

# **The Flaccus Family Packing Firms and Their Fabulous, Colorful, Embossed Jars: Part I – Flaccus Bros.**

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The involvement of the Flaccus family with glass containers is complex and convoluted. While Charles L. Flaccus operated a successful Pennsylvania glass house in Tarentum, Pennsylvania, other family members used containers embossed with the Flaccus name at their equally successful packing businesses at Wheeling, West Virginia. The Flaccus name also appeared on numerous paper labels attached to glass jars. The beautiful, colorful Steer's Head and Stag Head jars used by the Wheeling branch of the family had ornately embossed designs, some of the most intriguing in the study of glass containers. The story began with the Flaccus Brothers.

## **The Flaccus Family**

Because of the relationships involved in the firms that made or used containers embossed with the Flaccus name or logo, it is appropriate to provide a short family history at the beginning of this study. Welker & Welker (1985:54) provided a genealogy that we have modified with information from Caniff (1996:8). George C. Flaccus and his brother, William, originated in Pittsburgh. George later settled at Wheeling, West Virginia, while William remained in Pittsburgh. William had a son, Charles L. Flaccus, who founded the C.L. Flaccus Glass Co. (see the discussion of C.L. Flaccus in the "C" volume of this series for more information).

On the other side of the family, George C. Flaccus had four sons: George A., William C., Edward C. and Charles C. Flaccus. This branch of the family became wholesale grocers and packers of mince meat, catsup, fruit preserves, mustard, etc., and also commission merchants. Charles died in 1891, and William was only involved in the packing business sporadically.

## **Flaccus Brothers, Wheeling, West Virginia, and New Philadelphia, Ohio (1879-1905)**

Although one business was very short-lived, the Wheeling branch of the family operated three different packing plants, beginning in 1876. Two were in direct competition with each other. In 1897, Edward C. Flaccus broke away from the family business to begin his own business as a competitor.<sup>1</sup> It is somewhat ironic that he eventually bought out the original business – once again uniting the firm.

About 1876, George C. Flaccus and his son, George A. Flaccus, opened a grocery store (G.C. Flaccus & Son) at Altenheim, West Virginia, 2.5 miles east of Wheeling. Although sources are unclear about the date of transition, Flaccus Bros. had opened at Wheeling by 1878 at 23<sup>rd</sup> and Market Streets. Another son, William C. Flaccus, was a clerk in the business. When the senior Flaccus retired from the grocery trade in 1878, his eldest son, George, brought his brothers – William and Edward – into the business and renamed the firm Flaccus Bros. By that point, the operation had grown into a wholesale business, and the brothers rebuilt the store into a larger, three-story building, completed in 1881. (Biographical Publishing Co. 1903:613; Caniff 1996:10; 1997:45; Cranmer 1902; Creswick 1987:60, 266; Roller 2011:194; Welker & Welker 1985:54).

William withdrew from the concern by 1884 to establish a meat market but was listed in the city directory as the manager of Flaccus Bros. in 1886. The 1888 directory placed William as a coal dealer in 1888, and Charles, who formerly had been a salesman for the family firm, became a partner. By 1890, business had improved to the point where the family moved the operation to a large building at 17<sup>th</sup> and Chapline Streets. According to the *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer* (2/22/1890), the building was the former Smith Brewery. The paper noted that the “building complex will be used as a catsup factory and fruit preserving establishment.” The buildings now covered an entire city block. Charles died on June 6, 1891, and William returned that year to manage the packing department. Edward left in 1897 to form his own rival company. Flaccus Bros. was one of the first of its kind west of the Allegheny Mountains, with agents and salesmen covering most of the country – from the East Coast to California (Caniff

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<sup>1</sup> Only George A. Flaccus and Edward C. Flaccus signed the dissolution notice that was printed in the *Wheeling newspaper*. The involvement of William C. Flaccus at this time is unclear.

1996:11; 1997:45; Cramner 1902:609-610; Creswick 1987:60, 266; *Crockery and Glass Journal* 1908:16; Welker & Welker 1985:54).

In January 1902, George Flaccus, now in complete control of the business, purchased land at New Philadelphia, Ohio, and opened a second plant later that year. The New Philadelphia operation covered 30,000 sq. ft. compared to 60,000 sq. ft. at the Wheeling plant. George was suffering from Bright's Disease, so he sold the business to his brother, Edward, in 1905. George died on March 28, 1908,<sup>2</sup> at the age of 49 (*American Manufacture* 1902:114; Biographical Publishing Co. 1903:613; Caniff 1996:11; 1997:45; Cramner 1902:609-610; Creswick 1987:60, 266; *Crockery and Glass Journal* 1908:16; Welker & Welker 1985:54). It is unclear whether Edward continued to use the Flaccus Bros. name after 1905.

## Patents

George A. Flaccus apparently entered a brief designing frenzy near the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century – apparently spurred in patriotic fervor by the Spanish-American War. On August 15, 1898, Flaccus applied for a design patent and received Design Patent No. 29,331 for a catsup bottle in the shape of Uncle Sam on September 13 of the same year (Figure 1). The continuous-thread finish formed Uncle Sam's stove-pipe hat. He applied for his second design of the year on September 1 and received Design Patent No. 29,438 on October 4 for a "Shipping Vessel" (Figure 2). This was a mustard container in the shape of a "battleship or gunboat" – a two-piece vessel similar to the "hen" dishes, where the top or lid of the container was shaped like the decks, stacks, and guns of a Navy battleship.

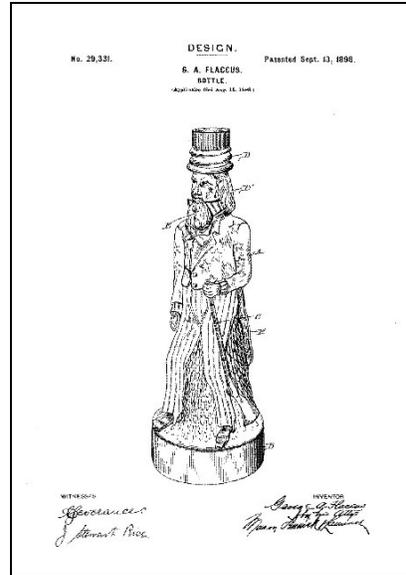


Figure 1 – Flaccus 1898 patent – Uncle Sam

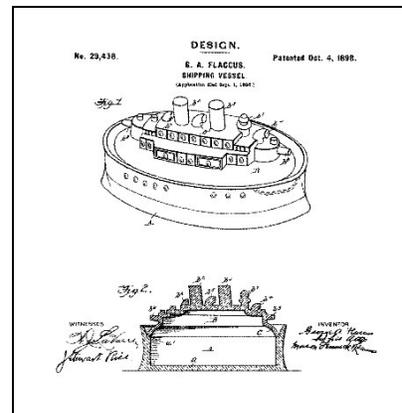


Figure 2 – Flaccus 1898 patent – Battleship

<sup>2</sup> Ancestry.com placed the date at March 31.

## Containers and Marks

Caniff (1996:9) could find no evidence that any of the Wheeling Flaccus companies (the ones that sold packer items, like catsup, packed meats, butters, jellies, etc. – see below) ever bought any of their packers’ jars from their cousin, C.L. Flaccus. While this is almost certainly true for the best-known Flaccus Bros. containers – the elaborately embossed fruit jars – it is a bit less certain for many of the other bottles and jars, both embossed and generic. However, as we explain below, Flaccus Bros. exhibited a marked preference for local or immediately regional glass products – from venues closer to Wheeling than Pittsburgh.

### **FLACCUS BROS. and Steer’s Head (1880-ca. 1908)**

The Steer’s Head logo in conjunction with the Flaccus Bros. name was the most common label used by the firm. In some cases, the Steer’s Head was embossed on the container; in others, it appeared on a paper label.<sup>3</sup> The design was used from 1880 to ca. 1908, a few years after George Flaccus sold the business to his brother, Edward (see discussion in Part II).

#### **Containers with Paper Labels**

According to Roller (1983:124-125), “the Flaccus jars were used to pack various types of condiments, and may be found with numerous styles of embossings, closures, colors, shapes and sizes.” Caniff (1996:11) noted that the Steer’s Head logo was probably only originally used on paper labels. He stated that labels appeared on catsup bottles as early as 1888.

Flaccus Bros. registered the initial Steer’s Head trademark, No. 21,314, on June 21, 1892, with first use claimed in 1880 (Figure 3). The actual trademark illustration was a catsup

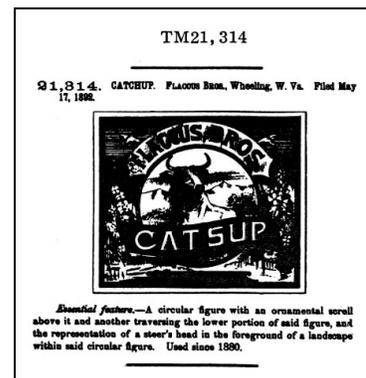


Figure 3 – Steers Head trademark – 1892

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<sup>3</sup> Flaccus Bros. used an interesting inconsistency in the term Steer’s Head. In pamphlets, on the trade mark application, and on paper labels, the term was always used correctly – with an apostrophe. However, on later embossed jars, the apostrophe had disappeared – making the term Steers Head. We have tried to remain consistent with the Flaccus Bros. usage.

paper label. The essential features of the trademark included “a circular figure with an ornamental scroll above it and another traversing the lower part of said figure and a representation of a steer’s head in the foreground of a landscape within said circular figure” (Creswick 1987:258).

A brief sample of advertisements is instructive. The earliest ad we have found was for catsup in a bottle in August of 1889. Three years later, an 1892 ad showed bottled catsup, preserves in a jar, and listed blackberries and raspberries, while a single 1893 ad featured a pint catsup bottle. According to the *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer* (9/18/1893), two carloads of catsup were shipped to Chicago on September 16, 1893. Black raspberries came in a two pound can in 1895, and the Flaccus Bros. promoted catsup and chutney relish in 1897. A December 1898 Washington, D.C., grocery ad featured preserves in elaborately embossed jars and 5 lb. stone kettles. Ads from 1899 showed catsup in bottles, and those from 1900 included catsup, fruit preserves (jelly and jam), and queen olives in bottles. The 1900 lineup noted crab apple jelly, mustard, sweet pickles and catsup.<sup>4</sup>

If Flaccus Bros. and E.C. Flaccus followed the same plan as expressed in a November 20, 1889, *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer* article, the former firm at least preferred the Wheeling location because the plant could buy its glass packages locally and avoid freight or packing charges. This meant that Flaccus Bros. would send a driver and wagon to the glasshouse to pick-up and transport the glass bottles and/or jars back to the packing house. The use of the railroad or river would add freight and packing charges to their overall bill. This suggests that unembossed containers were probably made locally (i.e., Wheeling or reasonably close).

We currently know very little about the progression or dating of the paper labels or the vessels to which they were affixed. We have some insight into the order of the paper labels because of the steer’s heads on the elaborately embossed later mustard jars. Since that design was used at the end of the sequence, all other variations of the steer’s head must have been used earlier. Unfortunately, the actual steer drawing varies little in our sample.

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<sup>4</sup> We gleaned these ads from newspapers. Since they proved to be non-diagnostic in the long run, we have not included individual citations.

## Unembossed Containers with Paper Labels

Flaccus Bros. used a variety of paper labels between 1889 and 1905, apparently all based on the Steer's Head trademark. These appeared on narrow-mouth bottles, wide-mouth bottles, and jars that were made of glass as well as ceramic containers and glass "boats." This section only deals with glass bottles and jars; "other" containers will be addressed below.

### Small-Mouth Glass Bottles with Paper Labels

Based on photos from the Hoosier Jar website (Spurgeon 2004), Flaccus Bros. only used bottles for catsup and pickles, although there may have been a few other condiments packed in narrow-mouth containers. Although the labels showed some variance, the basic design during this period, ca. 1889-1905, remained fairly consistent (Figure 4). Although our only example of a pickle bottle was sealed with a cork, the few catsup bottles from the site exhibit a marked preference for continuous-thread finishes, closed with metal screw caps.

Although screw caps and continuous-thread finishes were early features on wide-mouth jars (1850s), they did not become an industry standard on narrow-mouth bottles until the mid-1920s. Two main exceptions were liquor flasks and catsup bottles (although a few perfume bottles also had continuous threads). Catsup bottles used by the Flaccus Bros. were typical of the period between ca. 1895 and the 1920s. The bottles were each blown into a two-piece mold with a post or cup baseplate. The threads of the finish were part of the two-piece mold that formed the bottle. The bottle was then grasped by a snap-case, and the end was wetted or broken off. Unlike wide-mouth jars, where the lip or rim was then ground on a wheel to form a flat surface, catsup bottles were tooled to create the final lip or rim. This process was used on catsup bottles from ca. 1895 until machine-made bottles became common during the late 1920s.



Figure 4 – Flaccus catsup bottles (Hoosier Jar)

## Glass Jars and Wide-Mouth Bottles with Paper Labels

Even with our small sample from the Hoosier Jar Webpage, the Flaccus Brothers used a bewildering variety of glass jars and wide-mouth bottles. The main division is between mustard containers and everything else. Flaccus Bros. packed mustard in apple-shaped jars,<sup>5</sup> round jars of various types and sizes, and tin-top milk bottles (i.e., sealed with metal Lightning stoppers) – as well as stoneware jars, ceramic jars, ceramic mugs, glass “battleships,” and the elaborately embossed jars that will be discussed later (Figure 5).



Figure 5 – Flaccus mustard containers (Hoosier Jar)

One type of mustard label was especially prolific and appeared on many styles of jars. We call these the bow-tie labels because of their shapes. A typical label had the steer’s head in a gold medallion on the left and “The Finest” in another gold medallion on the right. The lettering read “MUSTARD PREPARED (white) / with fine herbs (black) / FLACCUS BROS. (white) / Fabricant (black) / WHEELING, W.VA. (white)” (Figure 6).

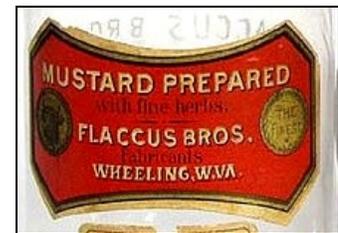


Figure 6 – Bow-tie mustard label (Hoosier Jar)



Figure 7 – Alternative bow-tie mustard label (Hoosier Jar)

A variation had steer’s heads in both medallions (with “STEER’S HEAD” in an arch above the drawing and “TRADE MARK REGISTERED” in an inverted arch below it) and was lettered “PREPARED MUSTARD (white) / WITH FINE HERBS (black) / FLACCUS BROS. / WHEELING, W.VA. (both white)” with small lettering – that listed the ingredients in fine print – under both medallions (Figure 7). The list of ingredients almost

<sup>5</sup> These were called “Egyptian Jam Jars, Squat Style” in the Hazel-Atlas Glass Co. 1908 catalog. The finish was called the Phoenix, patented in the U.S. by Alfred L. Weissenthaner in 1893 (No. 509,834). The finishes were certainly available in the mid-1890s, and these jars were probably offered by the Hazel Glass Co. during that period.



Figure 8 – Final bow-tie mustard label (Hoosier Jar)

appears to have been added as an afterthought. A third variation was identical except that the background color was yellow-orange instead of red (Figure 8). These last two labels were made to fulfill the requirements of the Pure Food & Drug Act of 1906, so they were actually used by E.C. Flaccus (see Part II for more information about the later labels).

The firm packed stuffed olives and melon mangoes in cork-stoppered, wide-mouth bottles; chili sauce, quince butter, and stuffed mangoes in wide-mouth jars with continuous-thread finishes and metal lids or glass inserts and metal screw bands; sweet gerkins and sweet pickles in cork-stoppered



Figure 9 – Wide-mouth bottles 1 (Hoosier Jar)

pickle bottles; sweet gerkins and chow chow in square wide-mouth, cork-stoppered bottles; and a large variety of foods in square, wide-mouth bottles with continuous-thread finishes and glass screw lids (Figures 9-11). We will discuss these glass inserts and glass lids below in the section on the elaborately embossed mustard jars.



Figure 10 – Wide-mouth bottles 2 (Hoosier Jar)

### Embossed Catsup Bottles

We have only discovered three embossed catsup bottles, all from the Hoosier Jar webpage and Tom Caniff articles.



Figure 11 – Wide-mouth bottles 3 (Hoosier Jar)

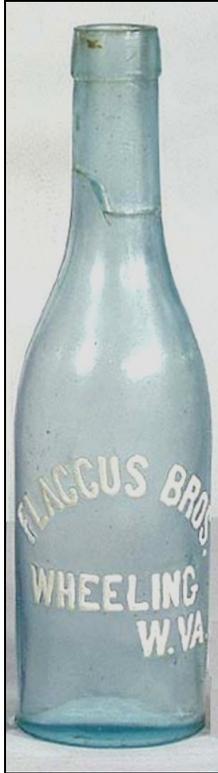


Figure 12 –  
Embossed catsup  
(Hoosier Jar)

### The No-Steer Bottle

Caniff (1996:17) illustrated a catsup bottle embossed “FLACCUS BROS. (arch) / WHEELING / W. VA. (both horizontal)” that he dated ca. 1880 (Figure 12). We agree that the probable date period is during the 1880s. This bottle is notable because it lacked the steer’s head that was used by almost all of the later bottles. The aqua bottle was mouth blown with a tooled finish to be sealed by a cork. All other Flaccus Bros. catsup bottles that we have observed had continuous-thread finishes.

### The Steer Bottle

Caniff (1996:12) illustrated a large catsup bottle with an unusual embossed Steer’s Head label. A steer – facing to its own right in a profile that included the full shoulder – was placed in a round plate on the front of the bottle, with “FLACCUS BROS.” in an

arch above it and “WHEELING WVA / PATENTED” in inverted arches below. This bottle was colorless, mouth blown, and had a tooled, continuous-thread finish, sealed with a metal screw cap. The bottle was 21 inches tall and was obviously made for display purposes. The photo (Figure 13) includes two normal-sized catsup bottles for comparison. See the discussion on paper-label catsup bottles above for more information on the process.



Figure 13 – Flaccus display bottle  
(Hoosier Jar)

### The Uncle Sam Bottle

As noted above, George A. Flaccus received Design Patent No. 29,331 for a catsup bottle in the shape of Uncle Sam on September 13, 1898 (see Figure 1). The actual bottles were colorless and mouth blown with continuous-thread finishes that formed Uncle Sam’s stove-pipe

hat (Figure 14). These bottles probably were not used long, possibly only for a few years after the 1898 patent, likely until the patriotic furor associated with the Spanish-American War calmed down.

### Embossed jars and Wide-Mouth Bottles

Flaccus Bros. used several different jars and wide-mouth bottles that were embossed with the Flaccus name. Some of these were also embossed with the Steers Head design.<sup>6</sup> A final category – elaborately embossed mustard jars – will be discussed separately.



Figure 14 – Flaccus Uncle Sam bottle (Hoosier Jar)

### Flaccus Name

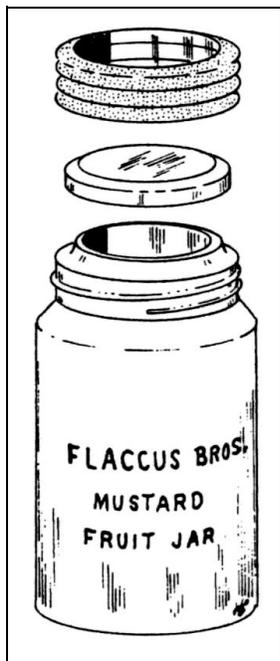


Figure 15 – Flaccus Bros. – no steer (Creswick 1987:61)

Creswick (1987:61) illustrated a round colorless jar topped with a white milk glass insert held in place by a metal screw band. The jar was mouth blown with a continuous-thread finish and a ground rim or lip. The jar was embossed “FLACCUS BROS (no period) / MUSTARD / FRUIT JAR” (Figures 15 & 16). The glass insert was embossed with a sunburst design. This is one of the few embossed jars with a surviving paper label (Figure 17).

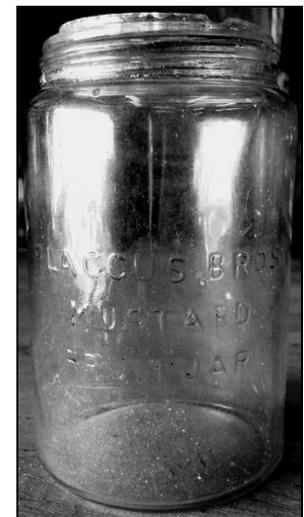


Figure 16 – Flaccus Bros. – no steer (eBay)

The Hoosier Jar webpage provided a photo of a colorless wide-mouth bottle with a ribbed heel, slight constriction above the heel, pleasantly rounded shoulder, and flared finish. The bottle was probably mouth blown and was embossed “FLACCUS” on the shoulder below two embossed rings

<sup>6</sup> As noted above, the embossed “Steers Head” did not include an apostrophe. To avoid using “(sic)” constantly, we have left the word as used by the firm.



Figure 17 – Paper label side of Figure 15 (Hoosier Jar)

around the neck (Figure 18). The flared finish may have been plugged by a cork or some type of foil or metal cover.

### Steers Head Containers

Many of the Steers Head containers – *not* the elaborately embossed ones – were very different in shape, closure, and design – although all of these seem to have been mainly produced in colorless glass. Although these *could* have also been made by the Wellsburg Glass Co., they were likely manufactured prior to 1904 by the Frank Glass Co. All of these were probably made during the period after

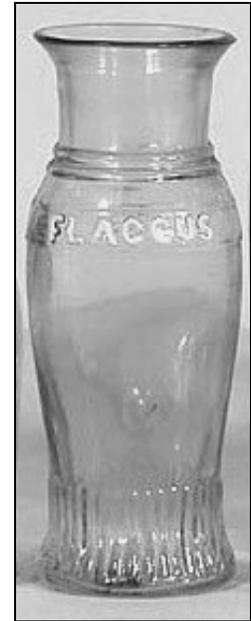


Figure 18 – Flared wide-mouth bottle (Hoosier Jar)

Edward Flaccus left the firm and was in competition with his brother.

George likely began upgrading his containers at that point in an attempt to outdo his upstart brother. Most of these embossed containers were thus probably made between 1897 and 1905.

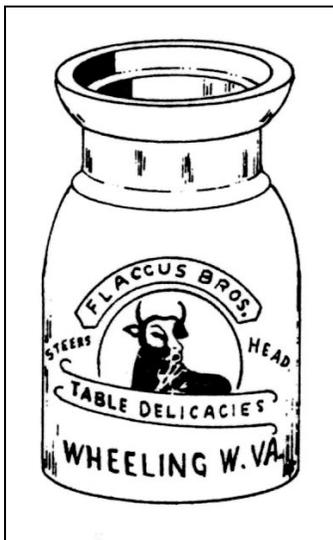


Figure 19 – Flared wide-mouth bottle (Creswick 1987:61)

Creswick (1987:61) illustrated a colorless, cylindrical, mouth-blown jar with a flared, tooled finish (Figure 19). The front was embossed “FLACCUS BROS. (arched in banner) / STEERS (curved) (steer’s head logo) HEAD (curved) / TABLE DELICACIES (in between two lines with curled ends – left upward, right downward) / WHEELING, W.VA.” The jar was topped by a colorless, unembossed glass lid with an S-shaped depression held down by an S-shaped wire clamp hooking under jar’s finish. The Hoosier Jar webpage offered a photo (Figure 20).



Figure 20 – Flared wide-mouth bottle (Hoosier Jar)

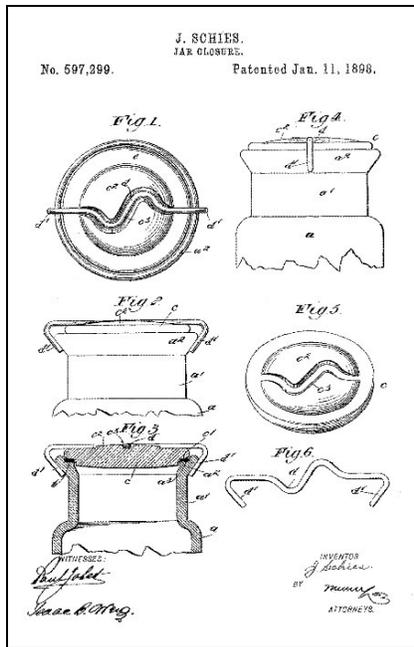


Figure 21 – Schies 1898 patent

John Schies filed for a patent for a “Jar Closure” on February 12, 1897. He received Patent No. 597,299 on January 11, 1898 (Figure 21). Schies was an officer of the Pennsylvania Glass Co. at Anderson, Indiana, so that factory likely made all containers with this type of finish. Creswick (1987:61)

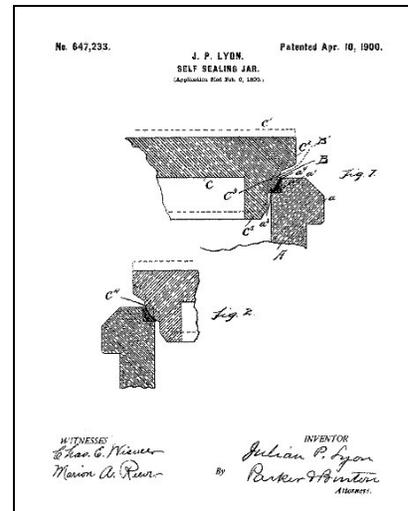


Figure 22 – Lyon 1900 patent

suggested that the lid was made to the Julian P. Lyon patent of April 10, 1900 (No. 647,233), but the Schies patent is a much better fit (Figure 22). Since Indiana was well out of the typical Flaccus

purchase area, this jar may have been an example of reuse.



Figure 23 – Steer Head – flared (Hoosier Jar)

Another wide-mouth, mouth-blown bottle with a similar finish was square in cross-section (Figure 23). It was embossed “FLACCUS BROS (no period) (arched in banner) / STEER (no S) (ascending height letters) (steer’s head logo) HEAD (descending height letters) / TABLE DELICACIES (in wavy banner) / WHEELING. W.VA.” The bottle was sealed with a cork.

Another square, wide-mouth bottle was colorless, mouth blown and had the same embossing as the one described immediately above (Figure 24). The finish



Figure 24 – Steer Head – screw top (North American Glass)

was flared as described just above but had a continuous-thread finish above the flare with a ground lip or rim. The bottle was topped with four types of caps:

1. A metal screw cap that was stamped on the top surface “FLACCUS BROS. (steer’s head logo) TRADE MARK PRESERVERS WHEELING W.VA.”
2. A white milk glass insert that was embossed “FLACCUS BROS.” on the top surface and held in place by a metal screw band.
3. A glass cap that was unembossed
4. A glass cap that was embossed on the top surface “PAT APL’D FOR (arch) / TO / REMOVE / CAP PRESS / DOWN & / UNSCREW

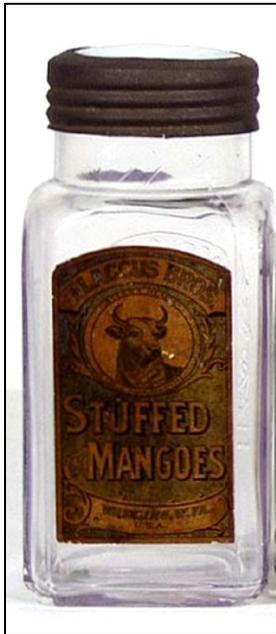


Figure 25 – Steer Head – glass insert (Hoosier Jar)

A similar, square, wide-mouth bottle was embossed “FLACCUS BROS. (arch in banner) / STEER (no S) (ascending height letters) {steer’s head logo} HEAD (descending height letters) / TABLE DELICACIES (in wavy banner) / WHEELING, W.VA. (in banner). The jar was mouth blown with a ground lip or rim and was sealed with an undersized white milk glass insert and metal screw band. The insert was embossed “FLACCUS BROS. (arch) / {steer’s head logo} / TRADE MARK (in a curved downward banner) / PRESERVERS (curved downward) / WHEELING, W.VA (curved downward). Our example from the Hoosier Jar website had a paper label with “FLACCUS BROS. (arch) /

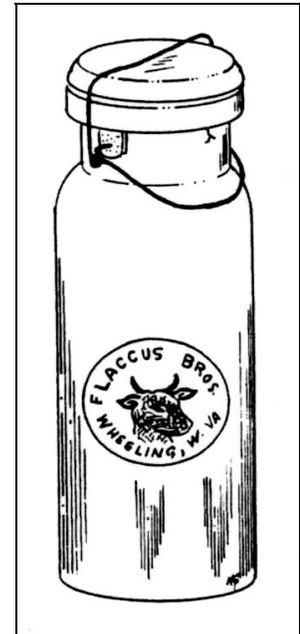


Figure 26 – Front plate jar (Creswick 1987:60)

{steer’s head logo} / STUFFED MANGOS / WHEELING, W.VA. U.S.A. (in curved downward banner)” (Figure 25).

One of the few machine-made non-elaborate jars was embossed “FLACCUS BROS (arch) / {steer’s head} / WHEELING W VA (inverted arch)” inside a circular plate (Figures 26 & 27). Both the cylindrical jar and lid were made of colorless glass. The finish was the old



Figure 27 – Front plate jar (North American Glass)

Lightning style with the lid held in place by a full wire-bail with coiled wire eyelets. The glass lid was embossed “APPLIED FOR” and had a circular center depression to accept a V-shaped bend in the Lightning-style bail (Creswick 1987:61).

This lid may have been made to the Charles Hess 1904 patent. Hess applied for the patent on February 10, 1900, but did not receive Patent No. 772,038 until October 11, 1904 – almost four

years later. He assigned the patent

to the Kearns-Gorsuch Bottle Co., Zanesville, Ohio (Figure 28). The V-shaped indentation in the Lightning-style wire bail is unique. It is

possible the Zanesville bottle company modified the Hess patent with a Lightning style closure. *China, Glass & Lamps* noted on March 1, 1902, that Kearns-Gorsuch would be starting “a furnace with machines for making bottles, principally wide necks, and packing jars” during the next week (Roller (1998a).

An 8-inch tall, colorless, cylindrical jar was embossed “FLACCUS BROS. WHEELING, W.VA.” on the base. The jar was mouth blown and was topped by a continuous-thread finish. The lid consisted of an undersized white milk-glass insert held in place by a metal screw band. The insert was embossed “FLACCUS BROS. (arch) / {steer’s head logo} / TRADE MARK (in a curved downward banner) / PRESERVERS (inverted arch) / WHEELING, W.VA (inverted arch).

One of the more unusual jars had a bulbous lower body with a cylindrical top section. A semicircular bead separated both sections while another embossed ring served as the shoulder. A tall, wide neck topped by a continuous-thread finish

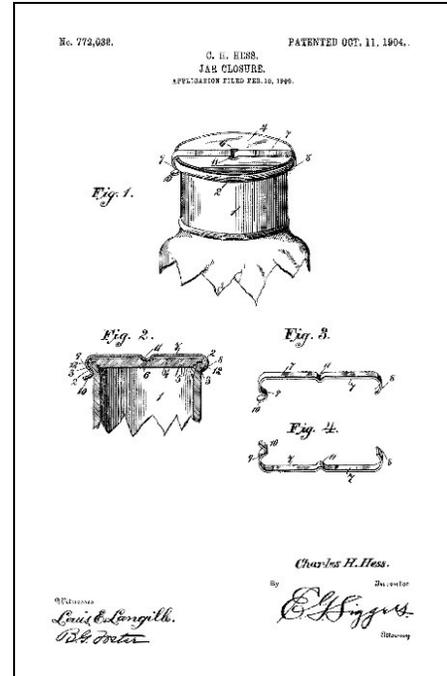


Figure 28 – Hess 1904 patent

completed the jar. The jar, itself, had no distinctive embossing, but the lid identified the firm. Above the screw threads, the metal lid had a “flip” top with a hole for a wooden spoon – a dispenser jar (Figure 29). The top of the lid was embossed “FLACCUS (arched) / TRADE {steer’s head} MARK / PREPARED MUSTARD (wavy line).”

### Elaborately Embossed Mustard Jars

Toulouse (1969:295-296) illustrated and described four variations of food jars with the FLACCUS BROS. and STEERS HEAD marks but noted that there were “many slightly changed versions of the decoration forms of each jar listed.” Toulouse dated the jars ca. 1890-1898 and claimed that they were probably made by the Hazel Glass Co. or Atlas Glass Co.,

although Lockhart & Bernas (2014) showed that Atlas only made aqua jars in its early days.

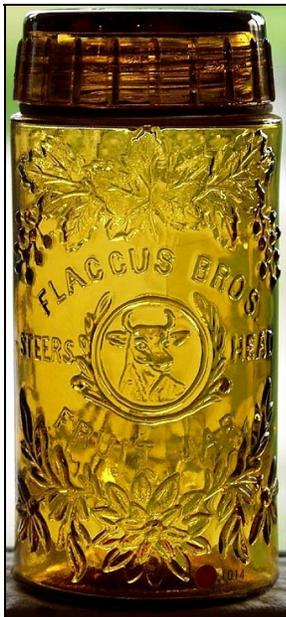


Figure 30 – Elaborately embossed jar front (North American Glass)



Figure 29 – Dispenser jar (Hoosier Jar)

The main distinguishing feature of these jars was their elaborately embossed designs. The front of each jar may be divided into three sections: top, middle (central) and bottom. The basic central design was a steer’s head, neck, and upper shoulder looking back to its own left, centered in a circle with “FLACCUS BROS.” in a slight arch above it, “STEERS” to the left, “HEAD” to the right, and “FRUIT JAR” in an inverted arch below. The steer head was made in several variations (Figure 30), although most of the variations were a fairly close match to the trademark drawing.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Variations include differences in angle of steer, horn length, horn curvature, nose, ears, eyes, neck, and shoulder – just about every part of the steer. These mostly occurred on the later,

The areas above and below the central design were covered with flower, leaf, and grape embossings. The figure just above the steer head was a grape vine motif centered around a five-pointed grape leaf with bunches of grapes to the sides – although the exact shape and surroundings varied (see Figure 30). The lower design centered around a multi-petaled, three layered flower (probably a chrysanthemum), and this motif also had variations (see Figure 30). Even in our sample (over 40 jars), the description from Roller that “a complete listing of Flaccus jars would be a book in itself” certainly appears to be correct. The backs of the jars were very similar to the front, except that the central area was bare to allow the attachment of the bow-tie paper label (Figure 31).



Figure 31 – Elaborately embossed reverse (Glass Discoveries)

An interesting fact is that these jars were originally packed with mustard. The labeling space on the reverse is exactly the right size for the bow-tie label, and existing jars have the mustard label in place. However, the term “FRUIT JAR” was prominently embossed below the steer’s head. Although we have not discovered an advertisement, this strongly suggests that the Flaccus Bros. had a long-term sales campaign where the mustard jar could be reused as a fruit jar.

Both Creswick (1987:61) and Roller (2011:195) presented examples of the elaborately embossed jars with two types of finishes: continuous-thread and unthreaded. The unthreaded variations, however, were machine made and will be discussed in Part II. Our discussion here will center around the jars with continuous-thread finishes.

### *Elaborately Embossed Jars with Continuous-Thread Finishes*

The elaborately embossed jars with continuous-thread finishes also fall into an important dichotomy. The first and oldest type was blown into a mold (see explanation below). The second had a “smooth lip” and was machine made. We address the older style first.

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colorless jars.

### *Mouth-Blown Elaborately Embossed Jars*

Jars with a “ground” or “burst-off” lip (rim) were manufactured by a multi-step production sequence. First, the jar was blown into a two-piece mold with a post or cup baseplate. Next, the jar was broken off of the blowpipe (by one of several methods), then was allowed to cool. Depending on the style of finish requested by the customer, the jagged rim was left as it was, smoothed somewhat to dull the sharpness, or ground off the lip or rim (Figure 32). These jars with continuous-thread finishes and ground or burst-off lips (rims) were made in colorless glass (some of which solarized to an amethyst hue), emerald green, white milk (opal) glass, and amber hues ranging from light to honey amber (Creswick 1987:61; Roller 2011:194).



Figure 32 – Ground lip (North American Glass)

### *Glass Inserts and Metal Screw Bands*

Mouth-blown elaborately embossed Steers Head jars were made with three different types of closures: 1) glass inserts with metal screw bands; 2) metal screw caps; and 3) glass screw caps. The earliest of these was the insert and band. Metal screw bands were the same size.

Glass inserts used on the mouth-blown elaborately embossed Steers Head jars were not necessarily made in the color as the jar (Figure 33). For example, on colorless jars, some were the same hue as the jars; jars of other colors used inserts made of white milk (opal) glass, regardless of jar color. We do not currently know whether Flaccus Bros. actually sold the jars this way, or if these inserts were switched by housewives who reused the jars for preserves or by later collectors. These inserts – mostly white milk (opal) glass – were made in at least three formats:

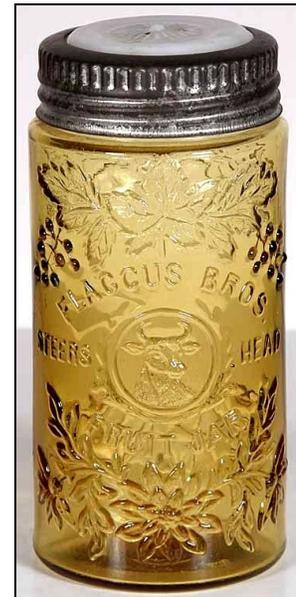


Figure 33 – Glass insert and metal band (North American Glass)



Figure 34 – Sunburst glass insert (North American Glass)

1. Slightly sunken center with a 24-point sunburst with a large dot in the center (Figure 34)

2. Central 22-point sunburst with a large dot in the center surrounded by a wreath of leaves and berries (Figure 35)

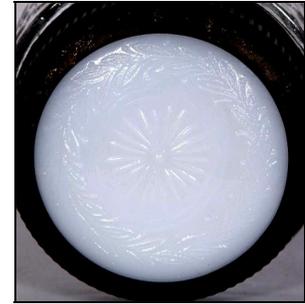


Figure 35 – Sunburst and wreath insert (North American Glass)

3. FLACCUS BROS. (arch) / {steer’s head logo} / TRADE MARK (in scroll) / PRESERVERS / WHEELING W.VA. (last three lined inverted arches)” (Figure 36).



Figure 36 – Steers head insert (North American Glass)

### Metal Lids



Figure 37 – Glenny closure (Jerry McCann)

A slight variation of the Steers Head jars was made for a metal (Glenny) screw cap which seals on a rim of the finish.

Figure 37 shows the insert-metal screw band jar and closure to the left and the Glenny to the right. To facilitate sealing, the burst-off lip was ground down to a lower level to accommodate the Glenny style screw cap.

Henry F. Brockmann applied for a patent for a “Screw Cap” on June 19, 1899, and received Patent No. 638,317 on December 5, 1899 (Figure 38). He assigned the patent to the William Glenny Glass Co. of Cincinnati, Ohio. These lids were only

likely made for a few years, possibly 1900-1903.

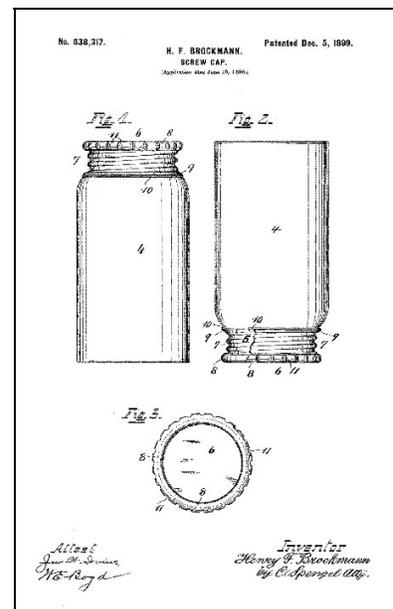


Figure 38 – Brockmann 1899 patent

### *Glass Screw Lids*

Some of the mouth-blown jars with ground lips or rims used glass screw lids. These lids were made in the same colors as the jars, although all appear to be slightly darker – almost certainly because they are made of thicker glass. These jars were made in the same colors as the ones with the inserts and metal screw bands (Figure 39). In addition, all of the jars – both those with inserts and bands and those with glass screw caps – appear to have been made in the same molds.



Figure 39 – Insert and band jars compared with glass cap jars (Hoosier Jar)

Even though the blowers made the three types of jars in the same molds, *and* each had either a burst-off or ground lip or rim, the finishes on each was very different, and sealing mechanisms were *not* interchangeable. Held in place by a metal screw band, the glass insert straddled the jar's lip and undoubtedly rested on a rubber ring that was positioned on the rim just above the continuous screw thread. For the metal (Glenny) screw cap, a circular waxed cardboard disk, positioned inside the cover, in all probability rested on the burst-off lip of the jar and sealed the contents when the cap was screwed down onto the continuous thread finish. In the case of the glass screw cap, inside the cover there is a circular indented channel which likely held in place a compound or sealing rubber that sealed the contents when the cap was screwed down onto the threaded finish. Note: if this style of jar (ground lip with glass screw cap) was reused for domestic canning, a circular rubber, placed on the jar's flat shoulder, would seal against the bottom edge of the glass screw cap. The shoulder region for the molds was very different, and each lid type will not seal on the opposite type of jars (Figure 40).



Figure 40 – Finish comparison; insert-and-band (left); glass screw cap (right) (North American Glass)



Figure 41 – To Remove Cap lid (North American Glass)

The glass screw caps are superficially similar to the ones patented by William B. Fenn and made by the Sterling Glass Co. and the Perfection Glass Co., both of Washington, Pennsylvania, and the Hazel-Atlas Glass Co. of Wheeling, West Virginia (see the Part II of this series and the section on the Perfection Glass Co.). Since Sterling, Perfection, and Hazel-Atlas only made these screw caps in flint



Figure 42 – PAT APL'D FOR (North American Glass)

(colorless) glass, earlier lids were obviously manufactured by a different glass house and, therefore, to a different patent. The lids were embossed “TO / REMOVE / CAP PRESS / DOWN & / UNSCREW” – embossed on the underside of the lid (Figure 41). A slight variation included “PAT.AP'D.FOR” (Figure 42).

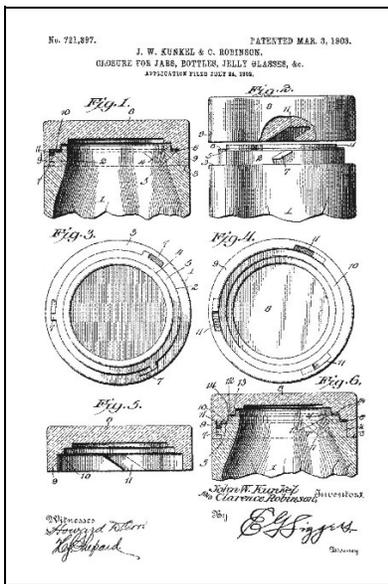


Figure 43 – Kunkel and Robinson 1903 patent

These caps appear to have been made to one of the Kunkel & Robinson patents. On July 24, 1902, John W. Kunkel, of Lazearville, and Clarence Robinson, of Wellsburg, West Virginia, applied for a patent for a “Closure for Jars, Bottles, Jelly Glasses, &c.” The pair received Patent No. 721,897 on March 3, 1903. The glass cap was made with “lugs or projections . . . upon the neck of the jar” that corresponded to “sockets or recesses” within the cap. A twist of the glass lid locked the

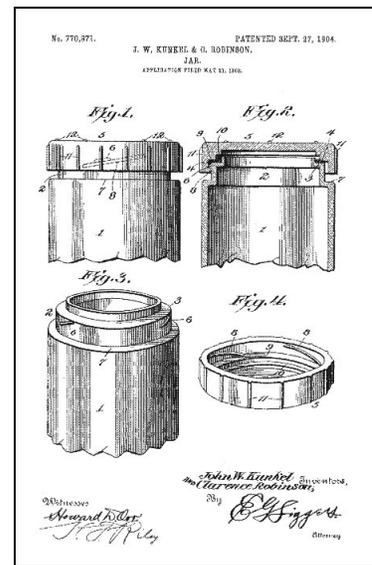


Figure 44 – Kunkel and Robinson 1904 patent

lugs and sealed the jar (Figure 43). Of course, the patent design would have had to have been modified for the Steers Head jar.

Kunkel and Robinson applied for a second patent – for a “Jar” on May 21, 1903, and received Patent No. 770,971 on September 27, 1904 (Figure 44). In this patent, the “neck of the jar is provided on its exterior with short inclined lugs . . . extending downward from the seat” to connect with “ long inclined flanges or lugs” on the cap. These were very similar to non-continuous threads, and the exterior of the cap had 14 embossed ribs for better gripping. The patent drawing looked *very* similar to the glass caps found on the mouth-blown steer’s head jars.

### ***Machine-Made Elaborately Embossed Jars***

Machine-made, elaborately embossed jars were likely first manufactured during the final years of the Flaccus Bros. under George Flaccus. Although the use of these jars began during the George Flaccus period, the bulk of their usage occurred during the tenure of Edward Flaccus. While it is tempting to make the statement that the firms that made the glass screw caps for the machine made STEERS HEAD jars (Sterling Glass Co., Perfection Glass Co. and Hazel-Atlas Glass Co.) also made the jars, there is still no direct proof that this occurred. The matter of the manufacturer remains unresolved. Accordingly, we will address these jars in Part II.

### **Other Containers (glass boats, ceramic jars, etc.)**

On October 4, 1898, George A. Flaccus received Design Patent No. 29,438 for a “Design for Shipping Vessel” (see Figure 2). The firm used this battleship design in colorless or white opal (milk-glass) as a mustard container (Figure 45). This, of course, was quite different from the Steers Head jars. These patriotic but gimmicky containers were made just after the Spanish American War and spawned a copycat version from the E.C Flaccus Co. (see Part II). These covered-dish containers, of course, could be reused by housewives in their kitchens.



Figure 45 – Battleship boat mustard containers (Hoosier Jar)

Caniff (1996:20-22) discussed the “battleships” in great detail. Recorded examples included a crescent-shaped label with “PREPARED MUSTARD (slight inverted arch) / FLACCUS BROS. (horizontal) / WHEELING, W.VA. (inverted arch).” Each had the name of the ship – Olympia, Oregon, or Wheeling – apparently embossed on the outer gunwale just aft of the bow. One variation had a “raised section through the bow area where the name would have been located.” These may have had individual names applied on paper labels, similar to the ones made by the E.C. Flaccus Co. (see Part II). Caniff (1996:22) speculated that “the area had just been filled in to obliterate the original names sometime after the end of the war when the flag waving had subsided.”



Figure 46 – Flaccus vinegar pitcher (Hoosier Jar)

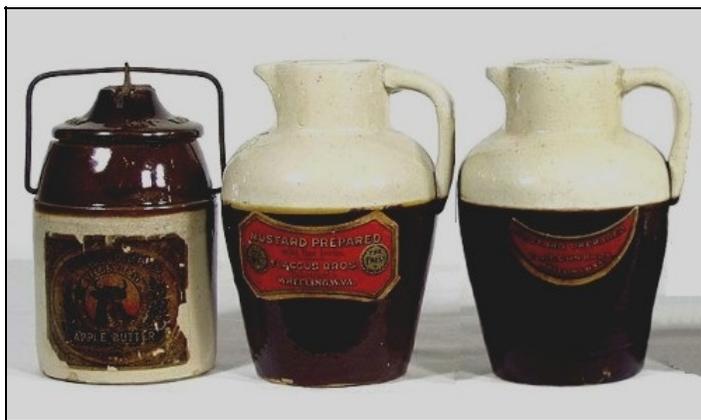


Figure 47 – Ceramic containers (Hoosier Jar)

Flaccus Bros. also sold mustard in ceramic pitchers and preserves in ceramic jars (Figure 47). Ceramic mugs seem to have been promotional items (Figure 48).

Flaccus Bros. offered tan-colored, barrel-shaped, stoneware water coolers in three- and five-gallon sizes (Figure 49). These had transfer prints of “FLACCUS

The Hoosier Jar webpage included a photo of a Vinegar cruet with a pitcher-style handle and spout. The container was embossed “FLACCUS / PURE / WHITE WINE / VINEGAR” and had a series of flutes at the shoulder-neck area (Figure 46). The vessel was almost certainly originally sealed with a glass stopper or cork.



Figure 48 – Ceramic water jugs (Hoosier Jar)

WATER COOLER” above a complex design in either black or brown letters. The lower section centered around the typical Steer’s Head motif with “FLACCUS BROS.” in a slight arch over head and “WHEELING, W.VA. U.S.A.” in



Figure 49 – Flaccus ceramic mugs (Hoosier Jar)

an elaborate banner below. The banner extended to both sides of the steer’s head, with “CANNED GOODS / MUSTARD / PRESERVES” to the left and “CATSUP / PICKLES / SAUCES &c.” to the right. The three-gallon size had the numeral “3” above the other lettering, although the five-gallon size had no volume number. Caniff (1996:18) noted that

these coolers were not only advertising pieces, but also held some product, such as mustard or pickles for commercial use. Some of the dark brown interiors show stains that may have been left by brined contents. Although they all have a molded bung hole, none have been reported with a spigot attached. The crocks were no doubt intended for possible reuse as water coolers, which would have provided fine advertising in saloons and restaurants; however a consumer can use only so many coolers, so it is possible some were returned to Flaccus for reuse.

### Glass Container Manufacturers

Although earlier researchers have only speculated as if a single manufacturer produced all containers for the Flaccus Bros., there were probably three or more glass houses that made bottles and jars for the firm during this 1880-1905 period. In the earliest years, the brothers may have employed used containers, such as a milk bottle that was made for a specific dairy – then labeled for mustard by Flaccus Bros. (Figure 50).



Figure 50 – Used milk bottle with mustard label (Hoosier Jar)

### Catsup Bottle Manufacturers

With the exception of three embossed bottles discussed above, Flaccus Bros. apparently used colorless, generic catsup bottles that

were round in cross-section with continuous-thread finishes and screw caps. Such bottles were common after ca. 1895, and they make up the only paper-label or embossed examples we have seen with one exception. One of the embossed catsup bottles was made for a cork stopper, and that style is probably representative of the bottles used prior to 1895. As with the later bottles, these were common and could have been made by any one of a number of glass houses. The sources (e.g., Spurgeon 2004) did not make any mention of manufacturer's marks on any embossed or paper-label bottles.

### **Colorless Jar Manufacturers**

According to Creswick (1987:60), “William Flaccus Stifel, a grandson of George A. Flaccus, wrote that the Flaccus’ [*sic*] had a close relationship with the Central Glass Company and their predecessors. They were a capable and aggressive firm who made much milkglass, and it seems reasonable to assume that at least some of the Flaccus jars were made by this company.” However, we have been unable to find *any* reference to fruit jars or product jars made at the Central Glass Co. The firm specialized in tableware. Because of the grinding equipment involved in the screw-top jar process, as well as the difference in products, it is unlikely that this firm made any Flaccus jars – despite the memory of the grandson – although Stifel may have remembered Central Glass making inserts for lids, a product easily within the glass house capacity. In addition, the “close relationship” may have only been ethnic in character, not involving business matters at all.

Creswick (1987:60) further advised that “William P. Flaccus, son of William C. Flaccus, stated that the jars were made by the Hobbs Glass Works in South Wheeling, W.Va.” The Hobbs family and their associates operated a single glass house under several names (probably the best known was the Hobbs-Brockunier Glass Co.) that, like Central Glass, specialized in tableware. Roller (1983:125) was less certain of these other manufacturers, and we consider the Hobbs plant to be an unlikely candidate as a Flaccus jar manufacturer.

As noted above, the jars made to the Schies patent were probably made by the Pennsylvania Glass Co. Many of the generic or unembossed bottles used by Flaccus Bros. could have been made by virtually any nearby Pennsylvania, West Virginia, or Ohio glass house that made colorless jars and/or wide-mouth bottles. Many – perhaps most – of the embossed bottles,

however, were probably made by the Frank Glass Co. between 1896 and 1904 – possibly by the Wellsburg Glass Mfg. Co. after 1904. Flaccus Bros. may have purchased a few embossed wide-mouth bottles or jars from the Standard Glass Works or S. George Co. – also at Wellsburg – prior to 1896. It is likely, however, that Flaccus did not use embossed jars or wide-mouth bottles before 1896.

### **Colored and Colorless Elaborately Embossed Mustard Jar Manufacturers**

Roller (1983:125) noted that the maker of the elaborately embossed mustard jars was uncertain “but may have been Wellsburg Glass Co., Wellsburg, W.Va., c. 1906-1911, of which E.C. Flaccus was president.” Edward C. Flaccus purchased the Wellsburg Glass Co. at Wellsburg, West Virginia, in 1904, turned it into a corporation, and became president. Welker and Welker (1985:54) noted that “this glasshouse [i.e., Wellsburg Glass] would almost certainly have furnished food containers for E.C. Flaccus Co. . . . Wellsburg had previously made packers’ ware and could have been an earlier source for containers for the Flaccus interests.”

#### **Colored Elaborately Embossed Mustard Jars with Glass Insert Lids**

Beginning with these hints from Roller and the Welkers, several factors led us to look in the direction of Wellsburg for the maker of the elaborately embossed colored mustard jars that were sealed with glass inserts held in place by metal screw bands. While none of these are absolute in themselves, the composite information makes the identification virtually positive – see Table 1.

All of these factors decidedly point toward the Frank Glass Co., possibly its successor, the Wellsburg Glass Mfg. Co., as the manufacturer of embossed glass jars and wide-mouth bottles for the Flaccus Bros.

#### **Colored Elaborately Embossed Mustard Jars with Glenny Metal Caps**

The Glenny metal cap was probably made during the 1900-ca. 1903 period and is only known to collectors on a single example of the elaborately embossed Flaccus mustard jars. Apparently, there was some problem with the cap or, possibly, with public acceptance. The

Glenny cap was obviously only used for a very short period and was very likely also made for the Frank Glass Co. by the William Glenny Glass Co.

**Table 1 – Factors Connected with the Manufacturer of Elaborately Embossed Jars**

Factors
George A. Flaccus probably adopted the elaborate steers head jars about the time Edward C. Flaccus left the Flaccus Bros. in 1897. The jars were advertised by 1898.
Edward Flaccus adopted similar jars with a stag head – possibly 1898 or 1899.
Jars from both firms were made in the same colors – colorless (that could solarize to an amethyst hue), ambers (from light amber to honey amber), white milk glass, and emerald green. The shades for each firm were virtually identical, indicating that the same glass house made jars for both packing firms.
The Frank Glass Co. opened at Wellsburg, West Virginia, in 1896. The plant made jars using hand methods until the firm ceased business in 1904.
Although Edward Flaccus was not an original incorporator of the Frank Glass Co. at Wellsburg, he was the president of the firm by April 1899, possibly as early as 1897. This may have been connected with his withdrawal from Flaccus Bros.
Flaccus Bros. preferred the Wheeling location because they could buy glass locally to avoid shipping charges.
Per available documentation, none of the glass houses in Wheeling – the Flaccus Bros. location – regularly produced the types of containers that George Flaccus needed.
Wellsburg was only 16 miles north of Wheeling, easily available via railroad or – in an emergency – the Ohio River. Not only was Wellsburg close, it was within West Virginia – which may have been a factor, depending on the state loyalty of George Flaccus.
Two Wellsburg factories made wide-mouth glass containers during the 1897-1905 period: the Frank Glass Co. and the S. George Co. (also called the Standard Glass Co.), a firm that made fruit jars and lamp globes from 1892 to 1904. The connections with Edward Flaccus favor the Frank Glass Co. and later Wellsburg Glass Mfg. Co. as Flaccus suppliers. The Frank Glass Co. of Wellsburg made “white” (opal or milk-glass) liners by 1897, probably from the opening of the factory a year earlier.

### **Colored Elaborately Embossed Mustard Jars with Glass Caps**

As noted above, these were likely made to the Kunkel and Robinson patent, probably beginning in 1902. None of the lids were embossed with a patent number, so they were almost certainly made prior to the receipt of the patent and possibly before the application. Since the two men lived respectively in Lazearville and Wellsburg, and the jars and caps were made in the same colors as the insert-and-band jars, it is almost certain that the Frank Glass Co. continued to make these jars (see Figure 39). The closing of the firm in 1904 puts a cap on the date range: ca. 1902-1904.

### **Colorless Elaborately Embossed Mustard Jars with Glass Caps**

Although these were only briefly addressed above, they deserve mention here. With the demise of the Frank Glass Co., George Flaccus almost certainly began seeking a firm that could make the elaborately embossed mustard jars with glass caps. He did have to look far. William B. Fenn had been working on a similar design at nearby Washington, Pennsylvania. Although Flaccus almost certainly adopted the Fenn closure by 1903 or 1904, this story is mostly set during the third phase of the family holdings and will be told in Part II of this series.

## **Manufacturer Histories**

### **Glass Houses at Wellsburg**

The Frank Glass Co. eventually became the Wellsburg Glass Mfg. Co. We consider this the most likely candidate for Steers Head jars produced prior to 1904, when Edward Flaccus purchased Wellsburg Glass. The October 13, 1897, issue of *China, Glass & Lamps* noted that

liners are now being turned out in immense quantities at the Frank Glass Works, which for a long time has been working almost entirely on fruit jars and packers' goods, such as mustards, etc., and commencing this week the output consists principally of liners on which they have greatly increased their force (Roller 1996a).

The reference to “mustards, etc.” and the emphasis on liners suggests a probable Flaccus Bros. connection. The next year, on May 23, *Commoner & Glassworker* noted that Frank “bought the old Dalzell & Gilmore glass plant. . . . Old furnaces being torn down and replaced with tanks. One 10-pot furnace left, being used for flint glass, the tanks to be used for opal glass.” On May 27, 1899, the same journal added that Frank was “making the McCarty fruit jar on royalty. . . . They are running 3 small tanks at present on a line of opal specialties.” There is no question that the Frank operation was a strong producer of opal or milk-glass (Roller 1996a).

The May 24, 1902, issue of the *National Glass Budget* listed the Frank Glass Co. as making its products in “flint, opal and colors” (Roller 1996a). All of this, plus the history below, shows that the Frank Glass Co. was in an excellent position to have made fruit and product jars of various colors, with lids of those same colors, including opal or milk glass. No other West Virginia firm during the ca. 1896-1904 period was in as good a position to manufacture the Steers Head jars.

#### **Frank Glass Co., Wellsburg (Lazearville) , West Virginia (1896-1903)**

Located in Wellsburg (Lazearville), West Virginia, the Frank Glass Co. made fruit jars, vases, opal ware, and fruit jar caps (Six 1993:11).<sup>8</sup> The company incorporated on July 20, 1896, with a capital of \$1,350. The original subscribers were James A. Frank, C.W. and Annie Stoetzer, and George W. and Walter G Russell. The new firm initially occupied a small building adjacent to the railroad tracks, ca. 205 feet south of the former Dalzell Bros. & Gilmore factory. Frank and his associates made Mason jars and liners at one small tank. The firm soon built a larger tank and added packers’ ware to its product list (Roller 1996a).

By December 1897, business was so good that the firm needed to expand again. By May of the following year, the Frank Glass Co. acquired the nearby former Dalzell Bros. & Gilmore glass factory. Dazell Bros. & Gilmore began its glass manufacture at the Brilliant Glass Works, Brilliant, Ohio, about November 1883 and probably moved into their new plant sometime during 1884. In 1888, the group closed its Wellsburg factory for a move to Findlay, Ohio (Caniff

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<sup>8</sup> Lazearville is currently the northern part of Wellsburg; they were closely bordering during the period when the Frank and Wellsburg Glass firms operated. Wellsburg is 16 miles north of Wheeling.

1997:39-40; Roller 1996a; 1998b). The original Frank Glass Co. plant, on the west side of Yankee St., near the southwest corner of Yankee and 22nd Street, was called the “old plant.” The former Dalzell Bros. & Gilmore factory – close by on the west side Yankee St., just south of 23<sup>rd</sup> St. – was known as the “new plant.”

As noted above, the Frank Glass Co. began making repairs on the old Dalzell Bros. & Gilmore plant in May 1898. Leaving a single 10-pot furnace, the new firm tore out the other furnaces to replace them with continuous tanks. The plant began making fruit jars, novelties, and some tableware. The sale, however, was not without problems. In September 1898, Edward D. Gilmore brought suit against his former partners, the Dalzell brothers, to force them to sell the “idle” glass factory property that was already occupied by the Frank Glass Co. Gilmore apparently won. On November 26, 1898, Special Commissioner J.F. Cree actually sold the Dalzell property to the Frank Glass Co. for \$3,612 (Roller 1998b).

The factory used eight pots to make its products in 1897 and 1898. Later in 1898, the list was amended to two tanks (*National Glass Budget* 1897:7; 1898a:7; 1898b3). By April 1899, E.C. Flaccus was president of the firm, with George W. Russel as secretary and treasurer. James A. Frank was the plant manager. It may be important to note that Flaccus was not one of the original incorporators, but he may have bought in as early as 1897. By May, Frank was making the McCarty Vacuum Fruit Jar “on royalty.” The roof of the plant blew off in early 1902, and the same windstorm did considerable other damage to the plant. After the damage, production was reduced to five “pots” (these were probably rings in the continuous tank) (Roller 1996a; 1998b).

On September 4, 1903, the stockholders voted to dissolve the corporation, citing insolvency, and Samuel George, Jr., was appointed receiver. A corporation, apparently organized by George, purchased the firm in December. S. George was president, with at least five other subscribers. The new company planned to continue making fruit jars. The company was apparently out of business by 1904 (Roller 1998). See the section below on S. George for more information. In a somewhat bizarre turn of events, the property went into contention, and James A. Frank purchased it on June 6, 1904 (Caniff 1996:15; 1997:39-40; Roller 1998).

### **Wellsburg Glass Mfg. Co., Wellsburg (Lazearville), West Virginia (1904-1910)**

On June 6, 1904, James Frank paid \$5,500 for the former Frank Glass Co., then immediately sold the property to Edward C. Flaccus. On June 11, 1904, E.C. Flaccus, F.C. Roderus, James Frank, T.S. Chapman, and F.A. Chapman incorporated as the Wellsburg Glass Mfg. Co. with a \$25,000 capital.<sup>9</sup> The plant intended to manufacture packers' bottles and jars, fruit jars, lantern globes, and novelties in colorless and opal (white milkglass) glass. E.C. Flaccus was president, with J.S. Liggett as vice president, T.S. Chapman as secretary/treasurer, and James Frank as factory manager. The firm rebuilt much of the plant and probably began production by June (Caniff 1996:15; 1997:39-40; 2014:17; Roller 1998).

The factory operated three continuous tanks with 12 rings in 1905. By 1907, one of the tanks had become a day tank – i.e., filled with only enough glass for the day's production; it allowed the changing of glass color on a daily basis. Liggett had become president, with F.A. Chapman as secretary and treasurer. Frank continued as plant manager (Roller 1998).

On May 14, 1907, the arrangement fell apart when a fire caused by a burst tank destroyed the factory. Different sources noted the fire as causing either \$40,000 or \$60,000 in damages (*Coffeyville Daily Journal* 5/2/1907; *Record-Argus* 5/14/1907). In reporting the fire, the *National Glass Budget* for May 18 noted: "As a result [of the fire], a Wheeling packing & preserving concern will have to secure their packages elsewhere." Edward's relationship with the company, along with the glass house products list, suggests that the Wellsburg Glass Mfg. Co. was making the jars (almost certainly *not* the elaborately embossed ones) for the E.C. Flaccus Co. from 1904 until the fire of 1907 (Roller 1998).

By early October, the firm had rebuilt and was running again. This time, the plant operated two continuous tanks with 15 rings and two day tanks. However, all was not well. On April 24, 1909, F.A. Chapman, Christie A. Chapman and J.S. Liggett petitioned for a receiver for the company. E.C. Flaccus was again listed as president, when the receiver sold the plant at public auction on February 19, 1910, to W.T. Emblem of Wheeling – but Emblem died the next

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<sup>9</sup> Different sources called the firm the Wellsburg Glass Co. and the Wellsburg Glass Mfg. Co. The chances of a source adding "Mfg." seems slim, but dropping the term was common in other glass house histories. We have elected to use "Mfg." for consistency.

day. Emblem's mother, Elizabeth, deeded the property to "Samuel A. Warden et al." The factory became the Erskine Bros. Glass Co. in 1916, but the plant made electrical glass and ceased to be of concern in our context (Roller 1998).

### **The Glass Houses of Samuel George**

Although less likely as manufacturers of the Flaccus Bros. containers, the plants operated by Samuel George cannot be entirely eliminated as a possibility.

#### **Standard Glass Works, Wellsburg, West Virginia (1888-1892)**

On February 13, 1888, the *Commoner & Glassworker* noted that "the new Standard works at Wellsburg made a large shipment of fruit jars and fancy colored globes last week" (quoted in Roller 1996b). By at least February 1891, the plant operated two furnaces and still made lantern globes and fruit jars, although the larger, ten-pot furnace made the jars (Roller 1996b). The other furnace produced colored fancy wares, including shades and lamp globes, water sets, table sets, and oil bottles. Although Samuel George initially owned the company outright, he and four partners incorporated the firm on January 31, 1889.

According to Caniff (2014:17), the George Glass Co. was advertising "DOME jars for sale" by January 14, 1891. "Some of these jars had 'Perfection' ghosted beneath the DOME embossing." Standard had advertised the Perfection Jar at least as early as August 25, 1888. On March 29, 1887, Lewis P.R. LeCompte of Portland, Oregon, received Patent No. 360,165 for a fruit jar. LeCompte had filed for the patent on March 29, 1887, although the product was advertised by at least March 5 of that year. The first jars may have been made by the Standard Glass Works of Wellsburg, West Virginia. Standard certainly made the jars by February 28, 1889 (Caniff 2014:17). The last known ad for the company was on May 4, 1892 (Caniff 1997:34).

#### **Samuel George Co., Wellsburg, West Virginia (1892-1904)**

The Samuel George Co. incorporated in 1892 and acquired the Standard Glass Works. The Samuel George Co., formed as early as 1873, had manufactured paper bags and flour sacks

prior to the acquisition of the glass works and continued to make paper products. In 1898, George announced that he would move glass production from “the river bank” to the former plant of the West Virginia Glass Co. (a window glass facility) on higher ground, away from any chance of flooding. George rebuilt the window glass plant, and opened the new facility in March 1899. The new operation devoted its entire production to lantern globes (Roller 1996b).

George purchased the Scott & Hellstern plant at Wellsburg in September 1902, but he died the following year on August 6, at the age of 76. Samuel George, Jr., took control of the company upon his father’s death and operated the plant until it burned on April 16, 1904. There is no record that the factory was ever rebuilt or that the younger George ever operated the former Scott & Hellstern plant (Roller 1996b).

### **Discussion and Conclusions**

The history of Flaccus Bros. – the first phase of the Flaccus family packing firms – is reasonably complete and provides a good background to address the variation, styles, and timing of its glass containers. We will address the history of the other family firms in Part II. The above study allows us to make a rough chronology of the Flaccus Bros. containers – see Table 2.

**Table 2 – Chronology of Glass Containers – Flaccus Bros. 1889-1905**

Dates	Container Types	Probable Manufacturers
1879-1920*	non-embossed paper-label jars	unknown
1880s-1905	embossed jars and wide-mouth bottles	unknown; Frank Glass Co.
1897-1900	Steers Head elaborately embossed, color, mouth blown – glass insert/metal band	Frank Glass Co.
1900	Steers Head elaborately embossed, colored, mouth blown – metal screw cap	Frank Glass Co.
1902-1903	Steers Head elaborately embossed, colored, mouth blown – glass screw cap	Frank Glass Co.
1903-1908*	Steers Head elaborately embossed, colorless, mouth blown – glass screw cap	Sterling Glass Co.; Perfection Glass Co.; Hazel-Atlas Glass Co.

\* These dates include Flaccus & Elliott and/or E.C. Flaccus firms.

As discussed above, the Frank Glass Co. was in a perfect geographical position to supply wide-mouth containers to the Flaccus Bros. Additional considerations – including the involvement of Edward Flaccus in the factory and the Kunkel and Robinson patent – make the identification more certain. The final argument in favor of the Frank Glass Co. is that we have been unable to find any other suitable West Virginia glass house. It is highly likely that the Frank Glass Co. made most of the wide-mouth containers used by the Flaccus Bros. between 1896 and 1904.

Small-mouth bottles – used primarily, possibly entirely, for catsup – were probably made in Pittsburgh. Even though Pittsburgh was farther away, there were several glass houses that made catsup bottles, and buying large quantities would have greatly reduced shipping charges. Because the bottles were either generic or lacking manufacturer’s marks, it is impossible to identify the producer.

Some of the colorless jars and wide-mouth bottles appear to have been ordered from more distant suppliers, although Flaccus Bros. seems to have purchased the majority of its glass goods fairly locally. Some of the more generic jars and bottles with paper labels – especially catsup bottles – may have been reused. This may especially be true during the latter period of the firm, when Edward Flaccus controlled the company (see Part II). A final exception to the generalities discussed here is that some generic wide-mouth containers could have been made at the Hazel-Atlas Glass Co. in nearby Washington, Pennsylvania. Hazel-Atlas was a major producer of packer jars and bottles.

One final issue is the sequencing of the elaborately embossed Flaccus jars and their closures. In the collecting world, the elaborately embossed insert-and-metal screw band jars are less prevalent than the glass screw caps. This observation suggests one of two models. First, the insert-and-metal screw band jars were made for a shorter period and the ground lip glass screw cap models for a longer period. Second, these jars were only offered as periodic special promotions. The term “FRUIT JAR” embossed on a mustard container implies a promotion to sell the jars with an intent to reuse them as preservers. This would likely have only occurred sporadically.

Assuming that George Flaccus adopted the jars about the time Edward Flaccus left Flaccus Bros., these jars were probably sold sporadically between 1897 and 1900 – a period when battleship containers and other mustard jars were also offered. Edward Flaccus adopted a very similar jar, probably in 1898 or 1899 (see Part II of this series), and that may have spurred George to switch to the Glenny caps, probably ca. 1900. About 1902 or 1903, George may have discovered the Kunkel & Robinson patent and decided that the glass cap would make an even better promotional item – offering this option until 1905 and beyond (see Part II).

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