

Encyclopedia of
Manufacturer's Marks
on Glass Containers

N-O

Compiled and Edited by
The Bottle Research Group

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

The purpose of this encyclopedia is to update the venerable (and outdated) classic *Bottle Makers and Their Marks*, published by Julian Harrison Toulouse in 1971.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 46 years old in 2017. 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, although 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 concentrated on 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 2016, 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. Nate Briggs found us online and wanted to discuss some bottles he had found. The discussions became more intense and complex until Nate became a member on January 26, 2017. Nate withdrew from the group in May. The remaining 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 glass collector's 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, online newspaper databases, and collectors' websites. One of

the amazing things about the internet is that new venues appear almost daily. 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 N-O section). Each of these letter sections contains a series of titles, usually the name of a glass manufacturer or a family name (e.g., the Lamb Glass Bottle Co. or the Lorenz Family Glass Houses). Occasionally, the title will reflect a logo that was used by more than one glass house (e.g., LG used by both Lamb Glass and Liberty Glass). Titles were also selected according the way the *glass firm* styled itself. For example, Karl Hutter will be found in the "J-K" section – rather than the "H" section. Some firms, however, just did not work that way, so we have some oddities like the Keystone Mason Jars, Parts I & II, the story of the Mason Mfg. Co. and Mason Fruit Jar Companies – or the Moore family glass holdings.

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 lists in the "N-O" section includes intuitively obvious plants, such as the New England Glass Co., Northwestern Glass Corp., and the Owens Bottle Co. However, it also includes derivative factories, such as Greenfield Fruit Jar & Bottle Co. and Whitney Glass Works, firms absorbed by the Owens Bottle Co. – many of them counterintuitive. Each listing will direct the reader to the individual chapter where a discussion of the glass plant is found (e.g., the Texas Glass Co. is discussed in the Liberty Glass Co. chapter). A second table will direct the reader to specific chapters that discuss individual maker's marks. For example, the "N-W" logo will be discussed in the Northwestern Glass Co. chapter, and the Box-O logo will appear in the Owens Bottle Co. 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 Streator 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 contain 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 N-O

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