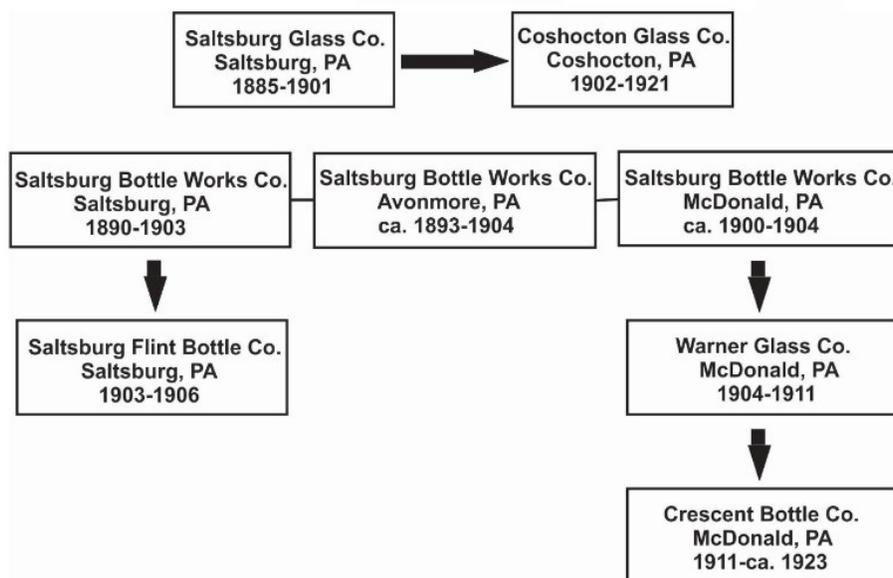


Saltsburg Bottle Works Co.

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with contributions by David Whitten

Like many similar studies, the older histories of glassmaking in Saltsburg are confusing. The Saltsburg Glass Co. was unrelated to the Saltsburg Bottle Works Co. The Saltsburg Bottle Works Co. – the focus of this study – opened at Saltsburg in 1890 and spread to Avondale and McDonald (all in Pennsylvania), becoming the Saltsburg Flint Bottle Co., Ltd., in 1903 – although all three branches were gone the following year. The McDonald plant continued on as the Warner Glass Co. until 1911, when it became the Crescent Glass Co.



Histories

Saltsburg Glass Co., Saltsburg, Pennsylvania (1885-1901)

The Saltsburg Glass Co. built their plant at Saltsburg in 1885, making “fruit jars, crocks, and other like articles” of black glass – the color made from shale (*Pottery and Glassware Reporter*, Feb. 12, 1885 – quoted in Roller 1998). A group headed by James P. Watson

purchased the plant in November of 1889, improving the facility and manufacturing prescription bottles (Hawkins 2009:451; Online Biographies n.d.). An 1891 ad featured a new bottle – the Monogram Square (Bethman 1991:84 – Figure 1). It is important to note that the “monogram” in the name was for the *druggists* not a Saltsburg Glass monogram. In mid-November of 1900, the Saltsburg Glass Co. incorporated with a capital of \$1,000. The directors were Joseph McQuaide, H.L. Greer, and S.J. Robinson.



Figure 1 – Saltsburg 1891 ad (Bethman 1991:84)

According to von Mechow (2019), the Coshocton, Pennsylvania, Board of Trade offered the firm \$15,000 and a three acres of ground to make a move to its location, and the glass company agreed, moving its operation in mid-1901 and becoming the Coshocton Glass Co. See the section on Coshocton for more on that firm. The Saltsburg Glass Co. was unrelated to the Saltsburg Bottle Works Co., and the two should not be confused.

Saltsburg Bottle Works Co., Ltd., Saltsburg, Pennsylvania (1890-1903)

The Saltsburg Bottle Works Co., Ltd. opened in 1890 (Hawkins 2009:451). In 1897, the Saltsburg Bottle Works Co., Ltd. used 10 pots to make its bottles. The following year, the number of pots had increased to 12. A September 1898 listing, however, noted that the company used two furnaces with 22 pots. That almost certainly included both the Saltsburg and Avonmore plants (see below) (*National Glass Budget* 1897:7; 1898a:7; 1898b:3).

According to the *Era Blue Book* (Haynes & Co. 1900), the Saltsburg Bottle Works Co. was making “flint bottles and glassware” at 6th and Liberty Streets, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1900. The Pittsburgh address was almost certainly either a business office or a sales outlet. By 1900, the company had also acquired a single furnace, 14-pot plant in McDonald, Pennsylvania (Hawkins 2009:453).

Saltsburg Flint Bottle Co., Saltsburg, Pennsylvania (1903-1906)

The firm incorporated as the Saltsburg Flint Bottle Co. on September 10, 1903, with a capital of \$30,000 (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania 1903:135; Hawkins 2009:451). The Saltsburg operation had T.S. Pierce as its president with L.O. Steele as secretary and treasurer and F.L. Carter as manager. Although Steele remained as president the following year, R.W. Farr became vice president with P.Y. Elder as secretary-treasurer and L.O. Steele moving into the plant manager position. The plant made “prescription ware” at one continuous tank and was listed as “out of business since 1911” (*American Glass Review* 1934:169; Roller 1998).

However, Hawkins (2009:451) noted that the Saltsburg plant was idled in 1906 and remained out of production until it was operated by the Tibby Brothers – under thier name – in 1907. The Tibby Brothers ran the plant for less than a year. Glass factory listings were known to be in error for closing dates; Hawkins is certainly correct. To make this even more confusing, the Saltsburg Flint Bottle Co. paid its corporate taxes from 1908 to 1917 – but not in 1918. Unfortunately, the listings did not include the location of the firm. This may be a case where the corporation remained open, paying a minimum tax in case things improved – long after the factory had been sold.

Saltsburg Bottle Works Co., Ltd., Avonmore, Pennsylvania (ca. 1893-1904)

The Saltsburg Bottle Works Co. bought the former Keystone Window Glass plant in Avonmore, Pennsylvania, by 1893 (Hawkins 2009:451). Roller (1996a) quoted the December 13, 1893, issue of *China, Glass & Lamps* that the plant “resumed last week with one 12-pot furnace making prescriptions” (our emphasis). The term “resumed” suggests that the plant was in operation at some point earlier. The *Cleveland Leader*, however, cryptically noted on November 6, 1896, that “the glassworks at Avonmore, Pa., which have been idle for a year, have been purchased by the Saltsburg Bottle Company, and will begin blowing at once.”

In 1904, however, the Avonmore branch remained listed as the Saltsburg Bottle Works Co., Ltd., with C.H. Beach as president, E.L. Warner as vice president, J.J. Kintner as secretary, and W.J. Lehan as plant manager. The naming of different presidents at the two locations suggests that the installations were separate companies by that time. The Avonmore plant made

“prescription and liquor ware” and was listed as “out of business since 1912” (*American Glass Review* 1934:169). An entry in Rootsweb (2007), however, noted that the firm reorganized as the Warner Glass Co. in January of 1904.

Saltsburg Bottle Works Co., Ltd., McDonald, Pennsylvania (ca. 1900-1904)

By 1900, the Saltsburg Bottle Works Co. had also acquired a single furnace, 14-pot plant in McDonald, Pennsylvania (Hawkins 2009:453). The McDonald factory used 14 pots by 1900 and continued to use the same number until at least 1902 (*National Glass Budget* 1900:11; 1901:11; 1902:11). By 1901, an ad for the Quaker City Oval featured the McDonald plant rather than Saltsburg – suggesting that there may already have been a split in the firm (Figure 2).

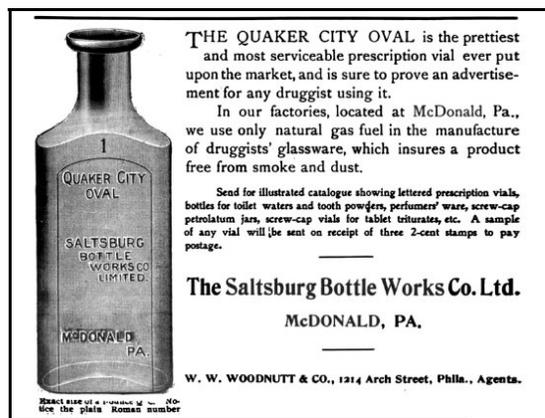


Figure 2 – Saltsburg 1901 ad (provenience lost)

Beach was also the president of the McDonald location in 1904, with E.L. Warner as vice president and Kintener and Lehan in the same positions as in Avonmore. The plant had two furnaces and 26 pots at that time. It, too, was also listed as being out of business in 1912 (*American Glass Review* 1934:169). If, indeed, the operations were separate by 1904, the Avonmore and McDonald branches may have remained in business longer than original location (*American Glass Review* 1934:169). An entry in Rootsweb (2007), however, noted that the firm reorganized as the Warner Glass Co. in January of 1904.

Warner Glass Co., McDonald, Pennsylvania (1904-1911)

Rootsweb (2007) noted that the Saltsburg Glass Works Co. reorganized as the Warner Glass Co. in January of 1904 with new officers. E.L. Warner had been the vice president of Saltsburg earlier in 1904, and this firm took his name. At some point, Dr. W.L. Scott became president of the firm and held that position until his death on June 26, 1907. The group also purchased (or took over) the former Sattzburg plant at Avondale, closed for four years by that time (*Coffeyville Daily Journal* 1/3/1911; McFarland 1910:1249; Roller 1996).

Initially, Warner also took over the Saltsburg product line, advertising in 1904 the same Quaker City Oval prescription bottle in 1904 that Saltsburg advertised in 1903. The new firm apparently had an infusion of money. Where Saltsburg had used two furnaces with 28 pots, Warner had one furnace with 14 pots and a continuous tank with six rings by 1908 (Roller 1996; Saltsburg Bottle Works Co. 1903:254; Warner Glass Co. 1904:i).

Upon Scott's death, the firm again reorganized. The *Coffeyville Daily Journal* reported on December 30, 1907, that "business men of McDonald, Pa., have organized a company and purchased the Warner Glass Co.'s plant at that place. The company will continue to transact business under the name of the Warner Glass Co." The new officers were A.C. LeComte as president, E.L. Freet as secretary, and B.D. Tillinghast as treasurer. A March 15, 1909, letterhead noted Clifton H. Beach as president and business manager, with Edwin L. Freet as secretary (Roller 1996b). By that time, the plant operated a single machine (*Bridgeton Evening News* 6/14/1909). Warner leased the plant to the Crescent Bottle Co. in 1911.

Crescent Bottle Co., McDonald, Pennsylvania (1911-1916)

The Crescent Bottle Co. incorporated on December 30, 1910, with a capital of \$13,000 and leased the McDonald plant of the Warner Glass Co. (apparently the only location by this time) on January 1, 1911 (Roller 1996; State of Pennsylvania 1907:43). Hawkins (2009:138) placed the factory in business ca. 1912. The plant made prescription vials, liquor bottles, and flasks at a single furnace with 12 pots. By 1915, the plant had a continuous tank with six rings (*Bridgeton Evening News* 4/19/1915). Due to labor difficulties, the plant close in January of 1915 and moved to Hawthorne, Pennsylvania, in March 1916 (*Patriot* 1/27/1916; *Woodbury Times* 3/29/1916).

Containers and Marks – Saltsburg Bottle Works Co.

Bethman (1980:77) noted that the Saltsburg Bottle Works put out a distinctive line of prescription bottles, some of which were unusual in style. An uncited ad from 1901 showed the Quaker Oval, one of the products from the McDonald factory (see Figure 2). The firm also sold Citrate of Magnesia bottles by at least 1894 (*Pharmaceutical Era* 1894:11).

S.B.

Preble (2002:U) drew a base embossed “PAT. JAN. 86 / S.B. (all horizontal)” (Figure 3). These initials *could* indicate the Saltzburg Bottle Works, although the Swindell Brothers would probably be a better choice. Few glass houses beginning with “S” use “Bottle” in their names. Of course, these initials could be those of a druggist.

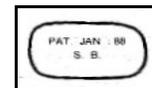


Figure 3 – S.B. (Preble 2002:U)

S.B.W. (ca. 1890-1904)

Toulouse (1971:464) noted the “S.B.W.” initials “on a hand-finished prescription bottle” from Ferndale, California, and stated, “time uncertain, possibly pre-1900.” Aside from adding that “the initials do not correspond with any known western glassmaker,” Toulouse had no clue as to the manufacturer. Bethman (1991:419, 681) illustrated two examples of the “S.B.W.” mark (with punctuation) on Washington drug store bottles. Both were used between 1895 and 1898. Each bottle was a different style.

Preble (2002:589) illustrated a lone example of the SBW mark horizontally embossed on the base of a drug store bottle dated 1898-1901. The BRG found a single, square prescription bottle in the Tucson Urban Renewal collection embossed with S.B.W across the base (Figure 4). Jay Hawkins (personal communication 8/17/2009) discovered a light green whiskey flask with the SBW mark on the base. Praetzellis and Praetzellis (1990:327-329) noted two pharmacy bottles embossed with the mark, one from a drug store in business from 1886 to 1895, the other 1895-1907. Bottles with the “S.B.W.” mark could have been made at any time during the firm’s existence – 1890-1904.



Figure 4 – S.B.W. (Jay Hawkins; TUR)

S.B.W.CO. (ca. 1890-1904)

Bethman (1991:595) illustrated a single example of the “S.B.W. / CO. (both horizontal)” mark, used ca. 1895 (Figure 5). Elliott and Gould (1988:201) showed a single style of drug store

bottle marked on the base with “SBWCO.” The bottles solarized to a light amethyst and were used during the late 1890s. Preble (2002:628, 680) illustrated three examples of drug store bottles marked SBW (arch) / CO (horizontal) on the base. His combined date ranges for the local drug stores stretched from 1890 to 1909.

Griffenhagen and Bogard (1999:128) listed the S.B.W.Co. mark as being on bottles used by C.P. Herrick, Tilton, New Hampshire, but failed to offer a date range. Fike (1987:227)

discussed Herrick’s Horehound Syrup that offered to cure “all throat and lung affections,” but he offered

no further information on the product or the bottle. It may be notable that both Bethman and Preble showed the “Co.” below the “S.B.W.” Hawkins (2009:453) also showed the mark with “CO.” beneath a slightly arched “S.B.W.” A photo from Antique Bottles.net, however, had “S.B.W.CO.” in a horizontal configuration (Figure 6). The use of punctuation, however, may have been optional. In our only two photos (one of each mark), the punctuation, although indistinct, is visible.

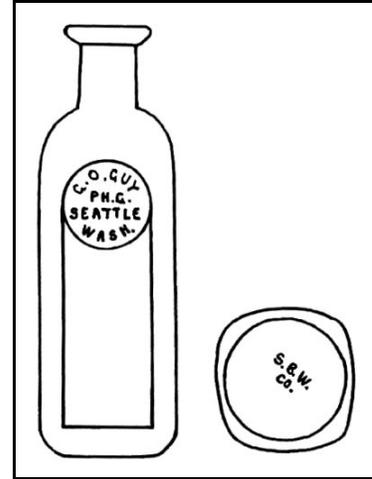


Figure 5 – S.B.W.CO. (Bethman 1991:595)

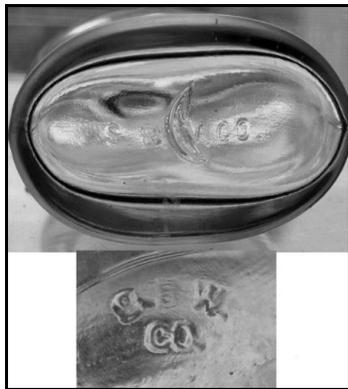


Figure 6 – S.B.W.CO. (Antique Bottles.net; Jay Hawkins)

SALTSBURG NURSER (ca. 1890-1904)

Hawkins (2009:452-453) mentioned “a nursing bottle . . . embossed the SALTSBURG NURSER on one side and THE GRADUATED NURSING BOTTLE on the other.”

Unfortunately, we have discovered no other reference to this bottle.

Containers and Marks – Warner Glass Co.

MARVEL (1904-1911)

Colcleaser (1965:78; 1966:45) illustrated a prescription bottle embossed “MARVEL” on the base and a drug store-style bottle embossed “BUCKEYE EXTRACT CO. / OLYMPIA,

WASH.” – also with “MARVEL” on the base. The illustrations showed very similar bottles but not identical ones. David Bethman (personal communication) stated that the bottles from Buckeye are found in 2-, 6- or 8-, 12-, 16-, and 32-ounce sizes. He noted that some Vancouver, British Columbia, drug store bottles were embossed “MARVEL” on the base, but he believed the bottles

were made by an American company.



Figure 7 – MARVEL



Figure 8 – Marvel ad (*Apothecary* 1910)

The bottles in our sample were mouth blown and had reinforced prescription finishes (Figure 7). Bottles of this type were generally used during the early 20th century, probably the ca. 1900-1925 period. The Warner Glass Co. of McDonald, Pennsylvania, advertised the Marvel Oval Prescription Bottle in the *Apothecary* in December of 1910. The ad touted the bottle as “Truly a MARVEL in BEAUTY and general adaptation to Druggists’ use.” The ad illustrated the bottle *with* the word “MARVEL” embossed on the base (Figure 8).

Discussion and Conclusions

Both “S.B.W.” and “S.B.W. / Co.” marks appear to have been used during the 1890s, but we have dated them to the full extent of the Saltsburg Bottle Works Co., Ltd, at Saltsburg. It is possible that the Avondale and McDonald branches, each of which retained the name longer, continued to use the mark. It is also possible that the use of two marks reflects a different mark for Saltsburg and Avondale/McDonald, but current methods do not allow a way to determine that for certain. It is also possible that one of the marks was used later than the other, but, again, we cannot tell by current methods. The Saltsburg Nurser was certainly made by the Saltsburg Bottle Works Co., and the Marvel was definitely a product of the Warner Glass Co., but each can only be dated to the full tenure of the respective firm.

Acknowledgments

Our gratitude to Wanda Wakkinen for proofreading these works.

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Last updated 2/25/2019