

COLLECTING GLASS HOUSE PAPER

By J. C. Sturm

The collecting of Glass House paper, or Ephemera as it is called, is a side line or "Go-With" collection for the bottle collector. The vast majority of these papers will have a vignette or picture of the company logo, the glass factory, or items manufactured by that glass house. There are several different types of Glass House papers.

The letterhead type is the standard letter paper that the glass house used for general correspondence. It usually contained the company logo or a picture of the factory and had some details of products manufactured by the company.

The billhead type is just as the name implies, a rendering of items sold with the cost and billing information listed thereon. From these billheads we can determine what products were sold by the company even if they are not listed on the letterhead. Billheads also give us an indication of the quantities sold. I once had a billhead from the W. W. Warner company which ordered 100,000 bottles at one time.

Envelopes, or postal covers, are another type of glass house collectible. Again, they usually show pictures of the glass house, the logo or glass workers in the factory. A cover with the vignette of glass blowers from the Cleveland Glass Works showed that it was located in Cleveland, Oswego

County, New York.

Many glass houses put out postal cards with pictures of the factories on them. In my bottle collection I have several bottles with the word DIXIE on the base. I had been told that the Dixie Glass Works was in Alabama. A postal card with a picture is marked Dixie Glass Works, Tallapoosa, Georgia.

Advertising flyers and Broad sides are also good sources of information on old glass houses. They are highly collectible and rarer than other types and therefore much harder to find and costlier to procure.



Stock certificates are available from some glass houses. They are usually very decorative and frame up nicely.

One other type is the shipping paper or bill of lading used when the glass was shipped by sailing vessel or wagon from its point of origin to the buyer. I have one such item which shows that the New England Glass Bottle Company shipped 32

hampers of bottles from Boston to New York aboard the Orleans on the seventh of September, 1831.

Where do collectors acquire these interesting articles of the past? I was intrigued by some framed papers while visiting Richard Watson's home in the mid-80's. I started looking for them at bottle shows and turned up quite a few. Later when I started utilizing E-bay on the computer I found many more. Many of them can be acquired at a very reasonable price. It seems that the older papers and smaller glass houses tend to get quite pricey. Many collectors collect paper from their immediate areas only while others collect according to their specialties. That is, fruit jar collectors collect paper from factories where fruit jars were made, etc.

The majority of these papers are black and white however occasionally some turn up with some color. They make an interesting display when framed and hung as a grouping.

You have probably noticed that I have not touched on Glass House Money. This, in my way of thinking, is a complete field in its own. There are many glass house paper bills and metal coins at a variety of prices. Many have interesting vignettes on them. They seem to be priced fairly high, possible because they also draw interest from paper money collectors as well as bottle collectors.

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