

Bottles on the Border:
The History and Bottles of the Soft Drink Industry
in El Paso, Texas, 1881-2000



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Chapter 12c

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Small Bottlers – 1920-1950s

The period between 1920 and the 1950s was one of great transition. At the beginning of the period, Prohibition was in full swing, and soft drink sales boomed. By the 1930s, however, the Great Depression caused the demise of most of the small bottlers, and the national franchises became the norm. By the end of the 1950s, the era of the small bottler was over, and few bottles still carried local designations.

Tickle Beverage & Mfg. Co. (1920)

History

E. Keith Lyons was the proprietor of the Tickle Beverage & Mfg. Co. in 1920, the only year it was listed. Lyons listed his firm, located at 904 North Peidras St., as “mfrs extracts, beverages and bottlers supplies.” He apparently came to El Paso to start the business but remained to become Service Manager for the Elite Laundry in 1921 and 1922 (EPCD 1920-1922). A 1920 chamber of commerce publication noted that the company manufactured “soft drinks, not only in bottles but also in cask form” (El Paso Chamber of Commerce 1920:82). The firm was apparently very short lived.

Border Beverage Co., Inc. (1919-1922)

History

Although the Border Beverage Co. did not appear in the city directory until 1920, the firm placed ads for Grapico by at least August of 1919. Thus, the firm was almost certainly incorporated in 1919 to cater to a public that (they hoped) wanted to at least recapture the *taste* of beer – as well as a grape drink. The company, located at 800 S. Oregon (Figure 12c-1), designated itself as “Manufacturers and Bottlers of Aerated Beverages” and offered soda fountain syrups and supplies as well as bottled drinks. Under the leadership of B. Rush Person, corporate president, Border identified

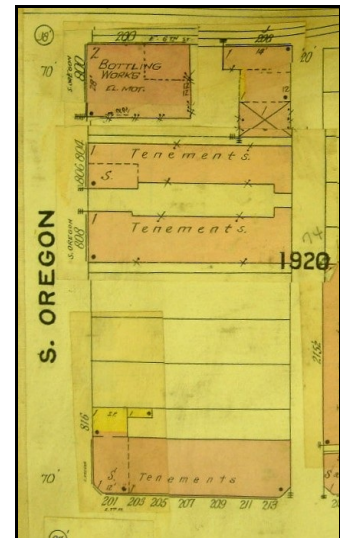


Figure 12c-1 – Location of the Border Beverage Co. (Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1927)

itself as “Bottlers of aerated beverages and soda fountain syrups and supplies” and advertised drinks called Bone-Dry (brewed by the Houston Ice and Brewing Assoc.) and Graino (from the Dallas Brewery), “A CEREAL BEVERAGE.”

The company’s first Graino ad appeared in the March 31, 1920, issue of the *El Paso Herald*. In 1921, the company touted Graino as “A REFRESHING, NUTRITIOUS AND NON-INTOXICATING CEREAL BEVERAGE.” Also, in 1921, Border offered sweet apple cider and “high grade fruit punches any flavor” (EPCD 1921 – Figure 12c-2). The Prohibition-era public apparently wanted more than just the taste of beer, as the Border Beverage Company was no longer listed in the city directories after 1922 (EPCD 1920-1922). The company also bottled Grapico (EPT 8/14/1919).

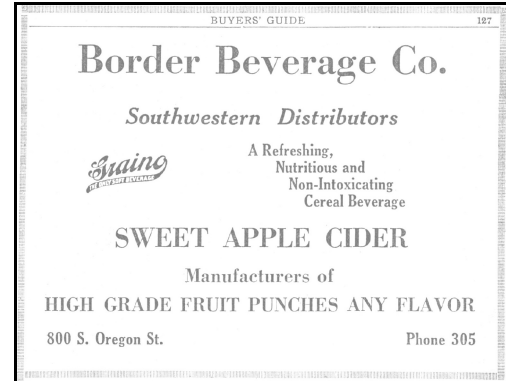


Figure 12c-2 – Border Beverage Co. ad (El Paso City Directory, 1921)

Benjamin R. Person arrived in El Paso about 1915 and worked for the Quick Tire Service in 1916. The following year, he made a transformation, common in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, into B. Rush Person and became the representative for the Waye Oil Tank & Pump Co., distributors of gasoline pumps, tanks, air compressors, etc. He became manager of the Border Beverage Co. in 1920 but continued to represent Wayne. The following year, he made a decision that may have been unwise. Dropping his connection with Wayne, he devoted his full time to Border Beverages, which, despite his attention, was liquidated in 1922 (EPCD 1915-1922).

Bottles and Artifacts

Grapico

Although Riley (1956:264) claimed that Grapico was first marketed in 1922 in the midst of a grape flavor “boom,” the Border Beverage Co. advertised the drink at least as early as August 11, 1919 (EPT). The ad utilized the Grapico logo – the word, Grapico, with an overline extending from the capital “G” with SPARKLING stenciled in it. DISTINCTIVELY INDIVIDUAL was placed below the word but above NATURALLY GOOD stenciled in an underline extending from the “O.” The drink was advertised “in bottles only,” and the ad

bragged that it was “Deliciously Refreshing and Thirst Quenching. Like [a] Bunch of Luscious Grapes.”

A later ad (EPT 8/14/1919) called it “a sparkling, refreshing and wholesome drink made from the juice of Concord grapes, granulated sugar and pure water” (Figure 12c-3). It noted that J. Grossman’s Sons of New Orleans were the manufacturers, but the drink was bottled in El Paso by Border Beverage Co. Grapico ads had ceased by mid-September of 1919.

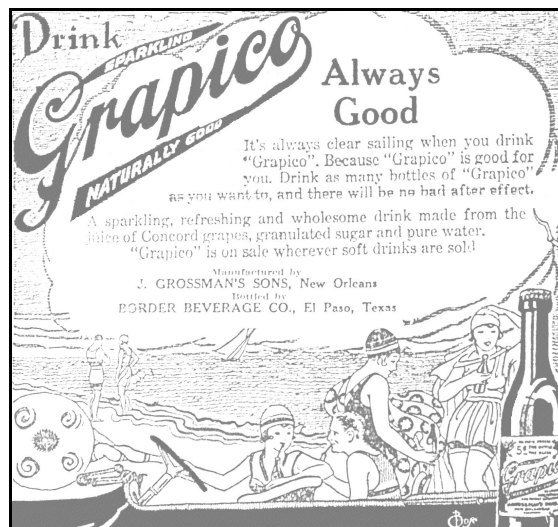


Figure 12c-3 – Grapico ad (*El Paso Times* 8/14/1919)

The August 14 ad showed a generic bottle with a paper label. Although most of the writing on the label was indistinct, the Grapico logo is clearly visible and the price (5¢). Bunches of grapes hung in the upper left and right corners. Although ads showed a paper-labeled container, a single embossed example resides in the collection of Lynn Loomis of Albuquerque (Figure 12c-4). The bottle is embossed “GRAPICO BOT’L’G. WKS.,” but it was not unusual for a local bottler to list itself under its own name and that of the franchiser. However, Grapico did not achieve any lasting popularity in El Paso.

Method of Manufacture: Machine

Color: Green

Size (in cm.): 19.5 (h); 5.9 (d)

Primary Labeling Style: Embossed

Finish: Crown

Capacity: 6½ oz.

Overall Bottle Design: Cylindrical with irregular debossed circles on neck

Front Description

Shoulder: Embossed - SPARKLING (upward slant on scroll emanating from “G”) / GRAPICO (upward slant) / NATURALLY GOOD (in underlining scroll) all under a



Figure 12c-4 – Grapico bottle

cluster of embossed grapes; concealed in the grapes are the letters: I C O.

Body: Bare possibly for paper label

Heel: Embossed - EL PASO, TEXAS.

Back Description

Shoulder: Embossed - THE DRINK OF THE NATION (arch) / 6 ½ FLUID OZS. (horizontal) all under a cluster of embossed grapes; concealed in the grapes are the letters: I C O.

Body: Bare

Heel: Embossed - GRAPICO BOT'L'G. WKS

Base: Embossed - 3

Manufacturer: Unknown

Dating: [ca. 1919]

Collection(s): Lynn Loomis collection.

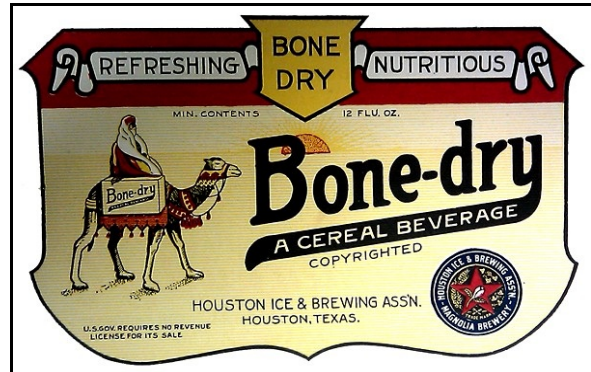


Figure 12c-5 – Bone-Dry label (Artefags Corp.)

Bone Dry

Bone-Dry was brewed by the Houston Ice & Brewing Assn., Houston, Texas (Figure 12c-5). Although the only Bone-Dry label I have found used the abbreviation “ASS’N,” the firm was founded as the Houston Ice & Brewing Co. in 1893 (Hennech 2000:83). As noted in Chapter 8a, the firm’s beer was distributed by the Magnolia Bottling Co. and may have been the inspiration for the “Magnolia” in the El Paso company’s name.

The Houston Ice & Brewing Co. filed for a trademark for Bone-Dry on July 10, 1917, and received Trademark No. 104,958 for a “non alcoholic cereal beverage sold as a soft drink.” The firm claimed first use of the mark on April 2, 1917 (Hennech 2000:95). I have no idea how long Houston Ice carried Bone-Dry, but it was certainly not a hit at El Paso. Border Beverage only advertised the brew in the 1920 city directory ad, but I could not find advertisements in the newspapers (Figure 12c-6).

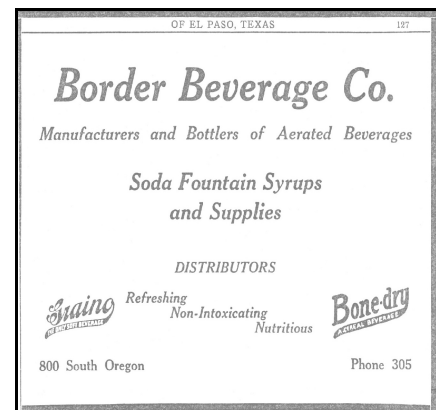


Figure 12c-6 – Bone-Dry in city directory ad (El Paso City Directory, 1920)

Graino

The label of Graino – “The Only Soft Beverage” – shows the Grain Juice Co., Ltd., as the producer. Graino contained less than ½ of 1% alcohol by volume. According to the label, the firm was a subsidiary of the Keeley Brewing Co., of Chicago (Figure 12c-7). However Stuertz (1999), discussing a dug well associated with a restaurant, stated:



Figure 12c-7 – Graino label
(Courtesy of Bob Kay)

That brick-lined puncture in the earth was once an artesian well feeding a brewery. The building dates to the late 1880s, when it was constructed as the Dallas Brewery and Bottling Works, the first such operation in the area. In 1918, the building was converted into the Grain Juice Co., which produced a non-alcoholic beer substitute called Graino during Prohibition. The company went broke in 1926, which raises a question: Who was buying Graino in sufficient quantities to keep the company afloat for eight years?

Originally called the Dallas Brewing Co., the firm was founded in 1887. In March 1893, however, the Keeley Brewing Co. purchased the Dallas plant but continued to operate under a similar name: the Dallas Brewery (Hennech 2000:36-40). The company, of course, began brewing near-beer in an attempt to survive Prohibition.

The El Paso area certainly was not helping boost Graino sales. Although Border Beverage probably carried Graino from its inception in 1919, it only advertised the brew in the city newspapers in 1920. One ad (EPH 9/3/1919) noted that the brew was made by the Grain Juice Co. at Dallas (Figure 12c-8).

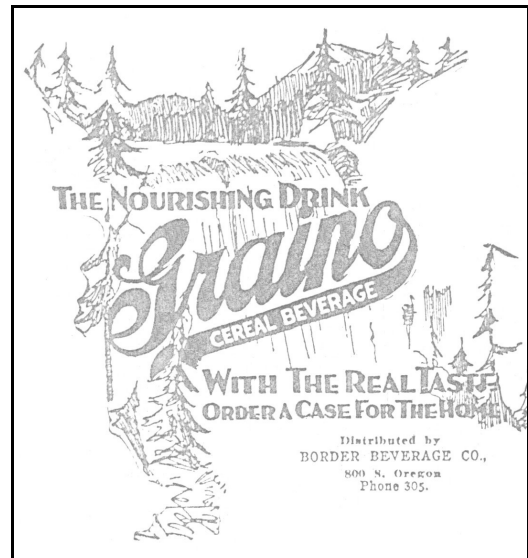


Figure 12c-8 – Graino ad (*El Paso Herald* 5/31/1920)

Antonio Patino (1922)

History

Antonio Patino operated his bottling works from his grocery store at 345 Tenth St. in 1922. Patino was first listed in the city directories in 1918 as a grocer who maintained his residence at the same address, probably as a room in back of the store or an apartment above it. Antonio may have been inspired to enter the bottling business by Luis Patino, possibly a brother or other relative who worked for Empire Bottling Works as bottler and inspector in 1915 and 1916 (EPCD 1915-1922). Patino was only listed for the single year. It is also possible that this was an incorrect listing, and Patino's grocery should have been categorized as *selling* sodas.

Mackin Brokerage Co. (1928-1933)

History

Although not a bottler, Mackin Brokerage Co. distributed cards advertising Falstaff Dublin Style Beverage and Falstaff Pale Dry Ginger Ale. The firm claimed to be “representatives for Arizona, New Mexico, West Texas” (Advertising cards, Mike Morrison Collection). A 1931 letter also advertised Falstaff Pale, a cereal beverage. The Mackin Brokerage Co. presents somewhat of a mystery. Although the cards clearly identified the firm as located in El Paso, the name, Mackin Brokerage Co., failed to appear in city directories, telephone directories, or New Mexico State Business Directories (which include El Paso).

James S. Mackin, however, was first listed in the city in 1919 as the manager of the American Grocery Co., Inc. at 909-911 South El Paso Dr. He remained at the American Grocery until 1925, when he married his wife, Martha M. Mackin. The following year, he

became secretary/treasurer for John H. McMahon & Co., a brokerage firm. He advanced to the position of manager of the company and held that job until 1929. No occupation was listed for

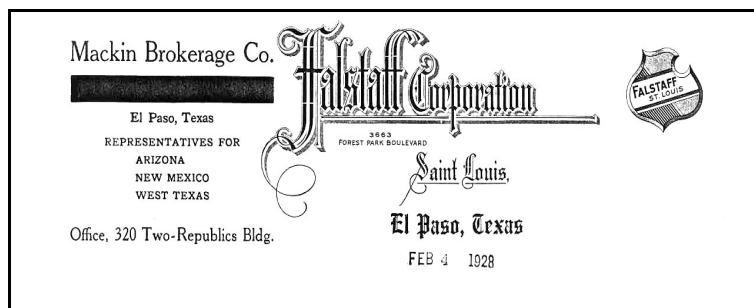


Figure 12c-9 – Letterhead from Mackin Brokerage Co.

Mackin in 1930, but he and Kenneth E. Van Atta formed the firm of Mackin & Van Atta at 224 N. Campbell St. in late 1931. Van Atta first appeared in the city directory in 1927 as a salesman for J.W. Lorentzen & Co., merchandise brokers and distributing agents. He was not again listed until his partnership with Mackin. The partners remained in business through 1932, but Van Atta apparently either died or left town, since he no longer appeared in El Paso directories after that year (EPCD 1919-1932; EPTD 1931-1936).

John H. McMahon & Co. was established in 1914 and was initially managed by John H., himself. Three years later, M.A. McMahon was added, and various combinations of John H., M. A., William B., and E.L. McMahon operated the business prior to the placement of Mackin in the managerial position. The company advertised itself as “flour, grain and grocery specialists” who covered a territory consisting of “New Mexico, Arizona and West Texas” (EPCD 1925). The firm incorporated in 1927, and E.L. McMahon replaced Mackin as manager in 1930. The listings, however, ceased operations in 1931 (EPCD 1920-1932).

As a possible clue, however, a letter bearing the letterhead of Mackin Brokerage Co. has survived from February 4, 1928 (Figure 12c-9). The letter solicited the business of a prospective customer for Falstaff Dublin Style Cereal Beverage and other Falstaff “near-beers.” The letterhead tells an interesting story. The address is 522 El Paso National Bank Building, the location of John H. McMahon & Company.

A section above the address is blacked out but can be read when held to a light. It bears the name of John H. McMahon & Co. Above the blacked-out McMahon name appears the name of Mackin Brokerage Co. (letter from Mackin Brokerage Co., 1928). This letter makes it virtually certain that Mackin replaced (probably purchased) the McMahon firm ca. 1928 and brokered Falstaff Corp. products in New Mexico, Arizona, and West Texas. As often occurred with the city directories, the McMahon listing probably continued for three years after the company had ceased operations. It is highly likely that Mackin’s distribution of Falstaff ended abruptly with the repeal of Prohibition in 1933.

Bottles and Artifacts

Mackin (and probably McMahon before him) brokered at least three non-alcoholic Falstaff beverages during prohibition.

Falstaff Pale Dry Ginger Ale

Mackin advertised Falstaff Pale Dry Ginger Ale as:

A sparkling and Refreshing drink for the entire family. Just dry enough to be thirst quenching and just enough ginger to give it snap—not the biting kind. Can you imagine anything more appropriate to serve when your friends drop in unexpectedly? And served in a Champagne Glass at dinner, it's marvelous. . . . Always prepared—if you keep a carton of one dozen bottles in your home, and the best part of it all is that the cost to you is comparatively small. . . . Order a case today (Falstaff Trade Card, Mike Morrison Collection).

The bottle was a light green, champagne-style bottle with a long neck and gently sloping shoulder (Figure 12c-10). A downwardly curved paper shoulder label bore the Falstaff shield with the words, FALSTAFF / ST. LOUIS. The front body paper label was cut in the shape of the off-center Falstaff shield with the words, CONTENTS 12 FL. OZ., followed by a copy of the smaller Falstaff shield that appeared on the shoulder label. Hugging the base of the smaller shield were the words, TRADE MARK REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.

The shield was trisected by two slightly elevated horizontal lines with the words, FALSTAFF / PALE DRY / Ginger Ale, in the center section. The lower section stated, MADE EXCLUSIVELY BY / FALSTAFF CORPORATION / ST. LOUIS, MO. The crown cap was covered by a metallic foil. Although Falstaff may have made ginger ale prior to Prohibition, it is unlikely. The bottles, therefore, probably date from 1920 to 1933, the years encompassing national Prohibition.



Figure 12c-10 – Falstaff Pale Ginger Ale (Falstaff Trade Card, Mike Morrison Collection)

Falstaff Dublin Style Cereal Beverage

Mackin advertised Falstaff Dublin Style Cereal Beverages as:

Truly a Master Brew, resembling in Taste and Character the Imported Stout and Porter of OLD. . . . Heavy in Body, Rich in Malt and Choicest Hops, this Delightful Beverage is Ideal for those who desire to build themselves up to physical fitness. . . . Thoroughly Fermented and Lagered, its After Effects are Pleasing and Assimilation is Rapid. . . . Keep a Case in your Home at All Times and let ALL the Family Drink it Freely (Falstaff Trade Card, Mike Morrison Collection).

Falstaff Dublin Style Cereal Beverage was packaged in an amber export beer bottle complete with the archetypical swollen neck (Figure 12c-11). A paper label was applied horizontally around the neck with the Falstaff shield bearing the words, FALSTAFF / ST. LOUIS. Lighter wording appeared on the sides of the label but is too indistinct on the trade card for legibility. A larger Falstaff shield that formed the paper body label was trisected by slightly elevated horizontal lines.

A smaller edition of the shield rested atop the upper line with the words, ALCOHOLIC CONTENT / LESS THAN ½ OF 1% BY VOLUME located above the shield. The central section proclaimed, FALSTAFF / Dublin Style / CEREAL BEVERAGE and the message, A CEREAL BEVERAGE BREWED FROM THE CHOICEST GRAIN[?] / AND FLAVORED WITH IMPORTED HOPS. / BREWED BY / FALSTAFF CORPORATION / ST. LOUIS, MO. Like the ginger ale, it can probably be dated by the duration of national Prohibition from 1920 to 1933.



Figure 12c-11 – Falstaff Dublin Style (Falstaff Trade Card, Mike Morrison Collection)

Falstaff Pale

Although I have not found an advertising card for Falstaff Pale, the 1928 Mackin letter describes it as “the same good, refreshing, thirst quenching Brew that it always was, minus the large per cent of alcohol.” Falstaff Pale appeared to be an almost alcohol-free version of the pre-Prohibition Falstaff beer brewed by the William J. Lemp Brewing Company of St. Louis, Missouri.

The bottle depicted on the 1928 letter was identical to the Falstaff Dublin Style described above (Figure 12c-12). The paper label was similar to the Dublin label, except that the word, FALSTAFF, appeared in larger letters and less fine print (illegible in the small illustration) was included. As with Falstaff's other two Prohibition products, Pale was likely produced between 1920 and 1933.

El Paso Beverage Co. (1935) and T.R. Fye Products Co. (1936)

History

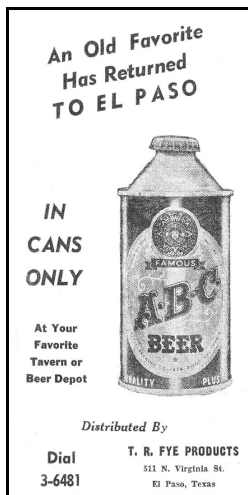


Figure 12c-13 – Acme Beer ad from T.R. Fye (Rick Chavez collection)

In 1935, Theodore R. Fye and W.H. McCullough of Roswell, New Mexico, initiated the El Paso Beverage Co. with George Holdefer as manager. The business location was 104 S. Florence St.. The following year, the El Paso Beverage Co. was gone, but Fye listed his own company, the T.R. Fye Products Co., as a bottling works at 407-9 South Virginia Ave. Despite Fye's listing himself as a bottler for one year, he primarily sold extracts and syrups, especially snow cone syrup. Although the exact time span is unknown, Fye was actually in business for several years (EPCD 1935-1936; Nicholson interview).

Fye was also a distributor for Acme Beer (Figure 12c-13). Since he was in business immediately after the repeal of Prohibition, beer sales were almost certainly his major focus. However, Acme beer was apparently not as popular as Fye had hoped, and his business did not last long.

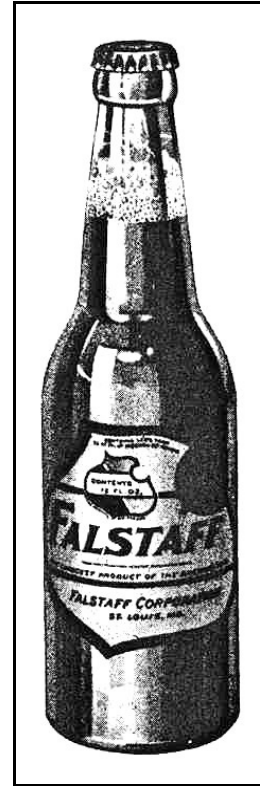


Figure 12c-12 – Falstafe Pale (1928 Makin Brokerage Co. letter)

El Paso Real Juice Co. (1935-1942)



Figure 12c-14 – ACL Lime Cola bottle; El Paso Real Juice Co. (Anthony and Maria Romero collection)

History

Little is known about the El Paso Real Juice Co. Located at 316 E. 9th St., the company was operated by Leo R Perez. Perez did not appear as being involved in any other soft drink company in El Paso (EPCD 1935-1942).

Bottles and Artifacts

Lime Cola

Although there were probably other flavors bottled by El Paso Real Juice, I have only found one example, Lime Cola, so far (Figure 12c-14). Although ACL bottles were available in 1935, most companies had not converted from embossed bottles to the ACL lettering until later in the 1930s or even the early 1940s. The earliest Owens-Illinois Glass Co. catalog (December 1930) included a drawing of an embossed Lime Cola bottle that may or may not have been used by the El Paso firm (Figure 12c-15). It is therefore possible (even likely) that Perez used either an embossed or a paper label for his earliest brands.

Method of Manufacture: Machine

Color: Colorless

Size (in cm.): unknown

Primary Labeling Style: Yellow and Red ACL

Finish: Crown

Capacity: 12 oz.

Overall Bottle Design: Cylindrical with stippling from heel to finish

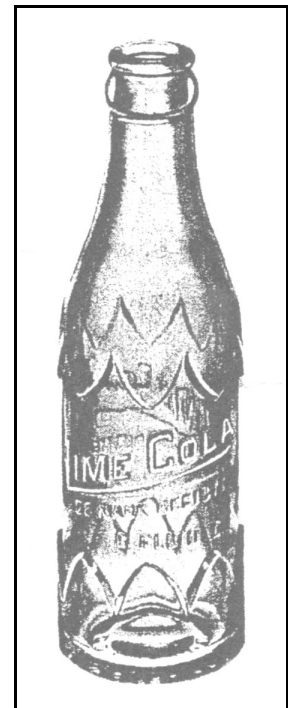


Figure 12c-15 – Embossed Lime Cola Bottle (Owens-Illinois Glass Co., 1930)

Front Description

Shoulder: Yellow ACL - It's Definitely Good (upwardly-slanted script)

Body: ACL - a red and yellow bullseye target is superimposed on a red-outlined, yellow rectangle. A stenciled line below the target outlines the target and top line. Below it is LIME COLA (red with a larger L and C - the bottom line of the "L" underlines the other letters and contains TRADE MARK REG in stencil). Below this, a stenciled bar contains MIN. CONT. 12 FL. OZS. in red.

Heel: Bare

Back Description

Shoulder: Bare

Body: A yellow burst is stenciled with COOLING / REFRESHING / SATISFYING with BOTTLED BY / EL PASO REAL JUICE CO. / EL PASO, TEXAS below it in yellow.

Heel: Bare

Base: Embossed - GC-connected / 5412/2

Manufacturer: Glass Container Corp. (1934-1967)

Dating: [1935-1942] Although the possibility of earlier container styles exists, this bottle must be dated to the entire life of the company.

Collection(s): Anthony and Maria Romero collection.

Sahara Dry Beverages (1939-1959)

History

The Sahara Dry Beverage Co., was located at Akron, Ohio, and advertised itself on its bottles as "Akron's Best." Originally opened in 1939 by Samuel C. Bershin, the first Sahara Dry plant was at 140 East North St. Two years later (1941), the firm had moved to 404 Wooster Ave. and remained there until they closed. Sahara Dry incorporated in 1946 with Bershin as president and Mrs. Jeanette Bershin (presumably his wife) as secretary and treasurer (Akron, Ohio, City Directories 1939-40-1958; Ohio Bottle Club, Inc. 1989:354).

Around 1955 or 1956, the firm reorganized with Samuel Epstein as president and H.E. Zeid as treasurer. The firm was last listed in the Directory of Ohio Manufacturers in 1959, when it employed fourteen people, thirteen men and a single woman. The company produced Club

Seltzer, Ginger Ale, Lime Rickey, Set Up, Grape Fruit, and Silver Fizz (Directory of Ohio Manufacturers, 1959; Ohio Bottle Club, Inc. 1989:354).

Although there is no record of who bottled Sahara Dry in El Paso, numerous bottle fragments were scattered ubiquitously about at a historic trash dump in Socorro, Texas (about 20 miles southeast of El Paso along the Rio Grande). No positive identification of the local bottler can be ascertained, but speculation can narrow the list of possibilities. Between 1939 and 1959 (the years Sahara Dry was available), El Paso hosted eleven major bottlers, nine of which were in business in 1947 – the year when the sample bottle from the Socorro dump was made.

When interviewed, former owners of all but two of those companies had never even heard of Sahara Dry (no former owners were available from the other two). This does not totally preclude the possibility that one of the companies, under a previous owner, had bottled Sahara beverages, but it lessens the likelihood. Of the remaining two companies (both in business during 1947, Flores Brothers/Wonder Beverage Company was a small local bottler that probably only bottled Wonder Beverages and its local Flores Brothers brand. Empire Products Corp., on the other hand, had been noted for bottling everything it could franchise. Empire, therefore, becomes the most likely choice as the local distributor of Sahara Dry. Even though the local bottler cannot positively be identified, the bottles deserve inclusion in this work because of the fairly large quantity of examples at the Socorro dump.

Bottles and Artifacts

Sahara Dry Mixers

I have only found one style of Sahara Dry in the El Paso area – and my only example did not have an El Paso designation anywhere on it (Figure 12c-16).

Method of Manufacture: Machine

Color: Colorless

Size (in cm.): 23.3 (h);5.5 (d)

Primary Labeling Style: White and Red ACL

Finish: Crown

Capacity: 7 oz.

Overall Bottle Design: Cylindrical with two embossed, circumscribed rings at the shoulder-neck junction and two more rings at the shoulder-body junction with vertical embossed ribs between. Similar vertical ribs appear on the heel.

Front Description

Body: White ACL - “The Sign of Good Taste (although quotation marks appeared at the beginning of the slogan, they were missing from the end) above a white background with red enameling depicting two pyramids accompanied by a camel and an oasis, backgrounded by a sunrise. Red lettering below the pyramids proclaimed SAHARA DRY / BEVERAGES / SAHARA DRY / BEVERAGE CO. / CONTENTS 7 FL. OZ. AKRON, OHIO.

Back Description

Body: White ACL - THE PERFECT MIXERS / SAHARA DRY / . . . / GINGER ALE. . .LIME RICKEY / SET UP. . .GRAPE FRUIT / SILVER FIZZ / . . . / AKRON'S BEST (stenciled into a white ribbon. The entire message was surrounded by a white, round-topped rectangular outline.

Base: Embossed - 9 {I-in-an-oval-superimposed-on-a-diamond} 47 / Duraglas (script) / G496 / 1

Manufacturer: Owens Illinois Glass Company (1929-1954)

Dating: [1939-1959] Sahara Dry was bottled in Akron, Ohio, from 1939 to 1959, and bottles of this type may have been used throughout that period. The period of usage in El Paso is unknown.

Collection(s): Author’s collection.



Figure 12c-16 – Sahara Dry bottle

Sahara Dry also produced another, larger bottle, which may or may not have been sold in El Paso. The colorless bottle came in a thirty-seven ounce size and had red and white ACL labels, which read “The Sign of Good Taste” / Sahara Dry / Club Seltzer / {Sunrise} / Sahara Dry / Akron Beverage Co. Ohio / Cont. 37 Fl Ozs. (Ohio Bottle Club 1989:354).

Wonder Beverage Co. (1946-1954) and Flores Brothers Bottling Co. (1950-1954)

History

Although the Wonder Beverage Company was in business for at least eight years, I have discovered little about the firm or its founder. Unlike most of the small bottlers, Wonder had only one owner/operator, Luis A. Flores, throughout its entire existence. Flores had been a driver for Empire Products Corp. in 1941 and 1942 prior to accepting a job as head meat cutter at Safeway. Like many young men in the early stages of World War II, he became part of the Army in 1944 and served for two years. Upon his return, he must have remembered his time with Empire and decided to become a bottler (EPCD 1941-1946).

The initial 1946 location was 3321 Alameda Ave., but the plant moved to 115 North Raynor St. in 1952 and remained there until 1954. During the years 1950, 1952, and 1954, the company was also registered as Flores Brothers Bottling Co., although only Luis A. Flores was listed as proprietor (EPCD 1947-1954; EPTD 1946, 1950). The firm bottled sodas under the brand name of Flores Bros. and advertised on the bottles as “The Yummy Best in the Sunny West.”

Bottles and Artifacts

Wonder Flavors

Franchised bottles from Wonder Orange Co. did not denote local bottlers, only the main company address (Figure 12c-17). I have never seen a Wonder bottle with an El Paso designation.

Method of Manufacture: Machine

Color: Colorless

Size (in cm.): 25.0 (h); 5.6 (d)

Primary Labeling Style: White and Red ACL

Finish: Crown

Capacity: 7 oz.



Figure 12c-17 – Wonder Beverages bottle

Overall Bottle Design: Cylindrical with two small embossed rings above the heel, two rings interspersed with vertical ribs to form a segmented band at the upper body, and three rings with similar vertical ribs to form a more complex band at the neck/shoulder

Front Description

Shoulder: White ACL - WONDER

Body: A white background with WONDER / BEVERAGES in red followed by CONTENTS 7 FLUID OUNCES stenciled to allow the colorless background to show through and a red scroll with WHOLESOME AND / REFRESHING below

Back Description

Shoulder: Bare

Body: White ACL - Bottled / under Authority (script) followed by WONDER / DeLuxe (script) / BEVERAGES within a circle, then WONDER ORANGE CO / Chicago, Ill (script) in horizontal letters

Base: Embossed - 2 / {T-in-a-keystone} / 62-B-7 (Figure 12c-18)

Manufacturer: Knox Glass Co., Palestine, Texas

Dating: [1946-1954] Wonder Beverage Company was in business in El Paso from 1946 to 1954, providing probable dates for this bottle.

Collection(s): Mike Morrison Collection; author's collection.

Flores Bros. Flavors

Although the firm was originally known as Wonder Beverage Company, at least one type of bottle was manufactured under the label of Flores Bros. (Figure 12c-19).

Method of Manufacture: Machine

Color: Colorless

Size (in cm.): 23.6 (h); 6.1 (d)

Primary Labeling Style: Red and White ACL

Finish: Crown

Capacity: 10 oz.



Figure 12c-18 – Base of Wonder Beverages bottle

Overall Bottle Design: Cylindrical with four slightly-separated concentric rings at the shoulder and tiny raised stippling on the entire surface except for the finish and labeling area of the body

Front Description

Body: A red ACL rose with white highlights on a white background with red enameled horizontal panels above and below with, FLORES BROS, in the top panel and BEVERAGES on the bottom one

Back Description

Body: White ACL - "THE YUMMY BEST / IN/THE SUNNY WEST" above a flower, then CONTENTS 10 OZS / FLORES BROS BOTTLING CO. / EL PASO, TEXAS

Base: Embossed - 2 {B-in-a-circle} 50 / M-88

Manufacturer: Brockway Glass Company (1925-present)

Dating: [1950-1954] Flores Bros. were listed in the City Directories from 1950 to 1954.

Collection(s): Mike Morrison Collection; author's collection.



Figure 12c-19 – Flores Brothers Beverages bottle

Sun Spot Bottling Co. (1948)

History

In 1948, James P. Sexton and W.D. Remy opened Sun Spot Bottling Co. at 701 West Main St. The following year, they, too, had joined the ranks of the failed entrepreneurs. Remy was a newcomer to El Paso, possibly connected with the main Sun Spot franchiser. He may have been unemployed the next year, but he was the sales manager for Nehi-Royal Crown under Robert Ritter until 1951. At that point, he apparently left town.

James Paul Sexton, however, had been in El Paso since at least 1937 working as superintendent for Al Randle's Seven-Up Bottling Co. Sexton had just become plant manager in

1947 prior to leaving the company to try his luck with Sun Spot. He was no longer listed in city directories after 1948 (EPCD 1937-1951). It is possible that Sun Spot was actually in business a year earlier – in 1947. At some point, probably after the instigation of the Sun Spot Bottling Co., the Seven-Up Bottling Co. distributed the product. Specific dates, however, are unknown.

The parent company was the Sun Spot Bottling Co. of America, headquartered at Baltimore, Maryland. I have been unable to discover more about the parent firm. However, the Sun Spot Bottling Co. at nearby Las Cruces, New Mexico, was listed in business from 1952 to 1954, although two bottles from the firm had been made in 1950 and 1951. It should be noted that ACL can be applied to generic bottles that were made earlier.

Because the El Paso Sun Spot Bottling Co. used at least three different bottles, the firm was probably in business more than the one year when the firm was listed in the city directory. Combining this with the information presented above, the plant was probably open from ca. 1948 to at least 1950. The Seven-Up Bottling Co. probably purchased the Sun Spot franchise ca. 1950 and offered the drink after that. It is also possible that Sexton and Remy carried the drink in 1948 and sold out soon. Seven-Up may have just continued to use the Sun Spot company name – a common practice (e.g., see Chapter 8a, where the Magnolia Bottling Co. was also listed as the Coca-Cola Bottling Co.).

Bottles and Artifacts

Sun Spot/High Rock

An unusual bottle was marked High Rock on one side and Sun Spot on the other. The bottle was marketed by the El Paso Sun Spot franchise and was made in 1947 (Figure 12c-20). A High Rock Ginger Ale Co. was open at Baltimore, Maryland, at some point, but the firm was probably not be connected with this bottle.



Figure 12c-20 – High Rock/Sun Spot bottle

Method of Manufacture: Machine

Color: Colorless

Size (in cm.): 24.5 (h); 6.4 (d)

Primary Labeling Style: White and Red ACL

Finish: Crown

Capacity: 10 oz.

Overall Bottle Design: Cylindrical

Front Description

Neck/Shoulder: White ACL - Bottled Sunshine (script - horizontal)

Body: A white-outlined red circle with, Sun / Spot, in white letters, T.M. / REG. below the circle to the left, and, © / 1938, to the right

Heel: Embossed - 571-1

Back Description

Neck/Shoulder: White ACL - Real / Enjoyment, in upwardly-slanted script

Body: A white-outlined red circle with, High / Rock, with SUN SPOT BOTTLING CO. OF EL PASO, TEX. © 1928 below the circle

Heel: Embossed - L-G 10 FL. OZS.

Base: Embossed - 47

Manufacturer: Liberty Glass Company (1946-1954)

Dating: [1947-1948] Although this bottle was made in 1947, the ACL could have been added the next year. They were probably used until they were worn out by either the Sun Spot plant or by the Seven-Up factory.

Collections(s): Tom Leachman collection; author's collection.

Variations:

1. See above.
2. The front of this bottle was identical to the first variation. The back, however, was labeled "Bottled / Sunshine" on the shoulder and "For / Real / Enjoyment / Serve Cold (all in white ACL script) / SUN SPOT BOTTLING CO . . . / OF / EL PASO . . ." Part of the last three lines had



Figure 12c-21 – Sunspot bottle

been obliterated, probably through exposure (Figure 12c-21). Both heels were bare, but the base was embossed “4 / {T in a Keystone} / CONTENTS 10 FL. OZ.” Unfortunately, the Knox Glass Bottle Co. plant (the maker of this bottle) did not use date codes. This appears to have been a less popular variation – at least I have seen only one of these with the El Paso designation.

Sun Spot

A base and body fragment of a single Sun Spot bottle were found in the trash dump at Oro Grande, New Mexico. The fragments were badly weathered, the ACL faded, but many details were legible. Only some black enamel remained but a photograph of a similar bottle (Bates et al 1996a:S-34) and an out-of-state example showed orange and black ACL and the same overall body shape.

Method of Manufacture: Machine

Color: Colorless

Size (in cm.): 19.3 (h); 6.9 (d)

Primary Labeling Style: Orange and Black ACL

Finish: Crown

Capacity: 12 oz.

Overall Bottle Design: Cylindrical with sharply sloped shoulders and a short neck. The body labeling area was bounded on top and bottom by embossed rings with vertical ribs extending from the rings to heel and shoulder. Three more concentric rings formed the slope of the shoulder. Non-labeling areas were stippled.

Front Description

Neck/Shoulder: No label

Body: An orange disk contained the words, Sun / Spot / TRADE MARK / REG. (black ACL) surrounded by an elaborate, round-cornered, black square with stenciled designs of three leaves and a blossom in each corner. Below the square appeared REGISTERED © 1938 SUN SPOT BEV. CO.

Back Description

Neck/Shoulder: Same as front

Body: Black ACL - CARBONATED BEVERAGE / FLAVOR DERIVED / ENTIRELY FROM / CITRUS FRUIT / _____ / SUN SPOT / EL PASO, TEXAS / _____ /

CONTENTS 12 FLU. OZS.

Base: Embossed - G-in-a-square / 1632

Manufacturer: Glenshaw Glass Company (1932-present)

Dating: [1947-1948] Bottles of this type can only be assumed to have had a use-life between 1947 and 1948, the only (probable) known dates of the company's tenure in El Paso.

Unfortunately, Glenshaw used a letter date code embossed on the reinforcing ring – which is missing from this example.

Collections(s): Oro Grande, New Mexico, dump.

Lone Star Sparkling Beverages (1955)

History

In 1955, Emanuel Bloch operated Lone Star Sparkling Beverages at 312 East Ninth St. Interestingly, the short-lived business was only two doors down the street from the address of Victory Bottling Works, in business between 1923 to 1931.

Because the only known container from the company is a siphon (seltzer) bottle, Bloch may have only sold drink mixers (EPCD 1955).

Bottles and Artifacts

Lone Star Sparkling Beverages

Although I have not discovered any actual soda bottles, a siphon bottle from Lone Star indicates that the “sparkling” in the title may have referred to siphon bottles rather than beverage bottles (Figures 22 & 23). See Siphon bottles from Chapter 5d for a short history.

Method of Manufacture: Turn-Mold

Color: Turquoise Blue

Size (in cm.): 24.1 (h); 10.5 (d) (measured without spout)



Figure 12c-22 – Lone Star Sparkling Beverages siphon bottle

Primary Labeling Style: ACL (probably)

Finish: Rimmed - siphon head was three-piece; two pieces formed a continuous thread base for the third – a squirt ejector. Siphon cap was stamped LONE STAR SPARKL. BEV.

Capacity: 36 oz.

Overall Bottle Design: Cylindrical with pot metal dispenser cap.

Front Description

Body: poss. ACL - Lone Star (upwardly slanted script) with underlining broad tail stenciled SPARKLING BEVERAGES / {18-point star burst} / EL PASO, TEXAS / CONT. 36 OZ. REG. [markings worn off – no color remaining]

Back Description

Body: Bare

Base: Etched - BOTTLE (downward arch) / MADE (horizontal) / IN (horizontal) / CZECHOSLOVAKIA (upward arch)

Manufacturer: Unknown

Dating: [1955] Lone Star Sparkling Beverages was only listed in the El Paso city directory in 1955. The ACL labeling on this example – the only one I have seen – was completely bleached by the sun, leaving only a “shadow” marking where the bottle must be held at an angle to read the lettering.

Collection(s): author’s collection.

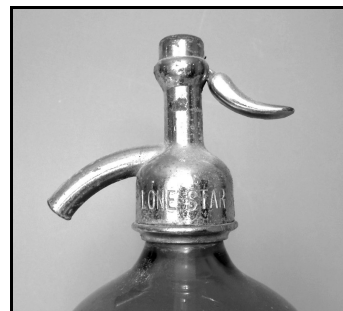


Figure 12c-23 – Lone Star squirter top

Jones & Pfafflin Mfg. Co. (1955-1958)

History

I have found little information about Jones & Pfafflin on 705 E. Missouri Ave. Unlike other bottlers, they were not listed under the “Bottlers” heading in the city directories – only under the heading of “Beverages” in the telephone directories. The company was owned and operated by Clinton L. Jones and Henry G. Pfafflin. Pfafflin had been a chemist with Empire Products Corp. prior to the opening of Jones & Pfafflin. He may have left Empire due to the impending (1956) purchase by Grapette (EPCD 1956; EPTD August 1955-April 1956).

The notation “Bakers sup” in the 1957 City Directory probably indicates that supplying bakers was the primary purpose of the firm. The company remained at the same address from 1955 to 1958. Pfafflin went on to open Topper’s Flavors, wholesale manufacturers of food products in 1959. Clinton L. Jones, the founder of Duffy’s Draft Beverages, had at one time controlled the Pepsi-Cola franchises for the entire western portion of the United States. For more on Jones, see Woodlawn Bottling Co., Chap. 7 (EPCD 1956-1958; EPTD August 1955-April 1958). It is virtually certain that the firm did not bottle sodas; however, the company was almost surely involved in some form of beverage supply, probably syrups.

Olague Bottling Corp. (1962) and Vess Distributing Company (1962-1974)

History

The 1962 telephone directory listed both the Olague Bottling Corp. and the Vess Distributing Co. at the same address, 1608 Thirteenth Ave. The location was unfortunate because it was immediately adjacent to the Farmers Dairy holding pen for cattle. The bovine presence was literally within ten feet of the bottler’s side door. As a result, the operation was constantly plagued with flies. Despite the questionable conditions, the Health Department allowed Vess to remain in business at the same location for five years (Yowell interview).

Olague distributed Three V Cola in sixteen-ounce bottles, claiming the soda as the “NEW Choice of Modern America” (EPTD February 1962). Because bottles have been found in the El Paso area with manufacturing information that suggests they were made in 1961, both Olague and Vess Distributing may have been in business the year prior to their inclusion in the city directory. They could have gone into business after data were collected for the 1961 issue or could have failed to inform the directory of their presence. An alternative possibility is that bottles of that style were blown in 1961, but the ACL label was not applied until just prior to sale the following year. The Vess Dry soda that was originally bottled in El Paso by Woodlawn Bottling Company at least as early as 1928 was the precursor of later Vess beverages.

Three V Cola was the first cola in El Paso to appear in a sixteen-ounce configuration. The large size insured an instant success that allowed Three V to dominate the cola market for a time. Pepsi-Cola was quick to reclaim its share of the cola trade by initiating its own sixteen-ounce bottle, but the conservative Magnolia Coca-Cola Bottling Co. was slow to react. It was

not until Tom Lucky almost forcibly induced Coca-Cola's plant manager to covertly witness sales at a local convenience store that Magnolia adopted the Coca-Cola sixteen-ounce bottle and regained the lion's share of the market. Although Three V Cola briefly occupied the dominant position among cola producers in El Paso, it never again achieved prominence after the older, more popular brands introduced their own sixteen-ounce packages (Lucky interview).

The two companies merged during 1962 to form Vess & Three V Cola, Inc., with Miguel A. Navar as president, Raul M. Olague as vice president, Mrs. María Luisa Olague (wife of Raul) as secretary, and Salvador "Sal" Herrera as treasurer. Although the name remained the same in 1963, the corporate structure was revised to eliminate the Olagues. Miguel Navar remained president of the corporation with Adalberto Navar, Jr., as vice president and Sal Herrera as treasurer. The company remained at 1608 Thirteenth Ave. until 1967, when it moved to 7239 North Loop Dr. In 1969, Vess offered 3-V Cola and Vess Flavors in Orange, Grape, Strawberry, and Root Beer. The El Paso firm changed its name to Sky Vess and 3-V Cola Beverage, Inc. in 1972 and renamed itself again in 1973 as the Vess Beverage Co. before fading into obscurity the following year (EPCD 1962-1965; EPTD, 1962-1974).

The Navar family had been long-time owners of Farmers Dairies at Ysleta, about twelve miles southeast of El Paso. Many of the Navars, including Miguel A., Rafael C., Tomas R., Juan M., José A., John, Domintila, Consuelo, and Adalberto all worked together at the dairy. Farmers Dairies had been in business since at least 1933 and possibly earlier. Adalberto Navar was listed as a dairyman as early as 1918 and began the San Antonio Dairy in 1921. Eventually, the dairy was renamed Farmers and San Antonio Dairy, but the name became shortened to just Farmers (EPCD 1918-1921, 1933-1963).

The Olagues were newcomers to El Paso in 1962 and may have come from Ciudad Juárez. After the restructuring in 1963, Raul opened the Dutch Tavern, selling beer with Salvadore Herrera. The presence of Herrera in both ventures after 1963 indicates that the parting may have been a peaceful one (EPCD 1962-1963).

The historic community of Ysleta, established in 1680, was annexed into the City of El Paso in 1955 over the protests of the Ysleta citizens. Ysleta was probably included in the city directories in 1948



Figure 12c-24 – Ad featuring 3V and Vess beverages

because the city was already leaning toward the annexation issue. The very large Navar family is entirely absent in editions of the city directory prior to 1948, although the family was in the dairy business long before that time.

Bottles and Artifacts

Three V Cola

Three V Cola was one of the early bottlers using 16-ounce bottles. The Double Cola Co. pioneered the idea by opening a 16-ounce container to national use in 1957. The Nehi Co. adopted the new size in 1959

(Elling 2002:21). In El Paso, the Three V 16-ounce bottle prompted the conservative Magnolia Coca-Cola Bottling Co. to add its own larger containers to the market.



Figure 12c-25 – 3V Cola bottle from 1961-1962



Figure 12c-26 – Vess bottle made in 1961

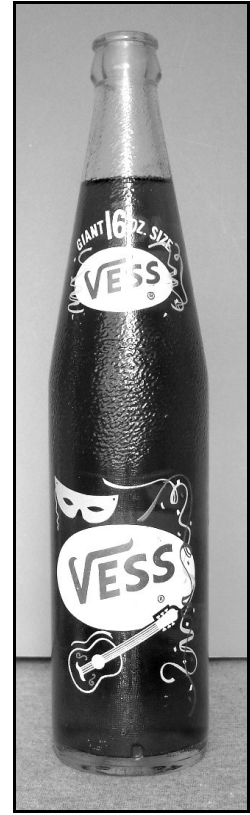


Figure 12c-27 – Vess bottle made in 1962

Three V Cola was advertised in sixteen-ounce bottles (Figure 12c-24), but the size of Vess flavors (Orange, Grape, Strawberry, Root Beer) was not revealed (EPCD 1967). A Three V bottle with a 1962 date code was almost certainly the type used in El Paso, although this example, like many bottles made this late (1960s), had no local city/state designation. Bottles of the type shown in Figure 12c-25 had date codes of 1961 and 1962 and were mostly made by the Liberty Glass Co. (Mike Morrison Collection; Willie F. Terrazas collection., author's collection).

Vess Flavors

Vess flavors came in at least two bottle configurations. The bottle in Figure 12c-26 has been found with 1961 date code and was almost certainly the first on used at El Paso.

Apparently, 1961/1962 was the year of change for Vess. An example of the second style was made by the Liberty Glass Co. in 1962. This style, too, was almost certainly used in El Paso (Figure 12c-27).

Shasta Beverages Division of Consolidated Foods Corp. (1972-1975)

History

In 1972, Shasta Beverages, a division of Consolidated Foods Corp., opened in El Paso at 1140 Airway Blvd. Ruble Hickey managed the operation until it ceased to be listed in 1975. It is likely that the Shasta division in El Paso served as a distributor rather than a bottler (EPCD 1972-1975).