



# The Signevierist

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## FOREIGN MARKS USED in the UNITED STATES

ALTHOUGH THE TWO following fire mark books indicate that foreign insurers issued fire marks in the United States, primary source documentation is poor.

Alwin E. Bulau's *Footprints of Assurance* notes that four different English companies issued marks in America:

London and Lancashire, 925  
North British and Mercantile, 934, 934VA and 934VB  
Royal, 893  
Sun Fire Office, 533 and 554.

Bill Evenden's *German Fire Marks* lists five different German insurers that issued *shilder* for "use in English speaking countries":

Aachen and Munich, 2Z  
Hamburg-Bremen, 65B (also B1384)  
National General, 98O  
North German, 100B  
Transatlantic, 143A and 143F.

Except for the above Royal, there is no documentation that any of the above marks were actually attached to buildings in the United States.

Following are the few documented foreign marks in the United States:

- Fire Insurance Association, GB-FA-1. Duane and Carol Lupke removed this mark from a building in Chillicothe, Ohio.
- London, Liverpool and Globe, 947-X-1. Mort Werner reports that this mark was purchased from an antique dealer and was "probably used in the United States."
- Royal, B893. Duane Lupke reports that he found two in southern Indiana. Duane also says that he also found a copper Royal, B891 on a "barn down near Cincinnati."
- Scottish Commercial Fire and Life, 948-X-1. Bill and Lore Evenden's rare mark has a maker's name on it, "Strobridge & Co. Mfs. Cin. O."

In an attempt to locate more primary sources to validate information in Bulau and Evenden's books, I ask FMCA members let me know if they have any additional documentation.

Please e-mail your information to me at [firemark2@comcast.net](mailto:firemark2@comcast.net).

Bob Shea

## MORE ZINC AETNA'S?

PETER FABER recently discovered that a B98, Aetna Insurance Company, he had wasn't tin but zinc. The measurements are only 1/16" of an inch from Bulau's. The other Aetna zinc variant is B107VA. Disregarding the minor size variations, the only difference of the B98 and B107 variants is the material; zinc vs. tin.

Is it possible that there are more zinc Aetna marks out there than previously thought?

I'm sure that every member, who collects tin marks, has an Aetna. Would you please put a magnet on your Aetna mark. If the magnet sticks then it's tin, more properly called tinned sheet iron. If it doesn't stick, it's zinc.

Let me know if you find a zinc mark that you previously thought to be tin. This will give you a chance to revisit and enjoy your marks that you have hanging on the wall.

Send your e-mail to me at [firemark2@comcast.net](mailto:firemark2@comcast.net) along with the Bulau number.

Bob Shea



## "HOUSE PLATE" MANUFACTURERS

WITH ALL the different fire insurance companies issuing fire marks in the United States there are only a handful of marks that have the manufacturers' name on them. Following is a list of the marks found in the Addenda:

Fire Association of Philadelphia	94-V-B	Wells & Hope
Forest City Insurance Company	445-X-1	Shober & Carqueville, Chicago
Germania Fire Insurance Company	299-X-1	Tin Plate Decorating Company of N.Y.
Insurance Company of North America	53-X-1	George Rutledge, 302 Broadway, Factory 311 East 22 <sup>nd</sup> . Street, New York, N.Y.
Rockford Insurance Company (Reported in 2005-2 Signevierist)	405	C. W. Shonk, Sign Mfr, Chicago, Ill.
Scottish Commercial Fire & Life Insurance Company	948-X-1	Strobridge & Co. MFS. Cin. O.

The dates of some of the manufacturers can be found in *Signs of Insurance* starting on page 137.

In the interest of obtaining more information on fire mark manufacturers, I ask that the membership take the time to help gather the company names on any of the tin plated marks they have. This is another opportunity enjoy your marks.

Send your e-mail to me at [firemark2@comcast.net](mailto:firemark2@comcast.net) along with the Bulau number.

Bob Shea



## FOR SALE

I HAVE BEEN ASKED to sell a large collection of fire insurance advertising material for a former and retired member of the FMCA. The major part of this collection consists of nearly 80 paperweights. It would make sense to offer these as an entire lot to someone interested in paperweights. If no one is interested in that option, I will offer them about 10 to 15 at a time on eBay. If anyone has an interest, please contact

Ralph Jennings  
675 Forrest Creek Drive  
Ambler, PA 19002  
Phone 215-646-7178 (Evenings only)

### AMERICAN CAST IRON FIRE MARKS

CAST IRON fire marks are the most collectable of American fire marks. In fact, some FMCA members only collect cast iron marks. For those who have cast iron marks, here are a few facts:

- The Mutual Assurance Company, Green Tree, issued the first cast iron mark in 1804, B36.
- Forty-two fire insurance companies issued fire marks. See list following. (The Germantown Mutual, B442, while a desirable addition to most collectors, is not included. This mark issued in 1926 for the Philadelphia Sesquicentennial is a promotional piece.)
- Seven Philadelphia fire insurance companies issued cast iron marks, the most of any US city.
- Only six companies outside the East Coast states issued cast iron marks.
- Most likely, the Fire Association of Philadelphia, who issued cast iron fire marks for over 50 years, issued the most marks.

Bob Shea

NAME	CITY	STATE	ORG. DATE	END DATE	Bulau #
Associated Firemen's Insurance Co.	Baltimore	MD	1847	1899	166
Associated Firemen's Insurance Co.	Pittsburgh	PA	1850	1930	191
Baltimore Equitable Society	Baltimore	MD	1794	P	<u>54-61*</u>
Chambersburg Fire Insurance Co.	Chambersburg	PA	1833	1872	125
Charleston Fire Insurance Co.	Charleston	SC	1811	1896	81
Citizens Fire Insurance Co.	Columbia	SC	1896	1896	473
Citizens' Fire, Marine & Life Insurance Co.	Wheeling	WV	1856	1877	275
City Insurance Co.	Cincinnati	OH	1849	1851	157
Clay Fire & Marine Insurance Co.	Newport	KY	1856	1879	276
Dutchess County Fire, Marine & Life Insurance Co.	Poughkeepsie	NY	1814	1906	82
Eagle Insurance Co.	Cincinnati	OH	1850	1894	195
Eagle Mutual Fire Insurance Co.	Boston	MA	1895	1897	471
Fire Association of Philadelphia	Philadelphia	PA	1817	1958	<u>83-93</u>
Fire Department Insurance Co.	Cincinnati	OH	1837	1855 ca	<u>136-138</u>
Firemen's Insurance Co.	Baltimore	MD	1825	1904	<u>114-117</u>
Firemen's Insurance Co.	Pittsburgh	PA	1834	1845	127
Firemens Insurance Co. of New Orleans, Louisiana	New Orleans	LA	1874	1899	446

Firemen's Ins. Co. of Washington & Georgetown in the District of Columbia	Washington	DC	1837	1957	139
Guardian Fire & Marine Insurance Co.	Philadelphia	PA	1867	1871	410
Guardian Mutual Fire Insurance Co.	Pittsburgh	PA	1904	1906	485
Home Insurance Co.	New Haven	CT	1859	1871	301
Hope Mutual Insurance Co.	Philadelphia	PA	1854	1860	252
Insurance Company of North America	Philadelphia	PA	1794	P	<u>47</u>
Lexington Fire, Life & Marine Insurance Co.	Lexington	KY	1836	1872	132
Lumbermen's Insurance Co.	Philadelphia	PA	1873	1950	442
Memphis City Fire & General Insurance Co.	Memphis	TN	1870	1887	437
Milwaukee Mechanics' Mutual Insurance Co.	Milwaukee	WI	1852	1951	215
Mobile Fire Department Insurance Co.	Mobile	AL	1866	1879	395
Montgomery County Mutual Fire Insurance Co.	Dayton	OH	1844	1932	155-156
Mutual Assurance Co. for Insuring Houses From Loss by Fire	Philadelphia	PA	1784	1982	<u>36-40 42</u>
Mutual Insurance Co.	Charleston	SC	1797	1806	62
Mutual Insurance Co. of Washington County	Hagerstown	MD	1846	1935	163
Pacific Insurance Co.	San Francisco	CA	1863	1871	334
Peabody Fire Insurance Co.	Wheeling	WV	1869	1899	424
Penn Fire Insurance Co.	Pittsburgh	PA	1841	1845	149
Pittsburgh Navigation & Fire Insurance Co.	Pittsburgh	PA	1832	1845	122
Protection Fire Insurance Co.	Charleston	WV	1892	1894	468
Star Fire Insurance Co.	Ogdensburg	NY	1854	1857	254
Union Fire Insurance Co.	Nashville	TN	1870	1873 prior	429
Union Insurance Co.	Charleston	SC	1807	1839	66
United Firemen's Insurance Co.	Philadelphia	PA	1860	1956	<u>310-320</u>
United States Insurance Co.	Baltimore	MD	1833	1845	126

Underline = See Addenda for additional information

