

identification old brown glass medicine bottles

identification old brown glass medicine bottles is a specialized area of interest for collectors, historians, and antique enthusiasts. These bottles, often referred to as amber or brown glass medicine bottles, served an important purpose in pharmaceutical history by protecting contents from harmful light exposure. Identifying old brown glass medicine bottles involves examining various characteristics such as color, embossing, shape, and manufacturing marks. This article will explore the history, features, and methods used to accurately identify these vintage bottles. Additionally, it will discuss common types, typical markings, and tips for distinguishing originals from reproductions. Understanding these factors is essential for proper classification and valuation. The following sections provide a comprehensive guide to the identification old brown glass medicine bottles.

- History of Brown Glass Medicine Bottles
- Physical Characteristics and Identification Features
- Common Markings and Embossing
- Manufacturing Techniques and Dating
- Collecting and Preservation Tips

History of Brown Glass Medicine Bottles

The use of brown or amber glass bottles dates back to the 19th century, primarily serving as containers for medicinal liquids, tonics, and chemicals. Brown glass was favored because it filtered out ultraviolet (UV) light, which could degrade sensitive contents such as pharmaceuticals and chemicals. This protective quality made brown glass bottles an essential component in the safe storage of medicine before the advent of modern packaging materials. Over time, different pharmaceutical companies and apothecaries produced bottles with varying designs, shapes, and embossing to distinguish their products.

Origins and Purpose

Brown glass bottles became popular in the late 1800s when glass manufacturers began producing colored glass to enhance product preservation. The amber color is achieved by adding iron, sulfur, and carbon compounds during glass

production. This not only provided functional benefits but also helped consumers identify medicinal products quickly on shelves.

Evolution Through the 20th Century

Throughout the early and mid-20th century, brown glass medicine bottles evolved in design to include screw tops, stoppers, and dropper attachments. The development of manufacturing techniques allowed for mass production and standardization, making these bottles widely available. The decline in their usage started with the introduction of plastic containers and improved light-resistant materials.

Physical Characteristics and Identification Features

Identification of old brown glass medicine bottles relies heavily on analyzing physical traits. These characteristics can reveal the bottle's approximate age, manufacturer, and original contents. Collectors and experts examine color, shape, size, embossing, and glass quality to differentiate authentic antique bottles from modern reproductions.

Color and Glass Quality

True antique brown glass medicine bottles typically exhibit a rich amber color, which may vary slightly from dark brown to lighter shades depending on the glass composition. The glass surface might show signs of wear, such as minor scratches or iridescence caused by weathering over decades. Unlike modern bottles, older bottles may have bubbles or irregularities due to less advanced glass manufacturing processes.

Shape and Size

The shape of old brown glass medicine bottles varies widely, including cylindrical, square, rectangular, and round forms. Common sizes range from small vials of 1 to 4 ounces to larger containers holding up to 16 ounces or more. The shape often corresponds to the type of medicine stored, such as cough syrups, tonics, or powders. Bottles with flared lips or ground glass stoppers were designed for specific dispensing methods.

Embossing and Labeling

Embossing is a critical feature in identifying these bottles. Many old brown glass medicine bottles have raised lettering indicating the manufacturer's name, product name, dosage instructions, or patent dates. Some also include

decorative elements or logos. Labels, if original, may be fragile or missing, but embossing provides permanent identification clues.

Common Markings and Embossing

Markings on old brown glass medicine bottles are valuable in tracing their origin and purpose. These inscriptions often include company names, locations, patent information, and usage directions. Understanding common markings assists in authentic identification and historical research.

Manufacturer Names and Logos

Many bottles carry the embossed name of the pharmaceutical company or apothecary that produced them. Examples include well-known firms such as Warner's, Dr. Kilmer's, and Parke-Davis. Logos or monograms may also be present, helping to confirm provenance and dating.

Patent Dates and Numbers

Patent dates embossed on bottles provide a terminus post quem (earliest possible date) for the bottle's manufacture. These dates can be cross-referenced with historical patent records to narrow down production years. Patent numbers may also be included, although less commonly.

Usage Instructions and Dosage

Some bottles feature embossed dosage information or warnings, reflecting the medical standards of their time. These details give insight into the bottle's contents and intended use. For example, instructions like "Take one teaspoonful" or "External use only" are typical.

Manufacturing Techniques and Dating

Determining the age of old brown glass medicine bottles involves analyzing manufacturing methods and technological advancements in glass production. Changes in bottle-making techniques provide important dating clues.

Hand-Blown vs. Machine-Made Bottles

Early bottles were hand-blown and often have pontil marks on the base, irregular shapes, and uneven thickness. Machine-made bottles, introduced in the early 20th century, have more uniform shapes, molded seams, and consistent thickness. Identifying these traits helps date the bottle within a

certain period.

Seams and Mold Lines

Bottles made before the 1900s typically have seams that stop below the lip, as the lip was finished by hand. After 1903, fully machine-made bottles have seams running through the lip and top. Examining mold lines is a key step in dating brown glass medicine bottles.

Base Markings and Manufacturer Codes

Many manufacturers marked the base of their bottles with symbols, numbers, or letters identifying the factory or mold. These can be referenced in collector guides to pinpoint the manufacturer and approximate date of production.

Collecting and Preservation Tips

Proper identification of old brown glass medicine bottles is essential for collectors who value historical accuracy and preservation. Understanding how to care for and store these bottles ensures their longevity and maintains their value.

Handling and Cleaning

Handling old bottles requires care to avoid damage. Cleaning should be gentle, using mild soap and water with soft brushes. Harsh chemicals or abrasive materials can damage the glass surface or remove original embossing.

Storage Conditions

To preserve brown glass bottles, store them in stable environments away from direct sunlight and extreme temperature fluctuations. UV exposure can degrade labels and affect the glass color over time. Proper shelving and padding prevent chips or cracks.

Authentication and Documentation

Maintaining accurate records of provenance, photographs, and reference materials supports authentication. Consulting specialized collector guides or experts can aid in confirming the identity and value of old brown glass medicine bottles.

- Examine embossing for manufacturer names and patent dates.
- Assess glass color and signs of aging such as weathering or iridescence.
- Identify manufacturing marks and mold seams for dating.
- Handle bottles carefully and clean with gentle methods.
- Store away from light and temperature extremes to preserve condition.

Frequently Asked Questions

How can I identify old brown glass medicine bottles?

To identify old brown glass medicine bottles, examine the bottle's shape, embossing, and markings such as brand names, patent dates, or manufacturer logos. Researching these details in antique bottle reference guides or online databases can help determine the bottle's origin and use.

What is the significance of the brown color in old medicine bottles?

The brown or amber color in old medicine bottles was used to protect the contents from sunlight, particularly ultraviolet rays, which could degrade certain medicines. This color helped preserve the potency and shelf life of light-sensitive pharmaceuticals.

Are there any common markings found on old brown glass medicine bottles?

Yes, common markings include the manufacturer's name, patent dates, dosage measurements, and embossing indicating the type of medicine or contents. Some bottles also have maker's marks or city names that help in identification.

Where can I find resources to help identify old brown glass medicine bottles?

Useful resources include antique bottle identification books, specialized websites like the Society for Historical Archaeology's Bottle Identification Guide, online forums, and auction sites. Local museums and historical societies may also provide valuable information.

What time period do most brown glass medicine bottles come from?

Most brown glass medicine bottles date from the late 19th century to the mid-20th century, roughly between the 1880s and 1950s, when glass medicine bottles were widely used before plastic containers became common.

How can I tell if an old brown glass medicine bottle is valuable?

The value depends on factors such as rarity, condition, manufacturer, embossing details, and historical significance. Bottles from well-known companies, with unique shapes or rare markings, and in good condition tend to be more valuable to collectors.

What should I avoid doing when cleaning old brown glass medicine bottles?

Avoid using harsh chemicals, abrasive materials, or high-temperature water when cleaning, as these can damage the glass or remove important markings. Instead, use mild soap, warm water, and soft brushes to gently clean the bottle without harming its surface.

Additional Resources

1. Antique Medicine Bottles: Identification and Price Guide

This comprehensive guide offers detailed descriptions and photographs of antique medicine bottles, focusing on brown glass varieties. Collectors and historians will find identification tips based on bottle shapes, embossing, and manufacturing marks. The book also includes pricing information to assist in valuation.

2. Old Brown Glass Medicine Bottles: A Collector's Handbook

Specifically dedicated to brown glass medicine bottles, this handbook explores their historical context and manufacturing techniques. It provides a catalog of common markings and brand names found on these bottles, helping collectors accurately identify and date their finds.

3. The History and Identification of Apothecary Bottles

Covering a broad range of apothecary bottles, this book highlights brown glass examples used by pharmacists in the 19th and early 20th centuries. It discusses the evolution of bottle design and labeling, offering clues for identifying origin and purpose.

4. American Pharmacy Bottles: Identification and Price Guide

Focusing on American-made pharmacy bottles, this book includes a significant section on brown glass medicine bottles. It features detailed photographs, embossing charts, and historical background to aid collectors in

distinguishing rare versus common specimens.

5. *Collecting Antique Glass Medicine Bottles*

This book serves as an introduction to the world of antique glass medicine bottles, with an emphasis on color variations including brown glass. It explains how to identify bottles based on manufacturing methods and embossing, and provides tips on caring for and displaying collections.

6. *Pharmaceutical Glassware of the 19th Century*

An authoritative resource on 19th-century pharmaceutical glassware, this volume discusses the significance of brown glass in protecting medicinal contents. It details bottle shapes, embossing, and stopper types, assisting readers in accurate identification and dating.

7. *English Medicine Bottles: Identification and History*

This book focuses on English medicine bottles, including brown glass varieties used during the Victorian era. It includes historical insights about medicine production and distribution, alongside identification keys based on embossing and glass color.

8. *Guide to Embossed Medicine Bottles*

Embossed markings are crucial for identifying old medicine bottles, and this guide covers a wide range of examples with an emphasis on brown glass bottles. It explains common embossing styles and trademark symbols, helping collectors decode the information etched into the glass.

9. *Vintage Brown Glass Bottles: Identification and Care*

This specialized guide covers vintage brown glass bottles, including those used for medicinal purposes. It offers practical advice on identifying bottle types, understanding historical context, and properly cleaning and preserving fragile glass artifacts.

Identification Old Brown Glass Medicine Bottles

Find other PDF articles:

<https://test.murphyjewelers.com/archive-library-606/files?ID=inT83-9136&title=practice-writing-numbers-1-10-for-kindergarten.pdf>

identification old brown glass medicine bottles: *Baffle Marks and Pontil Scars: A Reader on Historic Bottle Identification* Peter D. Schulz, 2016-03-04

identification old brown glass medicine bottles: *Boys' Life* , 1959-01 Boys' Life is the official youth magazine for the Boy Scouts of America. Published since 1911, it contains a proven mix of news, nature, sports, history, fiction, science, comics, and Scouting.

identification old brown glass medicine bottles: *Urban Archaeology in Old New Orleans* , 1986

identification old brown glass medicine bottles: *National Drug Clerk* , 1923

identification old brown glass medicine bottles: Picker's Pocket Guide to Bottles

Michael Polak, 2014-10-16 Buried Treasures When a brilliant and rare flask sold at auction for a record \$176,670 a few years ago, a secret was unearthed - bottles are true buried treasures. Discover for yourself what veteran bottle hunters have known for years with this hands-on, how-to guide to picking bottles. Learn what seasoned collectors look for and what they value in this easy-to-follow and indispensable pocket guide. You'll Uncover: • The most popular bottles, including flask, whiskey, poison, and ink • The hot spots for picking bottles, from flea markets to thrift stores • Where and how to dig for bottles • How to price and evaluate bottles Whether for pleasure or profit, the Picker's Pocket Guide is a real find.

identification old brown glass medicine bottles: Kovels' Bottles Price List Ralph M. Kovel, Terry H. Kovel, 1996 Long used and respected by collectors, this book provides current prices of more than 10,000 old and modern bottles -- manufactured from the 1700s to the 1990s -- in more than 80 categories. Included are figurals, bitters, flasks, ink, beer, milk, soda, perfume, medicine, Avon, Jim Beam, Ezra Brooks, and other collectible bottles. The Kovels provide company histories, a list of national and regional bottle collectors' clubs, bottle auction houses, publications of special interest to collectors, and an extensive bibliography.

identification old brown glass medicine bottles: Cold Case Files Liz Porter, 2011-05-01 Cold case investigators scrape back paint in a renovated flat where a murder was committed twelve years earlier, and find a blood stain that leads them to a killer. Scientists extract DNA from crime-scene samples collected in 1973, and a 21st-century hunt for a triple murderer begins. A forensic dentist probes the mysterious death of an ancient Egyptian mummy. A long-forgotten palm print leads detectives to the real perpetrator of a murder for which an innocent man has already served 12 years' jail. In this collection of fascinating cold cases from Australia, the UK and the US, award-winning writer Liz Porter shows how modern forensic science can unlock solutions for crimes and mysteries unsolved for decades, and, in some cases, centuries. Praise for Liz Porter: ...each of her stories reads like good crime fiction... a compulsive read - The Sydney Morning Herald A delightful and entertaining writer... - Weekend Australian Winner of Davitt Award for Best True Crime 2011

identification old brown glass medicine bottles: Year Book of the American Pharmaceutical Association American Pharmaceutical Association, 1930

identification old brown glass medicine bottles: American Druggist and Pharmaceutical Record , 1896

identification old brown glass medicine bottles: Proceedings of the American Pharmaceutical Association , 1930

identification old brown glass medicine bottles: The Bottles of Old Sacramento , 1980

identification old brown glass medicine bottles: Hobbies , 1979

identification old brown glass medicine bottles: Final Project Report for the 2002-2003 Old Agency Initiative of the Uncompahgre Valley Ute Project Steven G. Baker, 2004

identification old brown glass medicine bottles: The Saturday Evening Post , 1926 SCC Library has 1974-89; (plus scattered issues).

identification old brown glass medicine bottles: The Laboratory Digest , 1947

identification old brown glass medicine bottles: Billboard , 1942-07-11 In its 114th year, Billboard remains the world's premier weekly music publication and a diverse digital, events, brand, content and data licensing platform. Billboard publishes the most trusted charts and offers unrivaled reporting about the latest music, video, gaming, media, digital and mobile entertainment issues and trends.

identification old brown glass medicine bottles: Magazine Antiques , 1924

identification old brown glass medicine bottles: Bazaar Exchange and Mart, and Journal of the Household , 1890

identification old brown glass medicine bottles: The Chemical Bulletin , 1926

identification old brown glass medicine bottles: Antiques , 1925

Related to identification old brown glass medicine bottles

identification | **Weblio** identify, identification
identify with
identification
identity

identify | **Weblio** identify with
identification
identity

Identification | **Weblio** The process of mapping an object onto the supported identification schemas or getting the unique user identifier (UID). The operating system, IIS, or Commerce Server usually provides this

Weblio discriminant; identification <ID>; identification; identity 1) identify, identification

identification | **Weblio** the action of carrying out identification or investigative activities at the scene of a criminal act

identification | **Weblio** identification
identify with
identification
identity

Weblio identification
identify with
identification
identity

IDENTIFICATION NUMBER | **Weblio** identification number (identification numbers) A unique code assigned to an item in order to identify it

Identification mark | **Weblio** Identification mark
identify with
identification
identity

identification card | **Weblio** identification card
identify with
identification
identity

identification | **Weblio** identify, identification
identify with
identification
identity

identify | **Weblio** identify with
identification
identity

Identification | **Weblio** The process of mapping an object onto the supported identification schemas or getting the unique user identifier (UID). The operating system, IIS, or Commerce Server usually provides this

Weblio discriminant; identification <ID>; identification; identity 1) identify, identification

identification | **Weblio** the action of carrying out identification or investigative activities at the scene of a criminal act

identification | **Weblio** identification
identify with
identification
identity

Weblio identification
identify with
identification
identity

IDENTIFICATION NUMBER | **Weblio** identification number (identification numbers) A unique code assigned to an item in order to identify it

Identification mark | **Weblio** Identification mark
identify with
identification
identity

identification card | **Weblio** identification card
identify with
identification
identity

identification | **Weblio** identify, identification
identify with
identification
identity

identify | **Weblio** identify with
identification
identity

Identification | **Weblio** The process of mapping an object onto the supported identification schemas or getting the unique user identifier (UID). The operating system, IIS, or Commerce Server usually provides this

discriminant; identification <ID>; identification; identity 1) the action of carrying out identification or investigative activities at the scene of a criminal act - EDR

identification | **Weblio** identification 487

identification card | **Weblio** identification card - Weblio

identify | **Weblio** identify with

Identification | **Weblio** The process of mapping an object onto the supported identification schemas or getting the unique user identifier (UID). The operating system, IIS, or Commerce Server usually provides this

discriminant; identification <ID>; identification; identity 1) the action of carrying out identification or investigative activities at the scene of a criminal act - EDR

identification | **Weblio** identification 487

identification card | **Weblio** identification card - Weblio

identify | **Weblio** identify with

Identification | **Weblio** The process of mapping an object onto the supported identification schemas or getting the unique user identifier (UID). The operating system, IIS, or Commerce Server usually provides this

Related to identification old brown glass medicine bottles

Antique Bottle Hunting at an Old Train Bridge! (Adventure Archaeology on MSN3d) Join us beneath an abandoned train bridge where history hides in plain sight. This antique bottle hunting adventure takes you through rocky creeks and forgotten rail-side paths in search of vintage

Antique Bottle Hunting at an Old Train Bridge! (Adventure Archaeology on MSN3d) Join us beneath an abandoned train bridge where history hides in plain sight. This antique bottle hunting adventure takes you through rocky creeks and forgotten rail-side paths in search of vintage

Traveler demonstrates how old medicine bottles can protect your luggage: 'I do the same thing' (Yahoo1mon) It's always a disappointment to find out our favorite sweater got to use our leave-in conditioner before we did. Whether liquid bottles leak due to mishandling, a rushed packing job, or air pressure

Traveler demonstrates how old medicine bottles can protect your luggage: 'I do the same thing' (Yahoo1mon) It's always a disappointment to find out our favorite sweater got to use our leave-in conditioner before we did. Whether liquid bottles leak due to mishandling, a rushed packing

job, or air pressure

10 Old Bottles Worth Money & a Handy Price List (LoveToKnow on MSN8mon) Whether you are a collector, digger, trader or someone who just loves the look of a few old bottles decorating a kitchen

10 Old Bottles Worth Money & a Handy Price List (LoveToKnow on MSN8mon) Whether you are a collector, digger, trader or someone who just loves the look of a few old bottles decorating a kitchen

Back to Home: <https://test.murphyjewelers.com>