

ARTIFACT OF THE MONTH

September 2024

Oftentimes in archaeology, when excavating, the whole object cannot be recovered. Usually, only fragments of artifacts are found and collected, and if we are lucky, some of them can be put back together. The Gordon's London Dry Gin Bottle within THPO's collections is one such object. Three pieces of this bottle were found that we were able to refit. While we do not have the whole bottle, we luckily have more than enough to learn more about it.

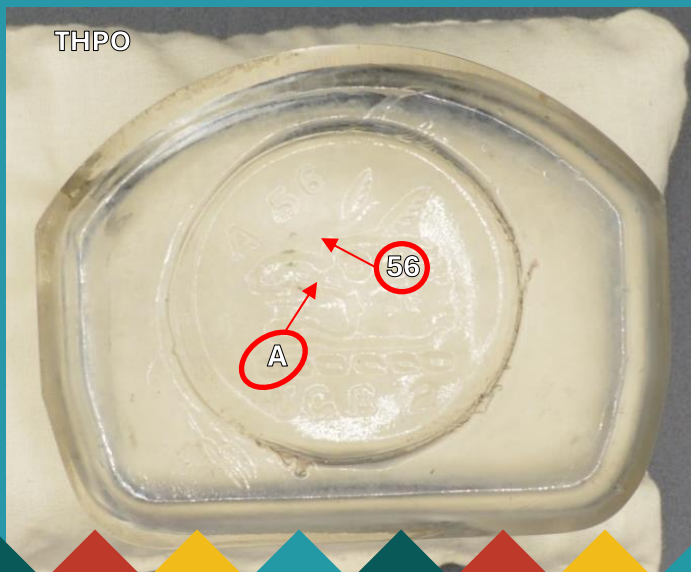
While the gin in the bottle traces its origin back to the medieval period, the bottle itself is much more recent. This can be determined by the maker's mark; this bottle was manufactured in 1956 (Toulouse, 1971). Looking at the bottom of the bottle further, we can see other distinct features on it. One of which is the large boar's head impressed upon the base of the bottle. This boar's head is representative of the boar's head found on the Gordon's family coat of arms. Legend says that this was added to the coat of arms when a member of the Gordon clan saved the King of Scotland from a wild boar ([About Gordon's, n.d.](#)). Another mark of note is the "A", and while United Glass Bottle Manufacturers made the bottle, this denotes the factory that the bottle was made in, which is Alloa Glass Works (Toulouse, 1971).



Old Spirits Co. 2023



House of Gordon USA



Alloa Glass Works did not start out supplying bottles to United Glass Bottle Manufacturers, the company that supplies Tanqueray Gordon and Co., but would go on to join them much later in its life. Alloa Glass Works was founded around 1750 by Lady Frances Erskine on the bank of the River Forth ([Clackmannanshire.scot, 2024](#)). From there, it would operate continually and eventually be acquired by United Glass Bottle Manufacturers in 1955, one year before this bottle would be produced ([Tweedie, 2021](#)). Even with only part of the original bottle remaining, we have more than enough information to learn quite a bit about it and its history.

About Gordons. (n.d.). <https://www.gordonsgin.com/en-row/about-gordons/>

Clackmannanshire.scot. (2024, February 21). Alloa Glass works. <https://clackmannanshire.scot/index.php/industry-and-commerce/alloa-glass-works>

Toulouse, J. H. (1971). Bottle Makers and their marks. Blackburn Press.

Tweedie, A. I. (Ed.). (2021, June 18). United Glass Bottle Manufacturers - Graces guide. Graces Guide. Retrieved July 10, 2024, from https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/United_Glass_Bottle_Manufacturers

