

Ravenna Glass Co.

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The Ravenna Glass Works (or company) had a troubled history with at least five incarnations during the period between 1857 and 1893. The firm made fruit jars and flasks marked with its name as well as one type of jar embossed with the “R.G.W.” initials. The first firm was almost certainly the initial manufacturer of the barrel-shaped fruit jars that were afterward produced by Potter & Bodine and the Cohansey Glass Mfg. Co.

History

Ravenna Glass Co., Ravenna, Ohio (1857-1869)

There were at least five operating companies involved in the Ravenna Glass Works and/or Ravenna Glass Co., although the second one probably made no glass.

First Ravenna Glass Co. (1857-1860)

McKearin and Wilson (1978:164) told a possibly apocryphal story about how Seth Day broke a window at his store in Ravenna, Ohio, in 1851 and was eventually led into the glass business because of difficulty in finding replacement glass.

Of more certainty, Seth Day, his wife, Mary, Ebenezer and Frances F. Spaulding, plus Samuel H. and Helen F. Terry, under the banner of the Ravenna Glass Co., purchased three parcels of land at Ravenna in August and September of 1857 and transferred the titles to the Ravenna Glass Co. The deed to the first lot included the words, “Being on which the Glass factory is building . . .” This clearly indicated that the plant was intended to be constructed on that lot (Roller 1997). Day apparently converted his store into the sales vehicle for the fledgling glass works. On May 7, 1857, the *Portage Sentinel* posted the notice that the Ravenna Glass Works offered a variety of goods for sale, including “dry goods, groceries, hardware, boots and shoes, hats and caps, carpets, etc.” The paper added, “Most kinds of produce taken in exchange for goods at the highest market prices.” The address was the Stone Building, Main St.

An ad in the October 31, 1857, issue of the *Cleveland, Leader* called the firm “Manufacturers of All Kinds of Green Glass Ware,” featuring especially Druggist’s Ware, although it also offered “vials, in every variety, Caster Oil, Packing, flask and globe bottles, Cap Jars, Demijohns, &c. Also Porter, Mineral Water and Wine bottles, Ink Stands, Ink bottles, Glass Milk Pans, &c., &c.” The firm bragged that “we manufacture the ROCK GLASS, which is far superior to the ordinary Green Globe, being much lighter colored and tougher, and is nearly equal to the best French glass.”

The new year began with elections of new officers: E. Spaulding was president with Julian Day as treasurer, W.K. Witter as secretary, and S. Terry as superintendent (*Portage Sentinel* 1/7/1858). Business, however, was apparently not as good as the group anticipated (McKearin and Wilson 1978:164; Roller 1997). An ad from August 19, 1858, shows that Julius Day and Samuel H. Terry operated the firm by that time (Roller 2011:445). Seth and Julius were both listed in the 1860 census and were almost certainly related, possibly father and son; Julius was 74 years old, Seth 36.

A report in the *Sentinel* on February 10, 1859, could be interpreted two ways. The paper noted that “the assignees of the Ravenna Glass Company announce that they will re-commence the selling of goods at the Stone Mountain on Monday, the 14th inst.” The term “assignees” could mean that the business was bankrupt, and the referees were selling off the accumulated goods. On the other hand, the same word could indicate the store was assigned to sell the goods for the productive factory. In the same issue, the *Sentinel* carried an ad for Ravenna Glass. Note that the ad was a reuse of an earlier, 1858, copy:

What Everybody Wants!!

Air-Tight Fruit Cans at wholesale or retail at the Ravenna Glass Co. Store. July 22, 1858.

It seems likely that the first company remained in business throughout 1860, possibly until early 1861, almost certainly ceasing production prior to April.

Second and Third Ravenna Glass Co. (1861) (1863-1864)

The plant sold at a sheriff’s sale on April 20, 1861, for \$2,783.34 to John and George Forder. Just over a year later, the sheriff again sold the property to George Messenger for \$2,400

on July 19, 1862 (McKearin and Wilson 1978:164; Roller 1997). The *Ohio Farmer* reported on the new arrangement on January 21, 1863: “T.J. Terry . . . is now making arrangements to put the glassworks . . . in blast. . . . As before, when these were in operation, all kinds of Druggist’s Ware, Wine Bottles and Bottles of every kind will be manufactured.”

But, this firm, too, failed. In the *Portage County Democrat* for February 10, 1864, Henry G. Abbey announced, “I shall offer for sale at public auction at the south door of the Federal Court Building . . . on the fourteenth day of March, 1864,” the Ravenna Glass Co. The report gave details about the location but offered no information about the buildings or equipment. Although the owners of the Ravenna Glass Co. were not mentioned, at least three suits were filed between 1863 and 1865 (McKearin and Wilson 1978:164; Roller 1997).

Fourth Company – Diamond Glass Co. (1867-ca. 1887)

F.W. Coffin, George Robinson, D.C. Coolman, H.H. Stevens, and J.D. Horton incorporated the Diamond Glass Co. in October 1867 and purchased the Ravenna Glass Works for \$8,000 at yet another sheriff’s sale on May 17, 1867. The Diamond Glass Works finally purchased the Ravenna Glass Works on September 15, 1869, effectively ending the tenure of the Ravenna Glass Co.¹ Although we have not discovered the date when Diamond Glass ceased operations, it was no later than September of 1887 (McKearin & Wilson 1978:164; Roller 1997).

Fifth Company – Ravenn Glass Co. (1887-1888)

The September 29, 1887, issue of the *Democratic Press* reported that

work at the Ravenna Glass Works commenced Friday last. . . . The company will manufacture fruit cans, oil cans, and a variety of pressed glass goods. . . . The starting of this factory is an important addition to Ravenna’s manufacturing

¹ The *Daily Empire* noted on May 17, 1867, that “the Ravenna Glass Works have been sold at Sheriff’s sale for \$8,000.” But, that would have been five months prior to the incorporation of the Diamond Glass Co. If this was yet another sale, the firm may not have actually gone into production. The McKearins’ date of 1869 sounds a bit late but is probably correct.

enterprises, and we wish the young gentlemen who are engaged in it the most abundant success.

This obviously referred to yet a new firm rather than a seasonal startup. As usual, the firm did not last long. The new Ravenna Glass Co. operated until fire destroyed the plant at midnight on April 9, 1888. Although the *Cleveland Leader* (4/10/1888) reported the loss “about \$30,000, fully insured,” the plant was not rebuilt. According to the *Plain Dealer*, the United States Glass Co. purchased the Ravenna Glass Works on August 9, 1889 – although it was unclear whether that was just the land or other considerations as well. *China, Glass & Lamps* reported in March 1893 that “all that is not moveable [of the old plant] . . . will be abandoned” (McKearin and Wilson 1978:164; Roller 1997).

As noted by Toulouse (1971:437) various researchers (and we add, newspapers) called the operation “Works” and “Company” – and glassware used both designations. The first firm used the term “Company” in its title, and the word “Works” may have indicated the factory. There is also little question that the newspapers used both terms indiscriminately, and the term “Works” – especially – may have been used casually.

Containers and Marks

Toulouse (1971:437) stressed the fact that a “Jeny Lind” flask (her name was actually Jenny) was made by the Ravenna Glass Works with an iron pontil scar on the base, indicating a manufacture that was probably not later than a couple of years after Jenny Lind’s 1850-1852 visit to the U.S. Since the barrel-shaped, wax-sealer fruit jars also had similar pontil scars, most popular during the 1850-1855 period, he suggested that the plant may have been open as early as ca. 1850 – although we now know that the plant was not opened until seven years later. McKearin and Wilson (549) noted that one “Jeny Lind “ flask was “attributed to Ravenna Glassworks.” The authors also suggested other flasks – unmarked by the firm name or logo – as possibly being made by Ravenna. For more on these other possibilities, see McKearin & Wilson (1978:165).

RGW (1857-1861)

Roller (1983:307; 2011:449) noted “RGW 1857” debossed on the base of a groove-ring wax sealer fruit jar and attributed the jar to the Ravenna Glass Co. Creswick (1987:185) illustrated the jar with the mark debossed into the resting point of the base (Figure 1). She suggested the Ravenna Glass Works, ca. 1850-1867. We agree with the identification of the maker as Ravenna; however, since 1857 was the initial year of the company’s existence, the jars cannot predate that time. They may have continued in production for a few years. These may have been made before the jars embossed “RAVENNA GLASS WORKS,” although the products could have been made concurrently.

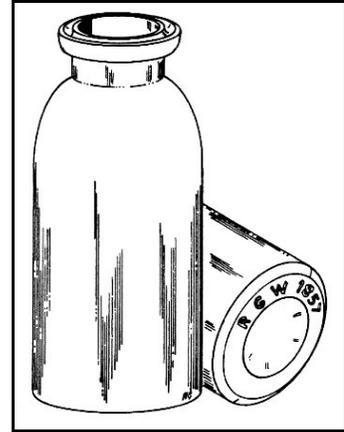


Figure 1 – RGW
(Creswick 1987:185)

RAVENNA GLASS WORKS (1857-1869)

Toulouse (1969:259-260) noted that a grooved-ring wax-sealer fruit jar, made to look like a barrel, was embossed “RAVENNA / GLASS WORKS / OHIO.” on the front and “AIR TIGHT FRUIT JAR” on the reverse (Figure 2). The jar was made ca. 1850 by the Ravenna Glass Works, Ravenna, Ohio. He noted that the company might have been in business between 1850 and 1857 or 1864. In his later book, Toulouse (1971:437) continued to suggest that the mark could have been used as early as 1850, based on the pontil marks on the bases of both “Jeny Lind” flasks and wax-sealer fruit jars.



Figure 2 – Ravenna Glass Works
(North American Glass)

Roller (1983:304) dated the jars to “c. 1858 - early 1860s” and added that the “pint jars were probably made to the April 13, 1858 Borden patent for a process to form the wax groove by pushing down on a forming tool while the glass was still plastic.” Although our sample is small, we have not seen any evidence of this tooling process on the Ravenna jars. Creswick (1987:183) illustrated the variations, also showing a slight style difference in the jars’ necks. She suggested that the jars were made between ca. 1857 and 1867 (Figure 3).

Roller (2011:445) added that a Ravenna Glass Co. Store ad in August 19, 1858, offered “Air-Tight Fruit Cans.” The editors discussed two variations – one embossed “RAVENNA / GLASS / WORKS” with “AIR-TIGHT / FRUIT / JAR” on the reverse; the other was marked as discussed in Toulouse above (Figures 4 & 5). They also noted Air-Tight fruit jars in barrel



Figure 4 – Ravenna Glass Works (North American Glass)

shapes made by Potter & Bodine and by the Cohansey Glass Mfg. Co. In addition, another Air-Tight Fruit Jar had no manufacturer’s information (Roller 2011:20, 138, 427 – see below for more on all of these jars). At least some of these jars had fire-polished rims, although others were made with a rough rim where the blow pipe was burst off and not fire polished (Figure 6). All had bare iron pontil scars on their bases. See the sections on Potter & Bodine and the Cohansey Glass Mfg. Co. for more



Figure 6 – Rims (North American Glass)

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were made with a rough rim where the blow pipe was burst off and not fire polished (Figure 6). All had bare iron pontil scars on their bases. See the sections on Potter & Bodine and the Cohansey Glass Mfg. Co. for more information on those firms and their jars (Figure 7).

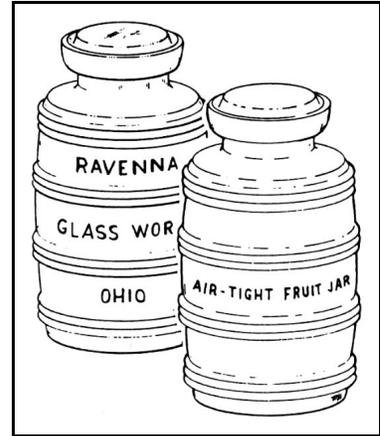


Figure 3 – Ravenna Glass Works (Creswick 1987:183)

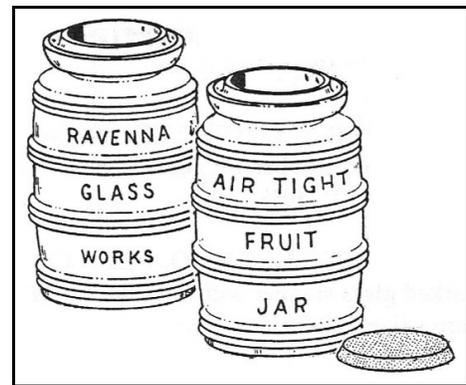


Figure 5 – Ravenna Glass Works (Creswick 1987:183)

McKearin and Wilson (1978:164, 669, 675) also noted a flask embossed only with “RAVENNA / GLASS / WORKS” on one side (Figure 8). The finish was tooled with a flat ring below the rim, and the base had a pontil scar. They dated the flask ca. 1865 but gave no reason for the date. They considered the flask scarce. The flasks had pontil scars on their bases. We suggest that this was a product of the first Ravenna Glass Works based on the use of “WORKS” – the



Figure 7 – Iron pontil scar (North American Glass)

term found on fruit jars that were almost certainly Figure 9 – Ravenna flasks (McKearin & Wilson 1978:515, 565, 669) produced during this 1857-1860 period. Also see the Discussion and Conclusions section below.



Figure 8 – Ravenna flask (North American Glass)

RAVENNA GLASS COMPANY (1863-1864)

McKearin and Wilson (1978:165, 565) discussed a flask embossed “RAVENNA” above an anchor and “GLASS / COMPANY” below it – with an eagle embossed on the reverse (Figures 9 & 10). The flasks were made with three types of finishes: 1) a plain rim (lip); 2) plain with laid-on ring; and 3) rounded double collar (two-part finish).



Figure 10 – Ravenna Glass Company (North American Glass)

rounded double collar (two-part finish). The bases could be smooth or have a disk in the center. The authors rated the flasks as common and dated them 1857-ca. 1869. We believe that this was a product of the third Ravenna Glass Co., in business in 1863 and 1864, although the molds may have continued in use by the Diamond Glass Co. until they wore out or possibly even revived by the final Ravenna Glass during 1877-1888.

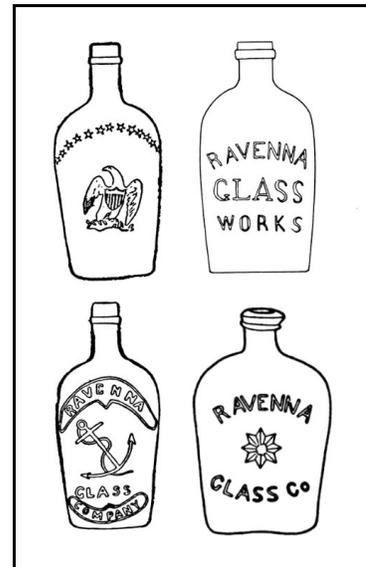


Figure 9 – Ravenna flasks (McKearin & Wilson 1978:515, 565, 669)

RAVENNA GLASS Co. (1863-1864)

This mark appeared in Toulouse (1971:436) and referred to a single flask embossed “TRAVELER’S / COMPANION” on one side and “RAVENNA / GLASS Co.” on the other (Figure 11). McKearin and Wilson (1978:165, 515, 671-672) listed two variations of the flask, dating both 1857-ca. 1869. The first of these had a tooled rim with a flat ring below it and a base “with or without black-oxide deposit from pontil.” The second could have two different finish types, both more complex with two parts, while the base indicated a two-piece mold with a post bottom. Like the flask discussed in the previous paragraph, we suggest that this was made by the third Ravenna Glass, 1863-1864. Similarly, the molds could have continued in use later.



Figure 11 – Ravenna Glass Co.
(North American Glass)

Barrel-Shaped Jars

The Ravenna Glass Works was one of three glass houses (Ravenna, Potter & Bodine, and the Cohansey Glass Mfg. Co.) that offered barrel-shaped, wax-sealer fruit jars for sale during the mid- to late 19th century. In the sequence below, we have provided a probable chronology for the manufacture of these jars based on historic references, patent dates, and manufacturing characteristics of the jars. After a brief description of the jars and the important features of each one, we have proved a table of their use.

All of these jars had several characteristics in common. Their vertical sides were rounded into a “barrel” shape, and all of them used the typical grooved-ring, wax-sealer finishes (although Potter & Bodine produced one variation with an open, smoothed rim). Each jar had four sets of “hoops” – one at the shoulder, one at the heel, with the other two equally spaced in between (although the center space was wider in the Cohansey jars). Each “hoop” consisted of three horizontal ribs encircling the body. Only the embossing and certain manufacturing features differed with each glass house and variations used by each manufacturer. All three glass houses called the jars Air-Tight Fruit Jars. Each of the early jars had applied finishes, but the ones made by Cohansey had the finishes blow in molds and a single variation that was machine made.

Ravenna Glass Works (1858-ca. 1860)

The Ravenna Glass Works was in production by at least October 31, 1857, when the *Cleveland, Leader* carried an ad for the glass house. The copy listed a number of specific types of glass containers but made no mention of Air-Tight Fruit Jars. The first acknowledgment we have found for the “Air-Tight Fruit Cans” was in an ad from the Ravenna Glass Co. store in the February 10, 1859, issue of the *Portage Sentinel* (Figure 12). Within the ad was the date July 22, 1858, almost certainly indicating a reprint of an earlier ad (also mentioned by Roller 2011:445 with a date of August 19, 1858). The older date very likely sets an initial time for the beginning of production for the jars.

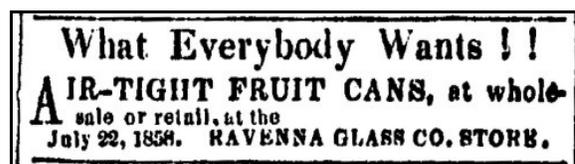


Figure 12 – Air-Tight ad (*Portage Sentinel* 2/10/1859)

The first Ravenna Glass Works (or Co.) failed at some point prior to April 20, 1861, when new owners purchased the plant at a sheriff’s sale. However, it is doubtful that the new firm made any glass. The sheriff again sold the property on July 19, 1862. The only reference we have found for products for this third short-lived incarnation was for “all kinds of Druggist’s Ware, Wine Bottles and Bottles of every kind” in the *Ohio Farmer* of January 21, 1863. This firm, too, was offered at auction on February 10, 1864. It is therefore unlikely that any of the later Ravenna Glass firms made the barrel-shaped Air-Tight Fruit Jars.

Aside from the embossing, one characteristic sets these jars apart from the otherwise identical shapes of the Potter & Bodine containers. The jars were blown into a mold, using the blow-over-and-burst method. According to Lindsey (2018):

This process entailed the blowing of a relatively large bubble in the glass just above the mold top (i.e., above the upper end of the bottle neck beyond the mold edge) which thinned the glass sufficiently to allow the bubble to “burst” - with either a subtle twist of the blowpipe and/or a larger puff of air from the blower (gaffer) - detaching the blowpipe.

This greatly sped up production, although it left an unsightly broken rim or lip on the bottle or jar. This could be ground down, fire polished (the finish placed back in the furnace to lightly melt the rim), or just left jagged. The jars made by the Ravenna Glass Co. clearly exhibited jagged glass at the rim or lip (see Figure 6).

Of interest, the jars also had applied finishes. Since we typically think of applied finishes as a blob of glass applied to the *top* of the finish then tooled into shape, both a broken rim (lip) *and* an applied finish seems counterintuitive. However, in this case the finish was applied around the neck then tooled into place, mostly without touching the jagged edge.

These jars were made in two variations, probably used concurrently. One was embossed “RAVENNA / GLASS WORKS / OHIO” on the front and “AIR-TIGHT FRUIT JAR” in the center of the reverse. The other had “RAVENNA / GLASS / WORKS” on the front with “AIR-TIGHT / FRUIT / JAR” on the reverse (see Figures 2-5).

Potter & Bodine (1855-1863)

The Bodine family glass businesses had an unusual set of trajectories. Joel F. Bodine became involved in the Washington Glass Works at Squankum, New Jersey, in 1839 and became the sole proprietor in 1842, bringing his sons into the business four years later. The family breached in 1855, with one group remaining at Squankum (renamed Williamstown). This branch, Bodine and

Brothers, produced fruit jars embossed “NE PLUS ULTRA AIR TIGHT FRUIT JAR” – in direct competition with the other branch (see below). These were *not* barrel shaped and cease to be relevant to this study.

For more information, see the section on the Bodine Glass Companies.



Figure 13 – Potter & Bodine jars (North American Glass)

The second branch, with a factory located at Bridgeton, New Jersey, began as Potter & Bodine ca. 1856 and lasted until F.&J. Bodine gained control of the operation in 1863. The latter firm ceased production in

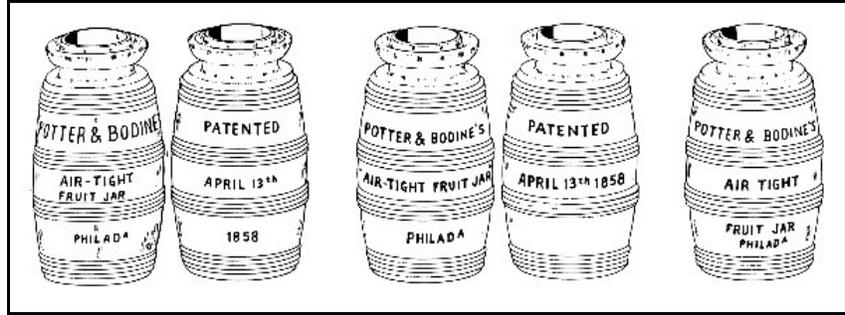


Figure 14 – Potter & Bodine jars (Creswick 1987:179)

1869. Potter & Bodine manufactured a total of 15 variations of Air-Tight Fruit Jars, many carrying a patent date of April 13, 1858. Three of these – all barrel shaped – are relevant to this study. As noted above, each of these retained the same shape and name (AIR-TIGHT FRUIT JAR) as the ones made by Ravenna Glass, although the embossing was different, identifying Potter & Bodine (Figures 13 & 14). For more information about these specific jars, see the section on the Bodine Glass Companies.

Of significance to this study, two of the three barrel-shaped jars were embossed with an April 13, 1858, patent date. On that date, Joseph J. Borden received Patent No. 19,964 for an “Improvement in Preserving-Jars.” The idea was actually to create a process for forming the wax groove on the finish of wax-sealer jars. The application of this method – used by the Bodines and the later Cohansey firm (see below) – eliminated the jagged edges of the rim (see Figure 8). All three variations had pontil scars, some of them bare iron.

Although the relationship between Ravenna Glass and Potter & Bodine is unclear, the latter firm probably picked up the barrel shape at the beginning of 1861, when the first Ravenna works ceased operations, although it is unlikely that Potter & Bodine purchased the molds. The embossing on the jars made by each firm was *very* different, and none of the jar sources reported any ghost lettering. Because Potter & Bodine already made a variety of Air-Tight fruit jars, the adoption of the barrel jars seems like a natural progression. Potter & Bodine almost certainly continued to produce the jars until F.&J. Bodine took control in 1863. The successor firm may have continued to make the containers until the molds wore out.

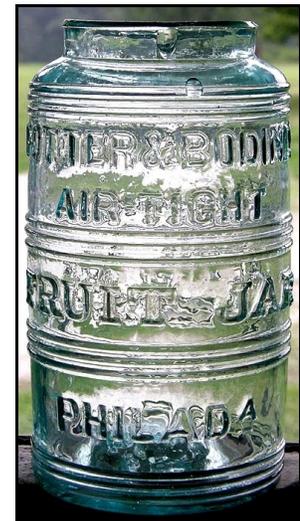


Figure 15 – Oddity (North American Glass)

Potter & Bodine also made a single oddity. This variation of the barrel jar had no wax-sealer finish. Instead, the rim (lip) was left open and apparently fire polished smooth. We have no explanation for this unusual jar (Figure 15).

Cohansey Glass Mfg. Co. (1870-1901)

The Cohansey Glass Mfg. Co. blossomed from F.&J. Bodine in 1870 – an incorporation of the earlier firm. Francis L. Bodine applied for a patent for a “Glass Jar” on February 15, 1877, and received Design Patent No. 9,860 on March 20 of the same year. This differed only slightly from the earlier unpatented barrel designs, by having a wider space between the second and third “hoops” and vertical lines to form “staves” (Figure 16). The bases, however, were made with three variations, all bearing the Cohansey name (Figure 17). All examples we have seen had the staves, so there was almost certainly a break between the Potter & Bodine jars and the ones revitalized in 1877 by Cohansey. Cohansey probably dropped the line when it reorganized in 1901.



Figure 17 – Cohansey bases (eBay; North American Glass)

An interesting variation was also probably made by Cohansey. These were amber in color (a Cohansey specialty) and made in barrel shapes with staves that were embossed “GLOBE (horizontal) / TOBACCO COMPANY (arch) / DETROIT & WINDSOR (in waves)” on one side and “PAT. OCT. 10TH, 1882” below the bottom “hoop” (Figure 18).

The central area between “hoops” was much wider. Variations included the elimination of the patent information



Figure 16 – Cohansey jar (North American Glass)



Figure 18 – Globe jar (eBay)

from the heel and one without “& WINDSOR.” They were topped with continuous-thread finishes. Although the jars lacked any embossed Cohansey name, the staves and color almost certainly serve as an identifying mark. Although the date at the heel of the jar was listed as a patent, it was actually for Trademark No. 9,720, issued to the Globe Tobacco Co. on October 10, 1882, for the representation of a barrel with a cover and bail (*Official Gazette of the United States Patent Office* 1882:313). So, the trademark is for the image conveyed by the jar rather than the design for the jar, itself. Similar trademarks were taken out for the famous Coca-Cola hobble-skirt bottle and for a Haig & Haig whiskey container.

We have found surprisingly little about the history of the Globe Tobacco Co. O.P. Hazard, Thomas McGraw, William Moore and Hiram Walker incorporated the Globe Tobacco Co. in 1871. By at least 1879, the company had a plant or sales office at Windsor, Ontario, Canada. The firm built a six-story building at 407 East Fort St., Detroit, Michigan, in 1888, but the American Tobacco Co. purchased the operation in 1904 (Bottle Pickers n.d.). The timing of the company is consistent with the tenure of the Cohansey Glass Mfg. Co.

A Final Variation

A final variation of the jar needs to be addressed. These were embossed “AIR-TIGHT FRUIT JAR” across the center space between two “hoops” but had no embossed firm name. The base had an iron pontil scar, and the finishes were applied. One example from North American Glass had the jagged rim from the blow-over-and-burst method, but the remainder of the jars had fire polished rims. The fire polishing often created a very uneven rim and frequently caused the grooved ring to sag – probably the reason the Ravenna jars retained the jagged edges on the rims (Figures 19 & 20).



Figure 19 – Air-Tight jar (Creswick 1987:4; North American Glass)

We can hypothesize that these jars were the first ones produced by the Ravenna Glass Works based on two major characteristics. First, the method of manufacture was essentially identical. Only the extra step of fire polishing was different, and that was probably dropped

because of the problems it caused with the finish. The jar title embossed at the center of the jar was identical to the one on the reverse of one variation of the Ravenna jars embossed “RAVENNA / GLASS WORKS / OHIO” on the front. The letters are the same size and font on each jar (see Figures 2 & 3).



Figure 20 – Fire-polished rim (North American Glass)

Summary

We conclude that all four of the barrel-shaped fruit jars were related and sequential in production, beginning with the otherwise unmarked examples with “AIR-TIGHT FRUIT JAR” embossed on the body – made by the Ravenna Glass Works. This jar had a fire polished rim that was dropped in favor of the jagged rim concurrently with the embossing of the Ravenna Glass Works name on the opposite side. The firm used an additional mold with slightly different positioning of the information. The unnamed jar was only made in 1858, the others in 1859 and 1860.

Potter & Bodine, already makers of Air-Tight jars with straight sides, picked up the barrel design in 1861 and used it with three different mold styles until the firm was replaced by F.&J. Bodine in 1863, although the latter entity may have continued the jars until the molds wore out. These jars had the jagged edges tooled out with a special finish process.

The final barrel maker, the Cohansey Glass Co., was an incorporation of F.&J. Bodine in 1870, but the new firm did not adopt the barrel shape until Francis Bodine patented a new design that included “staves” in 1877. The factory continued to produce the jars – including a machine-made variation – until the reorganization of 1901. See Table 1 for a more graphic chronology.

Table 1 – Chronology of Barrel-Shaped Air-Tight Fruit Jars

Front	Reverse	Glass House	Dates
no embossing	AIR-TIGHT FRUIT JAR	Ravenna	1858
RAVENNA / GLASS WORKS / OHIO	AIR-TIGHT FRUIT JAR	Ravenna	1859-1860
RAVENNA / GLASS / WORKS	AIR-TIGHT / FRUIT / JAR	Ravenna	1859-1860
POTTER & BODINE / AIR-TIGHT / FRUIT JAR / PHILAD ^A	PATENTED / APRIL 13 TH / 1858	Potter & Bodine	1861-1863
POTTER & BODINE / AIR-TIGHT FRUIT JAR / PHILAD ^A	PATENTED / APRIL 13 TH 1858	Potter & Bodine	1861-1863
POTTER & BODINE / AIR-TIGHT / FRUIT JAR / PHILAD ^A	no embossing	Potter & Bodine	1861-1863
no embossing front or reverse	GLASS MFG CO (arch) / {number} / COHANSEY (horiz) / PAT MAR 20 77 (inverted arch)	Cohansey	1877-1900
no embossing front or reverse	GLASS MF'G Co (arch) / {number} / COHANSEY (horiz) / PAT / MCH. 20. 77 (inverted arch)	Cohansey	1877-1900
no embossing front or reverse	no embossing	Cohansey	1877-1900
no embossing front or reverse	no embossing – machine made	Cohansey	1900-1901

Discussion and Conclusions

We have assigned four marks (RGW, RAVENNA GLASS WORKS, RAVENNA GLASS Co., and RAVENNA GLASS COMPANY) to the Ravenna Glass Co. (Works). Although we found eight companies with RGW initials, none but Ravenna fit the time period and made fruit jars. The year, 1857, embossed to the right of “RGW,” is the date that Ravenna was founded; therefore, this was almost certainly the initial jar produced by the company. The jar was thus made by the first company, owned by Seth Day and his companions, between 1857 and 1860 – although the molds could have continued in use by the next firm. “RAVENNA GLASS WORKS” on both barrel fruit jars and flasks was almost certainly also the logo of the first Ravenna Glass business. “RAVENNA GLASS Co.” (and COMPANY) was very likely the mark of the third Ravenna Glass firm, between 1862 and 1864. The final Ravenna incarnation may have continued to use the “Co.” and/or “COMPANY” molds, but that is unlikely since Diamond Glass Co. operated the factory in between.

Our study of barrel-shaped jars suggests that the Ravenna Glass Works was the first glass house to produce the style from 1858 to 1860. Although the relationship is unclear, Potter & Bodine picked up the exact style ca. 1861 (although with different embossing) and made the jars until 1863. The style lay dormant until Francis Bodine patented a slightly different design in 1877 with vertical lines to create “slats” – a style manufactured by the Cohansey Glass Mfg. Co. from 1877 to the reorganization of 1901. Cohansey also made the patented barrel-shaped jars for the Globe Tobacco Co. during roughly the same period.

Acknowledgments

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