




MIDWEST  
**GLASS CHATTER**  
MIDWEST ANTIQUE FRUIT JAR & BOTTLE CLUB

Since 1972



Midwest Glass Chatter  
July 2015

### Club Officers

- *Richard Cole, President*  
2904 W. Moore Rd.  
Muncie, IN 47304  
765-288-8717
- *Dave Rittenhouse, Vice Pres.*  
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765-468-8091
- *Jim Durr, Treasurer*  
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Fortville, IN 46040  
317-485-5854
- *Joe Coulson, Secretary/Editor*  
412 W. Smith Valley Rd.  
Greenwood, IN 46142  
317-476-6409

An Index to the Club Library is available online. Please contact Dick Cole about items which you would like to check out.

### Membership

The Midwest Glass Chatter is a monthly publication and is a forum through which collectors can share information.

Membership cost is \$15.00 per year, per family, due each January 31. All jar/bottle related collectors are welcome. Send to MAFJBC, Attn: James Durr, 500 W. Ohio St., Fortville, IN 46040

## Meeting Minutes, July 12th, 2015

The July club meeting was held in the Cantina at Minnetrista in Muncie, Indiana. Club President Dick Cole opened the meeting and welcomed 9 members: .

Dick mentioned that June Lowry is looking for material to nominate Dick Roller into the FOHBC Hall of Fame. A motion was made to support the nomination of Dick Roller to the FOHBC Hall of Fame. The motion was seconded and approved.

Jim Durr gave the Treas-

urer's report for June. There were no expenses or income to report.

Lou Ebert showed the Antique Week article (June 22, 2015) on the Cambridge City, Indiana Fruit Jar Get-Together and Show.

Dick Cole brought the club t-shirts which are available for sale for \$10 each. They are available in several sizes in blue or gray. Dick also brought Muncie January 2016 Show flyers. Anyone interested in show flyers that they can

leave at other shows or locations should check with Dave Rittenhouse or Dick Cole.

The next club meeting will be our annual club picnic, and it will be held August 9th at 1:30pm at the home of Jerry and Colleen Dixon. The theme for Show and Tell will be "Recent finds." Please bring a small side dish and a small dessert.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Coulson

## Show and Tell

The theme for the July club meeting was "Wax Sealers."

Lou Ebert brought a greenish aqua QT wax sealer (base: Dillon G. Co. Fairmount Ind.) (made by Dillon Glass Co. circa 1891-1894); a very light aqua QT wax sealer (base: M.F.J.Co.) (made by Marion Fruit Jar and Bottle Co. circa 1888-?); a light SCA HG Rau's Improved Pat. Applied For Groove Ring Jar (made by Fairmount Glass Works circa 1897-1900s); a light SCA QT Rau's Improved Pat. Applied For Groove Ring Jar (with part of the laid-on

groove ring cut away to show that it is hollow—which is what the patent may have been about); a clear unembossed 11 ounce wax sealer (made similar to the Rau design) (amber streaks within the hollow portion of the ring); a greenish aqua QT wax sealer (base: S.G.W. Lou. Ky. (over "tic-tac-toe grid") (made by Southern Glass Works of Louisville, Kentucky circa 1878-1887); a greenish aqua QT wax sealer (base: Sou. G. W.); and a green QT wax sealer (on heel: U.G.Co.) (attributed to Upland Glass Co. circa 1890s).

Note: On December 2,

1887 John L. McCullough and his brother-in-law J. Wood Wilson agreed to relocate their Southern Glass Works fruit jar factory from Louisville, Kentucky to Marion, Indiana. On January, 11, 1888 the new firm was formed under the name of Marion Fruit Jar and Bottle Company.

Colleen Dixon displayed an aqua QT wax sealer A.&D.H. Chambers Union Fruit Jar Pittsburgh, PA; an aqua QT wax sealer Steven's Tin Top Patd July 27, 1875; an aqua QT wax sealer Ball (3-L loop) Standard; and an aqua PT The Victor Patented 1899

## Show and Tell Pictures, cont'd

(around M in a diamond) (lid, but no buckle clamp).

Eugene Fannin shared a whittled aqua QT wax sealer with a large number 7 on the base. He bought the jar at an estate sale. It was a relic from a family that settled in the area in 1810-1811 near where he lives. There was also a jar with a large 8 on the base in the same auction.

Tom Sproat shared a dark green QT petal jar (cork/wax seal) (came from a privy dig); a deep aqua QT "push down"

wax sealer (also privy dug) (three piece mold) (with glass cap, iron pontil mark); a deep aqua QT groove ring wax sealer; an aqua QT "push down" wax sealer (iron pontil) (from Bill Dudley collection) (free blown); and an aqua QT "groove ring" wax sealer (free blown) (open pontil scar) (from Phil Robinson collection).

Dick Cole displayed a clear QT Ball Standard (reverse: R.G. Simpson 1952-1982 and train car design); an

aqua QT A.&D.H. Chambers Union Fruit Jar Pittsburgh, PA; an aqua HG wax sealer (base: A.G.W.L. Pitts, PA); and an aqua HG Standard (reverse: W. McKee & Co.).

Joe Coulson shared a round cardboard ring box for Ball Wax Sealing Rings (white powder still inside and original pamphlet); a cardboard box of Ball Wax Sealing Rings.



Aqua HG  
Steven's Tin Top  
Patd July 27, 1875



Aqua QT wax sealer  
base: SOU. G. W.



Aqua QT wax sealer  
base: S.G.W. LOU. KY.  
over "tic-tac-toe grid"



Aqua HG wax sealer  
base: A.G.W.L. PITTS PA



SCA QT Rau's Improved / Pat Applied  
For / Groove Ring Jar (left);  
SCA HG "Grove" Ring Jar (right)



Clear 11 ounce wax sealer  
Same style (hollow) ring  
as the Rau's Improved jar



Clear QT Ball Standard wax sealer  
(reverse: R.G. Simpson 1952-1982, Ball train  
car design, 30 Years Service)



### Show and Tell Pictures



Eugene Fannin displayed a whittled aqua QT unembossed wax sealer with a large mold number 7 on the base



Lou Ebert shared a greenish aqua QT U.G.Co. wax sealer with mold number 2 on the base



Tom Sproat displayed a dark green QT petal jar (cork and wax seal)



Aqua QT "push down" wax sealer with glass cap



Aqua QT "push down" wax sealer with metal cap and iron pontil (ex-Dudley)



Deep aqua QT "groove ring" wax sealer (ex-Dippold)



Light greenish aqua QT Dillon G. Co. Fairmount Ind (on base) wax sealer



Light bluish aqua QT M.F.J.Co. (on base) wax sealer; mold number 8



Aqua QT "groove ring" wax sealer (ex-Robinson) with open pontil scar



Aqua QT A.&D.H. Chambers Union Fruit Jar Pittsburgh, PA



## What is a Ball Wax Sealing Ring? By Richard Cole

Most collectors have probably not heard of such a thing as a Ball Wax Sealing Ring. And for good reason, they didn't last long and evidently were not popular with the homemaker. How do we know that they existed? Mostly from ephemera that is still around. For example, Figure 1 is a scan of a pamphlet that Ball Bros. Glass Mfg. Co. issued. There is no date on the pamphlet, but we can tell from the jar shown on it that it is before 1910, since it depicts a shoulder-seal triple-L Ball Mason.



Figure 1—Pamphlet Front cover

So what made these wax rings “Better than Rubbers” and how did they work? The inner pages of the pamphlet give more information:

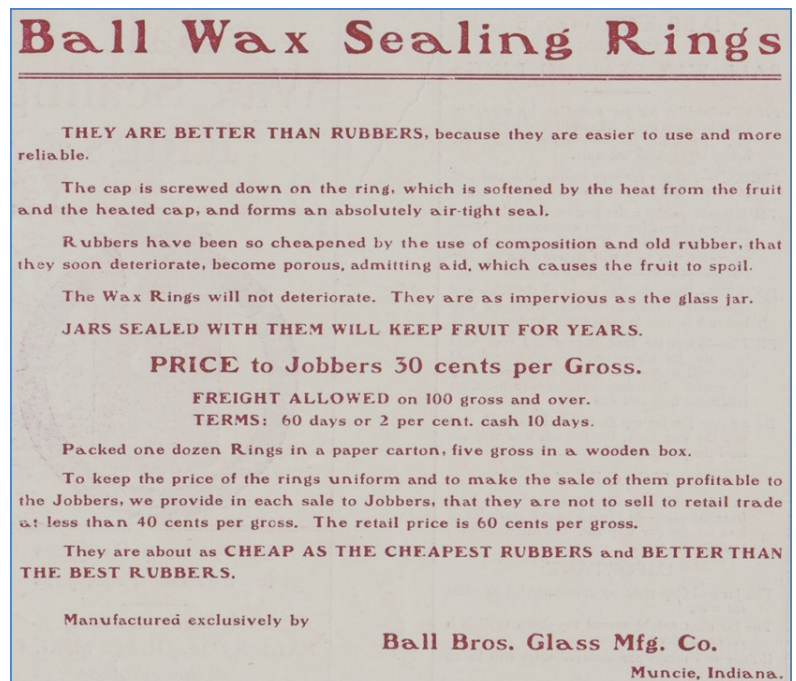


Figure 2—Inside Pages of Pamphlet

Reading the description, evidently the rings were actually made of wax, which softened from the heat of processing, thus allowing the lip of the zinc cap to sink in, the cap being hot since it was just taken out of boiling water.



## What is a Ball Wax Sealing Ring? Cont'd

Additional information about when they were made can be gained from another brochure, which has the same cover design, but which has more pages, 16 in all. Figures 3, 4, 5 & 6 show the cover and representative inner pages:



Figure 3—Front Cover

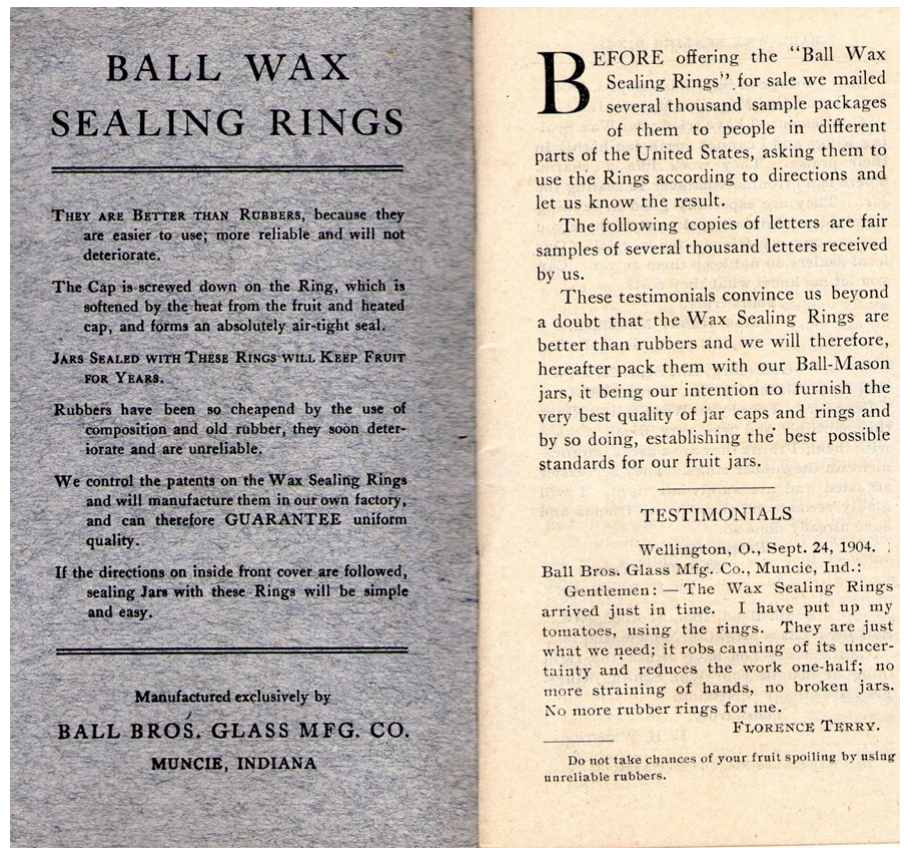


Figure 4—Inside Front Cover



# What is a Ball Wax Sealing Ring? Cont'd

## BALL WAX SEALING RINGS

Sturgeon Bay, Wis., Sept 3, 1904.

Ball Bros. Glass Mfg. Co., Muncie, Ind.:

Gentlemen:—I have tried your Wax Sealing Rings and I cannot speak too highly in their praise. They work like a charm. There is no trouble whatever in sealing the jar. They are especially good in canning vegetables. I distributed most of those you sent among my friends for a trial. Our local dealers do not keep them as yet. Can you let me know what they cost?

Yours truly,

MRS. HENRY NEUVILLE,  
R. F. D. 2.

Galesburg, Ill., Sept. 23, 1904.

Ball Bros. Glass Mfg. Co., Muncie, Ind.:

Dear Sirs:—I used your Wax Sealing Rings this morning and was very much pleased with them; I think they are a great improvement on the rubber rings. They are easier adjusted and are surely air tight. I will gladly recommend them to my friends and have already done so.

Respectfully,

MRS. T. C. OLSON,  
539 E. Brooks St.

South Bend, Ind., Sept. 30, 1904.

Ball Bros. Glass Mfg. Co., Muncie, Ind.:

Gentlemen:—You have struck the right thing at last in your Wax Sealing Rings. They are simply perfection.

Yours truly,

H. H. WEBSTER.

Ball Wax Sealing Rings do not change.

## THEY ARE BETTER THAN RUBBERS

Trenton, N. J., Sept. 21, 1904.

Ball Bros. Glass Mfg. Co., Muncie, Ind.:

Dear Sirs:—I have received the sample Wax Sealing Rings and am much obliged to you for the same. I have used them and I think they are just the finest thing out. I am so proud of them and show all of my friends what they will do, and they think they are just the real thing. I only wish I had known about them earlier in the season, it would have saved me lots of time and trouble that I have had with rubber rings, but hereafter I have got no more use for them if I can get the Wax Sealing Rings. I cannot begin to tell you how well pleased I am with them. I am going away on a visit for a few days and I wont forget to tell all of the women folks I meet about those Sealing Rings.

Yours truly,

MRS. FRED EHLV.

Harrietsville, Ohio., Sept. 22, 1904.

Ball Bros. Glass Mfg. Co., Muncie, Ind.:

Gentlemen:—Please accept my thanks for the Wax Sealing Rings you sent me a few days ago. I have used them with much satisfaction and must say they exceed by far the old rubber rings. I will gladly recommend them to all my friends for their benefit as well as yours and believe me when I say no other rings will be used by

Yours respectfully,

FRIDA WERNECKE.

Rubber disintegrates, admitting air, which causes fruit to spoil.

Figure 5—Typical Inner Pages



## What is a Ball Wax Sealing Ring? Cont'd

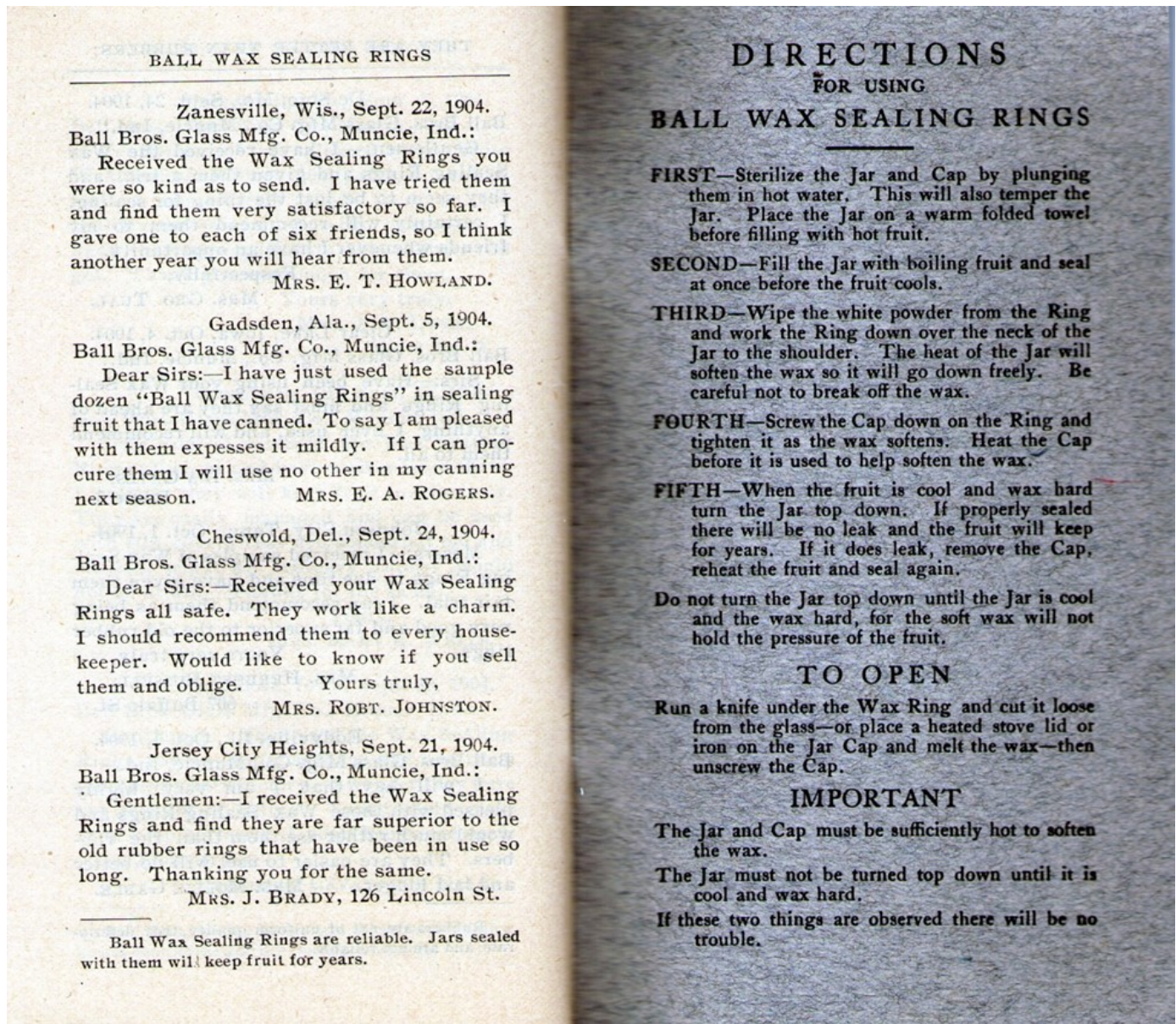


Figure 6—Inside Back Cover

All the other pages in this booklet contain similar glowing endorsements of the wax sealing ring by homemakers, all dated in August, September and October of 1904. This tells us that the wax rings were sent out for field testing by homemakers during the 1904 canning season. This is confirmed by the letter shown in Figure 7.



## What is a Ball Wax Sealing Ring? Cont'd

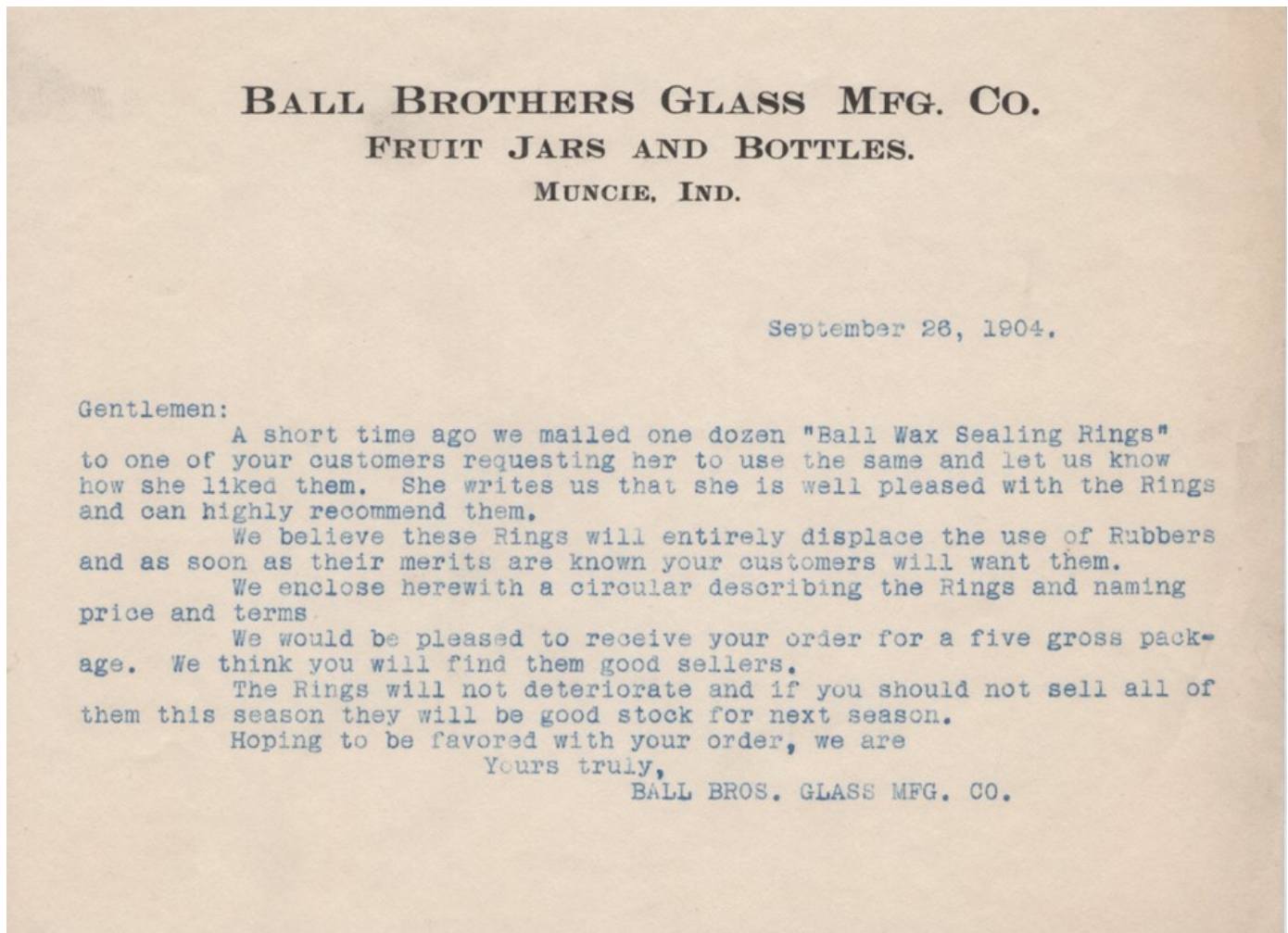


Figure 7— Form Letter to Retailers

This means that the wax sealing rings probably were offered to the public for the 1905 canning season.

Are there any examples of these rings still around? Matter of fact, yes. Tammy Johnson has photos of them in her book [Rings & Things III](#). See Figure 8. The reason for the two different methods of packaging is unclear. The unmarked round box might have been used for the rings sent out for test marketing, or they might have been the way that the rings were packaged in boxes of new jars, while the rings packaged in the box with the printing were the ones sold as replacement rings for the next canning season. The wax sealing ring was probably intended only for a one-time use.



## What is a Ball Wax Sealing Ring? Cont'd



Figure 8—Entries in Rings & Things III

So why did Ball come up with the idea of wax sealing rings? Well, you have to remember that rubber was a relatively new invention in 1905. It had only been 60 years since Charles Goodyear had patented rubber, and much less time since it had reached the public in the form of automobile tires. The rubber products of the day, including fruit jar sealing rubbers, tended to get brittle with age. And fruit jar rubbers were intended to be used over and over again. Exposure to air after repeated boiling in water to sterilize them would cause the rubbers to oxidize, get stiff and brittle, and they would not seal well. Pulling them off the notoriously hard-to-open mason jar would often cause the rubbers to break or crack.

And there was precedence for using wax as a means of sealing fruit jars. Wax sealer jars had been in use for years. They were a bit cumbersome to use, because the jar had to be put mouth-down into a hot water bath to soften the wax in the groove. And the metal lid and wire clamp were not the most reliable means of maintaining a seal.

So the wax sealing ring gave a better seal than a jar rubber, plus you didn't need a special jar with a groove to hold the wax. The regular shoulder-seal mason jar, which was in common use throughout the country, would handle the wax ring very nicely.

Despite the glowing reviews provided by the homemakers to whom Ball sent free wax sealing rings in 1904, they evidently did not gain widespread acceptance. The order forms that Ball sent out for the 1905, 1906 and 1907 all gave the wholesale customers the option of buying jars fitted with wax sealing rings, but the 1908 form does not. No further mention of the product line has been found. No specific reason can be given as to why this product line disappeared, other than the homemaker did not buy them.

Thus the wax sealing rings can be relegated to the list of products that Ball tried to market without success.

### References

Johnson, Tamara, *Rings & Things III*, second printing, 2012.

Other scans are of ephemera in the collection of the author.

# Ball Wax Sealing Rings—An Addendum, by Joe Coulson

The story is that Ball made a deal with George Coddington to get the rights for making these "wax sealing rings".

Here are the two patents in question:

Patent #748586, Packing Ring for Fruit Jars or the Like, George Coddington, Jan. 5, 1904

Patent #785089, Machine for Coating Sealing Rings with Wax, George Coddington, Mar. 21, 1905, assigned to Ball Bros.

Several materials from 1904 - 1905 promoted these rings as "better than rubbers for sealing fruit jars". One collector a long time ago found two of the plain round ring boxes in a wooden shipping box containing pint Ball 3-L Mason jars. It is interesting to note that this person bought them in a "small town north of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania". The May 2008 auction that I purchased the two Ball Wax Sealing Ring items from (shown on the next page of the newsletter) was also located in Pennsylvania (from the sale of a Country Store collection).

In the May 1986 Fruit Jar News, Dick Roller mentions the following important details:

A letter from Coddington to Ball dated January 2, 1908 was asking about a check due for \$600. The reply letter from Ball dated January 21, 1908 stated, 'I am sorry to say that the Wax Ring has not proven a success and we are obliged to abandon it. We cannot therefore of course continue to pay royalty to you, and our interest in the patent will of course revert to you under the circumstances.' From this we can deduce that Ball received patent rights from Coddington, paying him a royalty, possibly \$600 per year.

In 1986, Dick Roller had only seen

No. 748,586.

PATENTED JAN. 5, 1904.

G. D. C. CODDINGTON.  
PACKING RING FOR FRUIT JARS OR THE LIKE.

APPLICATION FILED AUG. 21, 1902.

NO MODEL.

Fig. 1.

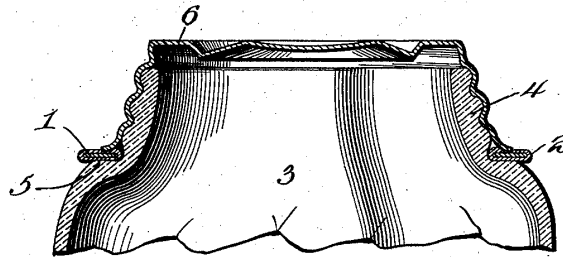


Fig. 2.

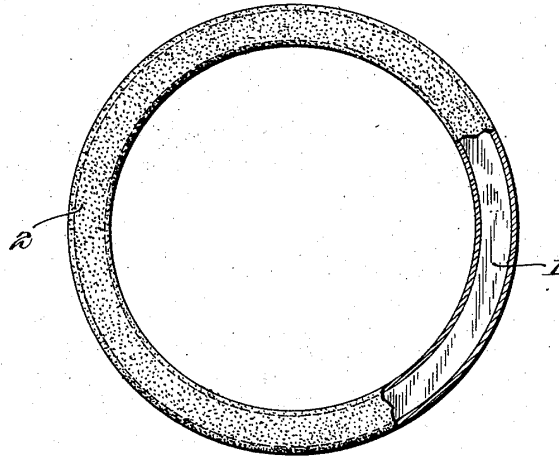


Fig. 3.



George D. C. Coddington, Inventor,

By

*E. J. Siggers*

Attorney

Witnesses

*Howard W. Ort.*  
*H. J. Shepard.*



## Ball Wax Sealing Rings—An Addendum, Cont'd

printer's proofs of the square ring box. He thought that the square box would have been sold on store shelves (whereas the round ones seem to have been packed in with the jars in the shipping boxes). In my experience both the round and square boxes are rare, and only a small number of examples exist. —Joe Coulson



MIDWEST ANTIQUE FRUIT  
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*A jarrific place to share and learn*

Send articles and info here:

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

[HTTP://WWW.FRUITJAR.ORG](http://www.fruitjar.org)

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## Annual Club Picnic August 9th, 2015 1:30 pm

**Place: (see map below)**

Home of Colleen and Jerry Dixon  
2602 W. Brook Drive  
Muncie, IN 47304 phone: 765-281-6973

Directions: From 332 in Muncie, turn south on Tillotson. At Petty Road (on east side of Tillotson) turn left (east). Go one block, turn left (north) on Duane Street. Go one block and turn right (east) on Brook Drive. House is on the left side of Brook Drive, 1-1/2 blocks from last turn.

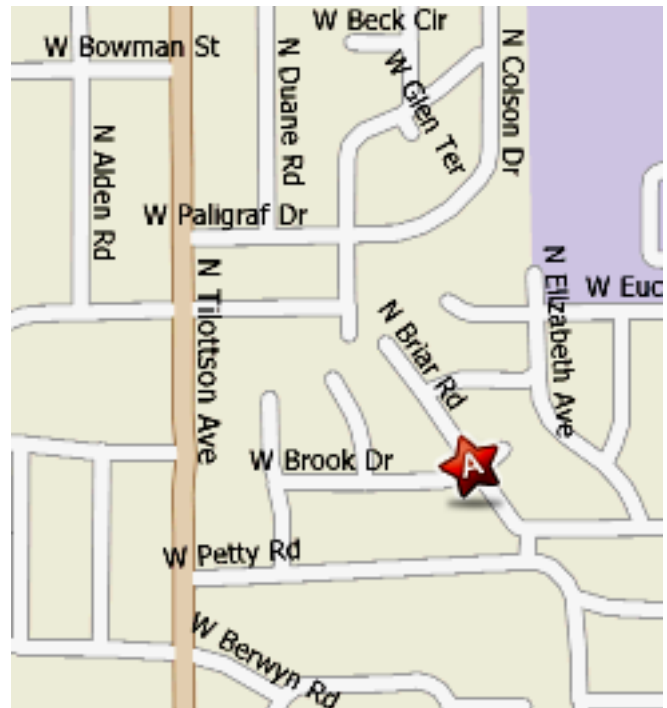
### Members Bring:

Chairs, small veggie or fruit and a small dessert.

### Club will provide:

Meat, plates, cups, tableware, soda.

**Show & Tell:** "Recent Finds"



## Announcements

- Upcoming club meetings:
  - Sunday, **August 9th**, 1:30pm, Club Picnic and theme is "Recent Finds"
  - Sunday, **September 13th**, 1:30pm, Tentative—Field Trip to BSU Glick Glass Center
  - Sunday, **October 4th**, 1:30pm meet at Minnetrista, theme is "Jars Made in Indiana"
  - Sunday, **November 1st**, 1:30pm meet at Minnetrista, theme is "Mason's Patent Jars"
  - Sunday, **December 6th**, 1:30pm meet at Minnetrista, Christmas Pitch-In Dinner
- Our club is a member of the Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors (FOHBC). The FOHBC has many resources and interesting articles on their website as well as a list of bottle shows: <http://www.fohbc.org/shows>