

Six Decades Making Music and Memories

Minnesota Boychoir

BARBARA W. SOMMER, PAGE 1

By the Numbers . . .

Who doesn't love topping fluffy pancakes with melted butter and pure maple syrup? In Minnesota, it's a spring tradition to tap maple trees and gather all that delicious sweetness. So it's not surprising that one popular brand got its start here. See "The Man and The Can: Patrick J. Towle and the St. Paul Origins of Log Cabin Syrup" by Matthew M. Thomas on page 14. The history is fascinating, but as far as pure maple syrup goes, well. . . .

Percentage of pure maple syrup in the Log Cabin Syrup recipe in its first fifty years:

25^a

Percentage of pure maple syrup in the Log Cabin Syrup recipe today:

0^b

Amount Log Cabin Syrup collectors pay for early paper-label, cabin-shaped tins in very good to fine condition:

\$200-\$2,000^c

Year the iconic cabin-shaped syrup tin was invented:

1897^d

The last year the cabin-shaped tin was used to package Log Cabin Syrup:

1956^e

The average price for a quart of Log Cabin Syrup in 1910:

50 cents^f

SOURCES: For a complete source list, see endnotes on page 26.

ON THE COVER



Top photo: Young singers under the direction of Paul H. Pfeiffer in 1978. Front row (L-R): Sanford Jones, Tom Whitney, Brian Balcom, and Rollin Ransom. Photograph by Paul Shanboom, courtesy of Ramsey County Historical Society; Bottom photo: Select members of the Minnesota Boychoir's Allegro choir in 2017-2018 (L-R): Noah Yager, Jacob Engdahl, Alejandro Ricart, Christopher Williams, Per Swenson, Gabe Hug, and Finn Jackson. Photograph by Diana Ricart. Courtesy of Minnesota Boychoir Archives.

Contents

- 1 *Six Decades Making Music and Memories*
Minnesota Boychoir
BARBARA W. SOMMER
- 14 *"The Man and The Can"*
Patrick J. Towle and the St. Paul Origins of Log Cabin Syrup
MATTHEW M. THOMAS
- 27 *Grasshoppers in My Bed*
New RCHS Children's Book Coming in May
- 30 **Book Reviews**

Message from the Editorial Board

This year, the Minnesota Boychoir celebrates its sixtieth anniversary. Founded in 1962, the organization has, over the years, added to our state's international reputation for choral music excellence. What began with thirty members today features four choirs, headquarters in St. Paul, a small artistic and administrative staff, countless volunteers, and a wide repertoire of music. Thanks to historian Barbara W. Sommer, we learn what it's like to be part of this beloved tradition.

Nearly a century before the choir's founding, a young Lillie Belle Gibbs was tending to her chores at the family farm north of St. Paul. It was 1877. At the same time, Patrick J. Towle was working to make a name for himself in the grocery business in Chicago.

Gibbs was the daughter of market farmers. It was not an easy life, but it was a full one, as we witness in the historical fiction children's book *Grasshoppers in My Bed*, soon-to-be-published by Ramsey County Historical Society. Gibbs lived in an agrarian community. She was made by the land and farm.

Towle, on the other hand, was made by the city. He weathered financial ups and downs before moving to St. Paul in 1888 in search of a fresh start. With his Log Cabin Syrup, Towle helped usher in the era of marketing, branding, industrialization, and expansion into distant markets.

These three stories are deeply rooted in our history. Early residents found that Ramsey County was—and still is—a place of prosperity and opportunity—a place where people can make a full life, a prosperous living, and, of course, beautiful music.

Anne Field
Chair, Editorial Board

Correction: Regrets to Judge Tanya Bransford. She was incorrectly identified on page 5 in our Winter 2022 issue. She is a St. Paul native rather than a native of North St. Paul.

The Ramsey County Historical Society thanks former Board Member James A. Stolpestad and affiliate AHS Legacy Fund for supporting the updated design of this magazine. Publication of Ramsey County History is also supported in part by a gift from Clara M. Claussen and Frieda H. Claussen in memory of Henry H. Cowie Jr., and by a contribution from the late Reuel D. Harmon. Sincere thanks to Minnesota Boychoir for their financial support.

“The Man and The Can”

Patrick J. Towle and the St. Paul Origins of Log Cabin Syrup

MATTHEW M. THOMAS

For much of the twentieth century when Americans thought of pouring syrup on their pancakes, one of the first images to come to mind was the small, red, cabin-shaped metal can of Towle’s Log Cabin Syrup. From the Towle Syrup Company’s beginning in St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1888, and for over sixty years, the well-recognized can kept Log Cabin Syrup at the top of the industry and marked its position as the nation’s leading brand of blended syrup. The success and distinction of Log Cabin Syrup as an iconic American brand grew through creative, carefully considered, eye-catching packaging and marketing choices. Under the leadership of its founder, Patrick J. Towle, Towle Syrup Company was positioned to connect with consumers at a time when they were beginning to experience the shift from purchasing home goods from grocer-controlled markets offering bulk and unbranded products

to shopping in self-served stores with shelves stocked with individually packaged and uniquely branded goods.¹

Getting Started

The Log Cabin Syrup story begins with Patrick J. Towle, who was born in 1835 in Troy, New York, to Irish Catholic immigrants. His family relocated to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1849 when Towle was a teenager. He attended private business school before beginning work as a clerk in a retail grocery firm. Seeking greater opportunity, Towle moved to Chicago in 1859 and accepted a job as a sales agent with the wholesale grocer J. W. Doane & Co. After six successful years there, Towle became a partner in 1865. Over the next twenty years, he continued as a wholesale grocer in the Windy City, working his way through a series of partners, business names, and store locations before finally opening his own firm in 1884. P. J. Towle & Co. specialized in wholesale teas, coffee, spices, sugars, and tobacco.²

The company started with the financial assistance of a fellow wholesale grocer from St. Paul named Anthony Kelly, who served as a silent partner. When Kelly pulled out a few years later, Towle found his business undercapitalized and struggled to pay his creditors. In January 1888, he accepted a judgment against himself in United States and Chicago Superior Courts for inability to meet his loan obligations. With liabilities of around \$100,000 and assets of \$96,000, Towle filed for bankruptcy. The remainder of his stock of teas, coffee, and spices was sold at auction by the sheriff of Cook County, Illinois. In reporting on the company’s failure, *The Chicago Tribune* commented that Towle “was regarded as a straightforward and competent businessman, his only weakness being a too great leniency with delinquent customers.”³

A newcomer to Minnesota in 1888, Patrick J. Towle quickly made a name for himself through his successful syrup company. Courtesy of the Towle Family Archives.





The Towle Syrup Company was briefly located on Fifth Street before fire destroyed much of the building and its contents. Here, workers stand outside the location with owner Patrick J. Towle, in front with his hands on his jacket lapels. *Courtesy of the Towle Family Archives.*

Looking to get back on his feet, Towle moved his family from Chicago to St. Paul, possibly drawn by the business connection and friendship with his associate, Mr. Kelly.⁴ There, Towle quickly developed a new partnership with long-time St. Paul grocer Thomas F. McCormick. In spring 1888, McCormick sold his grocery at the corner of Summit and Rice Streets, and the two men formed the firm Towle & McCormick to create and package Log Cabin Pure Maple Syrup. The business set up shop at 225-227 East Fourth Street in St. Paul's Lowertown. It has been suggested that Towle, frustrated with the high price of pure maple syrup, struck upon the idea to create a more affordable and agreeable-tasting syrup blended from cane and maple sugars. As a wholesale grocer in Chicago, he likely knew of the practice of blending maple syrup with less-expensive syrups such as cane or corn syrup. In fact, many businesses there had been adulterating syrup, making Chicago known as a city that produced more "so-called maple" syrup than Vermont—the true leader in pure maple syrup production at that time.⁵

By December, Towle & McCormick's Log Cabin Pure Maple Syrup had earned a place on store shelves as far west as Oregon. However, almost as quickly as it formed, the partnership dissolved, and, in April 1889, Towle, along with his son-in-law Richard J. Walsh and bookkeeper



C. W. Adams, began operating as the Towle Syrup Company in the same space on Fourth Street.⁶ The company soon outgrew its initial location and moved to a manufacturing and warehouse building at 186-188 East Fifth Street in downtown St. Paul. A catastrophic fire there in April 1901 prompted the company to relocate across the river to St. Paul's West Side Flats. The family built its own three-story brick plant on the corner of Chicago Avenue and Custer Street, adjacent to the Chicago Great Western Railroad.⁷

The new Towle Syrup Company building (c. 1904) was constructed at the corner of Chicago Avenue and Custer Street. *Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society.*

An early example of the cabin-shaped can featuring a colorful red and white label (c. 1906-1909). Courtesy of Soûlis Auctions.



The move allowed the company to expand its production exponentially, and it added nearly a dozen new brands and blends of syrup. Once limited to the simple Log Cabin Maple Syrup, between 1903 and 1909, the company portfolio grew to include Log Cabin Camp Syrup, Log Cabin Penoche Syrup, Log Cabin Selected Maple Syrup, Circus Brand, Target Brand, Wigwam Brand, Great Mountain Brand, Green Mountain Brand, Crown of Canada Brand, White Rock Brand, as well as Towle's Ready Spread Confection Butter, and Towle's Log Cabin Pancake Flour. The Towle Syrup Company did not just blend maple, cane, and corn syrups and honey, it also canned and bottled Towle's Top Brand molasses and sorghum and Towle's Melodia Brand of molasses. Selling syrup under a variety of brand names allowed the Towle Syrup Company to create an appearance of competition and ensured that it developed and maintained shelf space in nearly every grocery store in the country.⁸

Developing an Identity

Following the Civil War, the United States witnessed a transformation in the way household products were packaged, advertised, and sold to consumers. Described by advertising historian, Juliann Sivulka as a “packaging revolution,” a monumental shift in food packaging technology occurred as a result of growing mechanization and manufacturing standardization of metal

containers, bottles, and cartons. Food for home consumption was packaged and shipped less often in unbranded bulk containers and more often in “household-sized packs designed to appeal directly to consumers.”⁹ At the same time, improvements in postwar railroad networks made mail delivery of print media easier than ever. With lower-cost and better-quality printing and attention to brand names and attractive advertising design, publishers realized that they could make more money from selling ad space than from subscriptions. Advertising took on a new meaning and level of importance. With novel forms and methods of packaging, transportation, branding, and media used to reach the populace, a novel approach of national-scale marketing was born.

The Towle Syrup Company took advantage of these developments and put mass-marketing to work sooner and better than any other company in the blended-syrup industry. These tools gave manufacturers like Towle greater power to directly connect with buyers, limiting the influence grocers and storeowners previously held over consumers' purchasing decisions. Branding, labels, and packaging were designed to be eye-catching and memorable and to differentiate the target item from the competition.¹⁰

In the early years, the company packaged Log Cabin Syrup in tall rectangular cans and glass bottles, with the familiar cabin-shaped metal canister sporting a bright red label introduced in the late 1890s. As soon as the unique can hit the shelves, its popularity was quickly realized. It became the focal point of the brand and company marketing for years. At the time, the novel shapes of metal containers were considered impractical because of the difficulties in manufacturing and maintaining the integrity of the can and its contents, as well as cost. Log Cabin Syrup took a risk and overcame these challenges.¹¹

The late 1800s saw the rapid growth of brand marketing and the use of suggestive, fanciful, or artificial names, encouraged, in part, by increased brand identity protections and trademark registration. In his previous role as a merchant, Towle simply used his name to promote and sell his wares. With the adoption of the Log Cabin Syrup brand and logo, he moved beyond his family name and developed a unique brand

identity. Advertising historians have recognized that more than simply the brand and logo, the package itself has trademark value. As advertising historian Susan Strasser wrote, “a label or carton . . . was not an advertising medium but an integral part of the commodity itself.”¹² That was certainly true in the case of Log Cabin Syrup.

Maple syrup is a product that appeals to children. Combine that with the attractiveness and easy association of the cabin-shaped can and Log Cabin Syrup achieved a powerful one-two marketing punch. One marketer noted, “Grocers will tell you that the youngsters, when sent for syrup, ask for Log Cabin, and point to it on the shelves. That odd package wins them completely.”¹³ A marketing psychologist later observed,

The Log Cabin Syrup tin, by its shape and lithography, suggests the maple forests, and who cannot recall the delightful cool fragrance of a maple or pine forest? Thus does the imagination contribute to the appetite. Here we have a package that actually creates relish for its contents.¹⁴

In the case of food products like Log Cabin Syrup, advertisements in home magazines, such as *Better Homes & Gardens*, *The Ladies' Home Journal*, *The House Beautiful*, and *The Saturday Evening Post*, most often targeted women. According to historian Katherine Parkin, advertisers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries appealed to female readers with a variety of visual themes. Advertisements encouraged women to serve foods that would please a man and earn his affections. Other ads tried to persuade women to buy foods that would feed and nurture their children. Still others featured chubby, cherubic tots to suggest the positive association of “healthy” children with the product being sold. Towle employed all these advertising “hooks” to appeal to these primary purchasers and consumers of household goods.¹⁵

The company also used other methods to reach potential consumers, such as demonstration events, parades, and national and international fairs, exhibitions, and expositions. Log Cabin Syrup made use of free recipe booklets and promotional giveaways, and Towle’s Circus Brand Syrup, one of its lesser-known brands,

The Man and

THE PIONEER OF PURITY AND FULL MEASURE
P. J. TOWLE

THIS CAN IS WARRANTED TO CONTAIN FULL MEASURE.

TOWLE'S LOG CABIN MAPLE SYRUP
THE TOWLE MAPLE SYRUP CO., ST. PAUL, MINN.

The Can

The Test of Purity

It is now over twenty years since the first can of Towle's Log Cabin Maple Syrup was sold. For all these years the name "Towle" has stood as a guarantee of purity and deliciousness. When you see the Log Cabin can, you know it is Towle's, and good full measure, too.

To prove to you the genuine, dainty, maple flavor of Towle's Log Cabin Syrups, we will send you until Dec. 1st, 1905, a little can full of either

Towle's Log Cabin Maple Syrup
or
Towle's Log Cabin Camp Syrup

and
Our Souvenir Spoon
For Only Ten Cents

the cost of postage and package alone. The souvenir spoon is silver plated with a gold lined bowl and will please anyone who gets it.

With the spoon we will also send you free a little book of candy recipes — the most delightful you ever tried. Mention your dealer's name and write today to

The Towle Maple Syrup Co.
68 Custer St., St. Paul, Minn.

This “The Man and The Can” advertisement from the December 1905 issue of *The Ladies' Home Journal* ensured customers of the purity of Log Cabin Maple Syrup and offered syrup samples, a commemorative spoon, and recipes for the cost of postage. Courtesy of Matthew M. Thomas.

even offered a series of small cardboard cutout wild animals that children could collect from their grocer.¹⁶

Contrary to popular belief and later marketing language, Towle did not invent the cabin-shaped

A novel, full-size Log Cabin Syrup display cabin built with maple logs in the Palace of Agriculture attracted curious onlookers at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition. That year and also at expositions in 1894 and in 1900, the company won accolades for its quality maple product. In *The History of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition: St. Louis World's Fair of 1904*, edited by Mark Bennitt and Frank Stockbridge, 1905.



Log Cabin and the Myth of Lincoln

Sometimes an advertising image takes on a mythical status. Such was the case with the quaint and often repeated story that Patrick J. Towle chose to brand and package his blended syrup in a log cabin-shaped can in admiration of Abraham Lincoln and the iconic association of Lincoln with log cabins.

However, a careful and extensive review of the history of the company and its advertising suggests that the Lincoln origins and inspiration for the can is a myth created and perpetuated in later years by the marketing people at the General Foods Corporation after they acquired Log Cabin Products Company in 1927. The earliest known example of this narrative appears in a full-page 1945 advertisement in *The Saturday Evening Post*. In actuality, the log cabin used by Towle was the centerpiece of an idealized maple syrup camp. This is evident from the scene on the earliest Log Cabin Syrup labels, which show men gathering sap with buckets and boiling it into syrup on a nearby fire in front of a log cabin, nearly ten years before the cabin-shaped tin was introduced.^a

There is no question that the log cabin name and logo were good choices. The cabin was a powerful and nostalgic image in the United States that has long resonated with many. Maple syrup and table syrup companies have done an excellent job selling themselves by appealing to romantic and nostalgic ideas of

the past and memories of childhood. Advertising copy has always taken advantage of creative license and has been less concerned with historical accuracy in lieu of catchy slogans, script, and a good story.

Another mythical concept associated with Log Cabin Syrup is the use of the year 1887 to mark the company's inception, when, in fact, the company was not started until 1888. The year 1887 was trademarked by General Foods in 1976 and embossed on their commemorative bicentennial bottles. In 1987, General Foods even packaged Log Cabin Syrup in special one-hundred-year anniversary cabin-shaped cans.^b

Reference to 1887 as the founding date appeared in advertising by General Foods as early as 1929. However, city directories, newspaper accounts, trademark records, and biographical summaries reveal that Towle was still settling bankruptcy proceedings in early 1888, and it was not until later that year that he moved to St. Paul from Chicago and began to develop and produce Log Cabin Syrup, briefly as Towle & McCormick and then as the incorporated Towle Syrup Company in 1889. Also, according to the *Official Gazette of the United States Patent Office*, the words "Log Cabin" for maple syrup were registered as a trademark in 1890, with the trademark registration noting that the mark had been in use since May 1, 1888.^c

can. Instead, it was the creation of company employee James W. Fuller, who obtained the design patent (US Design Patent D26,936) for the can in April 1897. Fuller became a member of Towle's original traveling sales team in 1889. By the mid-1890s, he relocated to Portland, Oregon, as the primary West Coast salesperson, and he represented the Towle Syrup Company at the California Mid-Winter International Exposition in San Francisco, where Log Cabin Syrup won a first-prize gold medal. A year and a half earlier, before securing the design patent for the can, Fuller designed and patented (US Design Patent D25,169) a small dessert spoon featuring the cabin logo at the end of the handle. These silver-plated "after dinner coffee spoons" were given away by the Towle Syrup Company as promotional devices beginning in 1896.¹⁷

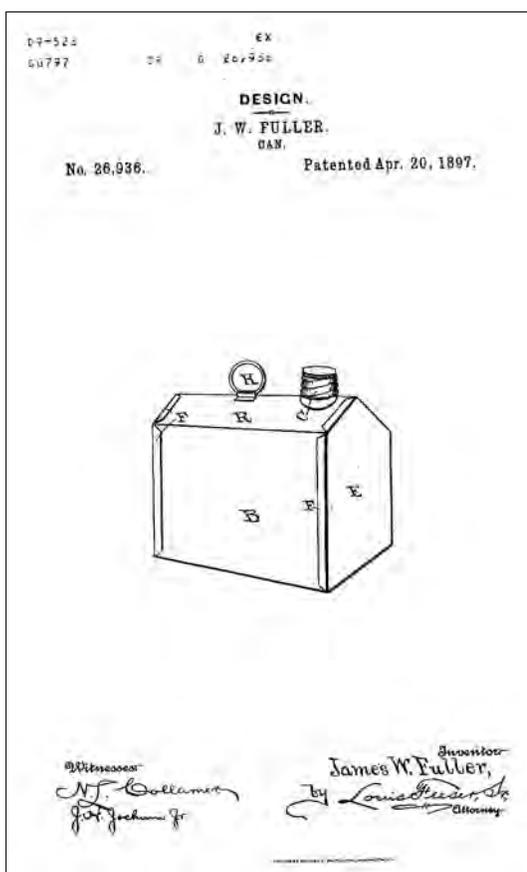
The earliest cabin-shaped metal cans were produced at St. Paul's Horne & Danz Company in their factory on East Filmore Street. The cans were hand-formed and hand-soldered with a wire-loop handle and featured bright red paper labels pasted on front and back panels and on the front roof. They came in pint, quart, half-gallon, and gallon sizes, as well as a small sample size. With the success and growing popularity of the cans, Horne & Danz ceased hand production and shifted to a more rapid and uniform mechanical approach using presses and dies.¹⁸

When Towle's Maple Syrup Company expanded its line of syrups in 1903, it added new colors to the labels to differentiate between syrup types. Red was reserved for Log Cabin Maple Syrup and Log Cabin Camp Syrup, blue was used for Log Cabin Penoché Syrup, and green represented Log Cabin Select Maple Syrup. In 1949, *Modern Packaging* magazine chose Log Cabin Syrup and its recognizable can as the inaugural nomination in the magazine's new packaging hall of fame.¹⁹

While the syrup company was headquartered in St. Paul, it wisely developed relationships and a physical presence in the heart of Vermont's maple syrup-producing region. As early as 1892, the Towle Syrup Company began a twenty-year relationship, purchasing syrup through J. M. Beeman and his son in Fairfax, Vermont. In the 1890s, Towle Maple Syrup even listed Fairfax alongside St. Paul on its labels and advertisements. In 1894, the Towle Company formally



James W. Fuller (c. 1894-1902). Courtesy of the Fuller Family Archives.



James W. Fuller's 1897 patent drawing for the soon-to-be famous cabin-shaped can. *J. W. Fuller design submitted to and approved by the US Patent and Trademark Office.*

opened a purchasing office there. In 1899, after changing the name to the Towle Maple Syrup Company, Towle opened a warehouse in Burlington for receiving and shipping the syrup to St. Paul.²⁰ Incorporating the word Vermont on labels and ads gave the appearance of authenticity when marketing its syrup, even as a Minnesota company. However, this did not prevent the prominent Vermont Senator Redfield Proctor from complaining loudly when he was served Log Cabin Syrup from St. Paul, which he said did not taste like maple syrup to his knowledgeable palate.²¹

Interruption and Redesign

On the morning of December 15, 1909, flames gutted the second and third floors of the St. Paul plant. The fire damaged the packaging equipment, destroyed a quarter of its stock, and left over one hundred employees temporarily without work. Insurance covered approximately \$100,000 of the loss. The company announced plans to rebuild immediately.²²

Word of the loss reached colleagues and maple syrup suppliers in New England. Vermont's "Maple King," George Cary, offered to sell his St. Johnsbury, Vermont, maple sugar

Adulterated Syrup and the 1906 Pure Food and Drug Act

In its first twenty years, the Towle family company creatively danced around the question of whether or not its products contained pure maple syrup, always using the words "maple syrup" on its labels, even if the syrups were not, in fact, 100 percent pure. It was common in the 1880s and '90s for syrup that was a blend of mostly glucose (corn syrup) or cane syrup and a small amount of real maple syrup to be labeled and sold simply as maple syrup. Makers of real maple syrup considered these blends to be adulterated and lobbied to make it illegal for blenders to use the words "maple syrup" on anything but 100 percent real maple syrup.

Glucose, was produced when hydrochloric acid was applied to inexpensive corn starch to force a chemical conversion of the starch to sugar. It was considered by many to be an unsafe, unnatural, or impure sugar. In contrast, more expensive cane sugar and maple sugar were naturally occurring sugars formed through simple concentration and evaporation of plant juices or sap. It was never revealed that Log Cabin Syrup was made with corn syrup, but in 1897 when corn syrup manufacturers were attempting to lock up the corn syrup supplies with a syrup trust, Patrick J. Towle curiously attended a secret meeting and even served as committee president and negotiating representative for the syrup blenders who were trying to obtain reasonable prices and secure access to supplies of corn syrup. That Towle would serve in this role suggests that his company was using corn syrup in its blend in the 1890s.^a

There were no reliable chemical analyses to differentiate between the various sugars in syrups in the 1890s, making it easy to get away with blended syrups. That changed in the early 1900s when a test was developed to identify the amount of corn syrup present in a syrup blend. It was at this time that the company most likely shifted to using cane syrup in its blend because it was not yet possible to differentiate the sugars of cane and maple

syrup. Log Cabin Syrup continued to defiantly label its cans and bottles as maple syrup. In fact, the company was so confident that its blend would not be revealed that its cans and ads included a "certificate of purity" and an offer of \$500 to anyone who could prove that Log Cabin Syrup was adulterated.^b

Government regulators addressed concerns with blended syrups by enacting labeling regulation. Early state laws were all over the board, with most only requiring that the label disclose the true ingredients in a package without stating how much maple syrup it contained. Log Cabin got ahead of this in 1904 by diversifying its product line to offer a range of syrups: some blends, some pure.^c

Syrup purists hoped that the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906 would bring an end to blends sold as maple syrup. To their disappointment, the act was aimed at the elimination of dangerous and unnecessary ingredients. Adulteration in the eyes of the federal government became the addition of unsafe, unhealthy, or inferior elements or chemicals. In response, syrup makers like the Towle Maple Syrup Company simply adjusted its labels, as required, to accurately state that the syrup was made from cane and maple syrup and expanded its use of the word "pure" to emphasize that there were no dangerous, unhealthy, or chemical ingredients. This was genius: it implied that other brands of syrup might be impure or, for the less careful label reader, that the Log Cabin Syrup package contained pure maple syrup.^d

Over the years, many states, including Minnesota, attempted to prosecute the company with claims of adulteration, misbranding, or a violation of labeling laws. In every example, the states failed to win their cases. Judges and attorneys general repeatedly found Log Cabin labels accurate and consistent with their ingredients and the language of the state or federal food and drug acts.^e

plant to Towle for use as a bottling and canning facility while Towle rebuilt the St. Paul location. Towle accepted the offer. The damaged Minnesota plant was repaired and production restored late that year. However, realizing the cost savings and marketing potential of a greater presence in the heart of the maple syrup world, the company continued to operate in St. Johnsbury for the next four years.²³

The interruption caused by the fire gave the Towle Maple Syrup Company an opportunity to make a few changes: the company name became the Towle Maple Products Company. Towle reduced its offering from three Log Cabin brand syrups (Penoche, Camp, and Log Cabin Cane and Maple) to one cane and maple blend called Log Cabin Syrup. It also redesigned the printed labels on its cabin cans, replacing the traditional paper label featuring a background of a solid block of bright red with a more graphically detailed label that resembled the log walls and wood-shingled roof of a cabin.²⁴

The Towle company had successfully emerged from the ashes of the 1909 fire, but more change and upheaval were coming. Following complications from heat exhaustion, Patrick J. Towle died on September 6, 1912, at the age of seventy-seven. With his death, sons William J. Towle

became president, Eugene A. Towle became vice president and continued as treasurer, Frank I. Towle remained as sales manager, and son-in-law Frank A. Eldredge maintained his role as secretary. Initially, life in the company moved ahead as before. Only a month later, in fact, it boasted in full-page ads of its “record-breaking shipment” of an entire trainload of Log Cabin Syrup from St. Paul to California. Such promotional hype reinforced the notion that Log Cabin was the most popular and best-selling brand of syrup in the country. At the same time, however, the new management consolidated all production in St. Paul and closed the Vermont plant on January 1, 1915.²⁵

Over the next fifteen years, Log Cabin Syrup maintained its reputation as the best-selling blended syrup on the market. The Towle family carried on and even improved many of the packaging, marketing, and advertising initiatives begun by their founder. They changed the name to Log Cabin Products Company in 1919 and expanded the use and scope of advertising with widespread, full-page color ads in nearly a dozen nationally distributed magazines. They modernized their packaging with the introduction of double-seamed closures on the can ends and shifted from paper labels to lithographed



William J. Towle, son of Patrick J. Towle and second company president, in his office at the Log Cabin plant in the West Side Flats (c. 1915). The other individuals in the room have not been identified. *Courtesy of the Towle Family Archives.*

cans—the label was applied in multiple colors of paint directly to the cans' exterior.²⁶

New Names and Faces

The Postum Company (formerly Postum Cereal Company) purchased the Log Cabin Products Company from the Towle family in October 1927 as part of Postum's aggressive program of acquiring successful, well-recognized products with national brand names and robust advertising histories. As new owners, Postum continued to blend and bottle Log Cabin Syrup in the St. Paul plant for another year and a half before moving all operations to its facilities in Hoboken, New Jersey, in 1929. That same year, the Postum Company changed its name to the more familiar General Foods Corporation.²⁷

With that, the Towle brothers retired from the syrup business. Proceeds from the sale of the Log Cabin Products Company were divided among Patrick Towle's children. Daughter Honora "Nonie" Towle Eldredge and her husband, Frank, reinvested their share from the sale, and, in late 1927, started the Hi-lex Bleach Company.²⁸

As a condition of the purchase, Towle's children, as the company owners, signed an agreement to refrain from using the trademarked Log Cabin Syrup name or cabin-shaped container and stay out of the syrup business for five years. According to Towle family history, a stipulation in the sale was that the Towle name remain a part of the Log Cabin Syrup trademark and logo while under General Foods ownership.²⁹

The Towles did retain ownership of the plant on Chicago Avenue and Custer Street, where they formed The Pioneer Maple Products Company in early 1929. Its leadership included the former Log Cabin Maple Products Company vice president and general manager John A. Bouthilet and Towle's grandson Eugene T. Eldredge.³⁰

The new company manufactured a blended syrup called Bucket Brand Syrup from 70 percent cane sugar and 30 percent maple sugar and advertised it as "rich maple goodness and maple at its best."³¹ It sold the brand in a unique pail-shaped, metal container colorfully painted to look like a wooden bucket. In 1933, after waiting the requisite five years, Towle grandsons Patrick J. Towle II and William J. Towle Jr. joined the company as vice president and treasurer, respectively, and the brand added the Towle

name to its label to become Towle's Bucket Brand Syrup. The result? Two completely separate blended syrup companies (General Foods and Pioneer Maple Products) using the Towle name on their labels at the same time.³²

The generous use of the term maple in Bucket Brand Syrup advertising, along with the implication that the product was some form of maple syrup and not simply maple flavored, eventually caught up with the company. In contrast to earlier unsuccessful attempts to denounce Log Cabin Syrup on the basis of label accuracy or inaccuracy, detractors sought to apply federal rules related to unfair competition in interstate commerce in their attack on the company's advertising and marketing language. In 1935, after reviewing a complaint that The Pioneer Maple Products Company was making improper use of the term maple and implying blended Bucket Brand Syrup was a maple syrup, the Federal Trade Commission ordered the company to cease and desist in using various maple-related descriptors in its advertising, promotions, and labels.³³

Following the ruling, national advertising for Bucket Brand Syrup scaled back, and, in 1940, the company stopped production all together. The syrup plant was reused as a warehouse. In 1946, the Minnesota Rag and Paper Stock Company occupied the location as a spillover work space and warehouse for the primary plant a few blocks away. The Towle building was ultimately demolished in 1967 as part of the Riverview Industrial Park urban renewal efforts for the West Side Flats. Nothing replaced it. Road redesign has since routed Plato Boulevard through the southern half of the former site of the Towle Syrup Company building.³⁴

A Log Cabin Legacy

Patrick J. Towle's decisions to advertise and distribute his syrup on a national scale and his willingness to take marketing risks separated Log Cabin Syrup from its blended syrup competitors and quickly made it the best-selling and most recognized product of its kind in the first half of the twentieth century. The significance of the cabin-shaped can to the sales and success of Log Cabin Syrup is hard to overstate. Years later, executives with Log Cabin Syrup admitted, "without the promotional showmanship this

symbol has provided . . . it is hardly likely that Log Cabin would have won and held its enviable top-ranking brand and sales position, no matter how good the product and regardless of how many advertising dollars were spent.”³⁵

The marketing success and visual recognition realized with the novel cabin can and, later, the Bucket Brand Syrup pail were applied to other brands in Towle’s lineup. Unique and innovative packaging became a theme in the company’s marketing.³⁶

The General Foods Corporation continued to manufacture Log Cabin Syrup in its New Jersey plant from 1929 until 1964, when it moved its canning operations to Dover, Delaware. Although the exterior scenes and logo design changed over time, the iconic cabin-shaped metal can continued to house the blended cane and maple syrup until 1956.³⁷ Over time, the percentage of maple syrup in the Log Cabin Syrup blend declined from 25 percent to 15 percent to 2 percent to zero. Throughout its ownership of Log Cabin Syrup, General Foods featured the Towle’s name on their Log Cabin Syrup labels, preserving and honoring the family and their association with Log Cabin Syrup far beyond their years with the company.³⁸

Acknowledgments: Special thanks to members of the Towle family for insight into family history. Additional thanks to Log Cabin Syrup antique collector Norman Reed for sharing his research and images of Towle syrup tins. Thanks, too, to the Fuller family for knowledge and a photo of James Fuller, their ancestor and inventor of the cabin-shaped tin.



Examples of other Towle’s syrup containers and brands. Note the Towle’s Bucket Brand Syrup at the center of the group. *Courtesy of Norman Reed.*

Originally from St. Cloud, Matthew Thomas is an independent researcher focusing his inquiries and writings on topics related to the history and archaeology of the maple syrup industry. Thomas maintains the website www.maplesyruphistory.com and has written two books—Maple King: The Making of a Maple Syrup Empire and A Sugarbush Like None Other: Adirondack Maple Syrup and the Horse Shoe Forestry Company.

NOTES

1. The Towle name is pronounced “towel,” as in “paper towel,” as shared with the author by descendants of Patrick J. Towle.

2. W. B. Hennessy, “Patrick J. Towle,” *Past and Present of St. Paul, Minnesota* (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1906), 288; Albert Nelson Marquis, ed., “Towle, Patrick J.,” *The Book of Minnesotans: A Biographical Dictionary of Leading Living Men of the State of Minnesota* (Chicago: A. N. Marquis & Co., 1907), 517; Henry A. Castle, “Patrick J. Towle,” *History of St. Paul and Vicinity 3* (Chicago and New York: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1912), 1057-1058; “Dissolution and Notice of Partnership,” *The Chicago Tribune*, January 16, 1870, 1; “Dissolution and Limited Partnership,” *The Chicago Tribune*, October 21,

1872, 5; “Dissolution and Notice of Limited Partnership,” *The Chicago Tribune*, January 7, 1875, 1; “Dissolution of Limited Partnership;” and “Copartnership Notice,” *The Chicago Tribune*, January 1, 1881, 8.

3. “P. J. Towle Confesses Judgment,” *The Chicago Tribune*, January 25, 1888, 3; “Heavy Failure,” *Minneapolis Tribune*, January 25, 1888, 3; “‘The Fair’ Groceries,” *The Chicago Tribune*, February 26, 1888, 5.

4. Castle, “Patrick J. Towle.” In 1860, Patrick J. Towle married Sarah Ann Hogan (b. 1835). They had seven children. Sarah Towle died four years before her husband in 1908; “Standard News,” *The Northwestern Standard*, January 23, 1886, 5; “An Autumn Wedding,” *The Saint Paul Daily Globe*, October 4, 1888, 2. The two families’

connections were especially strong with their respective daughters, Mary "May" Towle and Annie Kelly, who were bridesmaids in one another's weddings.

5. "Towle & McCormick," *Saint Paul City Directory* (St. Paul: R. L. Polk & Co, 1888), 1309; Dean Boyer, "Log Cabin Syrup," in *Encyclopedia of Consumer Brands 1*, edited by Janice Jorgensen (Detroit: St. James Press, 1994), 344-346; "Log Cabin . . .," *General Foods Family Album* (New York: General Foods Corporation, 1948), 16; James L. Ferguson, *General Foods Corporation: A Chronicle of Consumer Satisfaction* (New York: The Newcomen Society of the United States, 1985), 17; Becky Jones, "Syrup producer sparks nostalgia during birthday," *The Manhattan Mercury*, March 22, 1988, 22. The Log Cabin name was trademarked by the Towle Syrup Company. Registration information indicates that the name was in use as early as May 1888. The suggestion that Towle specifically developed his syrup blend to combat the high cost of pure maple syrup has come from marketing language put forward by General Foods Corporation, the later owner of the Log Cabin Syrup brand. There are no known documents or statements by Towle himself or from the time he was living to support this idea. As with the idea that he chose the log cabin to honor Abraham Lincoln, these anecdotes have been repeated and enshrined in American advertising history.

6. "Towle Syrup Co.," *Saint Paul City Directory* (St. Paul: R. L. Polk & Co, 1891), 130, 169; "Notice," *Saint Paul Daily Globe*, April 1, 1888, 2; "Genuine Log Cabin Maple Syrup," *Morning Daily Herald* (Albany, OR), December 22, 1888, 3; "Announcement," *Saint Paul Daily Globe*, April 12, 1889, 8; "Saint Paul," *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, April 19, 1889, 3. Following the dissolution of his short-lived partnership with Patrick J. Towle, Thomas F. McCormick partnered with Frank E. Creelman to sell wholesale teas, coffee, and spices on Sibley Avenue before forming McCormick, Behnke & Co. and locating around the corner from the Towle Syrup Company on the corner of Fourth and Wacouta Streets.

7. "Towle Syrup Co.," *Saint Paul City Directory* (St. Paul: R. L. Polk & Co, 1900), 1495; "Towle Company is Burned Out," *St. Paul Globe*, April 2, 1901, 1, 3; "Minneapolis Will Supply the Syrup," *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, April 4, 1901, 11. According to news accounts, the Towle company did briefly consider relocating to Minneapolis following the St. Paul fire; "Syrup Firm to Rebuild," *St. Paul Globe*, May 17, 1901 10; "In All Ways Modern," *St. Paul Globe*, March 4, 1900, 12. One year before the fire occurred, architect C. H. Johnson was preparing plans for a new Towle warehouse on the west side. In the end, Mark Fitzpatrick designed plans for the Chicago Avenue and Custer Street building.

8. Norman Reed, "The Log Cabin Syrup Tin—A History," *Tin Type* 11, no. 7 (1981): 2-14. Advertising by the company in national magazines was exclusively limited to promoting Log Cabin Syrup packaged in the cabin-shaped can.

9. Juliann Sivulka, *Soap, Sex, and Cigarettes: A Cultural History of American Advertising* (Boston: Cengage Learning, 2012), 47; Diana Twede, "History of Packag-

ing," in *The Routledge Companion to Marketing History*, edited by D. G. Brian Jones and Mark Tadajewski (London: Routledge, 2016), 116-117; Richard S. Tedlow, *New and Improved: The Story of Mass Marketing in America* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1996), 114; "Log Cabin Syrup: Nominated for Packaging Hall of Fame," *Modern Packaging* 22, no. 5 (1949): 86-91, 180; Susan Strasser, *Satisfaction Guaranteed: The Making of the American Mass Market* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 1989), 32, 90-91.

10. Twede, 120; Tedlow, 14; Strasser, 90-91.

11. W. Livingston Larned, "Novel Containers Stimulate Demand for Products," *Printer's Ink Monthly* 1, no. 6 (May 1920): 45-46; Russell B. Kingman, "Psychology of Consumer Preference," *The American Food Journal* (January 1921): 33-38.

12. Ross D. Petty, "A History of Brand Identity Protection and Brand Marketing," in *The Routledge Companion to Marketing History*, 97-114; Glen Buck, *Trademark Power: An Expedition into an Unprobed and Inviting Wilderness* (Chicago: Munroe & Southworth Publishers, 1916), 82-83; Strasser, 32.

13. Larned, 45-46.

14. Russell B. Kingman, "Psychology of Consumer Preference," *American Food Journal* 16 (1921): 33-34.

15. Daniel Delis Hill, *Advertising to the American Woman, 1900-1999* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2002); Katherine J. Parkin, *Food is Love: Advertising and Gender Roles in Modern America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 8-12; 139-144, 193-194.

16. Mark Bennitt and Frank Parker Stockbridge, *History of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition: Comprising the History of the Louisiana Territory, the Story of the Louisiana Purchase and a Full Account of the Great Exposition, Embracing the Participation of the States and Nations of the World, and Other Events of the St. Louis World's Fair of 1904* (St. Louis: Universal Exposition Publishing Company, 1905), 652; Strasser, 131, 164-167.

17. J. W. Fuller, "Design, 26,936, Can," and "Design, 25,169, Handle for Spoons," accessed February 24, 2022, <https://patents.google.com/patent/USD26936S/en?q=D26%2c936> and <https://patents.google.com/patent/USD25169S/en?q=D25%2c169>; "J. W. Fuller's Body Found," *Morning Register Sun*, November 23, 1902, 1; "James W. Fuller's Will," *The Morning Oregonian*, December 30, 1902, 14. Suffering from exhaustion and nervous prostration, James Fuller died by suicide at the age of forty-one in October 1902 near his home in Portland, Oregon. Fuller enjoyed a royalty contract with the Towle Syrup Company for use of the can he designed and patented. With his death, the proceeds of the contract were divided between Fuller's widow, Lillian Fuller, and his sister until the design patent expired in 1911.

18. Absorbed by Can Trust," *Saint Paul Globe*, March 26, 1901, 2; "Big Fire at St. Paul," *Little Falls Herald*, August 31, 1906, 6; Reed, 3-4. Horne & Danz was purchased by the American Can Company in 1901. In 1906, the American Can Co. plant on East Filmore Avenue was destroyed by fire. The company moved to North Prior

Avenue and Minnehaha Avenue in St. Paul's Midway neighborhood.

19. *Modern Packaging*, 86-91.

20. "Refuting a Charge of Fraud," *Burlington Free Press*, May 28, 1892, 4; "Fairfax," *The Cambridge Transcript*, March 16, 1894, 5; "Fairfax," *St. Albans Daily Messenger*, May 27, 1896, 3; "The Towle Maple Syrup Co. of St. Paul has Leased a Building in the City," *Burlington Free Press*, February 11, 1899, 5; "Fairfax," *St. Albans Daily Messenger*, December 12, 1900, 4; "Fairfax," *St. Albans Daily Messenger*, September 10, 1903, 6. James M. Beeman, his son Adelbert B. Beeman, and his grandson Arthur A. Beeman all operated as maple syrup buyers for the Towle company in the 1890s and early 1900s.

21. Betty Ann Lockhart, *Maple Sugarin' in Vermont: A Sweet History* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2008), 115-118.

22. "Towle Syrup Plant Destroyed," *Minneapolis Morning Tribune*, December 16, 1909, 1; "Loss is Nearly \$200,000," *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, December 17, 1909, 6; "Big St. Paul Fire Controlled," *Fire and Water Engineering* 47 (1910): 47.

23. "Towle Maple Company to Establish Big Branch House in St. Johnsbury," *St. Johnsbury Republican*, March 2, 1910, 1; "Will Enlarge Plant: Head of Towle Maple Products Company Came Here to Inspect New Property," *St. Johnsbury Caledonian*, March 16, 1910, 5. In June 1910, Cary Maple Sugar Company's John Rickaby came aboard to oversee the establishment and operation of Towle's new St. Johnsbury plant; "Towle Maple Products Co. Has Leased Pillsbury Baldwin Plant," *St. Johnsbury Caledonian*, March 13, 1913, 1. For more on the history of the Cary Company and its relationship to Towle's Log Cabin Syrup, see Matthew M. Thomas, *Maple King: The Making of a Maple Syrup Empire* (Vallejo, CA: CreateSpace Publishing, 2018).

24. Reed, 2-14; Cumulative investigation by author.

25. "Patrick J. Towle Expires Suddenly: Head of St. Paul Syrup Firms Dies Sitting in Chair at Home of His Son," *Pioneer Press*, September 7, 1912, 1; "Factory Closed: Towle Maple Products Co. Ceases Operations Here January 1," *St. Johnsbury Republican*, December 30, 1914, 8; "To Leave St. Johnsbury," *St. Johnsbury Caledonian*, December 30, 1914, 1.

26. Reed, 2-14; Cumulative investigation by author.

27. "Log Cabin....," *General Foods Family Album*, 16; "Effective tomorrow, July 25, the Postum Company, Inc. changes its name to General Foods Corporation," *Chicago Tribune*, July 24, 1929, 20; Hans G. Rolfes, *General Foods: America's Premier Food Company* (Poughkeepsie, NY: Hudson House, 2007), 88, 163.

28. William J. Towle died a few years after the sale of the company in 1929. Eugene A. Towle passed away in 1936, and Frank I. Towle died in 1943. Frank A. Eldredge married Honora (Nonie) Towle in 1891 while working as an attorney in St. Paul. Prior to coming to St. Paul in 1888, he served as mayor of Big Stone City, South Dakota; "Grocers Introduce New Cleaning Necessity," *Sioux City Journal*, September 18, 1927, 30; "Frank A. Eldredge," *The Minneapolis Tribune*, October 28, 1932,

16; "Investment Group Buys Hi-Lex Bleach," *Star Tribune*, November 22, 1991, 37. Eldredge began work at the Towle Syrup Company in 1892 as a cashier before moving to the prominent roles of company treasurer and then secretary, where he remained until the company was sold in 1927. The Eldredge family owned and operated the Hi-Lex Bleach Company until its 1970 sale.

29. Angela Towle Gatto, interview with author, March 27, 2020.

30. *The Tide of Advertising and Marketing* 39 (January 1935): 29, 79; "New Corporations," *The News Journal* (Wilmington, DE), April 24, 1929, 22. Because Eugene T. Eldredge was not a Towle by name, he was technically not in violation of the agreement: a subtle, but important, and legal, difference.

31. "Now the 'Good Old Maple Sap Time' is Anytime!," advertisement, *El Paso Times*, November 8, 1930, 6. One of the mottos used on most of the Bucket Brand Syrup ads was "Maple at its Best."

32. In addition to three sizes of metal pail-shaped containers, Bucket Brand Syrup was sold in three sizes of glass bottles. Pioneer Maple Products also made a Bonnie Brand Golden Syrup, a table syrup that contained corn syrup, cane sugar, and vanilla flavoring.

33. "Complaint in the Matter of Pioneer Maple Products Company," *Federal Trade Commission Decisions, Findings, Orders and Stipulations, June 25, 1935 to January 13, 1936* 21 (Washington DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1938): 294-297.

34. *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Saint Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota* 5 (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1904; revised 1939, 1946, and 1950); Hal Quarforth, "St. Paul Plans 2,000-acre Site for Industry Along Mississippi," *The Minneapolis Star*, December 7, 1960, 1B; City of St. Paul wrecking permit #74406—July 20, 1967.

35. *Modern Packaging*, 86.

36. Between 1900 and 1906, Towle's Target Brand Table Syrup, a blend of cane and corn syrup, was sold in round metal cans that sat on their side, similar in appearance to a canteen. In the 1920s, Towle's Wigwam Brand blended cane and maple sugar syrup was packaged in wedge-shaped metal cans, vaguely resembling the shape of a Native American tepee or wigwam featured in the earlier syrup logos. For an image of the Target Brand round canteen-like can, see Reed, 12; US Patent No. 1399168 William J. Towle, "Liquid-Containing Can," application filed December 9, 1920. Towle's Wigwam brand syrup appears to have been introduced as a brand in 1903, with the unique wedge-shaped cans in use in 1922 following the awarding of the container patent.

37. Can production ceased between 1942 and 1948. All sheet metal supplies were redirected to the war effort. Log Cabin Syrup was only sold in glass containers.

38. Since the mid-1980s, the Log Cabin Syrup brand has gone through a series of ownership changes. In 1985, Philip Morris Inc., purchased the General Foods Corporation, including the Log Cabin Syrup brand. Three years later, it acquired Kraft Foods and later

merged Kraft with its General Foods arm to form the Kraft General Foods Group. In 1997, Kraft sold the Log Cabin Syrup brand to Aurora Foods Inc., the owner of the Mrs. Butterworth's brand. Following bankruptcy in 2004, Aurora Foods merged with Pinnacle Foods, and, in 2018, Conagra Brands acquired Pinnacle Foods, providing the current corporate home for the Log Cabin Syrup brand.

Notes to Sidebar on page 18

a. Log Cabin Syrup full-page advertisement, *The Saturday Evening Post*, November 24, 1945, 51; "Log Cabin Syrup: Nominated for Packaging Hall of Fame," *Modern Packaging* 22, no. 5 (1949): 86-91,180; Thomas Hine, *The Total Package: The Evolution and Secret Meanings of Boxes, Bottles, Cans, and Tubes* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1995), 89; "Towle, Patrick, J.," *Little Sketches of Big Folks in Minnesota* (St. Paul: R. L. Polk & Co., 1907), 399.

b. See General Foods 1987 copyright information on syrup cans; "New Products," *Press and Sun Bulletin* (Binghamton, NY), November 18, 1987, 29.

c. Towle & McCormick, "Saint Paul City Directory (St. Paul: R. L. Polk & Co, 1888), 1309; "Saint Paul," *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, April 19, 1889, 3; "Trade-marks," *The Official Gazette of the United States Patent Office* 51, no. 4 (April 22, 1890): 482.

Notes to Sidebar on page 20

a. James Harvey Young, *Pure Food: Securing the Federal Food and Drugs Act of 1906* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989); "For Trust in Syrup: Mixers Representing \$5,000,000 Meet to Combine," *Chicago Tribune*, July 20, 1897, 2.

b. Deborah Jean Warner, *Sweet Stuff: An American History of Sweeteners from Sugar to Sucralose* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Scholarly Press, 2011), 165-166; C. H. Jones, "Detection of Adulteration in Maple Sugar and Maple Syrup," *17th Annual Report of the Vermont Agricultural Experiment Station, 1903-1904*, 446-447; C. H. Jones, "The National Pure Food Law and the Vermont Maple Sugar Industry," *Proceedings of the Fourteenth Annual Meeting of the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association* (Montpelier: Edson The Printer, 1907), 21-25; Towle's Log Cabin Maple Syrup advertising trade card, 1894, from the collection of Norman Reed.

c. Log Cabin Penoche Syrup was cane syrup used for making candies and confections. Log Cabin Camp Syrup was a blend of cane and maple syrup, and Log Cabin Maple Syrup and Log Cabin Selected Maple Syrup were supposedly 100 percent real maple syrup.

d. *Food Inspection Decision 75: The Labeling of Mix-*

tures of Cane and Maple Sirups, USDA Board of Food and Drug Inspection, July 5, 1907, 1. The United States Department of Agriculture issued a directive in 1907 stating, "When both maple and cane sugars are used in the production of sirup the label should be varied according to the relative proportion of the ingredients. The name of the sugar present in excess of 50 per cent of the total sugar content should be given the greater prominence on the label." That is, it should be given first. For example, a syrup with sugars consisting of 51 percent cane and 49 percent maple sugar would be properly branded as "Sirup Made from Cane and Maple Sugar" or as "Cane and Maple Sugar." As expected, Log Cabin complied completely and even added specific language to their label that their syrup was "Guaranteed Under the Food and Drugs Act of June 30, 1906."

e. "Refuting a Charge of Fraud," *Burlington Free Press*, May 28, 1892, 4; "Maple Syrup," *Burlington Free Press*, February 24, 1894, 5; "Syrup is Not Doped," *The St. Paul Globe*, June 24, 1904, 2; "Maple Syrup Is Released," *La Grande Observer*, February 1, 1915, 8; "Interpretation of Section 5785, G. C., as to What is Not 'Misbranding' Under Statute—When Product Contains Substantial Proportion of Each Said Ingredients on Label—What Constitutes Substantial Proportion of Any Ingredient—Towle's Log Cabin Syrup," *Opinions of the Attorney General of Ohio For the Period of January 10, 1916 to January 10, 1917*, 1 (Springfield, OH: 1918), 255-259; "State Forbids Sale of Disputed Syrup," *The Sacramento Bee*, May 6, 1918, 4; "State and Federal Judge at Odds on Syrup Quarantine," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 17, 1918, 11.

Notes from By the Numbers

a. Based on an analysis of the percentage of maple syrup and cane syrup printed on the labels of Log Cabin Syrup cans and bottles.

b. An examination of ingredient lists and labels of containers of Log Cabin Syrup in 2021 indicates that pure maple syrup has been eliminated from the formula.

c. Based on selling prices of Log Cabin Syrup collectibles observed by the author on eBay and other online auctions between 2015 and 2020.

d. United States Patent and Trademark Office Design Patent (D26,936) for the ambiguously titled "Design for a Can" awarded on April 20, 1897.

e. Based on a study of one hundred years of Log Cabin Syrup advertisements in newspapers and national magazines.

f. Based on an examination of advertisements for Log Cabin Syrup from newspapers and locations in the US.

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RAMSEY COUNTY History

A PUBLICATION OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Preserving our past, informing our present, inspiring our future.

The Ramsey County Historical Society (RCHS) strives to innovate, lead, and partner in preserving the knowledge of our community, deliver inspiring history programming, and incorporate local history in education.

The Society was established in 1949 to preserve the Jane and Heman Gibbs Farm in Falcon Heights, which the family acquired in 1849. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974, the original programs told the story of the Gibbs family. In 2000, with the assistance of a Dakota Advisory Council, RCHS also began interpreting Dakota culture and lifeways, now telling the stories of the remarkable relationship between Jane Gibbs and the Dakota people of Ĥeyáta Othújwe (Cloud Man's Village).

In 1964, the Society began publishing its award-winning magazine *Ramsey County History*. In 1978, the organization moved to St. Paul's Landmark Center, a restored Federal Courts building on the National Register of Historic Places. An expansion of the Research Center was completed in 2010 and rededicated in 2016 as the Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Research Center.

RCHS offers public programming for youth and adults. Visit www.rchs.com for details of upcoming History Revealed programs, summer camps, courthouse and depot tours, and more. The Society serves more than 15,000 students annually on field trips or through school outreach. Programs are made possible by donors, members, corporations, and foundations, all of whom we appreciate deeply. If you are not a member of RCHS, please join today and help bring history to life for more than 50,000 people every year.

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RCHS is committed to ensuring it preserves and presents our county's history. As we continue our work to incorporate more culturally diverse histories, we have made a commitment to diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion that is based on this core idea: RCHS exists to serve ALL who call Ramsey County home. To learn more, please see www.rchs.com/about.

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Mnisóta Makhóche, the land where the waters are so clear they reflect the clouds, extends beyond the modern borders of Minnesota and is the ancestral and contemporary homeland of the Dakhóta (Dakota) people. It is also home to the Anishinaabe and other Indigenous peoples, all who make up a vibrant community in Mnisóta Makhóche. RCHS acknowledges that its sites are located on and benefit from these sacred Dakota lands.

RCHS is committed to preserving our past, informing our present, and inspiring our future. Part of doing so is acknowledging the painful history and current challenges facing the Dakota people just as we celebrate the contributions of Dakota and other Indigenous peoples.

Find our full Land Acknowledgment Statement on our website, www.rchs.com. This includes actionable ways in which RCHS pledges to honor the Dakota and other Indigenous peoples of Mnisóta Makhóche.

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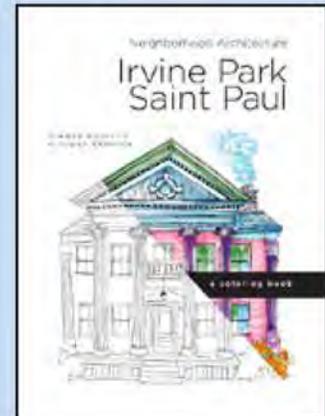


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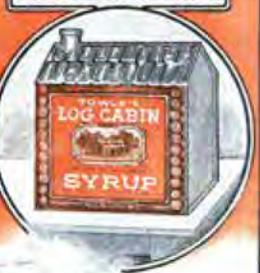


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TOWLE'S LOG CABIN SYRUP

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THE SYRUP CAN



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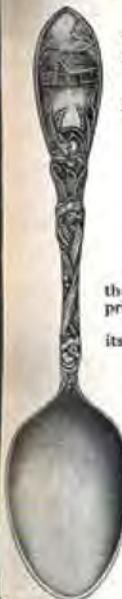
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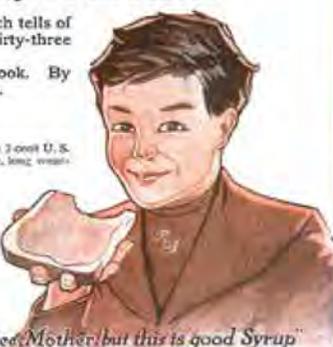
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<small>In the Virgin Mtns. Range, France.</small>	<small>In the center of North America.</small>
<small>San Francisco, Cal.</small>	
<small>World's Great Headquarters.</small>	



Get Mother, but this is good Syrup

"The Man and The Can"

Patrick J. Towle and the St. Paul Origins of Log Cabin Syrup

MATTHEW M. THOMAS, PAGE 14

Color advertisements were fairly rare in the early twentieth century. This one, which appeared in the October 10, 1910 issue of *The Saturday Evening Post*, is aimed directly at young boys, who loved syrup on their pancakes and bread, and their mothers, who most likely made the purchasing decisions for the family. Log Cabin Syrup was produced in St. Paul. From the collection of Matthew M. Thomas.