

The Hamilton Family Glass Companies

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Although there is some uncertainty about the earliest days of the factory, the Hamilton brothers (and one cousin) founded W.H. Hamilton & Co. at Pittsburgh in 1863. Although the reasons were never made public, James T. Hamilton and his brother, Albert, left the firm to form J.T.&A. Hamilton in 1879 (adding “Co.” to the name in 1916). Both glass houses made a general variety of flint bottles, including early milk bottles. The older firm (by that time W.H. Hamilton Co. – no ampersand) sold to the Imperial Glass Co. in 1909, but the J.T.&A. Hamilton Co. remained in business until 1943 – selling that year to the Knox Glass Bottle Co.

Genealogy of the Hamiltons

According to MJF (a great-granddaughter of James Hamilton, possibly Martha Ferguson), James Hamilton had seven children, including Samuel and James. Unfortunately, she did not include dates or middle initials.¹ It is very likely that James was the James W. Hamilton who was a partner in the firm of Lorenz & Hamilton (probably with Frederick Lorenz, Sr.).

Census documents define the second generation. Samuel Hamilton had five sons: William H. (b. May 1831), John (b. ca. 1833), James (b. ca. 1837), Joseph (b. ca. 1840), and Alexander (b. ca. 1842) as well as four daughters (Hester, Mary, Eliza, and Frances). By 1860, William (then listed as 30) was still a student. All of the brothers, except John, devoted their careers to W.H. Hamilton & Co. and the later W.H. Hamilton Co. John became a machinist by 1860 and may have even produced molds and tools for his brothers in the glass business.

The 1850 census listed Ruth Hamilton (enumerated as Luce in 1860) as a widow with two sons, James (listed as James T. in later censuses; b. ca. 1839) and Albert (b. ca. 1844) – along with a daughter named Charlotte. Ruth was almost certainly the widow of James W. Hamilton – of Hamilton & Lorenz. The two brothers began their careers in the glass business with W.H. Hamilton & Co. and split from the firm to form J.T.&A. Hamilton in 1879.

¹ This handwritten genealogy is in possession of the Hamilton descendants.

Although the W.H. Hamilton Co. did not survive long enough as a company to involve the next generation, the J.T.&A. Hamilton Co. did. Albert had three sons – James W., Frank A, and Albert G. – and one daughter, Grace E. Hamilton. All three sons worked for the firm and eventually became officers. The fourth generation was only represented by James Telford Hamilton – obviously named for his grand-uncle. We have not discovered which of the third generation was his father.

Histories

Lorenz & Hamilton, Elizabeth, Pennsylvania (1845-ca. 1848)

Hawkins (2009:322) noted that Lorenz & Hamilton operated at Elizabeth (now a Pittsburgh suburb) “for a time after 1841 but prior to 1848.” Christian Ihmsen & Co. actually owned the factory. Robert Smith took over the operation by 1848. Smith was the father-in-law of James W. Hamilton. The last sentence disagrees with the MJF genealogy (see above), that had James Hamilton married to Nancy Dinsmore. This is nonetheless almost certainly the same James Hamilton whose two sons eventually founded J.T.& A. Hamilton (see below).

The *Pennsylvania Daily Post* of August 30, 1845, announced that

LORENZ & HAMILTON, would inform their friends and the public generally, that they have their Glass Works now in successful operation, and are prepared to furnish Window Glass of all sizes, and of a quality which they will warrant equal, if not superior to any manufactured in the Western country.

We have found no other information about this glass house.

W.H. Hamilton & Co., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (1863-1898)

James M. Hamilton (son of James Hamilton and younger brother to William W. Hamilton) started an unnamed glass factory in 1863. An unnamed glass man recalled in 1919 that “the plant had one furnace. Mr. Hamilton would make bottles in the morning and deliver them to his customers in the afternoon. He kept this up for some time until the capacity of the

works was enlarged and newer systems put into effect” (*Glass Worker* 1919c:12). Thurston’s 1876 history (cited in Roller 1997a) noted the beginning of W.H. Hamilton & Co. in 1863. James – then only 21 years old – was listed in the 1860 census as a “Glass (illeg.) Manufacturer,” so the firm may have begun even earlier. James was not listed as owning property that year, but his father had \$3,000 worth of real estate and \$1,000 in personal property and may have financed his son. It would not have been unreasonable for a young man of that period to run such a business – especially with his father’s backing.

By 1866, the firm was called W.H. Hamilton & Co. A May 22, 1867, billhead listed the principals of the firm as William H. Hamilton, James Telford Hamilton (William’s cousin), and Joseph S. Hamilton (William’s brother) and placed the factory at the corner of Carson and Butler Streets, making flint glass vials and bottles. The office was apparently at 27 (or 26) Wood St. (Roller 1997a). Since William was the eldest brother, and he was listed in the 1960 census as being still in school (almost certainly college) at the age of 30, it is likely that he brought his education into the firm upon graduation and took over the business from brother James.

Another important factor may have been involved. Coming from a widowed mother with no money or property listed in 1850 or 1860, James T. Hamilton was enumerated in 1870 as a glass manufacturer with \$10,000 in real estate and \$4,000 in personal property – at the age of 27. Either the factory was wildly prosperous by then (for his share to have brought about so much wealth), or James had come into money from some other source and invested in cousin William’s firm. Since there is no evidence for any other funding source, James may have furnished most of the capital to match William’s education. James M. Hamilton furnished the expertise in glass making.

By 1871, the complex consisted of two factories, each operating a single furnace, the original one at 20th and Railroad and another one across the railroad tracks at 21st St. The plant used a total of 18 pots to make flint bottles by 1876. By 1878, the factories had two ten-pot furnaces and one eight-pot furnace, only making prescription bottles. James T. Hamilton separated from the company on April 1, 1880, to form J.T.&A. Hamilton, leaving cousins W.H. and Joseph behind with the original factories (*Crockery and Glass Journal* 1876:15; 1878:26; Hawkins 2009:249). In 1881, the W.H. Hamilton plant made “green” prescription bottles at three furnaces with 30 pots (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania 1882:59).

When the Allegheny River flooded in 1884, it damaged the factory, and the Hamiltons² could only operate one of their three 10-pot furnaces for some time thereafter. W.H. Hamilton died on the morning of November 5, 1884, and the remaining relatives (Joseph S. Hamilton, James M. Hamilton, and Alexander M. Hamilton) ran the business (Hawkins 2009:250).

In January 1886, the firm announced the introduction of two fruit jars – the Hamilton jar and the Guild jar, the latter made to Henry M. Guild’s 1886 patent (see Containers and Marks section below). The plant branched out into the manufacture of milk bottles in October 1889, advertising a milk bottle with a lightning closure. In the early morning of June 20, 1895, a fire broke out in the flint prescription factory on 20th Street, destroying the plant and the adjacent warehouse. Fortunately, insurance covered everything. The Hamiltons elected not to rebuild and sold the tract of land to the Consolidated Traction Co. They leased the 28th St. green bottle factory of William McCully & Co. in November (Roller 1997b). See the William McCully section for more information on that company.

In 1897, the W.H. Hamilton Co. operated “one 10-pot furnace at their flint bottle works” at “Pittsburg” (*National Glass Budget* 1897b:4). Although we have not discovered the disposition of the remaining Pittsburgh plant, the firm moved entirely to Charleroi at some point in 1897. The 1897 factory list shows that the family changed the factory name prior to the closing of the Pittsburgh plant (Hawkins 2009:250).

W. H. Hamilton Co., Charleroi, Pennsylvania (1897-1909)

In 1897, the W.H. Hamilton Co. opened a plant at Charleroi, Pennsylvania, closing the Pittsburgh operation. The plant was in full production by early 1898, printing its new catalog on February 1. Joseph S. Hamilton was president of the corporation, with Alexander M. Hamilton as secretary, and James M. Hamilton as general manager (Hawkins 2009:250). Located at the corner of Railroad and 10th St., Charleroi, Pennsylvania, W.H. Hamilton & Co. made flint glass vials and bottles (Carroll 1999).³ The plant had two furnaces with 24 pots and a 12-ton day tank

² The firm was sometimes called Hamilton & Brother (Hawkins 2009:249).

³ Carrol (1999) also stated that the Charleroi plant began in February 1898, although other sources do not support that date.

in 1898, but the capacity had doubled to four tanks with 50 pots by 1900 (Roller 1998). The number of pots remained at 50 in 1900 but had climbed to 82 by 1902 (*National Glass Budget* 1900:11; 1902:11)

In 1904, the plant made “prescription, liquor and packers’ ware, milk jars” at two furnaces with 50 pots and one day tank. The officers remained the same (*American Glass Review* 1934:167). The factory used a 20-ton continuous tank beginning in 1905 (Toulouse 1971:541) and made “Prescription & Druggists” ware along with milk bottles from 1905 through 1909 (Thomas Publishing Co. 1905:104, 578; 1909:202, 1101). The Imperial Glass Co. purchased the factory in 1909 and sold the plant to the McBeth-Evans Glass Co., who took over the plant on September 1, 1919 (*American Glass Review* 1934:167; *National Glass Budget* 1919c:12).⁴

Containers and Marks

It is possible that the earlier W.H. Hamilton & Co. did not use any type of mark. The first solid evidence we have found for marks is after the move to Charleroi in 1897. Since the plant did not begin production until early 1898, all marks for this company can probably be dated 1898-1918, a tidy 20-year span. Despite this speculation, we have retained the 1880-1918 range for one (possibly two) of the marks below that may have been used by the earlier company.

While still in Pittsburgh, the plant advertised milk bottles with an illustration of a bottle with a lightning closure on October 3, 1889. The 1901 Pittsburgh city directory included an ad for milk bottles, by that time “furnished with Tin Tops or for Paper Caps” (Roller 1997a).

Although the firm listed itself as a flint glass house, a billhead, dated September 12, 1900, invoiced 34 crates of amber champagne beer bottles to the Pittsburgh Brewing Co. (Hawkins 2009:253). It is likely that all or most of the beer and soda bottles made by the firm were produced in amber or aqua glass.

⁴ Although the several Imperial Glass Companies are dealt with in the Other I section, both of these Pittsburgh firms made tableware and are beyond the scope of this work.

According to Griffenhagen and Bogard (1999:100, 117, 119), W.H. Hamilton introduced the Pittsburgh Oval in 1893, the Charleroi Oval in 1897, and the Excelsior Oval in 1901. The 1898 catalog listed and illustrated the Charleroi Oval (Figure 1), and the plant advertised the Charleroi Oval in the 1901 Pittsburgh city directory (Roller 1997a). As far as we can tell, there is no easy way to recognize the Charleroi Oval (or either of the other two prescription ovals); these appear to have been marked with the “H” logo discussed below – just like other W.H. Hamilton bottles.

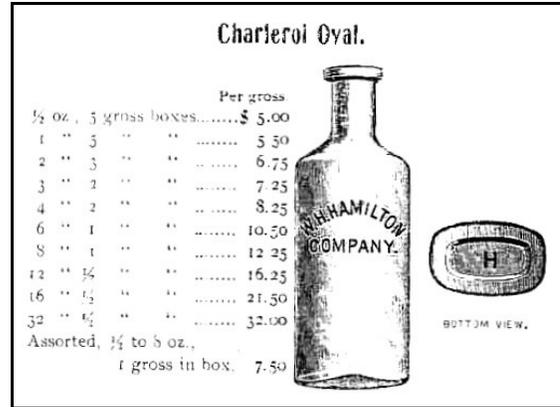


Figure 1 – Charleroi Oval

H (ca. 1898-1909)

A catalog from the W.H. Hamilton Co., dated February 1, 1898, noted that “bottles of our manufacture are all stamped with the letter ‘H’ on the bottom; none genuine without it” (W.H. Hamilton Co. 1898:3). It is possible (probable?) that the mark was not used prior to the move to Charleroi in 1897. Since the plant did not begin production until early 1898, the mark could be dated ca. 1898-1918. Hawkins (2009:254) stated that the mark was likely exclusive to W.H. Hamilton

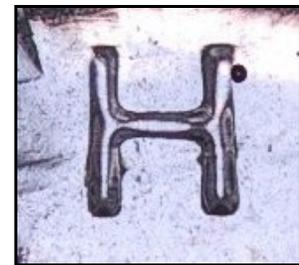


Figure 2 – Hamilton H (Jay Hawkins)

Co. and *not* used by J.T.&A.



Figure 3 – Hamilton H

Hamilton. We have seen an “H” mark with no accompanying numbers on prescription bottle bases, but we have not found bottles with those marks in Western contexts – which supports the idea that they were produced by the W.H. Hamilton Co. (Figures 2 & 3). Some of these are probably the Charleroi Ovals. Note that there were numerous “H” basemarks *with* accompanying numbers. These are dealt with in Great Holt Myth section as well as Discussion and Conclusions below.

H in a Star

Griffenhagen and Bogard (1999:124) listed the “H (in star)” logo as used by W.H. Hamilton & Co. From 1863 to 1884. Unfortunately, the authors did not discuss *why* they chose this identification, and no other source that we have found listed the mark. Toulouse (1971:235) dated the mark ca. 1880 and suggested that the maker could be either W.H. Hamilton or J.T. & A. Hamilton. Griffenhagen & Bogard frequently used the Toulouse identifications. In this case, he was wrong; the logo was N in a broken star. See the Other H section for an explanation.

HAMILTON (1886-ca. 1887)

On January 28, 1886, *Pottery & Glassware Reporter* announced that W.H. Hamilton was

getting up a new fruit jar . . . made of flint glass . . . altogether of glass, both the jar and cap. The cap is secured to the jar by means of a steel clamp . . . They will make two grades of these jars, one with the improvement noted and the other without, the former to be known as the “Hamilton” jar and the other as the “Guild” jar, the latter named after Mr. H.M. Guild, of Woodbury, N.J., under letters patent to whom the jar is manufactured . . . They will also make a jelly jar under the same patent—1/2 pint—and a milk jar. The various parts of the jars are interchangeable, that is the clamps and rubbers of the fruit jars fitting the jelly and milk jars and vice versa (quoted in Roller 1997a).

Toulouse (1969:141) listed two jars embossed “HAMILTON” on the front. One was a mouth-blown “very primitive” grooved-ring, wax-sealer fruit jar, with a finish that had a “flat shoulder which was then tooled downward to form a groove.” He attributed the jar to the Hamilton Glass Works of Ontario (Canada) and dated it ca. 1865-1873. We have not found any other source that supports this identification.

The second jar had a “glass lid and clamp rotating in two helical lugs in the neck.” This one was also mouth blown, and Toulouse suggested the Hamilton Glass Works as the manufacturer of this one, too (ca. 1865-1873). Roller (1983:147) described the jar as being sealed by a “straddle-lip top seal, glass lid (with hole through center) held down by a flat metal

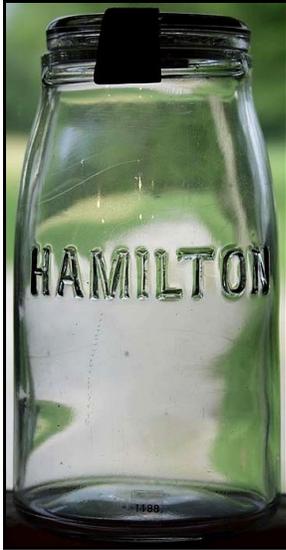


Figure 4 – Hamilton jar (North American Glass)

clamp engaging two inclined ramps on jar neck” (Figure 4). The lid was embossed “PATD FEB 2 1886,” patented by Henry M. Guild (Figure 5). He suggested Woodbury Glass Works as a possible manufacturer, almost certainly based on Guild’s residence in Woodbury, New Jersey and the fact that jars made by Woodbury used the same patent.



Figure 5 – Hamilton jar lid (North American Glass)

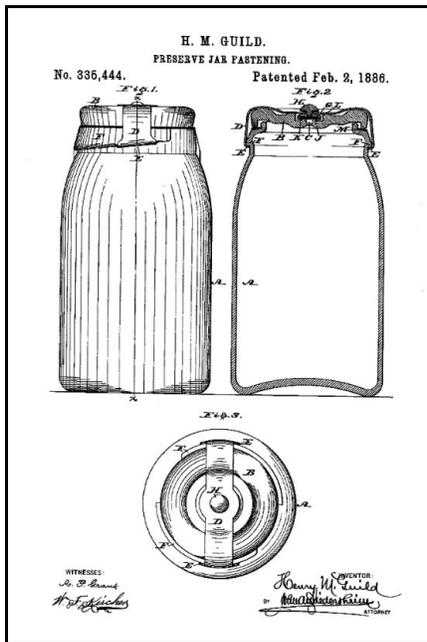


Figure 7 – Guild 1886 patent

Creswick (1987a:78) illustrated the jar and lid, dating it ca. 1886 (Figure 6). She, too, suggested the Woodbury Glass Works as the maker. Roller (2011:229) correctly identified W.H. Hamilton & Co. as the producer of the jar and dated it ca. 1886-1887. Henry M. Guild applied for a patent for a “Preserve Jar” on June 26, 1885, and received Patent No. 335,444 on February 2, 1886 (Figure 7). Apparently, Hamilton made these jars for a short time before Woodbury gained control of the patent.

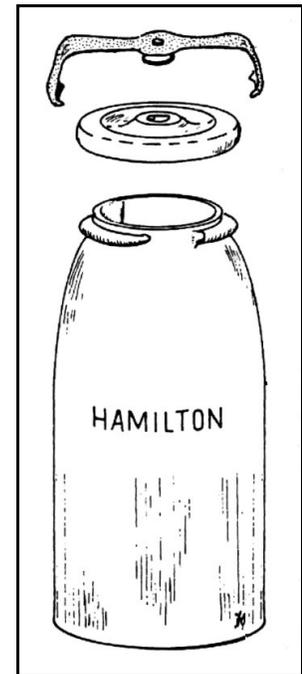


Figure 6 – Hamilton jar (Creswick 1987a:78)

W.H. HAMILTON (1880-1898)

According to Toulouse (1971:540), the W.H. HAMILTON mark was used by the W.H. Hamilton Co., “generally from 1880 onward.” Hawkins (2009:254) included “W.H. HAMILTON” in his list of marks used by the company. Although Hawkins was not specific about which mark, he noted three logos (W.H. HAMILTON, W.H.H., and H) on the bases of

flasks, patent medicine bottles, and “square quart liquor bottles.” We speculate that the W.H. HAMILTON mark may have been used from 1880 to the closing of the Pittsburgh plant in 1898.

W.H.H. (possibly 1880-1898)

According to Toulouse (1971:540), the “WHH” mark was also used by the W.H. Hamilton Co., “generally from 1880 onward.” Hawkins (2009:254) also attributed the “W.H.H.” mark as being used by W.H. Hamilton & Co. or the W.H. Hamilton Co. This may have been used by the Pittsburgh plant. Also, see the W.H. HAMILTON mark above. Neither Toulouse nor Hawkins mentioned the bottle type. Thus far, we have only seen the initials on Hutchinson soda bottles.

William Henry Hutchinson also used the “W.H.H.” logo on “blob-top” and Hutchinson soda bottles. William was the father of Charles Hutchinson, the 1879 inventor of the Hutchinson stopper – extensively used on soda bottles. William founded the soda bottling firm that bore his name in 1850. After William’s death, Charles, and another son, George, took over the business. The firm used both “blob” top and Hutchinson bottles embossed on the sides with “W.H.H.” (Figure 8) (Zang Wood, Personal Communication 1/6/2015). Since many glass houses embossed their names on blob-top bottles during the 1850s-1880s, Toulouse may have mistaken one of these for a bottle made by Hamilton.



Figure 8 – WHH (eBay)

OUR DARLING (1899-1918)

Peterson (1968:41) noted that the W.H. Hamilton Co. used “OUR DARLING” as a glass mark “affixed to the bottle” beginning in 1899. Although she did not name a manufacturer, Ostrander (1984) noted two “turtle-style” nursing bottles labeled “OUR DARLING.” One was embossed “OUR DARLING (arch) / SRCo (a circle) / NURSER (inverted arch). This bottle was sold through the famous Sears Roebuck mail-order catalogs from 1898 to 1915. The second

example was identical, except that the initials in the circle were “GRCo” (Goodyear Rubber Co.). Goodyear almost certainly made the nipples and thereby also carried the bottle during the same period (Figure 9).



Figure 10 – 1895 letterhead (eBay)

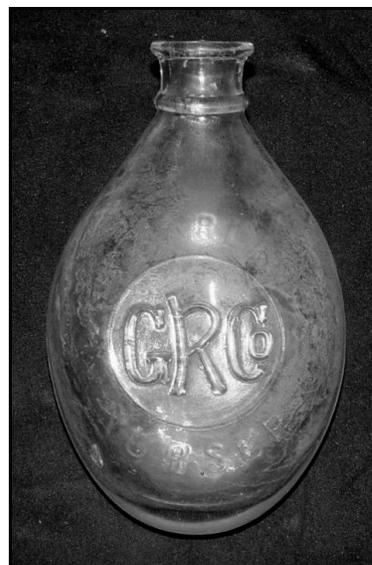


Figure 9 – Our Darling Nurser (eBay)

J.T.&A. Hamilton, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (1880-1916)

James T. Hamilton and his brother, Albert, began construction of a new factory at the corner of 26th and Railroad Streets along the Allegheny Valley Railroad tracks in 1879 and commenced production in March 1880, breaking away from their cousins in W.H. Hamilton & Co. As noted above, James had a total net worth of \$14,000 in 1860, so he had plenty of financial backing to begin a sizeable factory with no outside backing – by 1880 standards. By November, the Hamiltons had already increased the capacity of the plant (*American Druggist and Pharmaceutical Record* 1902:285; Hawkins 2009:243). In 1881, the plant made flint prescription bottles and vials at two furnaces with 23 pots (*Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* 1882:57). By 1883, the plant was operating two furnaces, making flint vials and prescription goods (*Crockery & Glass Journal* 1883:12).

The *Pottery & Glassware Reporter* for February 28, 1884, reported that “J.T.&A. Hamilton are making full lines of beer, wine, mineral, schnapps & other bottles in various shades of amber, and some in clear glass.” An 1884 flood closed the plant temporarily but business soon resumed. The works operated in two separate factories, with 17 pots by 1888. The company expanded, opening a plant at Butler, Pennsylvania, in 1889 and another at Blairsville in

1895 (Hawkins 2008). By at least 1894, the Hamiltons had incorporated with a capital of \$200,000 (von Mechow 2016). An 1895 letterhead confirmed that the plant emphasized flint glass production (Figure 10). The company had “32 pots in operation, 12 in Pittsburg and 20 in Butler, Pa., making a general line of prescription ware” in 1897. In 1898, the number of pots had increased to 32 (*National Glass Budget* 1897a:7; 1897b:9; 1898:7).

Albert Hamilton (by that time president of J.T.&A. Hamilton Co. and the Climax Bottle & Mfg. Co.) accused William C. Turner, former president of Climax, of embezzling \$2,700. Obviously taking offense, Turner murdered Hamilton and William J. Mallard, Jr. (secretary of Climax) on October 17, 1902. Turner then ended his own life with a bullet through his head (*American Druggist and Pharmaceutical Record* 902:285; Dairy Antique 2016; Hawkins 2009:244). A Sewall family letter described the situation: “Turner . . . had just gone into a meeting with two of his former business associates to defend himself against the charge (true, apparently) of embezzlement; he ended up shooting them both dead and blowing his own brains out as well” (Salwen 2005:5). James and Albert’s sons (James W. and Albert G. Hamilton) continued to operate the glass house.

In 1904, James W. Hamilton was the manager, and the plant made prescription and proprietary ware along with milk jars at two furnaces with 24 pots (*American Glass Review* 1934:167) and had similar listings in the Thomas Registers from 1905 to at least 1921 (Thomas Publishing Co. 1905:104; 1921:782). The name changed slightly with a reorganization in 1916

J.T.&A. Hamilton Co., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (1916-1943)

James T. Hamilton died on July 30, 1916. After his death, the survivors incorporated the business as the J.T.&A. Hamilton Co. on December 11 (1916), with a capital of \$190,000 (Roller 1997b; von Mechow 2016). The plant used two continuous tanks with 16 rings along with one furnace and eight pots to make a “general line” of bottles by both semiautomatic machine and hand methods in 1917 (*Journal of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry* 1913:953). James W. Hamilton was the president by this time, with Frank A. Hamilton as vice president and James Graham as secretary.

In 1917, Bristow (1917c:1, 9) noted that the Pittsburgh tank used:

one 2-man “Jersey” machine, which is making a miscellaneous line of bottles; two 1-man Teeple machines, producing milks; one 2-man Teeple machine on gallon and ½-gallon ware; four hand blow shops are producing prescriptions and panels and one Hartford-Fairmount [*sic*] automatic machine is producing pint and quart milks.⁵

The Pittsburgh plant was destroyed by fire on December 14, 1918 (*Glassworker* 1919a:15) – but was apparently rebuilt.⁶ In 1919, the Hamiltons announced that their firm was not part of the combine that formed the new Sterling Glass Co. at Elmira, New York. As such, Hamilton gave up any rights to the use of the Hartford-Fairmont machine (fully automatic). Exclusive rights to the machine were reserved for Sterling (*Glassworker* 1919b:1).⁷ In 1920, Thatcher Glass Mfg. Co. bought the milk bottle segment of the J.T.&A. Hamilton Glass Co. along with four other competing firms (*Wall Street Journal* 1920). Albert G. Hamilton – son of the murdered Albert – became secretary in 1920, and Graham became vice president in 1924 (Hawkins 2009:245; Toulouse 1971:290).

By 1927, the Pittsburgh plant made “flint, prescriptions, vials, beers, minerals, patent, proprietary, liquors, flasks and milk jars” by machine at one continuous tank with 10 rings. The plant added a second continuous tank with 13 rings in 1932 but decreased to eight rings the following year. The number of rings returned to 10 in 1934; James W. Hamilton was president, with Albert G. Hamilton as treasurer. By 1942, production was up to 12 rings, and the product list included “flint packers and preservers, pharmaceutical, patent, proprietary, liquors, flasks and milk jars” (*American Glass Review* 1927:133; 1932:73; 1934:93; 1942:101; Roller 1997b).

In late May 1942, workers walked out on strike at the Pittsburgh plant, although labor and management settled the dispute early the next month. Albert G. Hamilton moved into the vice president position that year, and James Telford Hamilton (the fourth generation to be involved!)

⁵ At the time of this writing, we have not researched any of these machines. As noted in the paragraph above, they were still semiautomatics by this period.

⁶ This may have been confused with the 1918 fire in Butler.

⁷ Although this combine appears to have been short lived, there were at least two other Sterling Glass Companies. See the section on Sterling for more information.

became vice president and general manager in 1943. In February 1943, Knox Glass Associates purchased the plant, retaining J.T. Hamilton as manager. Knox renamed the plant the Seaboard Glass Bottle Co. and closed the factory in 1947 (Hawkins 2009:246; Toulouse 1971:291, 296, 455; von Mechow 2016). See the section on Knox Glass for more information on Seaboard.

J.T.&A. Hamilton, Butler, Pennsylvania (1889-1918)

The Hamiltons purchased the plant of the Butler Glass Co., Ltd., at Butler, Pennsylvania, in May or June of 1889 and installed Frank A. Hamilton as manager (see the file on the Butler Glass Co. for more information on that firm). The factory was located on the south side of Kittanning St., near Monroe St., along the Pennsylvania Railroad tracks and had two furnaces, one with 12 pots, the other with eight, primarily used for the manufacture of flint prescription ware. By November, Hamilton had refurbished the plant, including the installation of a continuous tank in place of the furnaces. Fire partially destroyed the factory on October 16, 1893, but the firm quickly rebuilt (Hawkins 2009:244; Roller 1997b).

In 1917, Bristow (1917:1, 9) noted both that the Butler plant had “14 hand blow shops, three 2-man “Jersey”, two 1-man “Jersey” and one 1-man Teeple machines . . . being worked on two shifts and a general line of bottles is being made.” The Butler plant was destroyed by fire in 1918, putting 250 men out of work (Goldinger & Fetters [1999]:153).

J.T.&A. Hamilton, Blairsville, Pennsylvania (1895-1902)

The firm purchased the Asa Neville factory at Blairsville, Pennsylvania, near the Conemaugh River in 1895. The plant had one continuous-tank with 20 pots. A fire destroyed the factory on March 1, 1902 (Hawkins 2009:244).

Containers and Marks

Pottery & Glassware Reporter, on July 15, 1886, noted that Hamilton planned to make

a line of flint fruit jars . . . of the ordinary style in appearance. The lid is dome shaped, with the extreme top roughened. A piece of common fine wire is around

the neck of the jar, securing a bail of thicker wire which goes over the top of the lid Then the jar is filled . . . the lid is put on . . . the bail is pulled up over the top and the job is done (quoted in Roller 1997b).

We have not discovered an example. This was obviously in reaction to the 1886 jars of W.H. Hamilton & Co. If any jars were actually made, they were probably generic rather than bearing a Hamilton mark.

J.T.&A.H. (ca. 1884-ca. 1920)

Toulouse (1971:290) placed the use of the “J.T.&AH” mark ca. 1884 to 1920. Hawkins (2009:247) also described this mark and provided a photo of it (Figure 11). He added that this mark and the Triangle-H logo were found on “several types of whiskey flasks,



Figure 11 – JT&AH (Jay Hawkins)



Figure 12 – JT&AH (eBay)

beer, medicine, and milk bottles, and other common-use bottles” – although he did not differentiate which marks were used on what bottles (Figure 12). Giarde (1980:58) – only discussing milk bottles – followed the Toulouse date, but Schadlich ([ca. 1990]), claimed that the mark was used by Hamilton on milk bottles from 1900-1920. Since some of the other marks in the two Hamilton companies only date from the 1898-1900 period, it is possible that Schadlich was correct about a beginning date of ca. 1900.

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Figure 13 – JT&AHCo

J.T.&A.H.Co. (1916-1943?)

The only source we have found that listed the initials with the abbreviation “Co.” was the Dairy Antiques site (2016), although we have an example on a milk bottle with at “37” date code inscribed in the ejection scar (Figure 13). The mark may have only been used after Hamilton reentered milk bottle manufacture, probably in the late 1920s, when listings for milk bottles appeared in *American Glass Review* publications. As noted in the history section above, Hamilton had sold the milk bottle business to Thatcher in 1920; however, the federal government investigated the purchase of the milk bottle business, along with the acquisition of four other dairy-container producers in 1923. Thatcher was forced to divest itself of the new holdings, which probably resulted in the return of the milk bottle business to Hamilton in the late 1920s (see the Thatcher section for more information). Hamilton soon became the major producer of Pittsburgh milk bottles (von Mechow 2016). The addition of the word “Co.” could not have been used prior to the incorporation of the firm in 1916 (see history section).

Dairy Antiques (2016) noted that “J.T.&A.H.” was often accompanied by the number “14” – the number assigned to the plant by New York and New Jersey in 1910 or shortly thereafter. These state I.D. numbers eventually became a national identification code for milk bottle manufacturers. The initials were often accompanied by the word “CLIMAX” and Albert Hamilton purchased C.T. Nightingale’s share of the Climax Bottle Mfg. Co. ca. 1898, becoming the secretary and treasurer (Dairy Antiques 2016; von Mechow 2016). One eBay seller offered an amber milk bottle embossed on the base with the Triangle-H mark as well as CLIMAX 225 14 (also see the section on Climax Bottle & Mfg. Co. in the Other C section).

H in a triangle (1900-1943)

Peterson (1968:41) set the “first use” for this mark at 1900. Dairy Antiques (2016) told the rest of the story. The Hamiltons registered the Triangle-H logo (No. 102,404) on February 9, 1915, claiming that it was first used in January 1900. The firm renewed the trademark on February 9, 1935 (Creswick 1987b:64). According to Schadlich ([ca. 1990]), the mark was used by Hamilton from 1900-1920. Toulouse (1971:290) suggested a greater range from ca. 1900 to 1943, and Giarde (1980:58) followed the Toulouse dates.



Figure 14 – Triangle-H logo (eBay)

The Triangle-H mark was used on medicine or drug store bottles (Kardatske 2002:149) as well as milk containers. Hawkins (2009:247) noted that “an embossed H in a triangle has been observed on

Pittsburgh bottles dating prior to 1911 (Figure 14). This determination was based on the fact that Pittsburgh was spelled without the *h* from December 23, 1891, to July 11, 1911.” Hawkins (2009:248) included an illustration of the Century Oval – with the Triangle-H logo on the base – from the 1903 Hamilton catalog (Figure 15).



Figure 15 – Century Oval (Hawkins 2009:248)

HOM-PAK (1942-ca. 1947)



Figure 16 – Hom-Pak (eBay)

Toulouse (1969:154) noted that J.T.&A. Hamilton produced machine-made square fruit jars ca. 1940, embossed “HOM-PAK / MASON” on the body (Figure 16). The base was embossed with the Triangle H manufacturer’s mark. Roller (1983:157) dated the jars ca.

1942-1943 by J.T.&A. Hamilton and ca. 1943-1947 by the Seaboard Glass Bottle Co. He noted that the Anco Corp., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, received a trade mark (No. 402,413) for “HOM-PAK” on July 20, 1943 – used since June 25, 1942. A variation was embossed “S in a Keystone” on the base (the logo of the Seaboard Glass Bottle Co.). Creswick (1987b:64) illustrated the jar and presented much of the same information,

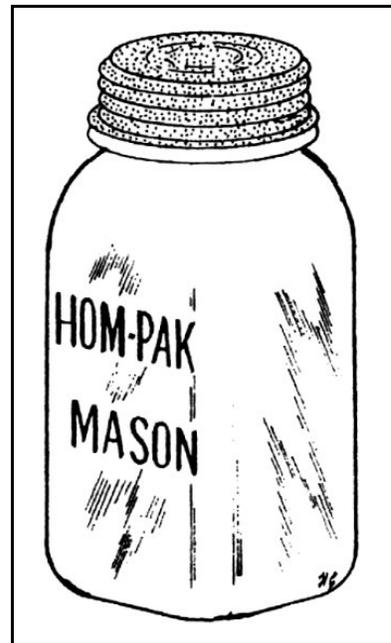


Figure 17 – Hom-Pak (Creswick 1987b:64)

although she failed to include a date range (Figure 17). Roller (2011:243) noted that the lid was embossed “HOM-PAK” on the underside.

Victory HOM-PAK (1942-ca. 1943)



Figure 18 – Victory Hom-Pak (eBay)

Roller (1983:373; 2011:537) discussed the “Victory (upwardly slanted cursive) / HOM-PAK / MASON” with the Triangle-H logo on the base (Figures 18 & 19). These were also made by J.T&A. Hamilton from ca. 1942-1944. Creswick (1987b:135) illustrated the jar but added no new information (Figure 20). Since Knox Glass bought the firm in 1943, it is unlikely that the Vicorty HOM-PAK jars were made after that point.



Figure 19 – Triangle-H logo (eBay)

Discussion and Conclusions

Most of histories and marks of both Hamilton companies are clear and easy to understand. However, it would be interesting to know what caused James T. and Albert Hamilton to become so infuriated with the rest of their family that they not only withdrew from the firm but went into direct competition with their relatives. We are reminded of the Flaccus Brothers and their family feud (see the Flaccus Brothers section for more information).

It is also possible that all of the marks from both firms (with the exception of “HAMILTON” on fruit jars ca. 1886) were only used from about the turn of the century. Future research should focus on looking into the possible earlier use of the logos.

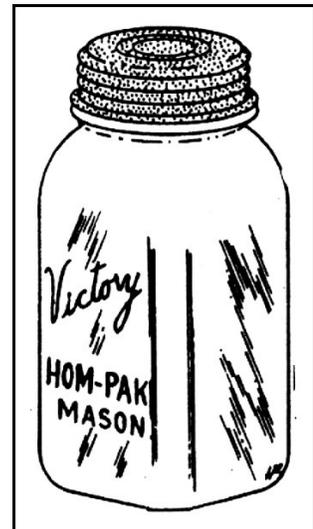


Figure 20 – Creswick 1987b:135)

A confounding element is the possible use of the lone “H” logo by other firms. Toulouse (1971:232) suggested that the Hart Glass Mfg. Co. used this simple logo from 1918 to 1938, although we have found no corroborating evidence for this claim. The Hazel Glass Co. probably used a single “H” logo into the 1930s, but these were followed by a one- or two-digit number and would have only appeared on packers’ ware. The Hemingray Glass Co. used the letter “H” followed by two- to three numerals (often with a hyphen in between) on beer, soda, and refrigerator bottles from ca. 1924 to ca. 1935, and the Heinz Co. used a similar system – always on Heinz bottles and jars – from the late 1800s to the mid-50th century. An unidentified western (probably California) glass house (possibly the early Illinois-Pacific Glass Co.) use an “H” above a one-, two, or three-digit number, and there were currently unidentified “H” logos below multi-digit numbers. Note that none of these should be confused with an unaccompanied “H” on the base of a prescription or drug store bottle – the only type solidly linked to W.H. Hamilton.

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