

# The Dating Game

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## Illinois Pacific - A Division of the Illinois Glass Co.

Few people seem to have been seriously interested in this company or its marks. Although Toulouse and others have recorded marks used the company, no one seems to have tried to arrange them in a chronological order. We offer a more complete interpretation.

## History

The Illinois Pacific Glass Co. was formed in 1902<sup>1</sup> when the Illinois Glass Co. consolidated its West Coast holdings and bought the Abramson-Heunisch Glass Co. The initial office was in San Francisco<sup>2</sup> (Toulouse 1971:268-269). The following year (1903), the company opened a plant in Los Angeles. In 1904, they expanded into Portland, Oregon, and Seattle, Washington. A final branch was opened in Oakland, California, in 1926 (Ayres et al., 1980:20-21).

According to Toulouse (1971:268), Illinois Pacific incorporated in 1925. Ayres et al. (1980:20-21), however, dated the formation of the corporation at 1926, citing city directories. Unfortunately, information from city directories can be somewhat misleading. If the 1925 directory was published in April, for example, and the company incorporated in May, then the first listing would be in 1926, even though the actual corporation date was in 1925. The *New York Times*, however, reported the existence of all new corporations in the New England Area. The January 7, 1926, issue noted, "Illinois Glass Corp., Wilmington, reorganize the Illinois Pacific Glass, a California Corp., \$31,000,000-310,000 shares." In other words, the original Illinois Pacific Glass Co. was also a corporation, chartered in California, and the Illinois Pacific Glass Corp. was a reorganization of the corporation, based this time in Delaware to take advantage of that state's more lenient corporation laws.

The idea that the first Illinois Pacific Co. was actually a corporation is further supported by evidence from Toulouse

(1971:269-270), who stated, "The company now became the Illinois Pacific Glass Co. with Heunisch president and Abramson vice-president." Sole ownerships and partnerships do not have officers; those are only necessary in corporations. Therefore, the "company" was a California corporation. To clarify, the change to the Illinois Pacific Glass Corporation occurred in 1926.

According to Toulouse (1971:270) and Jones (1961:[7]), Illinois Pacific merged with the Pacific Coast Glass Co. in 1930 to form the Illinois Pacific Coast Co., and the *New York Times* (8/20/1930) noted that the Illinois Pacific Coast Co. was chartered in Delaware August 19, 1930.

According to Paquette (1994:81-82), Owens-Illinois purchased the Illinois Pacific Coast Co., the largest glass manufacturer on the West Coast, on November 30, 1931. The name of the West Coast operation was changed to the Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co. on April 23, 1932 (Paquette 1994:81-82). This conflicts with most sources, who agree that the Owens-Illinois Glass Co. took over operations in 1932 (Ayres et al., 1980:21; Giarde 1980:54; Jones 1961:[7]; Toulouse 1971:271). The *New York Times* (June 2, 1932:33) placed the following notice: "San Francisco, Cal., June 1—Completions of negotiations by which the Owens Illinois Pacific Coast Company, a subsidiary of Owens Illinois Glass Company, will acquire the Illinois Pacific Coast Company, was announced here today by C. N. Davis, president of the last named concern."

Paquette's information may provide a second possible explanation for the discrepancy in manufacturer's marks and date codes. The Illinois Pacific Coast Co. may, indeed, have continued using IPG marks until the purchase by Owens-Illinois in 1931. At that point, the company may have wanted to distinguish its bottles from those of the prior owner by a slightly different mark. In 1932, the mark was then changed to that of Owens-Illinois Glass Co. The only way to distinguish the Owens-

Illinois Pacific Coast Co. marks from the Owens-Illinois Glass Co. marks is by the factory code to the left of the logo. West Coast numbers included 20-23 and 64 (see Toulouse 1971:406-408 for more details).

## Bottles and Marks

Toulouse (1971:268-269) illustrated a total of nine marks used by Illinois Pacific, although he did not attribute any of them to a specific period (i.e., the company, the corporation, or the Coast Corp.). He showed three sets of initials (IPG, IPGCO, and IPCCO) in three formats: initials alone, initials in a diamond, and initials in a triangle. Because of the order in which they were presented, many readers have assumed that IPG represented the company; IPGCO was used by the corporation; and IPCCO indicated the Coast Co. Our research makes it clear that IPGCO was the earliest mark (the company) followed by IPG (the corporation). Although the initials IPCCO would have to indicate the Coast Co., we have never found a bonafide mark with those initials, although many have mistaken an unclear IPGCO embossing for the IPCCO (see below). Of the nine marks illustrated by Toulouse, we have found no evidence that six of these marks<sup>3</sup> were ever used.

Toulouse may have been influenced by Jones (1965:[21]) who illustrated both the IPGCO initials and IPGCO in a diamond. Although she correctly illustrated the mark in an elongated diamond, her language may have been misleading: "Fenced in or not – I have one beer type without the triangle around it." Toulouse was one of May Jones' network, and he may have misunderstood her reference. Although Jones was an accomplished researcher for her time, her reporting was often colloquial and unclear.

T. L. Kusseff, plant manager of the Owens-Illinois' Oakland plant, further confused the issue (Jones 1965:[16]) by claiming that an IPGCO in a triangle mark "was the next mark of Illinois Pacific, don't know dates, again I think the third letter is 'G'." Although we would expect the plant manager to have knowledge of his company's history and marks, we have been unable to find a single example of this mark. Her next issue (Jones 1966:20) further confused the issue by showing a drawing of IPCCO in a diamond, another bogus mark.

Giarde (1980:54-55) essentially copied the Toulouse information – including the marks that do not exist (although he did

not show the IPGCo in a triangle). He discussed the difficulty in discerning the “G” versus the “C” in the logos but noted that “the triangle mark is the one found on milk bottles.” He also noted that “often the last digit of the year of manufacture is found to the left of the triangle, particularly in the late 1920s.” Giarde’s discussion suggests that milk bottles were not produced prior to the “Corp.” Thus, milk bottles would only have been made in 1926 and later. That would be compatible with the dating scheme introduced below in the Illinois Pacific Glass Corp. section.

#### Illinois Pacific Glass Company (1902-1926)

From 1903 to 1909, Illinois Pacific made fruit jars for the Kerr Glass Mfg. Co. Kerr began in Portland, Oregon, as a sales unit, but had its first fruit jars (the Economy) made by Illinois Pacific. However, the Hazel-Atlas Glass Co. also made some of the Economy jars from 1906 to 1909, so jars with the Economy label cannot be said to be universally from Illinois Pacific. In 1909, Kerr bought a factory in Altoona, Kansas, and began making its own jars (Creswick 1987:165).

#### I. P. G. Co. or IPGCO with no surrounding lines

This mark (initials alone) appeared in slightly different formats on both heels and bases of bottles. The variation with no periods was found in contexts from the latter part of the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to at least the early 1920s. Confirmed date ranges for the variation with periods extend from at least 1911 to 1924 (e.g., Elliott & Gould 1988:154, 189; Fowler 1998:51). Both marks were probably used simultaneously from the beginning of the company (1902 to the reorganization in 1926). However, we have no actual evidence for the use of the mark prior to ca. 1910. It is therefore possible that no mark was used during the first five or more years that the company was in business. This, however, does not fit the pattern of the Illinois Glass Co. – a firm that used the IGC mark from at least 1880.



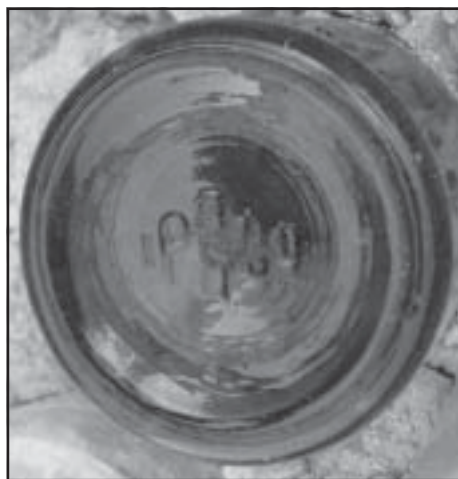
**Figure 1:** I P G C O Heelmarks [eBay]

It is also possible that the IPGCO mark with all letters the same size was used first, followed by the design where the mark forms a diamond pattern with the letters growing from I to G then decreasing to O.

The I. P. G. Co. mark was almost always embossed on the heels of bottles and could appear on either the front (obverse) or back (reverse) side [Figure 1]. The mark was accompanied by two- to four-digit numerals, also embossed on the heel, sometimes with decimal points or with some of the digits separated by a space (e.g., a jar in Creswick [1987:66] embossed I. P. G. CO. 2695 on the heel). Colorless Boyd Mason jars with continuous-thread finishes were embossed I. P. G. Co. on the heel during the 1910-1920s period. A variation had the I. P. G. Co. in a diamond logo on the base (Roller 1983:71). At least one case, provided by Serr, from the Silver Gate Soda Works (Schnepp Bros), was embossed I.P.G.CO. 70 on the front heel and was made by an automatic bottle machine.

IPGCO (with no punctuation) is almost always (in every example we have seen) found on the base (as are both variations of the diamond mark described below). These basemarks are generally accompanied by two- to four-digit numbers and occasionally by a separate, single-digit number. In a few cases, the mark was on the base, but the two- to four-digit code was embossed on the heel. Often (maybe always), the initials form a diamond pattern (letters growing larger from I to G then smaller to o) even though they are not enclosed by lines [Figure 2]. Creswick (1987:22) noted the mark (with a lower-case “o”) on the GENUINE Boydes MASON jar.

We found one interesting bottle that was embossed with I. P. G. Co. on the heel and IPGCO-in-a-diamond on the base (ca.



**Figure 2:** IPGCO Basemark [Lindsey]

1924). It is likely that a marked baseplate was inadvertently placed on a mold that already contained a heel mark. Such unintended errors were common in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

IPGCO in a diamond (with or without periods)

May Jones (1965:[16]) quoted T. L. Kousseff (Owens-Illinois Glass Co.) as stating, “I think this was the oldest mark of Illinois Pacific Glass Company, used before about 1920. I think the third letter was “G” not “C”, but perhaps not always clearly cut in the mold or clearly blown up.” She later (1966:20) misdated the mark as “1898-’99.” Toulouse (1971:) included the mark in the nine he attributed to Illinois Pacific but gave no specific date for this individual mark nor any other information about it.

Unlike the initials-only mark, the diamond marks are almost always found embossed on bottle bases. The mark was frequently shaped where the first three letters increased in size (with the G as the largest) then decreased in size to the “o” (or a diamond shape). This may be the only form of the mark [Figure 3]. It is often only recorded in brief with no reference to letter size at all. While this may indicate a variation with all five letters being the same size, it is more likely that the size of the letters was simply unreported.

The mark was also used on jars. Colorless Boyd Mason jars with continuous-thread finishes were embossed I. P. G. Co. in a diamond on the base during the 1910-1920s period. A variation had the I. P. G. Co. on the heel. A version of the IMPROVED Everlasting JAR also was embossed with IPGCo in a diamond on the base as was the SEALTITE WIDE MOUTH MASON (Creswick 1987:121; Roller



**Figure 3:** IPGCO in a Diamond [Lockhart]

1983:71, 165, 325).

These marks were frequently accompanied by three- or four-digit numbers that either preceded the mark or followed it. The numbers are likely catalog codes that identified the style of the bottle, although they may have served a currently-unknown function. These codes are often located on the heels of bottles, although the mark, itself, is on the base.

These marks, like the initial-only variations discussed above, were used during the entire period of the IPG Company (1902-1926), although we have found no documented bottles that dated earlier than about 1909. As mentioned above, the company may not have used manufacturer's marks during the first few years of operation. The marks are mostly documented on soft drink bottles, although Colcleaser (1966:17) showed the mark on a Lash's Bitters bottle. We have also observed the mark on other bottle types.

Miller (1999:7) illustrated a blown-in-mold bottle used from ca. 1912-1913 that was embossed with a Diamond IPGCO mark. Elliott & Gould (1988:154, 189) listed the diamond mark both with and without punctuation on mouth-blown bottles in the 1910-1917 range. These time periods are in keeping with the general trend toward semi-automatic bottle machine use that began about 1910 and was in full swing by 1914. We suggest that

Illinois Pacific may have adopted semi-automatic machines about 1912. This does not, however, preclude the manufacture of mouth-blown bottles after 1912; some glass houses used both techniques during a sometimes-lengthy transitional period. It should be noted that this is only speculation. The only bottles we have observed with IPGCo marks (with or without the diamond) have been either mouth blown or made with an Owens machine (see below).

**IPGCO-in-an-oval mark**

This mark was found on the base of a 16-sided pickle bottle from the El Paso Coliseum excavation with a 3 embossed below it. The pattern of the letters was the same diamond shape as those within the diamond mark described above (Lockhart & Olszewski 1993:37; 1995:29).<sup>4</sup> No other mark of this type has been reported. It may have only been a fluke made by a single engraver. Once the error was discovered, the mold (or at least the baseplate) may have been withdrawn.

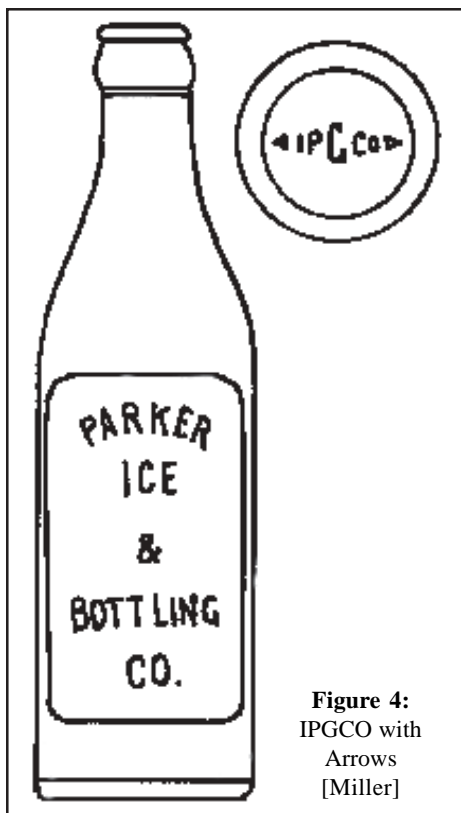
We would like to propose an interesting idea. Please remember that this hypothesis is as yet unproven. We have noticed that there are four major variations of the first mark (initials only, initials with punctuation, initials in a diamond with punctuation, and initials in a diamond without punctuation). There were also four major branches of the company: San Francisco (1902); Los Angeles (1903); Portland (1904); and Seattle (1904). Each of these branches may have used a different variation of the IPGCO mark. In addition, a fifth branch, Oakland (1925), was opened toward the end of the company period (the last year before the name/mark change). Oakland may have used the IPGCO-in-an-oval mark. If so, we would not expect to

find many of those due to the short period of time the branch was open.

**IPGCO with triangles at each end and the Owens Automatic Bottle Machine**

In 2004, Mike Miller found an Arizona soft drink bottle marked with IPGCO on the base [Figure 4]. The mark is in a diamond shape (without the enclosing diamond) but, unlike typical marks we have seen, it has small horizontal triangles at both ends. This may only have appeared on machine-made bottles. We know of at least two bottles from this period made by the Owens Automatic Bottle Machine. Both have the IPGCO mark with triangles on each end, but the mark is not enclosed in an embossed, elongated diamond; both are marked with the distinctive Owens scar on their bases. One is a colorless, square pharmaceutical bottle that could have held pharmaceutical products, toiletries, or some form of household product. Another is an aqua soft drink bottle that could not have been made prior to about 1924. The American Bottle Co. had the exclusive license to make soft drink containers from 1905 until sometime in the early 1920s. Thus, the bottle was probably manufactured between ca. 1924 and 1926 when the Illinois Pacific Glass Co. became the Illinois Pacific Glass Corp.

This brings up the timing of the use of the Owens Automatic Bottle Machine by Illinois Pacific. The Illinois Glass Co. obtained an Owens license in 1911 (probably for the manufacture of pharmaceutical bottles). Actual production likely began a year later. It is possible that Illinois Pacific, a subsidiary of the Illinois Glass Co., was able to make use of the



**Figure 4:**  
IPGCO with  
Arrows  
[Miller]



**Figure 5:** Improved Everlasting Jar  
[Creswick 1987:52]



**Figure 6:** Ad for Everlasting Jar  
[Creswick 1987:195]

license (Lockhart et al. 2004:54-56). It seems more likely, based on the scarcity of identified Owens-machine-made bottles with any of the IPGCo marks, that the West Coast plants did not obtain Owens machines until the early-to mid-1920s when such technology (including other fully-automatic machines) became available to glass houses that had previously been excluded by the strict licensing previously followed by Owens and other producers of fully automatic machines (e.g. see Smith 1989:25-27).

#### ILLINOIS PACIFIC GLASS Co. S. F. CAL.

Colcleaser (1965:30) showed a drawing of the IMPROVED EVERLASTING JAR with ILLINOIS PACIFIC GLASS S. F. CAL. embossed in circular pattern around the edge of the base. This is one of the few cases we have found where the location of a plant is included with the mark. Creswick (1987:52, 195) and Roller (1987:164) both showed the same jar with an identical logo on the base except that theirs included "Co." [Figure 5]. She noted that the lid was patented August 22, 1905. She also included an ad for the jar from 1905. The ad noted that the jars were made at the San Francisco and Los Angeles plants.

Although not specifically marked with a factory logo, the Everlasting JAR was made by Illinois Pacific, probably during the 1904-1909 period [Figure 6]. These jars used lightning-style covers with either PAT. NOV. 29. 04. on green lids or PAT. AUG. 22. 05. on colorless lids. The patents were held by Edward Abramson (with Edward O. Bennett in 1905), vice president of Illinois Pacific in 1907. An undated brochure from Illinois Pacific illustrated the jar on the cover (Creswick 1987:52; Roller 1983:118).

#### ILLINOIS PACIFIC GLASS CO./ MANUFACTURERS/SAN FRANCISCO U.S.A.

This mark appeared on an unusual food bottle offered for sale on eBay. The seller, Peter Crouch, identified the container as a pickle bottle. The mark was embossed on the rear heel: ILLINOIS PACIFIC GLASS CO. (downward arch)/MANUFACTURERS/SAN FRANCISCO U.S.A. (both horizontal). Since Crouch is located in New Zealand, the bottle was probably made for export by Illinois Pacific. That likely explains the inclusion of the full name rather than the usual manufacturer's mark. Since the bottle was machine-made,

it was probably manufactured during the last few years of Illinois Pacific Glass Company (early 1920s).

Crouch further offered information on 26-ounce, machine-made beer bottles that were produced by Illinois Pacific for J. R. Dodson Brewers of Nelson, New Zealand. He noted that the bottles were made in the 1920s and were the only ones that Dodson imported from Illinois Pacific. The New Zealand bottles were marked with the full Illinois Pacific name [Figure 7]. Crouch noted that amber bottles made by Illinois Pacific had a reddish tinge that distinguished them from New Zealand-made containers. Based on identification by this color variation, it is possible that Illinois Pacific made bottles for Kirkpatrick's of Nelson.

This information suggests that many of the fruit jars shown in Creswick (1987:106-108) were also manufactured for export. Similarly-marked jars were made by later Illinois Pacific companies. It is probably a good assumption that any bottle embossed with the full name of one of the Illinois Pacific companies was made for the export trade, especially if it is accompanied by the city/state designation of the factory.

#### I. P. G. Co. S. F. Cal.

Creswick (1987:52) also described a second version of the IMPROVED EVERLASTING JAR that was marked on the base with "I. P. G. Co. S. F. Cal. (within a triangle)" (her parentheses). Unfortunately, she did not illustrate the base of this jar. If she is correct, it would be the only recorded instance of the letters I P G Co in a triangle. I suspect it is more likely that she meant the initials were in a diamond with the city/state designation around the edges. Roller (1983:164) described the jar as "IPGCO S F CAL in diamond logo embossed on base" (note there are no periods in the Roller version).



Figure 7: Illinois Pacific Bottles Exported to New Zealand [Crouch]

#### BEAVER

According to Peterson (1968:41), BEAVER was "affixed to bottles and flasks" by the Illinois Pacific Glass Co. in 1910. He also noted that "fruit jars with a beaver design and name were made in Canada." These were made by the Lamont Glass Co. and should not be confused with any Illinois Pacific products.

#### Genuine (script) MASON

Creswick (1987:56-57) showed four variations of this jar, all marked with some variation of Genuine MASON, including one that had only block letters for GENUINE. She dated the jars ca. 1900-1910 but failed to present her reasons for attributing the mark to the Illinois Pacific Glass Co.

#### IPGCO in a Triangle

May Jones (1965:[16]) claimed that this mark existed, although we have yet to see one. As stated above, she noted Kousseff as saying, "I think this was the next mark of Illinois Pacific, don't know dates, again I think the third letter is 'G.'" Toulouse (1971:) also reported this mark (probably based on the Kousseff information) but gave no dates or additional information about it. When discussing Illinois Pacific marks in a later volume (1966:20), however, Jones did not mention this mark.

#### I P G C

Griffenhagen and Bogard (1999:124) listed the I P G C mark as belonging to the Illinois Pacific Glass Co. They erroneously dated the mark 1902-1930, probably based on Toulouse's confused rendition. They added that the mark was found on bottles used by Schmidt's Pharmacy and the Home Bitters Co., St. Louis. They almost certainly took their information from Ring (1980:248). Ring listed the Home Stomach Bittlers and noted either I.C. CO (probably meaning I G Co) or I P G C on the base of the bottle. We have found this mark in no other sources and have not seen it on containers. Ring may have seen a single example where the "o" in "Co" was very indistinct, or the exclusion of the "o" may have been a typographical error.

#### Illinois Pacific Glass Corporation (1926-1930)

##### IPG in a Triangle

As far as we can discover (except for the PRESTO jars), the only mark ever used by the corporation was IPG in a triangle

(despite the claim by Toulouse that three variations were used). This mark was mostly embossed on heels of the bottles (as noted on soft drink, food, and milk bottles), although it was occasionally placed on bases of medicine, some beer, and some food bottles [Figures 8 - 9]. It was often accompanied by numbers that fit into identifiable design. The marks uniformly followed the same pattern. The "I" leans in toward the center as does the "P" with the "G" slanted backwards. The apex of the triangle has a tiny, solid embossed triangle above the "P." Each IPG mark we have examined followed this pattern, although Robert Leavitt (personal communication, 5/11/2005) reported a single example that lacked the smaller, solid triangle at the apex. This was probably an engraver's error, quite common during the 1920s and for two decades to follow.

Creswick (1987:31) reported the triangle mark on the base of a Boyd MASON jar. Boyd MASONS were also made by the earlier Illinois Pacific Glass Co. (see above). The triangle mark was also positioned at the back heel as in the case of the Getsbest jar (Creswick 1987:57; Roller 1983:137). The IMPROVED Everlasting Jar (also made by the earlier "company") was embossed with the triangle logo on the heel (Roller 1987:165).

Jones (1965:[16]) was the first researcher to report this mark. According to her, T. L. Kusseff claimed that "this was the mark of Illinois Pacific in the 1920's, prior to the merger with Pacific Coast . . . Trade mark after 1924 'Electroneal.'" Three years later (1966:20), she again mentioned the mark but with a completely incorrect date of 1903. We have found no other reference to the "Electroneal" trademark, even though Carol Serr has rigorously searched the internet. Bill Lindsey, however, has a paperweight that notes the process [Figure 10]. Toulouse (1971:268-269) also included the triangle mark, again with no specific information. Giarde (1980:55) discussed the mark as used on milk bottles. He claimed that single-digit date codes were found to the left of the triangle "particularly in the late 1920's" and noted that "the triangle mark is the one found on milk bottles."

Most of the bottles we studied were soft drink bottles used in Arizona along with some from New Mexico and El Paso, Texas. However, all bottles (including milks and households) we have found with the



Figure 8: Triangle IPG Heelmark [Lindsey]



Figure 9: Triangle IPG Basemark [Lockhart]

Triangle IPG mark could be dated from 1925 to 1931. We attribute the mark to the Corporation period.

Beginning in 1927, soft drink bottles with the triangle mark displayed two notable patterns: 1) number - number located somewhere away from the mark (e.g., 7 - 1); or 2) number mark number (e.g., 8 manufacturer's mark 5). The manufacturer's marks were always embossed on the heels; we have found only one number pattern that appeared on a base. All other number patterns were embossed on the heels, although we found the first pattern inconsistently placed on the front or on the back heel, regardless of the location of the manufacturer's mark.

On bottles that should be from 1926, there are no identifiable date codes. However, the number "7" appeared in one of the formats described above (usually the number to the left) on all bottles that can



Figure 10: Electroneal Paperweight [Lindsey]

be dated to ca. 1927.<sup>5</sup> This is the first year for the use of a date code by Illinois Pacific.

In 1928, the numeral "8" is usually a part of the code and generally appeared also on the crown finish. The numeral was embossed on the second or lower, more bulbous area of the crown. Occasionally, however, the numeral "7" was in the codes associated with the mark, but "8" was on the crown. In all likelihood, this represented a transition to date codes embossed on the crown. Bottles with "7" near the manufacturer's mark were probably made from molds cut in 1927. When the engraver added the "8" at the crown, he likely forgot to change the heel number. Examples of this kind of error during a transformation period are common on Owens-Illinois Glass Co. bottles as well, and careful examination often reveals where an old code was obliterated and a new digit added to update the year. The date code on the crown probably began sometime during the year, so bottles exist in both configurations.

The move to the crown seems to have been completed by 1929, although occasional examples still retained an "8" near the manufacturer's mark. As above, this was a common error during transitions. In 1930, the only consistently-identifiable date code was embossed on the crown, although two examples attributed to that year did not have marks on the crown. One of these exceptions, however, had a "0" next to the manufacturer's mark (probably indicating 1930).

Even though Toulouse (1971:268, 270) and Ayres et al. (1980:21) both claimed that the switch to the Illinois Pacific Coast Co. came during 1930, bottles with date codes for 1931 still retain an identifiable IPG mark (instead of the expected IPC mark). This suggests that the actual merger took place in 1931, and the dated code probably indicates bottles made in 1931 prior to the merger. However, the "31" date codes may be found either on the crown or in conjunction with the manufacturer's marks. By this date, codes on both sides of the mark are often unrelated to the date.

The discrepancy in the date codes may show up because the company waited until all its old molds wore out. After all, the change in mark was *very* minor. The company may also have filled all of the existing contracts with the older mark because that was the name under which they were ordered. That apparently took from August 1930 to January 1931 or later. This

practice is documented by Smith (1989:25-27) in describing the Ball Brothers takeover of the Three Rivers Glass Co.

**MANUFACTURED BY ILLINOIS PACIFIC GLASS CORP.**

The PRESTO series of jars was made by the Illinois Glass Co. and its subsidiaries after March 1, 1927 (the first use date of the trademark). The PRESTO logo (#243,989) was registered by the Illinois Glass Co. on July 3, 1928 (Creswick 1987:155). Both PRESTO GLASS TOP jars and PRESTO SUPREME MASONS were embossed MANUFACTURED BY ILLINOIS PACIFIC GLASS CORP. in two lines across the back heels of the jars (Creswick 1987:106-107 – **Figure 11**). Contrary to Creswick’s statement (1987:106), the jars were *not* made by the earlier Illinois Pacific Glass Co. The “Co.” ended in 1926, a year before the PRESTO logo was ever used. Roller (1987:293) also featured the PRESTO GLASS TOP with the mark but not the Mason jars. See also the last entry under the Illinois Pacific Coast Co. and Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co. below for other PRESTO jars. These jars were probably made for export – hence the embossing of the full name (see discussion above).

Illinois Pacific Coast Co. (1930-1932)

Although Toulouse (1971:269) claimed three variations of the IPCCO mark were used by the Coast Co., we have not seen a single one of them. Because the IPGCO marks are often small and somewhat indistinct, many people mistake the “G” for a “C” (as noted by Kousseff – above). As a result, reports of an IPCCO mark are often found on eBay, in collectors’ literature, and in archaeological reports. However, we have not found a single report that can be authenticated by research that provides alternative dating. While we have tightly-dated evidence for all the marks we present, we have found no such evidence to support an IPCCO mark of any kind. In order to qualify as conclusive evidence, a bottle with an actual IPCCO mark would have to fit into a date range of 1930 to 1932. Most of the marks we have seen (identified as IPCCO) were much more likely made during the 1910-1920 period based on manufacturing characteristics.

Jones (1965:[16]), quoted T. L. Kousseff as stating that the IPC in a triangle was the “mark of Illinois Pacific Coast Co. 1930-1932, between merger of Illinois-Pacific



**Figure 11:** Presto Supreme Mason – Illinois Pacific Glass Corp. [Creswick 1987:106]



**Figure 12:** Triangle IPC Basemark [Lockhart]



**Figure 13:** Date Code on Crown [Lockhart]

and Pacific Coast, and before merger with Owens-Illinois.” Jones again mentioned the mark three years later with a date of 1903, probably a typographic error for 1930 (1966:20). Jones (1966:20) may have influenced Toulouse to consider the IPCCO-in-a-diamond mark. She showed a drawing of the mark and dated it 1930. She almost certainly misread the IPGCO mark.

IPC in a triangle

The only mark we have identified as being used by the Coast Co. is IPC in a

triangle. Logically, this is the style we would expect to follow the IPG-in-a-triangle mark used by the corporation preceding the merger, and we have carefully examined marks with a magnifying glass to verify that the letter is indeed a “C.” Date codes of “31” and “32” on the crowns verify the mark as belonging to the Coast Co. [Figures 12 - 13]. Although date codes for the Coast Co. may appear on either the crown, the heel, or both, the crown code is usually the defining feature. The marks were only used in 1931 and 1932.

A final bit of evidence for the use of this mark comes from eBay where a seller offered “a beautiful dual embossed Presto Supreme Mason on the front, reverse heel embossed : MANUFACTURED BY ILLINOIS PACIFIC COAST CO. front heel is embossed IPC in triangle and mold 5 off to the right.” This jar was also listed in Roller (1987:294), although he described it as “ILLINOIS PACIFIC COAST CO. Embossed on reverse, IPC in triangle logo embossed on heel.”

**MANUFACTURED BY ILLINOIS PACIFIC COAST CO.**

Along with the PRESTO SUPREME MASON discussed above, the Coast Co. also embossed the long version of the name to mark the back heel of PRESTO WIDE MOUTH GLASS TOP jars (Creswick 1987:108). These jars were probably made for export – hence the embossing of the full name (see discussion above).

Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co.

The Illinois-Pacific Coast Co. reverted to using the same Diamond OI mark as the parent Illinois Glass Co. The only way to tell the bottles used by the Coast division is to note the plant codes. Toulouse (1971:395) illustrated a graph with plant names, numbers, and approximate dates in business, but some of his information does not fit with known plant locations on the West Coast. An undated table from the internet gives the following plant locations and closing dates. Oakland, California, received the designation as Plant #20 in 1937 when the Backenridge, Pennsylvania, plant (the former holder of #20) closed; #21 and #22 were in San Francisco; and #23 was in Los Angeles. The first San Francisco plant (#21) closed in 1937 and the number reassigned to Portland, Oregon; the closure date for the second San Francisco plant is unknown. Apparently, Owens-Illinois closed the Seattle plant about 1932,

although why the Portland factory was not renumbered until 1957 is not explained. Number 22 was reassigned to Tracy, California, about 1960 (Anonymous 2005).<sup>6</sup>

Mike Miller discovered an interesting colorless, soft drink bottle embossed 21 I-in-an-oval-superimposed-on-an-elongated-diamond 7 on the front heel. This mark was used by the Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co. from 1930 to ca. 1954. The back heel, however, is marked 1 followed by a blanked-out triangle. The Owens-Illinois workers used an old mold from either the Illinois Pacific Glass Corp. or the Coast Co. to make the bottle. The 7 to the right of the Owens-Illinois mark is a date code for 1937 (the final year the plant was open), so the mold had laid in storage at least seven years prior to its reuse. To remove all doubts, the factory code 21 is for one of the two San Francisco (former Illinois Pacific) plants.

This was apparently a common occurrence. Creswick (1987:106) notes a PRESTO GLASS TOP jar marked MANUFACTURED BY ILLINOIS PACIFIC GLASS CORP. that also had the Diamond OI mark on its base. Either the Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co. used a mold from the Illinois Pacific Glass Corp. with a newer Owens-Illinois baseplate, or the older company used a baseplate from the parent company in Alton, Illinois (I consider this last possibility very remote). Unfortunately, Creswick did not fully illustrate the jar; it would have been instructive to have seen the factory and date codes for the jar.

#### MANUFACTURED BY OWENS-ILLINOIS PACIFIC COAST CO.

A final PRESTO WIDE MOUTH GLASS TOP jar was made by the Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co. and was so marked on the back heel in two lines. These jars were probably made for export – hence the embossing of the full name (see discussion above).

#### Imperial Packing Co.

Colorless or amethyst jars with BEECH NUT and TRADE MARK around an embossed nut and leaves in four variations are sometimes marked on the bases with I. P. C. along with a patent date of July 11, 1893 [Figure 14]. Creswick (1995:16) attributed the mark to the Illinois Pacific Glass Co. It is much more likely to have been made for the Imperial Packing Co. Imperial, a meat-packing company was

formed in 1891 and was renamed Beech Nut Packing Co. in 1899 (Toulouse 1971:89-91). Although Toulouse was unclear, Imperial (and later Beech Nut) probably did not make glass jars. The makers are currently unknown.

#### Summary

Marks from the Illinois Pacific Glass Co. (IPGCo) appear in letters-only and diamond shapes (with or without periods) and were used from at least 1912 until 1925 (possibly as early as 1902). Only the triangle marks were used by the Illinois Pacific Glass Corp. One-digit date codes appeared in 1927 in conjunction with triangle marks. The codes appeared on both heels and crowns in 1928 and 1929 (in case of discrepancies, the crown mark is correct). Two-digit date codes are found on the crown only in 1930 and on either the crown or heel (or both) in 1930 and 1931. Only IPC triangle marks are reliably reported for the Illinois Pacific Coast Co. These are all date coded 1931 or 1932. The year of transition appears to have been 1931.

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Figure 14: Imperial Packing Co. [eBay]

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#### (Footnotes)

<sup>1</sup> Jones (1961:[7]) claimed the merger occurred in September 1903.

<sup>2</sup> Jones (1961:[7]) provided a three-page history of the founding of the Illinois Pacific Glass Co. in California "Furnished by Owens-Illinois, Oakland Plant." Unfortunately, the history was almost all about the earlier pre-1902 companies. Jones did not number the pages in her series until 1966, so numbers are used in brackets here.

<sup>3</sup> We have found no evidence that IPG (initials alone); IPG in a diamond; IPGCO in a triangle; or IPCCO in any of the three formats were ever used on bottles.

<sup>4</sup> The mark was incorrectly recorded as IPCCo in both publications and attributed (also in error) to the Illinois Pacific Coast Co.

<sup>5</sup> Both Miller (in Arizona) and Lockhart (El Paso, Texas, and Southern New Mexico) have extensively dated local bottles using a combinations of company information, manufacturer's marks, possible code combinations, manufacturing techniques, and the observation of hundreds, possibly thousands, of bottles. This resulted in many cases in the development of a chronology for bottles initially used by a company within a one- or two-year period. These techniques have enabled us to develop, test, and often confirm

possible date codes on many bottles.

<sup>6</sup> The source for these plants and dates is an unnamed internet site. We know nothing of the origin of the site, so its accuracy is in question. Both this and the Toulouse data leave unanswered questions. What happened to the Seattle plant of Illinois Pacific? Did the Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co. close the plant in 1932? What happened to the Oakland plant between 1932 and 1937? Even more mysterious, what happened to the Portland plant between 1932 and 1957? At least the anonymous site was aware that there were two plants in San Francisco.

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