

Other V Logos

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As with all letters in this Encyclopedia, there are a few V marks that did not fit into any of the larger categories.

Containers and Marks

V (ca. mid-1920s-1930s)

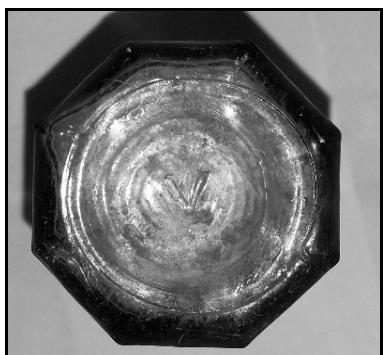


Figure 2 – V (eBay)

An eBay auction featured a machine-made catsup bottle with an embossed “V” on the base (Figures 1 & 2). Small-mouth, machine-made bottles first appeared in the mid-1920s, and the combination finish on the example was mostly offered during the 1930s. Packers often required factory designations on bottle bases even

though the same glass houses either rarely or never marked other bottles they produced. Unfortunately, we have yet to discover a glass house beginning with the letter “V” that manufactured catsup containers.

VB in an Oval (20th century)

We discovered a machine-made colorless bottle at a bottle show. It was rectangular in cross-section with chamfered corners. The base was embossed “2 {VB-in-an-Oval} L” (Figure 3). Unfortunately, we have lost the photo and description of the finish. The bottle was certainly made during the 20th century, after the mid-1920s. The initials could stand for “V. . . Bottle.”



Figure 1 – Catsup (eBay)



Figure 3 – Oval-VB

V in a Diamond (poss. 1891-1924)

A light aqua square bottle with chamfered corners was embossed “PROF CALLAN’S / WORLD RENOWNED / BRAZILIAN GUM” (a rubber cement) on the side and had a Diamond-V logo on the base. The bottle was mouth blown and had a one-part packer finish. Both Fike (1987:157) and Herskovitz (1978:13-14) mentioned the bottle but did not discuss the basemark. Digger O’Dell said the product was “sold between 1891 and 1924” but had little other information.” Although we do not know what the “V” indicated, it could not be a factory. Other Callan bottles had basemarks of Diamond-C and Diamond-JED.

The Universal Glass Products Co. plant at Vienna, West Virginia, used an almost identical logo from 1981 to ca. 1986. See the section on the Universal Glass Products Co. for more information.

VE (ca. 1890s-1920s)



Figure 5 – Finish (Amy Recter)

Amy Rector sent us photos of a machine-made bottle with an unusual two-part finish and “VE” embossed on the base (Figures 4, 5, & 6). The green color may be more suggestive of a European manufacture. The top ring on the finish could have been used for a crown cap, although the lower ring was *very* atypical for that closure. It could even have used a closure similar to the Kork-and-Seal that was primarily used for liquor bottles. This one probably contained some kind of soda or mineral water.

Because of the crudeness, the bottle was likely produced by some form of early semiautomatic machine. The base photo showed what may have been a machine scar, but the horizontal



Figure 4 – Seam end (Amy Recter)



Figure 6 – VE (Amy Recter)

seam just below the finish could only have been created by the parison mold on a machine. A very unusual feature, however, is the side seam that faded out at the top of the shoulder/base of the neck. This *could* have been caused by a slow transfer between the parison mold and the blow mold that allowed the neck to cool too much to imprint the upper sections of the seams. The transfer could have been tardy because it was manipulated by hand.

However, this could also have been an early press-and-blow machine used for small-mouth bottles. Most early 20th century press-and-blow machines were designed for milk bottles, and those intentionally allowed the finish to cool so the parison could be transferred to the blow mold without distorting the finish. The final milk bottles had a similar faded out seam with a bare area leading to the horizontal seam below the finish.

The British Ashley, United, or “Johnny Bull” machine was a press-and-blow machine used to make small-mouth bottles. Patented on November 13, 1886, Sykes & McVay first used the machines in their Castleford factory the following year. The machines improved and were used in Europe and, to a lesser extent, in the U.S. Most American use of the machines began after Michael Owens invented the first fully automatic machine in 1903. Soon, however, new semiautomatic machines appeared under U.S. patents, and Ashley popularity waned – declining to almost nothing after the invention of the gob feeders – that turned semiautomatics into full autos – in 1915 (Lockhart et al. 2014). European use of the Ashleys, however, may have extended for a longer period.

Toulouse (1971:517) listed the VE logo but did not know the manufacturer. He stated: “Because of the letter ‘V’ it is suspected that the bottle in question could be French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, or Mexican, since the word for glass in these languages begins with the letter ‘V.’”

Although Toulouse made no mention of Ventreria Etrusca or the VE logo in the Italian section of his foreign bottle marks appendix, we hypothesized that the Italian glass house could have been the manufacturer of Amy Rector’s VE bottle. Not only did the firm adopt its Empoli green color in 1928 (almost certainly the hue of Emily’s bottle), it produced wine bottles and used a VE ligature mark in later years (Figure 7).



Figure 7 – VE (Vetreria Etrusca)

However, Elizabeth Forbes, a representative of Vetreria Etrusca, Ltd., informed us that the plant did not adopt machines until 1958. When she and a colleague viewed photos of the bottle and logo, both agreed that it was not made by their company. However, it is still possible that the firm experimented with one of the early machines but rejected the quality of its bottles and did not retain that information in its records – so we have retained the history here. It is more probable, of course, that the manufacturer was a small French or Italian glass house, operating during the 1890-1920 period.

Possible Manufacturer

Vetreria Etrusca, Empoli, Italy (1920-present)

Vetreria Etrusca began its production at Empoli, Italy, making demijohns and flasks for local wine and olive oil production. In 1928, the firm began production of glass in the distinctive Empoli green color, but the factory did not adopt glass machines until 1958. The firm broadened its product base during the 1960s to include art glass, lamps, candlesticks, and figural bottles and began exporting its products to the U.S. and other countries a decade later. It remains in business as of this writing in late 2019 (personal communication, Elizabeth Forbes, Vetreria Etrusca, Ltd., 11/25/2019; Vetreria Etrusca VE 2019).

V.G.CO. (1894-1916)

Von Mechow (2019) reported three beer bottles (one champagne beer; two exports) embossed “V.G.CO.” on the reverse heels. All were for breweries in the Richmond, Virginia, area. He attributed the logos to the Virginia Glass Co. of Alexandria. Surprisingly, the archaeological report for the excavation of the Alexandria factory site did not include any manufacturer’s marks on the various bottles and bases found at the site (Pfanstiehl et al. 1999:9-1-9-30). It is possible that only the Richmond plant used the “V.G.CO.” logo. For information on another “V.G.CO.” mark, see the Victory Glass Co. section.

Manufacturer

Virginia Glass Co., Alexandria, Virginia (1894-1916)

The Virginia Glass Co. probably began operations as the Alexandria Glass Co., at the extension of Duke St. in early 1894 –although it was rapidly renamed the Virginia Glass Co. The *Evening Star* had reported on August 24, 1894, that “the Virginia Glass Bottle Company, whose works are located in West End, will resume operations at full blast on the 1st of September. The furnaces are now going through the gradual heating process” – showing that the plant was in production by at least mid-year. The owners were all experienced glass blowers. Edward S. Reeve was president with Henry Schnell as vice president, John S. Bordner as secretary, George H. Schwarzmann as treasurer, and Joseph H. Ramsey as superintendent – according to the *Alexandria Gazette* of July 3, 1895. The January 1899 edition of *Home Furnishings Review* noted that the firm had begun production six years earlier (i.e., 1893), and the *Washington Post* for February 19, 1905, claimed that the plant started 11 years earlier (i.e., 1894). The initial plant only fired three pots at a single furnace (O’Connor 1999:5-14-5-15; von Mechow 2019).

In an article entitled “Alexandria in a Cyclone,” the *Alexandria Gazette* reported on September 30, 1896, that “the Virginia Glass Works in West End, apart from the chimneys and furnaces, are about eliminated. The structure, most of which was of wood, was demolished. The loss is about \$1,500.” Other area businesses and homes were equally damaged. When the firm rebuilt the factory, it was equipped with a day tank rather than the pot furnace (O’Connor 1999:5-17). In January of 1899, the firm announced plans to open a new plant at Richmond. Although the Richmond factory was to become the main unit, the plan was to continue operations at Alexandria. At this point, the plant replaced the day tank with and eight rings continuous tank (O’Connor 1999:5-18; Roller 1998; von Mechow 2019).

On February 18, 1905, fire destroyed the Alexandria plant when a lehr collapsed. The fire began in a small area and could have been extinguished, but the water valves were frozen, so the fire was out of control by the time the workers could thaw them. By this time, the company was a corporation, with Bordner as president and Astryke as secretary. The remaining original owners had siphoned off to start the Old Dominion Glass Co. and the Belle Pre Glass Co., both also located in Alexandria. By March, the rebuilding had begun, and the new plant lit its fires in May (von Mechow 2019).

In 1907, the Thomas Register noted that the Virginia Glass Co. made beer, wine, soda, brandy, and proprietary medicine bottles, along with packers' and preservers' ware, although the firm name was missing from the 1909 and subsequent Registers (Thomas Publishing Co. 1907:161). On August 15, the *Alexandria Gazette* noted that new owners planned to remodel the factory – adding that, “since the fire at that plant a few years ago but little work has been done there and the prospect of a resumption of work will be gratifying to all interested in the plant.” Despite the prediction, the business went downhill over the next few years, and the factory was sold at auction to Luke C. Strider for \$6,500 on July 30, 1909 (von Mechow 2019).

The *Alexandria Gazette* reported on August 2, 1911, that operations for the season would begin “about August 15.” The newspaper added that “extensive improvements have been added during the summer vacation, among them the installation of two new glass-blowing machines, which makes four machines at the works to assist in turning out bottles.” Strider, indeed, had the plant open again on September 1 and incorporated by September 6 with a capital of \$50,000. However, after a series of strikes by the boy help in 1911, the company again failed (von Mechow 2019).

In a moment of déjà vu, a new group of experienced glass blowers took over the management of the Virginia Glass Co. on January 1, 1912. Martin M. Lillo became the president, with Edward Werling as manager and E. Nightingale, G. Cheeseman, and Frank Walker on the advisory committee. W. Gwynn Gardner supervised the plant, while Guy S. Whiteford managed the firm. The plant specialized in drug and liquor bottles, although it made a general line by both hand and machine. However, the *Washington Post* named William Gwynn Gardiner as the owner of the firm in its June 12 edition (von Mechow 2019).

The firm continued to be plagued by difficulties. On April 25, 1914, the plant caught fire at 3:30 in the afternoon causing considerable damage – although it was soon repaired, adding a second continuous tank with four rings. After the typical summer shutdown, the Virginia Glass Co. only opened with a greatly reduced force on September 7. Since the plant predominantly produced beer and liquor bottles, the state fight for Prohibition had virtually eliminated most of its orders. On October 24, 1914, the *Alexandria Gazette* reported a petition in District Court for involuntary bankruptcy against Virginia Glass (*Alexandria Gazette* 4/25/1914; 9/7/1914; 10/24/1914; O'Connor 1999:5-22).

On May 15, 1915, the Virginia Glass Co. made a motion in U.S. Court to have the bankruptcy proceeding dismissed on May 22, the combination of issues was too much to overcome. The plant apparently closed in 1916, following a final fire – and it may not have produced any significant glass after 1914. The charter was revoked by the state of Virginia in 1918 for failure to pay its annual registration fees for the preceding two years (*Alexandria Gazette* 5/15/1915; O'Connor 1999:5-30; von Mechow 2019).

Virginia Glass Co., Richmond, Virginia (1899-1916)

We have discovered amazingly few references to the Richmond plant. As noted above, the Virginia Glass Co. opened a factory at Richmond in 1899 and intended for the new operation to be the headquarters (von Mechow 2019). A few newspaper accounts made brief mentions of the Richmond plant over the years, and the entire company apparently ceased operations in 1916.

V&S (1914-1923)

Our three examples of the “V&S” basemark (from Antique Bottles.net) were on colorless, mouth-blown bottles. One had a double-stamp, a feature absent from the other two (Figure 8). Although other examples of double-stamped bottles we have examined fell between ca. 1895 and ca. 1914 (except some bottles blown by the Adolphus Busch Glass Works – the earliest adopter of the method – ca. 1885), these were obviously made for a few years later. Von Mechow recorded the mark on a single Hutchinson bottle and on champagne beer bottles but noted that it was also “found on flint flasks and prescription bottles.”



Figure 8 – V&S (Antique Bottles.net)

Manufacturer

Roulette Glass Co., Roulette, Pennsylvania (1903-1906, poss. again in 1908)

On July 23, 1903, the Roulette Glass Co. incorporated with a capital of \$50,000. At some point during 1906, the plant closed due to a natural gas shortage. It is unclear whether the factory

ever reopened, but it burned to the ground at some point during 1908 (von Mechow 2019). The mark was used by the V&S Bottle Co., Roulette, Pennsylvania – open from 1914 to 1923.

Roulette Bottle Mfg. Co., Roulette, Pennsylvania (1912-1913)

The Roulette Bottle Mfg. Co. incorporated on December 6, 1911, with a capital of \$30,000, and the plant began production in mid-February the following year. The president was E.J. Brown; with Milo Lyman as vice president, George Elmer as treasurer, W.A. Koch as secretary and general manager, and Phillip L. Drake as factory manager. The *Olean Evening Times* noted that “the general manager, W.A. Koch, has had many years of experience in the manufacture of glass and is well and favorably known to a large portion of the trade.” At some point, John P. Stone became president with W.G. Van Kuren as secretary. In 1913, however, the firm declared bankruptcy (von Mechow 2019).

V&S Bottle Co., Roulette, Pennsylvania (1914-1923)

The V&S Bottle Co. took over the Roulette Bottle Mfg. Co. plant in October of 1913 and was listed in 1914 as making bottles at a single continuous tank with eight rings. E.J. Brown was president with W.A. Koch as secretary, George Eimer as treasurer, and P.L. Drake as manager (Roller 1996). It seems odd that neither W.G. Van Kuren or John P. Stone – namesakes for the firm – were officers in 1914. V&S advertised in the *American Flint* (1916:22) for a “mould maker to do lathe and vise work” in 1916 – but the ad did not mention officers or owners. By 1917, Van Kuren and Stone were also co-owners of the Mountain Gas Co.– along with Fanny Perkins, Gertrude Fitzsimmons, George Eimer, John C. French, Jr., and Mark Harvey (*Petroleum Gazette* 1917:9).

T.N. Barnsdall, owner of the Potter Gas Co., purchased both the Mountain Gas Co. (\$425,000) and V&S Bottle Co. (\$30,000) on March 1, 1917. When Barnsdall died a few days after the sale, Thomas F. Rogers, George T. Goff, and “a syndicate of Pennsylvania capitalists” bought the glass plant (and the Gas Co.) for \$350,000 on April 9. The plant made “flint prescriptions, beers etc” at a single continuous tank with eight rings. Dan Nenbauer was the factory manager (*National Glass Budget* 1917:4; *Petroleum Gazette* 1917:9).

According to a court record, however, the “syndicate” included Stone and Van Kuren, and the new firm purchased the glass house back for just \$15,000. The case came under court jurisdiction because the new Potter Gas Co. refused to honor a 1913 agreement between V&S and the older Mountain Gas Co. and had significantly raised its price for natural gas (von Mechow 2019). We have not discovered a resolution. The 1918 listing included J.F. Stone as president, G.S. Goff as vice president, Fannie A. Perkins as secretary, and W.G. Van Kuren, treasurer, general manager, and sales manager (Roller 1996). The factory continued to operate as the V&S Bottle Co.

Roulette Glass Co., Roulette, Pennsylvania (1923-1924)

In May of 1923, the firm reorganized as the Roulette Glass Co. Goff was now the president with C.A. Rohland as vice president, Van Kuren still as treasurer, and Thomas F. Rogers as secretary. The new firm was reported to have had a capital of \$3,200,000 – a very unlikely figure for that period. The new company planned to manufacture glass inserts for a new type of vacuum bottle “in which fruits can be canned just like the process of keeping drinks hot or cold in therme [sic] bottles.” This firm, too, failed by May 1, 1924 (*Glass Industry* 1923:100; von Mechow 2019).

VUB

The “VUB” basemark was found on the base of an amber machine-made beer bottle (Figure 9). Although the possibility cannot be entirely eliminated, the initials probably did not represent a glass house. The “B” likely indicated the word “Brewery” – and the other initials finished out the name of the business.



Figure 9 – VUB (Josiah Russell)

Discussion and Conclusions

Although the manufacturers of the “V,” Circle-VB, “VUB,” and possibly “VE” marks remain unknown to us at the time of this writing, the remaining two Other V logos have been pretty clearly defined in this study.

Acknowledgments

We wish to thank Wanda Wakkinen for proofreading our works.

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Last updated 2/18/2020

