

FOUR OREGON TOKEN FLASKS

By Garth Ziegenhagen

John Thomas called these Newman flasks, but the real Newman flask is embossed on the bottom with C.Newman, Pat. Oct.10th 1876. Oregon has four of these emerald green token flasks and there are two of the unlisted ones. The other two are the OLD O.I.C./ RYE from Oregon Importing Co. and C.J. STUBLING/THE DALLES/OREGON.

Both of these flasks have appeared at Oregon bottle shows in the past. Sometime during 1904, the wholesale liquor store Oregon Importing Co. opened in Portland and then spread out to three different locations. Even though the company dealt only in wholesale sales, there was also a reference to it being a Family Liquor Store. The O.I.C. remained a mystery until someone came up with a paper label that said: Oregon Importing Co. Old Rye Whiskey.

Charles J. Stubling first opened a saloon in The Dalles in 1883 and in 1890 he entered the wholesale business. One trade token refers to his first venture in the Germania Beer Hall and Oyster Saloon. He was very successful and lasted in business until prohibition came to Oregon in 1915.

Most of the Oregon token flasks came after 1900. The writing is incised on a brass token and glued to a de-bossed circle in the center of the flask. The SARATOGA LIQUOR CO/ 245 ALDER ST./ PORTLAND, ORE was owned by Harry R. Eaton and it was difficult to find him in the directories because he was only in business for one year in 1911. It seems like most of these owners who moved around would use these token flasks because a new token would be easier and cheaper than embossing a flask. Also, the token flask is one of the prettier flasks made. The token could be placed upside down so it could be read while drinking. To my knowledge, only one of these Saratoga Liquor Co. flasks is known in 2012.

OAK RUN/(logo)/ BOURBON is attributed to W.J.VAN SCHUYVER & CO., as each of his initials W.J.V.S are incised inside the same logo used on his embossed cylinders and his Cyrus Noble shot glass on page 120 in Barbara Edmonson's book. William Van Schuyver was a partner of a saloon in Portland in 1866 and became the sole owner in 1877. The company stayed in business until prohibition. Many thanks to Margie for bringing this flask to a recent bottle show in Aurora, Oregon.

Source: John Thomas Whiskey Bottles and Liquor Containers From Oregon

