

UNUSUAL BOTTLES

by Bryan Grapentine

Photos by Larry Grapentine

Over the past 31 years I have collected bottles in most all the categories except embalming bottles. It is always fun and exciting to find a bottle that is somehow different or unusual compared to others in its category, or a bottle that is just extraordinarily beautiful. Common bottles in a rare or unusual color are often inexpensive and fun to collect. These unusual bottles can add much interest to a collection.

In this article I will present the most unusual bottles in my general collection from various categories.

MINERAL WATER [Figure 1] These bottles are unusual for the lettering, color, and size. Both bottoms are solid, not indented. Varennes is a small town about 25 miles from Montreal along the St. Lawrence River. A few of these bottles were found while the St. Lawrence seaway was being constructed. The large bottle is the only colored, quart size, round bottom soda bottle known. The medium blue color may be unique for this type of bottle.

ACL CROWN TOP BOTTLE [Figure 2, first bottle] In 1961 it was reported that 240 of these bottles was made by Canada Dry for a barbecue at the Texas White House of Honorable Vice President Lyndon Johnson. 45 of these bottles were salvaged from a trash dump and approximately 55 went home with the guests. Four color ACL bottles are not common.

BLOB TOP SODA [Figure 2, second bottle] This beautiful smooth base blue ten pin shape bottle is embossed vertically around the bottle: POLK & Co./BARNUMS/BUILDING/BALTO in big letters. Apparently the Barnums building was the Barnum and Bailey Circus headquarters. This bottle has a nice blue color, unusual lettering and is rarely offered for sale.

HUTCHINSON SODA [Figure 2, third bottle] This is the only known American Hutchinson bottle with Japanese characters. This Fresno, California bottle is not particularly rare but is considered desirable. An article on the bottler Morimoto,

appeared in *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector* magazine some years ago.

CROWN TOP EMBOSSED SODA [Figure 2, fourth bottle] This bottle has a most unusual, possibly unique, pink color for a soda bottle. Approximately 30 of these pink, machine made, bottles were made in three designs by Wheaton Glass for the Pepsi-Cola Company in 1953-1954. These experimental bottles never went into production. The product did not look good in pink bottles. The bottom has 44 raised dots in three circles. Notice the unusual serrated embossing below the lip. The swirl design was used later for ACL clear glass Pepsi bottles.

COCA-COLA [Figure 3, first bottle] This aqua 6 ½" ten pin shape bottle is from Washington, N.C. COCA-COLA is in block letters and Indian Rock Ginger Ale is in script on the shoulder. Coke collectors love this bottle even though it may have contained both Coca-Cola and ginger ale.

EMBOSSED MILK [Figure 3, second bottle] This experimental Borden's Royal Ruby quart is the only known red milk bottle. It was made by Anchor Hocking in 1950 but never put into production. Embossed under the neck ring is; FILL TO

ARROW ON FLANGE. Fewer than a dozen of these beautiful bottles were made.

ACL MILK [Figure 3, third bottle] This square quart is unusual because it pictures three calendar months on each of its four sides, each in a different identified color. This salesman's sample has the following identifying lettering around the shoulder The Owens-Illinois Duraglas HANDI-SQUARE American Favorite Dairy Container. Below this is: 1948 DESK CALENDAR ACL COLOR SAMPLES. This may be the only 13 color milk bottle ever manufactured. Likely, no other ACL bottle of any category came in 13 colors.

BEER [Figure 3, fourth bottle] This is only red glass ACL bottle that I know of. It was an experimental 12-ounce bottle made by the Anchor Glass Co. for the Latrobe Brewing Co., Latrobe, Pa, in the 1950s. Only a few of these ROLLING ROCK bottles exist. The company is still in business making beer.

SAMPLE [Figure 4, first bottle] This 3 ½" tooled top bottle is embossed: THE CROWN CORK & SEAL CO. BALTIMORE, U.S.A. The glass is a light sun colored amethyst and was probably made for salesmen to demonstrate the new (at the time) metal crown soda cap.

WHISKEY [Figure 4, second bottle] This beautiful deep teal colored pint flask has a token glued in a recessed circle. The



Figure 1: Quart and pint Varennes Seltzer



Figure 2: ACL Crown Top, Blob Top Soda, Hutchinson Soda, Crown Top Embossed Soda

Figure 3: Coca-Cola, Embossed Milk, ACL Milk, Beer





Figure 4: Sample, Whiskey
Flask, Mini-Jug, Poison



Figure 5: Food, Counter Jar,
Patent Medicine, Bitters

Figure 6: Ink, Target Ball,
Cologne, Go-With



token reads: ELK POOL HALL ELKO, NEV. Under the screw-on cap is a cork stopper with a silver button on top. The bottle is unlisted in *THE NEVADA BOTTLE BOOK*.

MINI-JUG [Figure 4, third item] Stoneware mini-jugs for vinegar and whiskey are rather common, but I have never seen another handled glass mini. This one came from a Heckler auction and reads: THE CAMPUS/GOSSLER BROS/ COLUMBUS AVE/& 104TH ST./N.Y. Common quart bottles are known from the same company in a similar amber color.

POISON [Figure 4, fourth bottle] Most poison bottles have some identifying embossing such as quilting, cross hatching, skull and cross bones, and skull figurals. This cobalt bottle embossed THE/J F HARTZ & CO/LIMITED/TORONTO uses tiny hearts on three sides to identify the bottle as a poison. This may be a unique design element for a poison bottle.

FOOD [Figure 5, first bottle] This 9 1/2" bottle strongly resembles a milk bottle. It even has a cap seat as does a milk bottle. Color is a light amethyst. The lettering is bold and extensive: ONE QUART/ PROPERTY OF/J.H.HEINZ CO./ PITTSBURGH,U.S.A./TO BE USED ONLY/FOR GROCERS BOTTLING/ HEINZ BARREL VINEGARS. The reverse reads: WHEN EMPTY/WASH CLEAN/AND/RETURN TO GROCER/ ANY PERSON MISUSING /THIS BOTTLE WILL/BE PROSECUTED. The base has the Heinz number 180. The bottle is not listed in *KETCHUP,PICKLES, SAUCES 19TH CENTURY FOOD IN GLASS* has a neatly made tooled top. I'm guessing the bottle pre-dates 1920.

COUNTER JAR [Figure 5, second bottle] This attractive medium green glass tea jar is interesting for many reasons. Is there another master tea jar? How many

jar lids have a jeweled crown on top of an outside fitting lid? Each side of the jar is different. Front has the company name and address. Right side pictures of an elephant loaded with boxes of tea. The back shows the Acker company logo and the left side pictures the tea plant. The 8 1/4" jar would hold a lot of loose tea for a wealthy family or upscale tea house.

PATENT MEDICINE [Figure 5, third bottle] An interesting story about the origin of Hobo medicine was written by Dr. Richard Cannon in *ANTIQUÉ BOTTLE & GLASS COLLECTOR* a few years ago and is available on the *AB&GC* website. A Mr. Horton of Singer, LA suffered from an extreme case of Bright's disease and the best doctors in the South could not cure him and pronounced his case hopeless. A fortunate encounter with a hobo passing through town led to a cure. The hobo prepared a cure from some herbs found in the nearby woods. Mr. Horton went on to prepare and sell the medicine to cure kidney and bladder problems. In the article, Dr. Cannon shows a clear ABM bottle, the bottle pictured here is an ABM medium cobalt with a crude irregular textured surface. Could this bottle be a reproduction?

BITTERS [Figure 5, fourth bottle] This is an unusual looking bitters – 14 1/4" tall, 8-sided cone shape bottle. It is a shape that will tip over easily and not survive unbroken well in the ground. Only two or three undamaged specimens of this Western (San Francisco) pontilled bottle exist. This was one of the first bottles made for a Western city. Jeff Wichman in his book *ANTIQUÉ WESTERN BITTERS BOTTLES* dates this bottle 1857 to 1863.

INK [Figure 6, first bottle] This deep green aqua bottle is listed in Covil's as #193 and was made in New York. The top ball holds about a 1 1/2 ounces of ink. The lower ball is solid glass. With the loose fitting stopper the bottle weighs 23 ounces and will

not tip over easily. The base has a pontil mark. On first view many collectors would not guess that this is an ink bottle.

TARGET BALL [Figure 6, second item] Two of these 1878 – 1889 target balls were dug in 2003 in an old town Sacramento Privy 8-9 feet down. The ball has LIDDLE & KAEDING AGENTS SAN FRANCISCO embossed on both front and back. Liddle & Kaeding were importers and manufacturers of fine guns, rifles, pistols and fishing rods. In addition, they were dealers in cutlery, fencing foils, masks, gloves, metallic cartridges, baseballs, cricket balls and bats as well as hunting clothes. This is the only known target ball made on the West Coast. This target ball was featured in an article in Ralph Finch's *ON TARGET* magazine in the summer of 2003.

COLOGNE [Figure 6, third bottle] This corset-waist form bottle may have been made at the Sandwich glass works. It has the unusual property of changing color depending on the lighting source. With back, or window, lighting the bottle appears green but with front lighting it is a medium blue.

GO-WITH [Figure 6, Seven-Up glass] This soda glass is unusual because of its three-color ACL, 1931 date and much product lettering. The fine print reads: "Drink after eating- before retiring- on arising." Below the words LEMON SODA in fine script, is the following message: "An anti-acid Beverage for Home or Hospital. The alka-lime reaction adds to the alkalinity. Of the blood. No drink is so acceptable to The ladies. As a mixer it is especially Desirable. Takes the "ouch" out of grouch."

The author may be contacted at bpgparentine@att.net