

# Tygart Valley Glass Co.

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The Tygart Valley Glass Co. grew out of the Beaumont Glass Co. at Grafton, West Virginia. Opening in 1906, the firm was successful until fire destroyed the factory in 1926. The company then purchased the Pittsburgh Sheet Glass Co. plant at Washington, Pennsylvania, and resumed production until Brockway acquired the firm in 1959. Although Brockway initially operated the factory under the Tygart Valley name, it lost its individual identity in 1962, becoming Plant No. 7 of Brockway and closing in 1984. The plant only used a single logo, a T over V, although the exact shape varied over time.

## Histories

### **Beaumont Glass Co., Grafton, West Virginia (1895-1906)**

According to a 1925 ad, the Tygart Valley Glass Co. incorporated in 1895 (*The Glass Container* 1925:28).<sup>1</sup> The ad actually set the date for the Beaumont Glass Co., the predecessor to Tygart Valley. The November 14, 1895, issue of the *Daily Intelligencer* announced the first stockholder's meeting of the Beaumont corporation – Fergus Whally, Frank Swift, James L. Higgins, Captain John Smith, and Percy Beaumont. Capitalized at \$15,000, the firm had “secured the old Northwood glass factory in Martin’s Ferry. Beaumont was described as “a well known glass man,” formerly with the United States Glass Co. The plant was to decorate tableware by gilding, engraving, and other methods. The corporation was actually chartered on December 27, although work did not commence until January of 1896 (*Wheeling Register* 12/28/1895; 1/26/1896).

In April 1899, the firm reorganized, increasing its capital to \$100,000. The firm bought the old Northwood plant (see the Other N section) and began to produce their own pressed and blown tableware. Percy J. Beaumont was president with A.G. Frohme as secretary.

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<sup>1</sup> Toulouse (1971:500) stated, “I have no data about the start of the company in 1895,” but he did not elaborate on where he found the date. His source was likely one of the firm’s ads.

Beaumont described itself in a letterhead as “Manufacturers and Decorators of Pressed and Blown Crystal and Colored Table Glassware” (Roller n.d.) In 1904, the plant made a general line of tableware and novelties at one furnace with 12 pots and a single day tank. William Morgan was president, with P.J. Beaumont as secretary and treasurer and William Hughes as manager. The Tygart Valley Glass Co. took over the Beaumont factory in 1906 (*American Glass Review* 1934:171; *Glass and Pottery World* 1906:30).

### **Tygart Valley Glass Co., Grafton, West Virginia (1906-1926)**

As noted above, the Tygart Valley Glass Co. began in 1906. Six (1993:22), however, placed the initial known date for the company at 1902, although the Beaumont Glass Co. was still operating at that time. The company originally made tableware at one furnace with 12 pots, adding a day tank in 1909. William Morgan was president of the firm with F.W. Watts as Vice President. G.G. McCaskey became president in 1910, but Edward C. Stewart replaced him soon after, displacing McCaskey to the treasurer and manager position. About that time, the plant converted to one larger tank and began producing “olive bottles and a general line of packer’ goods” in July 1910 (*National Glass Budget* 1910:6; Toulouse 1971:500).

By 1913, the plant used one continuous tank with eight rings to make “packers’ and preservers’ ware and fruit jars” entirely by semiautomatic machines (*Journal of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry* 1913:954). In May 1920, the plant completed a major overhaul of its equipment, notably expanding production. Olbert C. Noble became vice president and manager in 1922. On April 25, 1926, fire destroyed the entire plant (*National Glass Budget* 1920:1-2; Toulouse 1971:500).

### **Tygart Valley Glass Co., Washington, Pennsylvania (1927-1959)**

After the 1926 fire, the Tygart Valley Glass Co. moved its operation to the idle factory of the Pittsburgh Sheet Glass Co. at Washington, Pennsylvania<sup>2</sup> (Roller 1998; Toulouse 1971:501).

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<sup>2</sup> A commemorative bottle (stored at the West Virginia Museum of American Glass), made on the last day of the factory’s operation in 1982, placed 1925 as the date when the plant “BEGAN OPERATIONS AS / TYGART VALLEY GLASS CO.” The Toulouse date of 1926 for the Washington factory is probably more accurate.

In 1927, the remodeled factory made “packers, preservers, olive, pickle, mayonnaise, salad dressing, massage cream jars, complete line for packers and preservers, [and] jars for radio “B” batteries” by machine at two continuous tanks with 16 rings.<sup>3</sup> Stewart remained as president in Washington, with Noble still as vice president and general manager. E.A. Hinkins was secretary-treasurer. The number of rings decreased to 14 in 1930, and the battery jar listing was gone by 1937 – along with two of the rings. The same listing continued until at least 1944 (*American Glass Review* 1927:146; 1930:97; 1937:92; 1944:108). The plant added a third continuous tank in 1950, and Noble assumed the presidency upon the death of Stewart. The Brockway Glass Co. acquired the assets of the company on June 1, 1959 (Roller 1998; Toulouse 1971:61).

A commemorative bottle, made at the factory (see FN 3), confirmed 1959 as the date when Brockway acquired Tygart Valley, continuing to operate under the older firm name. In 1962, however, the factory lost its individual identity and became Plant No. 7 of Brockway. The last day of production was March 20, 1984 (Figure 1).

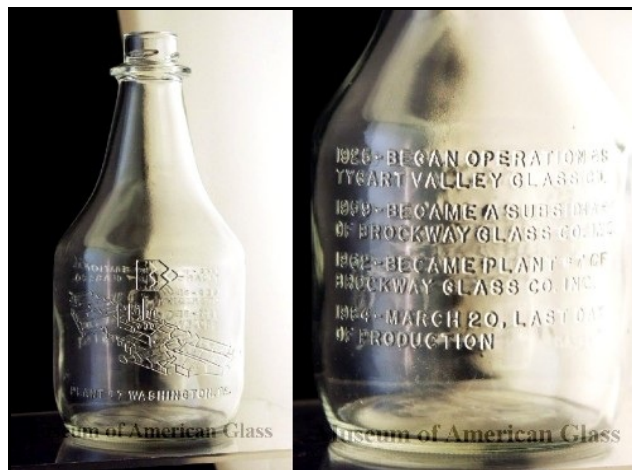


Figure 1 – Commemorative bottle (WV Museum of Glass)

## Containers & Marks

### T in an inverted triangle

Although Giarde (1980:124) questioned whether Tygart Valley could have been the user of the Inverted-Triangle-T mark, subsequent evidence has shown that the mark was used on milk bottles by the Travis Glass Co. and on packers’ ware by the Turner Brothers. See those two sections for more information.

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<sup>3</sup> Typical of his lack of proofreading, Toulouse dated the fire in 1926 and the rebuilding in 1927 in one place (page 501) but declared the end date for the Grafton plant *and* the beginning date for the Washington factory at 1928 in another (page 500). The 1926 and 1927 dates are certainly the correct ones.

## TV monogram-crude (1910-1926)

Toulouse (1971:500) showed three variations of TV monogram and attributed them all to the Tygart Valley Glass Co. In all three, a “T” was nestled in the center of the cavity created by the “V.” In the mark he called “probably very early in the company,” Toulouse illustrated a broad “V” with a short “T.” The second variation has a much taller “T” with a somewhat narrower “V.” Toulouse dated this second variation “circa 1910 to 1925.” He also noted that there seems to have been “a slow evolution from a broad ‘V’ to a narrow one” (Figure 2).

The only example of the mark we have seen was very crudely embossed in a rough, machine-made bottle with the numeral “7” at the top of the base (Figure 3). The logo was not quite like either mark shown by Toulouse. Unlike our other examples, this one had no stippling on the base. It is possible that the Toulouse marks are not really variations but differences caused by hand engraving. It is likely that crude variations of the mark were used by the Grafton plant between ca. 1910 (when the plant began making bottles) and 1926 (when the factory burned).



Figure 3 – TV logo

## TV Monogram-serifs on T (1927-1959)

The final variation extended serifs down from the top bar of the “T” to almost join (with a break) the upper tips of the “V” – in effect, creating an elongated, inverted triangle with a vertical line down the center (Figure 4). Toulouse dated this final variation “circa 1940 to 1960,” although 1959 is the date he gave for the sale of the company. Ads as early as January 1929 (*Glass Packer* 1929:5), however, show the third variation of the mark to be used after the 1927 move to

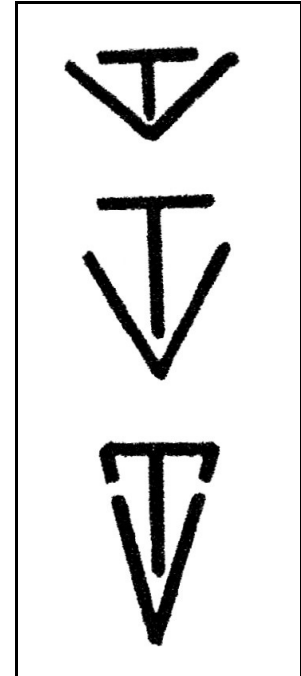


Figure 2 – TV logos  
(Toulouse 1971:500)

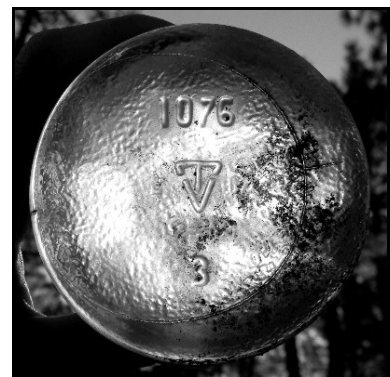


Figure 4 – TV logo

Washington, Pennsylvania (Figure 5). The mark may actually be dated 1927 to 1959, although the logo remained on a 1971 list (Hanlon 1971:6-17).

An example of a base with the mark showed the logo a bit above center, with a four-digit number (1287) above the mark and “49” below it. The four-digit number was very likely a model or catalog code, while the lower number was almost certainly a date code for 1949. This is an almost identical configuration to the one used by the Turner Glass Co. In addition to the virtually identical configuration (model code / logo / date code), the logo, itself, was very similar. Although Tygart Valley may have used the TV mark earlier than Turner’s Inverted-Triangle-T logo, the later Tygart Valley mark is almost certainly intended to mimic the Turner mark. The code system may also have been an imitation. Also see the section on the Turner Brothers.

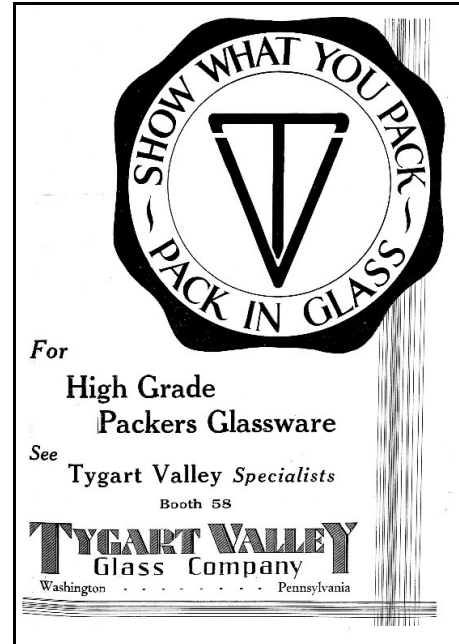


Figure 5 – TV ad (*Glass Packer* 1929:5)

## Discussion and Conclusions

The Tygart Valley Glass Co. only used a single mark during its tenure as a bottle manufacturer. However, crude variations that have a “T” nestled into the opening of the “V” were almost certainly used during the ca. 1910-1926 period, when the plant was located in Grafton, West Virginia. After the move to Washington, Pennsylvania, in 1927, the firm adopted the more consistent “T-in-a-V” logo, where the “T” had serifs extending downward from the upper terminations to almost create an inverted triangle. The mark was used until at least 1959, when the Brockway Glass Co. acquired the company.

## Acknowledgements

Our gratitude to Wanda Wakkinen for proreading our work.

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Last updated 10/22/2019

