From a further sale notice relating to Bowen's bankruptcy comes the following:

"The whole of the very extensive STOCK-IN-TRADE

Comprising cathedral, ornamental, obscure, fluted, enamelled, and stained glass; several thousand feet of rolled plate and sheet window glass of various quantities and thickness; glass tiles, patent undulated glass, also about 1,000 deal planks and other timber, hoop and bar iron, 9½ ingots of block tin, copper sheet, nails, shovels, about 20 tons cullett [*sic*], white lead, sulphate of copper and iron, broomheads etc."[44]

Exactly what 'Cathedral glass' is has not been established, unless it was plain coloured sheet. Eyres, in his letter to St George Gray, referring to one James Kelley, ponders, "If that is the Kelley who was there in my time he was an Irishman who came to mix metal for the coloured glass which Mr Bowen tried his hand at making ..." In a much quoted passage, "He was a clever mixer ... and would be very proud of getting you to hold pieces of his handiwork up to the light, when he would shew you what a 'foine Catheadral tint' it was." It is interesting to note from the English Heritage Report (Appendix 7) that there was uncertainty, because of the thinness of the colour whether the red glass fragment found was 'flashed' or painted. For 'painted' we might read 'stained' from the above list. The term 'flashing ' has already been used to describe the opening out of the crown to form a table of Crown glass, but it is also used to describe the process of taking an initial gather of coloured glass, then surrounding it with a larger gather of plain glass. Then, when it was blown and spun in to a crown table, or blown out in to a cylinder, the colour would be very thinly spread over the surface of the clear glass. As some of the coloured glasses were very dense in colour, to the extent of almost seeming opaque when in bulk, in some cases, this technique had two advantages. The first was that the coloured glass need not necessarily be prepared in large quantities. The second was that patterns such as those shown in the pattern sheet above could be created quite simply by cutting, or etching, away the very thin layer of colour from the clear glass substrate.

Figure 3.21: 'Undulating-interlocking' glass window pane
© Bristol Museums & Art Gallery. 'Probably from Nailsea'. Presented by Mrs B A Challicom, 1939

[44] Bristol Times and Mirror, 7th August 1869, p.1, col.6. From transcript in SMR 2397,Folder E

The ‘patent undulated glass’ mentioned above is presumably the same as that mentioned by Eyres in his letter to St George Gray as having been introduced by Kelly on the ‘undulating-interlocking’ principle. This may best be described as slightly ridged rolled plate, like a fine corduroy material, that is then formed so that there are two sets of corrugations running at right angles. The overall impression is of a series of pyramids (that have each been truncated by rounding off their tops), separated on each side from its neighbour by a slight round-bottomed valley.

No illustration has been found of any Nailsea production bottles, but it is believed that they would generally have been dark green in colour. The form would have been very similar to say a modern sherry bottle, but because of the hand-made element, coupled with transport conditions less sympathetic to glass bottles than today, it probably would have been considerably heavier than a modern bottle. According to Chance, J F, p.18, bottle manufacturers were forbidden by the Excise to make any bottle of less than six ounces capacity. It has been suggested that bottle production at Nailsea probably ceased “by the 1830s.”[45] Coathupe does not mention it in his notebook, and it is entirely possible that if Lucas had a good thing going with his window glass production, he would concentrate on that as he no longer had a direct need to produce bottles for his own business. Furthermore, one could pack a greater weight of window glass in to a given space than if the same weight of glass was in the form of bottles, so shipping costs would have been considerably greater for bottles.

This leaves us with the thorny question of ‘Nailsea Glass’. A lot has been written about this material, some of which is very colourful and exuberant, and it is quite clear that it goes well beyond the utilitarian window and bottle materials that are fairly well recorded as the staples of the works for the majority of its lifetime.

Figure 3.22: Early ‘Nailsea Glass’

From left to right: Front: A rather misshapen mug, c 1830; A hat, c 1830; A jar, c 1830; A sealed jug, c 1830
Rear: Large bottle with seal (bearing the initials JME & date 1833); Salt, c 1830; Decanter, c 1850; Flask (on its side), c 1840, from Mrs Challicom.

What is now on display at Bristol Museum and Art Gallery has been critically reviewed by the Museum staff, and while it will never now be possible to reverse the public perception and the collectors’ desires it would appear that two illustrations sum up the style. Figure 3.22, above,

[45] Vincent, K, p.8

shows the earlier material, made from dark green bottle glass, with 'opal' white flecks marvered in to the gather at an early stage; Figure 3.23 shows later items in window glass.

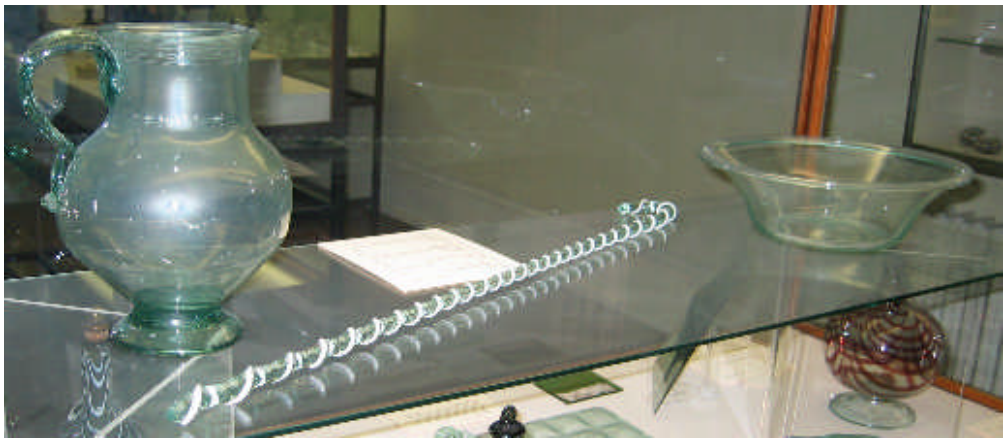

Figure 3.23: "Perhaps Nailsea" – 'Nailsea Glass': later styles
© Bristol Museums & Art Gallery From left to right: Jug, 1st half of 19th cent.,, from Mrs B Challicom, a noted collector; Walking stick, c 1860 (These were traditionally hung in the house, as it was believed that they attracted germs. By cleaning them down daily, disease would be prevented. It was apparently bad luck to break one.); Bowl, 1st half of 19th cent., used in dairies for separating cream.

The items in Figures 3.24, and 3.25 are basically all formed from window glass, with some additional decoration.

Figure 3.24: Left: Rolling pin; Right: Bottle
© Bristol Museums & Art Gallery

The rolling pin is much more decorative than that in Figure 3.25. It is "Perhaps Nailsea", c 1860, with the comment that 'the majority are purely decorative'.

The bottle is rather interesting. The accompanying description states that, "An old label records that this bottle was given by Mr Stonier, Manager of Chances' Nailsea Works, to George Masters who later gave it to Sir Edmund Elton. The ruby glass may be the same as that used for flashing window glass. The chemical composition indicates a Stourbridge origin."

[J F Chance mentions, "W Stonier, of the ledger department at Spon Lane, was deputed to take charge of the office" [at Nailsea in 1870].[46] We have seen above that coloured glass from Stourbridge was being employed at Nailsea under Bowen.]

Keith Vincent, who has written an extensive and well illustrated volume on *Nailsea Glass,* concludes that much of what has become 'Nailsea Glass' was never made at Nailsea. H St George Gray, whose articles in *The Connoisseur* may have originally helped fuel the idea, and Sir Hugh Chance, who was investigating his family's involvement at Nailsea, concur with this

[46] Chance, J F, p.106

view. Ashurst goes even further, pointing out that, "the Nailsea works, near Bristol, after which this style is named, did not come in to production until 1788 and originally only made common bottles. The Bolsterstone works was producing this form of decorative glass before it closed about 1758 ..."

Figure 3.25: 'Nailsea Glass' from the Scotch Horn Centre, Nailsea

Composite:

Top: Cucumber glass: makes the fruit grow straight

Bottom: Rolling pin in plain glass, Two knitting needles; two fragments of spiralled walking stick; Drumstick, with double blue spiral threads running down handle (R); Cullet

There is a further collection held in the Museum at Taunton Castle, that has not been seen by the writer. It derives from the collection of Mrs B A Challicom, a noted collector.

There is also a good collection at Clevedon Court, now in the care of the National Trust, and some examples are shown below, courtesy of the National Trust. In general, there does not appear to be any specific provenance displayed with any of the pieces, although this may be available. It was not deemed necessary to pursue this as part of this study.

Figure 3.26: Display of more formal clear and coloured 'Nailsea Glass' at Clevedon Court

Figure 3.26 shows a selection of the more decorative 'Nailsea Glass', both plain and coloured. It includes examples of the double (or gimmel) flasks, and other items with 'witch balls' at the top.

Figure 3.27: Vase and mug in dark green glass

The examples in Figure 3.27 are very primitive and roughly made. That on the left is described by Vincent as, "24 Jar or vase of dark green metal flecked with white enamel, some of the flecks having pale pink centres." (p.39.) On p.37 he describes the mug on the right-hand side as, "mug in dark blackish-green metal with large chips of white enamel marvered in (*height approx. 5 in.*) ... The metal ... has a distinct soft soapy appearance and feel, something like serpentine." If anything had the appearance of 'friggers' or 'end-of-day-glass' (or 'off-hand-glass' in the USA) (Newman, p.126), made by unskilled hands it is these two pieces. It seems that some works encouraged the blowers and/or apprentices to try their hands to improve their skills with the metal left in the pots, if it was not sufficient to make a production piece. Newman, p.125-126, defines them as, "A glass object, of various forms, made by a glassmaker in his own time and for his amusement and home decoration or for sale by him. They were usually made from the molten glass remaining in the POT at the end of the day, considered as the workman's perquisite. In some regions, they were made on Saturdays when the glasshouse was not working, and on Sunday each factory group paraded with its accomplishments (e.g. from Stourbridge to Wolverhampton), stopping at each public house en route to have the pieces voted on, and the most popular received a prize and the assurance of factory production ..."

Perquisite or not, Ashurst, p.113, reproduces a copy of a notice posted at Rotherham Glass Works 1st March 1871, which states, "

NOTICE.

Workmen are strictly prohibited using the Metal for any other purpose than making their Work.

Anyone found making, or carrying off the Premises, Glass Walking Sticks, or other Fancy Articles, Bottles, &c., without having first obtained permission, will be punished."

Incidentally, there appears to be two erroneous statements made by Sir Hugh Chance in the letter from him to H St George Gray, dated 21st October 1958, when he writes, "I still hold the view that the opal speckled bottles and the like were made at the Nicholas Street works or at Wick, in which Lucas and his partners had an interest." Also, in his January 1958 article he states that, "John Robert Lucas ... had a financial interest in bottle works in Bristol and Wick,