

From Berkeley To Chicago

Charles Cady's Opener/Sealer By Don Thornton

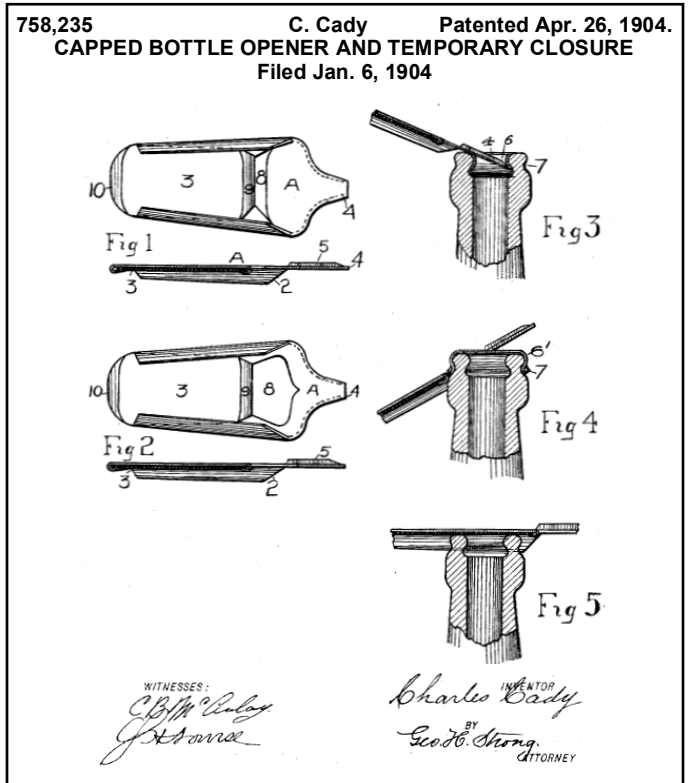
Charles Cady's patent for a "capped bottle opener and temporary closure" was one of the first, if not the first, designs for a flat, pocket-size bottle opener and sealer. The Berkeley, California inventor was granted Patent No. 758,235 on April 26, 1904 for his "combined opener and stopple for soda-bottle, beer-bottles, and the like."

The patent's "object is to provide a simple device for removing the metal sealing caps from bottles, at the same time affording means for interengagement with the external annual flange on the bottle neck to close the bottle and render it air-tight in order to preserve the unused contents of the bottle."

This is how the sealing works: The flanged tool with a rubber belly is hooked under the curved shoulder of the bottle and pressed back until the rubber plate seals the bottle mouth. Cady stressed that "the device is intended primarily as a temporary closure."

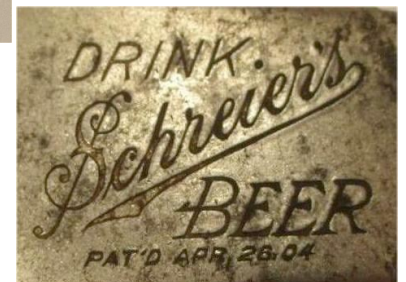
In addition to the cutout crown cap remover, the device has "a square pointed projection, somewhat similar in appearance to a screw-driver" to remove sealing plugs inserted into the bottle. Overall, the opener/sealer is remarkably simple and effective. And, although it's not mentioned in the patent, its flat top surface is perfect for commercial branding.

There is very little information available on Cady's background, other than the opener/sealer was his only patented invention. And there is one big unanswered question about his one invention: How did a Berkeley patent end up in Chicago? Time to meet Chicago's Harry L. Vaughan (See *The King of Novelty Branding Collectibles*, JFO 2025 News). The Vaughan Novelty Manufacturing Company likely obtained rights to the patent, eliminated the screwdriver-like projec-



tion and began limited production.

These early combo tools are marked only with the branding name and patent date. They were produced by Vaughan probably beginning in 1918 and up to 1921. Why 1921? That is the date Cady's patent expired. A 1918 Vaughan ad features the opener branded: KINGSBURG PALE MANITOWOC PRODUCTS CO. Although the



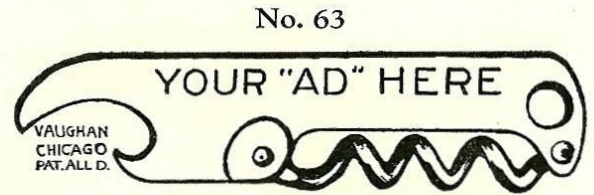
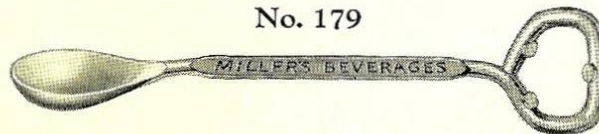
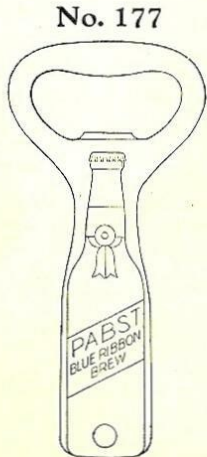
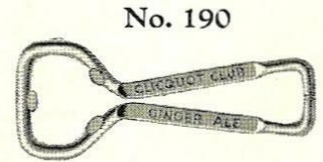
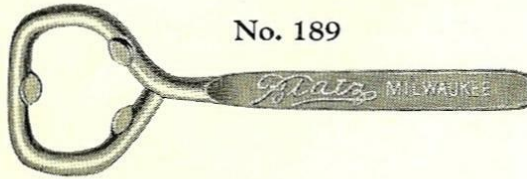
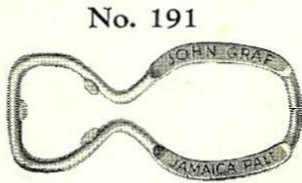
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others are marked with the patent date, the one in the ad has an unexplained PAT. APPLIED FOR.

A FEW NEW NUMBERS IN WIRE BOTTLE OPENERS ADDED TO THE EXTENSIVE VAUGHAN LINE



PRICES AND SAMPLES ON REQUEST

ASK FOR BOTTLE OPENER FOLDER

VAUGHAN NOVELTY MFG. CO., Inc.

3211-25 Carroll Avenue

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Following the 1921 expiration date, Vaughan launched mass production of the opener/sealer, naming it the LOCKTITE and opening the door to decades of hugely profitable "your business name here" branding.

DOES NOT SLIP OR POP OFF!

Vaughan's **Locktite**
TRADE MARK

combination
bottle stopper
and opener

A POSITIVE
AIRTIGHT
SEAL!

FITS ALL
STANDARD
"CROWN"
BOTTLES

EASILY
APPLIED AND
REMOVED

VAUGHAN MFG. CO.
MADE IN U.S.A. • CHICAGO, ILLINOIS • NO. 186-M

OLD CROW
KENTUCKY WHISKEY
OLD CROW DIST. CO.
FRANKFURT, KY.

Enjoy
SCHENLEY
for Good Taste

Vaughan's **Locktite**
TRADE MARK
BOTTLE STOPPER-OPENER
SLIDE OVER TOP
OF BOTTLE, GIVING
SLIGHT TWIST TO LOCK

VAUGHAN CHICAGO
MADE IN U.S.A.
PAT. PEND.

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It is not known when production of the Locktite began. Newspaper advertisements started in 1933, like one in the *Idaho Statesman* in Boise on September 2 of that year. The ad for the Whitehead Drug Company listed the price at 15 cents. The ads continue through the 1930s and drop off in the 1940s.

Locktite Bottle Stopper
and Opener..... **15c**
Opens the bottle. Then used as
stopper. It keeps contents bub-
bling fresh.

It should be noted that all of the surviving examples of post-1921 openers are marked PAT. PEND. although production in all probability continued into the 1940s. Another conundrum is the LOCKTITE TRADE MARK. A detailed search of the USPTO website lists 11 wordmarks for LOCKTITE – none granted to the Vaughan company.

