Spring! Time to Get Organized

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SPRING! TIME TO GET ORGANIZED

Fig. 1: Time to get organized. An example from my new database.

Here's my ***new*** database for my Brown and White transferware collection. I'm finally getting organized. I created it because my word processing program just provided me with loose sheets of paper that I would need to (*four letter word*) **file**. An Excel spreadsheet, while sortable, isn't flexible enough. What I needed was something ***searchable (like Google)***, so I could find any dish instantly. Or find ***all*** the pieces that were made by a particular maker. Or find ***all*** the pieces that have the same border. And then, of course, I want to ***sort*** them by pattern name and version number. And I want to ***print*** out that group as a ***list***. And ***export*** the list, complete with pictures and source prints, to a ***pdf file;*** so I can ***share*** them with someone else in the Transferware Collectors Club.

So, I need a custom database because I want a file that is:

- searchable by collection number, TCC Database number, pattern name, maker *or* anything else.
- searchable for groups of items (i.e. **FIND** all brown, Ridgway, teapots).
- sortable by pattern, color, mugs, tureens, teacups, you name it.
- transformable into a list of related items.
- printable as a single item or a list.
- customizable with pictures, source prints, dates, notes.
- exportable into files that are shareable with others.

YES, DATABASES ARE COOL

Fig. 2: Layout of my database.

And learning how to use the software isn't quick and easy. But, the TCC Database is a great guide to get you started, because it already has 95% of the fields you want in your database. So here is **layout 1** of my database. See Figure 2 (i.e. this is the structure behind each record I will create).

As you can see from Figure 2, I added and modified some fields: I wanted my own unique "Collection Number," so I could turn a plate over, search for the number on the back and

immediately find it on my computer. I wanted four big picture fields and a line for the approximate date of manufacture. I added fields for price, currency and purchase date.

One of the first orders of business was to design my collection stickers. I went online to Avery.com and chose a small round label just under 1/2" diameter. I used brown and green type and gold stars, so I couldn't confuse 6's and 9's. Then I had Avery pre-number them, so I couldn't accidentally duplicate a number. These are my sweet little labels, printed by Avery.
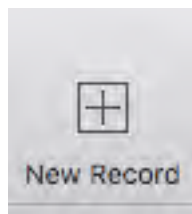

Fig. 3: My labels.

Since I've just started this database, I know that I will be adding, changing and expanding the fields as I go along. But, for now, I'm ready to start creating *records* for every piece I own.

I HATE TO TYPE

Now for the best part. Although I've created my database from scratch with FileMaker Pro 14 software for the Mac (but it will also work in Windows, of course), I don't have to re-type information from the TCC Database to my database; I merely *copy and paste*, whether it be pictures or text (see Addendum for how to **copy and paste**). Here's a quick demonstration:

- To create a new **record** for my "Chinese Pastime" soup bowl, I click on the **new record icon** in my database**.**

Fig. 4: New record icon.

- FileMaker automatically numbers this new record with the next sequential, unique number.
- Now I search the TCC Database and find the "Chinese Pastime" patterns. I compare the versions and see that I've got version "01."
- Then, I **copy and paste** the TCC Pattern Name and Version Number into my form.
- I type in the color, a description, and add measurements.
- Finally, I **copy and paste** the maker, pottery dates, location, source print and notes.

If, by luck, my dish is already in the TCC Database, I can even **copy and paste** the pictures into my record! In all, I've made room for 6 pictures: four for the dish and border, one for the back stamp and one for the source print.   Remember now, nothing in

my database is final FINAL. I can always edit, update, resize and add. If I get better, sharper pictures, I can drop them in anytime. I just look at the back of my plate to find my collection number, type **Command F** for **FIND**, enter my number, hit enter and paste in my new image.

SORTING, WHAT IS SORTING?

		Pattern	Version	TCC DB		Approx Date	Maker	Description
	21				Footed Cup			Same border pattern as Three Pagodas
	19	Boy Riding an		15718	Child's Mug			Chinese Boys on an Ox and an Ostrich
	31	Chinese Villa		15377	6-sided, child's			Chinese couple, Chinese house, pink luster,
	25	Chinoiserie Ruins			Dish	1805-1820		Two figures, one with a parasol, in front of a
	32	Cupid And The		9880	Cup Plate			Cupid is giving a swan some nectar from a
	34	Eastern Port	01	15643	Bowl			A well outside a city with horse solders, a
	22	Three Pagodas		15376	Footed Plate			Two Ladies in European Dress walking, 3
	26	Chinoiserie Fern or		66	Jug	1805-1815	Cambrian Pottery -	Chinese landscape with large fern and
	28	Chinoiserie Fern or		66	Bowl	1813	Cambrian Pottery -	Chinese landscape with large fern and
	33	Imari Handpainted			Lobed edge,	1805	Coalport	Georgian Hybrid Hard Paste Porcelain Dish
	17	72 or Orient	01	9215	Plate		Davenport	Two Exotic Birds, Butterflies and Flowers
	5	Chinese Pastime	01	4446	Deep Dinner		Davenport	Boy and Girl Fishing
	23	Chinese Pastime	01	4446	Soup Bowl		Davenport	Boy and Girl Fishing
	6	Chinese Pastime	02	4748	Plate		Davenport	Boy and Girl with Hoop and Pinwheel
	3	Chinese Pastime	03	6340	Platter		Davenport	Two Europeans in a Palenquin
	4	Chinese Pastime	05	7751	Covered		Davenport	Three Children Whipping the Top

Fig 5: Sorting example.

Why do I want to sort? The TCC Database is sorted, so why is this different?

Figure 5 is a list of pots I sorted by manufacturer, pattern name and then version number. And this is what's amazing ... just by looking at my list I can see that I have a pattern (#21) that has no TCC assigned name or number. That means, I will send pictures of my footed cup to the TCC editors for researching, naming and numbering.

I can also see that I have seven patterns with no known maker.

I have two "Chinoiserie Ferns" — one's a jug and the other a bowl. If I were to buy a teapot in this pattern and enter it in the database, my new sorted list would put the teapot right under the two other pieces and I would instantly see that I have three pieces in this pattern.

Looking at my "Chinese Pastime" dishes, I can also see that I have three pieces in the TCC Database identified as version #01. I have a version #02 and #03. But I'm missing version #04. Something to look out for!

Lists can be customized. Maybe you don't want a thumbnail picture. Maybe you'd like to know what patterns are missing source prints. All doable. And more. Furthermore, I can tell you, in the first three weeks of working with my database and entering information from the TCC site, I have learned so much about my dishes!

ADDENDUM

How to Copy and Paste

No more re-typing. This is a useful technique to know no matter what software you are using.

First: With your cursor, press and *drag down* on the text (or picture) you want to copy in the TCC Database.

It will change color. See Figure 6. Keep practicing until you can select just the block of text you want. Lift up on the cursor. Your selection will look like this:

Additional information:
Dinner plate, 10.6 inches, printed in purple as well as one measuring 10.5 inches, printed in green. The pattern name appears in an interesting cartouche topped with two Chinamen, but with no maker's mark. Godden1964, however, shows the mark as #1186 with the name 'Davenport' underneath. Many of the pieces are impressed with the Davenport name as well as the printed pattern name cartouche seen here. The border is an alternating pattern of floral cartouches. This fishing scene and mark are illustrated in WilliamsWeberII1986 on p.526, in Williams2008 p.89, and in Snyder1997 p.51. The romantic center scenes in this pattern differ on the various items in the dinner set
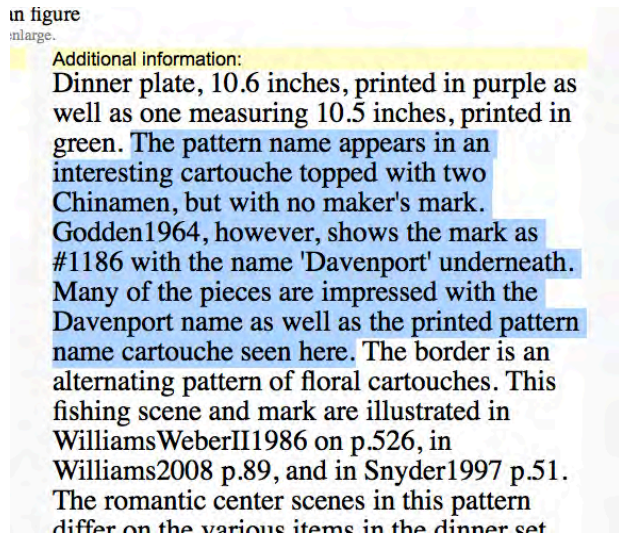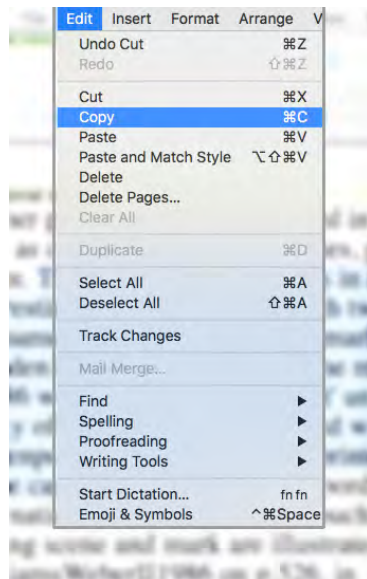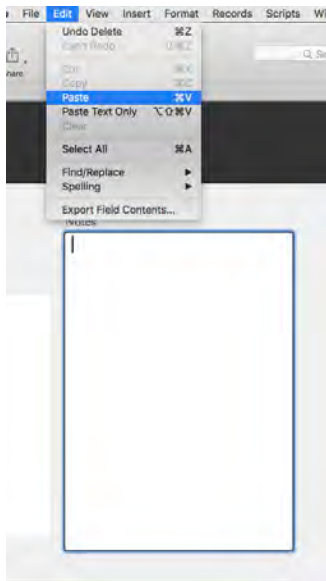
Fig. 6: Copy text.

Next: find the **EDIT** menu at the top of your browser's screen. Click on it and choose **COPY**. See Figure 7.
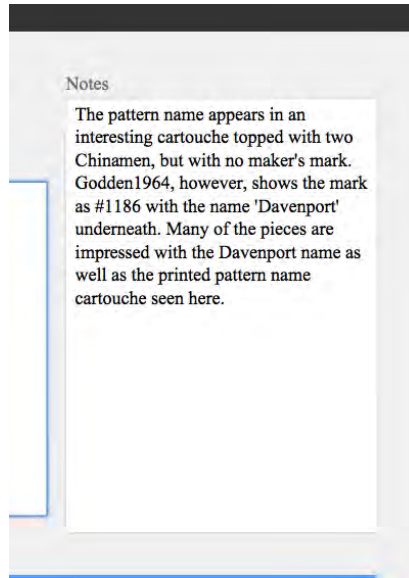
Fig. 7: Edit menu. The **COPY** command is highlighted.

Fig. 8: Paste selection in FileMaker Edit mode.

Voila! The sentences you copied from the TCC Database now appears in the text box of your FileMaker database. See Figure 9.

No more typing!

Now, switch over to your FileMaker database. Place your cursor (|) in the empty field where you want the text to go. You will see it highlighted.

Next, go to the **EDIT** pull-down menu and select **PASTE**. See Figure 8.

Notes

The pattern name appears in an interesting cartouche topped with two Chinamen, but with no maker's mark. Godden1964, however, shows the mark as #1186 with the name 'Davenport' underneath. Many of the pieces are impressed with the Davenport name as well as the printed pattern name cartouche seen here.

Fig. 9: Pasted text.

Credits

Article compiled by David Hoexter.
Images and content provided by the author, Susan Ferguson.

If you have a suggestion for or would like to contribute to the TCC Database Discoveries series, please contact us at webadmin@transcollectorsclub.org.

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