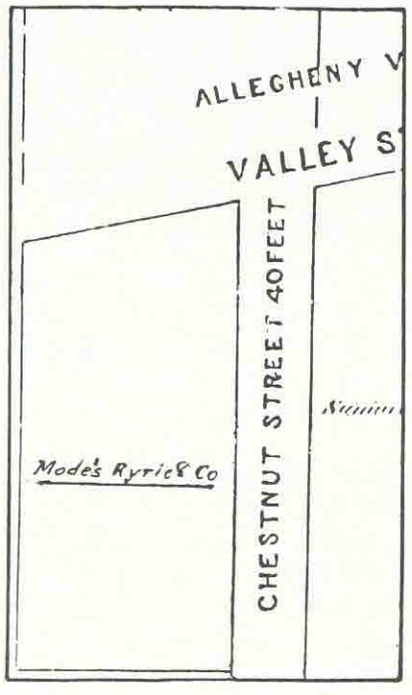
PENNSYLVANIA MANUFACTURERS

Beaver Falls Glass Company

A large number of insulators which are not attributed to any specific manufacturer have similar characteristics and may have a common origin. Research on W. F. Modes and his relationship with various glass plants in the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, area has resulted in the following proposed link.

In 1866 William F. Modes purchased a glasshouse in Lawrenceville, a northeastern borough of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The deed, recorded on July 19, 1866, between William Rehem and W.F. Modes, states a "parcel of ground on which is erected a building for the manufacture of glass" exchanged hands. The company, sold by Rehem to Modes, had operated as the Arsenal Glass Works from 1865 - 1866. The parcel was located between Chestnut (42nd) and Borough (41st) Streets and the Allegheny Valley Railroad. (Figure 1.)

The 1867 Pittsburgh *Atlas* (research material for which was prepared in 1866 and 1867) showed the glasshouse parcel under the name of "Modes, Ryrie and Company".

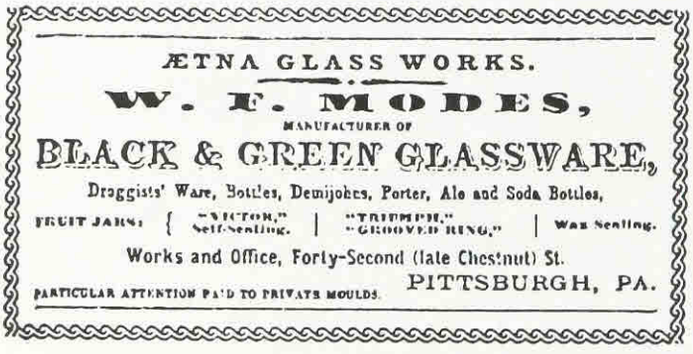


(Figure 1.) Map showing location of Modes, Ryrie & Company's glassworks on Chestnut Street, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, from an 1867 Borough of Lawrenceville Atlas published by James S. Henden.

No directory listing has been located for the company; however, T.B. Ryrie, glassblower, was listed in the city directory.

The 1869-70 edition of Thurston's *Pittsburgh City Directory* had an ad (Figure 2.) for the Aetna Glass Works, with W.F. Modes listed as the manufacturer of black and green bottles and fruit jars. The address given was "Forty-Second (late Chestnut) Street, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania." Modes sold the Aetna Glass Works in 1869 which was then operated by Bagley, Young and Company and known as the "Phoenix Roll Works". (Figure 3.)

Also, on May 13, 1869, William F. Modes and Thomas B.A. David of Pittsburgh bought a tract of land from the Harmony Society in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania. It was on this land site that the Beaver Falls Glass Company was built and operated for ten years by the firm of Modes and Eakin. (Figure 4.) In 1879, the Beaver Falls Glass Company became the Co-Operative Flint Glass Company and operated as such through 1937.


ÆTNA GLASS WORKS.

W. F. MODES,

MANUFACTURER OF

BLACK & GREEN GLASSWARE,

Druggists' Ware, Bottles, Demijohns, Porter, Ale and Soda Bottles,

FRUIT JARS: { "VICTOR," Self-Sealing. | "TRIUMPH," "GROOVED RING." | Wax Sealing.

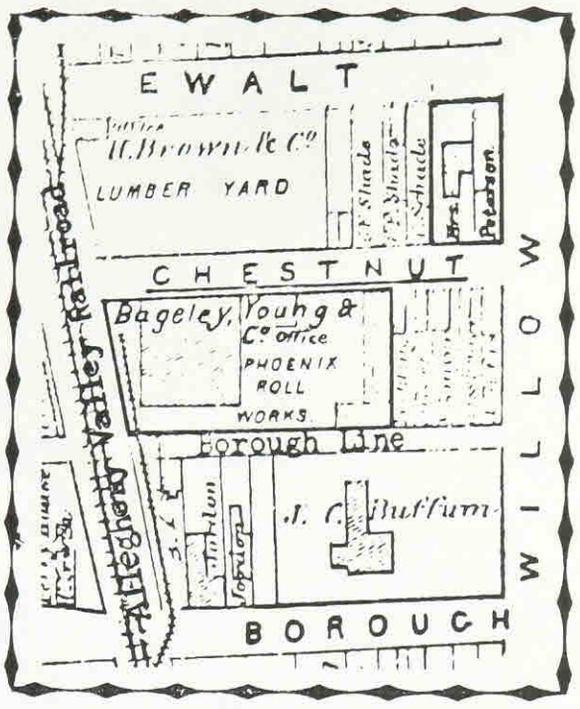
Works and Office, Forty-Second (late Chestnut) St.

PARTICULAR ATTENTION PAID TO PRIVATE MOULDS. PITTSBURGH, PA.

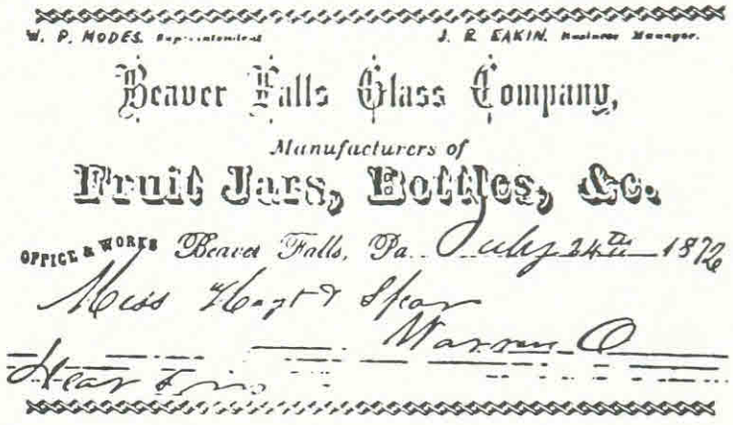
(Figure 2.) Aetna Glass Works advertisement from 1869-70 Thurston's Pittsburgh City Directory.

Only a few insulators embossed "B.F.G.CO." have been located. They are CD 133.2 and come in an aqua color. The insulators are believed to have been manufactured by the Beaver Falls Glass Company.

Comparative research of the known B.F.G.Co.-embossed insulators and those of the CD 132.2 style embossed "S.T.PAISLEY/MAKER/BEAVER FALLS, PA.," and the CD 133.2 embossed "P & W" shows many similarities. The threads are distinctively rounded and there is a crease in the glass at the top of the pinhole. It resembles the letter "Y". In the author's opinion, that crease was created when



(Figure 3.) Map from the 1872 Atlas of Pittsburgh, Allegheny & Adjoining Boroughs shows the location of the Phoenix Roll Works operated by Bageley (sic), Young & Company



(Figure 4.) Letterhead dated July 24, 1872, used by the Beaver Falls Glass Company showing W.F. Modes as superintendent, and J.R. Eakin as business manager.

a threadless plunger with the "Y" mark was used to create the pinhole, followed by a threaded plunger to form the threads. The dimple or lathe mark at the top of the pinhole would be created from the threaded plunger since it is always located in the center of the pinhole, while the "Y" marking is not always centered.

In addition to the styles and embossing already mentioned, a number of other unattributed insulators have manufacturing characteristics similar to the B.F.G.Co. These include CD 127 (W.U.P. and W/1 embossing) and unembossed CD's 131.8, 132.2 and 133.2. However, among this group are two different pinhole diameters. The smaller pinholes are found in the embossed Paisley (CD 132.2), the "W.U.P." (CD 127), and the crown embossed "P & W" (CD 133.2). Larger pinholes are found in dome-embossed "W1" (CD 127), CD 131.8, most of the unembossed CD 132.2 and skirt-embossed "P & W" (CD 133.2) and some of the unembossed CD 133.2 insulators.

Two threadless units embossed on top of the dome with a single letter, "M" or a "W", were manufactured in CD 731 or CD 728.2 styles. The CD 728.2 mold appears to have been reworked to produce the threaded CD 133.2 P & W insulators. If this is true, Modes may have produced the early threadless units and marked them with the "M" or the "W" which may have stood for William F. Modes.

The only fact available at this time is that the Beaver Falls Glass Company made insulators embossed "B.F.G.Co.". The idea of any relationship between this company and insulators which have been embossed with Paisley's name and insulators which have characteristics similar to the embossed units is still speculation. However, on June 13, 1870, the first paid fire department in the Pittsburgh area was organized, and S.T. Paisley was the alarm-telegraph superintendent. Modes' Beaver Falls Glass Company would have been in business and available to produce an insulator designed by Paisley to be used by the fire department alarm system.

Again, as of this writing, we cannot conclusively prove these speculations, but there is a possible link that needs further study.

Ora Beary of Venus, Pennsylvania, has an extensive collection of western Pennsylvania-manufactured insulators. He continues to try to unravel the production history of the area. His appreciation goes to Wendell Hunter of DuBois, Pennsylvania, for his contributions to the research on W.F. Modes.

Duquesne Glass Company

Although the location of the glassworks which produced the insulators embossed "DUQUESNE GLASS CO." remains unknown, there is some evidence that these insulators could have originated from the "Duquesne Glass Works" which existed in Belle Vernon, Pennsylvania. This organization was founded in 1834 and operated at least through 1886. Their plant was located in Belle Vernon, a community just south of Pittsburgh and west of Duquesne, Pennylvania, with a warehouse at 97-99 First Street, Pittsburgh.

At this time, there is no information available on the type of wares produced by Duquesne. If the name of the company was changed to "Duquesne Glass Company" after 1886, it is entirely possible that they were the source of the Duquesne-embossed insulators.

At present, three styles have been located and are unique to Duquesne manufacture. The CD 106.1, 106.3 and 113.2 units are very similar to the common, small styles used on telephone subscriber lines around the turn of the century. Most Duquesne insulators have been found in the East and Mid-west.

The CD 106.1 is an interesting style and is nicknamed the Duquesne "peak top" pony because of its unusual, noticeably pointed dome. Both the CD 106.1 and the 106.3 are more available than the uncommon CD 113.2 style.

Another characteristic unique to Duquesne insulators is the four "ribs" which are observed around the insulator's circumference beneath the lower wire groove ridge. In some cases, one of the ribs was omitted from the mold leaving only three ribs on the Duquesne specimens. It is not known what function the ribs served.

There are some light aqua unembossed CD 121 insulators which have the same four ribs as found on the embossed Duquesne units. It is assumed that they too were manufactured by the same company.

Duquesne insulators are noted in numerous shades of aqua. The CD 106.3 specimens tend to be of aqua shades or deep greenish blue while the CD 106.1 are frequently found in a distinctive light sky blue or a vibrant cornflower blue. The CD 113.2 style is usually light aqua, blue aqua or a sky blue.

There is some variation in the embossing found on the Duquesne insulators. While most CD 106.1 and CD 106.3 specimens are lettered "DUQUESNE" on the front skirt, with "GLASS CO." on the rear skirt, some are embossed "DUQUESNE/GLASS CO." on both the front and rear skirts. In some cases, "GLASS CO." has the abbreviated embossing "G.CO.". The CD 113.2 units are embossed "DUQUESNE" on the front skirt and "GLASS CO." on the rear skirt. However, some have a misspelling of the name "DUQUSNE".

Authored by Joe Maurath, Jr. (See The New England Manufacturers chapter for biography)

Harloe Insulator Company

Morton Brock Harloe was born on October 3, 1862, in Poughkeepsie, New York. He attended the Eldridge School in West Virginia. Later he returned to New York where he worked for the Metropolitan Police force's detective bureau and studied electrical engineering. Harloe was a talented musician as well as a successful inventor. He married Mary Theresa Corbitt in 1884. The couple had six children. Mary Theresa died in 1897. On December 14, 1898, Morton Harloe was remarried to Sophie Ann Simpkins, a reverend's daughter. She was also gifted in music and both were active in the church. They had six children by this marriage for a total of twelve.

Morton Brock Harloe

(Photograph made available by Evelyn Hobday, granddaughter of Morton Harloe, to Ray Klingensmith for reproduction. Copy of photo from collection of Claude Wambold)