

Appendix A – Illinois Glass Co.

Catalog Codes (Mold Numbers) for Soda Bottles, 1896-1920

At some point, ca. 1895, catalog numbers were added to the right of the “I.G.Co.” marks (very rarely placed to the left), possibly only on returnable beer and soft drink bottles or alcohol bottles (Figure ?). This was certainly in place by 1898 when “mould numbers” (i.e., numbers in the catalog) were included in the catalog – only for returnable bottles and those containing alcohol (Figure ?). Thus far, all numbers associated with the “I.G.Co.” logo have matched those in the 1903 catalog. All soda bottle numbers ended in double numerals (e.g., 11, 266, 377).

Date ranges on bottles used by local companies in Colorado were shown in Clint (1976) who drew information from local sources and empirical study of the bottles (Figure ?). These catalog codes accompanied “I.G.Co.” heelmarks rather than basemarks. Heel logos with no accompanying numbers fell within a range between 1882 to 1887, and all four examples were made with applied finishes. Heel logos accompanied by numbers embossed on bases dated 1894 to 1900. Heel logos with numbers immediately to their right dated from 1894 to 1915. All numbered bottles were topped by tooled finishes. Clint showed some unusual numbers such as 10 ½ and 72 ½.

From about 1895, the first year that catalog numbers were embossed on heels alongside the “I.G.Co.” logo, until 1915, the year that the Diamond I mark was first used and the probable last date for the “I.G.Co.” mark, all regular sized (i.e., “half-pint” and “pint”) soda bottles made by the Illinois Glass Co. were coded in the catalogs with double numbers (e.g., 11, 233, 566, etc.). Since we have a good sample of Illinois Glass Co. catalogs (1896, 1898, 1903, 1906, 1908, 1911, and 1920), we can trace the probable dates when certain types (i.e., catalog numbers) of soda bottles were used. Soda bottle “mould” (i.e., catalog) numbers followed in sequential order (e.g., 11, 22, 33, 44, etc.). About 1915, with the cessation of the “I.G.Co.” mark and the initiation of the Diamond-I mark, the entire catalog numbering system changed. None of the original numbers for soda bottles remained in the 1920 catalog.

Thus, any soda bottle embossed on the heel with “I.G.Co.” and a two- or three-digit number can be reasonably dated using Table 1.

Table 1 – Catalog Numbers (always ending with double numerals) with Corresponding Probable Dates Offered by the Illinois Glass Co. – Half-Pint and Pint Bottles

Catalog Numbers	Approximate Dates Offered
11-277	1895-1915
288-444	1898-1915
455-477 + 588	1903-1915
488-666	1906-1915
677-766	1908-1915
777	1911-1915

The catalog numbering system for quart soda bottles followed a slightly different pattern. All quart “mould” numbers ended in “9” and followed a sequential pattern (e.g., 9, 19, 29, 39, etc.). As with the smaller bottles, this provides a date range for the use of specific numbers embossed along with “I.G.Co.” on the heels of quart soda bottles. Note that #99 is missing from the sequence because it was already used on a style for a smaller bottle. It is also obvious that both the total number of quart styles offered and the periodic increase in varieties were greatly reduced compared with the smaller bottles. See Table 2 for quart dates.

Table 2 – Catalog Numbers (always ending with “9”) with Corresponding Probable Dates Offered by the Illinois Glass Co. – Quart Bottles

Catalog Numbers	Approximate Dates Offered
9-79	1895-1915
89 and 109	1903-1915
119	1906-1915
129-139	1908-1915

Beer bottles also received catalog numbers, but these followed no predictable sequence or order. Interestingly, one number (#77) was listed in the catalogs for both beer and soda bottles.

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