

## **Buck Glass Co.**

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With a few notable exceptions, the Buck Glass Co. has been ignored or treated lightly by past researchers into glass manufacturers and their marks. Because the main logo was so simple, there are few records to work with, but we have discovered some new information.

### **History**

#### **Nivison Glass Co., Baltimore, Maryland (1904-1909)**

The Nivison Glass Co. moved from Ohio to Baltimore, Maryland, in 1904. The plant made beer, soda, and other types of bottles. The factory was placed at Auction on July 8, 1909 (*Commoner & Glassworker* 1909a:2). For more information, see the Other N section.

#### **Buck Glass Co., Baltimore, Maryland (1909-1961)**

The Buck Glass Co. was organized to succeed the Nivison Glass Co. and was in operation on October 14, 1909, with “extensive improvements . . . including a fine mold shop” (*Commoner & Glassworker* 1909b:2; 1909c:16). George G. Buck was president of the corporation, with William H. Griffin as vice president, and Lawrence M. Buck as secretary and treasurer (*National Glass Budget* 1909:4).

The plant initially operated “eight shops . . . on the day turn and four at night” (*National Glass Budget* 1909:4) at the same single continuous tank with seven rings (Roller 1998). By November 1909, Buck installed its first machine for making “wide mouth ware” (*Commoner & Glassworker* 1909c:16). The plant apparently soon added a second machine, and the two were used to produce “a fine line of brandies, beers, milks, chows and pickles” (*Commoner & Glassworker* 1909d:6). By January 1910, Buck was working 14 hand crews along with its single machine (*Commoner & Glassworker* 1910:1).

Buck still used a combination of hand and semiautomatic production on a single continuous tank with seven rings to make a general line of bottles by 1913 (*Journal of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry* 1913:952). The company made “beers, packers, and preservers . . . by machine in flint glass.” By 1915, the plant added green and amber glass (Toulouse 1971:57-58). *Glassworker* (1917:4) described the Buck plant as operating with a single “one-man Cudden machine and two two-man Cudden machines on beers, sodas and liquor ware and two one-man Teeple machines on milks and one blow shop on a miscellaneous line of bottles” in 1917. According to a January 1918 article, “This company put off its last blow shop last week to make way for another machine,” eliminating hand production (*Glassworker* 1918:12).<sup>1</sup>

As late as 1927, Buck made “prescriptions, beers, flasks, milk jars . . . all flint glass” and all by machine on one continuous tank with three feeders. The plant added “minerals” the following year. In 1932, the product list changes to “milk bottles, special bottles, prescription and proprietary, packers jars, beverages and sodas”; however, the plant dropped packers jars in 1935 (Figure 1). A fourth feeder was in place by 1937 (*American Glass Review* 1927:127; 1932:70; 1935:82; 1937:82).

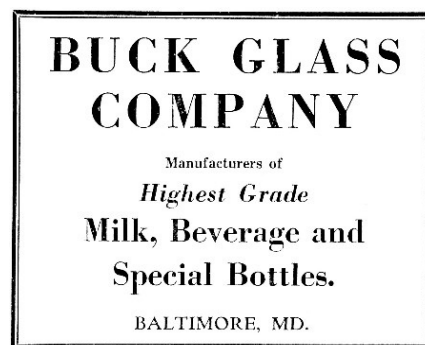


Figure 1 – 1938 Buck ad (*American Glass Review* 1934:107)

Royden A. “Roy” Blunt, Buck’s vice president since 1929, invented the square milk bottle in the early 1940s, a design that eventually became the industry standard (Giarde 1980:20). Upon the death of George Buck in August 1947, the board elected Blunt as president. The Knox Glass Bottle Co. purchased the Buck plant in 1961 – still working out of only one continuous tank (Roller 1998; Toulouse 1971:58), although Caniff (2013:17) placed the date of the sale at July 1959.

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<sup>1</sup> Minton (1961:85), however, claimed that Buck was the last plant to make the change to machines, not fully eliminating hand production until the 1925-1926 season. Minton was likely mistaken, but it is possible that the plant had reintroduced mouth-blown techniques sometime after 1918.

## Bottles and Marks

Although Buck Glass made a large variety of bottles and some jars from 1909 to 1961, the firm seems to have only used one logo – the single letter B – during that entire period. A few other products – such as Thrift Jars – may also be identified as products of Buck Glass.

### **B** (ca. 1928-1961)

Jones (1965:[22]) identified the “B” mark as belonging to the Buck Glass Co. However, she later incorrectly showed the mark with serifs (Jones 1966:15). We have no data that suggests the use of a serif “B” logo by Buck Glass. Toulouse (1971:57) attributed the mark to Buck but added “on machine-made bottles, 1909 to 1961.” As demonstrated by primary sources cited above, Buck did use semi-automatic machines to make small-mouth bottles in 1909 but probably did not use any logo until the late 1920s and only on machine-made bottles. Scholes (1941:129) showed that the mark in his 1941 logo table. Berge (1980:83) illustrated the mark on a chart from 1964, but it was unlikely that Knox used the logo after it acquired Buck in 1961. By that time, all Knox bottles were marked with the K-in-a-keystone logo.

Elling (2002:21) demonstrated that the simple “B” was used by Buck Glass on a soda bottle in 1960 with his discovery of a factory sample bottle sent by Buck to a Nehi distributor. The 16-ounce Nehi bottle was embossed on the base with “B” and a 60 date code but also bore a paper tag glued to the bottle that was headed “BUCK GLASS / COMPANY / BALTIMORE 30, MD.” which gave specifications for the bottle. The tag affixed to a bottle with the “B” logo is solid, empirical evidence that the Buck Glass Co. used the sans serif “B” logo.

Dating, however, is less straight forward. By 1909, only a handful of glass houses used manufacturer’s marks – and only on returnable bottles. Typically, both soda and milk bottle producers began using date codes in the late 1920s, and some firms waited still later. Since bottles made by Buck seem less common than most in our sample, the firm probably did not use date codes in its early years. A good beginning date is probably ca. 1928, and that likely indicates that the manufacturer’s mark was not used earlier, either. The mark was almost certainly continued until 1961 and may have even been used briefly by Knox. See the discussion in the milk bottle section (below) for information on codes.

## 17 B {number}



Figure 2 – 17 • B • 174 code

We have observed a 17 • B • 174 mark on the heels of squat, amber bottles of the type used for Bevo, the near-beer or cereal beverage made by Anheuser-Busch from 1916 to 1929 (Plavchan 1969:159, 616) and used for other types of malt beverages (e.g., Malt-Nutrine). Although this mark is similar to those used by the American Bottle Co. factories during the 1916-1929 period, the font size is slightly larger, and the dots have never been noted on American Bottle marks (Figures 2 & 3). One variation of the mark had the numbers and letter separated by dots (17 • B • 174), while another had similar numbers and an identical, sans serif “B” – but no dots (17 B 25).



Figure 3 – 1904 Malt Nutrine ad (eBay)

This bottle type was especially prevalent during the pre-Prohibition period, between ca. 1914 and 1918, when the anti-liquor forces were bringing about local and state restrictions and/or full prohibition of the making, drinking, and selling of alcoholic beverages. It is thus possible that the “17” in the codes is a date code for 1917.

These codes are reminiscent of the format used by the American Glass Co. on beer and soda bottles beginning in 1916 (e.g., 16 S 3). American Bottle had certainly produced a large number of containers in the malt extract shape for Anheuser-Busch – to hold the earliest “Prohibition-era” near-beer, Bevo – although these were embossed with “A.B.Co.” on their bases. However, the Belleville factory, the only American Glass plant with a name beginning with “B,” had closed in 1909, so a “17” date code would be inappropriate – if the bottles were made by American Bottle.

The “B” is sans serif, similar to those used by the Buck Glass Co. Buck was certainly open during the period, and the plant made beer bottles. The code sequence is also very similar to the one used by Buck on milk bottles (see below), although the possible date code is reversed; the milk bottle dates are to the left, and this one is to the right. We have not discovered any other date codes this early, so it is likely that the number to the left is a model number, and the one to the right is a mold code. It is probable, however, that the heelmark *is* the logo and codes of the Buck Glass Co.

## Milk Bottles

Contemporary sources (see history section) noted that Buck Glass made milk bottles on its first machine in 1909. Both Giarde and Dairy Antique agreed that dairy containers became a major part of the plant’s output.

## Square Milk Bottles

Dairy Antique (2013) noted that:

Buck Glass Company of Baltimore, Maryland claimed that they had a square milk bottle in use at Alexandria Dairy Products Company of Alexandria, Virginia in October of 1940. This is the first use we have found reported of a modern, square milk bottle and Buck Glass Company claimed they were the originator of the square milk bottle in many of their later ads.

According to Giarde (1980:20), this was “the squat square milk bottle” that was called “the square or sometimes as the modern square” by the 1950s. The Alexandria Dairy was probably the test market for a bottle invented by Royden A. “Roy” Blunt, the president of Buck

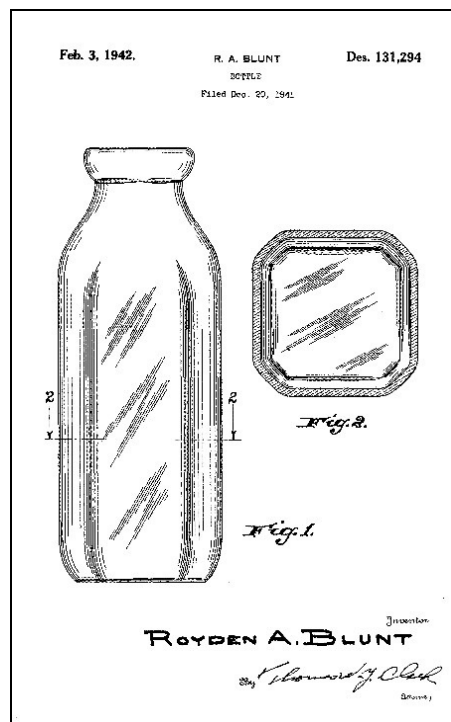


Figure 4 – Blunt’s 1942 patent

Glass. Blunt applied for a patent for a “Design for a Bottle” on December 20, 1941, and received Design Patent No. 131,294 on February 3, 1942 (Figure 4). He was followed by William C. Teunisz, who applied for a patent for a square milk bottle on July 13, 1944, and received Design Patent No. 139,331 on October 31 of that year (Figure 5). It is almost certain that the Owens-Illinois Glass Co. used the Teunisz patent in 1944 to compete with Buck. The square style soon became the industry standard.

### “Toothache” Milk Bottles

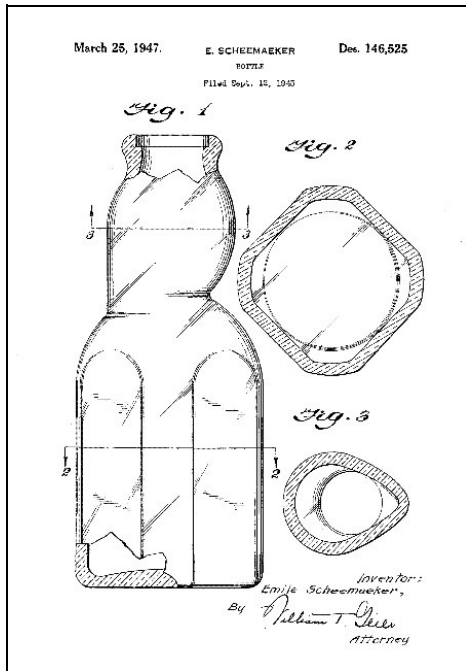


Figure 6 – Sheemaeker’s 1947 patent

the cream could be poured off without mixing it with the milk in the lower part of the bottle. Later variations included the baby top (with a baby face on the bulge), cop-the-cream (with the face and hat of a police officer), and the modern top (smaller bulge).

Various types of “cream top” milk bottles had been in existence since 1925 (see Giarde 1980:30-32 or Dairy Antique 2013 for in-depth discussions). These included the cream top, with a bulge at the top of the bottle where the cream collected. A special spoon could be fitted into the opening at the base of the bulge so that

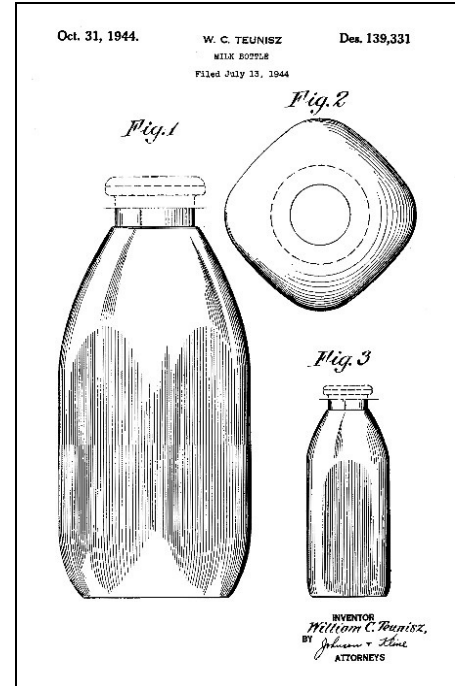


Figure 5 – Teunisz 1944 patent

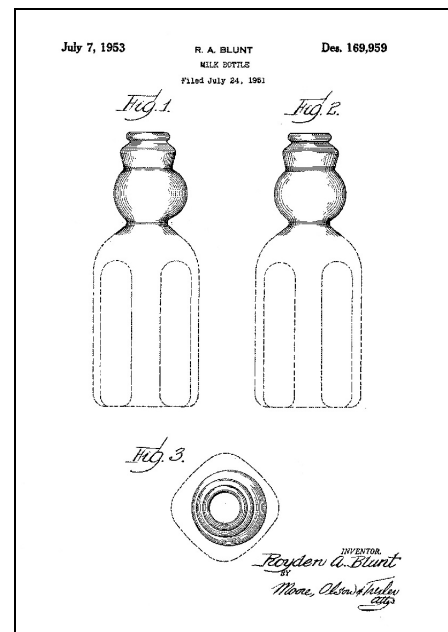


Figure 7 – Blunt’s 1953 patent

Emile Sheemaeker applied for a patent for a square milk bottle with a bulbous neck that extended to one side on September 12, 1945, and received Design Patent No. 146,525 on March 25, 1947 (Figure 6). Royden A. Blunt, who had designed the square milk bottle for Buck Glass (patented in 1942) applied for a similar (but much improved) “toothache” design on July 24, 1951. He received Design Patent No. 169,959 on July 7, 1953 (Figure 7). The Buck Glass Co. manufactured these bottles, although Richer-Pour Bottle, Inc., was the organization that sold the containers. Blunt was almost certainly associated with Richer-Pour, and it was probably a subsidiary of Buck (Dairy Antique 2013).

### **“B” on Milk Bottles**

Giarde (1980:20) advised a method for determining if a “B” mark on milk bottles belonged to Buck:

Use of the letter “B” as an identifying mark is an irritation to the collector because other companies also used the letter “B” on their bottles, often included in a series of numbers embossed on the bottom of the bottle.<sup>2</sup> Buck, however, did not adopt its mark with [collectors] in mind. To compound the problem Buck also often used numbers before and after their “B”. However, the Buck “B” tends to be a little larger and more obvious. What the collector must do is search the bottle with a “B” on it for signs of another manufacturer’s mark. When there is none then one can feel comfortable with the conclusion the “B” marked bottle is a Buck.

Unfortunately, Giarde did not discuss whether the mark was found on heels or bases, but eBay examples show that the codes were embossed in either location.. In addition, a number of examples – especially from eBay – have created a sufficient sample to identify elements of the Buck code and form a date code chronology. These samples further provide information on additional Buck marks, especially “seals” – discussed below.

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<sup>2</sup> A number of “B” marks with accompanying numbers also appear on milk bottle heels. However, the letter “B” with other codes also occasionally appears on bases of soda bottles made by the Knox Glass Co., especially ones with ACL labels.

Our study of milk bottles has been simplified by the posting of more than 20 bottles – with good photos – on eBay – along with two from other sources. Unfortunately, several other eBay postings had either poor embossing on the bottles or poor photos, rendering the codes illegible. The entire sample consists of milk bottles used in Maryland (Figure 8), clearly establishing the “B” as the Buck Glass Co. logo.



Figure 8 – Maryland milk bottle (eBay)

Codes on milk bottles divide into two categories: heelcodes and basecodes. Both of these may be further divided into three segments: a one- to five-digit number, followed by a “B,” followed by a one- or two-digit number. The initial number could be a mold code or a model (catalog) code. We assume the latter because some of the initial numbers on bases extend as high as 12002-10 or 10009-X-13. It is highly unlikely that *any* run of bottles needed 12,002 molds. The remaining segments of the codes are easier to explain. The “B” is an obvious reference to Buck, and the final numbers are almost certainly date codes.

### Heelcodes

The date codes on heelmarks divide into single-digit and double-digit numbers. The double-digit numbers are distinct date codes, ranging from 31 to 36 (1931 to 1936) in our sample of 12 bottles, all from dairies in the state of Maryland (e.g., “16 B 35” – Figure 9). An unusual outlier was embossed “SEALED B 36.” The initial codes (probably model numbers) accompanying double-digit dates extended from 9-138.



Figure 9 – 16 B 35 heelmark (eBay)

Single-digit numbers are represented by seven examples in the sample. These range from 2 to 8, and this spread is more complex to interpret. The Thatcher Mfg. Co. led the industry by using the first milk bottle date code in late 1909. In general, however, milk bottle manufacturers began embossing date codes on milk bottle bases (and occasionally heels) in



1928. These were usually two-digit date codes, although some glass houses began with single digits and adopted double-digit codes after the entry into the next decade.

It is probable that Buck Glass became a date code user in 1926, although either of the next two years is also possible. Thus, single-digit codes of “6” or “8” may indicate 1926 or 1928 (e.g., “3 B 8” – Figure 10). The very low numbers – “2” or “3” in our sample – likely represent 1932 or 1933. The trend toward date codes had not begun by the early 1920s, and the transition from one- to two-digit date codes was rarely consistent. It is highly probable that Buck used both single- and double-digit date codes randomly from 1931 to ca. 1936, possibly later. This erratic use was probably at the whim of the engraver. On heelmarks, the initial numbers (probably model numbers) extend from 3-43, with a single outlier of “A 121 B 3” and one with no initial code (Figure 11).



Figure 10 – 3 B 8 heelmark (eBay)



Figure 11 – B 6 heelmark (eBay)

The use of both heelcodes and basecodes apparently began about the same time – ca. 1926 or 1928. Their decision about which placement to use was apparently random; both styles were used on bottles with or without dairy initials or names on the bases. Heelcodes, however, seem to have disappeared prior to the 1940s.

### Basecodes



Figure 12 – SEALED B1 on shoulder (eBay)

arched shoulder embossing of “SEALED B1” (Figures 12 & 13) or “SEALED / B1” (Figures 14 & 15) – accompanied by date

All basecodes we have recorded were in an inverted arch format. As noted above, they also had three segments, basically conforming to the same criteria as those on the heels. Some of these also had



Figure 13 – Base of “SEALED” bottle (eBay)

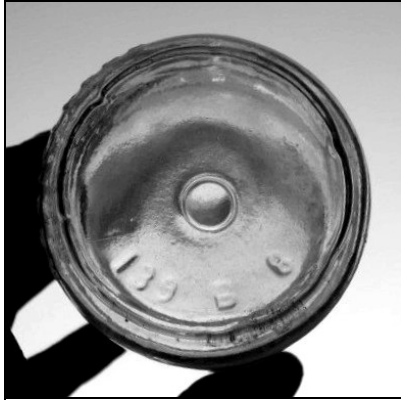


Figure 14 – Base of “SEALED” bottle (eBay)

codes of “7,” “8,” or “31.” A single example with a “42” date code had “SEALED B1”

horizontally at the heel (Figures 16 & 17). We will need a much larger sample in order to trace the “SEALED” sequence.



Figure 15 – SEALED / B1 on shoulder (eBay)

As noted above, basecodes began use ca. 1928, based on single-digit codes on milk bottle bases. In our sample of 14 Maryland milk bottles (all but one from eBay), “7” and “8” were the only single-digit date codes (see Figures 12 & 14), although the transition to double-digit codes probably followed the same trajectory as those in the heelcodes. Double-digit date

codes extended from “31” to “49” (see Figure 16) and probably extended to



Figure 17 – SEALED B1 heelmark (eBay)

the sale of the firm to Knox Glass Bottle Co. in 1961.



Figure 16 – Base of “SEALED” heelmark (eBay)

Although the code sequence through the 1930s is similar to the one used with heelmarks, Buck Glass made a notable change in the initial codes ca. 1942 (an older code sequence in our sample had a single-digit initial code – “4 B 41”). Where the 1920s-1930s initial code was one to three digits in length, the new ones had three to five digits, usually followed by a hyphen then a letter or single-digit number or both (e.g., “10009-X-13-B 44” or “12002-10 B 48” – Figure 18). These often appeared on square, squat round, or square creamtop bottles (Figure 19). Unfortunately, the last date code in our sample is “49” (1949). See Table 1 for a chronology.

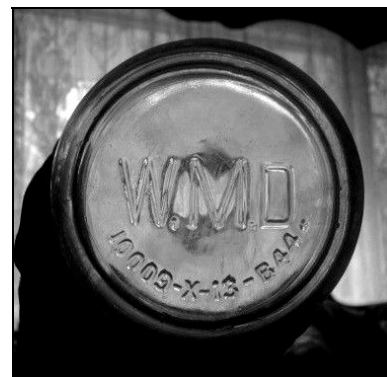


Figure 18 – 1940s base code (eBay)

**Table 1 – Chronology of Buck Glass Co. Milk Bottle Codes**

Logo Location	Date Code	Date Range	Other Marking
heel	one-digit	ca. 1926-ca. 1932	
heel	two-digit	ca. 1931-ca. 1936	
base	one-digit	ca. 1928-ca. 1930	
base	one-digit	ca. 1927	SEALED B1 (shoulder)
base	one-digit	ca. 1928-ca. 1931	SEALED / B1 (shoulder)
base	two-digit	ca. 1941-?	SEALED B1 (heel)
base	two-digit	ca. 1931-ca. 1941	
base	two-digit	1940s-1950s?	3- to 5-digit, hyphenated codes

### Creamers

Creamers, apparently were marked more simply (Figure 20). Our tiny sample on shows a “B” on the base above a one- or two-digit number (“7” and “14” in our sample). The simplicity may reflect the smaller basal surface.

### Milk Bottle Seals (ca. 1940-1947)

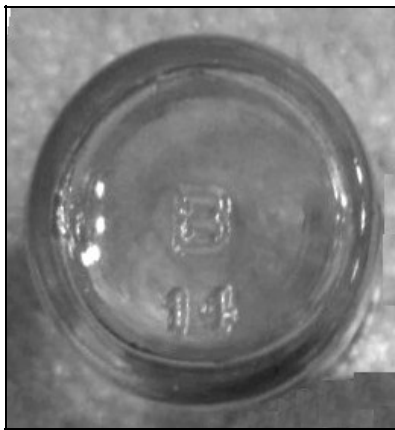


Figure 20 – Creamer base (eBay)

Even though Buck made milk bottles, the Massachusetts Department of Standards Bulletin #11 (1918) noted that the Butler Bottle Co., Butler, Pennsylvania, was authorized to sell milk bottles to dairies in the State of Massachusetts and authorized to use the Massachusetts “B” seal to identify itself (Schadlich ([ca.

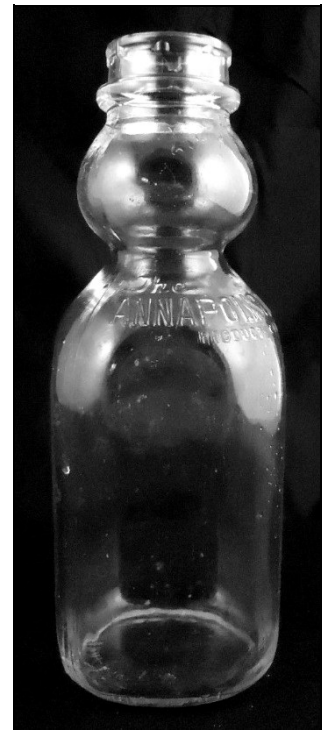


Figure 19 – “Toothache” bottle (eBay)

1990]). Because the Pennsylvania plant did not really exist (see Butler Bottle Co. section), and the Ohio company is known to have made milk bottles, it is almost certain that the Butler Bottle Co., Butler, Ohio, actually used the Massachusetts seal with the “B” in the center.

Schadlich ([ca. 1990]) further noted that the Buck Glass Co. did not apply for nor was it approved for a Massachusetts seal. This was not entirely correct, although Buck did not appear on either extant Massachusetts bulletin (1918 or 1928). Buck made milk bottles early in its existence, but the company does not seem to have joined in the “seal” systems for Massachusetts and Maine until fairly late in the sequence. Massachusetts began its seal system in 1900, requiring that dairies take their bottles to local “sealers” to have the volume checked. Bottles with correct volume were etched with a “seal” that showed they had been inspected.

In late 1909, the law was amended to require a bond from glass houses wishing to sell bottles in Massachusetts. The bond guaranteed that all milk bottles would meet the Massachusetts standards for volume. These companies embossed the seals on the bottles, making the system much easier on everyone. By 1914, many companies had accepted a round format on the bottle’s shoulder for the seals, and that configuration became law in 1918. The Massachusetts seal for Buck was “MASS (arch) / B1 / SEAL (inverted arch).” The “1” had no serifs and was probably used to be different from the B seal (Figure 21). These were probably used between ca. 1930 and 1947.



Figure 21 – Mass. B1 Seal (Al Morin)



Figure 22 – Maine B1 Seal

Maine enacted a similar seal system in 1913, although it only required the manufacturer’s mark and a state-generated number. In 1915, however, a new law required the use of “MAINE SEAL” with the number, embossed on the upper half of the bottle. The only example we have in hand also had the Massachusetts seal. The Maine seal appeared on this bottled on the opposite shoulder. The configuration was exactly the same (including B1) except that “MASS” was replaced by “MAINE” (Figure 22). The seal was probably used during the same ca. 1930-1947 period. Both states repealed the seal laws in 1947.

We have not directly traced the origin of the bottles embossed with “SEALED / B1” or “SEALED B1” on the shoulders and bases of milk bottles. However, several states required “SEALED” and the initials and logos of the manufacturers. These bottles were therefore likely labeled to fulfill a variety of state requirements.

### **Soda Bottles**

Giarde’s advice about determining whether a milk bottle was made by Buck Glass is probably an acceptable way to test other bottle types as well. On soft drink bottles, for example, the Knox Glass Co. used a capital “B” as part of its code sequence to indicate that the bottle was a beverage bottle. In the Knox code, the first two numerals indicate the mold number, the letter denotes the type of bottle, and the last two digits identify the capacity – each separated by a hyphen. For example, a code of “54-B-10” was embossed on several soda bottles from El Paso, Texas. The “54” was the mold number, “B” meant Beverage bottle, and “10” denoted a capacity of ten ounces. However, such bottles also were embossed with the K-in-a-keystone (or another letter) mark of Knox. Unless future research reveals a “B” with no serifs as having been used by another company, the “B” mark should be identified as that of the Buck Glass Co.

Finding examples of soft drink bottles has proven more difficult, especially since all Bottle Research Group members currently live in the western U.S. At this point, we only have one example, found by David Kirkpatrick on a base and partial body fragment with a heel embossing of “39 B - 6.” This fits Giarde’s comment on the style of Buck marks and our examples on milk bottles. If our milk bottle assumptions are correct, this bottle should date to 1926. To compound the identification problem, however, the Kirkpatrick mark is from a bottle with a 2 ½ " base – suggesting a bottle with more than six-ounce capacity (which typically have a 2 1/4" base – or less), although a squat soda bottle remains a possibility.

### **B.G.CO.**

Dairy Antique (2013) noted that “Some Buck Glass Company milk bottles also used the makers mark of B.G.CO.” This is the only citation we have found for a B.G.CO. logo used in connection with milk bottles or with the Buck Glass Co.

## BUCK GLASS CO.

Roller (1983:122, 133) noted that the entire company name was used to mark the glass lid for a jar made in the 1940s to 1950s. The lid was also



Figure 24 – Garden Queen lid (eBay)

embossed “Farm Family Baltimore, MD” in script.

Another very similar jar was

embossed “Garden Queen” on the glass lid as well as “BUCK GLASS CO.” The revised edition (Roller 2011:189, 205) described the same lids but was more cautious about dating, stating that “the date of manufacture of these jars is not known.”

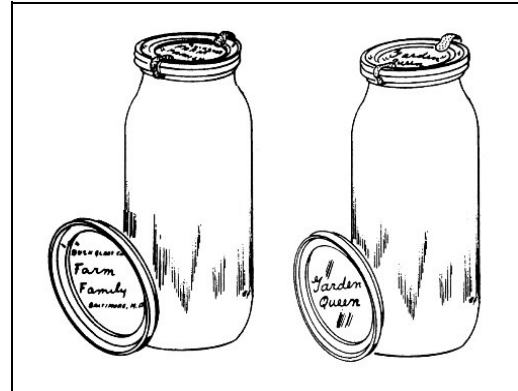


Figure 23 – Farm Family jar (Creswick 1987:52)



Figure 25 – Farm Family lid (eBay)

Creswick (1987:52) also noted the “Farm Family” and “Garden Queen” jars, and noted that the latter lid has been found both with and without the Buck name. The metal clips (to fasten the lid), and style of cursive were identical on both jars (Figures 23 & 24). She credited the Buck Glass Co. with the manufacture of the jars with and without the Buck name (Creswick 1987:55).

Caniff (2013:17-18) discussed the Farm Family jars and noted that one style of lid was embossed “BUCK GLASS CO. / Farm / Family (both cursive) / BALTIMORE, MD.” (Figures 25 & 26). He

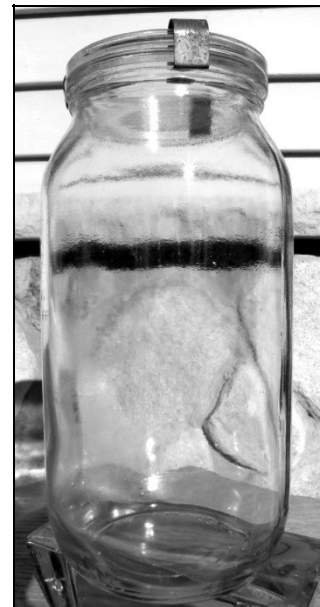


Figure 26 – Farm Family jar (eBay)

discovered ads for the jars dated May 4, 1945, May 5, 1945, and August 9, 1946. Two jars had basemarks of “4913-5 B 43” and “4913-5 B 44” – possible date codes for 1943 and 1944.

### Thrift Jars

As usual, jar information has built up as each



Figure 28 – Thrift Jar – Buck Glass Co. (eBay)

researcher discovered data unknown to the previous one. Toulouse (1969:306-307) noted two variations

of the Thrift jar. The jars were colorless and machine made (see Table 2 for characteristics). The main difference was that one was embossed “THRIFT JAR CO. / BALTIMORE, MD.” below “THRIFT” – while the other was embossed “BUCK GLASS CO. / BALTIMORE, MD.” in the same place (Figures 27 & 28). The

bases were embossed “LICENSED BY P.F.P. CO. BALTO, MD. / PATD

OCT. 7 1913” – both in circular form (Figure 29). Toulouse noted that Buck Glass made the jars and “the Thrift Jar Co. was probably a sales company.”



Figure 27 – Thrift Jar – Thrift Jar Co. (North American Glass)



Figure 29 – Thrift Jar base (eBay)

The American Pure Food Process Co. held the patents for both the lids and jars. Roller (1983:352) noted that “the exact relationship between the Buck Glass Co., Thrift Jar Co., and Pure Food Process Co. is not yet known.” Roller discussed the patents for the jars, invented by Edward D. Schmitt, and noted that the Pure Food Process Co. received a trademark for “Thrift” for jars and jar caps in 1920, claiming first use on July 1, 1918. He also mentioned a variation – a “THRIFT JAR ghosted through BUCK GLASS.” In other words, the jar had originally been embossed “THRIFT JAR”; the old embossing had been peened out, and “BUCK GLASS” was engraved on top of it. The former embossing, however, showed through faintly.

**Table 2 – Datable Characteristics on Jars and Lids Related to the Pure Food Process Co. (after Roller 2010:507-508)**

Characteristic	Location	Date Range
PAT. APPLIED FOR or PAT. APLD. FOR*	heel	late 1910-late 1912
PATENTED SEPT. 7, 1909	lid	late 1910-late 1912
HEYSER'S OYSTERS**	shoulder or body	ca. 1913-ca. 1916
LICENSED BY P.F.P.CO. BALTO, MD.	shoulder or heel	ca. 1910-ca. 1913
LICENSED BY P.F.P.CO. BALTO, MD.	base	ca. 1912-mid-1920s
THRIFT / THRIFT JAR CO. / BALTIMORE, MD.	body	1918-1921
THRIFT / BUCK GLASS CO. / BALTIMORE, MD. (ghosted over THRIFT JAR CO.)	body	1921-ca. 1923
THRIFT / BUCK GLASS CO. / BALTIMORE, MD.	body (no ghosting)	ca. 1922-ca. 1925

\* Some of these have no other markings and can only be identified with Pure Food by the accompanying cap.

\*\* William Heyser was probably selling oysters at Baltimore from at least 1892 to the 1920s; however, he likely only used P.F.P. bottles for a few years. Note that there are at least three variations of Heyser's bottles identified by Tom Caniff (Roller 2010:507), although there is likely no way to date them any closer than this date range.

Creswick (1987:129) discussed four variations of the jar and illustrated three of them (Figure 30). Two were the same jars discussed by Toulouse and Roller. Another lacked the side embossing but had the "LICENSED BY P.F.P. CO. BALTO, MD." on the base (Figure 31). Her final variation was embossed "THRIFT JAR Co. (arch) / THRIFT (horizontal) /

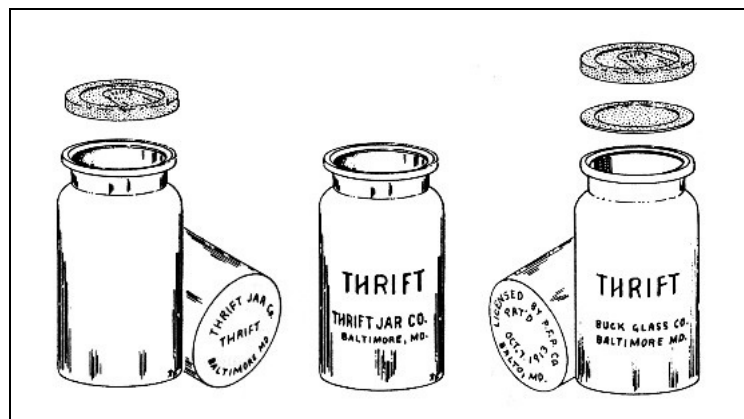


Figure 30 – Thrift Jars (Creswick 1987:129)



BALTIMORE, MD (inverted arch)” on the base, also with no side embossing. She also discussed the patents and trademarks.

Leybourne (2008:413) brought the total to six variations but added no further knowledge about the manufacturer or the Pure Food Process Co. Caniff, writing for the new Roller group (Roller 2011:506-508), brought the total variations to 14 but noted that the list was “by no means comprehensive in nature.” More importantly, he discussed the Schmitt patents in greater depth and added Baltimore City Directory information on the firms involved. He dated the jars as a group “circa 1910s-1920s by the Buck Glass Company of Baltimore, Maryland.



Figure 31 – P.F.P jar with no embossing on sides (eBay)



Figure 32 – Heyser Oyster jar (eBay)

A final variation of the Thrift Jars was embossed “HEYSER’S OYSTERS / CONTENTS 1 PT. NET.” on one side and “PACKED BY W.H. HEYSER / BALTO. MD.” on the other (Figure 32). William Heyser was probably selling oysters at Baltimore from at least 1892 to the 1920s; however, he likely only used P.F.P. bottles for a few years. There are at least three variations of Heyser’s bottles identified by Tom Caniff (Roller 2011:507), probably used between ca. 1913 and ca. 1916.

We would like to summarize a few interesting details about the patents and companies involved and indulge in a bit of speculation.

### **Company Histories**

Aside from Buck Glass, there were two other firms connected with the Thrift Jars: the Pure Food Process Co. and the Thrift Glass Co.

### **Pure Food Process Co. (1910-1919)**

The Pure Food Process Co. was incorporated on June 14, 1910, with a capital stock of \$150,000. The business was located at 1920 Eastern Ave., and Charles H. Dickey was president. Albert E. Donaldson was secretary by 1914, and the firm had moved to the Garrett Bldg. The next year, the company again moved, this time to 229 Guilford Ave. The listing in the city directory remained until 1919 (Fox 1910:323; Roller 2011:506).

The firm continued to be listed in various Maryland government documents throughout the teens and was apparently still in good standing at the end of 1919, when it was listed under “Corporations Subject to Franchise Tax” (Beck 1920). However, the firm was *not* listed as a taxpayer in the 1920 Annual Report of the Comptroller of the State of Maryland, suggesting that the firm did not survive into the new year (Archives of Maryland Online). Although the Pure Food received a final trademark for “THRIFT” connected with a jar-capping machine on May 18, 1920 (Creswick 1987:129), the firm was probably out of business by that time.

The Pure Food Process Co., therefore was in business from mid-1910 to late 1919. The frequent changes in office locations suggests that the firm was a management concern only. The directors held the patents but probably did not actually manufacture anything. There is some possibility that Pure Food made some lids, but it is virtually certain that the Buck Glass Co. manufactured all of the jars.

### **Thrift Jar Co. (1920-ca. 1922)**

The Thrift Jar Co. was first listed in the Baltimore city directories in 1920. L.M. Buck was president, with George G. Buck as vice president. The firm was only listed again in 1921 (Roller 2011:506). Lawrence M. Buck had been listed as the secretary of the Buck Glass Co., with George E. Buck as president in 1913. Thus, the Thrift Jar Co. was almost certainly a subsidiary company of Buck Glass. The Thrift Jar Co. apparently disbanded in late 1921 or early 1922.

The series is thus revealed. Although we will probably never know the details, the Pure Food Processing Co. owned the patents for the Thrift Jar from 1910 to 1919, although the Buck

Glass Co. likely made the jars. In 1920, Buck Glass apparently formed a subsidiary firm, the Thrift Jar Co., that continued to manufacture Thrift Jars. Buck dissolved the subsidiary in late 1921 or early 1922 (see Table 3). Based on the ghosted “BUCK GLASS” over “THRIFT JAR,” at least some jars continued to be made by Buck after the Thrift Jar Co. was closed.

**Table 3 – Sequence of Thrift Jar Patent Owners**

Firm	Date Range
Pure Food Processing Co.	1910-1919
Thrift Jar Co.	1920-1921
Buck Glass Co.	1921-1961*

\* Buck Glass probably only made the jars for a few years.

**The Schmitt Patents and THRIFT Trademarks**

Edward D. Schmitt was successful in obtaining five patents that were connected with the Thrift jars and/or lids. The relationships between the patent application dates, the dates when the patents were received, the wording, and company information tell an interesting story. First, we need a summary of the patents. For accuracy, these are numbered according to the dates when Schmitt *applied* for the patents.

1. Jar Cap or Closure, Patent No. 933,347; applied January 23, 1908; patent received on September 7, 1909; assignor to Frank G. Turner (Figure 33)

2. Jar Cap or Closure, Patent No. 1,025,314; applied November 18, 1909; renewed February 14, 1911, patent received on May 7, 1912; “Assignor by Direct and Mesne Assignments, to the Pure Food Process Company”

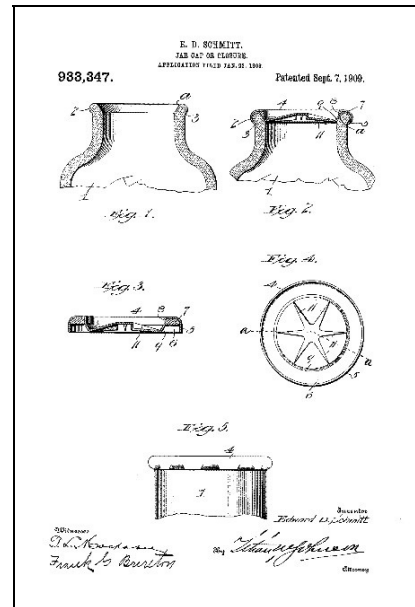


Figure 33 – Schmitt 1909 patent

3. Glass Jar or Bottle, Patent No. 1,049,926; applied December 9, 1909; patent received on January 7, 1913; “Assignor by Direct and Mesne Assignments, to the Pure Food Process Company” (Figure 34)

4. Jar Cap, Patent No. 1,075,125; applied May 10, 1912; patent received on October 7, 1913; “Assignor to the Pure Food Process Company” (Figures 35 & 36)

5. Jar Cap, Patent No. 1,163,039; applied January 14, 1915; patent received on December 7, 1915; “Assignor to the Pure Food Process Company”<sup>3</sup>

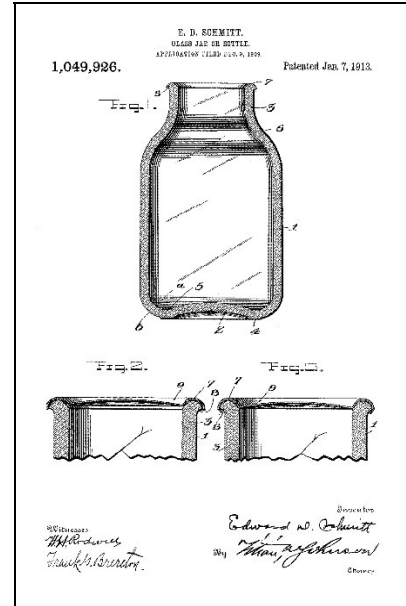


Figure 34 – Schmitt January 7, 1913, patent

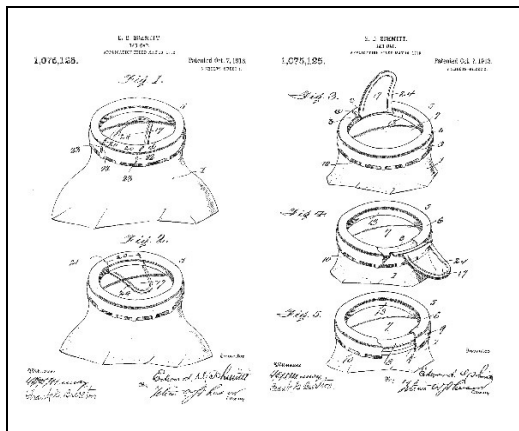


Figure 35 – Schmitt October 7, 1913, patent

6. Trademark No.

130,036 for

“THRIFT” on jar caps, registered on April 6, 1920,<sup>4</sup> with first use on July 1, 1918 – American Pure Food Processing Co. Note that the crossbar of the “H” in “THRIFT” had an upward slant; similarly, the lower horizontal bar in the “F” was longer than the upper bar (Creswick 1987:129, 152).

7. Trademark No. 130,257 for “THRIFT” on jars,

registered on April 6, 1920, with first use on July 1,

1918 – American Pure Food Processing Co. (Creswick 1987:129, 152).

<sup>3</sup> Although this has no reference to the study, the patent office assigned patents only on Tuesdays. To anyone who likes numbers, it may be of interest that *all* of the Schmitt patents were issued on the seventh day of the month – September 7, 1909; May 7, 1912; January 7, 1913; October 7, 1913; and December 7, 1915.

<sup>4</sup> The trademark dates appear as *January* 6 & 20 in Roller 2011:506, but this was probably a typographical error. Creswick (1987:129) noted the two trademark dates as April 6 & 20 and a third on May 18. She included a copy of the logo from the patent office document and the trademark numbers.

A couple of patent terms are worth discussing before we examine dates. The first is the term “assignor.” Generally, if an inventor works independently, there is no assignor. However, if the inventor is an employee, the patent is assigned to the employer. The inventor is given credit for his or her invention, but all rights belong to the firm where he or she works.



Figure 36 – Schmitt lids (North American Glass)

There may be some exceptions to this explanation, but it is generally correct. Next, the term “mesne” may (or may not) be important. According to Wikipedia, “In property law, a mesne assignment is an intermediate assignment in a series of assignments which occurs prior to the final assignment.” In other words, a mesne assignment of a patent assumes that there was some process involved, and there will be a final assignee.

Edward D. Schmitt applied for his initial lid patent (#1 above) on January 23, 1908, but he did not receive it until September 7, 1909, almost 20 months later. He assigned the patent to Frank G. Turner, a Baltimore lawyer, who appears to have had no involvement in jar sales or glass making (Myers 2011). Even though Caniff reported two lids stamped “PATENTED SEPT. 7, 1909,” the lid from this patent was probably never used. The Pure Food Process Co. probably purchased the rights for the lid from Turner, and he faded from our interest.

Just over two months after Schmitt received patent #1, he applied for patent #2 (November 18, 1909). He described the lid from the earlier patent and called the new one “my improved cap.” Schmitt developed this lid prior to the formation of the Pure Food Process Co., and this patent (along with #3) is probably responsible for the formation of the corporation. The “mesne” assignment indicates that some process was afoot, possibly an assignment *through* Turner *to* Pure Food, but we will likely never know the details.

Patent #2 remained in limbo for a year and a half. However, Schmitt applied for patent #3 (for the jar this time) on December 9, 1909, less than two months after he applied for patent #2. Patent #3 remained in limbo even longer – just over three years, being finally approved on January 7, 1913. This proved to be Schmitt’s most enduring patent, embossed on the shoulders, heels, and/or bases of a variety of jars.

Meanwhile, the Pure Food Process Co., formed long before either patent was approved, became impatient with the status (or lack thereof) of the second lid patent (#2). Pure Food renewed the application for the patent on February 14, 1911, almost a year after the firm came into existence. The #2 lid application finally received a patent (over a year after the *second* application) on May 7, 1912, again transferred to Pure Food by both mesne and direct assignment.

The earliest jars (see Table 2) were embossed “PAT. APPLIED FOR” – and some of these had lids stamped “PATENTED SEPT. 7, 1909.” These were almost certainly made after the formation of Pure Food (one was embossed “LICENSED BY THE PURE FOOD PROCESS CO. BALTO. MD.” along with the patent applied for notice) but before Schmitt received the 1912 patent (#2). Likely, more of the early jars lacked any embossing whatsoever, and these will not be recognized for what they really are unless they are accompanied by marked lids. Interestingly, we have discovered no reports of the 1912 patent date actually used on any jars or lids.

Just three days after he received his third patent (#3), on May 10, 1912, Schmitt applied for yet another patent (#4) for a lid. This was to prove his most important and useful closure. The main addition was a pull tab, which Schmitt described as “an opening lever which operates with a peculiar construction of rim whereby the lever may be readily manipulated to break the seal so that the rim may thereafter be removed to reach the contents of the vessel.” In simpler terms, the pull-tab tears the lid to make it easy to remove.

Schmitt did not receive patent #4 until October 7, 1913 – another delay, this time for 17 months. This patent date only appears on a few of the THRIFT jars (see below). Along with most of the other jar types, some THRIFT jars were instead embossed with the January 7, 1913, patent date.

Schmitt applied for his final patent (#5) on January 14, 1915, and received it on December 7 of the same year. This invention was merely a reinforcement of the pull tab. Although the improvement may have been used by Pure Food and Buck Glass, the date was not applied to any lid or jar that we have discovered.

The trademark dates (#6 & #7) are also revealing. First, the Pure Food Process Co. did not receive the final trademark for “THRIFT” until May 1920 – months after the firm had ceased operations. It is likely that the trademark application was part of the package deal, when the Thrift Jar Co. (a Buck subsidiary) acquired the Pure Food patents. It is also possible that the jar was simply not important enough to Buck to warrant a follow-up.

Secondly, and possibly even more important, the trademark applications set a beginning date for jars embossed “THRIFT.” Both applications stated that “THRIFT” was first used by Pure Food on July 1, 1918. Since one of the characteristics used to determine whether a logo is valid as a trademark is the previous use by the applying firm, it is to the firm’s advantage to claim the earliest possible date. There is no advantage in claiming a later date. Therefore, we can safely assume that THRIFT jars were not made prior to July 1, 1918.

The only listings for the Thrift Jar Co. are in 1920 and 1921, and Toulouse was almost certainly correct that this was a sales company set up by Buck Glass (with the Buck family as officers). This sets a very limited date range for jars embossed “THRIFT JAR CO.” The set of jars with a ghost mark of “THRIFT JAR” covered by “BUCK GLASS” embossing almost certainly represents the period immediately after the Thrift Jar Co. disbanded. Buck used the molds until they wore out – again almost certainly. It is equally probable that Buck used the older “PAT’D JANUARY 7, 1913” baseplates until they wore out, replacing them with ones embossed ‘PAT’D OCT. 7, 1913.’ Jars embossed with “BUCK GLASS CO.” – and no ghosting – were almost certainly made later.

While there are numerous overlaps, probably missing jars, and some speculation involved, Table 2 presents a reasonable chronology for the characteristics of these jars. It is virtually certain that the Buck Glass Co. made all of the jars covered in this discussion. It is possible that Buck Glass later made jars of this style with no embossing and with no identification on the lids. The *American Glass Review* listed packers’ jars as a Buck product until 1934. These generic containers would have become invisible to collectors and archaeologists.

## Discussion and Conclusion

Along with the Buck Glass Co., two other major manufacturers used a solitary “B” mark. The Charles Boldt Glass Co. (1900-1919) used a “B” with serifs to mark its products, mostly whiskey bottles and flasks. The logos are easy to distinguish because of the distinctive Owens basal scar. An extension of the company was controlled by the Owens Glass Co. from 1919 to 1929, but no mark is currently known for the factory during that period. Bottles were either unmarked or used the familiar Owens Box-O logo.

In 1925, the Brockway Glass Co. (1907-1982) revived the serif “B” mark formerly used by Boldt and eventually developed a Circle-B logo. Brockway adopted a sans serif “B” ca. 1980, but the letter was always surrounded by a circle. None of these should be confused with the mark used by Buck.

There is no question that the sans serif “B” mark – with no circle – was used by the Buck Glass Co. (although some unusual contexts are still in dispute – see the Other B section). The mark was used on milk, soft drink, and other bottles from 1928 to ca. 1961. However, the logo is easy to confuse with similar code sequences containing the letter “B” that were used by other bottle makers. Giarde’s idea – searching carefully on each bottle for other manufacturer’s marks before identifying a container as being made by Buck – is almost certainly a good practice. Even though Knox Glass purchased the Buck Glass factory, the sans serif “B” in the Knox soda bottle codes was adopted long before the purchase and was not related the Buck in any way.

Thrift jars and other jars made by Buck Glass may have been used as both fruit and product (packer) jars from ca. 1910 to ca. 1934. As shown in Table 2, many of these jars have a number of datable characteristics. The 2011 revision of the noted Roller work on fruit jars (Roller 1983; 2011) was an especially useful key in unlocking the Thrift jar information.

Future research should concentrate on local historical sources to determine whether most Buck Glass business was local/regional or was more national in scope. The limited information we have discovered points to a more regional distribution. A more in-depth analysis of the distribution would be greatly enhanced by a large collection of bottles with the Buck “B” mark and/or good archaeological contexts.



## Acknowledgments

As always, we are delighted to thank Doug Leybourne for allowing us to use the drawings in the Alice Creswick books and to Greg Spurgeon for letting us copy the North American Glass photos.

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Last updated 12/16/2013