

Encyclopedia of Manufacturer's Marks on Glass Containers

B



Compiled and Edited by
The Bottle Research Group

Preface to the Encyclopedia of Manufacturer's Marks on Glass Containers

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The purpose of this encyclopedia is to update the venerable (and outdated) classic *Bottle Makers and Their Marks*, published by Julian Harrison Toulouse in 1971. Toulouse did a fantastic job, using the available technology of the 1960s. Much of his information came in the form of letters – now frequently referred to as snail-mail – generally handwritten and filled with semi-accurate or inaccurate information. It is remarkable how well he was able to create his 625-page study. However, that study is 42 years old in 2013. It is time for an update.

Background

The Bottle Research Group (BRG) is a consortium of archaeologists and other interested researchers dedicated to the study of glass containers. Our origins date to some point in 2002, when Bill Lindsey e-mailed Bill Lockhart, wanting to share information about bottles. The two rapidly became friends. Carol Serr first contacted Lockhart on August 8, 2003, because one of Lockhart's e-books contained the only example of a Clysmic bottle Serr could find online. On March 4, 2004, the three began group discussions about bottles.

Although the focus of the three researchers was very general, Lockhart, conducting research on soda bottles in El Paso, Texas, had become concerned because there was no information on the T-in-a-keystone logo that he was finding on El Paso bottles. Toulouse was silent on the subject, and none of the other publications about bottle markings offered any information. After considerable searching, Lockhart published an article on the Keystone-T logo and other marks used by the Knox Glass Bottle Co. After reading the article, David Whitten – a collector, researcher, and owner of a website about glass manufacturer's marks – joined the BRG on March 19, 2004. Whitten withdrew from the group in August 2005 to deal with other interests. He has remained a contributor, and his manufacturer's mark website continues to be one of the best quick-reference sites on the subject.

After discussing bottles with Carol Serr for some time, Pete Schulz joined the BRG on October 21, 2005. By this time, the BRG was having regular annual field trips and had seriously adopted the study of manufacturer's marks. The researchers officially adopted the title of the Bottle Research Group in 2006. In March 2010, Schulz suffered a disabling stroke and had to become inactive in the group. As of 2013, Schulz remains inactive, and his presence is sorely missed.

On July 28, 2010, Beau Schriever e-mailed Lockhart to discuss Clorox bottles. Schriever hosted Lockhart (and his wife, Wanda Wakkinen) for a tour of a Fort Bayard, New Mexico, trash dump from November 23-25, 2010. On January 22, 2011, Schriever became a member of the BRG. The four continue to comprise the core group of the BRG.

The actual picture, however, is *much* larger. The BRG has developed a huge network of contributors, who may only supply information about a single bottle, jar or factory – or who may regularly or sporadically contribute information. Throughout this encyclopedia, we have recognized most of these outstanding helpers as coauthors or contributors by citing specific contributions and/or by thanking them in the “Acknowledgments” areas of each chapter. We can attribute the quality and quantity of our information to this group of well over 200 archaeologists, collectors, historians, and just plain folks who find bottles – who share their knowledge and expertise with us.

Earlier, we mentioned the limitations that Toulouse worked under as he amassed his data during the 1960s. Because Toulouse worked in the glass industry (Owens-Illinois Glass Co.), he had access to many of the trade journals and a working knowledge of the players in the glass game at the time. In addition, he belonged to the collector's glass network begun by May Jones (first in California, then in Nara Visa, New Mexico). Through Jones, Toulouse received input via letters from collectors all over the U.S.

We have a tremendously expanded network and access to sources. Internet searches open vast vistas that were unknown 40 years ago, especially into the realm of scanned books and articles, archaeological networks, and collectors' websites. In addition, through the medium of e-mail and listserves, we are in contact with literally hundreds of archaeologists, collectors, historians, historical societies, museums, and just interested people. We can scan photos and

drawings and capture photos from featured websites, eBay, and other online auctions. We are also in touch with professionals in today's glass industry and numerous authors and researchers. In short, we have hundreds of resources that were unavailable in the days of Toulouse.

How to Use this Encyclopedia

The Encyclopedia is divided into letter sections (A, B, C, etc.) with some combinations (e.g., the DE section). Each of these letter sections contains a series of titles, usually the name or a glass manufacturer or a family name (e.g., the Bell Bottle Co. or the The Blanke Companies – Jobbers in Milk Bottle). Occasionally, the title will reflect a logo that was used by more than one glass house (e.g., B.F.G.Co. Logos). Titles were also selected according the way the *glass firm* styled itself. For example, the Charles Boldt Glass Co. will be found in the “C” section – rather than the “B” section.

There is *no* classification system that will work perfectly for assigning positions for either glass factories or manufacturer's marks. To help our readers locate information, we have provided two tables (each in its own file or chapter – depending on whether you are using the printed or online format). The first table is a list of all factories found within a specific letter section. For example, the factory list in the “B” section includes intuitively obvious plants, such as the Belleville Glass Co., the Belle Pre Bottle Co., and Burgin & Sons. However, it also includes derivative factories, including Bodine & Brothers, Bodine & Sons, Bodine, Thomas & Co., and other firms following Joel F. Bodine's, Washington Glass Works – and counterintuitive names like California Packing Co. (associated with Baker & Cutting), Cicero Glass Co. (a precursor to the Bartlett-Collins Glass Co.), and the Thrift Jar Co. (a subsidiary of the Buck Glass Co.). Each listing will direct the reader to the individual chapter where a discussion of the glass plant is found (e.g., the Phoenix Glass Works is discussed in the Burgin & Sons chapter).

A second table will direct the reader to specific chapters that discuss individual manufacturer's marks. For example, the B&BSCO. mark will be discussed in the Other B Marks chapter. The B.G.Co. logo shows up in both the Belleville Glass Co. *and* the Binghamton Glass Co. chapters. A search in the “M” table will reveal that the MEYER-BLANKE mark is discussed in the chapter entitled The Blanke Companies – Jobbers in Milk Bottle, located in the “B” section.

Other Important Information

Information locked into glass containers is *not* limited to manufacturer's marks, of course. The glass house logos are always related to the type of container, sometimes the color, the manufacturing techniques involved, and other codes. We have tried to address all of these variables in our discussions of marks.

The logos themselves are also much more complex than Toulouse (and most other researchers) indicated. For example, various shapes can tell us things about both time and company. In most 19th century beer bottles, for example, the "o" in "Co" can be regular or superscript, usually with an underline (e.g., MGCo or MGC^o). The superscript is consistently earlier in bottles made by most glass houses of the period. Marks used by the Streater Bottle & Glass Co. were made in several formats, each with its temporal association; it is important to know what shape was used as well as the S.B.&G.Co initials. A Circle-A logo on a bottle that was mouth-blown into a mold was used by the Richmond plant of the American Glass Co. before 1920, while the same mark on a machine-made bottle was used by the Armstrong Cork Co. from 1938 to 1969.

The other codes on the bottles may often be useful. Although mold codes on 19th century beer bottles and some other styles can give us a sense of a bottle's age, they become increasingly less helpful as we move into the machine era. Some companies with multiple factories also used factory codes. Where applicable, we have discussed these. Some numbers are catalog or model codes. These can identify in some cases what the bottle or jar looked like – even if only a fairly small fragment is available.

Of greatest importance, the American Bottle Co. began using date codes on some of its bottles in 1906. A few breweries and soda bottlers had included four-digit date codes on their bottles during the last half of the 19th century, but these were scarce. Once the American Bottle Co. began using first one-digit then two-digit date codes, it began a trend that others quickly emulated. By 1930, most soda and milk bottles included date codes. In 1934, federal law mandated date codes on all bottles made to hold liquor. We have included a discussion of date (and other) codes whenever applicable. We hope that our format and information will provide a useful tool for dating and bottle identification.

Volume B

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Table of Contents

Volume B

Preface.	i
Table of Contents.	vii

Logos and Glass Houses

Bagley & Co..	1
Histories.	1
Bagley, Wild & Co., Knottingly, Yorkshire, England.	1
Bagley & Co., Knottingly, Yorkshire, England.	1
Bagley & Co., Ltd., Knottingly, Yorkshire, England.	2
Containers and Marks.	3
B&C ^{LD} and B & C ^O . LTD.	3
B&C ^O	4
Bagley & Co Ld or BAGLEY & Co LTD.	5
Discussion and Conclusions.	5
Sources.	6
The Baker Brothers and the Baltimore Glass Works.	9
Histories.	9
Baltimore Glass Works.	9
William Baker, Baltimore.	10
Baker Bros. & Co., Baltimore.	11
Spring Garden Glass Works, Baltimore.	11
Baltimore Glass Works under the Baker Brothers.	12
Baker Glass Co..	13
Bottles and Marks.	16
BB&CO.	16
BAKER BROS. & CO..	18
BALT ^O	19
BALTIMORE.	20

BALTIMORE GLASS WORKS.	22
Fruit Jars.. . . .	24
MONUMENTAL CITY bottle.. . . .	25
SPRING GARDEN GLASS WORKS.	25
Discussion and Conclusions.	26
Acknowledgments.	29
Sources.. . . .	29
Baker & Cutting and the Firms of Francis Cutting.	35
Histories.. . . .	35
A.D. Baker, San Francisco.. . . .	35
A.D. Baker & Co., San Francisco.	35
Baker & Cutting, San Francisco.	35
San Francisco Glass Works.	36
Containers and Marks.	38
BAKER & CUTTING / GLASS & PICKLE MFRS. / SAN.	38
San Francisco Glass Works.	39
Cutting & Co., San Francisco.	40
Containers and Marks.	40
CUTTING & CO..	41
SAN FRANCISCO GLASS WORKS.	41
M. SELLER & CO..	42
The Frisco R..	43
Cutting Packing Co., San Francisco.. . . .	44
Containers and Marks.	44
CUTTING PACKING CO..	44
C.P.CO..	44
Monogram.	45
Griffin.	45
California Fruit Canners Assoc., San Francisco.	46
California Packing Corp..	46
Discussion and Conclusions.	46
Sources.. . . .	47

Ball Brothers Glass Mfg. Co.....	51
History.	51
Ball Brothers, Buffalo, New York.	51
Ball Brothers Glass Mfg. Co., Muncie, Indiana.....	53
Ball Brothers Co., Inc.....	57
Ball Corp.....	59
Later Ball Reorganizations.....	59
Ball Brothers Machines.	60
Containers and Marks.	64
ABGA.....	66
BALL BROS. GLASS MFG. CO..	66
BBGMCo monograms.	67
BALL or Ball (cursive).	68
Reasons for Logo Changes.....	71
BI.	74
B in cursive.	74
BF.....	74
SG.....	74
Lustre.	74
Liquor Number.....	75
Discussion and Conclusions.	75
Acknowledgments.	77
Sources.....	77
From Premium Glass Co. to Bartlett-Collins.....	81
Histories.....	81
Cicero Glass Co., Cicero, Indiana.	81
Containers and Marks.	82
FIRST PREMIUM.....	82
Pioneer Flint Glass Co., Coffeyville, Kansas.....	83
Containers and Marks.	83
PIONEER.....	83
PREMIUM – horizontal.....	84

Premium Glass Co., Coffeyville, Kansas.....	85
Containers and Marks.	85
PREMIUM – arch.	85
PREMIUM COFFEYVILLE KAS.....	87
Overmyer’s Second Patent.....	88
Premium Glass Co., Sapulpa, Oklahoma.....	90
Containers and Marks.	92
Premium IMPROVED.....	92
Bartlett-Collins Glass Co., Sapulpa, Oklahoma.	93
Containers and Marks.	96
BACO.....	96
B-C.....	96
B-C in two joined circles.....	97
Discussions and Conclusions.....	98
Premium Jar.....	98
Milk Bottles.....	99
Other Bottles or Jars.	100
Acknowledgments.....	100
Sources.....	100
Beck, Phillips – the Bakewells – and the Brunswick Pharmacal Co..	111
Histories.....	111
The Bakewell Enterprises, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.	111
Bakewell & Ensell.....	111
Benjamin Bakewell & Co.....	112
Bakewell, Page & Bakewell.	112
Containers and Marks.	112
BP&B.....	112
Bakewell, Page & Bakewells.....	113
Bakewell & Anderson.	113
Containers and Marks.	113
BAKEWELL & ANDERSON / PITTSBURGH. ...	113
Bakewells & Co..	114

Bakewell & Pears.....	114
Bakewell, Pears & Co.....	114
Containers and Marks.	115
NEWMANS PATENT.....	115
J.D. WILLOUGHBY.	116
B.P.&Co..	117
BAKEWELL.	118
Bakewell, Pears & Co., Limited.	118
Beck, Phillips & Co..	118
Beck, Phillips & Co., Birmingham (Pittsburgh).	118
Containers and Marks.	118
B.P.&Co..	118
BP&So.	120
BECK PHILLIPS & CO. PITTS. PA..	120
Brunswick Pharmacal Co..	121
Johnson & Johnson, Brunswick, New Jersey.	121
Papoid Co., Brunswick, New Jersey.	121
Brunswick Pharmacal Co., Brunswick, New Jersey.	121
Containers and Marks.	124
B.P.Co. and Mirrored Ps in a Circle.	124
Discussion and Conclusions.	127
Acknowledgments.	128
Sources.....	128
Bell Bottle Co.....	133
History.	133
Bell Bottle Co., Fairmount, Indiana.....	133
Containers and Marks.	135
BBCo.	135
Milk Bottles.	136
Catsup Bottles.	137
Prescription Bottle.	138
Soda Bottles.....	138

BBCo in an elongated diamond.	138
6 (milk bottle code).	138
Discussion and Conclusion.	139
Hypothesis.	140
Sources.	140
Bellaire Bottle Co.	143
History.	143
Bellaire Bottle Co., Bellaire, Ohio.	143
Containers and Marks.	147
Acorn.	147
B.B..	148
Packer Bottle.	148
Curtice Brothers Catsup Bottles.	148
BBCo.	151
Discussion and Conclusion.	151
Sources.	152
Belle Pre Bottle Co.	155
History.	155
Belle Pre Bottle Co., Alexandria, Virginia.	155
Containers and Marks.	157
BP in the Massachusetts Seal.	159
B.P.17 or BP-17.	160
BPBCOo.	161
BELLE PRE BOTTLE CO.	161
BELLE PRE BOT CO NOV 21 99.	162
Acknowledgments.	162
Sources.	163
Belleville Glass Co.	165
History.	165
Belleville Glass Co., Belleville, Illinois.	165

Containers and Marks.	166
Soft Drink Bottles.	166
Fruit Jars.. . . .	168
Wax Sealers.	168
Burlington BGCo Jars.	169
BGCo Monogram.. . . .	170
Drug Store/Pharmacy Bottles.. . . .	170
Beer Bottles.	171
Finishes on Export Beer Bottles.. . . .	173
Glass Blower's Whimsey.. . . .	176
BGCo Variations.	177
B.G.Co. and BGC ^o	177
Discussion and Conclusions.	180
Beer Bottles.	181
Soft Drink Bottles.	183
Wax-Sealer Fruit Jars.. . . .	184
Other Fruit Jars.	184
Conclusion.	184
Acknowledgments.	184
Sources.. . . .	185
Berney-Bond Glass Co..	191
Histories – Berney-Bond Glass Company and Its Predecessors.	191
Berney Glass Co., Bradford, Pennsylvania.	191
Berney Glass Co., Hazelhurst, Pennsylvania.	192
Bond Glass Co., Hazelhurst, Pennsylvania.	192
Berney-Bond Glass Co..	192
Bradford, Pennsylvania.	194
Smethport.. . . .	195
Hazelhurst.	196
Clarion.	198
Columbus, Ohio.. . . .	198
Containers and Marks.	199

BBGCo.....	199
BBGCO48.	200
BB.	202
BB48.	202
Other Berney-Bond Codes.....	205
BB48 <i>and</i> the Owens-Illinois Diamond OI mark.	206
State Seals with “BB” and no Owens-Illinois logo.	209
State Seals with “BB” plus Owens-Illinois logo.	209
Discussion and Conclusions.	211
BBGCo.....	211
BBGCO48 and BB48.....	211
Acknowledgments.	212
Sources.....	213
B.F.G.Co. Logos.....	219
Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania.	219
Beaver Falls Glass Co., Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania.	219
Containers and Marks.	221
B.F.G.Co.....	221
BEAVER FALLS GLASS Co. BEAVER FALLS, PA.....	224
Co-operative Flint Glass Co., Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania.....	224
Co-operative Flint Glass Co., Ltd., Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania.	225
Beaver Falls Glass Co., Ltd., Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania.	226
Toronto, Canada.....	226
History.	226
Beaver Flint Glass Co.....	226
Containers and Marks.	227
B.F.G.CO.....	227
Prescription Bottles.	227
Canuck Ovals and Crown Ovals. ...	228
Poison Bottles.	229
Nursing Bottles.	229
Discussion and Conclusions.	231

Beaver Falls Glass Co.....	231
The Enigmatic S.G. Paisley.....	231
Beaver Flint Glass Co.....	232
Acknowledgments.....	233
Sources.....	233
Binghamton Glass Co. and B.G.CO. on a Crown-Finished Bottle.....	239
Histories.....	239
Binghamton Glass Works, Binghamton, New York.....	239
Binghamton Glass Co., Binghamton, New York.....	241
Containers and Marks.....	243
B.G.W.....	244
B.G.CO.....	246
Diamond-B.....	248
Milk Bottles.....	250
Alternative Possible Candidates.....	250
Bellingham Glass Co., Bellingham, Washington.....	250
Brookfield Glass Co., Brooklyn, New York.....	251
Discussion and Conclusions.....	251
Moxie Soda Bottles.....	253
Sources.....	255
Blake-Hart: The Square Milk Bottles.....	261
Histories.....	261
Irva J. Blake: Blake's Dairy, Sacramento, California.....	261
Harry N. Hart: Hart's Lunch, Sacramento, California.....	262
Blake-Hart Products Co., Sacramento, California.....	262
Containers and Marks.....	262
Distribution.....	263
BLAKE across a milk bottle inside a heart.....	264
Date Codes.....	266
Manufacturers.....	267
Square bottles with no Blake-Hart logos.....	268

Discussion and Conclusions.	269
Sources.	269
The Blanke Companies – Jobbers in Milk Bottles.	271
Histories.	271
Blanke & Hauk Supply Co., St. Louis, Missouri.	271
Containers and Marks.	272
Blanke & Hauk.	272
Blanke & Hauk / Supply Co..	273
Blanke Mfg. & Supply Co., St. Louis, Missouri.	273
Containers and Marks.	274
BLANKE MFG. / & / SUP. CO..	274
BLANKE.	274
Meyer-Blanke Co., St. Louis, Missouri (and other locations).	275
Containers and Marks.	275
MEYER-BLANKE.	275
Blanke-Baer Extract and Preserving Co., St. Louis, Missouri.	276
B. Riley Hauk Supply Co., St. Louis, Missouri.	277
Riley Hauk-Vogelsang Supply Co., St. Louis, Missouri.	277
Hauk Mfg. Co., St. Louis, Missouri.	277
Discussion and Conclusion.	278
Sources.	278
The Bodine Glass Companies.	281
Williamstown, New Jersey.	281
Histories.	281
Joel F. Bodine, Washington Glass Works.	281
Bodine & Sons.	281
Containers and Marks.	282
WILLIAMSTOWN.	282
Bodine & Brothers.	282
Containers and Marks.	282
BODINE & BROTHERS.	282

Bodine, Thomas & Co..	285
Containers and Marks.	286
B.T.&Co..	286
Bodine-Thomas Glass Mfg. Co...	286
Bodine Glass Mfg. Co...	287
Bodine Glass Works.. . . .	287
Williamstown Glass Co..	287
Bridgeton, New Jersey.	288
Bodine & Sons.	288
Containers and Marks.	288
J. BODINE & SONS.	288
BRIDGETON or BRIDGETOWN.. . . .	289
Potter & Bodine.	290
Containers and Marks.	290
J.C. BAKER'S PATENT.	290
POTTER & BODINE.	291
Potter & Bodine (cursive).	296
F.&J. Bodine.	297
Containers and Marks.	297
F.&J. BODINE.. . . .	297
PROTECTOR.	298
THE VALVE JAR.	299
Patents Associated with the Bodine Companies.	301
Bodine & Brothers.	301
August 3, 1858.	301
April 12, 1859.	301
March 26, 1861.	302
Potter & Bodine.	302
April 13, 1858.	302
F.&J. Bodine.	303
December 18, 1866.	303
February 12, 1867.	304

March 10, 1858.	304
Ludlow Patents.	305
June 28, 1859.	305
August 6, 1861.	305
Discussion and Conclusions.	306
Acknowledgments.	307
Sources.	307
Brockway Machine Bottle Co. and Brockway Glass Co..	311
Histories.	311
Brockway Machine Bottle Co., Brockwayville, Pennsylvania.	311
Brockway Machine Bottle Co., Brockway, Pennsylvania.	314
Brockway Glass Co., Brockway, Pennsylvania.	315
Brockway, Inc., various locations.	317
Owens-Brockway, Inc., various locations.	317
Containers and Marks.	317
B.	318
B in circle (Circle-B).	319
B in triple circles.	322
Brockway in upwardly slanted cursive.	323
Fruit Jars.	323
Sur-Grip Mason Jars.	323
Jiffy-Seal.	325
Clear-Vu Mason Jars.	325
Prescription Bottles.	327
Sani-Glas (cursive).	327
Mason Shoulder-Seal Jars.	329
Temperglas.	330
Codes.	330
Discussion and Conclusions.	331
Acknowledgments.	333
Sources.	333

Buck Glass Co.....	339
History.....	339
Nivison Glass Co., Baltimore, Maryland.....	339
Buck Glass Co., Baltimore, Maryland.....	339
Bottles and Marks.....	341
B.....	341
17 B {number}.....	342
Milk Bottles.....	343
Square Milk Bottles.....	343
“Toothache” Milk Bottles.....	344
“B” on Milk Bottles.....	345
Heelcodes.....	346
Basecodes.....	347
Creamers.....	349
Milk Bottle Seals.....	349
Soda Bottles.....	351
B.G.CO.....	351
BUCK GLASS CO.....	352
Thrift Jars.....	353
Company Histories.....	355
Pure Food Process Corp.....	356
Thrift Jar Co.....	356
The Schmitt Patents and THRIFT Trademarks.....	357
Discussion and Conclusions.....	362
Acknowledgments.....	363
Sources.....	363
Burgin & Sons.....	367
Histories.....	367
Phoenix Glass Works, Millville, New Jersey.....	367
Containers and Marks.....	368
B&W.....	368
PHOENIX GLASS WORKS, PHIL ^A	369

Early Philadelphia Firms.	369
Burgin & Sons, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.	370
Containers and Marks.	371
PHILADA GLASSWORKS (arch) / BURGIN & SONS.	371
Discussion and Conclusions.	373
Sources.	373
Butler Bottle Co..	377
History.	377
Butler Bottle Co., Butler, Ohio.	377
Butler Bottle Co., Butler, Pennsylvania.	379
Containers and Marks.	380
24B.	380
B with no number.	380
B in the Massachusetts Seal.	381
Discussion and Conclusions.	382
Acknowledgments.	382
Sources.	383
Other B Marks.	387
Containers and Marks.	387
B.	387
Export Beer Bottles.	387
Bluing Bottles.	388
Milk Bottles.	388
Fruit Jars.	389
Vials.	389
B on Insulators.	389
B in a circle.	390
B in a diamond.	390
User History.	391
Boyd's Crystal Art Glass, Inc..	391
54B.	391

B&BSCo.	392
User History.	393
Brewers' and Bottlers Supply Co..	393
BELLAIRE STAMPING CO..	393
User History.	394
Bellaire Stamping Co..	394
BESTOV.	394
User History.	395
Dairyman's Supply Co..	395
BFBCo.	395
BGCo monogram.	396
BIG PINE KEY GLASS WORKS.	396
User History.	396
Big Pine Key Glass Works.	396
BIXBY.	397
User History.	397
S.M. Bixby & Co..	397
B.K..	397
Probable Manufacturer.	398
Bridgeport Glass Works.	398
B&M.	398
User History.	399
Baker & Martin.	399
B.&M.S.Co.	400
User History.	401
Bottlers' & Manufacturers' Supply Co..	401
BO.	401
BOC.	402
BODE.	403
BOLEY M'F'G. Co.	404
Manufacturer History.	406
Boley Mfg. Co., New York.	406
Boley Mfg. Co., Olean.	406

BPK / GW.	408
THE BRELLE JAR.	409
User History.	409
Brelle Fruit Jar Mfg. Co..	409
B.R.G.CO..	410
Manufacturer History.	411
Blair-Ruehl Glass Co..	411
Blair Glass Co..	411
“BRILLIANTINE”.....	412
BROOKE or BROOKE CO..	412
BROOKLYN GLASS BOTTLE WORKS.....	413
Manufacturer History.	413
Brooklyn Glass Bottle Works.	413
B.&S..	414
Histories of Possible Makers.	414
Beatty & Stillman.	414
Boston & Sandwich Mfg. Co.....	414
THE BURLINGTON.....	415
BUSHWICK GLASS WORKS.	415
Manufacturer History.	415
Bushwick Flint Glass Works.	415
B&W.	416
B.W.&Co..	416
Possible Maker/User Histories.....	417
Beltzhoover, Went & Co.....	417
Bryce, Walker & Co..	418
Burroughs, Wellcome & Co..	419
Discussion and Conclusions.	420
Sources.....	420
Factories and Firms in the B Section.....	429
Manufacturer’s Marks and Other Logos on Glass Containers.....	435
B.....	435