

Old Familiar Strains

A newsletter for Collectors of Radio Strain Insulators and related items
Volume 3 No. 1 February 1996

Kokomo Company Makes Diamonds!



KOKOMO, IN -- Weighing in at 354 carats, this beautiful diamond was made from common silica sands by D. C. Jenkins Glass Company of Kokomo, Indiana . Story on Page 4

2016 PDF edition

Editorial

Welcome to the third year of Old Familiar Strains. I hope that you had great holidays.

At the suggestion of **George Freeman**, the mailing label now shows your expiration date and the publisher's notes now specify the suggested \$10.00 annual donation. Thank you, George.

If the mailing label on your envelope says "1295," I had not received a donation from you for 1996 when I put this (your last) newsletter in the mail. If you threw the envelope away last week, what can I say? Call me and I'll check my records.

Please review the information on both your mailing label and in the pull-out roster for 1996 (pages 7 & 8) for accuracy and completeness.

This issue is thanks, in part, to the efforts of Dick Roller, a long-time historian of glass manufacturers. Dick contributed key materials for this month's lead article on D. C. Jenkins. Thank you again, Dick.

Yes, I was serious when I mentioned the possibility of "SWAP MEET WEST" in the last issue. I am still hoping to put a road trip to Long Beach together for the 1996 NIA National Show July 19th - 21st. If your Summer may include Long Beach, please let me know so that we can formulate our plans.

Finally, I am looking forward to resuming the "Cataloging Your Collection" series in the next issue with a discussion of an insulator taxonomy. I still need information on B.G. Co. (Brilliant Glass). It's not too late to mail off that photograph, catalog copy, or....

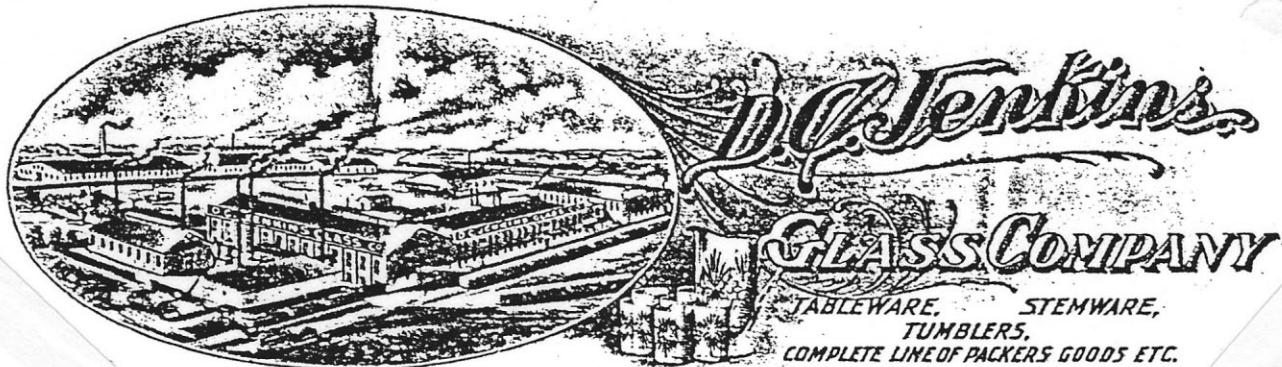
If you don't already subscribe to Crown Jewels of the Wire you might be pleasantly surprised. The January issue includes a copy of a Pyrex price sheet with strain prices from 1955. Also featured are photos from the 1995 NIA Central Show. Lois Blair's antenna insulator display is pictured along with pictures of displays by **Steve Blair, Rick Soller, Bob Stahr, and Alan Stastny**. Well done, everyone.

There is also an article that we can all appreciate. An old glass pin insulator (that is of little use to anyone) can be converted into a great strain insulator by breaking hole in the top with a screwdriver! News you can use! Yeah, I know some joker is going to send me an article about converting a cobalt glass strain into a pin insulator by breaking off one end and epoxying on a lag screw. Don't you dare.

D. C. JENKINS, PRESIDENT.

ADDISON JENKINS, SEC'Y. AND TREAS.

ALL CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS CONTINGENT UPON STRIKES, ACCIDENTS OR OTHER CAUSES BEYOND OUR CONTROL.
PRICES NOT GUARANTEED



D.C. Jenkins Antennae Insulators by Dan Howard

Yes, we finally know who made those beautiful diamond insulators.

Early one Saturday nine years ago, I found my first diamond insulator at an antique show here in Portland. There were three of them on the table at \$3.00 each. I bought only one in order to save money for the other goodies that were surely waiting just around the corner. On my return, I discovered that someone else bought the rest. Live and learn.

In October, 1995, in that same exhibit hall, I found out who made my diamond-shaped cutie. Mrs. Heem, a local antique dealer had a Sensory glass antenna insulator on her table but the tag said "Jenkins per Weatherman pg. 216." Mrs. Heem said that "Weatherman" referred to a depression glass book that included ads for antenna insulators. Wow! She was kind enough to bring the book for me the next day. Although the Sensory insulator did not match the pictures in the ad, across the page, in living black-and-white, was the diamond-shaped Jenkins No. 4.

Jenkins Part I: D.C. Jenkins Glass Company, Kokomo, IN

D.C. Jenkins, became the president of Kokomo Glass Manufacturing Company of Kokomo, IN in 1901 (1:208). But, in June, 1905, fire destroyed the Kokomo Glass factory (2).

Seven months later, on February 1, 1906, the D.C. Jenkins Glass Company was organized with D.C. Jenkins as president. Jenkins rebuilt the Kokomo factory and resumed glass production in June, 1906 (2).

By 1913, a second glass factory was started about 25 miles away in Arcadia, IN (1:208). D.C. Jenkins passed away in the early 1930's (1:208) but his company continued to make glass until at least the mid-30's under the direction of Howard C. Jenkins, a former sales manager (2).

In the 1920's and early 1930's, Addison Jenkins, the secretary/treasurer of the company, and others received patents for glass ashtrays, jars, and other items which were assigned to the company. As you can see from the cover photo, the Jenkins No. 4 insulator is embossed "Pat. Pend.". I haven't found where the design was actually granted patent protection, though.

Jenkins catalogs show everything from dinnerware to chicken feeders, lantern mantels and, of course, radio antenna insulators. The inclusion of mantels and insulators indicates that the company had experience manufacturing glassware that could withstand the rigors of heat, weather, and rough handling. Weatherman says that Jenkins dinnerware was heavier than other glass from the period and that its durability made it popular with hotels and soda fountains (1:208).

By combining the information from D.C. Jenkins Glass Company "Circular Number 1" (see back cover) and the circa 1930 catalog page from Weatherman's book (below), I have assembled the following "check list" of Jenkins insulators.

Catalog Description

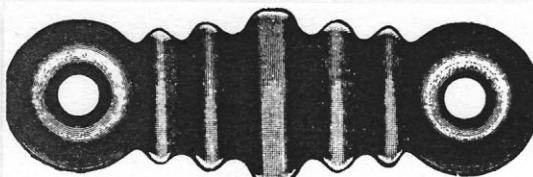
1	3 1/2" long 1 1/8" max dia	5	5 3/8" long 1 1/2" max dia
2	3 3/8" long 1 3/8" max dia	8	3" long 1 1/8" max dia
3	4 1/4" long 1 1/2" max dia	9	3 3/8" long 1 1/8" max dia
4	3 3/8" long 1 1/8" max dia		

Was there a 6 or 7? I would love to find out.

ANTENNAE INSULATORS

Glass is acknowledged to be the best insulating material for Radio. It is impervious to moisture. Its smooth surface prevents collection of dust and has great dielectric strength.

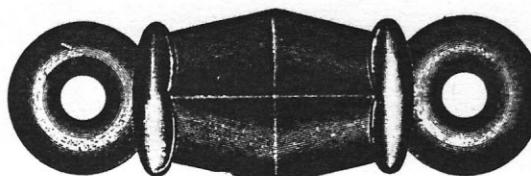
This line has been designed to give abundant mechanical strength and highest insulating efficiency under all conditions.



No. 1—Insulator
No. 3—Insulator
No. 9—Insulator

Illustration full size No. 1

3 1/2 x 1 1/8 inches
4 1/4 x 1 1/2 inches
3 3/8 x 1 3/8 inches



No. 4—Insulator
Illustration full size

3 3/8 x 1 1/8 inches

Jenkins Part II: A.G. Kaufmann Co Inc, New York, NY

Soon after learning of D.C. Jenkins, I made a very interesting connection. Last Summer, Jim Overstreet sold me an "A.G.K." insulator that was embossed "D.C.J." on the reverse side. I checked it and found that it was the same size as the Jenkins No. 3 in the catalog. Other A.G.K. insulators in my collection, are embossed "No. 2" and "No. 8" like the Jenkins catalog numbers. After measuring the insulators and comparing them to the cataloged dimensions, I began to see a pattern. Simple coincidence? I don't think so.

Dick Mackiewicz has some new-in-the-box A.G.K. No. 8 insulators in his collection. According to his Insulator Notebook, the boxes show that A.G.K. is A.G. Kaufmann Company Inc. from New York, NY.

Dick Roller doesn't recall seeing Kaufmann's name among glass manufacturers that he has researched. It seems reasonable to assume that Kaufmann was a jobber and that at least some A.G.K. insulators were made by D.C. Jenkins.

Jenkins Part III: Findings to Date

Thus far, I have compiled the following list of A.G.K. / D.C.J. insulators:

<u>Embossings</u>	<u>Dimensions</u>	<u>Source</u>
A.G.K.	3 9/16" X 1 1/8" (No. 1?)	(1)
A.G.K. No 2	3 3/4" X 1 5/16"	(1)
A.G.K. D.C.J.	4 1/2" X 1 1/2" (No. 3?)	(2)
A.G.K. D.C.J.	4 1/2" X 1 3/8" (No. 3?)	(3)
A.G.K.	4 5/8" X 1 7/16" (No. 3?)	(1)
A.G.K. D.C.J.	4 5/8" X 1 7/16" (No. 3?)	(1)
PAT. PEND.	3 9/16" X 1 1/8" (No. 4?)	(1,2,3)
A.G.K. No 5	5 1/4" X 1 1/2"	(3)
A G K NO 5	5 1/4" X 1 3/4"	(3)
A.G.K. No 8	3 1/4" X 1 1/8"	(2)
A.G.K. No 8	3 3/8" X ?	(3)
A.G.K. No 8	3 1/2" X 1 5/16"	(1)

(1): Dan Howard Collection

(2): Dick Mackiewicz Collection

(3): Jim Singleton Collection

(continued on page 9)

Jenkins, continued from page 6

The variations in dimensions and the embossing differences between Jim Singleton's two No. 5's would support our previous assumption of multi-sourcing.

All of the specimens that Jim and I have examined are clear glass. We both have similar insulators in "sun-colored amethyst" (SCA) but they are unmarked.

Weatherman says that Jenkins made at least some green and golden-iridescent glass (1:208). We don't know if they made colored insulators, however. If your collections holds examples of the "missing" numbers or if you have seen an example of a colored glass D.C.J. or A.G.K. insulator, please let me know.

End Notes

- 1) Hazel Marie Weatherman, Colorful Glassware of the Depression Era, Vol. 2, (Springfield, MO: Weatherman Glassbooks, 1974).
- 2) Dick Roller, Indiana Glass Factory Notes, (Paris, IL: Acorn Press, 1995).

Photo Credits

Front cover photo: from the Bob Dennison collection

Page 4, letterhead: courtesy of Dick Roller

Page 5: courtesy of Hazel Marie Weatherman (by permission)

Page 9, letterhead: courtesy of Dick Roller

Back cover: courtesy of Dick Roller

Sources

Mackiewicz, Dick. "Insulator Notebook," 1994 (unpublished).

Roller, Dick. Indiana Glass Factory Notes. Paris, IL: Acorn Press, 1995.

Singleton, Jim. Letter of Jan. 2, 1995.

Weatherman, Hazel Marie. Colorful Glassware of the Depression Era, Vol. 2. Springfield, MO: Weatherman Glassbooks, 1974.

D.C. JENKINS, PRESIDENT

HOWARD C. JENKINS, SALES MGR.

ADDISON JENKINS, SECY & TREAS.



Charles F. Jacobs W2EM
by Dan Howard

Charles F. Jacobs of New York, was a man with a better idea. Last February in Old Familiar Strains we touched on the different types of antenna insulators. Spreader insulators are those which are used to keep parallel feed line wires evenly spaced and to keep them rigid. Page 8 of the February, 1995, issue shows three common styles of feed line spreaders.

Companies such as Birnbach, E F Johnson, and National made feed line spreaders during the 1930's; coaxial cable was in its infancy at the time and open wire feed lines were very popular. The larger manufacturers typically produced several stock sizes (2", 4", 6", 7") for different applications. Mr. Jacobs apparently figured that one adjustable insulator which could be used in most applications would be even better.

By following along with the copies of Jacobs's patent and ads on pages 11 and 12 you will see the evolution of his product:

- 1) The earliest version, ca 1931, was made of unspecified materials and sold for \$8.00 per dozen (42¢ each) plus shipping. Apparently, this was the only version for which a patent was issued.
- 2) Jacobs's 1935 ad showed a new 6" porcelain spreader that appears to be simpler than the old version but about the same price.
- 3) About a year later, Jacobs went to a glass rod version that appears to be the best of all. The insulator seems to be infinitely adjustable over a range of 1" to 9". By 1938, Jacobs was selling this unit for only 15¢ each.

Although adjustable insulators would be great for tinkerers, they do have drawbacks. No doubt they weigh more than other types. There is also the question of just how often did you really want to adjust your feed line spacing. And did the insulators ever vibrate loose and adjust your spacing all on their own?

I have never seen a Jacobs spreader, outside of these ads. I suspect that they were not big sellers. By comparison, E F Johnson's steatite spreaders which were selling for just 15-20¢ each during this period are quite common today.

Sources:

Figure 1: United States Patent Gazette, Vol. 440 No. 1, Mar 6, 1934, pp. 223-224.

Figure 2: QST Vol. XVI No. 2, Feb, 1932, pg. 89 (by permission).

Figure 3: QST Vol. XIX No. 3, Mar, 1935, pg. 102 (by permission).

Figure 4: QST Vol. XX NO. 7, July, 1936, pg. 75 (by permission).

1,950,179

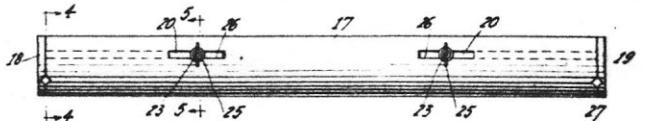
ELECTRICAL SEPARATOR

CHARLES F. JACOBS

Application August 12, 1931, Serial No. 556,479

4 Claims. (Cl. 173—314)

1. An electrical separator comprising a bar of insulating material having wire receiving grooves in opposite ends thereof, wire clamping heads disposed in abutting relation against the opposite ends of said bar and having recessed wire receiving grooves therein, rods slidable in bores in said bar and supporting said heads and adjustable clamping screws engageable with said rods to ad-



just the position of said heads with respect to the ends of the bar, said clamping screws being adjustable along the length of the bar.

Figure 1: Jacobs Patent 1,950,179 3/6/34

JACOBS SEPARATOR

Patents Pending



For the efficient and rapid construction of 2 wire R.F. feed lines used in conjunction with current and voltage fed Hertz antenna systems.

Price \$8.00 per dozen, F.O.B. New York, N. Y.

CHARLES F. JACOBS (W-2EM)
270 Lafayette Street **New York, N. Y.**

Figure 2: February 1932

JACOBS ADJUSTABLE SEPARATOR



U. S. Patent No. 1,950,179 — March 6, 1934. Others Pending.
Made of porcelain they provide the means whereby 2 wire R. F. feedlines of any separation from 1" up to and including 6" (used in conjunction with Hertz antenna systems) may be rapidly and efficiently constructed. \$2.50 for a set of 6.

CHARLES F. JACOBS (W2EM), 270 Lafayette St., New York, N. Y.

Figure 3: March 1935

**JACOBS ADJUSTABLE SEPARATOR
(Improved)**



U. S. Patent 1,950,170 — March 6, 1934 — others pending
Using this improved glass Separator 2 wire R.F. feedlines of any separation from 1" up to and including 9" (used in conjunction with Hertz Antenna Systems) may be rapidly and efficiently constructed. \$1.80 per dozen.

**CHARLES F. JACOBS (W2EM)
270 Lafayette St., New York, N. Y.**

Figure 4: July 1938

Readers Write

Steve Blair writes: Lois and I are pretty big into strains. Lois gets credit for most of it. She started 20 years ago looking through every junk box at every flea market she could find. (11/95)

Jim McCracken writes: I enjoy [OFS] very much, the colored pictures and views of other collections added to my knowledge of the hobby. Also enjoy the old ads and tech. stuf. In short, keep up a good work. You're doing a great job! (1/96)

Tag! You're it! by Dan Howard

It's fun to see how Crown Jewels and Old Familiar Strains can, and do, complement one another's efforts. The Old Familiar Strains December cover story on shell insulators was supplemented nicely by an ad showing French shell insulators in Bob Stahr's December Crown Jewels column. The insulators shown in the ad on page 8 of the issue appear to be slightly more rectangular than the English ones shown on our cover. They are obviously "family" however.

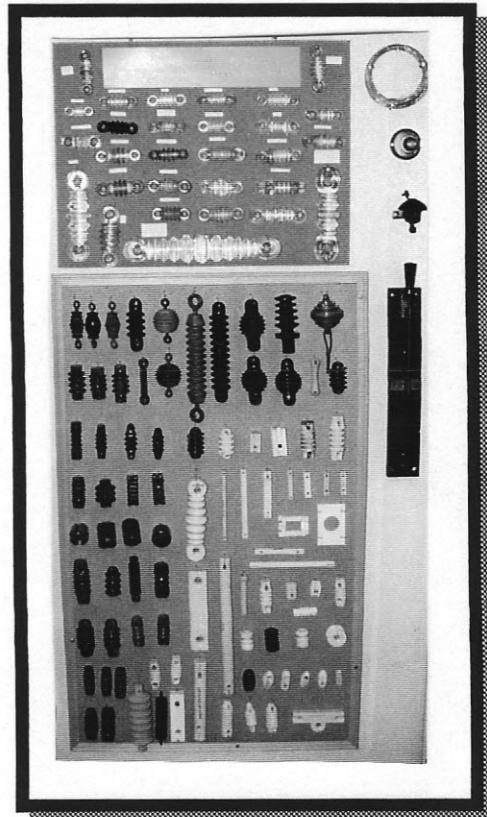
John Lewis shared the story of his Pyrex insulator find with Crown Jewels readers in the letters section of the December issue. According to John, the insulators are new-old-stock units which were destined for use at WGY in Scotia, New York. [For the complete story, see the December 1995 Crown Jewels pg. 3] John has a few of the units for sale (see below). I believe that these insulators may be the 7 1/4" "amateur transmitting" type insulators pictured on pg. 9 of the April, 1995 OFS.

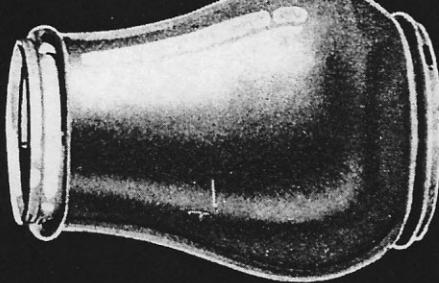
Classified Ads

For Sale: 7" clear Pyrex radio strain insulators (mint) in VVN Mint boxes \$40.00 postage paid. Some are in NMint boxes at \$35.00 post paid. Limited supply, so one to a customer, please. John C. Lewis (904) 968-5212 after 6 p.m. CDT.

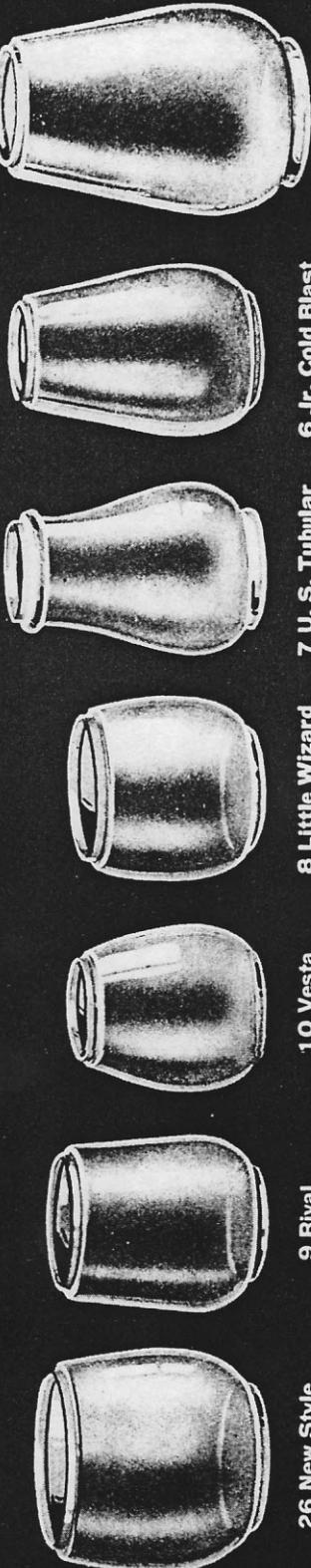
For Trade: I have a bunch of E F Johnson insulators ranging from 2" spreaders up to 12" strains and everything in between. If you have Johnson insulators and want to do some trading, please write or give me a call. Dan Howard

On the wall at Bob Dennison's house. This photo shows Bob's display of glass and porcelain insulators. In the past year, we have been privileged to include several pictures from his nice collection (including this month's cover!). Thanks, Bob!
(Photo courtesy of Bob Dennison)





LANTERN GLOBES



2 Street Globe
3 Street Globe

26 New Style

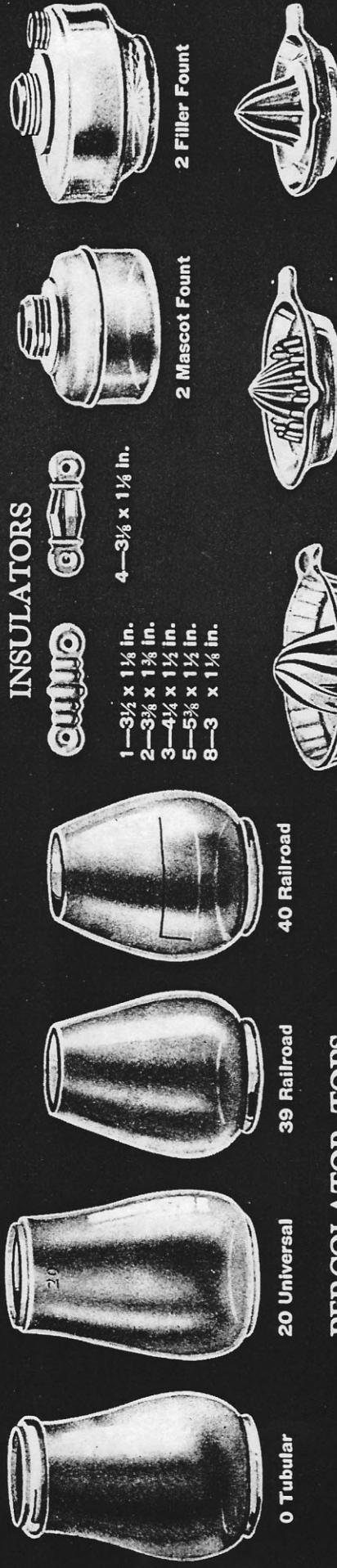
9 Rival

10 Vesta

8 Little Wizard

6 Jr. Cold Blast

LAMP FOUNTS



ANTENNAE INSULATORS



4— $3\frac{1}{8}$ x $1\frac{1}{8}$ in.

1— $3\frac{1}{2}$ x $1\frac{1}{8}$ in.

2— $3\frac{3}{8}$ x $1\frac{1}{8}$ in.

3— $4\frac{1}{4}$ x $1\frac{1}{2}$ in.

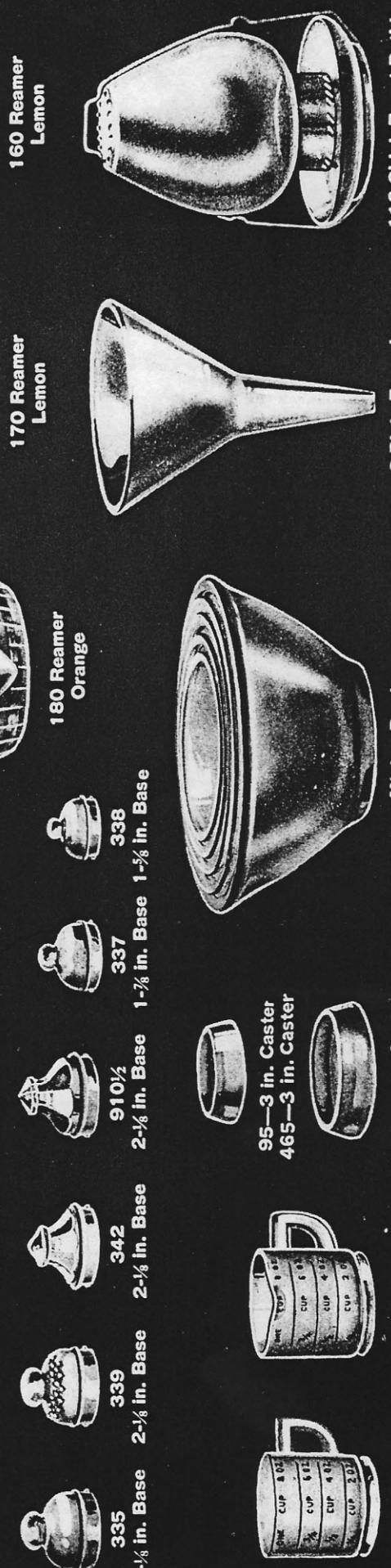
5— $5\frac{3}{8}$ x $1\frac{1}{2}$ in.

8— 3 x $1\frac{1}{8}$ in.

2 Mascot Fount

2 Cold Blast

PERCOLATOR TOPS



180 Reamer
Orange

160 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

40 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

39 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

20 Universal

160 Reamer
Lemon

180 Reamer
Orange

338
337

40 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

39 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

20 Universal

160 Reamer
Lemon

180 Reamer
Orange

338
337

40 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

39 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

20 Universal

160 Reamer
Lemon

180 Reamer
Orange

338
337

40 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

39 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

20 Universal

160 Reamer
Lemon

180 Reamer
Orange

338
337

40 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

39 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

20 Universal

160 Reamer
Lemon

180 Reamer
Orange

338
337

40 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

39 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

20 Universal

160 Reamer
Lemon

180 Reamer
Orange

338
337

40 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

39 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

20 Universal

160 Reamer
Lemon

180 Reamer
Orange

338
337

40 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

39 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

20 Universal

160 Reamer
Lemon

180 Reamer
Orange

338
337

40 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

39 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

20 Universal

160 Reamer
Lemon

180 Reamer
Orange

338
337

40 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

39 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

20 Universal

160 Reamer
Lemon

180 Reamer
Orange

338
337

40 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

39 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

20 Universal

160 Reamer
Lemon

180 Reamer
Orange

338
337

40 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

39 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

20 Universal

160 Reamer
Lemon

180 Reamer
Orange

338
337

40 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

39 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

20 Universal

160 Reamer
Lemon

180 Reamer
Orange

338
337

40 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

39 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

20 Universal

160 Reamer
Lemon

180 Reamer
Orange

338
337

40 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

39 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

20 Universal

160 Reamer
Lemon

180 Reamer
Orange

338
337

40 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

39 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

20 Universal

160 Reamer
Lemon

180 Reamer
Orange

338
337

40 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

39 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

20 Universal

160 Reamer
Lemon

180 Reamer
Orange

338
337

40 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

39 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

20 Universal

160 Reamer
Lemon

180 Reamer
Orange

338
337

40 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

39 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

20 Universal

160 Reamer
Lemon

180 Reamer
Orange

338
337

40 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

39 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon

170 Reamer
Lemon

338
337

20 Universal

160 Reamer
Lemon

180 Reamer
Orange

338
337

40 Railroad

160 Reamer
Lemon