

## **F.E. Reed and the Rochester Glass Works**

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with contributions by Bill Porter

The Reed name was a common one in glass manufacturing, with several unrelated Reed families producing glass, often at the same time (e.g., see Reed & Co. in the “R” Volume). Headed by Eugene P. Reed and Frank E. Reed, the Reed family featured in this section first bought into, then took over the Rochester Glass Works at Rochester, New York, a plant that already had a substantial – although somewhat capricious – background. Eugene Reed brought stability to the firm, when he purchased a share of Kelley & Co. – forming Kelley, Reed & Co. in 1886 – but Frank Reed pushed the factory into success when he succeeded Eugene in 1889. Although its sphere of influence was predominantly eastern in scope, the firm remained a major glass producer until bankruptcy brought the operation to a halt in 1956.

### **Histories**

The history of this glass house is very complex. As is often the case, sources disagree, and primary sources are few. The following histories follow the best researched sources we can find.

#### **Rochester Cooperative Glass Works (1862-1864)**

According to Toulouse (1971:432), workers from the Clyde Glass Works erected the Rochester Cooperative Glass Works ca. 1862. Although this name was not supported by any other sources, none of them provided any other information for this period. Letters from the Rochester Glass Works from 1875 and 1888, claim that the plant was established in 1862, so that *is* the likely inception date for the firm.

#### **Rochester Chemical & Glass Works, C.B. Woodworth (1864-1869 or 1870)**

Along with Reuben A Bunnell, Chauncey B. Woodworth purchased a perfumery business in 1856, although Woodworth bought out Bunnell by 1860. The firm made perfumes, soaps and

toilet articles. Woodworth gained control of the glass plant – located at 178 Plymouth Ave. in Rochester – by 1864 and changed the factory name, probably to the Rochester Chemical & Glass Works. When the operating company became C.B. Woodworth & Son in 1868, the glass plant was certainly known by the Rochester Chemical & Glass Works name. Woodworth sold the glass factory in 1869 or 1870 to concentrate on perfume (Collecting Vintage Compacts 2014; Roller 1997).

## Containers and Marks

### THE MODEL JAR (ca. 1867-1870 or later)



Figure 1 – Finish of Model Jar (North American Glass)

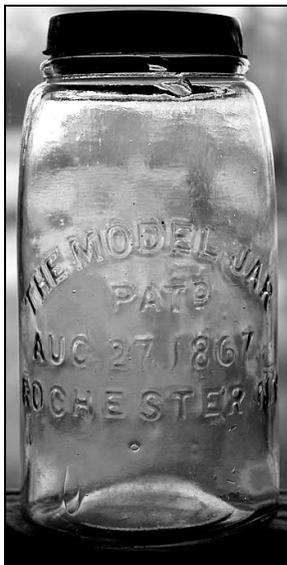


Figure 3 – Model Jar Rochester (North American Glass)

Roller (1983:254) noted two variations of THE MODEL JAR, both mouth-blown (Figure 1). One was embossed “THE MODEL JAR (arch) / PAT<sup>d</sup> / AUG. 27. 1867 (both horizontal)”;

the other added “ROCHESTER, N.Y.” below the date (Figures 2 & 3). The cardboard cap cover stated “THE MODEL JAR PATENTED AUG. 27 1867 (eagle

figure) J.J. VAN ZANDT PROPRIETOR & MANUFACTURER, ROCHESTER, N.Y.” (Figure 4). He added that “J.J. Van Zandt was listed as a coffee and spice merchant in the 1860s Rochester city directories. These jars are found with two distinctly different finishes” (Figure 5) In addition, the numerals (27, 1867) on one variation were in a “fancy style” (Figure 6). He suggested the



Figure 2 – Model Jar (North American Glass)



Figure 4 – Van Zandt cap (North American Glass)

Rochester Glass Works as the probable maker. The update (Roller 2010:379) filled in the information from Creswick (below).

Creswick (1987:159) illustrated both jars and added that Charles F. Spencer received



Figure 5 – Two finishes (North American Glass)



Figure 6 – Label variation (North American Glass)

Patent No. 68,319 on August 27, 1867 (Figure 7). The cardboard cover, of course, is very rare. Echoing Roller, she pointed out that the two jars “have slightly different necks but use the same sealing method.” Van Zandt was a dealer in coffee, tea, and spices, beginning in 1844 and remained in business until he retired, being succeeded by his brothers, Benjamin and Macy Van Zant. Creswick was more certain that the Rochester Glass Works made the jars ca. 1867.

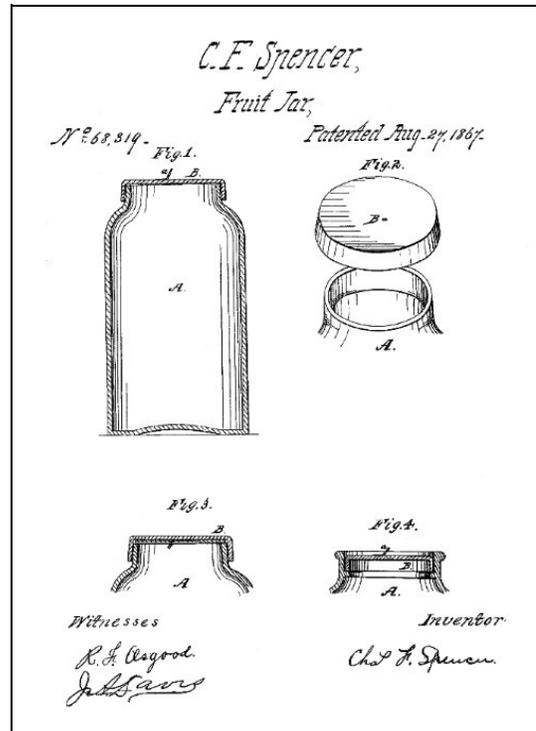


Figure 7 – Spencer 1857 patent

### WHITMORE’S PATENT (ca. 1868-early 1870s)

Toulouse (1969:329) described a mouth-blown fruit jar with a “notched glass lid and spring wire bail” embossed “WHITMORE’S (arch ) / PATENT (horizontal with a reversed “N”) / ROCHESTER (arch) / N.Y. (horizontal)” on the side. He suggested the Rochester Glass Works as the probable manufacturer ca. 1868. The lid was embossed “PATENTED JAN’Y 14<sup>TH</sup> 68.” He noted that he could not locate the patent – although North American Glass illustrated examples with an “L” or a reversed “P” above the numbers (Figure 8).

Roller (1983:381-382) described the lid as a “finned glass lid held down by lowed-wire bail hooking into bosses

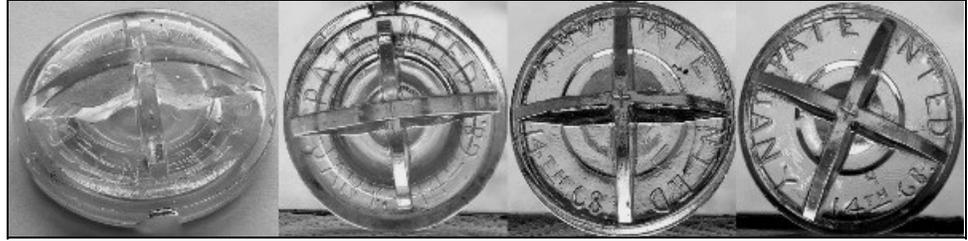


Figure 8 – Whitmore lids (North American Glass)



Figure 9 – Whitmore bails (North American Glass)

on jar neck” (Figure 9) The patent holder, Enos B. Whitmore, was listed in Rochester city directories from 1855 to 1878. Roller noted the variation with the reversed “N” and one with the “N” in

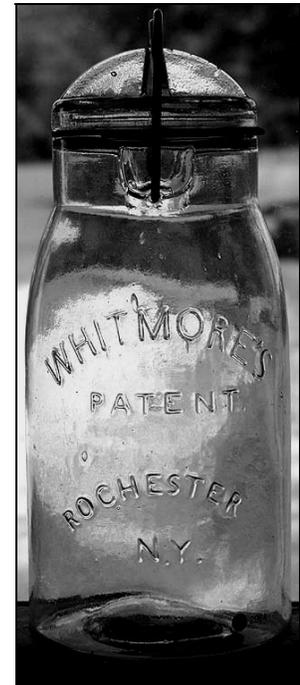


Figure 10 – Whitmore jar (North American Glass)

normal aspect (Figure 10). A variation had a “compass & square design embossed on the base,” and another jar was embossed “WHITMORE’S PATENT” above “two rectangular areas of mold alteration” that may have covered “JAN 14<sup>TH</sup> 1868” (Figure 11).



Figure 11 – Whitmore variation (North American Glass)

He noted that the jars were “not made by altering a regular Whitmore jar mold.” The dimensions of the jar were slightly different, and the bails were not interchangeable.

Creswick (1987:221) illustrated three variations, including the compass & square, the one with the reversed “N,” and one with the rectangular blocked-out area (Figure 12). She noted that Enos B. Whitmore received Patent No. 73,271 on January 14, 1868 (Figure 13). She dated all three jars ca. 1868 and claimed the Rochester Glass Works as the maker.

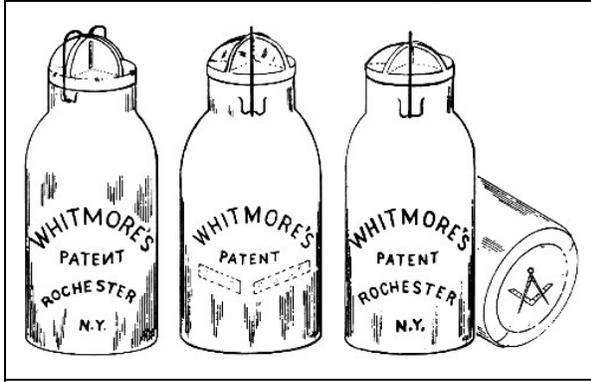


Figure 12 – Whitmore jars (Creswick 1987:221)

listed themselves as “Proprietors and Manufacturers of The Whitmore Patent Fruit Jar,” and E.G. Whitmore and G.H. Foster were actually the vendors of the jars. Although Roller called the maker “uncertain,” he said it was “probably” made by the Rochester Glass Works. By at least July 22, 1869, Boughton & Powell had become distributors of the jars. Both the letterhead and the trade card illustrated the same jar – obviously the same patent.

The Roller update (2011:551) cited a trade card and a letter dated July 22, 1869, to trace the ancestry of the jars. Foster & Whitmore, 77 & 79 Exchange St., Rochester,

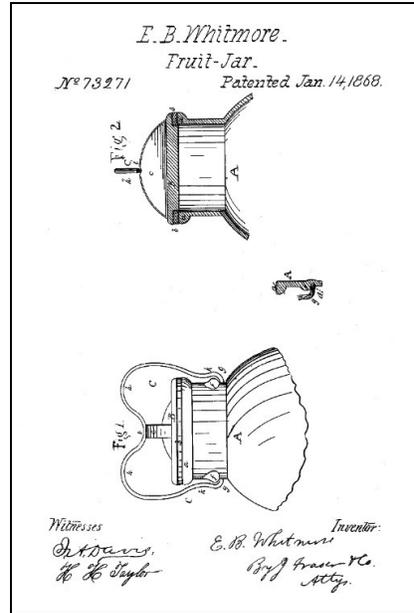


Figure 13 – Whitmore 1868 patent

### Rochester Glass Works, Thomas A. Evans (ca. 1870-ca. 1873)

Thomas A. Evans, better known for his glass factory in Pittsburgh, became the proprietor of the Rochester Glass Works by 1870 – possibly a year earlier. Evans built the Mastodon glass factory at Pittsburgh in 1855 and sold the plant to William McCully in 1869 (Hawkins 2009:195-196). See the Other T section for more on T.A. Evans. Although surviving records from the period are spotty, he apparently then moved to Rochester and acquired the glass works there. We know that Evans still ran the plant in 1871, but the next evidence – a letterhead from 1875 – showed N.B. Gatchell & Co. as the operating firm (Roller 1997). We have been unable to trace Evans after 1871.

## Containers and Marks

### T.A. EVANS ROCHESTER (ca. 1870-ca. 1872)

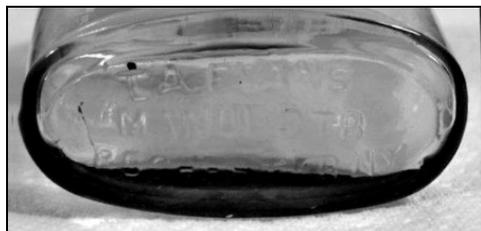


Figure 14 – T.A. Evans (eBay)

An eBay auction offered a colorless flask embossed “T.A. EVANS / MANUFCTR / ROCHESTER NY” horizontally across the base (Figures 14 & 15).

Evans owned the Rochester

Glass Works from ca. 1870 to some point between 1871 and 1875.

See the section for a company history.



Figure 15 – Evans flask (eBay)

### Rochester Glass Works, N.B. Gatchell & Co. (ca. 1873-1877)

Roller (1997) described an 1875 ad for “N.B. Gatchell & Co., proprietors of the Rochester Glass Works, mfrs. of glass bottles, flasks, &c., 178 Plymouth Ave.” The 1877 city directory says that Nathan B. Gatchell was “removed from city”<sup>1</sup> – almost certainly marking the end of his tenure as proprietor (Roller 1997; von Mechow 2015).

In April of 1862, James, Gatchell & Co. (F.H. James & N.B. Gatchell) had purchased the Lancaster Glass Works, Lancaster, New York, at an assignee’s sale. The business became James & Gatchell in mid-1864, and that firm controlled the plant until 1873 (von Mechow 2015). Since Gatchell left Lancaster in 1873, that may indicate the year he obtained the Rochester Glass Works. See section on Lancaster Glass Works for more information on that plant.

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<sup>1</sup> Although the specific meaning of “removed from city” is unclear, it seems to imply a negative connotation. There is almost certainly an interesting story behind this, although we found nothing in a newspaper search. Gatchell apparently left town. When George Clark assigned part of a British patent (No. 192,635) for an “apparatus for refining and aging alcoholic liquors” to several people, N.B. Gatchell or Lancaster, New York, was one of them. The patent was received on November 2, 1877 (Great Britain Patent Office 1878).

## Rochester Glass Works, Kelley & Co. (at least 1881-1885)

By 1881, Henry T. Kelley (Kelley & Co.) had gained control of the firm, although Kelley's tenure may have begun with the removal of Gatchell in 1877. Kelley & Co. operated the factory until at least July 8, 1885, when a billhead noted that the firm was "Manufacturers of Bottles." The address of the plant was 178 Plymouth Ave. with "178" crossed out and "380" written in by hand (Roller 1997). This suggests that the numbering system had recently changed rather than a new location for the plant.

### Containers and Marks

#### ROCHESTER GLASS WKS. or WORKS (1882-ca. 1897)



Figure 16 – Glass Works / Rochester (eBay)

We have observed variations of this mark on a flask and beer bottle offered for sale on eBay. They are obviously from the Rochester Glass Works. One beer base, illustrated in an out-of-focus photo on eBay, was embossed "GLASS



Figure 17 – Rochester Glass Wks (eBay)

WORKS / ROCHESTER (both arches) / N.Y. / U.S.A. (both inverted arches)" on the base (Figure 16). The bottle had a Baltimore loop or blob finish and was almost certainly mouth blown. A flask offered on eBay was marked "ROCHESTER (slight arch) / GLASS WKS. (slight inverted arch)" on the base (Figure 17).

Von Mechow (2015) described 12 beer bottles with variations of the Rochester logo on their bases. The vast majority of these were used by used by brewers in western New York, although one was as far east as Manchester, New Hampshire:

1. "GLASS WORKS (arch) / ROCHESTER, N.Y. (inverted arch)" [8 examples]
2. "GLASS WORKS (arch) / ROCHESTER (horizontal) / N.Y. (inverted arch)" [1 example]
3. "GLASS WORKS (arch) / PAT 85 (horizontal) / ROCHESTER, N.Y. (inverted arch)" [2 examples]

4. “GLASS WORKS / ROCHESTER / PAT (all arches) / 85 / N.Y. / U.S.A. (all inverted arches)  
[1 example]

The Baltimore Loop seal was patented in 1885, and bottles with the patent date embossed on the base were probably only made during the first few years. The vast majority of beer bottles with Baltimore Loop seals lack the patent date. Thus, the mark was probably used during the ca. 1885-1890 period.

Rochester Glass Works marks are relatively rare. Searches on eBay for well over a year have only turned up two examples, and von Mechow is the only other sources we have found that displayed them. The types of bottles associated with the mark were typically manufactured during the ca. 1880-ca. 1900 period, although they could have been made somewhat earlier or later. The 1885 patent date makes the most likely operating companies associated with Rochester Glass Co. marks either Kelley & Co. (1881-1885) or Kelley, Reed & Co. (1886-1888), although the marks could have been used somewhat earlier by N.B. Gatchell. Since E.P. Reed & Co. began using a distinctive mark during the 1888-1889 period, the likely cutoff date for the logo is 1887. Dating, however, is somewhat tenuous, as this name for the factory (as opposed to the operating company) was used from as early as 1864 until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **Rochester Glass Works, Kelley, Reed & Co. (1886-1888)**

Around 1886, Eugene P. Reed bought into the business, and the firm became Kelly, Reed & Co. Reed had probably been associated with Kelly earlier. According to Toulouse (1971:433), “soon [after 1865], Eugene B. Reed, from Rochester, was employed as bookkeeper. As time went on Reed invested money in the business, and together with a Mr. Kelley, finally took it over as ‘Kelley, Reed & Co.’” The firm was short-lived. When Kelley died in 1888, Reed gained control of the entire business (Dairy Antiques 2015; Creswick 1987a; Toulouse 1971:432). We have discovered no distinctive mark used by this firm, although it may have continued the Rochester Glass Works logo – or used none.

## **Rochester Glass Works, E.P. Reed & Co. (1888-1889)**

Upon Kelley's death, Reed gained control, and the company became E.P. Reed & Co. An E.P. Reed & Co. billhead showed that Eugene P. Reed operated the glass works by at least October 8, 1888, still at 380 Plymouth Ave. A letterhead from January 16, 1890, noted that F.E. Reed & Co. was the successor to E.P. Reed & Co. It is likely that Frank E. Reed took over the firm in late 1889. The city directories erroneously continued to list E.P. Reed & Co. until 1894, but Eugene Reed died on August 16, 1894 (Creswick 1987:276; Dairy Antiques 2015; Roller 1997; Toulouse 1971:432-434; von Mechow 2015).

### **Containers and Marks**

#### **E.P. REED & Co.**

Von Mechow (2015) illustrated bottles with variations of an "E.P. REED & Co." basemark that he found on three beer bottles (Figure 18):

1. "E.P. REED & CO. (arch) / PAT 85 (horizontal) / ROCHESTER, N.Y. (inverted arch)"
2. "E.P. REED & CO. (arch) / ROCHESTER (horizontal) / N.Y. (inverted arch)"



Figure 18 – E.P. Reed & Co. (Von Mechow 2015)

One bottle was used by a brewer in Brooklyn, but the other two were in or close to Rochester. We have not discovered a photo of this mark, but it was likely used only during the two years (1888-1889) when E.P. Reed & Co. was in business.

#### **F.E. Reed (1889-ca. 1903)**

Eugene P. Reed apparently retired from the business in 1889, and his brother, Frank E. Reed took over. By this point, there seems to have been a stronger identification with the operating firm than with the factory name (Rochester Glass Works). A January 16, 1890, letterhead noted that F.E. Reed was the successor to E.P. Reed & Co., and city directories

identified F.E. Reed as operating the glass works at 380 Plymouth Ave. from 1890 to 1902. By 1897, the plant had two continuous tanks with ten rings. The factory was listed with 10 “pots” (almost certainly rings) in 1900 and remained at that level until at least 1902 (*National Glass Budget* 1897:7; 1898:7; 1900:11; 1901:11; 1902:11; Roller 1997; Toulouse 1971:433).

## **Containers and Marks**

### **Cursive R** (poss. 1889-ca. 1903)

Von Mechow (2015) assigned a cursive “R” to F.E. Reed (Figure 19). He noted the mark in the center of the base on two beer bottles, one from Baltimore, Maryland, the other from Oswego, New York. Although the “R” in a fancy cursive design would be unusual as a manufacturer’s mark, one of the bottles is very similar to one with the FER logo (see next entry). The mark could have been used any time during the 1889-ca. 1903 tenure of the firm.



Figure 19 –  
Elaborate R  
(Von Mechow  
2015)

### **FER** (1889-ca. 1903)

Rydquist (2002:5) noted the FER mark “on the heel of a blown crown beer bottle.” This is almost certainly the mark of F.E. Reed before he added “& Co.” Reed’s grandson stated that any part of the name may have been used as a mark (see REED below). Mobley (2015) listed a single beer bottle marked with FER in his Dictionary of Embossed Beers, and von Mechow (2015) included two examples, each with “FER” embossed horizontally across the base. One bottle was used in Baltimore, Maryland, the other in Saratoga, New York. As with the “R” logo above, “FER” could have been used at any time during the 1889-ca. 1903 period.

### **F.E. Reed & Co.** (ca. 1903-1908)

Frank E. Reed brought his son, Arthur F. Reed, into the company at some point between 1902 and 1904 and renamed the enterprise F.E. Reed & Co., a copartnership. The company was listed as F.E. Reed & Co. in the 1904 glass factory directory. At that time, the plant used a single continuous tank with nine rings and one day tank with six rings to produce “prescription, liquor, proprietary and packers’ ware” (*American Glass Review* 1934:161). The company

remained F.E. Reed & Co. in the 1905 listing, with the factory noted as the Rochester Glass Works. Although the listing did not pick up the name change to F.E. Reed Glass Co. until 1915, the firm actually incorporated in 1908 (Thomas Publishing Co. 1905:104; 1915:578; von Mechow 2015).

**FER&Co. (ca. 1903-at least 1913)**

Griffenhagen and Bogard (1999:123) listed this mark as being used by the F.E. Reed Glass Co. from 1912 to 1920 on medicinal products bottled by the Guggenheim Mfg. Co. Toulouse (1971:432) did not show the mark but noted that the company was called F.E. Reed & Co. from 1898 to 1927. Creswick (1987:273), however, dated F.E. Reed & Co. from 1909 to 1927. The mark fits the company name, although we have dated this operating



Figure 20 – FER&Co (Fort Stanton Collection)



Figure 21 – FER&Co (eBay)

company from at ca. 1903 to 1908.

Pollard (1993:107) illustrated a blob-top soda bottle embossed “FER&CO (arch)” on the base. The brewer that used the bottle was in

business from 1902 to 1911. Von Mechow (2015) added three more examples with “FER&Co.” basemarks in both arched and horizontal variations. The firm also made catsup bottles for

Curtice Bros. (Figures 20 & 21).

These were used by brewers in New York and Baltimore, Maryland. Some examples were accompanied by a three- or four-digit numerical code either above or below the logo. These were almost certainly model codes, although no codes appeared in the 1910 catalog.

The October 15, 1910, F.E. Reed Glass Co. catalog (F.E. Reed 1910) illustrated numerous examples of the F.E.R.&Co. mark (always with punctuation) on the bases of 12 different styles of prescription bottles (Figure 22). The styles included oval, rectangular, round, and square shapes (in cross section).



Figure 22 – FER&Co (F.E. Reed 1910)

This reflected the recent change from F.E. Reed & Co. to the F.E. Reed Glass Co. and the probable use of old molds until they wore out. A 1913 ad (*American Druggist and Pharmaceutical Record* 1913:88) showed a graduated oval copied from the catalog (Figure 23). This suggests that the mark may have been used at least as late as the 1910-1913 period. The mark was noted twice by Fike (1987:61, 142) and is mentioned and illustrated on several bottles on eBay and the internet. We have observed the mark on catsup, proprietary medicine, and prescription bottles. All examples of this mark that we have seen appear to be on mouth-blown bottles.

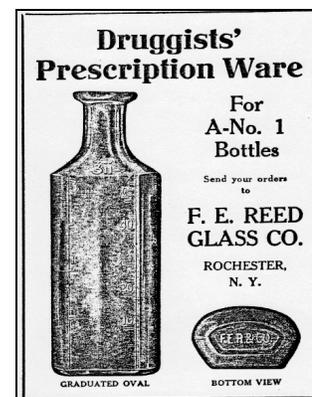


Figure 23 – FER&Co  
(*American Druggist and Pharmaceutical Record* 1913:88)

### **F.E. Reed Glass Co.** (ca. 1909-1947)

The August 1908 issue of *House Furnishing Review* noted the F.E. Reed Glass Co. as a new corporation with a capital of \$165,000 taking over the business and good will of the earlier F.E. Reed & Co. A billhead, dated April 19, 1910, noted that Reed was “Manufacturers of Flint and Amber Bottles, Brewers’ Ware, Patent Medicines, Flasks, Druggists' Ware And Milks Private Molds With Fine Lettering, Monograms, etc. Factories: Plymouth Ave., Maple St.” (Roller 1997; von Mechow 2015). The earlier F.E. Reed & Co. actually initiated the construction of the factory at 860 Maple St. in 1907, although the new plant was probably not in production until the following year (City of Rochester 1907:426). The 1910 catalog named the firm F.E. Reed Glass Co., although the bases of bottles in the catalog were marked FER&Co. – as noted above. Ads in the *Glass Container* and other publications from 1913 to 1940 also called the company the F.E. Reed Glass Co.<sup>2</sup>

According to Griffenhagen and Bogard (1999:104), Reed first promoted his graduated oval in 1912. By 1913, Reed was making a general line of bottles by both semiautomatic machine and hand methods at two continuous tanks with 15 rings (*Journal of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry* 1913:953). However, the city of Rochester did not appear on two machine lists from the *National Glass Budget* (1909:1; 1912:1) in 1909 and 1912. This suggests

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<sup>2</sup> Toulouse (1971:433) and others called the plant “Reed Glass Co.” This probably reflects a fast reading of the directories. The company was often listed as “Reed Glass Co., F.E.”

that semiautomatic production began ca. 1912 or 1913. A 1914 billhead only listed the Maple St. address, suggesting that the Plymouth Ave. plant had been closed by that time.

The plant was making “Flint, Amber and Green Glass” by at least 1921 (*Glass Container* 1921:36). The earliest ad we have found with a listing for machine manufacture was January 1922. Later that year, the firm bragged that “nearly all of our output is manufactured by latest machine methods. We have, however, retained a small portion of our plant for hand blown ware, which allows us to take care of small order special mould work” (*Glass Container* 1921:36; 1922a:26; 1922b:35). This almost certainly reflects fully automatic machinery, rather than the semiautomatic machines used earlier.

By 1927, Reed made “sodas, food containers, milks, [and] prescription ware” by both machine and hand processes at three continuous tanks with 24 rings. Arthur F. Reed was president by this time, with his father, Frank E. Reed, as vice president. Fred E. Reed was secretary and treasurer, with A.F. Reed as general manager, and William Johnson as superintendent. By 1929, an ad listed factories at 860 Maple St. and Mt. Read Blvd., both in Rochester. Since the earlier Plymouth Ave. plant apparently closed between 1910 and 1914, the Mt. Read factory was apparently a new one (*American Glass Review* 1927:143; Roller 1997).

By 1930, Reed used four continuous tanks with only 12 rings to make “druggists and proprietary ware, beverages, packers and preservers in flint, light green, emerald green and amber; milk jars.” The manufacturing technique was not recorded, probably indicating a full dependence on machines. The company added fruit jars in 1934, and the same listing continued until at least 1944 (*American Glass Review* 1930:95; 1934:98; 1944:106). It seems a bit odd that the listing still used the term “milk jars” a couple of decades after most glass houses used the term “bottles.” The last advertisement we have been able to find for milk bottles was in 1934.

## **Containers and Marks**

### **FERGCo (ca. 1910-1920s)**

Toulouse (1971:197, 433) showed this mark for the F.E. Reed Glass Co., Rochester, New York. He dated the mark 1898 to 1927, although we have abridged the date for the company to



Figure 24 – FERGCo (eBay)

ca. 1910 to 1947. The mark, however, was probably only used from ca. 1910 to ca. 1925. Giarde (1980:41) followed Toulouse, although he had not been able to confirm the mark’s use on milk bottles (his book’s specialty area).



Figure 25 – Milk bottle (eBay)

We have seen eBay photos of amber milk bottles with rounded heels, however, that were embossed “F.E.R.G.Co.-34 / 214” and “F.E.R.G.Co.-34 / 904” (Figures 24 & 25) as well as other two- to four-digit numbers on their bases, and the mark has been noted on similar bottles in dozens of eBay auctions (see the



Figure 26 – FERGCo (eBay)

discussion of the number “34” in the REED section below). The logo also appeared on other eBay bottles (pharmaceutical, catsup, and household) with and without punctuation (Figure 26). Reed also furnished some bottles for Curtice Bros. catsup during this period (Figure 27). All bottles in eBay photos appear to have been mouth blown (i.e., no machine scars or ejection scars), even though Reed should have had machine capacity during this period. The plant apparently only

marked mouth-blown ware.

Dating of milk bottles made by F.E. Reed is a bit complex, but it helps date the marks, themselves. The October 15, 1910, catalog included a single style of milk bottle. However, we have found no evidence of milk bottles bearing the FER&Co mark, nor are any such listed by Giarde (1980:41). Thus, the company apparently began manufacturing milk bottles ca. 1910, using the FERGCo mark.



Figure 27 – FERGCo Curtice Bros. basemark (eBay)

Griffenhagen and Bogard (1999:123) noted the logo on pharmaceutical bottles but dated the mark 1898 to 1947. Since the

authors cited Toulouse as one of their sources, the 1947 date probably referred to the change to Reed & Co. Jones (1966:16) showed the mark with punctuation (F.E.R.G.CO.). It is likely that the “F.E.R.G.Co.” logo was only used from ca. 1910 to the mid-1920s.

### **REED (1920-1926)**

Toulouse (1971:433) showed the “REED” mark as belonging to the F.E. Reed Glass Co. during the 1898-1927 period. He also described an interview with the grandson of Frank E. Reed who told him that “during the F.E. Reed Glass Co. period any part of the name, including the word ‘Reed’ alone might be used. No bottle carrying any of these marks would have been made prior to 1898.” Oddly, we have only discovered this logo on two types of bottles: milk bottles and those used for Coca-Cola.

### **Coca-Cola Bottles**

On hobble-skirt Coca-Cola bottles, “REED” was embossed at the heel, preceded by what may have been a model or catalog code and followed by a two-digit date code. Porter (2009) recorded codes, e.g.:

7 REED 20  
4 REED 21  
4 REED 23  
787 REED 23  
L 789 REED 24  
788 REED L 25  
790 REED L 26

These indicate that this code system was used on Coke bottles from 1920 to 1926. However, the bottles with date codes of 24, 25, and 26 (and at least one with 23) had the R-in-a-triangle mark on the base in addition to the “REED” on the heel. This overlap was almost certainly caused by allowing the old molds (with the “REED” heelmarks) to wear out, even though the new baseplates were in use. All of the “REED” marks are found on Coke bottles patented in 1915.

During this time period, Coca-Cola bottles made by F.E. Reed were a deep blue color, unlike the typical Georgia Green of most Coke bottles. Typical Coke bottles of the period were embossed “MIN. CONTENTS 6 OZS.” in the center labeling area. Bottles made for use in New York, however, were marked “CONTENTS 6 FL OZ” – except those made by Reed.

### Milk Bottles

Giarde (1980:41-42) dated the mark from 1898 to the mid-1930s, slightly extending the Toulouse date. He noted that the company made green and amber milk bottles as well as round “baby tops” (i.e. bottles with a round extension at the top of the container to separate milk from cream – some of these were embossed with baby faces). An eBay seller noted that “REED” was embossed on the heel of his bottle with “P 34” on the base. Other eBay sellers have noted a “34” or P34” on milk bottle bases with “REED” on the heels, and one of the authors has in his possession a REED bottle embossed “A-34” on the base (Figures 28 & 29).



Figure 28 – Reed milk bottle



Figure 29 – A - 37 basemark

The number “34” was assigned to F.E. Reed. In 1910, the State of New York required that each glass house selling milk bottles within the state borders must emboss a unique identification number, along with the manufacturer’s name or initials, on each container (*Orange County Times-Press* 1910). Many other states followed suit. Although most companies obtained the same number in each state, a few ended up with different numbers in some states. Fortunately, multiple numbers are the exception. Reed appears to have always used the number “34.”

Milk bottles with the REED mark were quite unusual. The bottles had all the characteristics of a blow-and-blow machines, unlike the usual ejection mark and other characteristics of the press-and-blow machines usually used to make milk bottles. The color of the bottles appears to be of little help. According to Tutton (2003:10), amber milk bottles “were used before 1900,” but he did not discuss the length of that use. In an earlier book, however,

Tutton ([1997]:7) noted that amber milk bottles were “used before 1900 and during the thirties.” He further noted that green milk bottles were used mostly for eggnog during the “thirties and forties,” but these colors form an area that could use more research. Reed seems to have been one of the most prolific makers of amber and green milk bottles. Unfortunately, we have found no evidence of identifiable date codes on Reed milk bottles.

It is pretty certain that the firm began using the F.E.R.G.Co. mark ca. 1910, and it is unlikely that the company used REED concurrently on milk bottles. The amber bottles marked F.E.R.G.Co. had more rounded heels and thinner finishes – a style generally used earlier than those marked REED. There was probably a bit of overlap between F.E.R.G.Co. and REED marks. Giarde must have had *some* reason for dating the bottles to the 1930s, although it is possible that he – or someone reporting to him – thought that “34” was a date code. Unfortunately, he did not explain why he chose that date, and it is not consistent with other data connected with the “REED” and later marks. Since we know that REED was discontinued in favor of the Triangle-R mark on Coke bottles in 1927, it is unlikely that the mark was used on milk bottles beyond that date.

### Massachusetts “R” Seal (ca. 1924-late 1920s)



Figure 30 – Mass R Seal (Al Morin)

In 1900, the State of Massachusetts required that each milk bottle be “sealed” (i.e., certified that it contained the correct volume of milk) by having it checked with a local “sealer,” then etched with whether it passed or was “condemned.” In late 1909, the onus shifted to the manufacturers, who were then required to post bond and emboss

each bottle with a seal.

The “R” seal has only been observed in a circular format – “MASS (arch) / R (horizontal) / SEAL (inverted arch)” – mandated in 1918 (Figure 30). However, Reed was not included in the

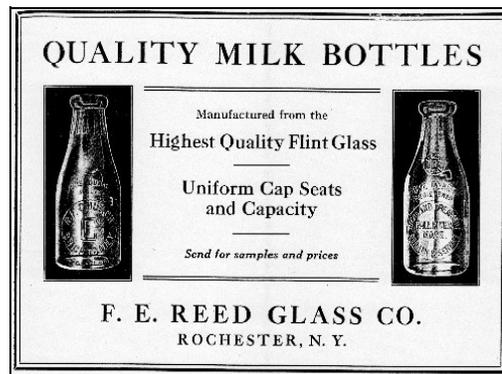


Figure 31 – Mass R ad (*Milk Dealer* 1924)

Massachusetts 1918 list, although the glass house was in the state's 1924 publication and in ads during that year (Figure 31). The R-seals are scarce and should be dated to the 1920-1926 period of the "REED" logo.

### Minnesota "45" Triangle

Some bottles were embossed on the shoulder with the Minnesota triangle. This was the "seal" required by Minnesota, and it consisted of a triangle bisected horizontally by a line. Above the line was a number – 45 for Reed – with "MINN" below the line (Figure 32). Each example we have recorded had a "REED" heelmark and "34" on the base. Although the dating of the MINN triangles is in its infancy, the triangle had probably migrated to the heel of the bottle by the early to mid-1930s.



Figure 32 – 45 MINN triangle

Since the triangles on these bottles were on the shoulders, they, too, should be dated to the 1920-1926 period of the "REED" logo.

### R in a Triangle (1923-1956)

Jones (1965:[22]) identified the R-in-a-triangle mark as belonging to F.E. Reed. However, she later (1966:18) dropped the identification, apparently deciding that she did not know who used the mark. Scholes (1941:129) stated that the mark was used in 1941 by F.E. Reed. Toulouse (1971:432) noted this mark as being used by the Reed Glass Co., 1927-1956. Giarde (1980:41) followed Toulouse, although he had not been able to confirm the mark's use on milk bottles (his book's specialty area). We have also been unable to locate any dairy containers with triangle marks.

Ads for Reed's triangle mark first appeared in *Glass Container* sometime between April and October 1925 and continued to at least 1940 – the last ad we have found (Figures 33 & 34). Many of the ads

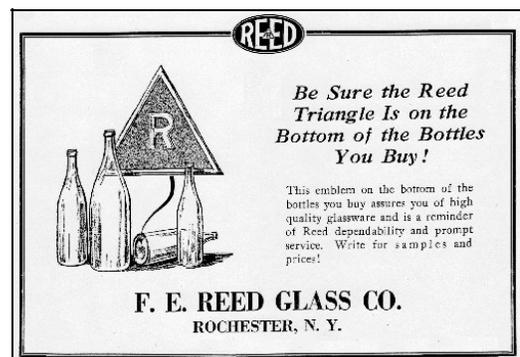


Figure 33 – Triangle-R ad (*Glass Container* 1927:34)



Figure 34 – Triangle-R ad (*Glass Container* 1932)

indicate that the mark was located on the base of the bottle, the only place we have seen it on actual bottles. Beer bottle ads began appearing by September 1933 accompanied by the triangle logo. The series of ads make it clear that Reed continued to offer a general line of bottles until at least 1940.

The Toulouse date range was predicated on his belief that the company was called the Reed Glass Co. from 1927 to 1956. However, existing information (see below) indicates that he was probably pretty close, even if his logic was faulty. The mark was advertised by at least 1925 and as mentioned above, Bill Porter reported a single Coke bottle with the Reed Triangle-R logo and a

“23” date code – as well as others with “24” “and later codes. We have thus dated the mark from 1923 to the closing of the plant in 1956.

Except on Coke bottles, we have found no evidence of date codes used by Reed until the adoption of the Triangle-R mark, although our information on date codes is scanty. Some of the marks appear with no codes of any kind. We recorded beer bottles with the R-in-a-triangle mark accompanied by two-digit date codes of 42, 43, and 46 (Figure 35). The use of two-digit date codes on beer and soda bottles (possibly other types) likely continued until the factory closed in 1956. Other observed codes include:



Figure 35 – Triangle-R beer (eBay)

- R (in triangle) X / D 30 3 1 (Figure 36)
- R (in triangle) / MARTIN (horizontal) / T 37 7 (inverted arch) [soda bottle]
- R (in triangle) / SYRACUSE / N Y (both horizontal) / A 519 9 (inverted arch) [soda bottle]
- A 527 0 (horizontal) / ALA (large letters – horizontal) / R (in triangle) [soda bottle]



Figure 36 – Triangle-R soda

A 557 0 [soda bottle]

R (in triangle) X / B 43 4 2

203-A / R (in triangle) / 7 12 46 (inverted arch) [on a Steinie beer bottle]

R (in triangle / C 6 9 4 46 (inverted arch) [soda bottle]

R (in triangle) / B 415 5 4 (Figure 37)



Figure 37 – Triangle-R

Laurer (2004) described the Triangle R mark on a Genesee beer bottle:

In raised print on bottom of the bottle is an “R” enclosed in a triangle. Below the triangle are the numbers “Z8383” & in large letters “G6” . . . . The “R” enclosed by the triangle on the bottom of the bottle probably was a manufactures coding and that of the Reed Glass Co. located in Rochester. A good assumption is that the large G6 is a date code of manufacture representing July 1936. This is definitely a post prohibition bottle from the mid 1930's.

Although Laurer did not explain his thinking, it is likely that he considered the “G” (seventh letter of the alphabet) to indicate July (seventh month) and the “6” as a single-digit date code. Because of Prohibition and the U-permit on the label, the bottle must have been made during the 1930s – thus the 1936 suggestion.

Our very small sample does not quite support the Laurer hypothesis. We have only recorded the letters A, B, C, D, and T which could equal January, February, March and April, although the “T” is off the month scale. The single-letter date code, however, is somewhat supported. The “30” code on one bottle may indicate 1930, but there are two bases with a “0” and one with a “9” in the date code position. Most companies that manufactured soda bottles used date codes by the early 1930s, and federal law required beer and liquor bottles to use two-digit date codes in 1940. The 1933 federal law required single-digit date codes on liquor bottles beginning that year.

As noted above, Porter (1996:5; 2009) reported the R-in-a-triangle marks in conjunction with “REED” heelmarks on Coca-Cola bottles 23, 24, 25, or 26. The triangle basemarks

continued after the transition period on Coke bottles patented in 1923. Porter recorded several slight variations of numbers that accompanied the triangle basemarks:

790 8

791 8

792 9

The initial three-digit number is most likely a model or catalog code, and the separate, single-digit number is likely a date code (for 1928 and 1929). Thus, the R-in-a-triangle mark was probably used on hobble-skirt Coke bottles from 1923 to 1929. Unlike the earlier deep blue color, these Coke bottles were bluish aqua. Currently, we have found no indication that F.E. Reed made Coke bottles after 1929. Coke bottles made by Reed have only been found for New York, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and a single city (Warren) in Ohio.

## ICICLE

The F. E. Reed Glass Co., Rochester, New York, registered Trade-Mark #264,384 on November 26, 1929, for “ICICLE” – claiming a use of the mark since July 1, 1927. The mark was for “empty glass bottles” and was “applied or affixed to the goods, by blowing the same directly in the bottle.”

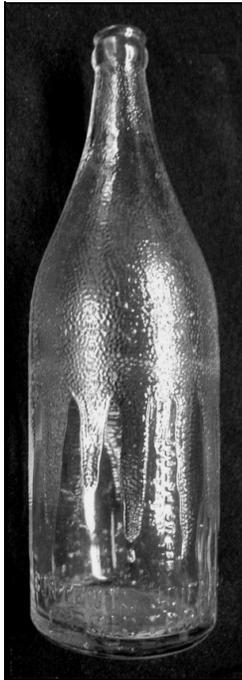


Figure 38 – Icicle (eBay)

This trademark was probably used for a soda bottle design that had icicles dripping down the bottle’s sides and “ICICLE REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.” embossed on the heel. An example was used by the Acme Bottling Works. The base was embossed “ROCHESTER, N.Y. (arch) / AC (horizontal – large) / PAT. APPL’D FOR (inverted arch).” The embossing suggests that Reed attempted to obtain a design patent for the bottle (Figures 38). Although at least two of

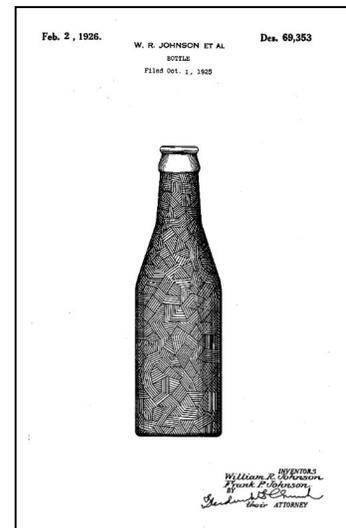


Figure 39 – Johnson 1926 patent

the Reeds – Arthur F. Reed (Design Patent No. 68,594; October 27, 1925) and Fred E. Reed (Design Patent No. 83,751; March 24, 1931) – and an employee – William R. Johnson (Design Patent No. 69,353; February 2, 1926 – Figure 39) – received design patents for soda bottles, the one requested for the icicle style was apparently not granted. None of the designs appear to have been very popular.

### **Reed Glass Co., Inc. (1947-1956)**

The company incorporated in 1947<sup>3</sup> as the Reed Glass Co., Inc. and made “food packers ware, [in] flint, emerald green, amber” at four continuous tanks with 14 machines between 1949 and 1956. Reed filed for bankruptcy on October 5, 1956, and the firm was listed as bankrupt the following year (Roller 1997; Toulouse 1971:434). The Castle-Hanson Corp. took over the property in 1960 to make food bottles, and the Leone Industries purchased the operation in September 1973. Leone continued to run the plant until at least 1988 (Roller 1997). See the Other C section for a discussion of Castle-Hanson and the Other L section for Leone Industries.

## **Discussion and Conclusions**

Although there are still some concerns with a few of the dates for the operating firms, most of the histories are reasonably complete. Future research should center around other resources than we have discovered to solidify some of the dates. There are still some very fuzzy transitions between the logos (e.g., from FER&Co to FERGCo, with REED thrown in), and they were almost certainly fuzzy in reality. Since the 1910 catalog called the firm the F.E. Reed Glass Co. but showed bottles marked “F.E.R.&Co.,” there was almost certainly an overlap where both logos (FER&Co and FERGCo) were used – at least until all the old molds were worn out. Even so, a bottle introduced in 1912 was marked “F.E.R.&Co.” Essentially, however, the dating of the marks is reasonably certain.

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<sup>3</sup> Roller (1997) noted that the F.E. Reed Glass Co. name continued to be listed in the directories until 1949. However, because the continued listing of old names or even closed factories was very common in the directories, the Toulouse date is likely correct.

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