

**Illinois-Pacific – a West Coast Phenomenon**  
**Part III – Illinois-Pacific Coast Co. (1930-1933)**  
**and Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co. (1933-1943)**

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The Illinois-Pacific phenomenon consisted of three companies: The Illinois-Pacific Glass Co. (1902-1926); Illinois-Pacific Glass Corp. (1926-1930); and the Illinois-Pacific Coast Co. (1930-1932). All were affiliated with the Illinois Glass Co. of Alton, Illinois. Because the history is so complex, and the company used such a rich variety of manufacturer's marks and date codes, we have divided the history and marks chronology into three sections, reflecting the three main divisions of the company's history.

### **Histories**

#### **Illinois-Pacific Coast Co., Los Angeles, San Francisco (1930-1932)**

The Illinois Glass Co. began plans for a merger with the Pacific Coast Glass Co. by at least 1929, when the Eastern firm acquired approximately 10% of the Western company's stock (*Wall Street Journal* 4/6/1929). The rest of the merger was beset with difficulties and negotiations, especially about the division and issuance of stock (*Oakland Tribune* 8/29/1930). According to Toulouse (1971:270) and Jones (1961:[7]), Illinois Pacific merged with the Pacific Coast Glass Co. in 1930 to form the Illinois Pacific Coast Co., and the *New York Times* (8/20/1930) noted that the Illinois Pacific Coast Co. was chartered in Delaware on August 19, 1930. Illinois-Pacific Coast continued to operate both plants from each former company, giving the operation two factories at San Francisco and two in Los Angeles. The new firm continued to use both the Electorneal and Temperite trade marks of both former companies (*Western Canner and Packer* 1930:26). But change was again in the wind in 1932.

## Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co., Los Angeles, San Francisco (1933-1943)

At some point in 1931, Owens-Illinois established a West Coast subsidiary, the Owens-Illinois Glass Co., Ltd. Apparently, the only purpose for this company was the ultimate purchase of the Illinois-Pacific Coast Co. The purchase price agreed upon, \$5,625,000, was predicated by the value of the Coast Co. as of November 30, 1931. The subsidiary, by that time renamed the Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co., acquired the assets of the former Illinois-Pacific Coast Co. on May 31, 1932, and began production on June 1, 1932 (Dawson 1947:4-5; Owens-Illinois 1931:9-10; 1932:11). Other sources (Ayres et al., 1980:21; Giarde 1980:54; Jones 1961:[7]; *New York Times* June 2, 1932:33; Toulouse 1971:271) agreed with the 1932 date.

By 1933, the Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co. had two factories in San Francisco, with six continuous tanks and 24 feeders. The Los Angeles plants had two continuous tanks and seven feeders. The combined factories made a “general line of bottles, fruit jars, milk bottles and corrugated fibre boxes [plus] ‘Onized’ ware.” In 1935, one of the San Francisco plants added another tank, and the firm began advertising Applied Color Lettering (ACL) on milk bottles (Figure 1). By 1943, the San Francisco factories were closed, and a new one had opened at Oakland (see below). The combined plants offered a “general line of bottles, fruit jars, milk bottles and molded caps [plus] ‘Duraglass’ (*sic*) bottles, jars” (*American Glass Review* 1933:70; 1935:90-91; 1943:106; *California Milk News* 1935:8).



**COLOR**

*Applied Color Lettering*

**... wins new sales for the dairy industry.**

● VALUABLE free advertising space on both sides of your milk bottle can be used for advertising your milk and other dairy products. Let us help you plan an attractive color design. Your name or trademark can be permanently fused in any of ten brilliant colors. Let us help you sell more dairy products. Write or phone today.

**Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co.**  
5120 So. Soto St. LOS ANGELES JEfferson 3281  
SAN FRANCISCO

Figure 1 – ACL ad (*California Milk News* 1935:8)

Owens-Illinois had begun planning for a new factory at Oakland, California, to replace the two San Francisco plants in 1935, and the following year was one of major construction on the West Coast. In addition to building the Oakland plant, Owens-Illinois began enlarging the Los Angeles factory from one to three furnaces, as well as additional warehouse space and a building to make corrugated cardboard boxes. The Oakland plant began operations in June 1937, and the Los Angeles factory was completed at some point during the year. The Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co. remained a subsidiary of Owens-Illinois until December 31, 1943,

when the corporation was dissolved and transferred all the assets to the parent company (Dawson 1947:5; Owens-Illinois 1935:13; 1936:5; 1937:9).

## **Containers and Marks**

Although Toulouse (1971:269) claimed three variations of the IPCCO mark were used by the Coast Co., we have not seen a single one of them. Because the IPGCO marks are often small and somewhat indistinct, many people mistake the “G” for a “C” (as noted by Keusseff – in Part II). As a result, reports of an IPCCO mark are often found on eBay, in collectors’ literature, and in archaeological reports. However, we have not found a single report that can be authenticated by research that provides alternative dating. While we have tightly-dated evidence for all the marks we present, we have found no such evidence to support an IPCCO mark of any kind. In order to qualify as conclusive evidence, a bottle with an actual IPCCO mark would have to fit into a date range of 1930 to 1932. The marks we have seen (identified as IPCCO) were much more likely made during the 1910-1920 period based on manufacturing characteristics. It is possible, of course, that one or more molds were mis-engraved with an actual IPCCO mark.

Jones (1965:[16]), quoted T.L. Keusseff as stating that the IPC in a triangle was the “mark of Illinois Pacific Coast Co. 1930-1932, between merger of Illinois-Pacific and Pacific Coast, and before merger with Owens-Illinois.” Jones again mentioned the mark three years later with a date of 1903, probably a typographic error for 1930 (1966:20). Jones (1966:20) may have influenced Toulouse to consider the IPCCO-in-a-diamond mark. She showed a drawing of the mark and dated it 1930. She almost certainly misread the IPGCO mark.

Paquette’s information may clarify things or may add further confusion (Paquette 1994). The Illinois Pacific Coast Co. may, indeed, have continued using IPG marks until the purchase by Owens-Illinois in 1931. At that point, the company may have wanted to distinguish its bottles from those of the prior owner by a slightly different mark. In 1932 (according to this hypothesis), the mark was changed to that of Owens-Illinois Glass Co. The only way to distinguish the Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co. marks from the Owens-Illinois Glass Co. marks is by the factory code to the left of the logo. West Coast numbers included 20-23 and 64. For the only accurate list of Owens-Illinois Glass Co. factories, see Lockhart & Hoenig 2015. All other sources, including Toulouse (1971:406-408) and Lockhart (2004) are incorrect.

## IPC in a triangle

The only mark we have identified as being used by the Coast Co. is IPC in a triangle (Figure 2). Logically, this is the style we would expect to follow the Triangle-IPG logo used by the corporation preceding the merger, and we have carefully examined marks with a magnifying glass to verify that the

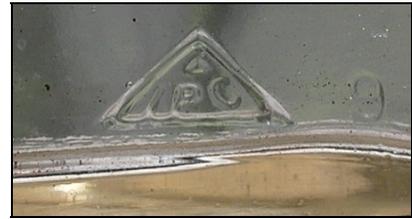


Figure 2 – Triangle-IPC



Figure 3 – Crown date code

letter is indeed a “C.” Date codes of “31” and “32” on the reinforcing rings of the crown finishes verify the mark as belonging to the Coast Co. (Figure 3). The codes are found on reinforcing rings on soda and Citrate of Magnesia bottles (and possibly on other bottle types that used crown finishes, such as catsups). Although date codes for the Coast Co. may appear on either the crown, the heel, or both, the crown code is usually the defining feature. The marks were only used in 1931 and 1932.

However, in contrast, hobble-skirt Coca-Cola bottles were consistently marked with the Triangle-IPC mark and a date code of “32” on the heel, although the codes/logos were not placed in any consistent order. The date code was sometimes to the left of the mark, sometimes to the right. Other two-digit codes were unrelated to the dates and were probably mold identification numbers. None of the examples recorded by Porter (2009) had date codes embossed on the reinforcing ring of the crown.

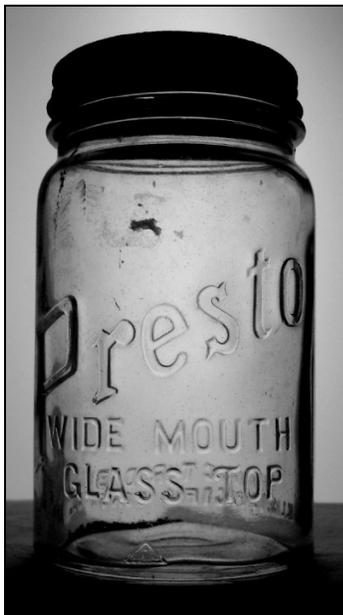


Figure 4 – Presto Wide Mouth Mason

A final bit of evidence for the use of this mark comes from eBay where a seller offered “a beautiful dual embossed Presto Supreme Mason on the



Figure 5 – Illinois-Pacific Coast Co.

front, reverse heel embossed : MANUFACTURED BY ILLINOIS PACIFIC COAST CO. front heel is embossed IPC in triangle and mold 5 off to the right” (Figures 4 & 5). This jar was also listed in Roller (1983:294), although he described it as “ILLINOIS PACIFIC COAST CO. Embossed on reverse, IPC in triangle logo embossed on heel.”

**MANUFACTURED BY ILLINOIS PACIFIC COAST CO.**

Along with the PRESTO SUPREME MASON discussed above, the Coast Co. also embossed the long version of the name on the back heel of PRESTO WIDE MOUTH GLASS TOP jars (Creswick 1987:108). These jars were probably made for export – hence the embossing of the full name (see discussion in Part I of this series).

**Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co. Marks**

The Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co. reverted to using the same Diamond-OI mark as the parent Owens-Illinois Glass Co. The only way to tell the bottles used by the Coast division is to note the plant codes. Toulouse (1971:395) illustrated a graph with plant names, numbers, and approximate dates in business, but much of his information was in error. As noted in footnote above, Lockhart & Hoenig (2015) have provided the most accurate dating and identification of the Owens-Illinois factories (based on information derived by Hoenig and Phil Perry, both employees of Owens-Illinois – now retired).

**Table 1 – Chronology for Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co. Factories**

Plant #	Location	Date Opened*	Date Closed
20	Oakland	1937	Present
21	San Francisco	1932	1937
22	San Francisco	1932	1937
23	Los Angeles	1932	Present
24	Los Angeles	1932	1937

\* Date of opening or acquisition by Owens-Illinois

Our study of milk bottles in the California State Parks collection at Sacramento (Schulz et al. 2009) produced interesting results. We observed milk bottles embossed with date-coded Owens-Illinois logos (actually from the Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Glass Co.) from the four California plants (Figure 6). The date codes we found indicate the following dates when milk bottles were produced. It is important to note that the factories may have been open and producing other bottle types during other years.



Figure 6 – Owens-Illinois Pacific milk base (California State Parks collection)

**Table 2 – Milk Bottle Production Dates, California Factories**

Plant #	Location	First Date*	Last Date
21	San Francisco	1932	1935
22	San Francisco	1935	1936
23	Los Angeles	1932	at least 1975
24	Los Angeles	1932	ca. 1936

\* Earliest date code we found

Mike Miller discovered an interesting colorless, soft drink bottle embossed 21 <0> 7 on the front heel.<sup>1</sup> This mark was used by the Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co. from 1933 to 1943 and by the Owens-Illinois Glass Co. From 1929 to ca. 1954. The back heel, however, was marked 1 followed by a blanked-out triangle. The Owens-Illinois workers used an old mold from either the Illinois-Pacific Glass Corp. or the Coast Co. to make the bottle. The 7 to the right of the Owens-Illinois mark is a date code for 1937 (the final year the plant was open), so the mold had laid in storage at least four years prior to its reuse. To remove all doubts, the factory code 21 is for one of the two San Francisco (former Illinois-Pacific) plants. Any of the Owens-Illinois <0> logos with California factory codes and correct date codes (i.e., Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co. period) were made by the firm (Figure 7).

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<sup>1</sup> We use <0> to represent the Owens-Illinois Diamond-I-O logo.

This was apparently a common occurrence. Creswick (1987:106) noted a PRESTO GLASS TOP jar marked MANUFACTURED BY ILLINOIS PACIFIC GLASS CORP. that also had the Diamond OI mark on its base. Apparently, the Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co. used a mold from the Illinois-Pacific Glass Corp. with a newer Owens-Illinois baseplate. Unfortunately, Creswick did not fully illustrate the jar; it would have been instructive to have seen the factory and date codes on the base.



Figure 7 – Owens-Illinois Pacific soda base

## **MANUFACTURED BY OWENS-ILLINOIS PACIFIC COAST CO.**

A PRESTO WIDE MOUTH GLASS TOP jar was made by the Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co. and was so marked on the back heel in two lines. These jars were probably made for export – hence the embossing of the full name (see discussion above). Another jar, marked GOOD HOUSE KEEPERS MASON JAR, also had the full name embossed on the back heel (with COMPANY spelled out) (Roller 1983:143; 2011:220-221).

## **Discussion and Conclusions**

Only IPC triangle marks are reliably reported for the Illinois Pacific Coast Co., although some IPG triangles were used during the first year the company was in business. IPC logos are all date coded 1931 or 1932 – except on Presto jars that bear no date codes. The company embossed its full name on some jars, probably for export. When the firm became the Owens-Illinois Pacific Coast Co. in 1932, it used the typical Owens-Illinois system of marks and codes, although a few transition bottles with markings from both the older and newer companies exist.

## **Acknowledgments**

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