



Drip Points

<http://www.nia.org>

Quarterly Newsletter of the National Insulator Association

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Editor

     
Shaun Kotlarsky NIA # 4993

Welcome to the new look of Drip Points!

A little info about me, my name is Shaun Kotlarsky and I started collecting insulators in 1991. I specialize in all things Hemingray Glass Co. I also have an interest in Italian insulators and blue and gray porcelain. I have recently been asked to be the

editor of Drip Points, I was excited to jump at the opportunity! I have many exciting plans for Drip Points in the future, I just want to reassure everyone that Drip Points is in good hands. I have won many awards for flyers and newsletters for my local insulator club (Huron Valley Bottle and Insulator Club), and for my Website "Hemingray On-Line museum" <http://www.hemingray.net> Constructive feedback is welcomed and much appreciated!



Shaun Kotlarsky





President



Lou Hall NIA # 7185

It's been a busy couple of months with lots going on "insulator" related. The first week in October I was back into the Nevada desert with the Transcontinental Telegraph Research Group. More about that shortly. Then, in November, the stars aligned themselves just right and I found myself in attendance at my first ever Springfield/Mid-Ohio show.



Springfield, Ohio - A Building Full of Treasures

I have heard for many years that if, as a collector, you could only attend one show you would want to get to the Springfield show. I have attended a lot of shows and they were all great but now that I have been to Mid-Ohio I can best sum it up this way: **WOW!!!** From now on I will be one of those saying "If you can only go to one show..." Kudos go out to Steve and Lois Blair and Glenn Drummond. This was the 40th anniversary of their hosting what has become a major destination for insulator collectors. The hospitality and energy generated at this show is absolutely contagious. I know this because even the waitress at the hotel was promoting the show to folks in the restaurant. I came away from the show with quite a few pins and brackets. 128 pounds of pins and brackets to be exact and Fed-ex was happy to ship it all home for me.



This year the Transcontinental Telegraph Research Group made their way back into the Nevada desert to once again discover and record the location of the telegraph lines. These lines were built in 1861 by the Overland Telegraph Co. and later, in 1864 by the United States Telegraph Co. This year marked my 10th year with the group. This proved to be a very successful trip. We were fortunate to find several new pole locations and get them recorded with GPS. In addition to that we found an iron ramshorn with the Goodyear rubber and wood block shards. On another day of the hunt our newest member located a complete wood block ramshorn insulator intact including the square nails. This piece is headed for the telegraph display in the Churchill County Museum in Fallon, Nevada. We also recovered a crude wire splice with a bend in it that perfectly fit the metal ramshorn.

After much searching in the sagebrush covered desert, group member Mike Doyle discovered a "new" old pole butt! This was as exciting as finding an insulator because the discovery helped answer questions about the direction the line took as it entered a nearby mountain range. The group also revisited portions of the line we had previously searched. We were able to find shards of glass from the CD735.3 U.S.TEL.CO. threadless insulator.



Now, and more importantly, some news about the NIA.

As most of you know Brent Burger took on the position of NIA Information Director. Soon after accepting the position he had to resign because he took a job that relocated him to Afganistan. (He reports it to be a little dryer there than in Spokaneistan.) In the Fall issue of Drip Points I solicited volunteers to fill that position. I am happy to report that Michele Kotlarsky has agreed to be NIA's new Information Director. Additionally, her son, Shaun, has agreed to take charge of our newsletter as its new Editor/Publisher. Although the Information Director is responsible for publishing the newsletter, the Newsletter Editor/Publisher will be responsible for creating and distributing the NIA "Drip Points."

The Information Director will create and distribute press releases, newsworthy articles and NIA hobby related stories to other hobby oriented publications and media outlets.

The Information Director is a member of the Board of Directors.

The Newsletter Editor/Publisher will solicit articles from Board members, Advisors, and Committee Chairs for inclusion in the publication. Stories, research projects, reports and other information of interest, written by NIA members, should be solicited from the membership. The Editor/ Publisher will assemble, edit, print and mail the newsletter both in paper copy form and electronically.

These are formidable tasks that Michele and Shaun are taking on and they will need support and help from all of us. They will be asking for information and material from us. Please be generous with your cooperation. I am encouraging those of you who have created exhibits and included handout materials to send copies to Michele and Shaun for future publication. Promote your shows and send in show reports and pictures when the event is over.

The NIA receives donation to fund its new Scholarship program

The NIA recently received a generous gift to fund projects established by the Association. On behalf of the NIA I want to thank Tommy Bolack for his financial support of the Association. His donation of \$10,000.00 will be used as follows: \$5,000.00 will initially fund the NIA Scholarship Fund and \$5,000.00 will be used to improve educational outreach, membership growth, and the archival of historical materials.

Additionally, Tommy has made a contribution of \$2,500.00 to the Golden State Insulator Club to support the 42nd Annual NIA National Convention and Show to be held July 8-10, 2011, in San Jose, California. Tommy's donation will sponsor the Hospitality Suite as well as underwriting much of the promotional material costs.

Tommy has stated that he hopes his contribution will encourage all members and supporters of the NIA to contribute to the Association at whatever level of support they feel comfortable.

The National Insulator Association, Inc. is a non-profit corporation. It is also classified as a "public charity" under IRS 501(c)3 regulations. As such, most donations to the NIA are tax deductible. (Please read the article in this issue by Rick Jones, NIA Philanthropy Advisor.)

One of the goals of the National Insulator Association is to continue to encourage insulator collecting and protect the interests of its members. With the help of donations from NIA supporters we will continue to see improvements in educational outreach and membership growth.

Lou Hall



1st Past President



Boy is time flying by! I've just gotten back from yet another Mid-Ohio insulator show at Springfield, Ohio. This has really become the show everyone compares other shows to even rivaling the National show every year. The laid back atmosphere and the central location pretty much guarantees a good show every year. I always seem to come home with something for my Hemingray collection whether it be insulator or other product. This year was no exception, I brought home a couple insulators to fill gaps in my collection, a Hemingray made depression green oil lamp and another one in amber, an HGCO embossed beer bottle with original paper label and another HGCO marked aqua blob soda bottle. A couple deals were pre-arranged, but others were complete surprises. That's how this show goes.

Springfield show hosts Steve Blair and Glenn Drummond were appointed this summer to an advisory committee to help the bid process for NIA Regional and National Shows. Please read the committee report in this issue if you are interested in hosting a show.

Please also don't forget that the NIA is accepting donations towards the erection of the State Of Indiana Historical Marker for the site of the Hemingray Glass Company factory in Muncie, IN. If you should choose to donate, please note that your donation is for this project. They are tax deductible I hope to have a report in the Spring issue on when the plaque will be erected and when we have reached our fundraising goal.

Thank You.

Bob Stahr

THE PIERCE 355 BRICK SPOOL INSULATOR

Charles L. Peirce, Jr. was only interested in pins and brackets as shown by his 33 patents from 1907 to 1934. The first 3 patents were assigned to his own company, Peirce Specialty Co. Most of his patents from 1911 to 1934 were assigned to an old company known as Hubbard & Co. The first mention of rack spool insulators was in his Oct. 19, 1915 patent for a metal rack that held 3 spool insulators. The earliest Hubbard catalog I have is dated 1924. The No. 355 spool insulator could be ordered made of dry process porcelain. Obviously red brick is not dry process porcelain. The No. 455 spool insulator in the same design was made of wet process porcelain.



I've seen the brick rack spools before, but do not know where they were found or if anyone knew at the time that they were used for a special service. Dry process porcelain is naturally cheaper than wet process and was so stated in the 1924 and 1928 Hubbard catalogs. Brick is more porous than dry process porcelain, so naturally brick would be inferior electrically. The reason brick was used instead of dry process porcelain is open to speculation. I suspect the brick insulators were made during or around the time of WW I either because the usual manufacturer of dry process porcelain could not fill orders or the available dry process spools were inferior (brittle, surface flaws, etc). Perhaps the later was the case and Hubbard turned to a local brick manufacturer to supply an inexpensive substitute until a suitable dry process manufacturer could be found.

Thank you to Elton Gish for the above information.



2nd Past President



Kevin Jacobson

NIA # 6720

Hello everyone,

I have just returned from the 40th Annual Mid Ohio Insulator show hosted by Steve and Lois Blair and Glenn Drummond. I have a bit of jet lag as I write this from an intense lesson in times zone changes. When I left home (Phoenix), Ohio was three hours later than Arizona as we do not go on daylight savings time in Arizona. While at the Mid-Ohio Show, most of the country went off daylight savings time early Sunday morning causing another clock adjustment for me. Later on Sunday, I traveled from Columbus to Dallas and then to Phoenix resulting in two more time zone changes. Phoenix is now two hours different from Ohio and part of me is still trying to figure out what time it really is as I am writing this.

The show was another great one. Perhaps the best ever with the exception that Glenn Drummond could not make it. There were more first time show attendees than I remember during the 10 years I have been going to the Mid-Ohio show. Great job Steve, Lois, Glenn and all those other folks who helped out.

My NIA related activities since the last Drip Points have been somewhat limited due to work related commitments, but I would like to remind everyone that the NIA obtained status as a Charitable Organization under the IRS code 501(c)(3). Many folks do not know or realize what this means, but the short explanation is that we are now considered a Charitable Organization under the IRS code and anything you donate to the NIA (not your dues) is a TAX DEDUCTION for you. The donation does not have to be monetary. It can in fact be an insulator or collection of insulators. You as the donator decide the "Fair Market Value" of the donation not the NIA. We simply give you a receipt without the amount filled in. If you can back up the value of a donated item with the price guide or auction information or other sources, then you will withstand scrutiny with the IRS should you ever be unfortunate enough to be audited.

The NIA is developing guidelines right now for what we can and cannot accept as a donation, but cash is never a problem. In the case of donated insulators, it is envisioned that the NIA would have an auction of the donated items to convert them to cash for the furtherance for the NIAs educational and research activities. As I said before, we are still working on the details of this, so it may or may not happen this way. The actual effective date of the Tax Exempt Status was October 16th, 2009. If you donated anything to the NIA since the October 16th 2009 date (over a year ago) then you should make certain that you have a receipt from the NIA for the donation if you plan to claim it on your tax return.

Thanks to donations to the NIA, at last word we had around \$5000 in the new NIA Scholarship fund and a new committee to define the general rules and requirements for application to receive those funds. Carol McDougald is in charge of the committee and I am involved as well. Please notify Carol or myself if you would like to help us out by volunteering for the committee. (Editors note: a new person is being voted on for filling this position due to Carol having to step down).

I hope everyone has a great holiday season. The end of the year is only four to five weeks off and by the time you read this, we will literally have Thanksgiving under our belts. My next show is likely to be the Yuma Arizona tailgater hosted by the Grand Canyon State Insulator Club in Yuma, Arizona on Saturday February 5th. It's a great get together, usually in the 70's, and free.

Best of luck collecting,

Kevin Jacobson





Western Region VP



I write this as I sip my 1st cup of coffee upon returning home from four days of the “**Springfield Show Experience**”. For those of you who have been... you know the “Experience” I’m talking about. A show hall filled with tables busting at the seams with glass, porcelain & every imaginable go-with. The sounds of wall to wall people reuniting with others, talk of the hobby, recent finds or personal experiences since their last visit. Yup, all this and more, in a laid back, incredibly comfortable setting. There’s a camaraderie unique to the Springfield Experience that keeps folks coming back year after year (some for near on 40 years). If you happen to be one of those that just haven’t managed to get there yet... I strongly

suggest you start putting your spare change in a “Springfield” jar now, so you’ll be able to catch the fever next November 2011.

A special thanks goes out to all those folks that keep this show going. With that said: There sure have been a lot of shows, swaps, get-togethers & tail-gaiters over the last couple of months, and I’m happy to report that those held out west have had fairly good turnouts, considering the lousy economy. It’s great how folks are still managing to get to a show or two and sharing in the fun and upbeat energy that fellow collectors inherently bring with them. Let’s face it, everyone needs a break from time to time and there’s no better way to get that than hanging out with fellow collectors.

As winter draws near, and shows lessen, and everyone starts talking about the long winter ahead without that connection to the hobby.... I encourage any and all collectors out there to consider planning your own collector get-together. It doesn’t have to be big to be great, just start planning for the crowd and size you feel comfortable with, whether it’s half a dozen folks over at your house or twenty in a spare room at the fire station. Collectors like to get-together and talk glass... lets keep it happening on a local level.

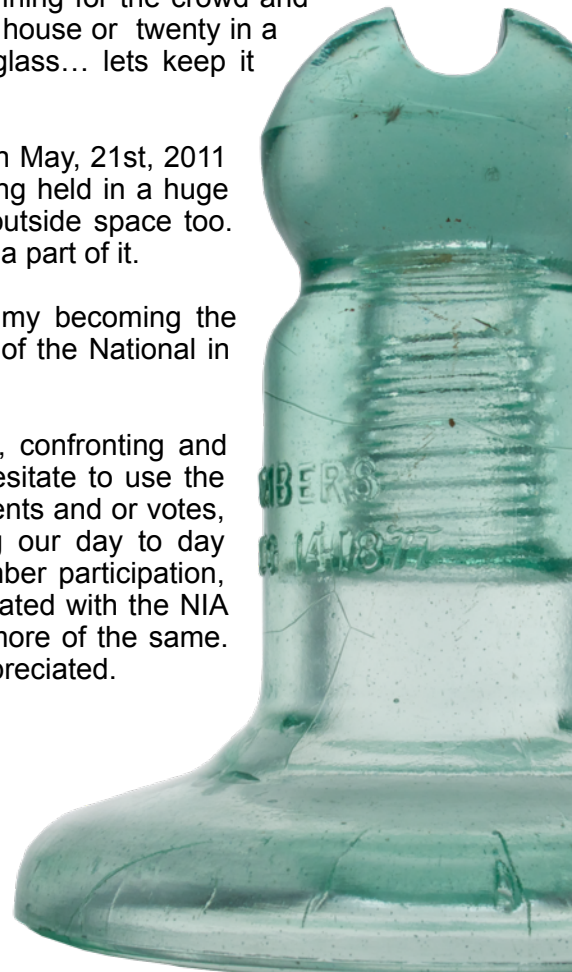
Now for my plug: The Triple Ridge insulator club will be having a Show on May, 21st, 2011 from 9am to 3pm at 2905 N Cascade Colorado Springs, CO. It’s not being held in a huge auditorium or anything, just my dry & comfy warm shop with plenty of outside space too. May is a great time of year in Colorado and I invite any and all to come be a part of it.

Well, it’s hard to believe that a quarter of the year has passed since my becoming the Western VP. Heck, it seems like yesterday that I was walking the aisles of the National in Boxborough MA.

NIA President, Lou Hall has kept the momentum going for recognizing, confronting and finding solutions for some of the issues facing our hobby. He doesn’t hesitate to use the speed of email to alert board members of any issue requiring their comments and or votes, and board members have already acted on several issues concerning our day to day obligations & continue to discuss ways to better our hobby though member participation, representation & enforcement of our bylaws. It’s been great being associated with the NIA at the board level over the last couple of months and I look forward to more of the same. Any questions, concerns, constructive advice or comments are always appreciated.

Hope to see you at a show soon,

Dan Gauron





Central Region VP



Bill Snell

NIA # 2624

I just returned from the annual trek to Springfield for the Mid-Ohio show. As always, Steve, Lois and Glenn put on an incredible gathering and this year, as the 40th Mid-Ohio show, we celebrated in fine style. Thanks to our show hosts and everyone involved with all the behind-the-scenes work that makes everything appear so seamless to the participants. I also have to add that I thought the displays at this year's show demonstrated some of the highest educational quality I've seen.

Thanks to everyone who took the time to put together these top-notch displays.

Welcome to our new Information Director, Michele Kotlarsky, and Shaun Kotlarsky, who's now editing Drip Points. Thanks to both for taking on this significant task!

I was not able to attend the HVBIC show in October, but I hear it was well attended and some outstanding insulators turned up. I certainly enjoyed the photos that attendees shared.

In talking with some bottle collector friends recently, I found we'd had some similar experiences at estate sales and auctions: someone unconnected to the hobby community, holding the vague concept that insulators are "worth money," aggressively paid substantial amounts, sometimes even hundreds of dollars, to get an unusual but not rare insulator that might sell for \$10.00-30.00 at a show.

I've tried engaging a few of these folks in conversation, and while they seem interested in insulators, they've convinced themselves that they know all there is to know and they see no reason to participate in any community or organized hobby. Even if they're paying much more than necessary (and if I mention typical show prices, they stare at me like I'm babbling about giant purple llamas invading Kansas), they refuse to step outside their current experience to attend an insulator show or learn any more than they already know.

I think it's sad to find that a few people have become so focused on insulators and monetary values – distorted values, even – that joining a community can be so easily dismissed as unnecessary or undesirable. Think about all the historical information we've been able to gather over the past several decades. None of that would exist if we didn't band together and share. While my attempts haven't always been successful, I think it's worth the effort to engage collectors "outside the loop" and introduce them to the NIA and some other local members. They're missing out on so much by staying unconnected, probably because they don't realize how much there is to gain.

Now if I can shift the subject back to insulator shows, I'm hearing from several people in the Central Region who are interested in hosting the National in 2012. That's great news! I urge everyone who is submitting a bid, or who is considering it, to get in touch with the National Show Committee chairs, Steve Blair and Glenn Drummond. These guys have a vast well of expertise to share and they'll be able to guide you through the planning and bid process, prompting you to think about some of the details that show hosts need to consider. Please understand Steve and Glenn's role is NOT to create more bureaucracy. Their efforts are part of our strategy to encourage and support potential National hosts. Putting together a large-scale show is a lot of work and Steve and Glenn are there to help you understand the process. I'm confident that no matter the location, the excitement surrounding the annual National will only grow stronger in the coming years.

Please accept my warmest wishes for a healthy, safe, and peaceful holiday season. I'm looking forward to everything that 2011 holds!

Bill Snell





Eastern Region VP

Matt Grayson

NIA # 387

There are two definite signs of autumn here in the East short cool days and driving home from Springfield. There is little need to comment on the packed show hall, sold out tables, a fantastic banquet, over twenty wonderful displays, brisk sales, trades and the greatest assortment of lightning rod insulators brought together in one place. My thanks to Steve Blair, Glenn Drummond, their families and the group of volunteers that made the show a success.

Back around 1976, I was rooting around in the electrical engineering section of a university library here in New York and came across a copy of Ralph Mershon's biography. There were photographs of white multipart from the Niagara test line. I was amazed. I had never seen anything like these insulators before, this was before the publication of Elton's multipart guide. If memory serves me, I sent some photocopies of this along to Jack Tod for Crown Jewels porcelain column. These insulators today are identified as M-3250. I really never had any hope of seeing these insulators as the line was dismantled and scrapped prior to 1905. Imagine my surprise when I saw not one but two examples of these insulators reconstructed in Springfield displays. A special thanks to Ken Willick and Jeff Katchko for recovering and reconstructing this essential piece of alternating current and New York State history.

With winter approaching, the opportunity for hunting in the wild diminishes here in the northeast. There is another type of hunt that I highly recommend. A visit to the local public library, historical society, museum or similar local institution may hold a treasure trove of insulator related information. As impressive as the volume of information that has been digitized and is available on the internet, there are still thousands of photographs, documents and similar items just waiting for some one to go through them in these institutions. I have come across contract documents, photographs, insulator manufacturer correspondence in boxes of only partially cataloged files in local public libraries.

Most shows from now until spring are in the South, but there are shows in the north too! Check Crown Jewels, ICON and the other collector resources for show dates and additional information. Shows, in my opinion, are the best ways to add to your collection. There are always deals and items you cannot find anywhere else. More importantly, you will get to spend time with the greatest people in the world, insulator collectors! The NIA is working very hard to improve the organization of shows and their success, and I am sure the show committee would be happy to hear any suggestions. Don't forget, donations to the NIA are now tax deductible!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to All!!!

Matt Grayson

Wanted: Volunteer

Product Marketing Manager

The Product Marketing Manager is responsible for marketing, sales and inventory of NIA endorsed products. A background in retail management and sales would be beneficial. A job description is available upon request. This person would work closely with the current Product Marketing Manager so as to be prepared for the position as of July, 2011.

If this position sounds like a fit and appeals to you please contact Lou Hall, NIA President, by phone (559) 435-1740 or e-mail: president@nia.org



Membership Director



Donald Briel

NIA # 7218

Well, the insulator shows for this year are now over for Jeanne and I, but what a great year it has been. Jeanne and I started out with the Yuma tailgater last February, went to the Bank's swap meet in Lostine, then attended the National in Boston where we had a few days of sightseeing as well. After the National we attended the Yuhas' swap meet in Helena. We were on our way to the Albuquerque show, but about half-way there learned that Jeanne's dad passed away and had to turn around and head back home right away. My last outing was a single day at the Springfield show where I was able to gather some valuable data for the next Price Guide. It was my first time at Springfield. What a pleasant surprise to see what a huge show it is. As always, every occasion was filled with renewing friendships and meeting others for the first time. What a great hobby! What great people! Many thanks go out to each and every show host for their much effort that makes this such a wonderful hobby.

Here in Utah we have had our first snow, the weather is getting colder, and the outdoor chores are finishing up. It's now time to settle down and get serious about the next Price Guide. Many thanks go out to each contributor. You are the ones that have made each Price Guide valuable and the next one will be no exception. If there is anyone that would like to review prices and haven't let me know, it's not too late. Please send me your name, contact information, and the areas of interest for review (Don.Briel@comcast.net). I will add you to the volunteer list.

We are in the midst of NIA membership renewals for 2011. As of this writing the 2010 members in good standing count is 1670, our second best year ever. Also, as of this writing we have nearly 900 members paid up for 2011 with a 6" tall pile of mail waiting to be processed. I'm paying the price for being out of town for the past week! If you haven't yet renewed your membership for 2011, now is the time to do it so as not to miss anything. Don't forget that any donations beyond the \$12 membership dues are now tax deductible. If you send an added donation, be sure to note how much that is so it is not credited as additional years of membership dues.

Thank you for all of your support of the NIA and the insulator collecting hobby!

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Donald Briel



THE CD 122 VMR/NAPOLI

This insulator has been in production in the period 1943-1945 in Naples (Napoli) by VETRERIE MERIDIONALI RIUNITE, ordered by the US troops in southern Italy. This is the original type, while a variation with top groove is known.

The insulator has been used as a telephone insulator, while some other American types have been rescued in Italy. Lets remember the abandoned railroad from Agrigento to Trapani (Sicily) whose telephone line was originally equipped with WHITALL TATUM clear CD 122s in number of four on wooden poles, and some other Americans CD 154 used in Tuscany on houses' walls

Thank you to Nora Coppo from Italy for this information.



Awards & Recognition Chair

Gene Hawkins NIA # 421

What a memorable show Springfield 2010 turned out to be! Fantastic people, great glass (and mud!) lightning rod insulators that I had never knew existed came out of private collections and were on display. Other displays were there too, most were parts of the hobby I rarely think about. and there they were, right there in front of me where I could read, see & learn about them. Thank you to the dedicated collectors who took

the time to put them together so we could enjoy them.

These displays educated and inspired new collectors, kids attending the show as well as we veteran collectors. NOW WHAT CAN YOU DO FOR THE HOBBY? Can you host a tailgater? Can you put together a display for an insulator show of a portion of your collection so it can get another collector's adrenaline flowing? Can you mentor a new collector? What about a small display for your local library? Can you volunteer to help an NIA team work toward a common worthwhile goal?

Do you know someone who has contributed to the insulator hobby? Do you know if they have ever been recognized by the NIA? Go to: http://www.nia.org/archives/nia_awards.htm to see the list of people who has received the NIA Outstanding Service Award and Lifetime Membership Awards. Do you know someone not on the list? NOMINATE THEM!! Contact me at awards@nia.org and I will send you the proper form. LET'S DO SOMETHING PRODUCTIVE FOR OUR HOBBY!

Gene Hawkins



Information Director

Michele Kotlarsky NIA # 5370

I was notified at the 2010 Springfield show that I would be the new NIA Information Director. This was on a Sunday, the newsletter deadline was Wednesday! Nothing like jumping in with both feet! I hope the transition is a smooth one, bear with us. Shaun my son will be the newsletter editor so look for some changes. We are trying to reach out to clubs to submit articles, photos, information to spice things up. Maybe you could pick a member each

month from your club and ask them to write up something. It could be how they got started collecting, what insulators are from their area, what they do for a living, why they joined the NIA it doesn't matter, I need content!!! And photos. I collect insulator go-with items, miniature insulators, insulator cats and any pink insulator. My favorite insulator is the Fisher and I do have a few Zicme's along with Duquesnes. I buy whatever I like at the moment!

Michele Kotlarsky



NIA Promotions Chair

Jim White

NIA # 1127

About two years ago I was asked to serve as Promotions Chairman, and more recently, President Lou Hall asked that I continue to serve, which I am willing to do.

The object of this Committee has been to help show hosts, especially the NIA Regionals and National Convention hosts, who might seek some help in promoting their show. We have made it clear we are not forcing our assistance but offering to provide ideas and guidance in helping promote their show.

To this end I developed a first draft of a document that I thought might help show hosts. This has been the greatest accomplishment to date, but now it is time to move on. The "Committee" has been a one-man show to date, but now it is time to expand the involvement.

If you have some experience in media releases, show hosting, marketing and public relations, advertising any of these would be useful. Due to the personal demands of my job and my physical limitations of being in the Midwest, I am currently seeking a few Committee members who are distributed over the US. This will benefit in that there is a likelihood that at least one Committee member will be able to attend most shows and be close to at least one of the NIA Regionals.

I will be developing a job description for the Committee members so you can better assess what is expected.

So if you are interested, please contact me: Jim White 317-319-1205 cell / 317-253-8245 res (evenings and weekends) and email: Indyblanc@aol.com.

Jim White

A Springfield Surprise!

Michael Young had an amazing find of 17 Chambers CD 317s. He found them in the basement ceiling of his house from the 1860's in Sandusky, OH. Michael is not an insulator collector but found out about the Springfield show and got a table. He sold out all 16 (he kept one) on Friday!





Ethics Chair



David R. Wiecek

NIA # 3225

2 NIA members contacted me earlier this year seeking help regarding incomplete transactions to purchase / trade insulators with Diego Botero Restrepo of Columbia, South America. Several attempts were reportedly made by Diego to ship the packages from Columbia that were held up and returned to the sender by Customs authorities. It is unclear as to whether it was Columbian or United States customs authorities who rejected the packages. These transactions are still incomplete after nearly 6 months. Communications regarding the matter have been inconsistent, reactive and erratic. It was decided after a review of the information available to alert the NIA membership of the difficulties here and advise against doing business in Columbia with Diego Botero Restrepo until the issue is resolved.


I will restate some of the recommendations I made in the last issue of Drip Points as a reminder. Be sure with international transactions that you and the sender are clear up front on the plans for packaging, customs regulations, shipping dates, estimated shipping times and cost. Do not proceed if you are not comfortable with the level of communications you are receiving. You should have some knowledge of how parcels are processed in the countries they are traveling from. Be aware of the political climate and potential for corruption that may exist. Keep in mind that items may be unwrapped for customs inspection and may not be re-wrapped as carefully as they were by the sender. Packages where multiple insulators are sent may not be repackaged to be protected from each other for the remainder of their journey. Request that items are packaged so that they are well protected but easily opened and that there is required minimal effort to repackage them so that they will get to their intended destination in 1 piece. Parcels may never reach their intended destinations or may be sent back to the sender. Be sure the sender lets you know when they have shipped your package and to let you know if it is returned.

Collecting items from far away lands can be interesting and exciting. However keep in mind that international transactions have far more variables involved and carry a greater risk of a potential problem. It is difficult to track down and validate a problem once you cross international borders.


I encourage you to contact me if you have a personal matter where you believe the NIA Code of Ethics was violated.

David R. Wiecek

ORIGINAL HEMINGRAY MOLD FOUND!



I recently obtained this original Hemingray "Salesman Sample" mold used to produce the miniatures that were given out at the 1933 World's Fair. It was obtained from the grandson of a former Owens Illinois employee. It was given to him when the plant closed. Definitely a centerpiece of my Hemingray Glass Co. collection.



Shaun Kotlarsky



Philanthropy



Rick Jones

NIA # 201

Now that the NIA has acquired its 501(c)3 designation, gifts to the NIA are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. This usually means that a cash gift is fully tax deductible as long as the donor received no goods or services in return. As always, be sure and discuss any donations with your personal financial advisor.

With the end of the year approaching, it's a great time to be thinking about a gift to the NIA. They need the funds for scholarships and to plan other program activities. The 501(c)3 status ensures that your gift will be handled legally, responsibly, and that no gifts will inure to the benefit of individual board members or committee people. The IRS watches over non-profit, tax exempt organizations to ensure that the rules and laws are followed.

Another way to help the NIA would be to donate your collection. A good way to do this would be through your estate planning in your will. The fair market value of your collection or other non-cash items can be fully tax deductible if you choose to make such a donation while you're still living. If done through your will, it may also be tax deductible for your estate. You are required to set the value of what you donate, but you may be required by the IRS at some point to justify that valuation. This burden may also fall on your heirs if the donation is made through your will. The NIA is not allowed to offer an estimate of value for tax purposes on any donations of non-cash items. The NIA may also be planning to establish a list of what they would accept as a non-cash gift to avoid becoming a warehousing operation of unwanted items. Ask most museums and you'll find that they have a policy to accept or reject any gift, including grants and cash, if there are strings attached by the donor that are not in line with the mission of the organization, or, if a non-cash item cannot be a) turned into cash for the organization; or b) is something of no interest to the organization. Consulting your tax advisor on non-cash gifts is a good idea as well.



Please consider a gift to the NIA this year. Any size gift would be appreciated, I'm sure, and you will receive a letter from the NIA that can serve as your receipt for tax purposes.

Thank you for considering a gift and I wish each of you a very happy holiday season.

Sincerely,

Rick Jones

Wanted: Articles for drip points

If you have a short "Did you know" style tidbit about an insulator please let me know. Also looking for longer articles (1/2 page to 2 pages) about an insulator related subject to spice up Drip Points! Send your submissions to newsletter@nia.org Thanks! Shaun Kotlarsky, Drip Points editor



Rules & Procedures



Mike Doyle

NIA # 5932

The Winter of 2010 - Holy Christmas! Time sure do fly. I hope that this article finds everyone warm and well. It has been a fantastic summer and fall, workin' like a dog, trompin' around in the desert looking for insulators, visiting Ron Yuhas' show for the first time, tryin' to learn how to upload insulator pictures to my Facebook page. Golly -I can barely stand the strain.....

did I say strain? OK well I am still cryin' for missing yet another Mid-Ohio show and have vowed to make the next one - God willing.

I guess I should talk a bit about the Rules & Procedures advisory panel's work instead of what I Hey, how about this really cool Wade that our buddy Reuben just dug from behind the International Café in Austin, NV?!? Oops! There I go again - Seriously though, Gus Stafford and I have been working with Lou Hall to get the donation procedures on paper and hammer out a working draft of the new NIA handbook. There are a million changes necessary to fine tune our Rules and Procedures to match the Non-Profit entity guidelines and to fall in line with the goals and direction that the NIA is striving toward. We sure do have a lot on our plate but by our Spring issue we'd love to have a working copy of the new handbook on the table. I actually spoke to Lou today about it and we are considering a snowy cabin isolation retreat (with DTV and wifi of course) to get this draft published. Stay tuned please! Your NIA has great things in store.



Mike Doyle



National Show & Advisory Panel



Steve Blair & Glen Drummond

NIA # 247 & 537

We would like to remind everyone that the Advisory Panel is the NIA contact point should you be giving serious thought to hosting a future National or Regional Show. The committee goals are two-fold. First is to insure that the bidding process produces a show that will provide both an affordable and a memorable hobby experience for the preponderance of the collector population. Second is to minimize the financial risk of the potential show host in

producing a quality show. Please contact a committee member if you are giving serious thought to the preparation and submission of a bid for either a National or Regional Show so we can begin the working together to achieve these goals.

We are searching for show hosts for the 2012 Eastern and Western Region Shows and the 2013 Western and Central Region Shows. Please contact us at your earliest convenience if you have interest in one of these opportunities.

Please keep these factors in mind as you plan for a National or Region Show: Economy of plan for attendees, travel convenience, and show "go-with" activities (special displays, seminars, games to play).

Steve Blair, NIA 247
 740-852-3148
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Steve Blair & Glenn Drummond



Research & Education

Jacquie Linscott-Barnes

NIA # 1380

Dear NIA members,

I missed the deadline for submitting info for the last issue of DP. I hope this gets to press on time.

You probably read in the last DP (FALL) as to the mission of the Research and Education committee. Our ultimate goal is to provide the means for students to develop an understanding of the use of glass and porcelain insulators, their antiquity, and just maybe some of the students will pursue the hobby of collecting.

I am very excited to report that NIA members, Tammy Brewer, NIA # 6696 and her husband, Lee Brewer, NIA# 6695 along with Jeanne Weber, NIA # 1954 will be assisting me with preparations of lesson plans for grades K-12. These will be made available to classroom teachers across the United States via the NIA web site. Now, How do the educators get the info to know they can access the ready made plans? I have contacted each state affiliate of the National Education Association (NEA) with the information to be published in their state publication/internet site. Most teachers are members of the NEA.....But just in case some are not members or do not have time to read their newsletter, I will also be contacting each state Department of Education, in particular, the Director of Curriculum so that they can make the information available each school district to pass on to the classroom teachers.

We hope to develop a plan so that interested students can acquire a "starter set" of insulators along with information, price guides, catalogs, web sites, publications, DVDs, videos, etc.....anything that will "tweak" their interest in the hobby.

If you have ideas that will enhance this project please pass them on to this committee via my email.. bluebellwt@aol.com.

Jacqueline Linscott-Barnes

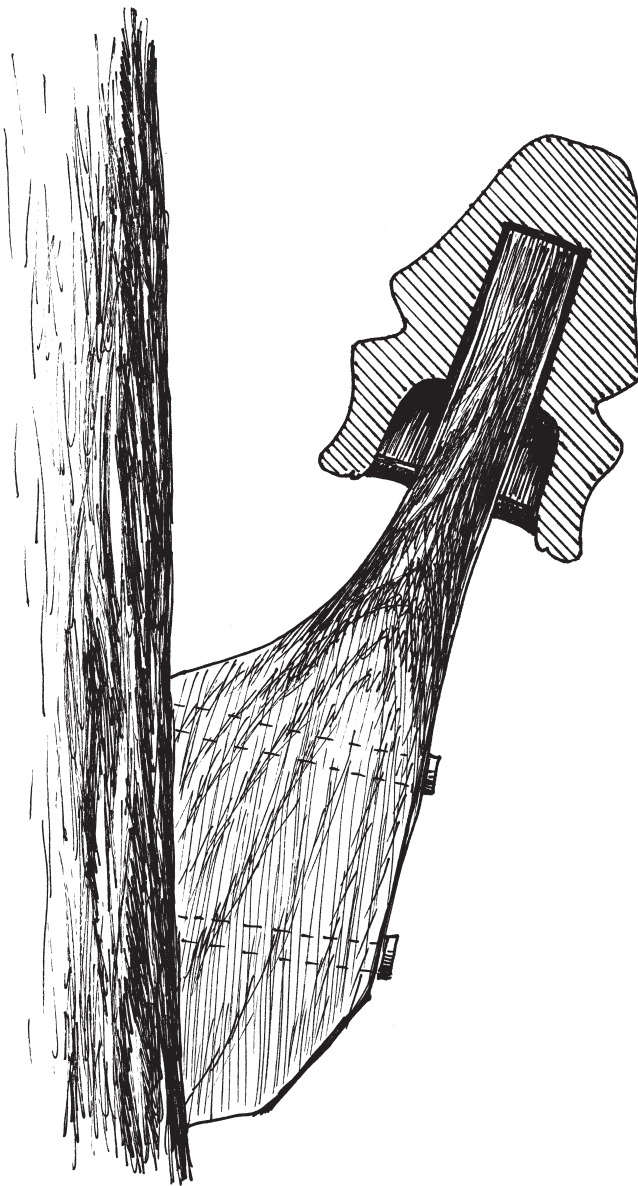


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To switch, email Donald Briel membership@nia.org

An Incomplete History and Timeline of the Electric Telegraph and the CD 731 Compromise Insulator



Revised Edition

Compiled by
Rick Jones
NIA # 201
Hamilton, Ohio

November 2010

An Incomplete History and Timeline of the Electric Telegraph and the **CD 731 Compromise Insulator**

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Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to provide an educational, informational and somewhat entertaining journey into the history of glass insulators concluding with the development of the CD 731. I've chosen to do this through a brief history of the electric telegraph and the role of the insulator throughout that history. Let me be clear from the beginning--- I am NOT a "researcher" and this is not a research report per se, but I am a collector deeply interested in his specialty. Most of my comments in this paper can be substantiated through sources listed under *Acknowledgements* at the end of the document, but I have also included some of my own personal observations and opinions. I have handled and studied thousands of glass insulators over the years both early on in the 70's and since my return to the hobby in 2003. A goal for this paper was to organize information from numerous sources into a handy reference-type format that would be helpful to both beginning and long time collectors. I have also created a timeline of the development of the electric telegraph while giving readers a sense of the evolution of the glass insulator through 1865. I think giving readers an overview of the early development of the glass insulator is informative and clearly shows where the 731 fits into that development. From the invention of the electromagnetic recording telegraph (Morse) to the development of the 731 was only a period of 28 years, but it was a period of rapid growth for the railroad and the telegraph. Morse's invention launched telecommunications in this country and would have never been successful without the insulator.

Compared to the 2007 edition, this *Revised Edition* expands upon the historic research of the electric telegraph, insulators in general, and the CD 731 in particular. Our journey will culminate with the development of the CD 731 threadless concave skirt "Compromise" insulator with new information introduced into the hobby on its various mold characteristics. When I started collecting in 1971, I specialized in exotic blue glass insulators. Even then I had a fondness for the 731. I loved its place in history in the development of pin-type insulators, its shape, and the period in which it was produced. When I returned to the hobby in 2003 after a 25-year hiatus and liquidating my exotic blues collection in late 1978, I decided to focus on threadless and shortly thereafter, the CD 731.

Upfront I want to recognize Ray Klingensmith and his opening work in McDougald's two-volume set on pin-type insulators in North America. Ray's research was a primary source for this work and I drew information on 731's from his work. His vast knowledge on threadless insulators not only helped inform this story of the 731, but was also useful as I developed the historical timeline. Ray has always made himself available to discuss insulators and especially with helping me better understand 731's in particular. Also, as I discovered any additional information, I've added it where appropriate. I've cited his and McDougald's work in the *Acknowledgements* along with J.B. Calvert's 2004 revision of *The Electromagnetic Telegraph*.

Threadless research is very challenging. Accurate records were not kept on insulator production prior to 1875 since most insulator production at that time was by bottle companies making insulators as a side business. If records were kept, most usually fell victim to loss by fire, flood or other tragedy. Many were

just destroyed as a normal event when a glass business either quit producing insulators or went out of business altogether. One fairly good source for research is old supply house catalogues. Unfortunately, I have never had access to these. Some do show threadless illustrations on occasion and which companies may have provided them, but usually the glass manufacturer actually making the pieces becomes a guessing game for collectors. Collectors look for clues in the quality of the glass, color traits caused by glass components (usually sand) from certain areas, specific mold characteristics, and of course, markings. But it still boils down to a guess when trying to accurately identify most threadless insulator makers. I do find it interesting when a collector (or dealer) states emphatically that a particular unembossed threadless is, for example, a Brookfield product. The person might say, for example, they can tell by the glass quality and color that it is definitely a Brookfield product. But pin this person down on a suspected bogus piece and they're not so sure it's bogus since there really is no definite proof---they'll say it's all circumstantial. More on bogus pieces later.

The Compromise style in the U.S.A. actually encompasses CD's 727 through 732.4 (McDougald Price Guide, 2007). Many researchers feel the concave skirt preceded the straight skirt styles based on early articles in *The Telegrapher* and other sources. Remember that the Consolidated Design numbering system does not follow any chronological pattern and was created by N.R. Woodward in the 1960's. "Woody" introduced his CD numbering system in his 1967 publication "The Glass Insulator in America 1967 Report". In general, the CD system starts at 100 for the smaller pieces and goes through the 300's for larger power pieces. The 400 to 600 numbers are reserved for foreign glass and the 700's are for threadless. Visit the National Insulator Association website for more detail and photos (www.nia.org).

A Brief History

I have added this opening section simply because it shows how early that men were thinking about transporting information from one place to another, more distant place. Before we get too far into this incomplete history and timeline, a few early thoughts and experiments should be considered.

Let's begin with some early creative ideas expressed well before their time and well before Morse and his cohorts came onto the scene. For example, in the Bible, the author of the Book of Job raises this question while thinking the impossible, "***Canst thou send lightnings that they may go, and say unto Thee, here we are?***" Was the author thinking that words could travel through air like lightning? Did the author somehow associate the powerful electricity in flashes of lightning with using that power somehow to transmit words?

Or, the Neapolitan scholar of notable ability, who had devoted great attention to the study of natural and physical science and authored the work *Natural Magick*, John Baptista Porta, in one of his publications in approximately 1575 in the vicinity of Naples, Italy:

"To a friend, that is a far distance from us, shut up in prison, we may relate our minds; which I do not doubt may be done by two mariner's compasses having the alphabet writ upon them."

This quote came from "The Proeme" of Book VII on his experiments with Loadstones (magnets). His work was ultimately published in twenty books. His were the earliest experiments recorded that hinted at the development of the electromagnetic telegraph.

And finally, what about Charles Morrison of Scotland in 1753 writing in *The Scot's Magazine*:

"It is well known to all who are conversant in electrical experiments that the electric power may be propagated along a small wire, from one place to another, without being sensibly abated by the length of its progress; let, then, a set of wires equal in number to the letters of the alphabet be extended horizontally between two given places parallel to each other and each of them about an inch distant from that next to it. At every twenty yards' end let them be fixed in glass or jeweler's cement at some firm body, both to prevent them from touching the earth, or from another non-electric, and from breaking from their own gravity."

(Was this the first recorded thought of an insulator some 257 years ago?)

The electric telegraph grew from advances in electrical science, especially during the first forty years of the 19th Century. The discoveries of galvanic electricity by Luigi Galvani of Italy in the late 1770's, the electric battery by Alessandro Volta in 1799, research in electromagnetism by Hans Christian Oersted, Andre Marie Ampere, Joseph Henry, and Michael Faraday during the 1820's and 1830's all contributed to the discovery of the electric telegraph. These discoveries also propelled the advent of nearly instantaneous long-distance communication. During the 1830's the American painter and inventor, Samuel Finley Breese Morse, developed the recording electric telegraph. His contraption

used an electromagnet to record dots and dashes (Morse Code) onto a moving strip of paper. During the mid-1840's, telegraph operators began receiving messages by sound listening to the clicks of the electromagnet using what was called a key and sounder. Electric telegraph lines opened in England around 1836. It wasn't until 1844 that telegraph lines first opened in the U.S. As described above, men thought about such wonders long before technology and innovation permitted these ideas to come to fruition (Calvert, J.B., Troy, NY. May 2004).

The idea of a working electric telegraph and the need for some type of insulator has been around since the early 1700's. The first serious experiments to use a form of electricity were those of the static electricity attempts in Europe around 1726. These failed due to insufficient transmission of high voltages and the weakness of the effects produced. In America (or at that time, the American Colonies) in 1748, Benjamin Franklin, like many of the others experimenting, was using Leyden jar static electricity in experiments. He strung a wire across the Schuylkill River in Philadelphia at one point and used this method to ignite alcohol flares on both sides simultaneously. It was a crowd pleaser, but not much more.

Harrison Gray Dyar of New York in 1828 set up an experimental line around a race track using static electricity produced by friction, bare iron wires and glass insulators of some sort. His message was to be chemically recorded by hand on damp litmus paper. Due to leakage, his experiment failed, and really had no effect on future developments. Similar experiments continued in America as well as Europe for the next 50-plus years. Some of these efforts required as many as 76 wires and proved not only ineffective, but would have been totally impractical to construct had they been successful.

This brief history leaves out an enormous amount of information on the development of the electric telegraph and threadless manufacturers and suppliers. Please refer to the endnotes for sources if you would like more detailed information. My purpose here is to share what I've learned in a sort of meta-analysis of the writings of several researchers, collectors, old publications, and online resources to bring those interested in threadless more information on the development of the CD 731 while giving readers a basic understanding of the development of the electric telegraph and insulators in general. The credit goes to those in my *Acknowledgments*. My real contribution is the characteristics of different CD 731 molds and keeping the discussion on bogus 731's an ongoing conversation.

Timeline 1837-1865

The timeline begins with Samuel F.B. Morse and his successful bid to create a working electromagnetic recording telegraph. He actually began work on his experiments with the telegraph in 1832, but it was not until late 1836 that he had perfected it to the point of being able to present it effectively. Please note that Morse was the first *commercially successful* inventor of the electric telegraph in America. Many *technically* successful attempts preceded him. His was not the first telegraph, not the first electromagnetic telegraph, nor even the first recording telegraph, but his was a huge financial success for his patentees (Calvert, J.B., May 2004). It also paved the way for a worldwide telegraph phenomenon that ensued for the next decade. It represented the birth of commercially viable telecommunications in America and most importantly for us, the birth of insulators. Thank you, Sam.

1837 - First telegraph demonstration by Samuel F.B. Morse at the University of New York. This demonstration failed. Observed by Alfred Vail, he made improvements for Morse. Partnership formed among Morse, Leonard Gale (scientist used for title only), and Vail (who invented and who was never credited for, the code and instruments used by Morse). All (along with F.O.J. Smith and Amos Kendall) eventually became the Morse Patentees.

1838 - Morse goes to Washington DC to demonstrate his telegraph to President Van Buren and Congress. He asks Congress for \$30,000 to construct an experimental line between Washington DC and Baltimore, Maryland -- about 44 miles. He is denied funding.

1839 - Englishmen Cooke and Wheatstone develop a working needle telegraph claiming it as an 'improvement of the electric telegraph'. Both Morse and Cooke/ Wheatstone created improvements on the electric telegraph. The Morse followers claimed for him all originality and priority disregarding decades of earlier development by others and soon, Morse believed it true as well. This 'unseemly and excessive pretense' was carried forward by the descendants of Morse.

1843 - Morse continued to experiment and Congress finally passed a bill to appropriate \$30,000 to build the line between Washington and Baltimore, thanks to the assistance of Morse' newest partner, F.O.J. (Fog) Smith. Smith was a Representative from Maine, chair of the Congressional committee observing Morse's demonstration, and a bit of a scoundrel. President Tyler signs the bill. Ezra Cornell is retained by Smith to lay a lead-encased underground cable and an agreement with the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad is reached to use their right-of-way. By the end of 1843, half of the \$30,000 appropriation has been spent on laying this underground cable and it reaches from Baltimore to Relay, MD. Work is suspended when it is discovered that the wire insulation (lead sheathing) was faulty.

1844 - A new plan to string the wires between wooden poles suspended high above the ground is devised and construction begins that spring. A primary challenge is how to insulate the wires from the poles. Cornell devises a plan to sandwich the wires at each pole between two sheets of plate glass by wrapping the wire in cotton thread, saturating it with a solution of asphaltum, beeswax, rosin and linseed oil. This unit would then be inserted into a notch in the cross-arm. A piece of wood could then be nailed over this glass sandwich and another coat of the solution applied to help hold the "insulator" in place. This is the year of commercial success for the Morse Patentees. Completed on or about May 22, 1844, we are all familiar with the now historic message "What hath God wrought?" sent between Baltimore and Washington on May 24, 1844. Morse sent the message from Washington and Alfred Vail received and sent it back from Baltimore. Did you know that the composer of this message was the daughter of the then head of the U.S. Patent Office and her name was Annie G. Ellsworth?

1845 - Continuing struggles with insulation issues lead to the creation of the "glass bureau knob" style insulator (Pope, F.L., New York, NY. September 1871). This improved insulator was conceived by Cornell and would be used on the proposed New York to Philadelphia line. This line would be constructed under the auspices of the nation's first private telegraph company -- the Magnetic Telegraph Company. It would be granted incorporation by the Maryland legislature in 1845. This route from Philadelphia to New York had many obstacles, including how to cross the North River to New York City, and challenges slowed progress on construction. Confronting rivers usually meant unsuccessful attempts at underwater cables and the temporary use of messengers or carrier pigeons. Glass bureau knob insulators, of which only a couple are known to be in collector's hands, are considered the first pin-type insulator (CD 780).

1846 - Various glass block type insulators come into use. Widely used into the 1850's. The Little insulator is developed in England by George Little. This glass hat style is large and has a single or double wire groove ridge and an umbrella or saucer-like skirt. Proves very effective at getting water away from the wire. The Little design is similar to the CD 735 through CD 738 styles.

1847 - Ezra Cornell is credited with the adoption of the Little insulator in America. Used extensively in many design variations (CD 734-742.3). A former Cleveland, Ohio portrait artist, Jephtha Wade, began connecting Detroit and Jackson, Michigan with a telegraph line. This project eventually formed the Western Union Telegraph Company in 1856.

1849 - First use of the suspended hook insulator. Iron hooks shaped like ram's horns and set in glass, rubber or paraffin encased in a metal cylinder (typically). These units were attached to poles, cross-arms or wooden blocks. Wire was then suspended along its course hanging from the hooks. Prevalent and used extensively until about 1869. J.J. Speed invents the wood-covered glass insulator (McDougald, 1991).

1850 - William M. Swain (formerly editor of The Philadelphia Public Ledger) becomes president of the Magnetic Telegraph Company line between New York and Washington DC, designs what he calls '...the insulator of the future'. Swain designs what becomes referred to as the "egg" insulator (CD 701-701.8). He also calls it the '...double cone' (Pope, F.L., September, 1871). People claim it to be stronger and more durable and dependable than the umbrella style hats. Newsmen like Swain had great interest in the success of the telegraph and invested in them as well as became engaged in aspects of its progress, like his designing of the egg style insulator.

1855 - Amasa Stone of Philadelphia, PA, (this does not appear to be the same Amasa Stone of Cleveland who designed railroad bridges). He receives a patent on August 7 for a threaded pin cavity for

glass insulators (Patent No. 13,402), preceding Cauvet's patent by ten years. Stone dies before he is able to apply his invention. Stone's patent shows only two threads and is for use on a similarly threaded iron pin. The insulator would have required only a half or two-thirds turn and the result may have been only slightly better in service than a threadless application.

1860 - During the late 1850's and well into the early 1860's, now captain of industry, Jephtha Wade, adopts and modifies, designs, and produces the wood-covered Wade insulator first conceived by J.J. Speed in 1849. Ideal for prairie and wilderness applications because the glass insert is protected. Used extensively on lines from coast to coast. Smaller styles are used in Canada (CD 721-725). Smaller hat styles are developed for ease of transport into wilderness areas and may have incidentally improved insulation by their reduction in size (McDougald, 1991). These will continue to be produced into the mid-1870's (CD 734-735.3).

1861 - The Pacific Telegraph Act of 1860 called for the facilitation of communication between the east and west coasts of the United States of America. Hiram Sibley of the Western Union Telegraph Company won the contract. In 1861, Benjamin Franklin Ficklin joined Hiram Sibley in helping to form the Pacific Telegraph Company of Nebraska. At the same time, Jephtha Wade was asked by Hiram Sibley to consolidate smaller telegraph companies in California. While the Pacific Telegraph Company built west from Omaha, Nebraska, the Overland Telegraph Company of California was thus formed and built east from Carson City, Nevada. With their connection in Salt Lake City, Utah on October 24, 1861, the final link between the east and west coasts of the United States of America was made by telegraph. The First Transcontinental Telegraph led to the immediate demise of the eighteen-month-old Pony Express. The Pacific Telegraph Company and Overland Telegraph Company of California were eventually absorbed into the Western Union Telegraph Company (Casale, John, May 2004). The 731 was used on all of these lines as was the 735 Mulford & Biddle (McDougald, 1991).

1864 – The Western Union Telegraph Company with concern about Cyrus Field's failure to connect the U.S.A. with Europe via a telegraph cable under the Atlantic Ocean decided to try another path. Their alternative was to connect San Francisco with Moscow by building an overland line from near Vancouver, British Columbia, up through Russian America (Alaska), under the Bering Strait into Russia, then overland again to Moscow. Russia committed to do their part and this project became known as the Collins Overland Telegraph Expedition, but its official name was the Western Union Russian Extension Company. Most of the Collins Line went through uncharted wilderness. Due to the rough wilderness terrain that had to be endured during construction of the Collins Line, mostly 735's were used. Later, in 1867, the project was abandoned when Cyrus Field's Atlantic cable was finally successful. (Casale, John, May 2004)

1865 - This historical timeline ends in this pivotal year in history: the end of the Civil War has come, improved threads are invented, and M.L. Wood creates the "Compromise" style glass insulator. As reported by Franklin L. Pope, the General Superintendent of the U.S. Telegraph Company, Merritt L. Wood is credited with the design of what is now known as the CD 731. It is a cross between two popular designs -- the egg and the umbrella (or hat) styles (Pope, F.L., September 1871). The 731 may have come sometime just after the concave skirt egg CD 701.8, also called the "National Road Egg", since it has been found only along the route (now U.S. Route 40) of that original wagon road that stretched east and west across Maryland, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois (McDougald, 1991). (Timeline primary source: Calvert, J.B., May 2004)

Also in 1865, Louis A. Cauvet forever changes the future of pin-type insulator design with the invention of the threaded pinhole. Cauvet's patent is for a fully threaded pinhole requiring the insulator to be turned several times to be secured on a threaded pin. It is likely Cauvet was aware of Stone's 1855 patent and made improvements upon it allowing for a new patent. We may never know for sure if he was aware of Stone's invention or why it took ten years even if he was. Cauvet's patent date shows up on several threaded and at least two threadless (728.4 and 731) insulator styles with the date July 25, 1865.

An interesting crossover appears about this time: the CD 731 and the threaded version, CD 131. One speculates that re-worked threadless molds could have easily become what we now call CD 131. Molds with no embossing could have been engraved with the Brookfield and sometimes along with the scarcer L.G. Tillotson name added and then a threaded plunger may have been used to update the insulator---all

done to extend mold life and reduce production costs. At least one known 131 style is unembossed and MLOD. It also looks identical to unembossed MLOD 731's, yet not an exact match to any embossed 131's I've seen. One final note on this crossover period, Pope reports that the CD 127 was designed and used around the 1870-71 period by Western Union to replace the 731 style (Pope, F.L., September 1871).

Threadless production continued into the mid-1870's probably due to the expense of production changeovers. I can only guess that threadless insulators remained in service until it was necessary to replace them even well into the production of threaded glass. At that time, they were replaced with the newer threaded pins and glass. There is at least one report that a 731 was found on a threaded pin on a Georgia railroad still in service and within the last twenty years or so.

A Journey

Imagine that the date is now 1866 and you're going on a walk along the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) in southeastern Wyoming. It's a clear, dry, and almost hot June afternoon with a slight breeze occasionally whipping up a tiny whirlwind near the railroad bed. Blooming spring flowers in purple and yellow sparsely dot the landscape. The smell of sagebrush is wafting in the breeze. Only three hundred yards from the tracks, coming out of a rolling swale, are a dozen Pronghorn antelope occasionally looking up sharply and rotating their large ears toward you. You freeze, and they continue to graze, flicking deer flies off their ears and tails satisfied that you're not a threat. Leading your horse alongside the track, you begin your slow walk again looking up at the azure, cloudless sky.

While looking up, you notice piercing rays from the bright sun are shining through a glass object on one of the telegraph poles on the north side of the right-of-way. It has a wire attached to it. You take out your spyglass and have a look, careful not to catch the rays directly. It's kind of a small, hat-shaped glass object. The color appears to be a light, powdery blue. You stretch your spyglass and zoom in a little adjusting the focus. There's writing on the side of the glass. Looks like "M-u-l-f-o-r-d & B-i-d-d-l-e". You walk a little to your right. There's something else written on the back. Looks like "U-P-R-R". Not sure about Mulford & Biddle, but UPRR must stand for Union Pacific Railroad, you think. Hmm...you wonder if Mulford & Biddle are guys who own the railroad or maybe the telegraph company. You glance across the tracks just as a Western lizard scurries for cover in a crevice in one of the ties. There are poles on the south side of the track, too. You see another glass object, this time glowing with the sun behind you now. The color is a little more greenish than the other one, like the bottle your daddy's liver medicine comes in. The shape is also different. It looks larger, has a bit of an angled top, sort of flat on top, with a groove around the middle -- similar to the other one -- and kind of a skirt with sides that curve in below that groove. You raise the spyglass. No writing on this one. Wait. There is something as you walk around to the side. Looks like a different kind of lettering. Not really a script, but certainly not like the one on the other side of the tracks. Looks like "S.-M-c-K-e-e-&-Co". You don't know what that means either. Maybe a man's name, or the name of some company. You amble on down toward the next pole to see what's on that one. As you walk, you wonder what these things are for. Maybe they insulate the telegraph wire for some reason. Wonder if they call them insulators? Probably not. Must be connectors or some other name. You get to the next pole and find another glass object very similar to the last one. Same shape. Color is different. Looks like a dark green color. The spyglass reveals no lettering at all on this one. Wonder why? Oh well, you pick up a good size rock and look intently at this tempting glass target perched way up there on the side of the pole. Seems to be asking you --- taunting you --- to try and hit it. But, for some reason, after staring at the beautiful glass glistening in the hot sun, you drop the rock and move on. You've got a stray steer out here somewhere on the prairie and your horse is getting thirsty.

Back to the Present

The above stroll along the UPRR may have been what you could have encountered on many lines throughout the West for several years just after the Civil War. Millions of 731's (and 735's) were in use all over the western states. The 731 was used throughout the central and eastern states as well. The McKee's were used extensively on the UPRR and Transcontinental lines (along with the unembossed 731's). A mint McKee was even recently found in Indiana still lying on top of the ground next to a railroad bed. The arc embossed Tillotsons were heavily used in the northeastern states and on up into Canada. A number of Tillotsons have been found in Maine and down the east coast. The beautiful sapphire blue Tillotson 731 has turned up on at least two occasions on the east coast, one fairly recently. The northeast was also the site of discovery of a mustard-olive-amber unembossed 731 about seven years ago. I wish I had one of either of these in my display to show you...

Much of what is known or assumed about 731's is speculation, though some researchers who collect threadless have connected some of the dots. For example, long a mystery, it is now fairly well established that the 731 with the "M" or "W" on the dome top is most likely an "M" referencing "Modes" and the maker was probably Beaver Falls Glass Company in Beaver Falls, PA. William Modes was their founder. The glass quality is very similar to that found in other Beaver Falls products (especially the CD 132.2 Paisley's) and the insulator has a fuller dome and is bulkier in general than other 731's. There are some unembossed 731's with these same glass qualities and these, too, are considered Beaver Falls products. They also have an unmistakable texture to the glass surface.

Embossed 731's discovered to date include Brookfield, Tillotson, S.McKee & Co., and the "M" dome embossed style. Who knows what may turn up in the future as we treasure hunters keep looking. Maybe that's why we've seen some suspect 731's enter the hobby over the years.

Bogus? (or, Compromise vs. Compromised)

The 731 concave skirt signal--probably first called the "Compromise" style by Franklin L. Pope in 1871--must have been a fairly durable design just as M. L. Wood had predicted in 1865. They were produced in huge quantities for many years. The market was booming by 1865 with over 83,000 miles of telegraph lines around the country. That's three and a third times around the Earth at the equator, which is a lot of wire and insulators! Today, there are many 731's in collections that look brand new. A couple in my display look like they came right out of the barrel of sawdust. It's fun to speculate how so many survived in such good condition, but part of the reason has to be their durability. It may also be why the most recent suspected bogus 731's, which always seem to look new, have easily entered the hobby.

Maybe the commonality was a factor that has led some with minimal or no scruples to reproduce the 731. It certainly was not the value since current prices on aquas and blues on unembossed styles range in the \$150-\$200 (VNM) category. Counterfeiters never make ones, fives, or tens. You would think somebody making fake threadless would focus more on, say, CD 788 slashtops or CD 790 teapots. Nevertheless, we have seen questionable 731's enter the hobby periodically. A large group of different threadless CD's (including 731's) and some known CD's and some not, surfaced in Florida several years ago. All were fairly good copies, but in unusual colors and therefore raising immediate red flags among collectors. As with many reproductions, the glass color and quality tended to give away their recent manufacture, as did some CD's like 719... I would love to hear different theories on why anyone would reproduce 731's. The easy answer is a quick buck, but what if market prices overall would somehow be affected when these get into the market? Let me know your thoughts on this: threadless@cinci.rr.com

More recently, a 731 with a narrow dome and the typical Tillotson embossed in an arc on the crown entered the hobby. Only it's not typical. Both "O's" in Tillotson are noticeably smaller than the other letters. And the glass, usually black or very dark cobalt and other dark colors, looks like it was poured yesterday. Others of these now called "pointy (or "narrow") domes" are bubble-infused olive green like the one in my display. Some have an "art glass" quality about them that is easy to spot if you've handled enough old glass. I'm not sure of the official NIA stance on these, but I'll personally go on record officially right here -- my humble opinion is that these are recent reproductions. No evidence, of course, other than circumstantial, so that's just my opinion.

Then, most recently, some 731's have entered the hobby that are raising real concern. They are made so well that long-time threadless collectors and general collectors who have handled thousands of glass insulators have difficulty telling the difference. I am not going into why this is being done (or even if it is being done) anymore than I already have other than to say that the NIA's unofficial stance on these suspected bogus 731's is 'inconclusive'. I can't say that I blame them.

After all, there is no proof that these pieces are bogus. Nobody has been caught in their garage sticking a threadless plunger into molten glass in a 731 mold or having boxes and boxes of these on hand. But compare them side-by-side with known authentic 731's and you will see a difference -- in shape and glass quality. I've done this in pictures for you at the end of this paper.

These recent 731's do have some characteristics that are consistent and different from all of the known authentic 731's. These include a very subtle curvature of the upper and lower wire groove ridges. Also, the base of the wire groove itself has about a quarter-inch flat spot rather than a smooth,

concave shape (or a V-cut shape like the McKee styles). Other than these differences, the suspect 731's are very close to the embossed 731 Tillotson mold style, easily fooling even some of the most seasoned threadless collectors. But, guess what, I've seen a lot of 731's the past several years and I've yet to see an unembossed 731 that is a perfect match to the known authentic embossed Tillotson. If you have one, I would love to see it.

Glass quality, color, even some black and/or white flecks in the glass and light surface cracks --- especially inside the skirt --- give these suspect 731's even more attributes to make it difficult to determine their authenticity. I hope this paper and my display help you better understand the differences.

Stop by my sales table and we can discuss 731's further. I am always looking for new information and styles I haven't seen. Feel free to bring your 731's for comparison. Not interested in 731's? Stop by and chat about insulators in general!



The CD 731 pictured left is the standard Tillotson with Tillotson arc embossed on the dome. It is MLOD and has the classic shape associated with the authentic CD 731 Tillotson. All letters are the same size.



The CD 731 here is what has been referred to in the hobby as a "pointy" or "narrow" dome. Note the shape of the dome compared to the authentic and suspect 731's pictured. Colors of these are typically dark and usually full of character (swirls, bubbles, etc.) like this one. Also, they have the arc embossed "Tillotson" on the dome, but the two O's in Tillotson are not the same size as the other letters---they are smaller. Some of these have surfaced as unembossed, but on close inspection they show distinct signs of alteration, such as grinding and buffing. The shape of the wire groove ridges is identical to those of the other suspect 731 on this page.



The CD 731 above is the shape that has recently appeared and one that I consider suspect. No embossing. MLOD. Note the rounded upper and lower wire ridges and the flat area at the base of the wire groove. It should be concave like the Tillotson above. NOT a pointy dome.

A final note on the suspect 731's like the lighter green one on the previous page---they have rarely appeared with damage of any kind. I think they will eventually, but for now, just like those in my display, they are typically mint. Pretty rare for an insulator that's supposedly been around for over 150 years. Some people will say maybe they were found still packed and unused---just like the story with the pointy domes. Maybe. But packed how long ago? Look closely before you buy.

Below I have listed the characteristics of authentic 731's in my collection. This list includes the different mold styles and sizes that I have. There are more out there for sure. I would like to hear from you if you have any that are radically different than what I've listed. Those in my collection have a variety of colors and glass impurities which I am not listing since these wonderful characteristics make great collector interest, but have little to do with real substance in manufacturing differences. What I have noticed is that sizes do not vary widely in the 731 since producers stayed pretty close to spec. Slumping of the glass can affect size and shape to some extent so I've allowed for this when I measured the pieces.

Mold Characteristics of My 731's

Mold Style

1. **Button Mold**---has a raised area on top about one inch in diameter. The mold lines terminate on both sides of this area indicating a three piece mold. Most common style in the unembossed 731's. Some have vertical lines texturing the dome and skirt to varying degrees, but this is not by design. Seems to be a mold defect or trait.
2. **MLOD**---the mold line over dome style. Two piece mold. Found in all embossed Tillotson styles and some unembossed styles. Less common than Button Mold style.
3. **Dome Circle**---related to Button Mold, but just a circle and not raised at all. Unembossed.
4. **Flat Dome**---has a very flat dome top. MLOD. Unembossed. Resembles, but doesn't match, CD 131 embossed pieces.

Mold Shape

1. **Tillotson**---arc embossed across the dome. All letters identical in size. Strong mold seam, especially in wire groove. Concave at bottom of wire groove. Taller dome only somewhat more narrow toward top than most other styles. Wire ridges are not perfectly rounded, but have the hint of an edge to them. I've never seen an unembossed 731 that matches this shape exactly. Nice variety of colors. MLOD. Most likely a Brookfield product.
2. **S. McKee & Co.**---embossed straight across mid-skirt. Some styles have larger and/or a bit more script-like lettering. Some have different period locations, some have no periods. Only three colors observed: Shades of "McKee" blue, aqua, and green (teal) aqua. Shape is distinctly different than Tillotsons. Shorter, squattier, larger wire groove that has a "V" shape. Wire ridges are sharper with more distinct edges. Although slumping can affect size and wire groove shape, embossed styles seem very consistent while unembossed styles vary somewhat. Both Button and Circle molds noted. Probably another Brookfield product.
3. **Stoddard**---unembossed style usually in dark amber or dark olive colors. Both MLOD and Circle Mold styles seen. Thinner wire ridges and more narrow wire groove than even the Tillotson style. Somewhat flatter dome, but not a Flat Dome. Most likely a product of the New Granite Glass Works, Stoddard, NH, 1861-1871.

4. **Modes**---a Beaver Falls Glassworks product. Bulkier and heavier style with a fuller dome shape. Has a circle on the dome top with a serif style letter "M" embossed. Recently determined to stand for Modes after William Modes, president of Beaver Falls Glassworks operating from 1869 to 1879. Glass quality is very similar to other Beaver Falls products such as CD 132.2 Paisley styles. Most noticeable is a somewhat orange peel texture to the glass surface. Greens, blues, aquas.

Sizes

1. **Tallest**---Tillotson at 4 inches.
2. **Shortest**---Unembossed Button Mold at 3 5/8 inches.
3. **Widest**---Beaver Falls Glassworks "M" at 3 inches across base.
4. **Narrowest**---several unembossed styles---about half at 2 7/8 inches and half at 2 5/8 inches. NOTE: all styles in my collection have the standard 1" pinhole.

Glass Houses That Made Insulators

David Whitten developed a list online of glass factories that produced insulators. Below I've used his work to create a list of those factories operating during the dates when 731's were manufactured. **This does not mean that these houses actually produced 731s**, but the dates, the geography, the glass made by these factories, and the fact that many produced threadless insulators, all point to the possibility. As always, please let me know of any updates needed to this information. Remember, some of these companies could have changed names/locations in later years. For more information on some of these glass houses, see McDougald's two-volume set and Klingensmith's opening article on threadless in volume one.

I'm only considering possible 731 production years. Since the 731 was first conceived by M.L.Wood as a re-design of the standard egg insulator of the period in 1865, and assuming it was put into production that same year (Cauvet's patent year for threads), my guess is that 731's were produced primarily from 1865-1872 or so and possibly into 1875. I would think that to have so many produced, several glass houses must have been making them:

1. Beaver Falls Glassworks, Beaver Falls, PA 1869-c.1879
2. Boston & Sandwich Glass Co., Cambridge, MA 1825-1888
3. Brookfield, Brooklyn, NY 1864-1906
4. Hemingray, Covington, KY 1852-1890
5. Kearns & Co., Zanesville, OH 1864-1886
6. Louisville Glass Works, Louisville, KY 1855-1873
7. Lancaster Glass Works, Lancaster, NY 1849-c.1908
8. Massachusetts Glass Works (precursor to Boston Bottle Works), Boston, MA 1867-1871
9. Mt. Pleasant Glass Works, Mt. Pleasant, NY 1844-c.1870
10. New England Glass Co., Cambridge, MA 1818-1888 (made insulators 1846-1850 for Ezra Cornell)
11. New Granite Glass Works, Stoddard, NH 1861-1871
12. Pacific Glass Works, San Francisco, CA 1862-1876 (possible maker of EC&M's)
13. E. Wormser & Co., Pittsburgh, PA 1854-1875 (source of unembossed CD 120's & 133.4 bullets--- could have produced unembossed 731's)
14. S.McKee & Co., Pittsburgh, PA c.1865-1875 for 731's (see Acknowledgments for source)

Acknowledgments

Research on 731's is a difficult challenge since few, if any, records are available. The manufacturer of many remains a mystery in terms of who produced them and exactly when. Patent records seem non-existent on most as well. Hence, my focus on the history leading up to their development and listing characteristics only on those in my collection. I am constantly searching for any information on 731's and, of course, for any 731's. If you have either, feel free to contact me. I'm in the Crown Jewels Directory, an NIA member, and a member of ICON.

I would like to thank some people whose writings and conversations were very helpful in compiling this "Incomplete History and Timeline of the Electric Telegraph and the CD 731". The McDougald's *Insulators: A History of North American Glass Pintype Insulators -- Volume 1 (1991)* was, as always, a very useful resource. That volume begins with an introduction titled "Glass Insulators -- the Beginnings" by Ray Klingensmith and this is a terrific historical resource. The 2007 Price Guide was also a helpful resource. Like the McDougalds, Ray's contributions to this hobby are enormous, especially his knowledge of threadless. His auction catalogues were a very good resource as well. Information on glass houses that made insulators came from David Whitten's online "Glass Factories That Made Insulators". He states that some of the information may not be fully accurate, but it gives good basic info on manufacturers. I list only those that may have produced 731's. Whitten's website: www.myinsulators.com/glass-factories

Also helpful and insightful were the many conversations about 731's and the opportunity to trade for or purchase them for the display. Just a few of those always willing to share their knowledge include Doug MacGillvary, Gary Kline, Ray Klingensmith, John McDougald, Graham Barnes, Paul Greaves, Keith Roloson, Ross Baird, Doug Williams, Howard Banks, Jim Peach, Jim White, and Tom Katonak. I would also like to thank those collectors who have found themselves owning what they thought to be an authentic 731 that turned out to be suspect--and allowing me to purchase it for my educational display, sometimes at a loss for them. They shall remain anonymous.

A special thanks to Glenn Drummond for some editorial help on the 2007 paper and to Paul Greaves for this Revision. Not only have I known some of these guys off and on for 30-plus years, they continue to help and support my efforts in my hobby specialty by keeping their eyes open for both suspect and authentic 731's and that is much appreciated.

Some articles in *Crown Jewels* were also quite helpful (found at: www.cjow.com in the Archives)
Klingensmith, Ray. *Crown Jewels of the Wire, Threadless Corner*. February 1980.
Green, Mike. *Crown Jewels of the Wire, The Iron Horse and the Talking Wire*. April 2003.

Most online sources were too numerous to mention in their entirety, but most helpful and a source I used so much throughout this paper that citing it each time would have made the paper too long was this: J. B. Calvert, *The Electromagnetic Telegraph*, April 7, 2000 (revised May 2004). This paper is in 27 sections with section 11 dedicated to telegraph insulators. It's a great and detailed history of not only the Morse telegraph, but the House telegraph, the Bain and Vail alphabets, and an extensive bibliography spanning 1842-1999:
<<http://www.du.edu/~jcalvert/tel/morse/morse.htm#C>>

The online source at: <<http://www.tscnet.com>> was very informative on John Baptista Porta and his *Natural Magick*.

Other online sources:

www.telegraph-history.org (about Frank L. Pope and the Western Union Telegraph Co. by John Casale of Troy, NY)
www.cjow.com (archives)
www.reference.insulators.info/publications (The Insulator Gazette)
www.profilesintime.blogspot.com/2007/h-sellers-mckee.html (history of McKee brothers and their glass houses)

F.L. Pope. *The Telegrapher*, Notes on the Glass Insulator. (New York, NY) September 30, 1871.

ICON and especially the NIA websites were extremely helpful due to their educational content and ease of access:
www.ICON@insulators.info
www.nia.org

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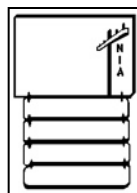
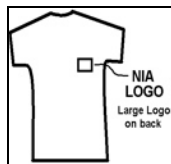
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