

LIBERTY GLASS CO., LAMB GLASS CO., and UPDATES by Bill Lockhart

LIBERTY GLASS CO.

Background

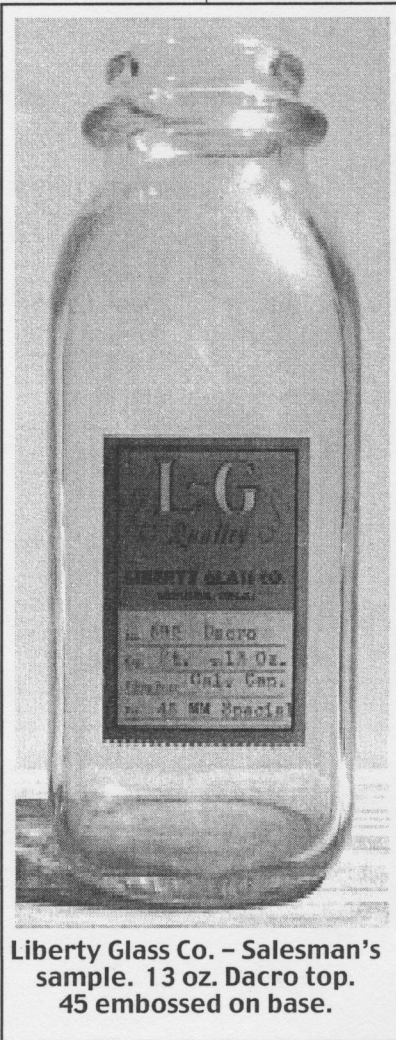
Liberty Glass Co. was formed from the Bartlett-Collins Glass Co. in 1918, at Liberty, Oklahoma, with George F. Collins as its manager and secretary of the corporation. Toulouse (1971:321) placed the L.G. mark as used from 1924 to 1946, but did not note any earlier mark. He noted a change to the L-G mark and dated that from 1946 to 1954 when the company made a final change to LG (no punctuation). The company made milk bottles exclusively until 1935, when George F. Collin & Co. of Poteau, Oklahoma, ceased operation, and Liberty began the manufacture of soft drink bottles as well. About 1955, Liberty expanded its output to a general line of containers..

Although Peterson (1968:49) did not cite his sources, he placed the L-G mark as beginning in 1936, a full decade earlier than the date claimed by Toulouse. He also suggested 1953 as the beginning date for the LG mark. Peterson did not assign end dates to marks.

Giarde (1980:65-68) dated the L.G. mark from 1924 to 1934, the L-G mark from 1934 to 1954, and LG starting at 1954. Giarde also suggested that the L.G.Co. mark found on early milk bottles is the missing mark from Liberty Glass and was used from 1918 until the beginning of the L.G. mark in 1924. Although the L.G.Co. mark was also used on beer bottles from 1880 until about 1900, it was obviously used by a different company.

Although the three major researchers (Toulouse, Giarde, and Peterson) agree on most dates, there are two conflicts, one minor – the other of major importance. The minor conflict is only expressed by Peterson with the beginning date of 1953 for the final LG mark, where both others cite 1954. This discrepancy is relatively inconsequential. The disagreement over the beginning date of the L-G mark, however, is important as it differs by a full decade or more. Giarde placed the date at 1934, Peterson at 1936, and Toulouse at 1946. An intuitive time for the change would have been about 1935, when Collins' Poteau plant closed, and Liberty began making soft drink bottles. It is probable that the date given by Toulouse was a typo (he certainly had several!) – he likely intended it to be 1936.

As somewhat of an aside, the actual date for the beginning of soft drink bottle production was probably 1934. Toulouse cited city directories as his sources, and they are notorious for recording changes a year later. For example, if the 1934 directory came out in April, and Liberty began making soft drink bottles in May or June, then date codes for 1934 would show up on bottles, even though the directory did not record the change until the 1935 edition. The year, 1934, fits better with the marks found on the bottles.



Liberty Glass Co. – Salesman's sample. 13 oz. Dacro top. 45 embossed on base.

Milk Bottles

Empirical testing of milk bottles produced interesting results. I looked for date codes I had recorded for El Paso milk bottles along with input from Warren A. Hackbarth. On milk bottles, the L.G. mark always appeared on the heel of the bottle, and I found date codes of 28 (1928) and 31 (1931) on bases. Milk bottles from companies that were only in business prior to 1928 were not marked with date codes. That probably means that Liberty Glass did not include date codes on its earliest containers, although the sample is small. This supports Giarde's claim for a 1924 to 1934 date range.

Empirical testing also supports Giarde's beginning date for the L-G mark. Many Liberty Glass Co. milk bottles with the L-G were used in El Paso – almost always accompanied by a two-digit date code on the base (although two bottles had both the L-G mark and the date code on the bases – 1942 and 1947). Dates range from 1934 to 1958. A single exception was embossed with a strange date code – a 31 with a "1" that looks more like a capital "I" with tiny serifs.

The use of the LG mark began at least as early as 1955 on milk bottles and continued in use until at least 1971. Note that an overlap exists between 1955 and 1958 when both L-G and LG marks were used. By 1971, most companies had phased out glass bottles in favor of plastic containers or waxed-paper cartons (or both), although

bottle-making continued on a smaller scale. Presumably, the mark continued to be used by those few companies preferring glass over the alternative containers. LG logos always appeared on the heels with date codes on the bases.



LIBERTY GLASS CO., LAMB GLASS CO., and UPDATES (continued)

Oddly, the L.G. mark returned to use on some milk bottles. Bottles in the Hackbarth collection have L.G. marks on heels with two-digit date codes of 51, 56, 61, and 67 on the bases. All of these bottles have pyroglazed labels on them, a technique not used on bottles until 1934. Therefore, these codes must be for 1951 through 1967. These were obviously used concurrently with both L-G and LG marks.

Conclusion

The L.G. mark was probably used by Liberty Glass from about 1924 until about 1934 when soft drink bottles were added to the factory's inventory. Based on existing literature, the company probably did not mark its earliest bottles (1918-1924). The L.G.Co. mark was probably used by Lamb Glass Co. instead of Liberty (see Lamb Glass Co. below). Date codes began to appear on bottles with the L.G. mark in 1928 and continued until about 1934. The L-G mark began use in 1934 and continued to be used until at least 1958, four years longer than any of the established reference claim. LG on milk bottles was used at least as early as 1955 and as late as 1971.

LAMB GLASS CO.

Rex M. Lamb and associates formed the Lamb Glass Co., a corporation, in July 1921 at Mt. Vernon, Ohio. From the beginning, Lamb produced machine-made containers and specialized in milk bottles. Lamb merged with the Dorsey Corp., owners of Chattanooga Glass Co. in 1964 but continued to mark its bottles with the distinctive L52 logo. In 1955, the company began the manufacture of

wide-mouth food bottles and packers due to the adoption of waxed paper and plastic containers (and discontinuance of glass bottles) by an increasing proportion of dairies. By 1971, the company began using the © (circle C), the symbol of Chattanooga Glass (Toulouse 1971:317-318). Unfortunately, the company never embossed date codes on its bottles.

In a personal communication, Warren A. Hackbarth disagreed with Giarde's interpretation that the L.G.Co. mark was used by Liberty Glass Co. Hackbarth noted that on all of his bottles that bore the L.G.Co. logo, the mark was followed by the number 52. Toulouse (1971:317) noted two marks for the Lamb Glass Co., L₅₂ (with a subscript 52) used "Since 1921" and LAMB from "1855 [certainly a typo for 1955] to 1964." Giarde (1980) added two other marks – L52 and L-52 – and dated both "FROM 1921." L.G.Co.52 fits better with the other Lamb Glass Co. configurations than with the Liberty Glass Co. formats.

It seems likely that L.G.Co.52 was the earliest mark used by Lamb. I have not personally seen either the L₅₂ or L-52 marks. Maybe our readers can supply more information on these. On bottles I have seen, the L52 marks have a large "L" (no serifs) with 52 "tucked" inside the "corner" (see drawing). All of these marks that I have seen fit into a datable context from 1941 to the early 1950s (based on bottle use by El Paso and Southern New Mexico dairies). It is possible that the L.G.Co.52 mark was used in the 1920s, the L₅₂ and/or L-52 marks used in the 1930s, and the L52 (with 52 "tucked" into the "L") used from 1940 on. Once again, maybe our readers can help with assigning dates to some of these other Lamb marks.

TABLE 1 - Liberty Glass Co. - Marks, Location, and Dates

Mark	Mark Location	Date Location	Bottle Type	Date Range
LGCo	Heel	None	Milk	1918-1924*
L.G.	Heel	None	Milk	1924-1927
L.G.	Heel	Base	Milk	1928-1934
L-G	Heel**	Base	Milk	1934-1958
L.G.†	Heel	Base	Milk	1951-1967
LG	Heel	Base	Milk	1955-1971

* Giarde (1980:67) suggested "probably 1920's" and attributed the mark to Liberty. Hackbarth noted that this mark fits better with the patterns used by Lamb Glass Co. As such, it was probably used beginning in 1921, possibly throughout the 1920s.

** Some exceptions are known with L-G and the date code embossed on the base (at least 1942-1947).



LIBERTY GLASS CO., LAMB GLASS CO., and UPDATES (continued)Acknowledgments

I especially want to thank Warren A. Hackbarth for looking through his collection and sending me much-needed milk bottle information. As always, thanks to my fellow researchers, Bill Lindsey, Carol Serr, and David Whitten, for looking over my work and offering suggestions.

Comments are always appreciated.

Sources

Giarde, Jeffery L., 1980 *Glass Milk Bottles: Their Makers and Marks*. Time Travelers Press, Bryn Mawr, California

Peterson, Arthur G., 1968 *400 Trademarks on Glass*. Washington College Press, Takoma, MD

Toulouse, Julian Harrison, 1971 *Bottle Makers and Their Marks*. Thomas Nelson, New York.

L52

large "L" (no serifs)
with 52 "tucked" inside
the "corner"

Salesman's Sample
Quart – Red Pyro

