

Maywood Glass Co.

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History

Maywood Glass Co., Los Angeles, California (1930-1959)

Benjamin H. Koons, formerly the mold-shop supervisor for the Southern Glass Co. at Vernon, California, organized the Maywood Glass Co. at Los Angeles in 1939, probably building the factory in 1930. Koons was president with James Moore as vice president, G.R. Helsing as secretary, and S.H. Templeton as Treasurer. By 1932, the factory operated two continuous tanks, one of 15-ton capacity, the other 30 tons. The plant used a single Lynch R machine, one Lynch LA, an O'Neill machine, and two Teeple Johnson machines – along with two feeders licensed by Hartford-Empire (Swain 1935:335; Toulouse 1971:357-358).

In 1936, Maywood operated two continuous tanks, making “flint amber and green proprietary ware, beverage and liquor bottles, packers’ ware, bottle specialties” by machine. Harry J. Houck replaced both Helsing and Templeton, combining the secretary and treasurer positions in 1938. Burton O. Burt photographed the plant on May 17, 1939 (*American Glass Review* 1936:95; Digital Public Library of America; Toulouse 1971:358) (Figure 1).



Figure 1 – Maywood Plant 1939 (Digital Public Library of America n.d.)

When Koons died in 1940, A.J. Mount became Chairman of the Board and held that position until the Anchor Hocking Glass Co. purchased 97% of the Maywood stock in 1942. That year, the company used five machines to make “flint and amber, beverages and liquor ware, packers’ ware, private mould work.” The plant added a sixth machine in 1943. The plant

retained its identity until 1961, when Anchor Hocking bought the remaining stock in 1959 when Maywood and two other West Coast plants became the company's Western Division (*American Glass Review* 1942:104; 1943:104; Simson 1962:63; Toulouse 1971:358).¹

Containers and Marks

MG

Toulouse (1971:357) dated this mark "circa 1930." At this point, we have been unable to find a single example of this mark.

MG-Ligature in Italics

Toulouse (1971:357) illustrated this mark with the "M" and "G" connected and both slanted to the right. He dated it "circa 1940." We have been unable to find a single example of this mark, and this may just have been the way some collector in the May Jones/Toulouse network reported the regular mark (see below).

MG-Ligature

Toulouse (1971:357) illustrated this mark with the "M" in its usual orientation and the "G" backwardly slanted to nestle against the right "leg" of the "M." He dated this logo ca. 1958. Jones (1965:[17]) showed the mark as "Maywood Glass, Maywood, Calif. Established 1930, Merged with Anchor-Hocking, maybe about 1950." By her next edition (Jones 1966:17), she hedged a bit, noting the beginning date as "circa 1930." The MG-ligature continued to be listed in the table of glass trademarks compiled by Owens-Illinois in 1964 (Berge 1980:83) but was no longer present in a 1971 marks list. (Hanlon 1971:6-17). It is likely that the Owens-Illinois table was out of date and inaccurate.

¹ Toulouse (1971:357-358) incorrectly placed the company's ending date at 1961 at the beginning of the section and at 1959 at the end. As confirmed by Simson (1961), the 1961 date is correct.

Like most glass houses, Maywood did not apply date codes to most of its non-returnable bottles, although the factory did emboss two-digit date codes on beer, soda, and liquor bottles by at least 1940. It is probable that the firm applied single-digit date codes on such bottles during the 1930s, although we do not have a sufficient data set to ascertain when such codes began. Späth et al. (2000:95), for example, listed an amber beer bottle base embossed “3 (center left) \ {MG ligature} (center) / 9.” The “9” was probably a date code for 1939.



Figure 2 – MG-ligature – stippling

Empirical evidence suggests that the MG-ligature was accompanied by stippling on beer bottle bases by at least 1942. In some cases, where the stippling was heavy, the logo and codes were stamped into the stippling in sunken rectangles (Figure 2). This apparently was associated with individual mold makers rather than as a dated context.



Figure 3 – MG-ligature variations

From photos and examples in our possession, we have discovered three variations of the MG-ligature on beer bottle bases (Figure 3):

- 1) M (sloped legs), rounded G (leaning) 43, 44 (as well as one 44 example with an upright G)
- 2) M (vertical legs), rounded G (upright) 45
- 3) M (sloped legs), squared G 44, 45, 46

From this, we can hypothesize that Maywood used a rounded “G” in the logo from its inception until 1945 and a squared “G” from 1944 to 1961, when the firm was completely absorbed by Anchor Hocking. It is likely that Maywood adopted the squared “G” logo in 1944, and the single 1945 example had an altered date code from an earlier year.

A small number of the bottles from Maywood bear the union stamp – “UNION (slight arch) / GBBA / MADE (slight inverted arch)” with the “G” and “A” much larger, filling in the ends of the other two words to make the stamp roughly oval (Figure 4). The first “B” was in mirror image. The stamp was used by the Glass Bottle Blowers Association, possibly from the adoption of the name in 1895. In both of our photos, the “G” in the MG-ligature is indistinct, but it appears to be squared. Our examples have no obvious date codes, but bear a “2” and “4” code respectively below the union stamp. If the use of the GBBA initials reflects a period of union activity, it was apparently short.



Figure 4 – Union label (eBay)

Coca-Cola Bottles

The MG-ligature only appeared on Coca-Cola bottles of “IN U.S. PATENT OFFICE” variety. They were made between 1952 and 1957. The logo was embossed in the center of the base, except when the large letter baseplate had the state name embossed across the center; those had the logo below the state name. The Coke bottlers using the containers were at least in California, Arizona, and Idaho, except for a single dealer in Alaska. All bottles in this sample had marks of the third style, i.e., sloped legs on the “M” and a squared “G” (Bill Porter, personal communication, 5/14/2008).

Discussion and Conclusions

Although MG-ligature occurs in at least three variations, we have found no evidence to support the first two marks claimed by Toulouse. These were probably incorrectly reported to him by his collector network or may have been a misunderstanding of a description of the variations we have found. Toulouse almost certainly guessed at the dating. It is likely that Maywood only used a single mark (MG-ligature) – with a change from a rounded “G” to a squared “G” in 1944 – for its entire existence.

It is probable that Maywood adopted the double-digit date code system in 1940 (the earliest report of such code), when the federal government mandated double-digit date codes on

beer bottles. The switch from the rounded G to the Squared G seems to have occurred shortly after the acquisition of Maywood by the Anchor Hocking Glass Co.

One interesting sideline is worth addressing. Although this line of inquiry is in its infancy, our limited observation of the GBBA union marks suggests that these logos appeared on chemical bottles, especially those used for bleach. This *may* indicate that one bleach company (or more) was union operated and only purchased glass from union glass houses that were willing to emboss the union stamp on their products. This idea needs much more research and documentation.

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