

UNCLE JO BOTTLING COMPANY

FORT WORTH, TEXAS AND SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA

For years I have wondered what the story was behind my Uncle Jo and Aunt Ida bottles, along with the other “family members,” but had only heard rumors without solid facts to back them up. What I had heard was that these soda brands were named after the family members who started the business, which has turned out to be the real story, but then I did not know who or where. Then came a surprise in my inbox from PSBCA member Steve Thompson from Texas.

Read on to see what he sent.

The following information has been compiled based on the oral histories of various family members of Courtney Glazer, the great granddaughter of the founder of the original company. She has stated that errors and/or fuzzy details are entirely possible, but for the most part, her family history sounds very plausible. As far as I am concerned, family memories are as good as it gets!

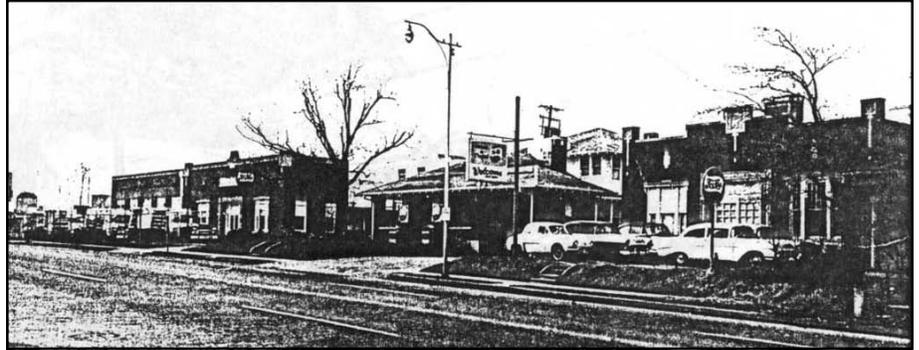
The Family History

The Uncle Jo Bottling Company was named for Jo Glazer (1876-1944). Jo and his brother Louis began bottling soda in St. Louis, Missouri in 1898, approximately ten years after moving to the United States from Russia with their family.

While there in St. Louis, Jo married Ida Feldman (1881-1945). Ida had studied with a Viennese chemist in Kansas City at a bottling company owned by a local Jewish family named Rubenstein. It was there that she learned to make the formulas for the extracts that would later become their future business.

Toward the end of the 19th century, Jo and Louis left St. Louis looking for a warmer climate and eventually made their way to Texas. Because the two brothers wanted to remain within proximity of each other, yet be far enough apart so as not to be each other’s competitor, Louis settled in Dallas and Jo in Fort Worth. By the turn of the century, each had worked to develop his respective soda business.

Louis’ operation in Dallas, Real Juice Bottling Works, eventually evolved from soft drinks to liquor. One of their soda brands was Woosie, a root beer named for Louis’ grandson Robert Samuel Glazer whose nickname was Woozie.



“The Shop,” as it was called, in Ft. Worth, Texas

Jo’s operation in Fort Worth, Uncle Jo Bottling Company, was located at 1109 East Lancaster Street, which was also the family home to Ida and Jo and their six children. According to family recollections, Jo built the house and the “shop” without an architect.

The Family Sodas

Jo and Ida used a variety of basic extracts to create their own flavored sodas. Uncle Jo “in brown bottles” was a fruit punch created from a basic Bush Flavorings extract. Aunt Ida followed, using an Armour and Co. lemon-lime extract. Eventually many different flavors were sold under the Uncle Jo name, and later, even these flavors were replaced by other flavored brands. For example, Uncle Jo Grape was replaced with Grapette. The shop handled other brands in addition to their own concoctions, such as: Chero Cola, Sugar Cane (a cream soda), Red Rock Cola,

and Texas Cola. As the extracts used to create these self-titled sodas were discontinued, so were the brands. Uncle Jo ceased in 1942; then Aunt Ida later, in the 1950s.

The Family Business

In the beginnings of soda distribution, the business was considered seasonal. As an effort to keep soda sales going during the slower times, Willard Glazer, Jo’s son, made the shrewd decision to market the orange flavor to the school system since it was considered “healthy.” This business arrangement allowed bottling and selling to continue from September to May.

According to family lore, Uncle Jo bought retired horses from the Fort Worth Fire Department to haul the bottles. The problem with this decision was that the shop was only a few blocks from the fire station and every time the bells went off, so did the



Uncle Joe and Aunt Ida Glazer



Uncle Jo and Aunt Ida bottles.



Joy Goldberg, daughter of Florence (Glazer) and Clarence Goldberg.

horses, carrying bottles and all. Add to this the fact that as Jo's grandsons began working at the shop, it was inevitable that each one would drop at least one forklift full of bottles as though it were a rite of passage.

As Uncle Jo the soda was phased out, Jo's sons considered what was to be their next move. In the late 1940s, the Pepsi Cola franchise bottler in Fort Worth went bankrupt and the bankruptcy lawyer happened to be a close personal friend of Jo's sons, Yale, Willard, and Marvin. They determined that Pepsi Cola might be a better seller than Red Rock Cola and picked up the franchise. By 1949, Pepsi began rolling out of the shop in Fort Worth as well as the Real Juice Company in Dallas.

The "Other" Family Franchises

In addition to bottling soda, the Uncle Jo Bottling Company sold their original flavor extracts in Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana and Oklahoma and had a few franchises. The Fort Worth and Shreveport operations were the strongest and survived into the



Wooden crates were made to hold both the regular-sized bottles and the minis (below).



1970s and 1980s as Pepsi Cola Bottling Companies.

After marriage, two of Jo and Ida's daughters started their own franchises.

Florence (Glazer) and Clarence Goldberg were the first to begin and chose Shreveport, Louisiana for their location. A delivery truck and cases of empty bottles were given to the newlyweds. After that, they bought a filler, crowner and other necessary bottling equipment from Jo and Ida and, in 1930, began bottling at 962 Travis. The Aunt Ida flavor became very popular there and billboards using the "Aunt Ida Girl," was commissioned by popular artist Earl Moran. (Moran was a popular artist during the 30s and 40s, particularly known for his "pin-up" girls. Marilyn Monroe was one of his most famous models. He worked until his death in 1984.)

Another brand started in Shreveport was Joys, so named after Florence and Clarence's daughter, Joy Goldberg. In 1948, the Shreveport operation also began rolling out Pepsi-Cola.

The other franchise was started by Edna (Glazer) and Milton Fox in Alexandria, Louisiana. One of their flavors, Sonny Boy, was named after their oldest son, Sylvan Fox. However, the Miltons were less successful than the Goldbergs in Shreveport and left bottling for a more lucrative business in broadcasting.

The Family Bottles

The bottles used by the families were likely made in Oklahoma. The following descriptions are for the proprietary brands bottled by the Uncle Jo Bottling Company. Others may exist.

There are several examples in this "family" of bottles in my collection. The embossed amber Uncle Jo above was also the same as the green one used for Aunt Ida (below). The 4-ounce Uncle Jo "mini" was a smaller version of a larger amber example easier to find than some of the other "family" members. It is also the shape found as "Sonny Boy," but in clear glass.



Aunt Ida (embossed, green glass)
"Aunt Ida The World's Greatest Mixer"
Shreveport, LA (with six-pointed star)
"Aunt Ida The Favored Drink"
(On the bottom, "Duncan, OK"
with six-pointed star.)



Left: Uncle Jo (embossed, amber glass)
Uncle Jo in Brown Bottles
Trademark Registered 22016
Contents 8 Fl Ozs.
Fort Worth Texas

Right: Uncle Jo (white ACL, clear glass)
Uncle Jo / Enjoy, Pure and Delicious
Uncle Jo Beverages
Uncle Jo Bottling Co., Ft. Worth, Tex.
(On the bottom, "169-B-9 / B57)



Uncle Jo (embossed, amber glass)
Uncle Jo in Brown Bottles
Contents 4 Fl. Ozs. / Reg U.S. Pat. / Ofc.
(On the bottom, "Pat. 30009 / Pat'd
Apr 2, 1929" with six-pointed star.)



Left: Woosies (embossed, clear glass)
Woosies / Beverages / RJC
(on the bottom, "Real Juice Co. /
Cap. 10 Fl. Oz. / 242-1-B / LG 53 /
Dallas, Texas
Right: Sonny Boy in clear glass.



Left: Joys (white ACL, clear glass)
Joys Beverages / Conts. 7 Fl. Oz.
Hires Bottling Company
Alexandria & Lake Charles LA.,
with five-pointed stars and bubbles
(On the bottom, "33-B-7 / 2")
Right: Uncle Jo Syphon Water
(white/blue ACL, clear glass)
Uncle Jo / Syphon Water / Phone 2-2391 /
Ft. Worth Tex. / Cont. 36 Fl. Oz.
with a six-pointed star around the nozzle

Syphon bottles also exist in blue, green, and amber.

There are other variations of the Uncle Joe, such as an 8-ounce amber like the mini (pictured on previous page) and an 8-ounce like the mini in clear.

My collection also has the Sonny Boy in both the shape of the amber Uncle Joe (pictured on the left) and the Aunt Ida, but in clear glass. I have only seen the Aunt Ida in the green example pictured, but other variations could exist.

References:

Courtney Glazer's family history.

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Other Packer Jars

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cap and the jar it sealed, please review the above reference.

⁶ Endnote number 3 has references which can provide more information on this screw cap.

⁷ "Patents Issued to William Beach Fenn Part 2 of 2," Barry L. Bernas, *Bottles and Extras*, March-April 2007, pgs. 36-41. See Figure 17 and the patent verbiage that accompanies it.

⁸ "Granny Kath's Kitchen," Vivian S.

Kath, *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector*, October 1995, pg. 56; "The Label Space," Tom Caniff, *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector*, July 2006, pg. 41 and "Fruit Jar Rambles," Tom Caniff, *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector*, January 2007, pg. 6. The first reference initially reported another probable packing container with a May 3, 1904 patented screw cap on it. This machine made, clear and cylindrically shaped container had the abbreviation – T. C. Co. – embossed on it. The second source reported the same style of embossed jar and glass cover with a label on it for prepared mustard

from Flaccus Brothers of Wheeling, West Virginia. The last update from Tom Caniff offered a probable identification for the T. C. Co. abbreviation. This marking likely stands for the Twitchell-Champlin Company of Portland, Maine. This jar represents the fourth packing container that took the May 3, 1904 closure.

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The Dating Game: Hermann Heye Glasfabrick

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Footnotes:

¹ Answer.com (2007) stated that Gerresheimer did not begin exporting bottles until 1882. Although this disagrees with Quinn's claim that the plant exported bottles in the 1860s, we have no way to determine which source is correct. It is certain that bottles marked "HEYE" were imported into the U.S. by at least the early 1860s, although most of those are also marked "BREMEN."

² Answer.com (2007) placed the date of the first Owens machine at the Gerresheimer plant in 1908 and claimed it was the first in Europe.

³ The Bottle Research Group consists of Bill Lockhart, Bill Lindsey, Carol Serr and Pete Schulz.

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