

## FIRE GRENADE BOTTLES

- #1. Early in the 1870's it became popular to have round glass bottles filled with carbon tetrachloride stationed at critical points in homes, businesses, trains, and other appropriate places. These bottles were designed to be thrown into fires, where the impact would shatter the bottle, spill the carbon tetrachloride, and extinguish the fire.
- #2. In case a number of you weren't sure about what you were going to be seeing for the next half hour or so, this picture will give you an idea of what you have in store.
- #3. The card in front pretty much tells the story on this old piece of equipment.
- #4. Just thought this was an interesting shot of the top where they put in the chemicals.
- #5. AJAX FIRE ENGINE WORKS put lead stopper in the bottle before putting bottle into engine, New York City, U.S.A. This was an acid refill bottle used in the larger chemical fire extinguishers such as THE BADGER.
- #6. This strange looking fire extinguisher was called THE MINIMAX and was manufactured in New York. This was also a soda and acid type extinguisher. It was charged by smacking the bottom plunger on the floor which in turn would release the acid into the soda and send a spray of foam out the top.
- #7. The famous HARDENS STAR. This is the one most commonly seen. Chances are the majority of you have come across at least one at every bottle show. But just because they are quite common that doesn't make them any less desirable. The turquoise color is unique to grenades, consequently making them a beautiful addition to any collection. The HARDENS, no doubt, were the giants of the grenade industry as they were sold all over the world up to the very end. Colors other than turquoise are rare.
- #8. It's advertising of this type that no doubt made them so popular. Written material and ads such as this are far scarcer than the bottles themselves. The extinguishers were sold wholesale at \$7.00 per dozen in the pint size, and \$9.00 per dozen in the quarts, which means they probably retailed for \$1.00 and \$1.25 each. Just think, complete fire protection for your home for \$1.00. See what inflation has done!! Take notice of the rack being held by the man in the ad.

- #9. Here is the rack similar to the one in the picture. This particular one was a little fancier than most and was sold for a nominal fee. They did, however, as an added inducement, give away racks with the purchase of a dozen grenades. The racks were made to hold 2, 3, or 6 grenades, depending on your desire or needs.
- #10. The original HARDENS STAR, footed, Pat'd August 8, 1871 and August 14, 1883. Note the sled type runners used for the feet rather than the four small round feet generally seen on the quilted HARDENS. I have seen these only in the turquoise color.
- #11. Quilted HARDENS HAND FIRE EXT. GRENADE pat'd No.1 Aug.8 and Aug. 14, 1888..This was the transition bottle between the original HARDENS STAR and the ever famous round ribbed model. Common in the turquoise, rare in other colors. The smaller ones were salesman's samples and I suppose they would have have been all right to use on very small fires.
- #12. Another quilted Hardens with a slightly different bottle design. Note the raised collar at the base of the neck. Considerably more scarce than the previous one shown.
- #13. More of the HARDEN STARS. Here you can compare the pint and quart sizes. The aqua and amber are the rare ones.
- #14. Another delightful bottle is the HARDENS IMPROVED HAND GRENADE. Especially pretty because of the petal shaped ribs, wide band and round base. Have seen these in cobalt only.
- #15. Still a later improvement by HARDEN. One of these three piece sections is embossed in a round flat side saying HARDENS IMPROVED FIRE EXTINGUISHER HAND GRENADE NEST SYSTEM PAT'D OCT. 7, 1888 No. 1. In case you're wondering, you weren't supposed to stop and separate the sections. Harden claimed that there were different chemicals in the sections and when broken together produced expecially good results. I wonder if they meant some sort of a pretty mosaic in colored glass.
- #16. Everytime Harden put a new grenade on the market it was embossed improved, which proves they were always trying. This particular 2 piece job is embossed around the area where they fit together. Quote HARDENS IMPROVED FIRE EXTINGUISHER PAT'D OCT. 7, 1884. This also comes in amber.
- #17. I felt this was an interesting slide where we show the sectional ones together.



- #18. The lamp chimney shaped HEALYS is another oldie. All it says around the sides is HEALYS HAND FIRE EXTINGUISHER. This also has the drippy old glass around the top. There is a later version of the HEALY in a little different shape dna wider mouth. That's the one we need. (Finally got one, both shown here.
- #19. A pretty group made up of just the amber and green shades. Now that you've seen a number of the grenades you're probably wondering how in the world that little bit of liquid could put out any kind of a fire. Well, actually while the contents might look like water, it was usually carbon tetrachloride or ammonia. The real principal was that when these were broken, the chemical drew the oxygen out of the air thus smothering the flames in an entire room.
- #20. These beautiful cobalt grenades are embossed KALAMAZOO AUTOMATIC AND HAND FIRE EXTINGUISHER. There are just the 2 variants. One is embossed ROCKFORD above the center, and the other is plain. Identical in all other respects. The card below tells the story on their operation.
- #21. LITTLE GIANT FIRE EXT. One of the several grenades designed to self destruct. However, this is the only one I've ever come across where a fuse was used in its destruction. I can just imagine how much of your house would be left if you had to wait until the flames were close enough to light the fuse. Probably didn't go over too good. One good thing about it though, if the flames and smoke didn't get you the shrapnel did. Either way, your problems were over.
- #22. Label on the reverse side reads: THE AUTOMATIC FIRE EXT. BUFFALO N.Y. DIRECTIONS: PLACE THE EXTINGUISHER WHERE FIRE IS MOST LIKELY TO OCCUR. THE FUSE WILL IGNITE AND BREAK IT, OR IT CAN BE THROWN AND BROKEN INTO THE FLAMES. CAUTION, NONE GENUINE WITHOUT THE NAME BLOWN INTO THE BOTTLE. PAT'D FEB. 15, 1887 (Both sides of label states "Do not handle the fuse."
- #23. Everyone always enjoys seeing a cobalt collection. We are no exception. A number of these bottles may appear to be duplicates, but in most cases they are variants in either the color or embossing.
- #24. This is a close up of the same group.

- #25. Here we see ~~two~~ <sup>one</sup> versions of the BARNUM'S DIAMOND. The three sided amber one is embossed in each panes as follows: DIAMOND, next FIRE EXT. and last PAT'D JUNE 29, 1869. You may have noticed there was no mention of BARNUMS name. While on the four sided version it is embossed in each panel #1 BARNUMS HAND FIRE EXT, #2 DIAMOND, #3 PAT'D JUNE 26, 1869 and in the 4th. DIAMOND again. And in case you didn't notice, 3 days separate the 2 patent dates. Both are scarce, the three sided being the rarer of the two.
- #26. Your eyes aren't deceiving you, and no trick photography. This is actually an olive green grenade. We haven't been able to pick up any information researching this grenade, but feel it is our oldest example. From its appearance, we have to assume that it was produced by either the Keene or Coventry Glass House. Bob West has another specimen of this particular bottle with contents. However, it is filled with sand and has an automatic detonator inserted through the neck. This was apparently set off by the heat melting a zinc element releasing the firing pin which in turn blew sand in all directions. I'm afraid this is another case of too little too late.
- #27. A shot of the base showing the groove for a storage rack.
- #28. An attractive grouping of just the green shades.
- #29. The HSN more commonly called the NUTTING. A very attractive grenade with a protruding diamond pattern covering the bottle. Shades of amber and aqua, generally seen in light golden amber.
- #30. Your guess is as good as ours on this one. You'll notice the cap has a hook for hanging at the top which might lend itself to being used as a grenade. The top of the bottle is ground and has a cork inserted flush with the top. No embossing anywhere.
- #31. Sideview of the same bottle. Another example known to exist in cranberry red.
- #32. Another rather wierd and unknown grenade in amber with the old drippy applied top. If you look closely you will notice a glass tube inserted down the neck. Sealed on top with plaster and wired similar to the older soda bottles. Here again, I'm assuming that the glass rod contains acid and the rest of the bottle filled with alkaline. When the bottle was broken the two liquids would mix and a foaming action would hopefully put out the fire. Some of the directions can be seen on the label.



- #33. Just a picture of me standing by the display.
- #34. The ever popular HAYWARDS DIAMOND panel. These are embossed in three panels with the fourth plain for a label. Panel #1 HAYWARD'S HAND FIRE EXTINGUISHER. Next reads S.F.HAYWARD 407 BROADWAY N.Y. And the third had PATENTED AUG. 8,1871.
- #35. These are also the HAYWARDS only with circular rather than diamond shaped panels. They are embossed the same.
- #36. This picture shows the plain panel with the label giving directions on how to use them.
- #37. From this picture you can see the many beautiful colors that were manufactured in this one grenade alone. The HAYWARD people saw a market through the women for color coordination in the homes. Because of this they had a booming business. This company was #2 next to HARDENS. I'm sure the reason there are so many of these around today is because of the variety of colors. The most commonly seen are the ambers. Made in one size only.
- #38. Another variant of the HAYWARD is the accordian or pleated model. These are embossed wround the shoulder HAYWARD HAND GRENADE FIRE EXTINGUISHER NO.407 BROADWAY N.Y.
- #39. Railroads needed protection from fires as well as from Jessie James and Butch Cassidy. So here you see a grenade embossed with C & NW RAILWAY which was manufactured specifically for the Chicago and Northwestern Railway. And as we all know the aisles were pretty narrow in the cars and for this reason they designed this long grenade to hang in racks on the wall. The bottoms were set in a small cast iron cup shaped base and the neck fit into a metal clip. HARDEN also got into the act with this type of grenade and manufactured them in rather plain or fancy designed bottles (slight additional cost for fancy containers.)
- #40. Could be that the Union Pacific had more spacious cars or maybe set one on each dinner table. Irregardless, they seem to prefer the more conventional type container. As you can see from the amount of embossing, they weren't long on words. JUST THROW IT! DON'T READ IT.
- #41. This picture was taken inside our bottle room showing some of our grenades in a display case.
- #42. How's this for a catchy name.HARKNESS FIRE DESTROYER? Boy, if that name didn't sell you, nothing would.

These are in my opinion about the most attractive of all the grenades. I've sort of nicknamed them the BEE HIVE for obvious reasons. The colors really don't show up too well in this picture, but one is a deep purple, another teal blue and the third a cobalt. Generally found in shades of cobalt.

- #43. Even in the old days they had counterfeiters trying to cash in on others peoples good names. Here is a prime example. The HARKNESS name plate was taken out of the mold and some rings removed in the neck, but I'll bet a lot of people thought they were buying FIRE DESTROYERS when they weren't.
- #44. What appears to be a clear glass quilted HARDEN is actually embossed AMERICAN FIRE EXTINGUISHER CO. HAND GRENADE.
- #45. A grouping of cobalt and greens for an interesting color combination.
- #46. Probably the most unusual of all the grenades is the UNIVERSAL FIRE EXTINGUISHER manufactured by John D. Warren & Co's. Chemical Works Worchester Mass., U.S.A. If you couldn't read the embossing you would swear it was an old wax sealer canning jar. It appears to have had some sort of a lead foil seal around the top as there are traces of it left in the neck ring. A great bottle!!
- #47. This shows the vertical ribs around the bottle except for in the front.
- #48. THE FLAGG'S FIRE EXTINGUISHER on the reverse side PAT'D AUG. 4, 1868. Semi flat on the bottom so that they will stand on their own, except during earthquakes. Seen in amber only. I would have to rate these as pretty rare.
- #49. THE MAGIC FIRE EXTINGUISHER. Found in shades of amber and very similar in appearance to the FLAGGS although lacking in a patent date. Other than the embossing the most noticeable difference is the two flat moldmarks on each side about the size of a half dollar. An interesting sidenote is the fact that a couple of cases of these were found in the east recently in the basement of a house owned by a fellow who claimed he was paid for services performed in bottles and fire grenades among other things many years ago. It makes a good story anyway. The MAGICS I've seen don't show any indication of ever having been filled.
- #50. Another shot with the last three grenades for comparison in size.
- #51. Another shot showing the variety of colors and types.



- #52. MS MERRIWEATHER LONDON. A beautiful citron color and very similar in appearance to the HARDEN STAR, however the bottom half below the band has vertical ribs and the upper half has horizontal ribs.
- #53. A group of ambers, cobalts and clear.
- #54. Not as old as some of the others, but certainly as interesting are the BABCOCKS. Embossed on the large front pane BABCOCK HAND GRENADE NONFREEZING MANUFACTURED BY FIRE EXTINGUISHER MANUFACTURING CO. 325-331 S. DES PLAINES ST. CHICAGO. Also a variant from Elmore. I have seen the BABCOCKS in amber, cobalt green and aqua. The NON FREEZING might have been a pretty good selling gimmick as it would have been pretty frustrating to throw a grenade at a fire in the winter time then have to wait for it to thaw out. Note the letter opener used as a giveaway advertisement.
- #55. Well, you have seen the smallest, now here's the largest. HAZELTON'S HIGH PRESSURE CHEMICAL FIRE KEG. Manufactured by Frank R. Hazelton, Concord, N.H. These hold about a gallon and are found in the amber shades only. The large ring of course was used for carrying. The directions say to just throw it into the flames. We haven't been able to determine when the high pressure part comes in.
- #56. Here we show three grenades embossed W.D. ALLEN MFG. CO. CHICAGO, IL. with a crescent like on the door of an outhouse. These melon shaped grenades were advertised as CRESENT GRENADES, and strangely enough, the few we've come across were found on the west coast. Rare in any color, but a real dilly in green.
- #57. Here we do the granddaddy of them all. The CALIFORNIA FIRE EXTINGUISHER. The only grenade with a picture embossed and of course it would naturally be the California grizzly bear. In crudeness, I believe these top them all. The top lip was applied where the glass dripped over, much like the old bitters. These bottles were manufactured by the San Francisco Glass Works in the 1860's. The label on the reverse makes interesting reading. These came in amber only.
- #58. The one you see here is another railroad type grenade. As I mentioned earlier, HARDEN manufactured a tubular that was considerably more ornate than the C & NW RAILWAY, well, this is it.
- #59. SANTE FE ROUTES. The wooden box is completely lined with red mohair material, with screw holes in back indicating that it was permanently secured to the wall.
- #60. As you can see from this individual picture of the Sante Fe Route, it is very similar in shape to the BABCOCK.