

Let's Talk About Ink

with Ed & Lucy Faulkner

Pottery Bottles

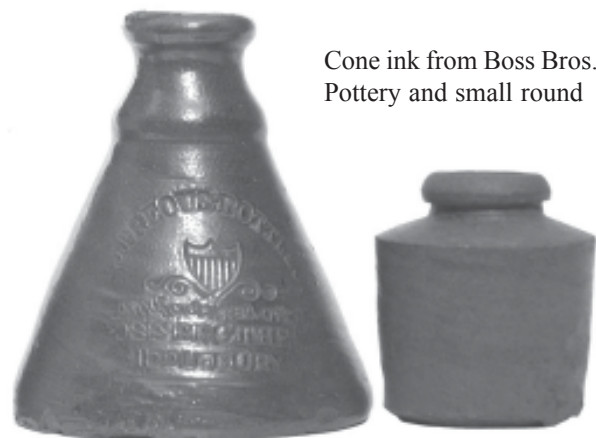
Pottery bottles are often classified as stoneware or ceramic. The glazes vary from an off-white and gray glaze, to light and dark brown. Some have a reddish glaze and are referred to as redware. Glazes vary from shiny to a dull flat.

Most of the large ink manufacturers seem to have used the pottery bottles at some point. A lot of the marked bottles have English or French marks, such as Bourne & Denby and N. Antoine & Fils. Some American companies, including Boss Brothers and Robinson Clay Products of Ohio as well as some Pennsylvania potteries, also made bottles.

Probably any pottery that made utilitarian bottles made ink bottles. Few of these are marked.

It is hard to date these bottles, except for Davids' patented bottle, because the design was the same for all of them. Most were just cylindrical bottles ranging in size from about an ounce to a quart. The small sizes were made in cone shapes, also, and less frequently seen in teakettle and jug shapes. Gallon crocks and jugs were also used by most ink makers for both ink and glue or paste.

The ones we see most often are from the early 19th to early 20th century. It is thought these bottles were used until about 1935. The early small ones were sold as "penny inks" as that was the original cost.

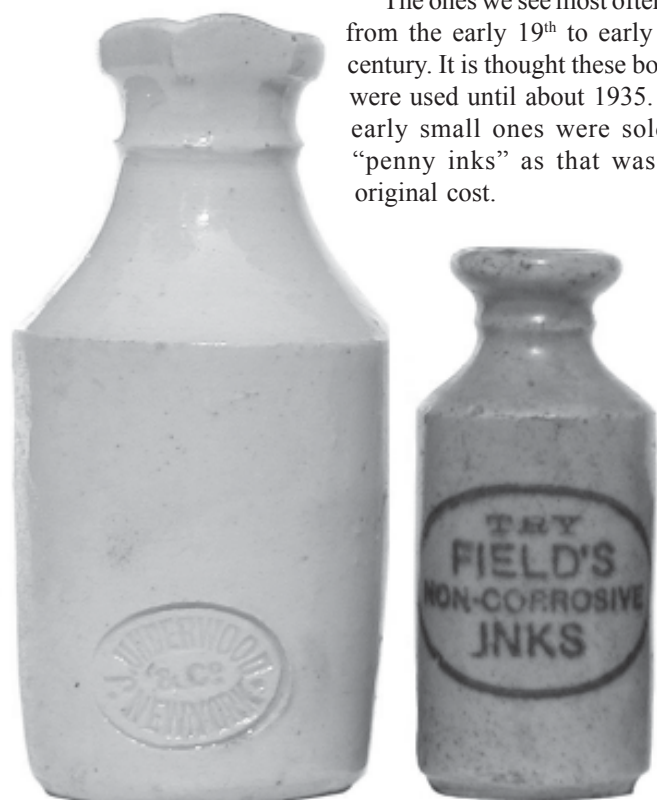


Cone ink from Boss Bros.
Pottery and small round

Because of the weight of pottery bottles, according to some sources, they were often used as ballasts in ships coming to America. It is known from ads that the Stephens Company of London, and probably Arnolds, were shipping ink to the United States in the 1840s. Felt, Stationers Hall, of New York had newspaper ads as early as 1835.

Most ink collectors want these bottles with a full label unless they are from an old company with the name debossed. Bottles from large companies such as Carter and Sanford are fairly common and can still be found with labels.

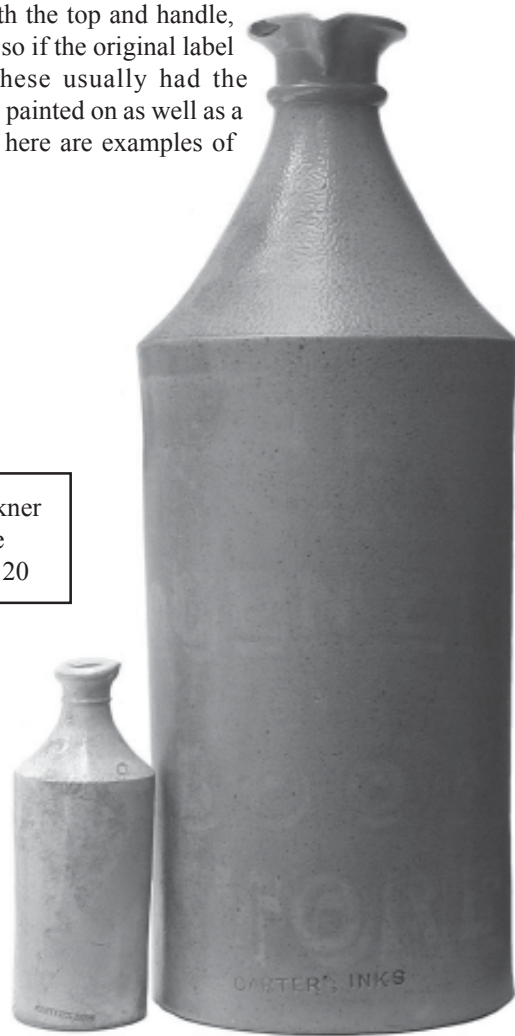
The crocks which were used for paste and glues are collectible if complete with the top and handle, and even more so if the original label still exists. These usually had the company name painted on as well as a label. Pictured here are examples of all types.



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Left: Two sample size bottles from Underwood's, N.Y., and Fields', London (2 and 3 inches tall)

Right: Large 27" tall Carter's display jug with same style in a quart size.



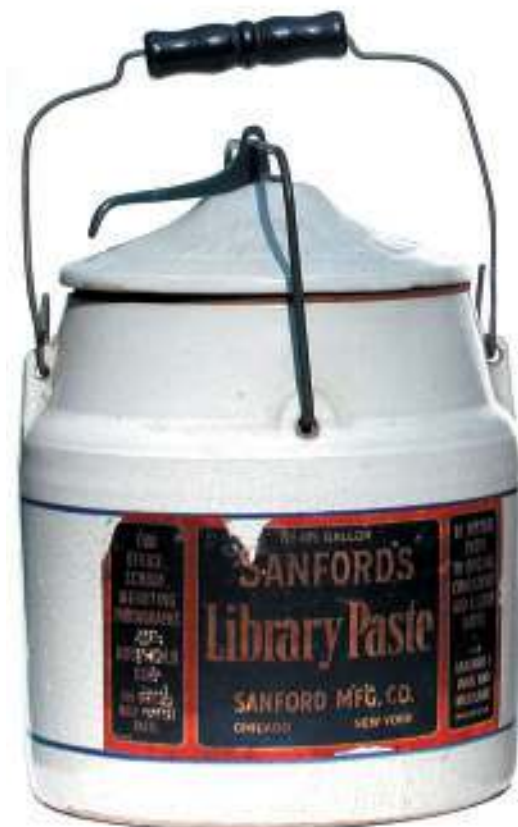
Below: Teakettle and small jug for ink



Right: Felt, Stationers Hall, N.Y., and C. D. Shipman, Mohawk, N.Y. Most Shipman bottles have Utica, N.Y. They were only in Mohawk a short time.



Above: Thaddeus Davids, N.Y., and Stephens, London



Below: Sanford gallon size library paste, Thaddeus Davids, and Keller's jugs. Note the Davids is half-gallon size. Most of these are found in gallon sizes.

