

Bottle Trademark Identification: A Key to the Past

By Mike Polak

When selling at bottle and collectibles shows, the most asked questions are: What make a bottle old? What makes a bottle valuable? But, the question that usually leads to a discussion about the importance of trademark identification is: How can I identify a bottle when it has no label or embossing?

While bottle collectors rely on certain factors to determine age and value, such as condition, color, and rarity, in addition to mold types, seam lines, and pontil marks, trademarks are often overlooked. Trademarks can provide the collector with additional valuable information towards determining history, age, and value of the bottle, and provide the collector a deeper knowledge of the glass companies that manufactured these bottles. I have been collecting bottles for 47 years and on many occasions trademarks have been a big factor towards unlocking the mysteries of the past.

An excellent example is depicted in **Figure 1A & 1B**, a common (\$20-25) 1880-1890 “Amber Whiskey” bottle. The front and back are absent of a label or embossing, but embossed on the bottom is SF & PGW. Pacific Glass Works (PGW), founded in 1862 in San Francisco, California, was very successful but encountered financial problems years later. Carlton Newman, a former glass blower at PGW and owner of San Francisco Glass Works (SFGW), bought PGW in 1876, and renamed it San Francisco & Pacific Glass Works (SF & PGW). With that trademark, you have unlocked the mystery. Now, you know you have an 1880-1890 Whiskey bottle, manufactured by SF & PGW between 1876 and 1880, in San Francisco, California.

Another great example is **Figure 2**, an Aqua Blue 1860-1870 “Union -Clasped Hands- Eagle With Banner” Whiskey Flask. While

Figure 1: A common (\$20-25) 1880-1890 “Amber Whiskey” bottle, but embossed on the bottom is SF & PGW



there is the embossing of the Stars above Union, Two-Hands Clasped, and an Eagle and Banner, it doesn't appear to provide any additional information. Or, does it? What about the letters “LF & Co” embossed in an oval frame under the Clasped Hands, and, “Pittsburgh, PA” on the reversed side under the Eagle and Banner? Author Jay W. Hawkins, “Glass-houses & Glass Manufacturers of the Pittsburgh Region, 1795-1910”, researched the mark as Lippincott, Fry & Co, 1864-1867, (H.C. Lippincott and Henry Clay Fry, Operators of the Crescent Flint Glass Co.)

This Civil War era bottle, circa 1864-1865, was made after Fry returned from military service with the 5th Regiment of the Pennsylvania Cavalry during the Civil War where he served since August 1862. Now, you have

Figure 1B: Common 1880-1890 Whiskey Bottles – Trademark SF & PGW





Figure 2: Union-Clasped Hands – Eagle Banner Whiskey Flask, 1864-1865, Front View LF & Co., Top image - Close-Up of Front View LF & Co. Bottom Image - Close-Up Back View Pittsburg, PA.

the entire picture from just a few letters and one word. Earlier I discussed color as being a major factor in determining value. Here's the approximate range for this flask: Aqua Blue- \$100-150, Yellow Green-\$1000-\$2000, Golden Yellow-\$400-600, and Amber \$900-1200. Another note about this Historical 1860-1870 Flask is that it was found in 1973, during a major dig behind a house of the same period in Youngstown, Ohio, in the trash dump located in the back yard. Five additional bottles from the same time period were also found. In 1998 I was fortunate enough to meet the bottle collector who dug this very cool bottle, and after some very tough negotiating, I was fortunate enough to take home the treasure. I've also included additional **Figures 3, 4, and 5** for examples of trademark identification.



Figure 3: Old Quaker Whiskey Bottle 1935-1940, Base image: Trademark F (In Hexagon) Fairmont Glass Works (1906-1968)



So, what is a trademark? By definition, it is a word, name, letter, number, symbol, design, phrase, or a combination of items that identify and distinguishes the product from similar products sold by competitors. Regarding bottles, the trademark usually appears on the bottom of the bottle, possibly on the label, and sometimes embossed on face or backside of the bottle. With a trademark, the protection is in the symbol that distin-

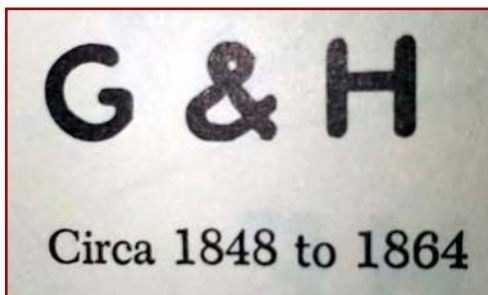
Trademark Illustrations and Descriptions



A. H. Hersey Glass Col, Newark, OH, 1893-1958



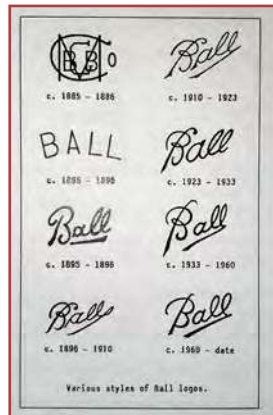
C.L. Flaccus Glass Co., Pittsburgh, PA, 1900-1928



Gray & Hemmingray, Cincinnati, OH, 1841-1851



Hemmingray Glass Co., Covington, KY, 1882-1890/ Muncie, IN 1888-1933



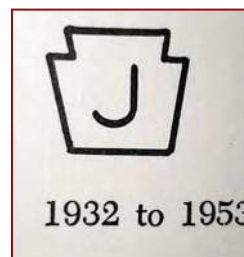
Trade Marks of Mason Jars produced by Ball Brothers 1885-Present
Ball Brothers Glass Manufacturing, Muncie, IN, 1888-1919,
Ball Brothers Co., 1919-1969, Ball Brothers Corp., 1969-Present



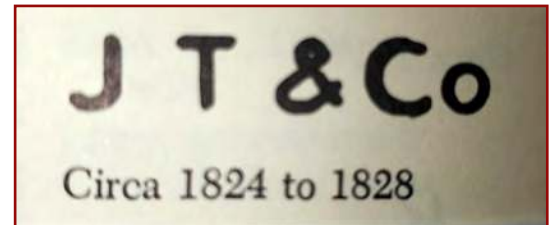
Durkee & Co., 1850-1880



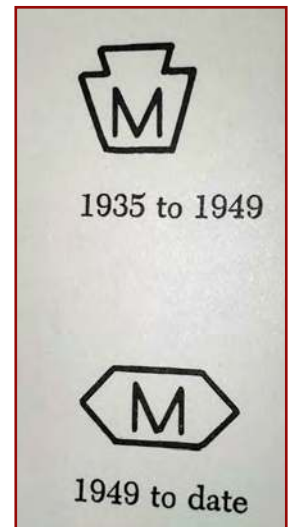
Lippincott, Fry, & Co. (Crescent Flint Glass Co.) 1864-1865



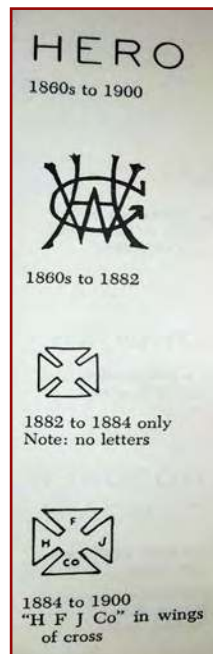
Knox Glass Bottle Co. of Mississippi, Jackson, Mississippi, 1932-1953



Brownsville Glass Works, Brownsville, PA (James Taylor & Co.) 1824-1831



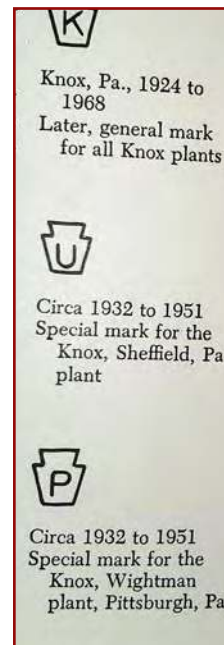
Metro Glass Bottle Co., Jersey City, NJ, 1935-1949



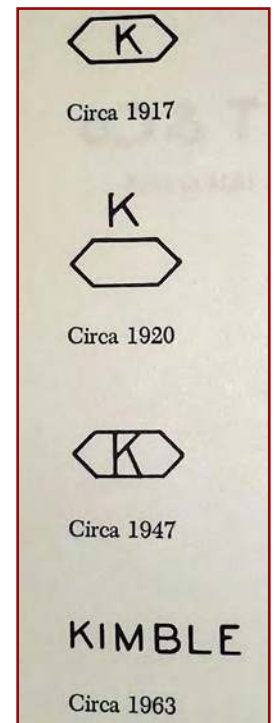
Hero Glass Works, Philadelphia, PA, 1856-1884,
Hero Fruit Jar Co., Philadelphia, PA, 1884-1909



Liberty Glass Co., Toledo, OH, 1895-1860



K -Knox Glass Bottle Co., Knox, PA, 1924-1968 - U -Knox Plant - Sheffield, PA, 1932-1951
P - Knox Wightman Plant, Pittsburgh, PA, 1932-1951



Kimble Glass Co., Vine-land, NY, 1917-1963

guished the product, not in the actual product itself.

Trademarks had their beginnings in early pottery and stone marks. The first use on glassware was during the 1st Century by glassmaker Ennion of Sidon and two of his students, Jason and Aristes, identifying their products by placing letters in the sides of their molds. Variations of trademarks have been found on early Chinese porcelain, pottery and glassware from ancient Greece and Rome, and from India dating back to 1300 B.C. Stonecutters marks have been found on Egyptian structures dating back to 4000 B.C. In the late 1600's, there was the introduction of a glass seal applied to the bottle on the shoulder while still hot. While the seal was hot, a die with the initials, date, or design was pressed into the seal. This method allowed the glass maker to manufacture a many bottles with one seal, then change to another, or possibly not use a seal at all.

Prior to the beginning of the 19th Century, the pontil mark still dominated the base of the bottle. In England through the 1840's, and the 1850's in America and France, glass houses identified their flasks by side-lettering the molds. By the 1880's, whiskey, beer, pharmaceuticals, and fruit jars were identified on the base of the bottles or jars. Following the settling of the Europeans in North America, trademark use was well established. The trademark became a solid method of determining the age of the item providing the owner of the mark is known, or can be identified by research, along with knowing the exact date associated with the mark. If the mark has been used for an extended period of time, the collector will need to reference other material to date the bottle within the trademark's range of years. If the use of the trademark was a shortened time frame, then it becomes easier to determine the age and manufacturer of the bottle. The numbers appearing with the trademarks are not a part of the trademark. They are usually lot manufacturing codes not providing any useful information. The only exception is that the manufacturing year may be stamped next to the codes or the trademark.

While the U.S. Constitution provided for rights of ownership in copyrights on patents, trademark protection did not exist. Registration of trademarks on glassware began in 1860, and by the 1890's there were trademarks were used by all glass manufacturers. Trademark registration guidelines were enacted with legislation by the U.S. Congress in 1870 resulting in the first federal trademark law. The trademark law of 1870 was modified in 1881, with additional major revisions enacted in 1905, 1920, and 1946. The first international trademark agreement, accepted by approximately 100 countries, was formalized at the Paris Convention in 1883 titled at the Protection of Industrial Property.

The next time you find that special bottle without a label or embossing, check out the base, or the lower side of the bottle. You never know what treasure you may have found. "Keep Having Fun With The Hobby of Bottle Collecting."

REFERENCES

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- Whitten, David – Glass Factory Marks on Bottles, www.myinsulators.com/glass-factories/bottlemarks.html



Figure 4: Overbrook's Premium Old Fashion Egg Nog – Rum Brandy and Whiskey, 1945, Base image: Trademark B (In Circle) Brockway Glass Company (1933-1988)



FIGURE 5: Royal Crow Soda Bottle 1947, Base Image: Trademark – Owens-Illinois Glass Company I (In Oval) Overlaid on Elongated Diamond) (1929-1957)



U. S. TRADEMARK DESCRIPTIONS

The following Trademark Identifications represent only a small selection for future reference. As of this writing with updated research, there are approximately 1,200-1,400 trademarks, representing approximately 900 older trademarks.

A trademark is a brand name. A trademark or service mark includes any word, name, symbol, device, or any combination, used or intended to be used to identify and distinguish the goods/services of one seller or provider from those of others, and to indicate the source of the goods/services. (<https://www.uspto.gov/trademarks-getting-started/trademark-basics>)

AB - Attached (B slanted to left) –American Bottle Company 1905-1929

AB Co - Attached (B slanted to left) – American Bottle Company 1905-1929

A B Co - American Bottle Company 1905-1917

A B G M Co. - Adolphus Busch Glass Manufacturing Co., Belleville, Ill, and Saint Louis, Mo. 1885-1928

A C M E - Acme Glass Company., Olean, NY 1920-1930

A.R.S. - A.R. Samuels Glass Co., Philadelphia, PA 1855-1872

B - (In Circle) - Brockway Machine Bottle Co., Brockway, PA 1907-1933

B-C - Bartlett - Collins Glass Company, Sapulpa, OK, 1914-1929

B.B. & Co. - Baker Bros. & Company (Proprietors of Baltimore Glass Works) Baltimore, MD., 1852-1905

BK - Benedict Kimber, Bridgeport and Brownsville, PA., 1825-1840

C (In a Square) - Crystal Glass Co., Los Angeles, CA, 1921-1929

C C G CO. - Cream City Glass Co., Milwaukee, WI. 188-1894

C.G.M. Co. - Campbell Glass Mnfg. Company, West Berkley, CA 1885

DOC - D.O. Cunningham Glass Co., Pittsburg, PA – 1883-1937

E.W. & Co. - E. Wormser & Company, Pittsburg, PA – 1854-1875 (Later Wormser Glass Company 1875-1927)

F (In a Hexagon) - Fairmont Glass Works/Company, Fairmont, IN 1889-1906 & Indianapolis , IN 1906-1968

G (In a Circle) - Gayner Glass Works 1898-1937 (Later Gayner Glass Company, Salem, N.J. – 1937-1957)

H.G. Co. - Hemingray Glass Company, Covington, KY & Muncie, IN (For Bottles) 1870-1895 & Insulators 1870-1915

HGCO (Monogram) - Hemingray Glass Company, Covington, KY(Fruit Jars) 1890-1888

