

Whitall Tatum – Part II – Whitall Tatum Co.

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The history of the Whitall Tatum firms may be divided into four sections: The early companies, Whitall Tatum & Co., Whitall Tatum Co., and the factories after the sale to the Armstrong Cork Co. (and later to the Kerr Glass Mfg. Co.). Since we have discovered no glass manufacturer's marks for the early firms, we have included a brief history of those house in Part I with Whitall Tatum & Co. Part II is comprised of the history and marks of the second major division, the Whitall Tatum Co. See the Armstrong Cork and Kerr Glass sections for more information on those glass houses both before and after their respective acquisitions of the Whitall Tatum plants.

The Whitall Tatum Co. grew out of Whitall Tatum & Co. The firm continued to be one of the giants of the glass industry, especially in the production of prescription bottles and other pharmaceutical supplies. As with the earlier firm, most Whitall Tatum bottles continued to be clearly marked with the company initials in a variety of styles from the incorporation in 1901 to the sale of the business in 1938.

[This study was originally published as Lockhart et al. 2006,
but much of it has been greatly expanded.]

History

Unlike the previous section, there is only a single history – that of the Whitall Tatum Co. As noted above, we have presented the histories and bottles of the successor firms – Armstrong Cork Co. and Kerr Glass Co. – in other sections of the Encyclopedia.

Whitall Tatum Co., Millville, New Jersey (1901-1938)

On January 2, 1901, the firm incorporated as the Whitall Tatum Co. (Moody Manual Co. 1914:1200). The firm had developed a semiautomatic machine for wide-mouth containers by

1904 and had one for narrow-mouth bottles operational by 1912 (Toulouse 1971:546-547). The narrow-mouth machine was invented by “Cox & Brost of Bridgeton [New Jersey].” Whitall Tatum had earlier “bought the old window factory on Columbia avenue” to house the new machinery, although the factory was “carefully guarded day and night.” The machine was “said to be able to do the work of four shops [crews] and to turn out 15 bottles per minute.” The preliminary test of the machine was “perfectly satisfactory” (*Commoner and Glassworker* 1910:5).

However, the plant also continued to make bottles by hand. In 1913, the company was listed as using both mouth-blown and semiautomatic processes at three continuous tanks with 41 rings, six day tanks with 64 rings, and 8 furnaces with 71 pots. The listing stressed “opal ware” along with a “general line” of bottles (*Journal of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry* 1913:953). The use of both hand-blown and machine-made bottles continued at least until 1924, the company's catalog of that year still listing a large component of specially-embossed hand ware. That year, the factories had four furnaces with 48 pots, seven day tanks with 68 rings, and 51 rings in use at the four continuous tanks. By 1929, only five continuous tanks were in use (Toulouse 1971:547).

Hand production at the Whitall Tatum plants almost certainly ceased by 1925. A 1925 news report implied that the transition was well underway if not complete (*Glass Worker* 1925:34-35), and, from 1925 onward, the company's ads touted “full automatic machine process” but no longer mentioned lettered ware. A 1926 article (see below) supported the 1925 automatic production date as well as providing a cameo view of both Whitall Tatum “works” (Figures 1 & 2).

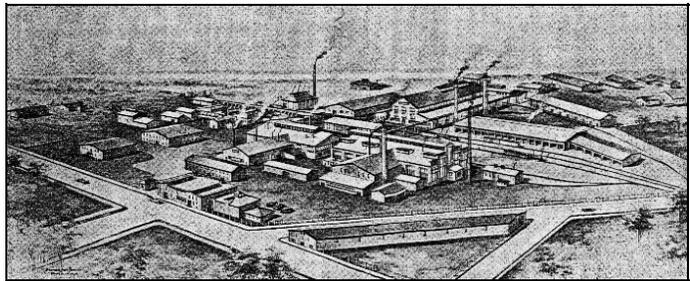


Figure 1 – Upper Works (*Glass Industry* 1926:207)

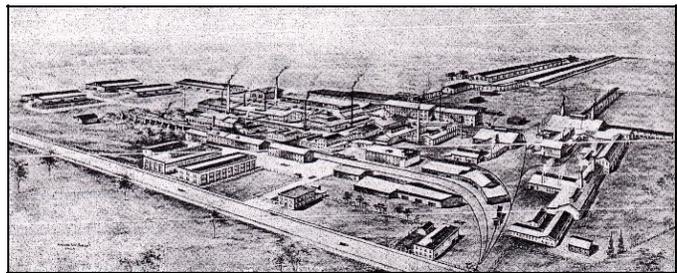


Figure 2 – Lower Works (*Glass Industry* 1926:207)

At the Lower Works, “two continuous tanks each provide flint glass for four Lynch blowing machines fed by Hartford-Empire feeders of the plunger type.” The Upper Works also used two continuous tanks, one for amber glass, one for “light green” products. One tank, partially destroyed by a fire the year before (but restored) was “equipped with four Hartford-Empire plunger feeders and supplies glass to four Lynch blowing machines.” The other tank was “equipped with three Lynch machines and one special machine of the company’s own design for making insulators.” The plant also included a “complete mold shop” and formerly had a pot-making department that was no longer operating (indicating a complete cessation of hand production) (*Glass Industry* 1926:209-211).

In 1927, Whitall Tatum made “prescriptions, vials, patent, proprietary, water bottles, hospital goods, ampules, battery jars, acids, tubing, carboys” at four continuous tanks with 62 rings and five day tanks with 43 rings by both machine and hand methods.¹ The day tanks were eliminated from the 1928 entry, and another continuous tanks was added. In addition, the plant made “ampules, oiler glasses, jellies, tumblers, ointment pots, hospital goods, graduates, tubing, opal ware, pressed and blown, laboratory glass, funnels” at four furnaces with 38 pots; four continuous tanks with 51 rings; and seven day tanks with 68 rings. By 1930, the product focus had shifted slightly to “prescriptions, vials, patent, proprietary, perfumes, toilets, grape juice, catsups, packers, preservers, water and beverage bottles, acids, and insulators (*American Glass Review* 1927:147; 1928:153; 1930:97).

By 1932, the ads mentioned amber “beverage” bottles, and after Repeal it is clear that those bottles – in a departure from the company’s 19th-century tradition – were meant to hold beer. This was evidently part of a major effort at diversification, which had already led to production of glass insulators beginning in 1922. The company added liquors and wines to the list in 1934 (*American Glass Review* 1934:100). Although it is unclear just how much the Great Depression of the 1930s influenced these changes, it undoubtedly had an effect.

In 1937, Whitall Tatum increased to five continuous tanks, making “prescriptions, vials, patent, proprietary, perfumes, toilets, grape juice, catsups, packers, preservers, water and beverage bottles, liquor ware, wines; acids and insulators.” The 1939 list noted “now Armstrong

¹ Even though the listing included hand methods, that had almost certainly ceased two years earlier.

Cork Co.” (*American Glass Review* 1937:93; 1939:95). It is interesting to note that the “machine and hand” production continued to be listed until 1936, although it was almost certainly eliminated a decade earlier. The Armstrong Cork Co. purchased Whittall Tatum on June 20, 1938, and owned the operation until selling it to the Kerr Glass Mfg. Co. in April of 1969 (*Glass Industry* 1939:20; *Glass Packer* 1939:52). See the sections for Armstrong and Kerr Glass for more information on those periods.

Containers and Marks – Pharmacy Bottles

Toulouse (1971:544) claimed that the WT&Co manufacturer’s mark was used by the company “until 1935.” As shown below and in Part I, this is incorrect. As also noted in Part I, Patent dates are neither reliable nor accurate. Although a bottle embossed with a patent date or number cannot have been used prior to the year that the patent was assigned, any individual container, bearing the patent date, might have been made later. However, it is unlikely that a patent date would continue to be embossed on a bottle after the patent had expired. Thus, a bottle with a patent date embossed on the base (or elsewhere) was probably made no later than ca. 14 years after the patent date, although baseplates with patent dates would certainly have been used until they wore out or the model was discontinued. For notes about our original study and date ranges for the logos, see Part I. See Table 1 at the end of this section for a chronology of the 20th century Whittall Tatum logos on prescription bottles.

W.T.C.

Ring (1980:338) listed a single bitters bottle with this mark embossed on its base. She identified the bottle as Muller’s Genuine Bismark Bitters but offered no other information about it. “W.T.C.” was either a misreading of the bottle, a typographical error (of which she had many), or the mark of a different company. We have found no other source that mentions such a logo. However, an eBay auction posted a photo of what may be a base only embossed “W.T.CO.” (Figure 3).



Figure 3 – W.T.CO (eBay)

W.T.Co.

U.S.A.

[1901-ca. 1905]

This mark appeared in Pollard (1993:243, 255). Because of its similarity to the final W.T.&Co. mark, we have assumed it was the earliest of the new corporation's marks. It was probably only used during the first few years, possibly 1901-ca. 1905, although a later use is possible. One example was marked "PAT. JAN. 4, 1898" below the "U.S.A." Pollard (1993:251) also showed a single example with a letter (E) to the left of the "U.S.A."

W.T.Co.

(letter or number)

U.S.A.

[1901-ca. 1924]

Although he only noted a letter beneath the company initials, Bethman (1991:79) explained, "After the company was incorporated in 1901, this base marking was used throughout the rest of the operations that produced hand-blown prescription bottles" (Figure 4) He provided an end date by saying that "the production of hand-blown prescription ware was discontinued in the 1920s" (Bethman 1991:78). Although Elliott and Gould (1988:198-199) dated bottles with this mark to the mid- to late 1890s, we agree with Bethman's post-1901 date.

This is the most common mark we have found. The mark was ubiquitous in Bethman's work. Date ranges on illustrated bottles varied from 1904 to 1922 with a single outlier that had a 1900 date. Although production dramatically decreased after ca. 1918, the big change to machine-made bottles occurred during the 1922-1924 period. The accompanying letters could include the entire alphabet (A-Z), and we have found double letters up to AJ. The letters could also be replaced by single-digit numbers (3-8 that we have observed). By far the most common in the literature are letters A-C.

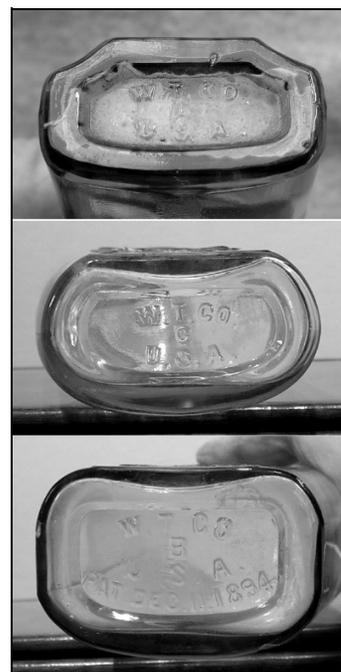


Figure 4 – W.T.CO (Lynn Loomis collection)

This pattern was shown in Pollard (1993) and was often accompanied by patent dates, including: “PAT. JAN. 5, 1892” or “PAT. DEC 11, 1894.” The patent date was always below the U.S.A. Similar patterns were recorded in Miller (1999). In addition to the 1892 patent, Bethman (1991) recorded patent dates of “JAN 22 78” and “DEC 11 1894.” Ring (1980:84, 338, 487) listed four bitters bottles with this mark on the base. This was by far the most common of the 1901-1924 prescription logos.

*** * ***

W.T.Co.
(letter or number)
U.S.A. [1901-ca. 1905]

Preble (2002) included three examples of this mark. The date ranges for drug stores extended from 1892 to 1915. All other known examples of the star-series marks were in conjunction with the “W.T.&Co.” logo and were dated between ca. 1891 and 1901. It is likely that these marks were used only during the first few years after the change to the “W.T.Co.” logo.

W.T.Co
(letter or number) [1901-ca. 1924]

Pollard (1993:277) recorded this variation, and we, too, have seen a single example. The mark postdates 1901. This system may have been used in conjunction with the “letter/number” system or may have followed it. Until further evidence is uncovered, this variation must also be dated 1901-ca. 1924.

(letter)
W.T.Co. [1901-?]

Bethman (1991:735) illustrated a single bottle with this mark. The letter on the example was “P.” He dated the bottle ca. 1892, but that was problematical. The ampersand (&) was dropped in 1901, so the bottle was either made later than Bethman suggested, or the logo was miscopied.

W.T.Co.
(letter)
MILLVILLE [1901-?]

We have seen a single example of this variation. Aside from dating it to the corporation period, we have no clue as to its period of use.

(letter)
U.S.A. [ca. 1912-ca. 1915]

Although these marks cannot be positively identified as belonging to Whitall Tatum, they follow a very similar pattern. Miller (1999:67, 97) noted three instances of the mark's use on Arizona pharmacy bottles (Figure 5). The date range for Miller's bottles, 1912-1915, is currently our best estimate for the use of the mark.

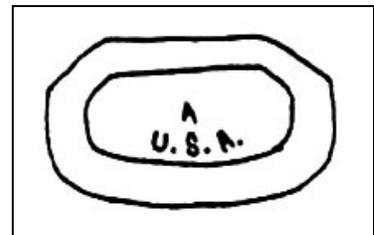


Figure 5 – Logo (Bethman 1991)

A Note on the End Date

The 1924-1925 Whitall Tatum catalog makes it clear that hand-made, plate-mold prescription bottles were still being offered by the plant as of September 1, 1924. Thus, the “W.T.Co.” mark may have been used on mouth-blown bottles for a few more years. Dating by collectors, however, indicates that few of those bottles were actually being ordered by drug stores. Paper label identification had taken over, and the era of embossed, proprietary drug store bottles was at an end (Whitall Tatum Co. 1924).

Design Patents

Bethman (1991:89-91, 93) reproduced some of the pages from the 1895, 1898, and 1904 Whitall Tatum catalogs. Other patent dates came from the Whitall Tatum 1902 catalog. Some of the drawings and descriptions included patent dates for specific styles.

Many of these (including Millville Rounds, Knickerbocker Ovals, Manhattan Ovals, Seal Ovals, and Penn Ovals) were shown in the 1902 catalog. Many others (including Kinckerbocker Ovals, Manhattan Ovals, Manhattan Ointment Pots, and Bronx Ointment Pots) also appeared in the 1909 Whitall Tatum catalog. The implication is that bottles embossed with patent dates of 1878 and 1888 were being used 15-25 years later, and dates of 1892 and 1894 were still listed fifteen years later. However, even though the *style* of bottle may have continued, it is unlikely that the patent date remained embossed on the bases beyond the 7-10-year active period.

Table 1 - Chronology for Whitall Tatum Prescription Bottles

Mark	Dates - Pat	Dates - Bethman etc
W.T.Co. U.S.A.	1892, 1898	1901-ca. 1905
W.T.Co. (letter or number) U.S.A.	1892, 1894	1901-1924
W.T.Co (letter or number)		1901-1924
(letter) W.T.Co		after 1901
(letter) U.S.A.		ca. 1912-ca. 1915

Other Markings, Colors, and Other Container Types

As noted in Part I, Whitall Tatum made cobalt blue glass bottles from at least 1876 (Pepper 1971:230). However, at least one cobalt blue bottle was marked “W.T.Co. / U.S.A.” – showing that blue production extended into the post-1901 period (Figure 6). By 1934 (ad in the *Glass Packer*), the company stated, “W.T. bottles come stocked in Crystal Clear Flint, Rich Amber, Light Green, and Emerald Green.”

WTCo monogram

As noted in Part I, Whitall Tatum & Co. introduced a flat nurser embossed “ACME NURSING” above a WT&Co monogram in an eight-point star and “BOTTLE” below it between 1876 and

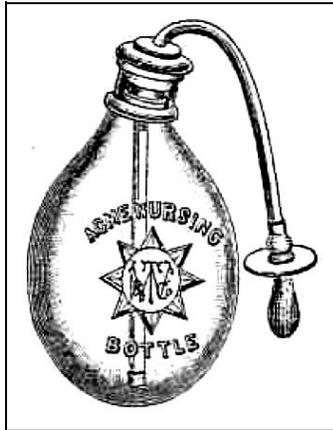


Figure 7 – Acme Nurser (WT 1902 catalog)

1880. Illustrated in the 1880 Whitall Tatum catalog, the nurser certainly was in use by that point. The Acme nursing bottles appeared in Whitall Tatum catalogs from 1880 to at least 1902. In 1902, however, the Acme had lost its position in first place to the Handy nurser (Whitall Tatum 1902:n.p.). Although the star only was altered slightly, the monogram on the 1902 Acme Nursing Bottle had been completely redesigned (Figures 7 & 8).

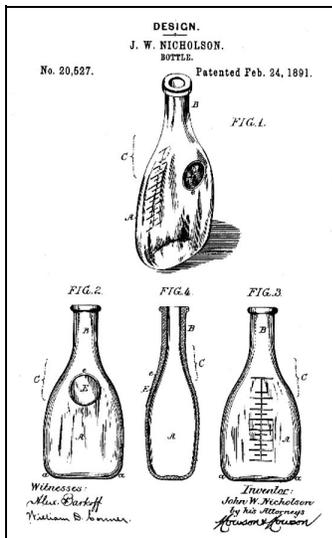


Figure 9 – Nicholson 1891 patent

1880. Illustrated in the 1880 Whitall Tatum catalog, the nurser certainly was in use by that point. The Acme nursing bottles appeared in Whitall Tatum catalogs from 1880 to at least 1902. In 1902, however, the Acme had lost its position in first place to the Handy nurser (Whitall Tatum 1902:n.p.). Although the star only was altered slightly, the monogram on the 1902 Acme Nursing Bottle had been completely redesigned (Figures 7 & 8).

The Handy Nurser also was embossed with a new monogram that did not include either the ampersand or the “Co.” – but a different one from the Acme. These probably remained in production until ca. 1924. The 1924 catalog (Whitall Tatum 1925:71) still offered the Handy Nurser, but the style was clearly being phased out by the newer round and oval bottles. The next catalog we possess (Whitall Tatum 1937:10) only illustrated the round and oval and round bottles with the Triangle-W / T mark on the base (see below for a discussion of the mark).

The Handy Nurser, was patented by John W. Nicholson on February 24, 1891 (Figure 9). Nicholson applied for the patent on October 27, 1890, and received Design Patent No. 20,527. He assigned the patent to Whitall Tatum. The bottle had graduations on the back and a circular seal area embossed “HANDY / NURSER” with a WT&Co monogram in the center (Figure 10).



Figure 6 – Cobalt blue (eBay)



Figure 8 – Acme Nurser (Jay Hawkins)



Figure 10 – Handy Nurser (eBay)

We have observed one Handy Nurser base embossed “W.T.CO. / B / U.S.A. / PAT. FEB. 24, 1891.” It is likely that all Handy Nurers had similar markings, although the patent date probably disappeared by ca. 1915 or so.

As mentioned above, the styles had changed by the 1924 catalog. Although the older flatter types of nursers remained listed and illustrated, the trend was

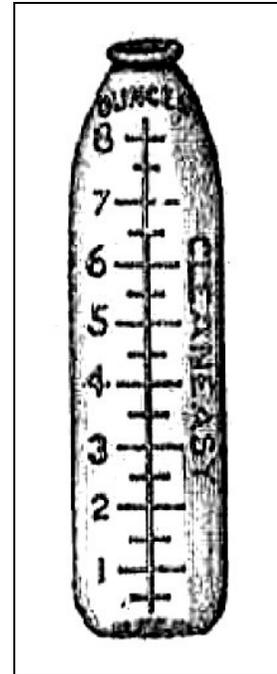


Figure 11 – Cleaneasy (WT 1924 catalog)

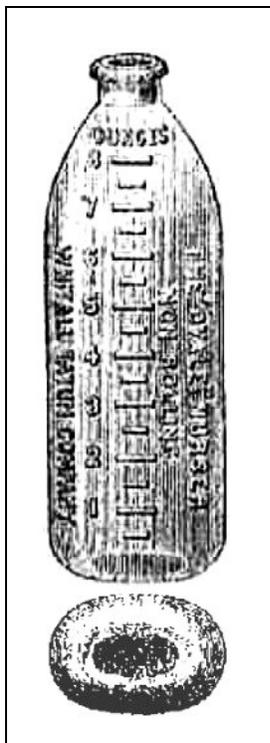


Figure 12 – Ovale (WT 1924 catalog)

shifting to the taller, more narrow forms. The first of those shown was the Cleaneasy Sanitary Sterilizer, a round bottle available in four- or eight-ounce sizes – although we have not found an example as illustrated in the catalog (Figure 11). Aside from the graduations on the side, it was only embossed “CLEANEASY.”

The second was the Ovale Nurser, oval in shape but only available as an eight-ounce bottle (Figure 12). The nurser was embossed “THE ‘OVALE’ NURSER / NON ROLLING” on one side of the graduations and “WHITALL TATUM COMPANY” on the other. Again, we have not found an actual example.



Figure 13 – Cleaneasy (eBay)

Although Ovale Nurser remained the same in the 1937 catalog, the drawing showed the base embossed with the WT inverted triangle mark (see below) and “U.S.A.” The Cleaneasy, however, had undergone a transition. From the side, it now appeared the same as the Ovale – except that it was round in cross-section. The embossing now read “CLEANEASY SANITARY STERILIZER” on one side of the graduations and “WHITALL TATUM COMPANY” on the other (Figure 13).

Laboratory Ware and Other Goods

An unusual trademark was used by Whitall Tatum for laboratory glassware. The mark, consisting of “NONSOL” above “W.T.Co.” in an oval, was registered on September 19, 1916, although it had been used since 1904. The mark was used on “glassware for chemical laboratories, namely, flasks and beaker glasses,” and it was “usually displayed by burning it directly into the goods, although it may be stenciled thereon, printed upon labels to be attached to packages containing the goods, or otherwise displayed.” The factory etched the trademark onto the necks or other parts of the flasks or other glassware, and almost certainly applied the logo to wooden crates, cardboard boxes, and tags that accompanied the glass objects.

A graduated beaker (offered on eBay) had “WHITALL TATUM CO., PHILA. GUARANTEED ACCURATE. N.Y. CITY APPROVED TYPE III SERIAL A-9” etched into the glass on one side. A second one was etched “GUARANTEED (arch) / N.Y. / WHITALL TATUM / PHILA. (all horizontal) / ACCURATE (inverted arch) in a diamond (Figure 14). The absence of the ampersand (&) dates this mark after 1901. A variety of graduated beakers were offered in the 1880 catalog.

Although the 1892 catalog listed a large variety of wares, no graduated beakers were listed. Numerous dose glasses were offered in the 1902 catalog (including a goblet-shaped beaker), but graduated beakers were again absent from the listings.



Figure 14 – Beaker (eBay)

Other Druggist's Ware

By 1927, the product list included “ampules, oiler glasses, jellies, tumblers, ointment pots, hospital goods, graduates, tubing, opal ware, pressed and blown laboratory glass [and] funnels” (*American Glass Review* 1927:109). It is currently unknown whether any of these (except insulators and laboratory glass – discussed elsewhere) were marked with a company logo.

A final, different mark “COMPLEMENTS /1928 / WHITALL TATUM COMPANY” was etched on the side of a dose glass (Figure 15). While embossed dose glasses (similar to shot glasses – called medicine glasses in the catalogs) were available in 1880 and 1892, it was not until the 1902 catalog that “engraved” medicine glasses were available. Engraving appears to be what we would now call etching.



Figure 15 – Etched dose glass (eBay)

Occasional pieces were simply marked with the Whitall Tatum name. Apparently, during the 20th century, the corporation had figured that free advertising was to its advantage. Although we are unable to positively date some of these, all were made after 1901 (as shown by the lack of the ampersand). An eBay seller describing a milk-glass apothecary jar noted that “text on the bottom of the jar forms a circle. The text reads Whitall Tatum Co. Phila & N. Y. At the center of the circle is the letter ‘B.’” A similar piece with identical marking on the base was described by McKearin and McKearin (1941:165; plate 62). Numerous eBay apothecary jars have been reported with similar markings. The Philadelphia and New York sales offices are of little help in dating as both were in place by at least 1880 (Whitall Tatum catalog).

W.T.Co.
(double letter)

U.S.A. [1901-1924]

Sellers on eBay have also offered dose glasses with the Whitall Tatum logo and double letters (Figure 16). All examples from Miller (1999:66, 104, 112), and our collections have

double letters: AL, AM, and AN. These were almost certainly made from 1901 to 1924, the same time period as similarly-marked prescription bottles.



Figure 16 – Dose glass base

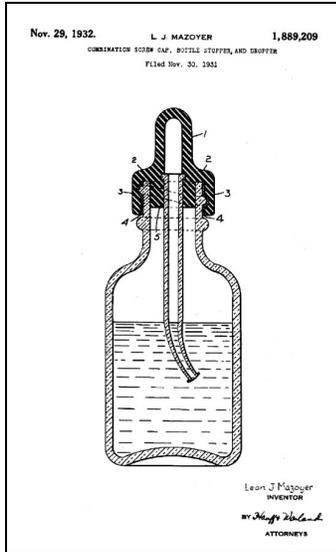


Figure 17 – Mazoyer 1932 patent

On November 30, 1931, Leon T. Mazoyer applied for a patent for a “Combination Screw Cap, Bottle Stopper, and Dropper.” He received Patent No. 1,889,209 for his invention on November 29, 1932 (Figure 17). This may be the first patent for what became the typical “nose drop” bottle. Although Mazoyer assigned the patent to Whitall Tatum, the bottle did not appear in the 1937 catalog. Mazoyer noted that other dropper/screw-cap bottle combinations had been patented but claimed that none of them had been practical – all had major flaws. He stated that his invention overcame the flaws. His drawing certainly *looks* like the bottle that became successful.



Figure 18 – Acid bottle (eBay)



Figure 19 – Acid base (eBay)

Acid Bottles and Recessed Ware

Acid bottles – very similar to packer bottles except with ground glass stoppers – were embossed with at least two slightly different logos: “W.T.CO. (slight arch) / {number}” in the center of the base or “W.T.CO. II (inverted arch)” along the basal edge (Figures 18 & 19). Another category – rounded and squared recessed ware, both wide and narrow mouth – also had at least two variations of basemarks: “W.T.CO. / {number}” with or without “PAT. APR. 2. 1889 (arch)” on some of them or “W.T.CO. (arch) / {number} / U.S.A. (inverted arch).”

These were also called Salt-Mouth Ware and were common during the late 19th century (Figures 20 & 21).

Food, Beer, and Milk Bottles

Pepper (1971:421) claimed that Whitall Tatum began beer bottle production in 1927, so some of those bottles should have the W/T in a triangle mark on them. However, this date makes no intuitive sense as it occurs in the middle of Prohibition when beer was legally forbidden in the U.S. She may have misunderstood certain Whitall Tatum ads. For example, an ad in the December 1933



Figure 20 – Recessed ware (eBay)

Glass Packer (p. 774)



Figure 21 – Bases (eBay)

illustrated a bottle type that was ubiquitous during the latter Prohibition era and has often been mistaken for beer bottles. The ad called the style an “amber beverage bottle” (Gershman 1990:153; Lockhart 2005:69-70; Pendergrast 1993:196). Later ads (e.g., p. 471, July 1934, p. 8, January 1938 *Glass Packer*) showed both export-style and “Esslinger” beer bottles. These appeared in ads along with the Triangle-W / T mark (see a discussion of the mark below), although we have not seen any actual examples of beer bottles embossed with the logo.

However, there is no question that Whitall Tatum made beer bottles. In 1933, the plant joined numerous other companies in gearing up for the repeal of Prohibition and the return of beer to the American market. Whitall Tatum

has been advancing output and is now employing more than 300 operatives; the company has begun remodeling and improving the plant units that have been inactive for many years, and will equip and start up the earliest possible date to handle incoming business (*Ceramic Age* 1933a:25).

By June 1933, Whitall Tatum “placed two automatic glass-making machines in service” to make beer bottles (*Ceramic Age* 1933b:180).

By 1902, the older Crystal Milk Jar was gone (see Part I), and the catalog listed the more modern “common sense” milk bottles developed by Hervey Thatcher, although Whitall Tatum continued calling them “milk jars.” Milk bottles were obviously not a targeted item – the entire copy read, “All styles and sizes, furnished with Paper Tops or Metal Fittings. Prices on application.” Although Giarde (1980:136) suggested that the W.T.&Co. mark was used to 1924, it is much more likely that “W.T.CO.” was used from 1901 to 1924, followed by the inverted triangle mark (see below), used until the company sold to Armstrong Cork in 1938 (Griffenhagen & Bogard 1999:40).

From late 1909 to 1947, the state of Massachusetts required all milk bottle manufacturers who desired to sell their containers within the state to emboss a “seal” on each bottle. Initially, these seals were embossed on various parts of the bottles, but the location was specified as the shoulder in a 1918 Massachusetts Bulletin that also published the names of glass houses that had posted bond and met other requirements for selling milk bottles within the state (Schadlich & Schadlich 1984:4-5). Despite the 1918 mention of Whitall Tatum, we have been unable to locate a single bottle with a WT seal or any other designation that would have indicated Whitall Tatum.² It is likely that Whitall Tatum never actually made any Massachusetts milk bottles.

Milk bottles used by Whiting & Co., a Massachusetts dairy, may be misleading. These are embossed with an inverted triangle enclosing a “W” above a much smaller inverted triangle on the shoulders of their milk bottles. These may easily be mistaken for the later Whitall Tatum inverted triangle mark. Unless one looks closely, the smaller inverted triangle may be seen as the “T” in the Whitall Tatum logo (Figure 22). Marks found on ware other than pharmacy bottles are consolidated in Table 2.



Figure 22 – Whiting

² This is despite our contact with three major collectors of Massachusetts milk bottles.

Table 2 - Chronology for Other Whitall Tatum Marks

Mark	Bottle Type	Dates
W.T.Co. (double letter) U.S.A.	Dose Glass	1901-1913+
W.T.Co. (number) (letter)	Jars and Ointment Pots	1901-1924?
WT (monogram) in an inverted triangle	Prescription	1924-1938
W/T in an inverted triangle	Prescription	1924-1969
Circle A (Armstrong Cork Co.)	All Bottles	1938-1969
AHK Kerr (cursive)	All Bottles	since 1969

Museum Jars

While we dealt with the development of the Whitall Tatum museum jars in Part I, the ones with the 1895 patent were apparently used until 1903 – although the jars were not listed in the 1902 catalog. The 1909 catalog (page 47), however, illustrated a museum jar that descended from the 1895 patent. The catalog cited both the 1895 patent and one from June 2, 1903.

Charles A. Tatum applied for the latter patent on January 2, 1903, and received Patent No. 729,908 for a “Securing Device for Jar-Covers or the Like” on June 2 of the same year (Figure 23).

The main difference between this and the earlier patent is that the

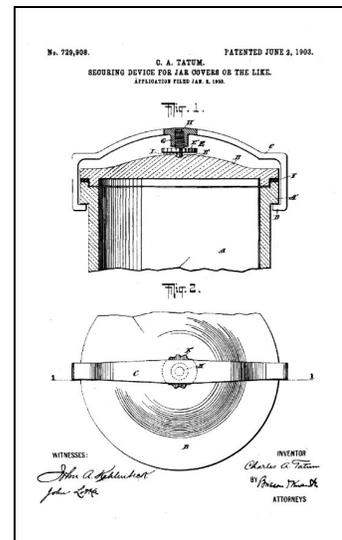


Figure 23 – Tatum 1903 patent

1895 device had the stem of the screw that held the lid shut protruding above the iron yoke. In the 1903 patent, a disk was integral to the screw and was placed between the glass lid and the yoke (Figure 24). The glass lids still were embossed with the company name, Philadelphia and New York, and the 1895 patent date. The wheel of the clamp, however, was embossed “PATENTED JUNE 2 1903 (Caniff 2003:9).



Figure 24 – Museum jar (North American Glass)

The 1924 catalog (p. 31) no longer included the patent date, although it illustrated the same jar and lid setup. The museum jars no longer appeared in the 1937 catalog. That leaves a 13-year unknown space, but we do have clues. Since Whitall Tatum apparently abandoned mouth-blown production ca. 1924, that is a *very* likely date for the end of manufacture for the museum jars.

Other Whitall Tatum Jars

Whitall Tatum offered a variety of other types of jars, some advertised consistently throughout the tenure of the firm and some periodically. Most of these carried typical marks used by the company.

Buchner et al. (2007:237-238) found an amber jar embossed “W.T.CO. / 1212 / M” on the base and a milkglass jar embossed “W.T.CO. / 1225 / A” on the base. The amber container was a one-ounce Bronx Ointment Pot (available in both amber and “opal”). These were tall pots with rounded heels and screw lids, offered in sizes from one-half to four ounces. The milkglass jar was a four-ounce Morris Ointment Pot (also offered in both amber and opal – i.e., milkglass). The Morris pots were shorter, with sharper heels and screw lids. These, too, ranged in size from one-half to four ounces (Whitall Tatum 1909:29).

In 1905, Whitall Tatum used five semiautomatic machines “making Mellon’s [*sic*] food, Horlick’s malted milks, Eskays, Wanamaker’s candy jars and morphines” (*National Glass Budget* 1912:1). This supports the Toulouse (1971:544-547) assertion that Whitall Tatum developed an automatic machine for wide-mouth bottles by 1904.

Buchner et al. (2007:237) excavated three examples of a milk-glass tooth powder “box” embossed “W.T.CO. / 643 / A” on the base. Whitall Tatum offered these round boxes with a choice of plain lids or ones lettered “Cold Cream” (both with continuous threads) for \$9.00 per gross. They also sold these boxes in ½- and 2-ounce sizes (Whitall Tatum 1919:30).

W.T.Co

(number)

(letter)

[post-1901]

We have noted this variation on an amber base that cannot as yet be identified. It postdates 1901 and was probably used until the next change of logo in 1924 (Griffenhagen & Bogard 1999:40). This is the only case we have found where a multi-digit number (600) on a base does *not* match up with the corresponding number in the 1902 catalog. Number 600 in the catalog is a sulfuric acid reagent bottle. The rounded base we observed does not match the squared-corner reagent base shown in the catalog. The base, however, matches the Bronx ointment pots, made of amber glass, in the 1937 Whitall Tatum catalog. The ½-ounce size is number 700. This may have been an engraver’s error.

Charles A. Tatum applied for a patent on April 1, 1901, and received Design Patent No. 34,569 on May 28, 1901, for a “Design for a Box.” The 1909 Annual Price List (page 31) noted the patent and called it a “Flat Rounded Square Glass Box.” Made from opal glass, the boxes sold for \$9.00 per gross. There was no hint as to the suggested contents.

Whitall Tatum Insulators

According to McDougald & McDougald (1990:133-134), Whitall Tatum began production of insulators in the Spring of 1922, on an eight-mold, semiatomatic I-A machine. The firm adopted a twelve-mold fully automatic machine on June 3, 1924, although the machine had problems. The firm solved its machine problems with the development of the I-D machine, another twelve-mold operation,



Figure 25 – Insulators (eBay)

that worked well. The insulators were embossed “WHITALL TATUM CO.,” sometimes with a catalog number (No. 1, etc.), on the front skirt and “MADE IN U.S.A” on the reverse skirt (Figure 25). Although the McDougalds did not comment on the end of insulator production, it probably extended until the sale of the factories to the Armstrong Cork Co. in 1938.

Later Whitall Tatum Marks

Whitall Tatum apparently hired James S. Steelman to design bottles in 1934. The prolific Steelman designed 36 bottle styles for Whitall Tatum between 1934 and 1937. One of these was featured as the first bottle (page 3) in the 1937 Whitall Tatum catalog. Called Century Oblongs, the bottles were “ade of superior quality flint glass, uniform in size and color[,] carefully annealed and free of imperfections” (Figure 26). They were packaged with a choice of “Single Shell Black Metal Screw Caps” or “Black Combo Screw Caps.” Steelman applied for his patent on October 15, 1935, and received Design Patent No. 97,748 on December 3 of that same year (Figure 27).



Figure 26 – Century Oblong (WT 1937 catalog)

W / T in an inverted triangle [ca. 1922-1969]

Toulouse (1971:544) dated this mark “1935 to 1938” and included a “W” superimposed over a “T” in an inverted triangle with the same date range (Figure 28). The date of final change is just prior to the sale to the Armstrong Cork Co. According to McDougald & McDougald (1990:133, 1938), the W / T variation was used on insulators between 1922 and 1938.



Figure 28 – Triangle WT

In support of the earlier date, the first triangle marks begin to appear in Whitall Tatum advertisements in 1925. That is ten years earlier than Toulouse

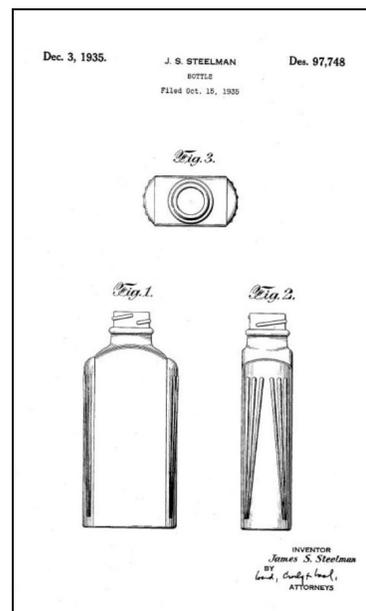


Figure 27 – Steelman 1935 patent

has the mark on bottles, indicating yet another probable Toulouse typo. Giarde (1980:136) dated both marks at 1924 to 1938 but admitted that the time period was unsure. Griffenhagen and Bogard (1999:40) placed the W / T mark firmly in the 1924-1938 period.

The 1924-1925 Whitall Tatum catalog makes it clear that non-plate, pharmacy or medicine bottles were being made by machine and sold in large quantity lots by September 1, 1924 (the publication date). This suggests that the conversion to machine manufacture began by at least 1924. However, the catalog also offered many varieties of “hand made ware” in plate-mold prescription bottles. While the catalog did not specifically show marks, the presence of machine-made bottles suggests a use of the Triangle-W / T mark by 1924 (Whitall Tatum Co. 1924).

In support for the transition date, a January 1924 ad in the *American Druggist* is the last ad for a “Lettered Prescription Bottle” we have found. The ad noted that the bottles were used by “druggists who appreciate a distinctive message to their patrons.” Based on the decreasing frequency of accounts about plate mold pharmacy bottles in collectors’ literature (see e.g., Bethman 1991 or Elliott & Gould 1988), the number of druggists who wanted the “distinctive message” embossed on bottles had been progressively declining since ca. 1908, almost certainly in favor of paper labels on generic bottles. Ads from 1925 use phrases such as “machine made” or “full automatic machine process,” suggesting that hand manufacture had completely ceased by that time. A 1925 article (*Glass Worker* 1925:35) noted that “the automatic machine has ousted the men.” Pepper (1971:244) erroneously set the inverted triangle marks as beginning in 1902.

The W / T mark is shown extensively in the 1937 Whitall Tatum Glassware Price List (Figure 29). The company went as far as to brag, “When you find [the W / T in an inverted triangle] on the bottom of a glass container[,] you recognize the symbol of highest quality” (Whitall Tatum & Co. 1937:4). Although Pepper (1971:244) did not specify exactly when, she stated that date codes accompanied by mold numbers appeared “in the 20th century” (1971:244). Likely, the use of date codes began sometime during the 1924-1938 period, although the exact date is currently unknown.



Figure 29 – Triangle WT (WT 1937 catalog)

Scholes (1941:129) showed both the W / T inverted triangle mark and Circle A as used by Armstrong Cork Co. in 1941. Berge (1980:83) illustrated a chart from Owens-Illinois showing glass marks used in 1964. The chart showed both the W / T in an inverted triangle mark and the Circle A mark (see below) as being used in that year (1964). The McDougalds also noted that “eight years [from the date of the sale to Armstrong Cork] passed before the venerable Whitall Tatum name began to be replaced by Armstrong embossings” on insulators (McDougald & McDougald 1990:138). This body of evidence suggests that the W / T inverted-triangle mark was used in conjunction with the Circle A mark during the entire tenure of Armstrong Cork (1938-1969) which extends the use of the triangle mark from ca. 1924 to 1969.

However, bottles shown in Colcleaser (1965; 1966) show the W / T-in-an-inverted-triangle marks accompanied with numbers and, in one case, a letter: A, 22, 25, 26, 31. Assuming that these are, indeed, date codes, this further supports an initial use of the triangle mark in 1922. The “A,” of course, is a mystery.

Jones (1965:[22]; 1966:18) only showed the W / T variation of the inverted-triangle mark (but no monogram mark) as did Colcleaser. At this point, we have seen well over 100 of the W / T variation but not a single example of the WT monogram in an inverted triangle as shown by Toulouse. The monogram mark is likely bogus. It should be noted that Toulouse (1971) received information from a large number of bottle collectors (probably the May Jones network) and sometimes reported non-existent marks either because of misinterpreting a description (the likely cause in this case) or because the collector misread the mark on the bottle.

Thus far, we have found no machine-made Whitall Tatum bottles with marks earlier than the inverted triangle form. This suggests that prescription bottles were all mouth blown until about 1924. The inverted triangle marks also could have been used slightly earlier on machine-made glass bottles (as the “22” code on one bottle suggests). There was likely a slight overlap (apparently at least two years) between the use of the “W.T.CO.” and inverted triangle marks.

Finally, we have observed a single example of a mouth-blown drug store bottle with the W / T-in-an-inverted-triangle mark. The bottle was embossed on the side with the drug store name and location. This was almost certainly a transition bottle, made sometime during the 1922-1924 period.

Liquor Ware

Whitall Tatum also made liquor bottles, almost certainly applying for a federal permit in late 1933 (although the first listing for liquor ware was the following year). Because of its low



Figure 30 – WT liquor base

number, Whitall Tatum was almost certainly early in line when Prohibition was repealed, and the government allowed the manufacture of liquor bottles to resume. Each company desiring to make liquor bottles had to apply to the government for a permit number: 12 for Whitall Tatum. That number was also passed on to the Armstrong Cork Co., when Armstrong bought Whitall Tatum in 1938. A typical flask was embossed “D18 WT in an inverted triangle 12-6” (Figure 30). The distiller’s number was “D18”; the logo is discussed above; and “12-6” was Whitall Tatum’s number plus the date code for 1936.

Whitall Tatum produced at least one wine bottle, a colorless round quart with “W.T.CO. / 5” embossed on the base (Figure 31). This was apparently made after the repeal of Prohibition.



Figure 31 – WT wine
(Peter Samuelson)

Discussion and Conclusions

Whitall Tatum had one of the longest production runs for drug store bottles in the history of glass manufacture. It is apparent that the company did not use a mark during its earliest years, but the firm went through three distinct logo changes, each of which is datable with some precision:

WT&CO – ca. 1880-1901

WTCO – 1901-ca. 1924

W / T in an inverted triangle – ca. 1922-1969

However, the remark from McDougald and McDougald cited above argues for speculation. The McDougalds noted that the Triangle W / T mark was phased out in favor of the Circle-A mark about eight years after Armstrong Cork bought Whitall Tatum. That would make the beginning of the transition ca. 1946. Assuming that the same time span may be extended to bottles, the transition period probably lasted until ca. 1950, allowing time for all the baseplates with the older mark to wear out. Thus, a possible end date for the triangle logo is ca. 1950.

The company also embossed its full name on some bottles, used a WT&Co or WTCO monogram on some nursing bottles, and had several trade marks on fruit jars. All in all, Whitall Tatum provided a rich and long manufacturer's mark history.

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