

Jeannette Glass Co.

Bill Lockhart, Beau Schriever, Bill Lindsey, and Carol Serr

Growing from the rocky beginnings of its predecessor firms, the Jeannette Glass Co. began production in 1898. The factory originally made a variety of bottles, but it added a line of glass prisms, auto headlights, and tableware in 1912, then shifted entirely to the manufacture of tableware in 1924. The plant added the Jeannette Mason Home Packer fruit jar to its inventory in 1940 but withdrew the jars ca. 1945. The firm remained a tableware operation until it closed in 1983.

History

Jeannette Bottle Works (or Co.), Jeannette, Pennsylvania (1893-1894)

Westmoreland Specialty Co., Jeannette, Pennsylvania (1895-1998)

On September 1, 1893, the Jeannette Bottle Works (possibly Jeannette Bottle Co.) broke ground for a new factory at Jeannette, Pennsylvania. A.K. Martell was the president, with J.T. Cord as vice president, J.R. Morrow as secretary, and E.J. Vinton as treasurer. Tommy Spillane was general manager, with Joseph Diebold and E.J. Euwer as additional directors. Although sources disagree, the original equipment may have consisted of a tank and a single eight-pot furnace. The Westmoreland Specialty Co. leased the factory by November of 1895 to manufacture tableware and remained in place until 1898 (Hawkins 2009:343; Roller 1998a; Welker & Welker 1985:65).

Jeannette Glass Co., Jeannette, Pennsylvania (1898-1983)

Joseph W. Stoner, W.A. Huff, and several others at Jeannette reorganized the firm as the Jeannette Glass Co. on June 20, 1898, and took over the plant, making drug, liquor, soda, and food bottles at one continuous tank with ten rings. Stoner was the president of the corporation, with Huff as secretary and S.R. Hall as plant manager. The plant was known as “The Fizzle” due to its inability to remain in business consistently, possibly because it was flooded at least twice during the first few years – although some sources attributed “The Fizzle” to the

predecessor firms. The plant installed O'Neill semiautomatic machines to make wide-mouth ware – specifically for pickles, mayonnaise, relish, and olives – in 1899 (Hawkins 2008; Macky 2016; Roller 1998a; Welker & Welker 1985:65). For more about O'Neill machines, see Lockhart (2014).

A company letterhead, dated October 29, 1900, listed “Prescription Ware, Beers, Brandies, Catsups, Mustards, Flasks, Etc.” as the products and noted the main office at Greenburg, four miles east of the factory at Jeannette. The following year, *Commoner & Glasswork* listed “flint glass milk jars, beers, sodas, prescription & druggist ware, packers & preservers jars” (Roller 1998a).

By at least 1912, the plant made sidewalk prisms at two continuous tanks with 16 rings and expanded its line to include auto headlights, glass building blocks, pressed tableware and kitchen pieces.¹ The factory used both machine and hand methods in 1913 to produce a “general line” of bottles at two continuous tanks with 16 rings (*Journal of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry* 1913:953). Unfortunately, we have not discovered when the plant adopted machines for narrow-mouth bottles.

The American 3-Way Luxfer Prism Co. purchased the plant in 1917 to insure a steady supply of the glass prisms. The *National Glass Budget* still reported the production of various types of bottles and fruit jars in 1919, and the Thomas Registers listed bottle and jar manufacture until at least 1921. However, the firm only made pressed tableware and automobile lenses by 1924, when the plant increased its automatic machine production and instituted a “new hand-made pressed tableware line” (Hawkins 2009-297; Macky 2016; Roller 1998a; Thomas Publishing Co. 1921::782, 784, 4572)

In 1927, the *American Glass Review* (1927:97) listed Jeannette as making “plain and decorated tableware, tumblers, colored glassware, bar goods, auto headlight and signal glass, novelties and specialties” at three continuous tanks with 12 rings and two day tanks with four rings. By 1930, the plant had five continuous tanks, when the West Bros. Co. (Grapeville,

¹ Although not germane to this study, sidewalk prisms were blocks of colorless glass that were cubes with an inverted pyramid shape on the bottom. These were set in concrete floors and sidewalks to provide light for the rooms below.

Pennsylvania) purchased the operation. Only two tanks remained in operation during 1944, probably due to World War II restrictions. The next year saw the boom period after the war, and all five tanks were back in use – as well as expansion in 1947 (Hawkins 2009:298; Macky 2016).

Maurice L. Stonehill bought the firm in 1960, and Jeannette purchased the McKee Division (at Jeannette) of the Thatcher Glass Mfg. Co. the following year. The firm changed its name to the Jeannette Corp. in 1970, and it only made tableware by 1982, using five 350-ton tanks. The factory closed in 1983 (*Glass Industry* 1982:38; Hawkins 2009:298; Macky 2016; Simson 1962:64).

Containers and Marks

J in a bowl or goblet (1898-?)

Pullin (1986:176) illustrated a line drawing of a goblet with a “J” in the bowl. She noted that it was used by the Jeannette Glass Co. from “1898 to present” (i.e., 1986). She was probably only using the dates that the firm was in business, however, rather than a specifically known date range. Macky (2016) also listed the mark as belonging to Jeannette (Figure 1). Although he did not elaborate, it is likely that it was only used on tableware.

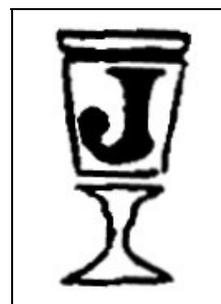


Figure 1 – Goblet-J
(Pullin (1986:176))

J in a square (1940-ca. 1945 – on jars)

Toulouse (1969:161-162) listed a machine-made Jeannette Home Packer as being produced from 1920 to 1930 and noted that Jeannette “stopped making jars and bottles about 1930 to concentrate on silverware.” He also noted an earlier variation that was hand made ca. 1900. The jar was actually embossed “Jeannette (slight arch) / Box-J logo / MASON / Home Packer (both horizontal)” on the front (Figure 2). An eBay auction photo showed a stippled base with a round valve mark near the center (Figure 3).

Roller (1983:170) also listed “Jeannette J (in square) MASON Home Packer.” He described two lids, one embossed “J (in square) MASON,” the other embossed “Jeannette (arch)



Figure 2 – Jeannette Mason (eBay)

/ {J in a square} / Mason (inverted arch)” (Figure 4). He gave no date range but mentioned that “only quart size jars have been reported.” Only Toulouse reported a hand-made jar, and subsequent evidence (see below) makes that highly unlikely. Creswick (1987b:67) followed Toulouse but illustrated the machine-made jar (Figure 5).



Figure 3 – Jeannette base (eBay)



Figure 4 – Jeannette insert (eBay)

Toulouse (1971:272) dated the Box-J mark from ca. 1915 to 1922, and Macky (2016) claimed the logo was used by Jeannette but did not elaborate. Pullin (1986:178) assigned the mark to Jeannette from “1898 to present” (i.e., 1986). Peterson (1968:49), on the other hand, claimed that the mark was first used by Jeannette in 1940, and Hawkins (2009:298) reported the logo on a pressed bowl. Roller editors (2011:260) confirmed and clarified Peterson’s date.



Figure 5 – Jeannette Mason (Creswick 1987b:67)

They noted that Jeannette registered the

Box-J trademark on March 4, 1941, claiming a first use on March 28, 1940. They advertised the jars in the 1943-1945 glass directories, but the ads disappeared after that.

J in a triangle (after 1917)

Pullin (1986:176) noted that the J-in-a-triangle mark was used by the D.C. Jenkins Glass Co., whom she called a “c. 1920s, maker of depression glass” (Figure 6). The tacit indication is that the mark was used only on tableware. Macky (2016) added the mark as only used by the

Jeannette Glass Co. Currently, we have no way to resolve this discrepancy. Hawkins (2009:298) noted that he had observed this mark on the base of a restaurant creamer – that he attributed to Jeannette.

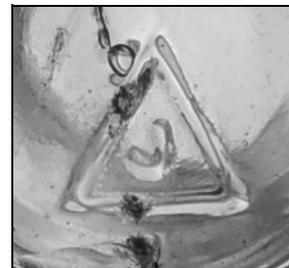


Figure 6 – Triangle-J (Jay Hawkins)

J in a Diamond (early 1900s)

Porter (n.d.:2) reported the Diamond-J mark in two sizes on early straight-sided, amber Coca-Cola bottles used by the Chattanooga franchise about the turn of the century. Another early bottle from the franchise was embossed with C in a diamond, also on the base. *If*, the Diamond-J mark were actually a logo of the Chattanooga Bottle & Glass Co., the mark could not have preceded the opening in 1901. This suggests that the Diamond-J mark may have been used in 1900 or early 1901.

Only two of the “J” plants we have discovered made soda bottles: the Jeannette Glass Co, Jeannette, Pennsylvania, (1898-1983) and the George Jonas Glass Co., Bridgeton, New Jersey, (at least 1896-1908). Both made colorless bottles. Jeannette used a Box-J mark, but both Jonas and Jeannette were reported by different sources to have used a Triangle-J logo. Although we have found no direct mention that Jeannette made amber glass, the company *did* manufacture beer bottles (which could have been amber or aqua in color). Jonas, however, certainly operated an amber tank by 1897. To further complicate the issue, the Jeffris Glass Co., Fairton, New Jersey (1896-1905) made amber bottles by at least 1897. Unfortunately, all three companies were in business during the 1900-1901 period when the mark was likely used.

Although the connection is less likely, the Diamond Glass Co., Royersford, Pennsylvania, made amber glass by at least 1897 and “soda water” bottles by at least 1905. The company also used a diamond mark on bottles, sometimes with a letter in the center. See the section on the Diamond Glass Co. for more information about the company.

Arguments for any of the “J” companies or the Diamond Glass Co. are unconvincing. Although we can find no intuitively obvious reason for a “J” being used by the Chattanooga Glass Co., the firm *did* use a diamond enclosing a “C” as an early logo. Chattanooga Glass was

also a noted early manufacturer of Coca-Cola bottles. Adding these together, it is likely that the Chattanooga Glass Co. used the Diamond-J logo. These could have been errors, both made by the same engraver; however, the explanation may be buried in the sands of time.

Jeannette

The word “Jeannette” in mixed-case letters appeared above the Box-J logo on the Jeannette Home Packer fruit jar and on some of the inserts. See Figures 2, 4 & 5 and the entry for J-in-a-Square above for details about the jar.

J.G.CO. (early 1900s)

Jones (1965[34]) described the JGCo mark as “Eastern maybe” but gave no information as to type of bottle. However, we have observed catsup bottles made for the Curtice Bros. that were embossed on the bases with “J.G.CO.” as well as a single-digit number below the mark (Figures 7 & 8). At least two of these were machine made, and all we have observed were a solarized amethyst color.



Figure 8 – J.G.CO. logo (Tucson Urban Renewal collection)

Albert Morin (Dracut, Massachusetts) reported the JGCo mark on a mouth-blown milk bottle that was made for a dairy that was probably in Pennsylvania. The “JGCO” mark was embossed on the base above “36.” There was no apparent punctuation between the letters, and the mark was double stamped – a condition generally observed only on pre-1914, mouth-blown bottles. The bottle

was solarized to a light amethyst color. Morin suggested that many of the qualities of this bottle indicated a turn-of-the-century manufacture. Hawkins (2009:298) noted that the JGCo mark was found on milk bottles made during the ca. 1904-1918 period.



Figure 7 – Curtice Bros. Bottle (eBay)

Giarde (1980:56-57) noted that Jeannette was making milk bottles “practically from its inception” and connected milk bottles with the Box-J mark known to be used by Jeannette. He followed the Toulouse beginning date of 1915 for the Box-J logo but stated, “whether that mark or another was used during the earlier years is uncertain.” However, he did not state that he had actually seen any milk bottles with the mark, and we have not found any Box-J examples.

J.G.C.

We have observed a single Curtice Brothers catsup bottle embossed “J.G.C.” on its base – at a New Mexico bottle show (Figure 9). Although we have found nothing published about this logo, it was probably a mold maker’s error for the “J.G.CO.” logo discussed above.



Figure 9 – J.G.C. logo (NM bottle show)

Other J.G.Co. Glass Houses

Because we have no direct evidence for the user of the “J.G.CO.” logo from past researchers or industry sources, we conducted a search of bottle factories with J.G.Co. initials. The list consisted of four firms, including the Jeannette Glass Co., George Jonas Glass Co., D.C. Jenkins Glass Co., and Jefferis Glass Co. We presented the history of the Jeannette Glass Co. above and discussed the George Jonas Glass Co. in the section on the Cape May Glass Co. The other two are presented below.

Kokomo Glass & Mfg. Co., Kokomo, Indiana (1900-1905)

D.C. Jenkins Glass Co., Kokomo, Indiana (1906-1932)

David C. Jenkins, along with his son and grandson, incorporated the Kokomo Glass Mfg. Co. in 1900, and the plant produced its first glass in February of the following year. By 1904, the factory used two continuous tanks with 14 rings to make a general line of tableware. The senior Jenkins (D.C.) was president, with A. Jenkins as secretary and treasurer and David Jenkins as manager (Roller 1994:53; 1998b; Welker and Welker 1985:68). We have not discovered any reason why the Jefferis name was chosen. As far as we can tell, no one named Jefferis was connected to the firm.

Fire destroyed the plant in September 1905, but the corporation reorganized as the D.C. Jenkins Glass Co. on February 1, 1906, with David C. Jenkins (possibly, Jr.) as president and Addison Jenkins as secretary – with Thomas Jenkins, David Jenkins, and David Davies as other directors. The group rebuilt the factory with one continuous tank and 12 rings. The company opened a second plant in Arcadia, Indiana, in 1913. The firm was listed in 1907 as making milk, cherry, and olive bottles. A November 16, 1908, letterhead included “Tableware, stemware, tumblers, complete line of packers goods, etc.” as products (Roller 1998b; Thomas Publishing Co. 1907:158; Welker & Welker 1985:68).

Jenkins received a license for an Owens automatic bottle machine in 1912 (*National Glass Budget* 1913:1; Scoville 1948:106), but the 1913 list failed to include the firm as a bottle maker (*Journal of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry* 1913:952). The plant added a third tank in 1915 (probably for the Owens machine) and made “Blown tableware, jellies, tumblers, goblets, lantern globes, fish globes, display, tablet, cigar & tobacco jars, stemware, bar goods, flint packers & preservers” (Roller 1998b). By November 1916, the factory had a single 6-arm Owens automatic machine for experimental purposes. The listing noted that this was a “special machine” but added no details (Palmer 1917:213).

In 1927, the plant was only listed under the tableware heading and was apparently no longer making bottles. The factory made a dazzling array of products that included “tableware, tumblers, goblets, stemware, bar goods, auto headlight and signal glass, lantern globes, fish globes, display and pickle jars, machine tumblers and sundaes, mixing bowls, kitchen jars, [and] percolator tops” with two furnaces, 28 pots, and two continuous tanks with 25 rings (*American Glass Review* 1927:97-98). By 1934, the plant used four continuous tanks with 26 rings, but furnaces and pots were no longer mentioned (Roller 1994:53). The company went bankrupt in 1932. As a postscript, the Slick Glass Co. reopened the factory in 1945 but only operated it for about a year. The building was razed in 1962 (Welker & Welker 1985:68).

Willis-More Glass Co., Fairton, New Jersey (1892-1896)

Jefferis Glass Co., Fairton, New Jersey (1896-ca. 1913)

Pepper (1971:302) noted that the Jefferis (*sic*) Glass Works grew out of the Fairton Glass Works, operated by the Willis-More Glass Co., at least as early as 1892. The plant was incorporated as the Jefferis Glass Co. in 1896, with Philip Stathem as president, Furman R. Willis as vice president and treasurer, Azariah More as general superintendent and secretary, and Samuel D. Beckett as manager.

Early in 1897, the “Jefferies [*sic*] Glass Mfg. Co.” used 19 pots to make its bottles. Later in the year, now correctly listed as the Jefferis Glass Co., the plant operated two continuous tanks with 22 rings making green and amber bottles. The use of 22 rings continued until the 1901 listing for the plant – still as Jefferies Glass Mfg. Co. (*National Glass Budget* 1897a:7; 1897b:4; 1901:11). By 1903, the Woodbury Glass Co. owned the factory, renting it to Cox & Brothers, who installed several Cox semiautomatic glass machines (a type of machine thus far unresearched). Cox Brothers & Co. operated the plant in 1904, making a general line of bottles at two tanks with 22 rings, although L.E. Smith controlled the operation by 1910. It may have burned in 1913 (Roller 1997).

Discussion and Conclusions

We have not found any researchers who attributed the Goblet-J or Box-J logos to anyone except Jeannette Glass. Only one source suggested the D.C. Jenkins Glass Co. as the user of the Triangle-J mark, but two others placed Jeannette as the user. We doubt that any of these calls were based on industry evidence – more likely just cases of matching the “J” with Jeannette or Jenkins. Since Jeannette used a variety of marks, this may be another one – although we cannot entirely rule out Jenkins. In any event, the logo was apparently little used. As noted above, the Diamond-J mark on Coca-Cola bottles was probably a logo of the Chattanooga Glass Co.

The major issue we need to address centers around the “J.G.CO.” logo. We have only found four glass houses with names that match the J.G.Co. initials, and we have eliminated the Jefferis Glass Co. because we have no evidence linking it to the manufacture of either milk

bottles or catsup bottles – the only container types we have found with the initials on the base. Three possible contenders (Jeannette Glass Co., D.C. Jenkins Glass Co., and George Jonas Glass Co.) remain, and these must be assessed in context with milk bottles, catsup bottles, or both.

All three glass houses made a variety of containers, most with no manufacturer's marks of any sort. Therefore, we must first address the reason why the logos are only found on milk and catsup bottles. Each of these exceptions came about for different reasons.

Milk Bottles

As addressed in multiple sections of this Encyclopedia, Massachusetts led the movement to bring about consistency in milk bottle capacity, introducing its “seal” system in 1900. The onus, however, was on each individual dairy to prove its bottles held the correct amount of milk. In late 1909, the state shifted the onus to the manufacturers, requiring an embossed “seal” with the glass house initials.

New York shifted the system in a different direction, demanding either the initials or logo of the glass house *and* a number assigned by the state. That requirement became common and evolved into a de facto national system of numbering. As noted above, our only example of this logo on a milk bottle base was embossed “J.G.CO. / 36” on the base. This provides two bits of information. First, the glass house using the mark was not a major player on a national scale – or we would have more examples. Second, the firm entered the numbering scheme late enough to have a fairly high number. Whether these facts have any relevance or not remains to be seen.

We can eliminate Jonas because we have found no indication that the firm made milk containers. Jenkins made milk bottles from at least 1907 to 1921 and likely had produced them a year earlier, when the factory was rebuilt in 1906. It is virtually certain the milk bottle production ceased before 1927, and it had probably disappeared early in the 1920s, although we cannot accurately state the precise date. Thus, Jenkins could certainly have made the mouth-blown milk bottle marked JGCO (probably used by a Pennsylvania dairy).

The Jeannette Glass Co. was operating under that name by 1898 and made milk bottles by at least 1901. Although the milk bottle listing ceased after 1912, Hawkins (2009:298) noted that milk bottle production at Jeannette continued until ca. 1918 (i.e., World War I).

Both glass companies obviously made milk bottles during the mouth-blown era (up to ca. 1905 or later), so both could have used the “JGCO” mark. As late as 1913, Jeannette made bottles by both hand and machine. However, Jeanett had wide-mouth, semiautomatic machines by 1899. It is very likely that the company made milk bottles by machine at an early date. Jenkins’ plant still used furnaces and pots (an almost certain sign of hand production) in 1927.

Hawkins (2008) identified Jeannette as the user of the “J.G.CO.” mark on milk bottles, and a possibly important consideration is that the D.C. Jenkins Glass Co. also always listed itself with the founder’s first two initials. This does not eliminate Jenkins from “J.G.CO.” consideration, of course. Other glass companies have used marks that abbreviated the company’s name or initials.

A final consideration is why so few bottles with the initials have appeared. Why would either firm have made only one marked bottle (or just a few)? A possible answer is that the manufacturer began the production of milk bottles by hand, using the “J.G.CO.” mark, then switched to semiautomatic machinery and stopped using a mark. There are known examples (e.g., the American Bottle Co.) where hand-made bottles had manufacturer’s marks, and machine-made ware did not. Semiautomatic machines were used to make milk bottles at least as early as 1904.

This explanation works for Jeannette – adopting wide-mouth machines early. The converse (for Jenkins) is not true. Jenkins made mouth-blown bottles at least as late as 1927. There is no reason to suspect that Jenkins only marked a single bottle. Although neither explanation is fully satisfactory, the Jeannette Glass Co. seems to be a much more likely choice.

Two final observations are clear. Even though milk bottles with the “J.G.CO.” mark were probably made during the Massachusetts “seal” period, none of these firms received a seal from the state. In addition, *very* few of these bottles were made – or we would have been able to find more than a single example.

Catsup Bottles

Catsup bottles present a different dilemma. An important consideration in this case is that the only catsup bottles with the "J.G.CO." mark were produced for the Curtice Brothers at Rochester, New York, and this requires a bit of digression. With the exception of beer and soda bottle manufacturers, most glass houses did not use logos on bottles during the 19th century, although that began to change during the first few years of the 20th century. A few *bottlers*, however, demanded glass house initials or logos on bottles made for them.

Although both of these need *much* more research, the Moxie Nerve Food Co. – a New England soft-drink firm, despite the name – required glass house markings by at least the 1890s, possibly earlier. Curtice Brothers were the only catsup packers we have found that had a similar requirement for catsup bottles, and their regulation probably began in the mid- to late 1890s. On bottles from both of these firms, we find glass house initials or logos embossed on no other container types. "J.G.CO." and "J.G.C." are each one of those marks (with the exception of a single milk bottle).

Our sample is tiny. We have photographed what appears to be a mouth-blown base embossed "J.G.CO. / 1" from the Tucson Urban Renewal collection but, unfortunately, have lost the data sheets to confirm hand manufacture. The machine-made base photographed at a New Mexico bottle show had "J.G.C." above "5" on the base. Finally, two separate eBay auctions offered Curtice Brothers bottles with "J.G.CO. / 6" basemarks. This sequence suggests that "J.G.C." is an error for "J.G.CO." – and we state that hypothesis, even though we currently lack the data to test it.

Jeannette Glass only specifically listed catsup bottles on their 1900 letterhead, although such bottles may have been subsequently included under the packers' heading. Jenkins was only listed as making cherry and olive bottles, and that does not give an indication of catsup production – although it cannot be entirely ruled out. Pepper (1971:302) listed the George Jonas Co. as making catsup bottles. However, *any* of these companies could have gotten a single contract to make bottles for the Curtice Brothers. Curtice Brothers used bottles with at least a dozen different logos.

As with milk bottles, the problem of initials not exactly fitting two of the glass house names remains an issue. As mentioned above, the consistent use of the first name in “George Jonas Glass Co.” cannot completely eliminate the firm from consideration, but it tilts our thinking in the direction of Jeannette.

Catsup *and* Milk Bottles

If the marks on milk bottles and catsup bottles were used by the same company, then Jeannette is the almost certain maker. Jonas did not make milk bottles, and it is unlikely that Jenkins made catsups. The Jeannette initials match exactly, while neither of the others are a perfect fit. The bulk of the evidence, therefore, strongly leans toward the Jeannette Glass Co. However, a question (currently unanswerable) remains: Why did the company using JGCO stop using the logo on later milk bottles (or any other containers)?

Acknowledgments

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