for his files. Carder rarely volunteered information that wasn't asked for, and rarely did his replies cover more than one side of a single page.

There are few, if any, new revelations, surprises, or insights for us in these letters, largely because the members of this club are already well informed regarding Frederick Carder and Steuben Glass. However, I believe there is a fascination in reading even familiar material when it is Carder's own words written in his own hand.

Brothers responded immediately to Carder's letter, and said he would send another letter with questions right after Christmas. However, he didn't write until September, 1944, with apologies, and Carder replied to his questions as follows: "Dear Sir, Answering your recent letter. I started the Steuben Works in 1903, making first blanks for cutting and engraving. As I had to educate my workmen, it took some time before I started making colored glasses. These consisted of Aurene, calcite, alabaster and a collection of colored glasses, 25 of which were principal colors. From these a great variety of colors were obtained by coating or flashing one upon another. The vase sketched on your letter which you say was ruby with iridescent loopings is similar to some made at Steuben. Yours truly, Frederick Carder"

In February, 1945, Brothers sent a letter that Carder didn't reply to, perhaps because the questions couldn't be answered properly on a single page.

Brother's next letter was sent in September, 1945, and had more modest questions dealing with Calcite and Aurene glasses. Carder replied tersely with "Answering yours of the 24th. Aurene glass was made from 1904 to 1932 at the Steuben Glass Works. Calcite glass was made from 1912 to 1930, as per the pamphlet enclosed. Trusting that this is the information you want."

Brothers responded a few days later, with the following reply from Carder: "Calcite was used also as a base for decorating with Aurene and other colors in vases, bowls, and shades. Aurene was derived from the Latin Aur (Gold) and I added the ene for sheen. Did not know Mr. Lutz and my recollection of the Union Glass Company was that their products were not worth a dam. As to Quezel, this was an offshoot from Tiffany. Sorry do not have any information about them."

Brothers responded with a letter opening with the "kick" he got from Carder's colorful reference to products of the Union Glass Co., and said that he wondered if products of other companies were also over-rated, such as those from Sandwich. He asked several questions, and sent Carder a copy of his booklet "Thumbnail Sketches".

(SLIDE 8) Carder replied as follows: "Dear Mr. Brothers, Answering yours of the 20th instant. The glass illustrated and returned forthwith was made by young Nash at the Corona Glass Works. Nash ran these works for a short time after L. C. Tiffany retired. Calcite was used as a base for casing with other colors as well as the metallic Aurene. Threads were applied in the form of peacock feathers, flowers, leaves, etc. Sorry I do not have an [Aurene] piece to send you. Regarding "Thumbnail Sketches": possibly if you had used the whole hand your information would have been more accurate. Yours, Frederick Carder."

Two days later Brothers responded, first with questions about Nash, and then he asked "What meanest thou when thee sayest (quote) 'Re Thumbnail Sketches. Possibly if you had used the whole hand your information would have been more accurate.' I'm not so sure about that whole hand stuff." He then asked about Aurene articles marked Haviland, and if he could send a small vase for Carder's opinion.

November 12th, 1945 from Carder: "Answering yours of the 2nd. Douglas Nash was the son of Arthur Nash who made it possible for Tiffany to make Favrile, He was manager of the Corona Works. Yes I made a lot of Aurene for Haviland just after the first World War. Re vase: if you care to send it for me to see I can than tell you what I think of it. Yours, Frederick Carder."

Brothers replied just before Christmas, 1945, saying that he had been violently ill, closing with: "May you have a genuine old-fashioned Christmas, full of the spirit of Yuletide cheer, and may the New Year bring you the fulfillment of those things most dear to you." Shades of Brothers' greeting card days.

At this point the correspondence halted for 7 years. However, late in this period Brothers had read of Corning Glass Works' intention to open this Glass Center, and on March 22nd, 1951 he sent a letter to Arthur Houghton at Steuben that said in part "I am so thankful to think that at long last some one of our American glass firms has had the courage, and foresight, to inaugurate a program for the education of the public in general, and the preservation of such material as concerns glass, and which should be kept for the use of posterity." The CMOG opened with an exhibition of Carder Steuben glass, and the Corning Glass Works publication for its employees, called the Gaffer, had a nice article about Carder.

In Brothers' next letter to Carder in April, 1952, he gave no explanation for the 7-year gap, beginning: "How nice it was to receive my copy of the Gaffer this last weekend, with its interesting article concerning you and your work. I was amazed at the scope covered, and the delicacy of the execution. How I would love to go to Corning to see the exhibition. How long will your work be on display?" He supplied sketches of Steuben vases he had collected and asked for Carder's comments, and asked about Carder's wax-on-glass "cameo" vases that were in the exhibition.

Carder's reply said: "Thanks for yours of the 7th. The first sketch was one of many decorative pieces made about 1922 at Steuben with different colored decorations. The second sketch was one of a number of heavy pieces and called Cleutha or clouded glass - made about 1920. Regarding wax on glass. The vase is first painted over with a good transparent varnish. When dry the wax is applied with bone or wood modelling tools."

(SLIDE 9) Three years later, in November, 1955, Brothers presented Carder with a dilemma. His letter began "I am attaching a description of 'AURENE' as it has been

prepared for a book I am writing for publication. May I have your reaction concerning authenticity of description."

Brother's description of Aurene, shown here, was composed by combining bits of information he had gathered from several sources, and a careful reading of it shows that he didn't fully understand parts of the process. The most serious issue, however, is his statement at the very end that Aurene glass contains the element gold. A person could be excused for believing this is so since the name of the product contains the word "gold" twice, but gold Aurene does not contain gold. The gold color is due largely to the presence of iron (together with tin as oxides) in the iridescent coating. Carder had a policy of never revealing the actual chemicals in the Aurene glass batch or in the iridescent coating. He, therefore, wrote his stock description of Aurene glass at the bottom of Brothers' page as follows: "Aurene is a glass which has the salts of the precious metals therein (plural metals) and kept in an oxidizing condition. After the article is made and on the pontil it is subjected to a reducing gas - this brings to the surface of the glass a metallic coating from the glass itself. If this metallic coating is now sprayed with another metallic salt, (actually two salts) this produces the iridescent surface by breaking up the metallic skin into very fine lines which reflect and refract the light."

(SLIDE 10) This Aurene batch composition, which I copied from a Carder notebook, shows that the only precious metal in the batch is silver. I'm somewhat surprised that Carder didn't try and convince Brothers to delete the sentence about the gold, but it is possible that Carder didn't mind having people believe there was gold in the glass. The function of the boron in the batch is probably to lower the thermal expansion of the glass so as to have a better expansion match with the iridescent coating. Contrary to what is commonly believed, this batch is quite similar to that of gold Favrite, except that Tiffany's glass has a higher lead content and sodium instead of potassium.

In Brothers' next letter in February, 1956, he asked if Carder had a small piece of sculpture that he might care to sell. Carder responded that he did have several from \$100 to \$500 that he could see if Brothers visited Corning.

There is a 6-year gap at this point, and letters from this period are missing from the file.

On October 31, 1962, Brothers wrote: "Permit me to again tell you how much I enjoyed visiting you recently. I have not forgotten the lovely bronzes, and some of the fine pieces of glass which you showed me. For some reason, I cannot just tell you why, your home reminded me of the house of my parents, a home in which I spent many happy hours." He then asked several questions that Carder answered as follows:

"Dear Sir, Answering yours of the 31st October. Intarsia was made about 1912. Alabaster 1907. With Cluthra, transparent and opaque colors were used. Rosalene is gold ruby over alabaster. If gold ruby is turned quickly it becomes a livery color. Ivrene was made as a lighting glass for bowls and shades."

(SLIDE 11) On February 11, 1963 Brothers wrote his last letter to Carder. He said "I have been wanting to tell you that I saw the Rockwell collection before I left Corning in October, and I thought it simply magnificent." Carder wrote answers to Brothers' questions right on the letter itself. It was Carder's last communication with Brothers. 1. When did you first make Rosalene? - About 1912. 2. When was Ivrene first made, and how would you describe the color? - About 1916, white iridized. 3. What prompted the

name Cintra? - A coined word meaning fine ground glass. 4. When did you make the little three-stemmed bud vases in the Rockwell collection? About 1906. He then added "All from memory, so they may not be correct." Carder was 99 1/2.

(SLIDE 12) The previous Christmas, in 1962, Brothers had sent Frederick Carder the following Christmas greeting, a copy shown here in his own hand: "My good friend, I am still reminiscing the enjoyable conversation which I experienced when I recently visited you, and now I want to wish you a most enjoyable holiday season. May you be blessed with good health and much happiness in 1963. Most sincerely, J. Stanley Brothers, Jr."

CORNING GLASS WORKS
CORNING, NEW YORK

MANUFACTURING
DEPARTMENT

Nov 17th 1943

J Stanley Brothers & Co.
718 West Michigan Ave
Kalamazoo, Mich

Dear Sir:

Answering your letter of the 13th inst. relative
to Leucoplarad Glass and also the Glass that was
made at the Steuben Glass Works from the time
that I started the works until my retirement.

What are the specific items of information
that you wish to be informed upon possibly
I may or may not be able to help you

Yours truly
H. A. Lander

CORNING GLASS WORKS
CORNING, NEW YORK

MANUFACTURING
DEPARTMENT



Sept 25th 1944

J. Stanley Brothers Inc.
Kalamazoo, Mich

Dear Sir

Answering your recent letter. I started the
Staten Works in 1903. making first Blanks for Cutting
and Engraving. as I had to educate my workmen about
Some time before I started making Colored Glasses, these
Consisted of Aurene, Calcite. Alabaster and a Collection
of Colored Glasses. 25 of which were principal Colors, from
these a great Variety of Colors were obtained by Coating or
flashing one upon another. The Vase Sketch on your letter
which you say is Ruby with iridescent loopings is similar
to some made at Staten, the iridescent loopings are of
Aurene or similar Glass, which is a glass with the rare
metals dissolved therein, when the loops are applied
as a thread they are colorless, when, however the article
is finished and in a plastic state on the punty it is
subjected to a reducing gas. this produces a metallic
surface upon the loops only. it is then sprayed with
a metallic salt. which gives it the iridescent sheen, all
being done while the article is red hot.

General was made by some workmen who left Tiffany
and started a factory in Brooklyn

It is similar to the Trade of Tiffany

Yours truly
J. M. Carter,

CORNING GLASS WORKS
CORNING, NEW YORK

MANUFACTURING
DEPARTMENT



Oct 2^d 1945-

J Stanley Brothers Inc
Kalamazoo Mich.

Dear Sir:

Answering yours of the 24th Sept. Aurene
Glass was made from 1904. to 1932. at the Steuben
Glass Works. - Calcite Glass was made from
1912. to 1930. as per pamphlet enclosed.
Trusting that this is the information you want.

Yours truly
Fred L. Carter.

CORNING GLASS WORKS
CORNING, NEW YORK

MANUFACTURING
DEPARTMENT



Oct. 12th 1945.

J. Stanley Bros Inc

Dear Sir,

Calcei was used also as a Base for
decorating with aurene and other colors in Vases
Bowls and Shades—

Aurene was derived from the Latin Aur (Gold) and
I added the ene for Sheen.

Did not know Mr. Putz and my recollection of the
Union Glass Co was that their products were not
worth a damn—

As to Querel. This was an offshoot from the
Tiffany. Sorry do not have any information
about them.

Yours truly
Fred L. Carter.

CORNING GLASS WORKS
CORNING, NEW YORK

MANUFACTURING
DEPARTMENT



Oct. 31st 1945.

J Stanley Bros Inc
Kalamazoo, Mich

Dear Mr. Brothers.

Answering yours of the 20th Oct. The Glass Illustrated
and returned herewith was made by Jimmy Nash at
the Corona Glass Works. Nash ran these works for a
short time after L. C. Tiffany retired. -

Calate Glass was used as a Base for Casing with
different colors as well as the metallic Aurene,
decorations in different colors as well as aurene
threads were applied in the form of peacocks feathers
Flowers Leaves, etc. Sorry I do not have a piece
that I can send you. Re Thumb nail Sketches.
Possibly if you had used the whole hand your
information would have been more accurate

Yours

Edith Carver.

P.S. do you want this returned

CORNING GLASS WORKS
CORNING, NEW YORK

MANUFACTURING
DEPARTMENT



Nov 12th 1945.

J. Stanley Brothers Inc
Kalamazoo Mich

Dear Mr. Brothers

Answering yours of the 2^d - Douglas Nash was the
Son of Arthur Nash "an Englishman by the way" who made
it possible for Tiffany to make Faville, he was manager
of the Corona works.

Yes I made a lot of Aureus for Havell and just after
the first world war -

Re Vase if you care to send for me to see I can
then tell you what I think about it.

Yours
Fred Larder.

CORNING GLASS WORKS
CORNING, NEW YORK

MANUFACTURING
DEPARTMENT



April 15th 1952.

Dear Mr. Brothers

about 1922. Thanks for your of the 7th - the first sketch was one of many decorative pieces made at Steuben with different colored decorations.

The second sketch was one of a number of heavy pieces and called Cleutha or Clouded Glass - made about 1920 -

Re photo. for Galli' and Daum freres - made some fine things. evidently it was a french idea of Cameo Glass -

as to D'Arzentat the name is new to me evidently an offshoot from Galli'

Yes at the present time I am fine the Es will remain open during this month

Exhibition

Yours
Fred W. Carder.

CORNING GLASS WORKS
CORNING, NEW YORK

MANUFACTURING
DEPARTMENT



April 16th 1932.

Dear Mr. Brother.

In my letter to you yesterday I forgot.
to answer your query on Mason Glass -
The Vase is first painted over with a good
Transparent Varnish. -

When dry the white wax is applied with
Bone or Wood Modelling tools =

To insure the wax from getting dirty it should
be kept in a trim Rag - where Bits can
be picked up with the tools and transferred
to the Vase

Yours truly
Ladd Gardner.

✓

AURENE is an art glass originated by Frederick Carder (perhaps his most famous American commercial achievement), and was made from 1904 until 1932 by the Steuben Glass Works, Corning, N. Y. The glass has a metallic iridescence that practically defies description, with changeable and mingling colors of blue, green, gold, ruby, violet and intermediate shades (this changeable mingling of colors being produced by the crackled surface reflecting different wave lengths of light).

The shapes are composed of a basic glass cased with an outer metallized-iridized layer, and Mr. Carder had to find a basic glass having the correct coefficient of expansion before the outer layer could be applied to it without fracturing the glass.

In manufacturing the ware this outer layer was colorless when it was applied to the basic glass, but after the glass had been shaped, and while it was still in a plastic condition on the pontil rod, the surface (containing one of the rare metallic oxides) was subjected to a reducing gas that produced its metallic surface. Then, while the glass was still in a red-hot condition, it was sprayed with a chloride salt to give the metallic surface its iridescent sheen.

It may be of interest to add that CALCITE (which see) was coated (used as a base for casing) with Aurene. This produced glass having an opaque interior and an metallic and iridized exterior.

A large amount of Aurene was made for Haviland & Co and marked "AURENE - Haviland" just after the First World War.

Mr. Carder originated the name, using "Aur" (the Latin for Gold, which the glass contains) and adding the "ene" for sheen.

Fall 1911

Aurene is a Glass which has the precious metals dissolved therein and kept in an oxidizing condition after the article is made and on the pontil it is subjected to a reducing gas - this brings to the surface of the glass a metallic coating from the glass itself. This metallic coating is now sprayed with a different metal salt - this produces the iridescent surface by breaking up the metallic skin into very fine lines which reflect & refract the light -

1001

STEUBEN

DIVISION OF CORNING GLASS WORKS

GENERAL OFFICES

CORNING, NEW YORK

STEUBEN GLASS INC.

NEW YORK SHOP - 718 FIFTH AVENUE

CHICAGO SHOP - 900 NO MICHIGAN AVE.

PALM BEACH SHOP - 307 WORTH AVENUE

Dec 12/1955

J. Stanley Brothers Inc
Kalamazoo Mich

Dear Sir,

Answering yours of 16th Oct. -
Aurum Glass has some of the precious metals dissolved therein and kept in an oxidized state - after the article is made by the usual methods and while hot on the pontil it is subjected to a reducing Gas. which "Brings to the surface a metallic coating." if this is ^{next} sprayed with another metallic Chloride it will pucker this metallic skin into fine lines which refract & reflect the light. -

"Lalavira is where a design of a different Colored Glass is enclosed between two Glasses. and then Blown larger in size -

Silverone is a Glass coated with Silver leaf while hot. & then sprinkled with Glass float either Crystal or Colored to prevent oxidation.

Sculptured Lalavira is Etched deeply with Hydrofluoric Acid & then sand blasted. Yours Fred L. Carter.

February
10th
1956

Mr. Frederick Carder,
Corning Glass Works,
Corning, New York.

Dear Mr. Carder:

In writing me recently in response to a query of mine you overlooked giving me a few details to fill in on a short biographic sketch. When you were with Stevens & Williams at Brierley Hill in what year did you start to establish a class for the workmen to instruct them in designing, etc. And will you tell me briefly about your work in teaching, and where this took place.

I also note that you did not return the description of Aurene which I sent in my last letter.

Do you have anything in the way of a small piece of signed sculpture (casting) that you might care to sell?

yes I have a Number from 100 -

With kindest personal wishes, I am

Cordially, *if you should be coming this way in the*
J. Stanley Brothers, Jr. Summer would be glad to show the
J. STANLEY BROTHERS, JR., *by you*
2229 La Crosse,
Kalamazoo, Michigan.

*about 1881 or 2. I obtained a position as designer
at Stevens & Williams Brierly Hill Glass Works
on ~~1881~~ - I started a drawing class with the workmen
so that the workmen would understand a drawing of
a new design - this later became an Art Class under
the Stourbridge School of Art -
later an art class was started at Worsley and
later became a full School of Art - I was master of
this School for 10 years before I came to the U.S.
JC*

FRED'K CARDER
249 PINE STREET
CORNING, N. Y.

Nov 3^d 1912.

Stanley Brothers Inc

Dear Sir

Answering yours of the 31st Oct.
- Lulama was made about 1912.
- Alabaster 1907.

- Cluthra or Cloudy. Various and
opaque colors were used.

- Rosaline Gold Rush over alabaster

Your ideas re Gold Rush are
correct. If it is turned quickly,
it becomes a lovely color as on
looking through a gemstone.
Yellow resembles to the Gold Leaf
re Dureau. This was made as
a lighting glass for Booth and shades
re your slides Nos 1 to 6 are
slides all the others are either
R.T.O.

Austrian or Cheekstoea
Sheds enclosed.

Yours Truly
Gardner.

February
11th
1963

Mr. Frederick Carder,
249 Pine Street,
Corning, N. Y.

My dear Mr. Carder:

I am wondering how this rugged old winter has been treating you. It has been pretty rough on us out here in Michigan, and I certainly will bless the days when our spring shall have arrived to bring us continued sunshine and warmer temperatures.

By the way, I have been wanting to tell you that I saw the Rockwell collection before I left Corning in October, and I thought it simply magnificent. Were all of these pieces made before approximately 1933?

- ④ Can you recall when you made the little three-stemmed (rustic) bud vases in the Rockwell collection?

I also wish you would clear up the following for me.

- 1 When did you first make ROSALINE?
- 2 When was IVRENE (not Calcite) first made?
Have I IVRENE correctly spelled?
How would you describe the color of IVRENE?
- 3 What prompted the name of CINTRA?
When was CINTRA first made?

I certainly hope this finds you enjoying the best of health.
And with every otherwise good wish, I am

Cordially,

J. Stanley Brothers, Inc.

- 1 about 1912.
- 2 " 1916 white iridized
- 3 a corned bead means fine
Ground Glass
- ④ about 1906.

all from Henry so they may not be correct
Frieda Carder