

The York Glass Co. and the YGCo Logo

Bill Lockhart, Beau Schriever, Bill Lindsey, Carol Serr, and Bob Brown

In business for a century (1830-1930), the York Glass Co. produced medicinal bottles in a variety of colors. The firm used a single complex logo embossed on the base of glass containers and impressed into ceramic bases.

History

York Glass Co., York, England (1830-1930)

The firm was established in 1830. After a strike in February 1867, York became decidedly anti-union. Notably, the company was *not* mentioned in a discussion of glass machines (Great Glass n.d.; Hodkin 1953:26N-27N). We have discovered little else about the plant or its products, although empirical evidence suggests that the main output of the factory was medicinal bottles in various colors including green, blue-green, cobalt blue, and flint. Although the firm remained in operation until at least 1924, the National Glass Co. took over the former York Glass Co. plant in 1930 (Great Glass 1999-2009). Boow (1991:183), however, called the firm the “York City Glass Co.” and dated it “c. 1860-c. 1900; continued as National Glass (York) Ltd.”

Containers and Marks

YGC^o Logo (ca. 1870-1930)

Sellers on eBay have offered numerous medicinal bottles in several colors (including flint, green, blue-green, and cobalt blue) embossed on their bases with a complex YGC^o logo – also found impressed into the bases of

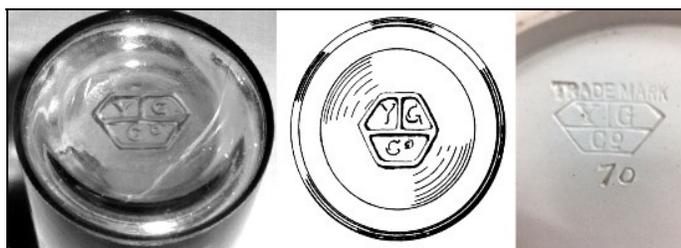


Figure 1 – YGCo (eBay; Wills 1974:59)

ceramic containers. The logo consisted of a six-sided polygon (symmetrical but with sides of different lengths (Figure 1). The polygon was bisected by a horizontal line with a vertical line further dividing the top segment. The upper left section contained a “Y”; with a “G” in the upper right; and “C^o” in the lower section. The logo was centered on the base in all examples we have seen. The bottles range from crude – suggesting a manufacture as early as the 1870s – to the quality we would expect from a bottle made in the 1920s (Figure 2).

Wills (1974:59) identified the York Glass Co. as the user of the YGCo logo, and British sellers on eBay have confirmed that. We have found no other English



Figure 2 – YGCo (Urquhart 1973:33)



Figure 3 – YGCo (TUR)

or American glass house with the correct initials and accept the Wills identification. Although the bulk of the auctions for the bottles came from British sellers, the bottles have also been found in U.S. contexts. For example, the Bottle Research Group photographed a base with the mark from the Tucson Urban Renewal collection (Figure 3). Bottles we have seen included round, oval, and square cross-sections, including several of the so-called Label Under Glass (LUG) bottles.

Discussion and Conclusions

Because we have discovered no alternative possibilities, bottles with the YGC^o logo should be attributed to the York Glass Co. The bottles we have seen were probably not made earlier than the 1870s and were probably produced until the company ceased production in 1930. All examples we have seen exhibited mouth-blown characteristics, and we have found no evidence that York ever used machines.

Acknowledgments

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