

KV-4 - THE TAYLOR'S POISON BOTTLE

By Bob Barbour, #19

The Taylor's poison bottle was patented on November 19th, 1905 by Mr. Taylor of Liverpool, England. The bottle has a very unique shape, with a narrow front panel embossed vertically NOT TO BE TAKEN, The adjacent side panels angle steeply away and are embossed with raised bumps. The back is rounded and usually has CAUTION embossed at the top and the registration number REG_D N_O 469210 at the base. The base is embossed with Taylor, Liverpool and the capacity in ounces. Kuhn has listed the Taylor's poison as KV-4.

There are 3 known variants of the above description. (1.) The back is plain with no embossing (2.) The back has rows of raised bumps at the top and bottom, with Caution at the top and registration number at the base (3.) The back has raised bumps at the top and bottom with no other embossing on the back. This third variant matches the original patent drawing that was submitted in 1905. (See Fig 1.)

The Taylor's poisons are found in a number of different sizes including the ½, 1, 1 ½, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, and 20 ounce. To date the 10, 12, and 16 ounce have not been recorded. All sizes are found in the initial description. Variant 1 so far is only found in the 4 ounce size. Variant 2 is only found in the 1 ½ and the 20 ounce sizes. Variant 3 is only found in the 4 ounce size (?) and only in cobalt blue, (See Fig. 2.) otherwise all Taylor's are found in various shades of green.

I have included two photos of the 2 different 20 ounce Taylor's. Variant 2 is on the left, KV-4 is on the right. Notice the four rows of raised bumps at the top and bottom, left and the absence of raised bumps, right. (See Fig 3.) The 1 1/2oz. has only 2 rows of raised bumps due to the smaller size of the bottle.

The Taylor's and the Wilson's are the only two non-ammonia English poison bottles that have CAUTION embossed with NOT TO BE TAKEN. I am not sure of the significance of this, but it is interesting to note.

The Taylor's poison is a great of example of English poisons with subtle variations. No one knows for sure why they occur. We can speculate that Variant 2 was the original version, because of the close similarity with the patent drawing. But then you have to ask, "Why the other variants?" That's what I love about collecting bottles. There will always be questions that for now there are no answers.

Again my thanks to Brian Thatcher and to Angus Rawthorne who provided the pictures of the cobalt Taylor's. Angus dug the cobalt Taylor's somewhere in England. Exactly where, only Angus knows the details.

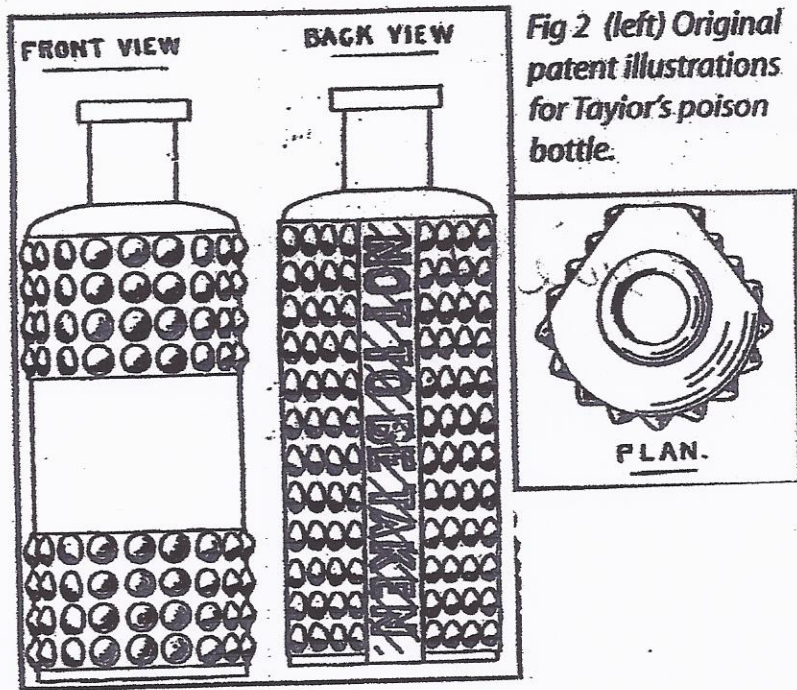


Fig. 1 Variant 3



Fig. 2 Variant 3, 4 oz.
Front & Back

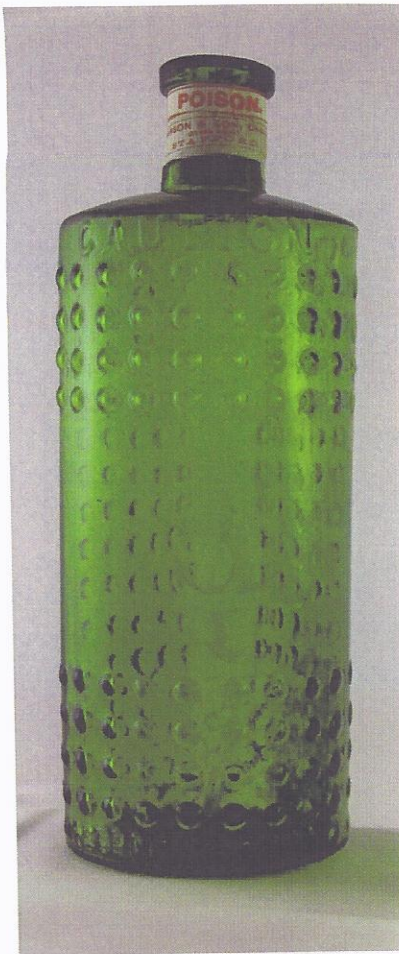
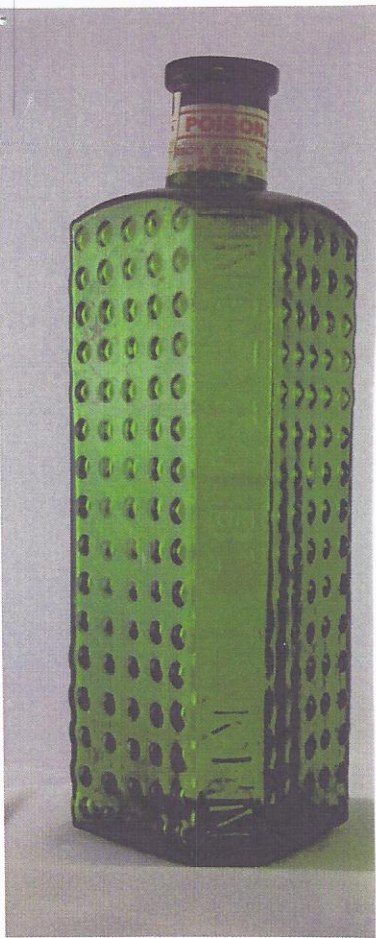


Fig. 3 Variant 2 20 oz.
front & back

KV-4 20 oz. and 4 oz.
Note color variation.

