

# Coast Manufacturing and Supply Company

by Mark Bohannon

In 1867, Lemuel Stoughton Ellsworth, the son-in-law of Joseph Toy of the Toy, Bickford & Company of Simsbury, Connecticut, was sent to California to establish a branch office to manufacture and market safety fuse on the west coast.

In 1902, the California Fuse Company, the Western Fuse and Explosives Company, and the Metropolitan Fuse Company were consolidated with the California branch of the Ensign, Bickford, and Company (the name had been changed from Toy, Bickford, & Company in 1887 after Toy died) under the name of Coast Manufacturing & Supply Company. The fuse plant was located at Trevarno, near Livermore, California. Coast Manufacturing and Supply Company was sold to the Apache Powder Company in 1964.

Coast Manufacturing & Supply Company sold safety fuse packed in a number of different quantities. The most common packaging consisted of two 50 foot coils, each paper wrapped, with one nested within the other to make a 100 foot package. These were then packed in wooden cases containing 1,000, 3,000, or 6,000 feet. They were also packed in fibre cases containing 1,000 or 3,000 feet (Fig. 1).

Safety fuse was also sold wound on a light metal reel containing 3,000 feet and packed in fibre cases containing one reel, or in wooden cases containing either one or two 3,000 foot reels. Special metal lined wooden cases were also furnished at twenty five cents per thousand feet extra.

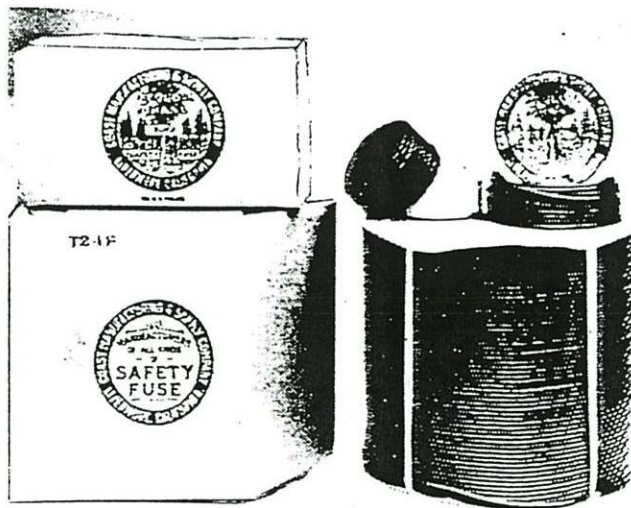
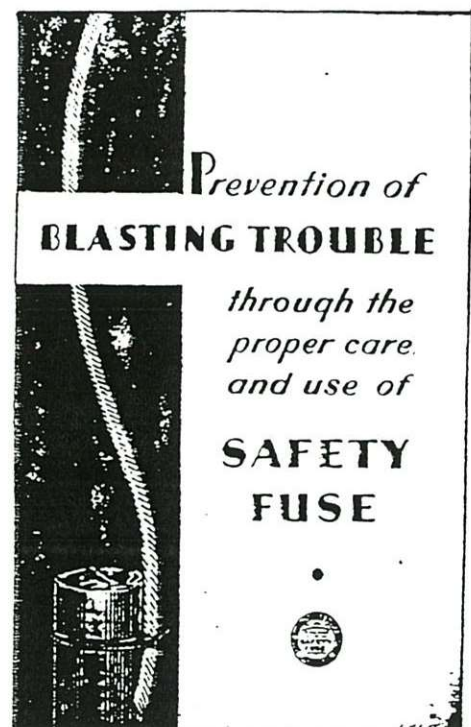


Fig. 1  
(From Apache Powder Catalog)



A 20 Page, 9 x 6 Booklet

Many safety fuse manufacturers produced and sold a number of different brands of fuse that varied quite widely in their ability to withstand water, temperature changes, handling, and other aspects according to the different conditions under which the fuse was to be used. Of the many fuse companies in the United States, Coast Manufacturing & Supply Company probably sold the largest selection of fuse brands. Shown below are several brands of safety fuse along with a guide for the best brand for any particular blasting condition. Coast Manufacturing & Supply Company was sold to Apache Powder Company of Arizona in 1964.

### VARIETIES AND USES OF SAFETY FUSE

Select from the following brands the one best adapted to your particular conditions of use. All of these brands have a burning speed of 120 seconds per yard when burned in the open at sea level with an allowable variation of 10%.

Brand	Comparative Qualities of Various Brands					Recommended for
	Price	Waterproofness	Freedom from side splitting	Freedom from smoke	Ability to withstand rough usage	
Blue Label	Seventh (lowest)	Fourth (poorest)	Fifth (poorest)	Third	Fourth (poorest)	Dry and Damp Ground, Agricultural and Dry Quarry Work. Use with non-inflammable explosives. Black finish, cotton countered.
Dreadnaught	Sixth	Third	Fourth	Fourth (poorest)	Third	General all-around use for surface and underground. Will withstand ordinary wet work. Black finish, cotton countered.
Sequoia White	Fifth	Second	First (best)	First (best)	Third	All uses in very wet work. Will withstand very heavy water pressure if not "laced", "half-hitched" or "kinked". Easy to light as powder core adheres to split ends. Especially recommended for warm climates and for use with inflammable explosives. White finish, cotton countered.
Sequoia Black	Fifth	Second	First (best)	Third	Second	Same as White Sequoia, except Black finish, cotton countered.
Comet Special	Fourth	Third	Third	Fourth (poorest)	Second	All uses in wet work. Especially resistant to acid mine waters. Black tape finish.
Bear	Third	Third	Second	Second	Second	All general underground uses in wet work. White finish, cotton countered.
Victor	Second	Second	First (best)	First (best)	Third	All uses in very wet work. Pliable and will withstand wide variations in temperature. White finish, cotton countered.
Triple Tape	First (highest)	First (best)	Second	Fourth (poorest)	First (best)	All uses in very wet work. Especially constructed to withstand heavy tamping. Black tape finish.



(Red)

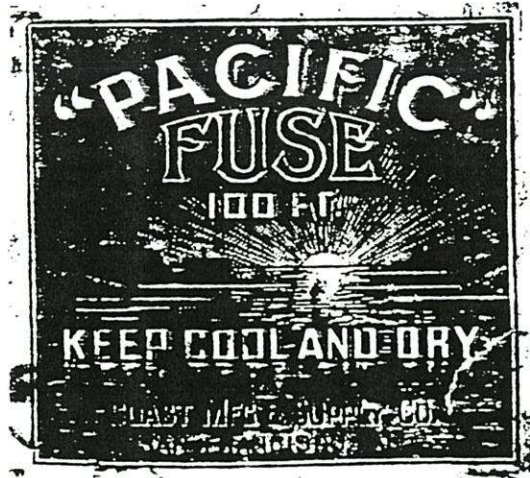


(Black)





(Maroon)



(Black)



(Red-Brown)



(Orange)



(Black)



(Green)



Collectible items from safety fuse companies are usually difficult to find. Rolls of safety fuse can sometimes be found in garages or attics of mining communities, but most of the safety fuse wrappers and packing containers in collections were found underground in abandoned mines.

Most wrappers which are found are torn and wrinkled because the miners usually just tore open the wrappers, then wadded the paper up and threw it in a corner or waste area. In most mines, only one or two brands of fuse might be found, but sometimes a mine will contain many different brands, often from more than one company.

I would appreciate receiving good photocopies from anyone who has any brands of safety fuse wrappers to better document the variety of brands the different companies manufactured.



## Grasselli Cap Tins

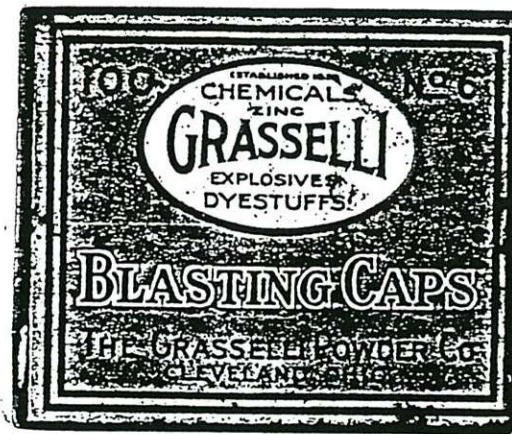
by Mark Bohannon

The Grasselli Powder Company, a subsidiary of the Grasselli Chemical Company, was incorporated in Ohio on July 1, 1917 as a consolidation of the Burton Powder Company, the American High Explosives Company, and the Cameron Powder Manufacturing Company.

No information on its length of existence is known. Shown below are the four different styles of cap tins known from the Grasselli Powder Company.



Lt. Blue, Drk. Blue, White Lettering  
(Ted Bobrink Collection)



Green, Yellow, Blue Lettering  
(Mike McLaughlin Collection)



Lt. Blue, Drk. Blue, White Lettering  
(Mark Bohannon Collection)



Lt. Blue, Green, Drk. Blue Lettering  
(From Andy Martin's Cap Tin Book)