

The Blanke Companies – Jobbers in Milk Bottles

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Louis and William Blanke joined with B. Riley Hauk in a nationally advertised dairy supply business in 1903. Although Hauk parted company with the Blankes in 1911, each continued in the supply trade. One or both of the Blankes were involved in three subsequent companies, while Hauk was connected with three others. While Hauk seems to have used no markings on his bottles, three of the four firms connected with the Blanke name used no less than five different logos on milk bottle bases.

Histories

Blanke & Hauk Supply Co., St. Louis, Missouri (1903-1911)

Louis William Blanke joined with his brother, William F. Blanke and Bernard Riley Hauk to purchase the firm of H. McWilson & Co. in 1903, renaming the business as the Blanke & Hauk Supply Co. William was primarily concerned with his own business, the W.F. Blanke Can & Mfg. Co., although he served as secretary and treasurer for the Blanke & Hauk Supply Co. Louis was the president of the corporation until at least 1906, with Hauk as the vice president. The firm of Blanke & Hauk was “jobbers of modern machinery, appliances and supplies for the creamery, dairy, ice cream maker and poultry man (Leonard 1906:60, 262).

A 1904 letterhead for the Blanke & Hauk Supply Co. noted that the company sold “Modern Machinery & Appliances, Creamery, Dairy, Ice Cream Maker & Poultryman SHARPLES CREAM SEPARATORS” (eBay). Hauk became the president of the corporation at some point and served in that capacity until 1911, when he left the firm to become president and manager of the B. Riley Hauk Supply Co. (Marquis 1912:270).

The St. Louis Building Arts Foundation listed a 350-page “Catalogue No 2, Modern Machinery And Supplies For The Creamery, Dairy And Cheese” from Blanke & Hauk Supply Co., 202-206 Market St. Unfortunately, the catalog was undated. The firm advertised bees in

1910 (Figure 1). Hauk left the business in March 1911, and W.F. Blanke became president of the Blanke Mfg. & Supply Co. (Marquis 1912:61).

Containers and Marks

BLANKE & HAUK (1903-ca. 1906)

An El Paso Dairy Co. bottle was embossed with “BLANKE AND HAUK (arch) / SPECIAL (inverted arch) on the base and was also embossed in a round plate on the body with the phone numbers BELL 340 AUTO 1156 (Figures 2 & 3). According to the city directories, the Auto phone system was used in El Paso from ca. 1906 to 1913, thus providing a date range for the use of the bottles. The few Blanke & Hauk bottles we have seen were mouth blown.



Figure 2 – Blanke & Hauk base

The mark was likely used by the company from its inception in 1903 until the second mark (addressed immediately below) was put into use. This mark is at least scarce, maybe rare. It was probably only used during the early days of the company, although the El Paso bottle suggests that it remained in use until at least 1905-1907.

Frank Bishop reported a milk bottle embossed “SNOW & PALMER” in a plate mold, with “BLANKE & HAUK” on the base. The heel was embossed “PE-32 KEYSTONE.” Milk bottles embossed with “KEYSTONE” are associated with “EMPIRE” marks and the August 13, 1901, Nightingale patent bottles distributed by the Empire Bottle & Supply Co. in the east and O.J. Weber in the west. While there is still a great deal of confusion about the initials “PE,” the bottles were certainly used during the 1901-1918 period.



Figure 1 – Blanke & Hauk bee ad (*Des Moines Iowa Homestead* 3/10/1910)

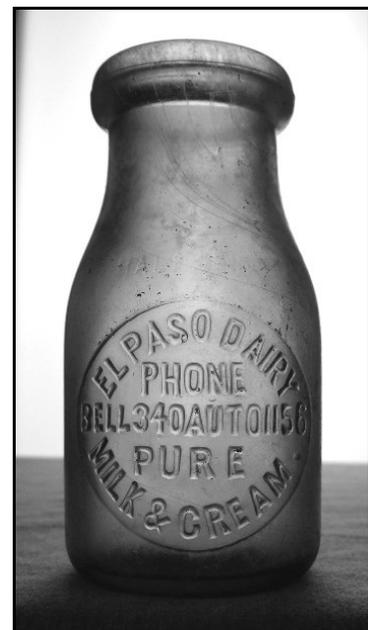


Figure 3 – Blanke & Hauk ½ pint milk bottle – El Paso

BLANKE & HAUKE / SUPPLY Co. (ca. 1906-1911)

Bottles sold on eBay (and one in our possession) were embossed “BLANKE & HAUKE (arch) / SUPPLY Co. / SPECIAL (both horizontal) / St. LOUIS (inverted arch)” on the bases (Figure 4). These spanned the transition from mouth blown to machine made based on eBay photos. This was almost certainly the second mark used by the company and was likely used until the firm dissolved in 1911.



Figure 4 – Blanke & Hauk Supply Co. base (eBay)

Blanke Mfg. & Supply Co., St. Louis, Missouri (1911-ca. 1923)



Figure 5 – Token from Blanke & Hauk (Greever 2011)

Giarde (1980:18) correctly identified the Blanke Manufacturing and Supply Co. as a “jobber” or supplier of milk bottles and other dairy related items. Although he gave no date ranges, he noted that the mark was found on “early milk bottles.” The company actually grew out of Blanke & Hauk and began sometime

during March 1911. Louis Blanke served as president, with his brother, William, as vice president. The firm was listed in 1912 as selling “wholesale creamery supplies” (Marquis 1912:61, 270). The firm was one of the advertisers in the Michigan Agricultural College 1916 Yearbook. Blanke apparently sold tokens to its customers, including one used by the Clover Leaf Dairy (Figure 5).

A 1922 ad in *Creamery and Milk Plant Monthly* (1922:69) named the Blanke Mfg. & Supply Co., St. Louis, Missouri, as “Factors – Engineers – Contractors to the Creamery, Milk Plant, Ice Cream, Dairy

BLANKE MFG. & SUPPLY COMPANY
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI, U. S. A.

FACTORS — ENGINEERS — CONTRACTORS
to the Creamery, Milk Plant, Ice Cream, Dairy, Trade

Jensen Creamery Machinery De Laval Equipment "Sterling" Refrigeration Milwaukee Filers and Cappers Emery Thompson Presses Lefell Boilers Rice & Adams Washers Blue Lane Bottle Washers Simpson Butter Printers Schroeder Homogenizers Yankees Little Giant and Crensey Ice Breakers James Barn Equipment Ruff Evaporators Alvey Conveyors	Mojonnier Equipment Dial Churns Barrells Simplex Equipment "Facile" Testers Lewis & Lison Pumps Stanley Milk Products Equipment Tynes Thermometers Delt Gelatin Lamb Milk Bottles Blanke's Fruits and Extracts Walberg Cases "Wyandotte" "Falcon" Parchment Paper Nails Glassware Smith-Lee Bottle Caps	"Golden State" Milk Powder Blanke's Hardrox Batch Mixer Blanke's Hardrox Starter Cans Sanitary Can Liners Solar-Singers Cans Dacking Tubs Torsion Scales Gaston Platform Scales "Calsons" Nelson Cabinets Corrugated and Solid Fibre Butter Boxes Butter Carboys Purity Containers Blanke's Sanitary Fittings and Tin-ware
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We solicit your inquiries and guarantee satisfaction.

Please mention CREAMERY & MILK PLANT MONTHLY when writing to advertisers.

Figure 6 – Blanke Mfg. & Sup. Co. ad (*Creamery & Milk Plant Monthly* 1922a:69)

Trade” and listed 44 products, including “Lamb Milk Bottles” (Figure 6). Although the details are unclear, the firm may have declared bankruptcy in 1923. A footnote in *Stanford Law Review* (1950-51:325) noted that *Blanke Mfg. & Supply Co. vs. Craig* concerned the attempt to withdraw a bid during a bankruptcy sale.

Containers and Marks

BLANKE MFG. / & / SUP. CO. (1911-ca. 1921)

The Blanke Mfg. & Supply Co. embossed its name in the “BLANKE MFG. (arch) / & / SUP. CO. (inverted arch)” format on the bases of milk bottles it sold (Figure 7). This was probably the first mark used by the company, and it was listed by Giarde (1980:18).



Figure 7 – BLANKE MFG. & SUP. CO. base (eBay)

BLANKE (ca. 1921-ca. 1923)

This mark was embossed in an inverted arch on the bases of some milk bottles. As noted above, the Blanke Mfg. & Supply Co. advertised as using bottles made by the Lamb Glass Co. Since Lamb Glass incorporated in July 1921, Lamb bottles cannot have been sold by the firm prior to that date. Because of the late date (post-1921), BLANKE was probably the last mark used by the Blanke Mfg. & Supply Co. and may only have been used on bottles made by Lamb.

A bottle in our possession had 24 panels and was embossed with “SNOW & PALMER /

COMPANY” on one side and “SEALED / HALF PINT” on the other. The front heel was embossed “L-52,” with “321” on the back heel and “BLANKE” (inverted arch) on the base (Figures 8 & 9). C.H. Snow, of the Snow & Palmer Branch, Beatrice Creamery Co., Bloomington,



Figure 8 – BLANKE base



Figure 9 – L-52 heelmark and BLANKE base

Illinois., was listed as a subscriber to the *Journal of Dairy Science* from 1938 to 1946, but we have discovered nothing more about the company. It is highly probably that Snow & Palmer was independent at some point prior to 1938 and used the BLANKE bottles then.

An eBay auction featured a bottle with the BLANKE basemark and a heelmark of “L.G.CO.52” (Figure 10). The L.G.CO.52 logo was probably the earliest mark used by Lamb, followed by the “L-52” logo. Unfortunately, we have not yet determined when Lamb changed from either of these early marks to the L52 mark (with the “52” nestled into the crook of the “L”), although the final change was probably after the “BLANKE” mark was terminated. The logo was likely used until the end of the company, sometime between 1923 and 1926.



Figure 10 – BLANKE basemark with L.G.CO.52 heelmark (eBay)

Meyer-Blanke Co., St. Louis, Missouri (and other locations) (ca. 1924-at least 2011)

Meyer-Blanke almost certainly grew out of the Blanke Mfg. & Supply Co. According to Missouri Business (2013), Meyer-Blanke incorporated on November 23, 1920 – although ads for the earlier firm ran to at least 1922. It is possible that the new firm began while the older one was still operating, or the ads may have been paid too far into the future for accuracy.

Giarde (1980:72) recognized that the MEYER-BLANKE CO. mark was that of a supplier rather than a manufacturer but otherwise had no knowledge of the firm. The firm apparently continued in the dairy supply business. The Meyer-Blanke Co. remains in operation in 2013 (Missouri Business 2013).

Containers & Marks

MEYER-BLANKE CO. (ca. 1924-1930s)

Schadlich ([ca. 1990]) noted that MEYER BLANKE Co. was embossed on the bases of milk bottles ca. 1900. Although that date is incorrect, we have in our possession a milk bottle

embossed “MEYER-BLANKE CO.” in an inverted arch that wrapped (counterclockwise) almost entirely around the base. The bottle, unfortunately, has no manufacturer’s mark. Similarly marked bottles have appeared on eBay, and one had the L52 mark (with the “52” nestled in the crook of the “L”) embossed on the heel (Figure 11). The bottle styles were popular during the 1930s and 1940s, and the logo was used by the Lamb Glass Co. from ca. 1929 to ca. 1971 or later. We have arbitrarily chosen “1930s” as an ending date for the MEYER-BLANKE logo because other jobbers we have researched ceased using their own marks on milk bottles by that period. The mark could have been used later or could have been discontinued earlier.



Figure 11 – MEYER-BLANKE basemark in counterclockwise format (eBay)



Figure 12 – MEYER-BLANKE basemark in clockwise format (eBay)

A variation was embossed on the base with the same words, but this one was configured in an arch that extended (clockwise) almost entirely around the circumference of the base (Figure 12). We have been unable to determine whether the difference was an engraver’s whim or whether there is some temporal significance to the arched vs. inverted arch variations. Unfortunately, the Lamb Glass Co. rarely if ever used date codes on its bottles.

Blanke-Baer Extract and Preserving Co., St. Louis, Missouri (at least 1930-at least 1944)

We know very little about this company. The Blanke-Bauer Co. of St. Louis advertised for black walnut kernels in several newspapers in 1930 (e.g., *Altoona Herald* 1930), but the blurb gave little hint as to the nature of the business. The firm was still in operation as the Blanke-Baer Extract and Preserving Co. in 1976, “Makers of Fine Flavors” (*Abilene Reporter-News* 1976). We have found no bottles with a mark that can be traced to this company.

B. Riley Hawk Supply Co., St. Louis, Missouri (1911-1921)

This company grew from the Blanke & Hawk Supply Co. in March 1911, when B. Riley Hawk became the president and manager of this new firm (Marquis 1912:270). Hawk had been the president of the initial company. Hawk advertised in 1911 as a poultry supply jobber (Figure 13). The firm was still in business under the Riley Hawk name in February of 1920 (*Cedar Rapids Evening Gazette* 1920; *Chillicothe Daily*

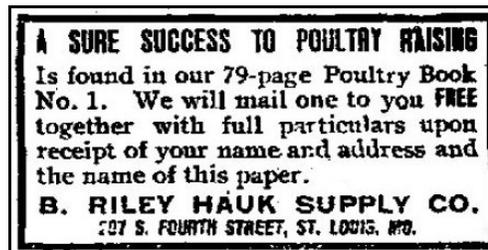


Figure 13 – B. Riley Hawk ad (*Chillicothe Daily Constitution* (2/20/1911))

Constitution 1911). A token website noted that the firm was in business from 1911-1921 (Greever 2011), although it probably closed not too long after that. According to Stevens (1921:232), Hawk’s “latest enterprise is the Dairyman’s Manufacturing and Supply Company.” Since Stevens’ book was written in 1921, the B. Riley Hawk Supply Co. could not have remained in business later than that year.

Riley Hawk-Vogelsang Supply Co., St. Louis, Missouri (at least 1915-at least 1918)

O’Mally (2006:53) cited a letter from Hawk-Vogelsang, written in 1915, so the firm was in business by that time. The company still advertised in 1917 as producers of “Hawk’s Emulser, Creamery, Dairy and Ice-Cream Machinery and Supplies” (Chemical Catalog Co. 1917:316) and advertised again in 1918 (*Creamery and Milk Plant Monthly* 1918b:55). This firm was in business concurrently with the B. Riley Hawk Supply Co., and this may reflect two names for the same company.

Hawk Mfg. Co., St. Louis, Missouri (at least 1930-at least 1947)

There is currently a 12-year gap in our information. This firm may have come into business any time between 1918 and 1930. The Hawk Mfg. Co. advertised in 1930, and Hawk was sued over a debt issue concerning water heaters in 1947. We know little about this company, although it apparently grew from the B. Riley Hawk Supply Co. and/or the Riley Hawk-Vogelsang Supply Co. There were several different firms in business later in the 20th century with the name, Hawk Mfg. Co., so the later extent of the company is difficult to trace.

Discussion and Conclusions

The marks on these bottles have rarely been recorded in the bottle literature (Table 1). The above research establishes reasonably good dates for some of the Blanke marks and good approximates for all others. Hopefully, future research will enable us to “tighten” the date ranges.

Table 1 – Marks used by Blanke Companies

Mark	Firm	Dates	Mfg.
BLANKE & HAUK	Blanke & Hauk Supply Co.	1903-ca.1906	
BLANKE & HAUK / SUPPLY Co.	Blanke & Hauk Supply Co.	ca. 1906-1911	
BLANKE MFG. / SUP. CO.	Blanke Mfg. & Supply Co.,	1911-ca. 1921	Lamb
BLANKE	Blanke Mfg. & Supply Co.,	ca. 1921-late 1920s	L-52
MEYER-BLANKE CO. (inverted arch)	Meyer-Blanke Co.	late 1920s-1930s	
MEYER-BLANKE CO. (arch)	Meyer-Blanke Co.	late 1920s-1930s	

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Cedar Rapids Evening Gazette

1920 “Cherry Co. Holds Sales Conference.” *Cedar Rapids Evening Gazette*, February 23, 1920.

Chemical Catalog Co.

1917 *Chemical Engineering Catalog*.” Chemical Catalog Co., New York.

Chillicothe Daily Constitution

1911 Advertisement: “A Sure Success to Poultry Raising.” *Chillicothe Daily Constitution* February 20. [Chillicothe, Missouri]

Creamery and Milk Plant Monthly

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