

The Upland Glass Companies

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Earlier researchers often confused the various factories at Upland, Indiana, because of their similar names. Different primary sources often used incorrect names (e.g., Upland Glass Factory) or used partial names (e.g., Upland Glass Co. for Upland Co-Operative Glass Co.), so the confusion is understandable. Histories of the Ball Brothers, for example, consistently used the name “Upland Glass Co.,” although the Balls actually purchased the Upland Co-Operative Glass Co.

Histories

Upland Glass Co., Upland, Indiana (1892-1895)

On October 24, 1892, the Upland Glass Co. incorporated with a capital of \$60,000, although the plant did not actually begin production until sometime after May 1893.¹ James Johnson was president with John W. Pittinger as secretary and treasurer, Thomas P. Kenny as vice president and general manager, and Richard Davis as superintendent. The intended products included fruit jars, bottles, and glass novelties. The factory made green glassware by 1894, but there were no listings after that point (Matthews 1892:107; *National Corporation Reporter* 1892:180; Roller 1998). Upland went into receivership in November 1894. Fort Wayne Glass was organized to take over the plant and apparently began operations in 1895.

As late as November 1895, however, Upland Glass was a “cross-complainant” in *Citizens’ Street Railway Co. v. Abright* (Moon 1896:433). On June 8, 1897, the *Brigeton Evening News* reported that James Johnson, a local banker attempted to foreclose on the Upland property. He was apparently successful; the 1898 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showed the factory in “poor condition” and obviously out of production (Roller 1998). Ownership of the

¹ Roller (1998) cited the October 13, 1892, issue of the *Pottery & Glass Reporter* that the “Johnson-Upland Glass Mfg. Co. recently incorporated with \$250,000 capital, will erect at Upland, IN, what it is said will be the largest glass plant in the state.” This was apparently a premature report. No giant factory like that was ever built at Upland.

plant continued to be short term until J.S. Giles purchased the property in November 1898. See the section on Giles-Clough for more information.

After saying that “Upland should not be confused with the several other glass companies that included the name ‘Upland’ in their titles,” Toulouse (1971:508) apparently confused the Upland Glass Co. with the Upland Co-Operative Glass Co. He dated the Upland Glass Co. from the early 1890s to a sale to the Ball Brothers in 1909. The Ball Brothers actually bought the Co-Operative (see below) in 1909; the Upland Glass Co. was long abandoned by that point.

Brantley (1975:25, 94) also called the plant the Upland Glass Co. but incorrectly dated the Ball purchase – actually of the Upland Co-Operative Glass Co. – at 1904. Creswick (1987:274) followed Brantley and Toulouse, claiming a date range from the “early 1890’s to 1904” and noted that it was “purchased by Ball Company in 1904 and closed immediately.” As noted, *all* of this refers to the Co-Operative *not* the Upland Glass Co.

Upland Co-Operative Glass Co., Upland, Indiana (1900-1909)

C.E. Cartwright, C.W. Cole, W.M. Brown, H.J. Overmyer, and T.J. Overmyer incorporated the Upland Co-Operative Glass Co. at Upland, Indiana, on early November 14, 1899, with a capital of \$10,000. The Factory opened early the following year. Cartwright was the president with Brown as vice president and Cole as secretary and treasurer (Carter 1900:130; Krone 2000; Roller 1998).

A May 24, 1900, inspection report provided a cameo view of the factory (McAbee et al. 1901:106). The inspector noted that the plant made fruit jars with a workforce consisting of 90 males, 10 females, 13 males under 16, and 3 females under 16, all of whom were paid in cash weekly. Sanitary conditions of the factory were good. As a result of the inspection, Order No. 893 required that the firm

discharge all boys under the age of fourteen years, secure affidavits from all minors between the ages of fourteen and sixteen years and keep them on file. No woman or female young person shall be permitted to work in any factory between the hours of ten o clock at night and six o clock in the morning.

The company made fruit and battery jars, oil cans, bottles, and flasks in flint and green glass during its first year of operation. The company added lanterns and globes the following year. A 1906 trade card offered “Hand Made Mason Fruit Jars” (*American Glass Review* 1934:155; Krone 2000; Roller 1998). The Thomas Registers listed Upland from 1905 (the initial issue of the Register) to 1909 (Thompson Publishing Co. 1905:103; 1907:158; 1909:200).

The courts granted Upland a bankruptcy hearing on September 11, 1909. Part of the bankruptcy appraisal reported seven “glass manufacturing machines.” The description made it clear that these were used for making jars. The Ball Brothers bought the bankrupt “Upland Glass Co.” for \$9,647 on November 12, 1909 (Midwest Antique Fruit Jar & Bottle Club 2005; Roller 1994:109-110).

The ownership of the large inventory of jars on hand when Ball acquired the property was contested by the Glenny Glass Co. Glenny, apparently a jobber (wholesaler) in Cincinnati, Ohio, had advertised handmade fruit jars from Upland in 1904. In early 1910, a federal judge found in favor of Glenny as the rightful owner of the jars in the former Upland storage facility. The Ball Brothers then sold the Upland property for \$800 to the Upland Commercial Club on March 21, 1911. That same year, A.M. Foster & Co. acquired the plant (Roller 1994:110; 1998).

About five weeks after the collapse of the glass house, the Grant County State Bank closed its doors. Charles W. Cole, the bank president, was a major stockholder in Upland Glass Mfg. Co., and the townspeople distrusted him so badly that a run on the bank forced the closure. Cole apparently contracted for the entire output of the glass house “to the Glenny Glass Company of Cincinnati at a figure below the cost of the product for more than a year.” Cole either resigned or lost his position with the bank – but the damage was done (*Elkhart Daily Review* 9/8/1909).

Upland Flint Bottle Co., Upland, Indiana (1911-1923 or later)

Upland Flint Bottle Co., Marion, Indiana (1923-1929)

Adelbert M. Foster acquired the former Upland Co-Operative Glass Co. property in 1911, renamed it the Upland Flint Bottle Co., and disbanded the older A.M. Foster & Co., moving the workings of his Millgrove Glass Co. (Millgrove, Indiana) to the Upland location. The new firm incorporated in June with a capital of at \$50,000 – with A.M. Foster, W.C. Forbes, and S.L. Pettersen as directors (Foster-Forbes [1996]; *Industrial World* 1911:iii; Toulouse 1971:45).

A 1913 listing noted that the plant made medicine and liquor bottles at one continuous tank with ten rings (*Journal of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry* 1913:952). The Thomas Registers did not pick up the Upland Flint Bottle Co. until 1915 and then only listed the factory as making fruit jars (Figure 1). The listing remained until 1918 but was gone in the 1920 edition (Thomas Publishing Co. 1915:3387; 1916:3781; 1917:4104; 1918:4429). In 1917, the Upland plant had “20 hand blow shops on two shifts, which are producing prescriptions, packers and preservers ware” (Bristow 1917:1).



Figure 1 – Upland Flint Glass Co. ca. 1914 (Wiki Marion)

By 1921, the plant made flint (colorless) prescription, beverage, and proprietary medicine bottles at a single continuous tank with ten rings. A.M. Foster was the president with W.C. Forbes as secretary, S.L. Petterson as treasurer, and A.M. Curry as manager (Roller 1998). Upland Flint Glass purchased the Marion Flint Glass Co., Marion, Indiana, in 1922 and began operations with fully automatic machinery and hand production in March 1923 (Figure 2). Combined, the plants had a capacity of 20 rings at two continuous tanks. Although the Upland plant was closed, the company planned to reopen it for mouth-blown production when it was needed (*Bottle Maker* 1923:15; Roller 1994:110).

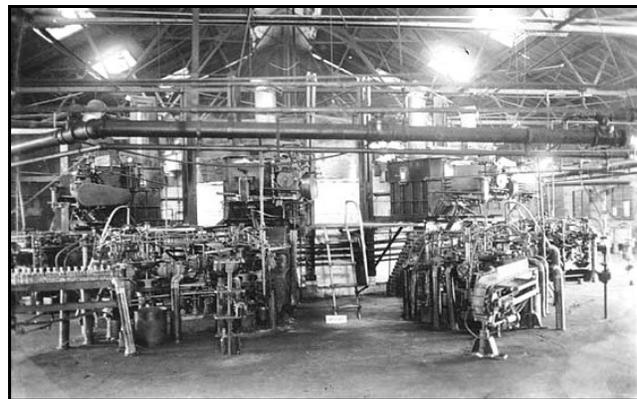


Figure 2 – Inside Upland Flint (Wiki Marion)

A break in the tank caused a fire on April 2, 1923, destroying part of the factory. Company officials announced that they would replace the building with a fire-resistant steel structure. In March 1925, W.C. Forbes stated that the company would not reopen the Upland plant at that time (Roller 1994:110; Toulouse 1971:507).

Despite Forbes' statement, the *American Glass Review* (1927:146) noted that the Upland Flint Bottle Co. had plants in both Marion and Upland, in 1927. The combined units used two continuous tanks with 17 rings to make “prescriptions, vials, patent, proprietary, liquors, flasks, packers and preservers” by machine. The listing was reduced to one continuous tank with seven rings in 1929, possibly indicating that the Upland operation had been discontinued by that time (*American Glass Review* 1927:146; 1929:105). Upland became the Foster-Forbes Glass Co. in 1929 (Foster-Forbes [1996]; Toulouse 1971:507).

Containers and Marks

Like the earlier histories, the source for logos for these firms are few and not well documented. Nor have we found many examples.

U (1892-ca. 1895)

Toulouse (1971:45, 508-509) noted that the Upland Glass Co. used a “U” mark with no serifs. He dated the mark as “circa 1890 to 1909.” Since Toulouse confused the Upland Glass Co. with the Upland Co-Operative Glass Co., it is difficult to tell which firm he really intended as the user of this mark – although the dates suggest the Co-Operative. Whitten (2019) noted that a “U” mark was found on strapside (Union) flasks made prior to ca. 1900, although he did not note whether the “U” marks were serif or sans serif. We have not found an example, but these could have been made by the Upland Glass Co. (1892-1895).

Although we know that the Upland Glass Co. produced fruit jars and bottles, we have found no recording of finer distinctions in products. Thus, the firm may or may not have made flasks.

Although both the Upland Glass Co. and the Upland Co-Operative

Glass Co. produced jars, neither Toulouse (1969), Roller (1983), nor either of the Creswick books (1987a; 1987b) showed a single jar marked with either the company name or “U.”

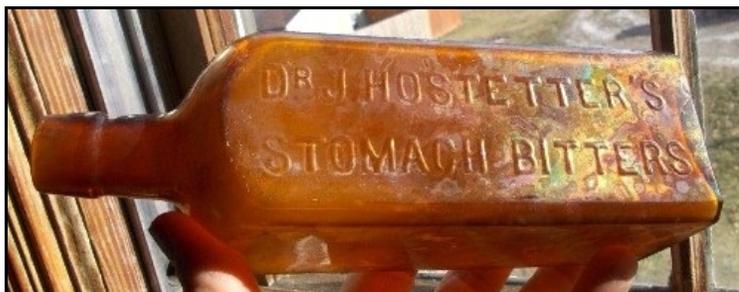


Figure 3 – Dr. Hostetter's bottle (eBay)

To further complicate an already confused set of marks, we have found only three examples of a sans serif “U” logo.



Figure 5 – Prescription bottle

Two of these were on amber Dr. Hostteter’s Stomach Bitters bottles (Figure 3).



Figure 4 – U bases (eBay)

One type (two actual examples) had a large, double-stamped “U” embossed in the center of the base. The other (one example) had a smaller “U” in the same place with no double stamp (Figure 4).

The third one with a sans serif “U” basemark was machine made – much too late for *either* the Upland Glass Co. *or* the Upland Co-Operative Glass Co. This sans serif “U” medicinal bottle – embossed on the base “4 “U” 133” – was more likely produced by either the Upland Flint Glass Co. (1923-1929) or the Underwood Glass Co. (1956-1979).



Figure 6 – U base

The style of the bottle is much more likely from the “Flint” glass house (Figures 5 & 6). See the Other U section for more on Underwood.

U (1911-1929)

According to Toulouse (1971:45, 197, 507), the serif “U” mark was used by the Upland Flint Bottle Co. from 1911 to 1929. Toulouse showed the mark, with serifs extending farther to the outside than to the inside, with thick lines so that the entire mark resembled a horseshoe. Apparently, the Upland plant (1911-1923) produced mouth-blown bottles, but the new factory at Marion (1923-1929) made bottles by machine as well as hand blown. Thus, the “U” mark may be finer dated according to whether it was made by hand (1911-1929) or machine (1923-1929).

As with the sans serif “U,” we found no references to jars with the mark in any of the typical jar literature (see the section just above). In addition, the “U” mark is not listed in any of the typical marks lists (e.g., Hanlon 1971; Emhart 1984), and we have not found any examples personally. Toulouse (1971:506) also noted that the Underwood Glass Co. used a “U” mark with serifs (see Other U section).

The only example of a bottle with a serif “U” base logo had that mark in a circle. The container was a Griffin shoe polish bottle, with a design patent received in 1931 – too late to have been made by Upland Flint Glass. We have addressed the bottle and the circle mark in the Other U section.

U.G.Co.

We have addressed the “U.G.Co.” logo in the Union Glass Works/Co. section and have identified that firm as the most likely manufacturer of the fruit jars with the “U.G.Co.” heelmarks. A North American Glass auction suggested that glass researcher Lou Ebert had attributed the “U.G.Co.” mark to the Upland Glass Co. Although we know that Upland made fruit jars, we have found no indication of what kind they were, but the factory’s short tenure in operation – from October 1882 to possibly as late as November 1885 – was just over three years. Since there appear to have been many of these jars produced, a manufacture by a plant in business for this short a period seems unlikely. However, the possibility cannot be entirely ignored: The factory was in business during the correct period to have made the crude jars.

Discussion and Conclusions

After eliminating the confusion over the names, the histories of the glass companies using the Upland designation is very straight forward. What is much less clear is information about the marks. Aside from a Circle-U mark (on a bottle that could not have been made by *any* of these companies – see Other U section), we have not seen a serif “U” mark on any bottles and have seen very few examples of the sans serif mark – two different styles on mouth-blown bottles and another on a machine-made prescription bottle that was likely made during the 1923-1929 tenure of the Upland Flint Glass Co. We also found a report of a mouth-blown strapside flask that may have been made prior to the 20th century by the Upland Glass Co.

The two mouth-blown examples were both on the bases of Dr. Hostetter's Stomach Bitters bottles. In both cases, the "U" was sans serif, and both bottles were light amber in color – but one "U" was much smaller than the other. Bill Lindsey suggested that the small-U bottle was produced during the 1880s-1890s based on manufacturing characteristics. The only firm currently suggested for the "U" marks that was in business during that time frame was the Upland Glass Co. (1892-1895).

The larger "U" logo was double-stamped, a technique that was generally only used between ca. 1895 and ca. 1914. That would place the use of the logo within the realm of the Upland Co-Operative Glass Co. (1900-1909). Although not impossible, it is unlikely that the Upland Flint Bottle Co. would have made amber glass – for two reasons. First, the term "flint" in its name suggests only the production of colorless glass. Second, it used a continuous tank – requiring a major process to change colors. Both the Upland Glass Co. and the Upland Co-Operative Glass Co. used pot systems. Even though they both made "green" glass, it would have been very easy to change glass colors to make amber bottles for the high-volume Dr. Stoddard. However, neither plant was listed in our sources as actually producing amber glass.

It seems probable that most or almost all the bottles with "U" or "U" marks were generic. As such, they become virtually invisible in today's market. Collectors are our main source for bottle samples – and collectors are unlikely to get excited about colorless, generic bottles. Therefore, we have such a small sample that we can produce little empirical data – enough to create a hypothesis but not to test it.

Although we have included the Toulouse variations and dates, identification based on those should be used with extreme caution. Our few examples point to the sans serif "U" being used by the Upland firms – Upland Glass Co., Upland Co-Operative Glass Co., and the Upland Flint Glass Co. Our only machine-made bottle was almost certainly produced by the Upland Flint Glass Co. during the 1923-1929 period.

Since Toulouse interviewed Chester Underwood, who was then still head of the Underwood Glass Co., it is very likely that Underwood used the serif "U" logo – even though we have been unable to find an example. We have no evidence of a serif "U" being used by any of the Upland firms. The assigning of any U-marked bottle to a specific company should include a

careful review of the company histories (above) accompanied by a good assessment of manufacturing characteristics of a specific bottle.

Acknowledgments

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