

Firing and Dram Glass Feet:

A look at the foot forms within opaque and colour twist stems.

Barrington Haynes lists a separate 'firing foot' (p.199), whereas today we often assign this use to any thick, solid foot, and its attached glass would be known as a 'firing glass', rather than a 'dram glass'.

As an aside, the impression gained is that the stems are sometimes the leftover (or broken) sections of longer twist stems.

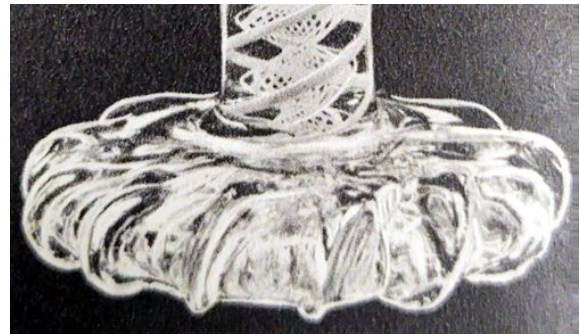
The bowls are often ogee, but also found are ovoid, cup and trumpet forms.

There are several different forms of feet:

- Plain (not dealt with here).
- Flanged (not dealt with here).
- **Oversewn (or 'Overstrung')**: Barrington Haynes notes a difference, but his oversewn foot (Pl.78a) is basically a flatter, more melted in version of his overstrung foot (Pl.60b). This would make it more suited to dram glasses rather than firing glasses.
- **Terraced**: Again, a thick, heavy foot, and a version of the terraced foot found on wine glasses and candlesticks. When they are thinner and less substantial, the glass is normally given the name 'dram glass'.



**Barrington Haynes
Oversewn Foot (from Pl.78a)**



**Barrington Haynes
Overstrung Foot (from Pl.60b)**

There is more than one way to make some of these foot-types:

- Plain (not dealt with here).
- Flanged (not dealt with here).
- **Oversewn**: Barrington Haynes describes a long-winded and incorrect method of adding the lines: trailed on one at a time. In fact, they are the result of dipping a gather of glass into a vertically-ribbed optic mould. The foot is formed by dropping the resultant patterned gather onto the stem and squashing it. The moulded ribs stay cooler than the rest of the glass and lose very little of their sharpness. His 'oversewn' foot has been reheated to allow it to be squashed flatter, and the ribs have begun to melt in.
- **Terraced**: Bickerton (p.21) mentions that "terracing allowed extra strength to be built into the construction of the foot". Not so - what adds strength is the amount of glass used, and the concentric rings are merely a decoration. Although, conceivably, they could be made by dropping a gather of glass onto a marver, flattening it, then pressing the rings into it before adding the stem at the centre, they are more likely made in the same way as their thinner cousins on wine glasses and the domed variety on candlesticks. They start life as a blown bubble into which the rings are scored using the jacks, then adding it to the stem and opening it to form the foot.

Mark Taylor and David Hill - The Glassmakers

January 2024

References:

Barrington Haynes, E. (1948) 'Glass Through the Ages' (1970 reprint)

Bickerton, L.M. (1971) 'An Illustrated Guide to Eighteenth-Century English Drinking Glasses'