

## **Hart Glass Mfg. Co.**

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Thomas F. Hart was involved in a number of firms with an unusual historical path. Initially teaming up with someone only recorded as Fletcher, Hart began as a jobber in glass bottles – Fletcher, Hart Co. – in 1879. J.M. Maring apparently purchased Fletcher’s share in 1882, renaming the firm Maring, Hart & Co. With their distribution business located at Bellaire, Ohio, Maring and Hart leased a glass factory at Leasdale, Pennsylvania, in 1886 and began to manufacture their own products. Leaving the Leasdale plant in 1887, Maring, Hart & Co. also abandoned its jobber status to become a full-time producer of glass containers at a factory in Dunkirk, Indiana, and a second plant making window glass at Muncie, Indiana. The firm closed the Muncie operation ca. 1900 and sold the Dunkirk factory to the Armstrong Cork Co. in 1938.

### **Histories**

#### **Fletcher, Hart Co., Bellaire, Ohio (1879-1882)**

The Fletcher, Hart Co. (Lawrence A. Fletcher and Thomas F. Hart) – a jobber in bottles, lamps, and other items – opened in 1879. We have not discovered the actual producer of the goods sold by the company, but Fletcher and Hart were two of the parties listed as assignors in Charles H. Fry’s 1881 lantern patent (No. 237,852). Fletcher apparently sold his share of the operation to J.M. Maring (or Hart) in 1882. Fletcher was involved with the Zihlmann, brothers, described as “craftsmen in Bellaire, Ohio, glasshouses,” as a builder the Cumberland Glass Works in 1884 (Paquette 2002:272).

#### **Maring, Hart & Co., Bellaire, Ohio (1882-1888)**

Fletcher apparently left the firm in 1882, and Hart merged with J.M Maring & Co. – a glass jobber and competitor at Bellaire – to form Maring, Hart & Co.<sup>1</sup> James M. Maring, Thomas F. Hart, and George W. Maring were the principals of the company, identified in an

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<sup>1</sup> Maring had been a jobber at Bellaire since at least 1877 (Roller 1998a).

1886 letterhead as “mfrs. & jobbers of Window Glass and Flint Bottles, Chimneys, Lantern Globes and Lanterns.” The letterhead illustrated shoo fly and picnic flasks as well as an MH&Co monogram – although the monogram has never been reported on glass containers (Roller 1998a). A similar letterhead from the West Virginia Museum of Glass requested a mold from Charles Yockel. Although the letter described the mold in detail, it did not ask for a manufacturer’s mark (Figure 1). The firm moved its headquarters to Dunkirk and built a factory at Muncie (both in Indiana) in 1888.



Figure 1 – 1887 letter (West Virginia Museum of Glass)

### **Leasdale Glass Co., Leasdale, Pennsylvania (1886-1887)<sup>2</sup>**

On September 16, 1886, *Commoner & Glassworker* announced that Maring, Hart & Co. had purchased the Gallatin Glass Works at Leasdale (near Pittsburgh). The firm operated the factory under the Leasdale Glass Co. name. T.F. Hart was president of the company, with M.H. Hart as secretary and R. Bankston as plant manager. The plant made bottles, druggists’ ware, and vials of flint glass. Maring, Hart & Co. sold the plant in April 1887 (Hawkins 2009:314; Roller 1997).

The factory was formerly the Gallitin Glass Works, operated by Robert Liddell at 12 Wood St. The plant began as James Lindsay & Co. in 1872.. Lindsay manufactured lamps and

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<sup>2</sup> Toulouse (1971:232) claimed that Maring, Hart & Co. leased a glass factory at Martin’s Ferry, Ohio, during the 1882-1888 period, but that seems unlikely. We could not find any factories in the community that made flint bottles or window glass during that time – although there were several tableware firms.

lamp accessories at one furnace with ten pots. By at least 1880, the plant was called the Lindsay Flint Glass Co. Lindsay apparently died in 1880 or 1881, and Robert Liddell took control of the factory in October 1881, although the Lindsay heirs retained ownership. The plant made flint bottles and prescription ware. When the Lindsay heirs placed the factory for sale, Marin, Hart & Co. became the new owners (Roller 1997). It seems probable that Gallitin Glass had made some or all of the containers offered by Marin, Hart & Co. The purchase of the factory may have been to guarantee control of this supply source.

### **Maring, Hart & Co., Dunkirk, Indiana (1888-1918)**

When natural gas was found in Dunkirk, Indiana, many firms moved there to take advantage of the new source. Although there is some dispute about the date (Toulouse [1971:232] said 1889), Maring, Hart & Co. relocated to Dunkirk in 1888 (Roller 1998b). This move marked a major turning point in the firm. The firm began as a jobber, then entered a stage with the Leasdale plant where it made some (most?) of its own products. With the joint opening of a bottle factory at Dunkirk and a window glass plant at Muncie, the company became a full-fledged manufacturing unit.

J.M. Maring was specifically mentioned when the firm moved from Bellaire to Dunkirk in 1888. However, his name was crossed out in a billhead dated February 24, 1900 (Roller 1998a). Maring was the business manager for the Bellaire Lantern Globe Co., Bellaire, Ohio, during 1891 but left in December just before the business collapsed (Paquette 2002:431). He thus probably left Maring, Hart & Co. ca. 1890. None of the sources mention why he left or when.

The firm seems to have imported at least some of its labor from Europe. The *Evening Bulletin* (Maysville, Kentucky) reported on January 3, 1894:

Two tramps robbed a Belgian glassblower near the Maring, Hart & Company's glass works. The culprits were caught by the enraged Belgians, who marched them to the glass works with the avowed purpose of ducking them in the big tank of molten glass. The officers arrived just in time to save the strangers from a horrible death.

The Dunkirk plant was listed in 1897 as having “two furnaces, 24 pots, in operation on flint glass.” The factory used 21 pots in 1898 (*National Glass Budget* 1897:5; 1898:7). By 1904, the plant made “beers, liquors, proprietary ware, milk jars, fruit jars, packers ware,” still at the two furnaces with 24 pots but also at a single continuous tank. T.F. Hart was president of the firm, with M.H. Hart as superintendent (*American Glass Review* 1934:153).

In 1905, the plant made flint milk, brandy, and packing bottles. By the following year, the factory had two 12-pot furnaces and a single continuous tank with 10 rings. The Thomas Register changed the listing to “beer, soda, wine, brandy, packers’ [and] preservers” ware and milk jars in 1907 but abbreviated it to “wine, preservers, etc.” as well as milk jars in 1909 – and that continued until at least 1912

(Thomas Publishing Co. 1905:103; 1907:156, 798; 1909:199, 1100; 1912:530, 3011; Toulouse 1971:232). A postcard dated September 5, 1910, showed the factory (Figure 2).

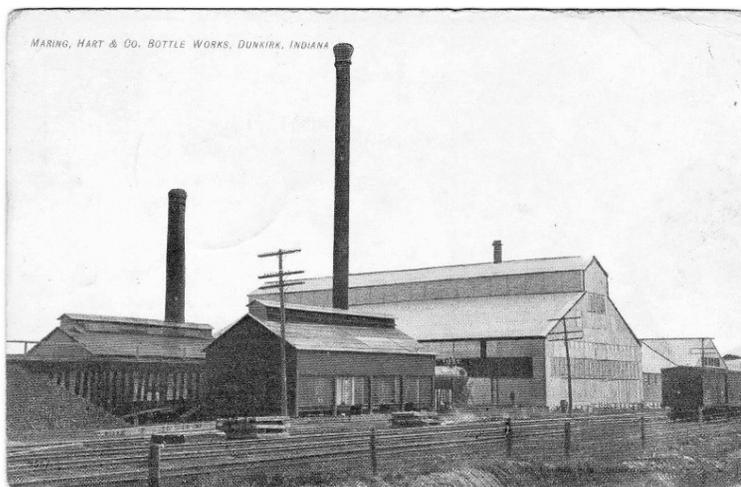


Figure 2 – Factory 1910 (eBay)

Although no machines were listed at Dunkirk in 1912 (*National Glass Budget* 1912:1), Maring, Hart & Co. was making a “general line” of bottles at two continuous tanks with 22 rings by both hand and machine processes – likely semiautomatic – in 1913 (*Journal of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry* 1913:952). In 1915, the list of products remained the same as in 1912 and continued that way until the final Thomas Register listing for Maring, Hart & Co. in 1917 (Thomas Publishing Co. 1915:577, 3388; 1917:729, 4105; Toulouse 1971:233). T. Francis Hart – probably a nephew of Thomas F. Hart – became plant manager in 1916. After receiving his degree at St. Marys College, Hart played professional baseball for the Dayton and Fort Wayne (Ohio) teams in 1901 and 1902 before entering the oil business where he remained until he joined Maring, Hart & Co. (Jay 1922:414). But, more change was once again in the wind.

### **Maring, Hart & Co., Muncie, Indiana (1888-1899)**

In 1888, Thomas F. Hart and J.M. Maring built a glass factory on Bellaire Ave., Boyston (a suburb of Muncie, Indiana). The plant made window glass at one continuous tank with 54 blowers. The operation remained in Muncie until at least February 1900 and merged with the American Window Glass Co., of Pittsburgh in September 1899 (*Paint, Oil & Drug Review* 1899:24; Roller 1994:74).

### **Hart Glass Mfg. Co., Dunkirk, Indiana (1918-1938)**

The firm incorporated as the Hart Glass Mfg. Co. in March 1918, with a capital of \$300,000. Still at Dunkirk, Francis H. May, Thomas F. Hart, and T. Francis Hart were the incorporators (*Metallurgical and Chemical Engineering* 1918:382). The works consisted of two factories in separate buildings that were both destroyed by fire in late June or early July. The Harts blamed the railroad (sparks from the engines) for the fire but quickly rebuilt. Another building burned in 1919, and the Harts sued the railroad for \$116,000 – again rebuilding (*American Machinist* 1918:80f; *National Glass Budget* 1919:16).

The list of products remained the same as before the name change, although the plant now produced both fruit and milk jars (the listing was changed to milk *bottles* in 1920 (Thomas Publishing Co. 1918:809, 4429, 4431; 1920:826, 830, 4615). The new company installed automatic lehrs by 1921 and added fully-automatic bottle machines the following year – increasing the capital to \$500,000 in 1923 (Toulouse 1971:233). The plant still used two continuous tanks in 1921 but now had 11 machines, and was making Mason jars (Roller 1994:18). Machine count remained the same in 1927, but products listed were “flint patent, proprietary, liquors, flasks, packers and preservers, and full condiment line” (*American Glass Review* 1927:135).

On May 26, 1927, T. Francis Hart died, after almost 50 years in the glass business – holding the positions of treasurer and general manager of the firm

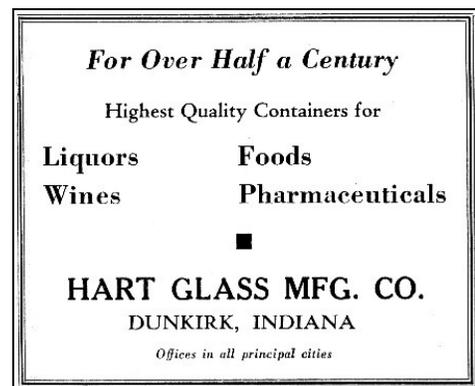


Figure 3 – 1934 ad (*American Glass Review* 1934:109)

until his demise (Roller 1998b). By 1929, the plant used 13 machines. The list was slightly abridged to delete “preservers” and added “beer bottles” in 1933 (Figure 3). The listing remained the same until the number increased to 15 in 1938 (*American Glass Review* 1929:98; 1933:65; 1938:77). On December 15, 1932, Harry R. McDonald applied for a patent for a “Glass Jar” and received Design Patent No. 89,403 on March 7, 1933 (Figure 4). He assigned the patent to the Hart Glass Mfg. Co. A.M. Hart became president of the firm in 1936, two years before the Armstrong Cork Co. acquired the plant in late 1938 (Roller 1998b; Toulouse 1971:233).<sup>3</sup>

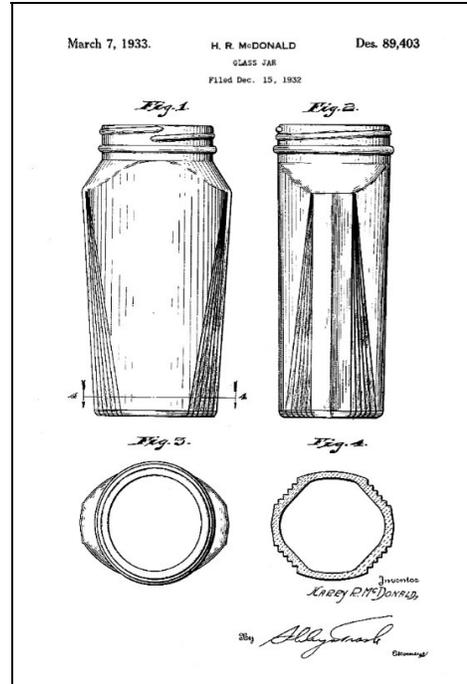


Figure 4 – McDonald 1932 patent

## Containers and Marks

### H

Toulouse (1971:232) reported a lone “H” used by the Hart Glass Mfg. Co. from 1918 to 1938 (Figure 5). Because the company had been using semiautomatic machinery since at least 1913 and fully automatic machines by 1922, this mark should only be found on bottles with the characteristics of automatic production (e.g., side seam extending through finish, horizontal seam encircling finish, machine scar on base, etc.). This assumes, of course, that Toulouse was correct about the 1918 beginning date.

Giarde (1980:50) attributed this mark to the Hart Manufacturing Co. of Dunkirk but did not include any accompanying numbers or letters in his reporting. He dated the mark 1918-1938, likely following Toulouse. It is clear from the lack of descriptions that Giarde had not actually seen examples of

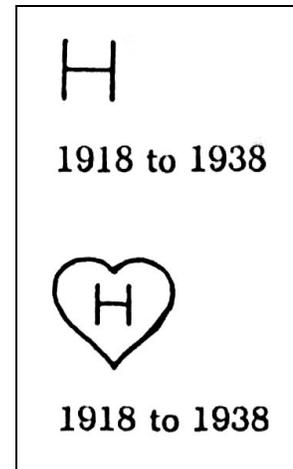


Figure 5 – Hart logos (Toulouse 1971:232)

<sup>3</sup> Roller (1994:18) noted that H.J. Prentis, Jr., president of Armstrong, announced the purchase in January 1939.

this mark or the one below. See the sections on Hamilton, Hazel-Atlas, and Holt for other companies using the “H” mark. The logo is also conspicuously missing from Whitten (2016).

## **H in a Heart**

Toulouse (1971:232) also noted the H-in-a-heart logo as being used by the Hart Glass Mfg. Co. from 1918 to 1938 (see Figure 5). It, too, should be found on bottles with automatic machine traits. Giarde (1980:50) also attributed this mark to the Hart Manufacturing Co. of Dunkirk and dated its use to 1918-1938, again following Toulouse. It is unlikely that Giarde actually saw either of these marks. This logo, too, is absent from Whitten (2016).

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

Unfortunately, Toulouse is the only source we have for information on both marks. As usual, Toulouse failed to explain *why* he chose the association between the “H” mark and Hart Glass Mfg. Co. The H-in-a-heart logo, of course, is an obvious choice, even though we have not located an example. He also failed to note why he chose the 1918-1938 date range, although it is possible that he discovered the mark on a machine-made bottle.

Equally perplexing, Maring, Hart & Co., followed by the Hart Mfg. Co., made milk bottles by at least 1904. Beginning in 1910, many states required a manufacturer’s number for milk bottle producers – yet we have discovered no reference to a number for either of the Hart firms. There are a few numbers that we have not connected to glass houses, such as 15, 18, 20-23, etc. We simply may not have located the number for Hart. It is also possibly that Hart only sold milk bottles in those – increasingly fewer – states that did not require numbers.

Whitten (personal correspondence 1/18/2016), had never seen any examples of either the “H” or H-in-Hart mark, nor – as mentioned above – have we. Dairy Antiques (2016) similarly reported no contemporary references to milk bottle production during the 1918-1938 period – and therefore no marks (at least on milk bottles). Although the Thomas Registers did list the plant under milk bottles until at least 1921, their lists were often out of date – thus not fully reliable. We would normally have placed such a tenuous logo in the Other H section, but the tortuous history seemed inappropriate for that venue.

## Acknowledgments

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