

# Millville, New Jersey-- Glass Insulator's Abdication



*“Down in southern New Jersey, they make glass. By day and by night, the fires burn on in Millville and bid the sand let in the light.”*

## WHITALL, TATUM and COMPANY

Thus was a young Carl Sandburg compelled to write upon visiting the Whitall, Tatum and Company glassworks in the very early 1900's. Although not producing glass insulators at the time of Sandburg's observation, the spectacle of insulator production in Millville spanned six decades, and held no less fascination for many even to the end.

With roots tracing as far back as 1806, the joint venture of Israel and John Whitall with Edward Tatum was formulated in 1854, and was known as the aforementioned Whitall, Tatum and Company. Their production facility consisted of two separate glass plants located on the Maurice River in Millville. Less than a half-mile stood between the two facilities. Founded close to abundant supplies of silica sand, an essential raw material, the glassworks flourished.

In early spring of 1922, at the northernmost or Upper Works of what was at that time known as Whitall Tatum Company, preparations were made to begin production of glass insulators. (Figure 1.) Correspondence dated April 12, 1922, indicates that Western Electric's Line Material Inspection Department had received samples of Whitall Tatum No. 1 insulators. Preproduction in nature, these items were produced by a hand-operated side-lever press, and represent the earliest documented glass insulators to come from the plant.

The early years of insulator production at Whitall Tatum centered on an eight-mold semi-automatic I-A machine. Operation of this device

required manual intervention, and production managers at the plant began searching for a swifter means of manufacturing insulators. This search culminated on June 3, 1924, in the delivery of a twelve-mold rotary press manufactured by the Miller Glass Engineering Company of Swissvale, Pennsylvania.

The purchase was prompted in part by the success of a similar device at Canada's Dominion Glass Company. Miller technicians spent close to four months at Whitall Tatum attempting to make their machine produce an insulator, however without success. The press was returned to Swissvale and the matter eventually went to litigation.

With the disastrous Miller rotary press as incentive, Whitall Tatum engineers began development of a fully-automatic glass-forming machine of their own design, a twelve-mold I-C machine. (Figure 2.) Quickly I-A production was rendered obsolete, because by mid-September 1925, ware production began in totally automated fashion on the new machine.

In 1928, Whitall Tatum introduced its I-D glass-forming machine. It was developed in the same twelve-mold configuration as its predecessor, with various improvements for increased productivity gleaned from three years of successful I-C operation. Precisely-sized gobs of molten glass entering the molds in machines of I-D design formed the vast majority of insulators produced during Whitall Tatum ownership.

Whitall Tatum insulators can be found

with the following embossings:

**STYLE 1**

(F-Skirt) - WHITALL TATUM CO. preceding a  
Catalog Number (such as No. 1, No. 2, etc.)  
(R-Skirt) - MADE IN U.S.A.  
This embossing style was used from 1922 to 1924.

**STYLE 2**

(F-Skirt) - Catalog Number over WHITALL TATUM CO.  
(R-Skirt) - MADE IN U.S.A.  
This embossing style was also used from 1922 to 1924.

**STYLE 3**

(F-Skirt) - WHITALL TATUM CO. preceding Catalog Number  
(R-Skirt) - MADE IN U.S.A. (W/T in triangle)  
The trademark placement varies from the most common style as indicated only on No. 1 and No. 2 insulators  
This style was in use from 1924 to 1938.

Mold numbers on all three embossing styles can be found in front or rear locations centered below the major half-mold embossing.

Variations include the CD 182 Dry Spot, found in clear, embossed as follows:

(F-Skirt) - DRY SPOT INSULATOR NO. 10  
(R-Skirt) - MADE IN U.S.A.

Also an early embossing style found in very few CD 154 styles:

(F-Skirt) - WHITALL TATUM CO.  
(R-Skirt) - No. 1 MADE IN U.S.A.

Additionally, the CD 240.2 Whitall Tatum 1025 power insulator, found in clear, with or without brass caps and/or

bushings, is embossed simply "1025". Finally, the 1025 in similar configurations, and the number 16 secondary rack spool insulator in straw tint are found without embossing. A testament to the craftsmanship of the plant moldmakers is the fact that no Whitall Tatum insulators are found with embossing errors.

**Embossing Style 1**

Catalog No. 1 CD 154 clear, light purple, straw tint, pink tint, aqua  
Catalog No. 3 CD 115 clear, straw tint pink tint, aqua

**Embossing Style 2**

Catalog No. 4 CD 169 aqua  
Catalog No. 5 CD 165.1 aqua  
Catalog No. 9 CD 108 light purple, straw tint, aqua  
The No. 9 in this embossing type can also be found with the trademark on the rear.

**Embossing Style 3**

Catalog No. 1 CD 154 clear, straw tint, aqua, ice aqua, amber, carnival  
Catalog No. 2 CD 122 clear, straw tint, pink tint, aqua  
Catalog No. 3 CD 115 clear, straw tint, aqua  
Catalog No. 4 CD 162 clear  
CD 163 aqua, ice aqua  
Catalog No. 5 CD 165.1 clear, straw tint, aqua, ice aqua  
CD 164 clear  
Catalog No. 9 CD 107 clear, ice aqua  
CD 108 straw tint, aqua  
Catalog No. 10 CD 214 aqua  
Catalog No. 11 CD 168 aqua  
Catalog No. 12 CD 176 clear, apple green  
Catalog No. 13 CD 113 clear, straw tint  
Catalog No. 14 CD 160 clear, straw tint  
Catalog No. 15 CD 197 clear, straw tint  
Catalog No. 16 CD 1052 clear  
Catalog No. 62 CD 272 amber  
Catalog No. 511A CD 272 clear, straw tint, amber  
Catalog No. 514 CD 221 amber

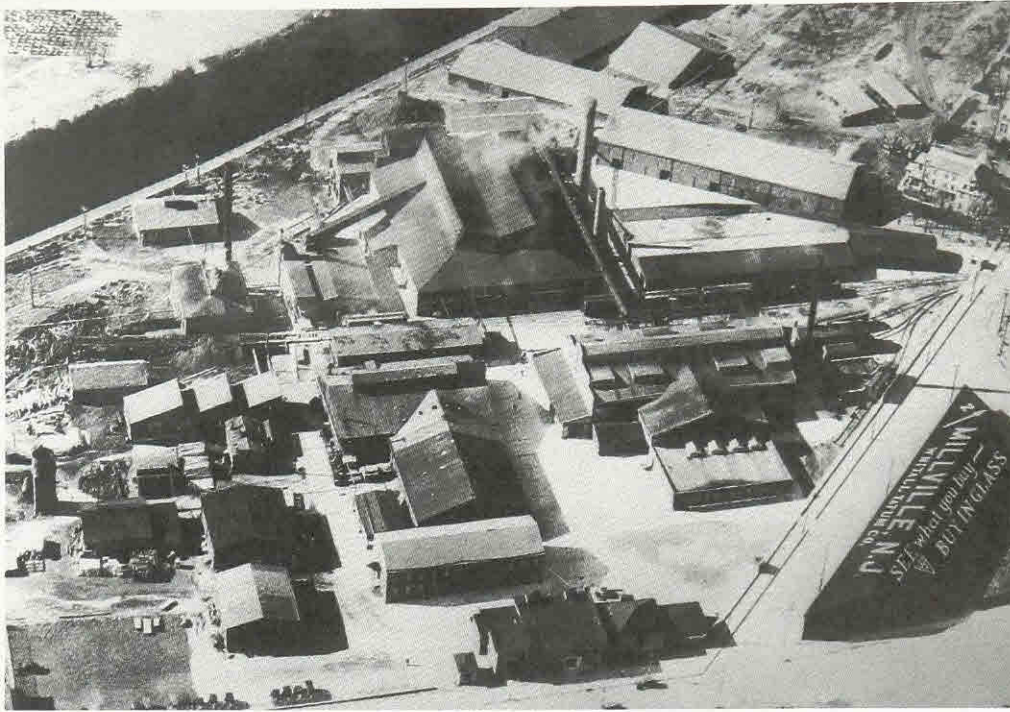
All Claims must be made within Ten Days from Receipt of Goods. All Goods will be shipped and receipts taken in GOOD ORDER, AND NO DAMAGE OR LOSS THAT MAY OCCUR IN TRANSPORTATION WILL BE ALLOWED.

*A.C. Phillips* New York, N.Y. Mo. 1884.  
*Sinclairville N.Y.*  
Bought of **WHITALL, TATUM & CO.,**  
MANUFACTURERS OF DRUGGISTS' GLASSWARE, BOTTLES, VIALS, &c.  
TERMS CASH. *Manufacturers and Jobbers of DRUGGISTS' SUNDRIES,*  
Nos. 46 & 48 BARCLAY STREET.  
P. O. Box 1886.  
With Exchange on New York or Philadelphia.  
All bills not remitted in 30 days will be subject to draft at sight.

✓ 1 doz ✓ 1 doz U.S. Flint complete	20 00	2 00
✓ 1/4" Matteson Imp. Sys.	10 00	2 40
✓ 1/2" #1 Crescent "	12 00	2 63
✓ 1/2" #1 Home "	12 00	6 00
✓ 1/2" #2 "	8 00	4 00
✓ 1/4" & Phe 1oz Cone grad	5 50	1 88
✓ 1/4" " 2oz "	4 00	1 00
		1 88
✓ 1/4" Sin Blum Dairy Sherb	2 25	1 13
✓ 1/4" Phi Nipple Sherb	1 50	2 25
✓ 1/4" " "	1 50	
		1 53
		5 00
		25 44

Put & packing 25 Sept 25

Whitall, Tatum & Co. bill of sale date September 1, 1884. (Courtesy of Kevin Lawless)



*(Figure 1.) (Above) An aerial view of the Upper Works of the Whitall Tatum Company, taken in 1932. It was commonly known as the "Glasstown "plant. It was razed by Armstrong Cork Company after that concern acquired the Whitall Tatum factories in 1939 and moved to South Millville. The large building on Columbia Ave. with "Millville, N.J." painted on the roof served as a warehouse. (Below) An aerial view of the Lower Works of the Whitall Tatum Company also taken in 1932. (Photos courtesy of Don Wentzel)*

