



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Imperial Glass Company Records

NMAH.AC.0105

NMAH Staff

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Imperial Glass Company Records
Date:	1909-1940
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.0105
Creator:	Imperial Glass Company. Corning Museum of Glass. Lancaster Colony Corporation.
Source:	National Museum of American History (U.S.). Division of Ceramics and Glass
Extent:	0.1 Cubic feet (1 box, 29 microfiche sheets)
Language:	English .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Collection donated by the Corning Museum of Glass.

Provenance

The original collection of catalogs and photographs was acquired from Imperial Glass Co. by the Division of Ceramics and Glass (now Division of Cultural and Community Life), which transferred them to the Archives Center, April 1984. The Lancaster Colony Corporation requested return of the material in December 1989. Microfiche copies were made for the Archives Center by the Corning Museum of Glass in 1990; the original collection was returned to Lancaster Colony Corporation in Feb. 1992. As this firm needed the catalogs for a special project, it is possible that they will return the originals at a later date.

Processing Information

Collection processed by NMAH Staff, undated.

Preferred Citation

The Imperial Glass Company Records, 1909-1912, Archives Center, National Museum of American History

Restrictions

No original material in this collection at the present time. Researchers must view microfiche copies.

Conditions Governing Use

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

Historical

The Imperial Glass Company was established in 1901 in Bellaire, Ohio. The company's first pieces were produced for the mass market for stores like Kresge's and McCrory's; they produced jelly glasses, pressed tumblers, butter dishes, pickle dishes, berry bowls, and a variety of other tableware.

With the introduction of machine-pressed glassware in 1910, the market expanded. Imperial Glass Company began producing "NUART" iridescent ware in colors of "rubigold, peacock, sapphire, rose satin, blue satin, iris ice, blue ice, and rose ice." The company began making "NUCUT" crystal ware, which was pressed glass made to reproduce early English pressed glass.

"Imperial Jewels," introduced in 1916, were free-hand iridescent "stretch glass" pieces. In 1922 the company imported a shop of Venetian glassmakers to what the company labeled Imperial "Art Glass." Catalogue 103G states on page 3-G, "these wares are covered with heavy deposits of various metal oxides, which make them nearly opaque in appearance. The enormous heat, necessary to develop these colors, cannot be regulated mathematically, and therefore there are scarcely two pieces alike, even when manufactured apparently in the same manner and under the same conditions." These pieces, mostly bowls, nappies, berry bowls, and nut bowls, are in colors of pearl green, pearl white, pearl ruby, and pearl amethyst.

The Depression and the influx of machine glass companies combined to push Imperial Glass Co. into bankruptcy in 1931, although the plant continued to operate after it went into receivership.

The company in 1940 started an acquisitions program and bought a series of other companies including the Central Glass Works of Wheeling, Virginia, (est. 1860). In 1958 Imperial Glass purchased molds from the Heisey Co. (est.1885) and bought the Cambridge Glass Co. (est. 1873). The firm became a subsidiary of Lenox China Inc. in 1973.

In June 1984 Imperial Glass went into Chapter 11 bankruptcy. The plant closed August 31, 1984, and the company's assets were taken over by Lancaster Colony Corporation, Columbus, Ohio.

Scope and Contents

This collection is divided into two series, Catalogs and Photographs, on fifty nine (59) microfiche sheets. These are photographic reproductions of catalogs of Imperial Glass Products from 1909 to 1912 and of several photographs showing Imperial Glass Company products, their stock numbers and rulers indicating size. Some of these photos are hand painted. Many of the catalogs have no dates and are arranged by number and type. A few of them have prices noted throughout and were presumably used by salesmen at the company. There is one catalog from The Central Glass Works of Wheeling, Virginia, one of the companies that Imperial purchased. There are General Catalogs, "Bargain Book" catalogs, a Special Catalog of Hand Engraved and Sand Blasted Glassware and a Special Catalog of Plain and Engraved Gas and Electric Glassware.

Arrangement

Divided into two series.

Series 1: Catalogues

Series 2: Photographs

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Glass manufacture
- Glass, Colored
- Glassware
- Glassware -- Catalogs
- Pressed glass

Types of Materials:

- Business records -- 1910-1930
- Catalogs
- Microfiche

Names:

- National Museum of American History (U.S.). Division of Ceramics and Glass

Container Listing

Series 1: Catalogues

Box 1	365-LO, Catalog of Pressed Gas and Electric Shades, [1905?-1910?]
Box 1	366-LO, Special Net Price List for Plan and Engraved Gas and Electric Glassware, [1905?-1910?]
Box 1	364-T, Special Catalog of Hand Engraved and Sand Blasted Glassware, [circa 1905 1910?]
Box 1	351-T, General Catalog, 1909
Box 1	352-T, General Catalog, January, 1912
Box 1	355-T, Imperial Glass Catalog No. 100E, [1915?]
Box 1	356-T, Imperial Glass Catalog No. 100F, [ca. 1915 1920]
Box 1	F-6784, Imperial Glass Catalog No. 300, [ca. 1918 1923]
Box 1	357-T, Imperial Glass Catalog 101D, [1921?]
Box 1	358-T, Supplement for 101A and 101D, [1921?]
Box 1	359-T, Imperial Glass Catalog No. 101 E, [1921?]
Box 1	F-6740, Imperial Glass Catalog No. 103 B, [1923?]
Box 1	360-T, Price List No. 530B for Popular Priced Iridescent Glass Novelties shown in Catalog 103B, [1923?]
Box 1	F-6511, Imperial Glass Catalog No. 103 G, [1923?]
Box 1	F-6738, Imperial Glass Catalog No. 104 D, [1924?]
Box 1	361-T, Price List No. 54D, Open Stock Crystal Table Glass shown in Catalog 104D, [1924?]
Box 1	F-6745, Imperial Glass Company No. 104 F, [1924?]
Box 1	354-T, Imperial Bargain Book (second edition), [1924?]

Box 1	F-6747, Imperial Bargain Book, [1924?]
Box 1	353-T, Price List for Second Edition Bargain Book, [1924?]
Box 1	F-3823, Imperial Glass Catalog, Supplement to Bargain Book, 1925
Box 1	F-6748, Imperial Glass Catalog No. 201, [ca. 1925]
Box 1	F-6785, Imperial Glass Catalog No. 400 Open Stock, [ca. 1925 1931]
Box 1	363-T, Price List 400 for Catalog No. 400, [1927? 1931?]
Box 1	362-T, Imperial Glass Catalog No. 200, [1926? 1929?]
Box 1	F-6778, Imperial Glass Catalog, Soda Fountain, Restaurant, Hospital, Tea Room, and Hotel Glassware, [ca. 1932 1938]
Box 1	367-T, Imperial Glass Catalog No. 101, Hotel and Barware, [1940]
Box 1	F-5345, Imperial Glass Catalog No. 300, Soda Fountain, Restaurant, Hospital, Tea Room, and Hotel Glassware, [1940?]

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Series 2: Photographs

Box 1

368-T, Photoprints of glassware (some of these are hand painted color), circa 1922

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