

GRAND CANYON GLASS

INTRODUCING ARIZONA'S NEWEST HUTCHINSON SODA

By Michael Miller

On July 19th, my wife Karen & I were preparing for our vacation to San Francisco preceding our trip to the Federation Expo in Reno. Our excitement was quite high as we had been anticipating this trip for some time and we had heard many wonderful things about the last major western city that we had never visited.

Coming from the Chesapeake region of Virginia, I have always been a connoisseur of great seafood, especially crab and the thought of shopping in Chinatown and along Fisherman's Wharf certainly appealed to Karen. Little did we know that on that same day we would receive

an e-mail which would make our present excitement pale by comparison; a message that we could not have anticipated and left us in utter shock?

It came at 3:06 p.m. and attached to the email on my computer screen were several photos of objects freshly dug and waiting to be identified. It has not been unusual to receive these types of e-mails, since completing my book on Arizona bottles, "A Collector's Guide to Arizona Bottles & Stoneware," to some I have been perceived as some kind of expert on old Arizona items and from time to time receive requests from collectors and archeologists wanting to obtain information on their newest finds. Amongst the many broken shards of pottery, bottle pieces, rusted old tin and other decomposing relics were several bottles including two readably identifiable shaped Hutchinson sodas. In the first photos these bottles (photo #1) were quite small and appeared to be un-embossed but examination of the later photos (photo #2) soon changed that opinion.

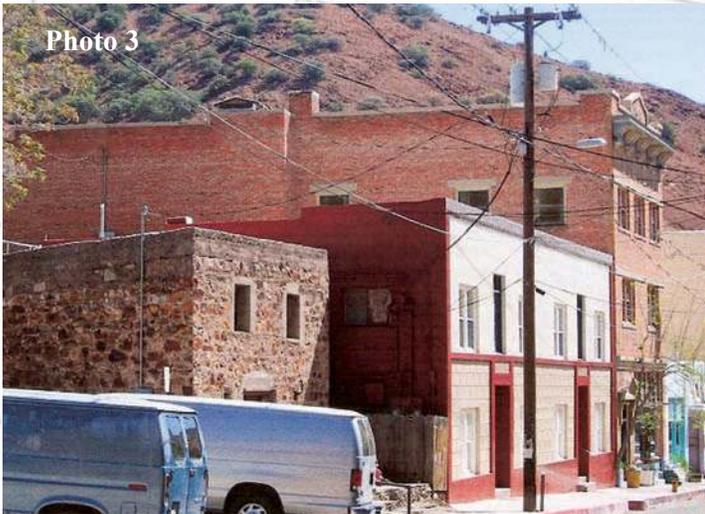
The e-mail came from a part-time amateur archeologist in Southern Arizona who had noticed some construction work



Photo 2

Photo 1





going on and had the forethought to inquire from the property owner if he could dig on the lot after the workers had left for the day.

The lot involved is in a location that my wife Karen and I have walked by many times in the past (photo #3) and a comparison of this area from an old turn of the century photo (photo #4) shows that only a small stone building remains today. With permission acquired, he proceeded to inspect the lot and very quickly found the first Hutch partially exposed by the earlier construction work. Unfortunately, this work had damaged the Hutch and left it with a large fresh chip at the base. Further digging in the area where the first bottle was found initially uncovered broken relics and some smaller bottles and later more interesting artifacts including the remains of an old leather miner's helmet, a snuff bottle, a monogrammed perfume, some rusted tin signs from a local drugstore and finally the prize of the day.

Upon seeing this bottle in the e-mail, I quickly contacted the digger and spoke with him about his dig and the objects that he found. It was interesting to note that like myself he was very interested in old Arizona history and wanted to know about the proprietors listed on the Hutch sodas and the tin signs. I provided to him what information I had on the three identifiable items and then inquired as to whether he would be interested in selling any of the relics and negotiating a fair price. Much to my surprise, this was his intent in contacting me as he wanted the items to go to someone who would appreciate them for what they were.

The damaged hutch was not from Arizona and was embossed DIXON SODA WORKS. I recognized this as being a California Hutch from the town of Dixon which is located just southwest of Sacramento and a town we would be traveling through on the trip we were about to embark on. This would have been a nice Hutch to acquire if the damage was not so extensive and so we left it for the digger to keep as a souvenir.

The tin signs (photo #5) were of more interest to me even though they were in poor condition. Advertising a medicine for Gonorrhea called KNOXIT, they were clearly marked from the Rinehart's Drug Store in Bisbee. This short-lived pharmacy was operated by C. E. Rinehart from 1905 to 1909 and this is the first advertising of any kind that I had seen from this drugstore.

Finally there was the other Hutch to consider. This one was from Arizona and as was revealed in the attached close-up photo was a very special soda indeed. It was the kind of bottle that makes an old Arizona collector like myself stop to catch his breath and take a moment to calm down. There

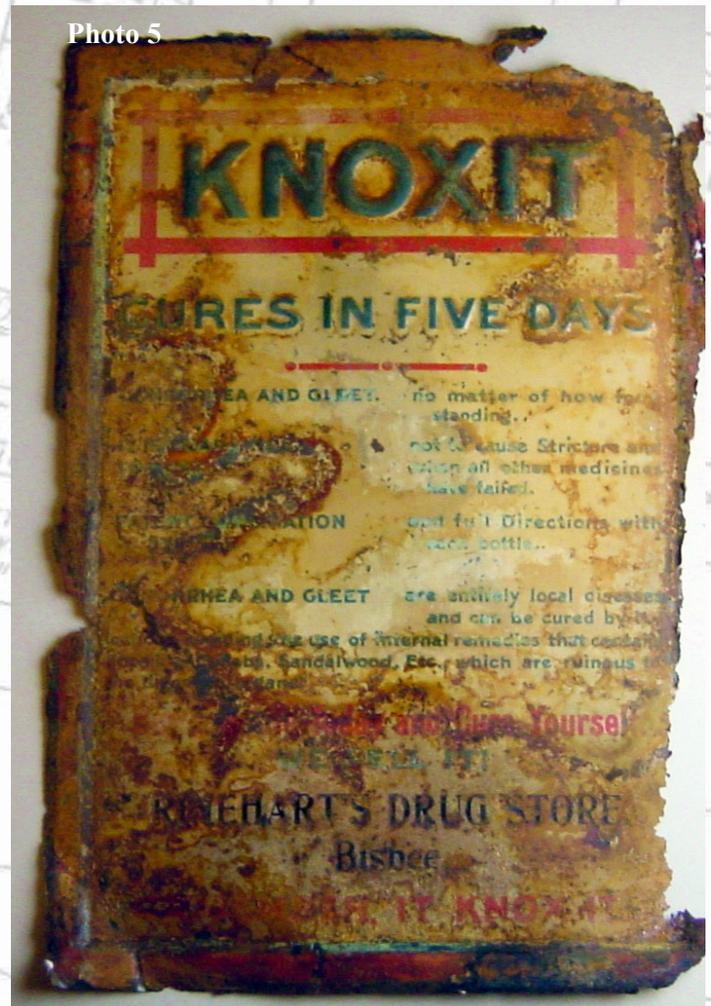


Photo 6



Photo 7



before me on my computer was a photo of the very first new Hutch soda identified from Arizona in the last 20-plus years and to make the bottle more interesting, it was the first from the famous mining town of Bisbee.

As unlikely as it would seem with the many mining towns and camps that sprung up during the 1880s through the early 1900 (the time frame for Hutchinson sodas), mining town Hutches from Arizona are very rare with only six different bottles styles known; two each from Tombstone and Globe, one from Clifton and now one from Bisbee.

The Bottle

Embossed PIONEER SODA WORKS/T. F. METZ/BISBEE, ARIZONA (photo #6), the Hutchinson dug is a nice aqua in color and of 4-piece mold construction. The bottle found is in very nice condition with the only flaws being a small potstone near the K in works and some very light scratches. What is surprising is that the Hutch is extremely whittled and has some great crudity in the tooled blob top. Overall, it would be very difficult to find any Arizona Hutch in this kind of condition. Both this and the Dixon Hutch were dug with their original stoppers intact including the leather ring. Upon cleaning the leather disintegrated but the wire stoppers themselves were salvaged.

Mr. Metz & Pioneer Soda Works

Theophil F. Metz was born in Alsace Lorraine, France on March 13th, 1867. In 1890 he immigrated to the United States and settled down in Bisbee. Employed originally at the Copper Queen Smelter, Metz later in 1894 started his soda manufacturing business. In 1896, he became a U.S. citizen and two years later sent for his fiancé. They married on June 20th, 1898 at the Sacred Heart Church in Bisbee.

The Pioneer Soda Works (photo #7), also called the Bisbee Bottling Works as seen on an old letterhead (photo #8), was located about a mile and a half up from downtown Bisbee at 509 Tombstone Canyon. A layout for the plant on an old insurance

Photo 8

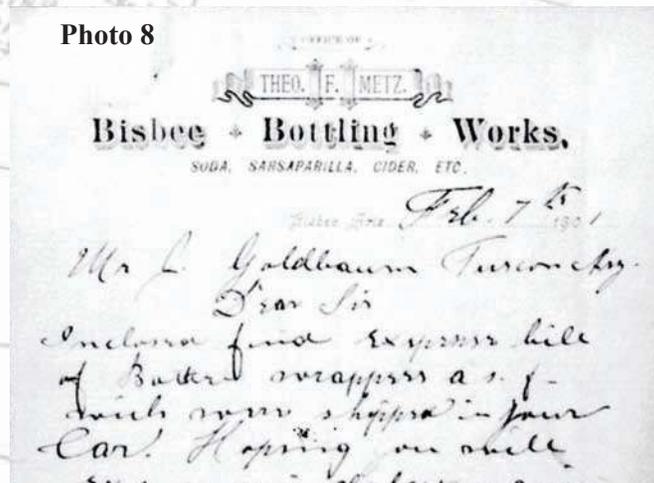


Photo 9

BISBEE PIONEER SODA WORKS

THEO. F. METZ, Proprietor
METZ STOP TOMBSTONE CANYON
PHONE 19 P. O. BOX 63

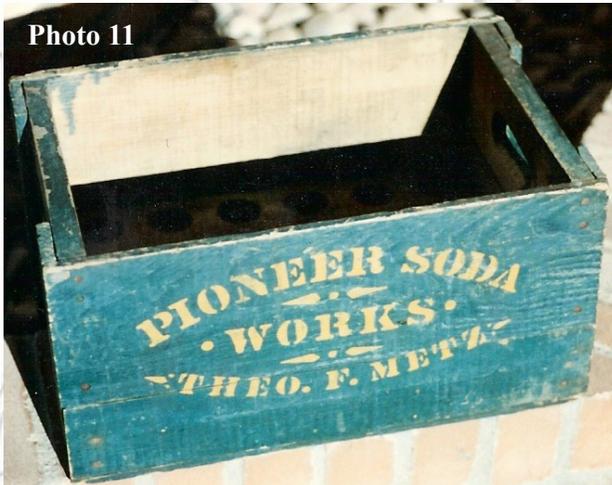
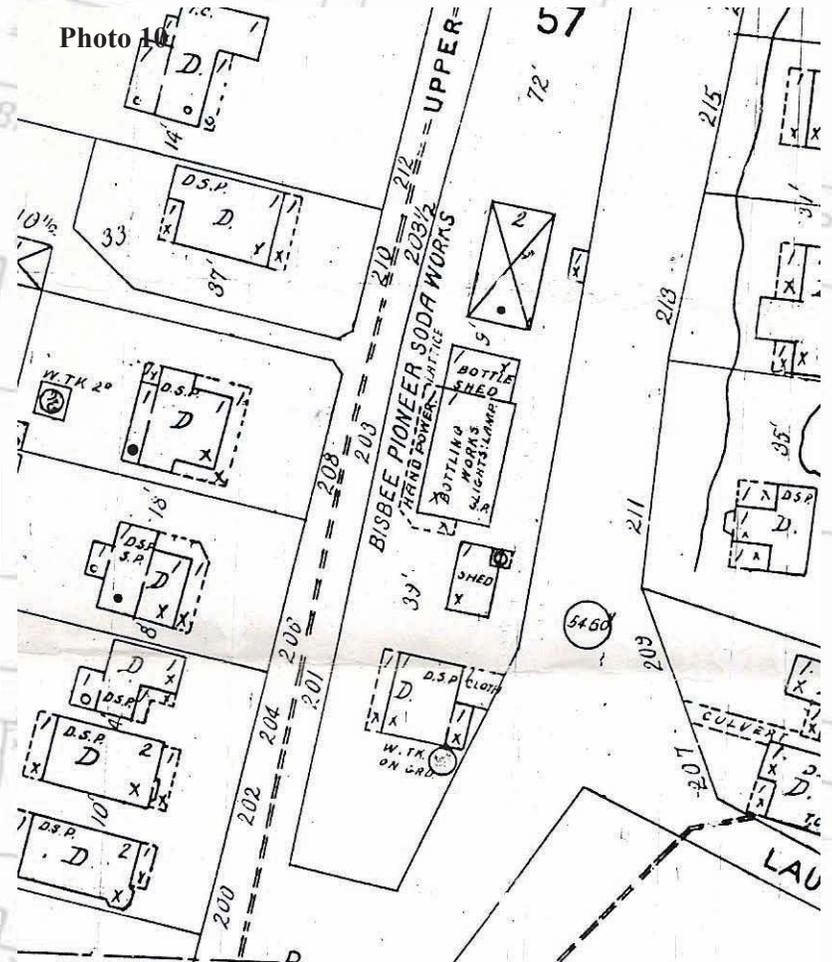


Photo 11



Drawing 1

Drawing 2

map shows this was initially a small operation (photo #9). By 1902 Metz had also opened a saloon in Bisbee and an April 4th, 1903 notice in the Bisbee Daily Review stated that Metz had expanded his soda market to Douglas, A. T., a nearby smelter town. Metz became very successful in his soda operation and was still in business in 1925 when the name of the company was changed to the Bisbee Pioneer Bottling Works (photo #10). In 1930, Metz sold his works to Joseph F. Wolfe and William A. McDonald who further modified the name to the Bisbee Bottling Works. Metz continued to live in Bisbee until his death on April 4th, 1937 at the age of 70.

T. F. Metz's bottles

As of this time there are six different bottles known from Metz's bottling operation. These include the newly found Hutchinson soda, two tooled top crown sodas, one machine made crown top and two footed siphons. Of these the two siphons (drawings #1 & #2) and the Hutch are very rare, variants of the tooled crowns range from common for the non-based marked aqua bottles (drawing #3) to rare on the based-marked aqua (drawing #4) to very rare on the smoke-colored, based-marked examples (drawing #4). The machine-made bottle (drawing #5) is very common and represents what is the easiest Southern Arizona soda to acquire.



The legend

For many years, it has been speculated that there must be some additional Hutches from Arizona. Many a conversation between major Arizona collectors have turned to opinions as to where the next Arizona Hutch would be from with the more educated guesses favoring either Bisbee and Jerome, both mining towns with known early soda works or Florence and Kingman, once again with early bottlers. Furthermore early so called Hutch soda cases had been found from three Arizona bottlers with no early bottles (though I personally believe that there is evidence that these were actually recycled shipping cases for crown sodas delivered from glassworks to the bottlers). Among these prior described cases are ones from the Crystal Bottling Works in Prescott, the Glendale Bottling Works in Glendale and guess who, the Pioneer Soda Works in Bisbee (photo #11).

Finds of Hutch bottles from Safford and Clifton back 20-plus years ago once pumped new blood into diggers and collectors searching out new Arizona items but with the passing of years it has been a long drought since only the Clifton Hutchinson was found. Other great Arizona bottles and jugs have been discovered and described in the years since, most notably The Elite saloon mini jug from Willcox, the Wilkins Tucson, A. T. pumpkinseed flask and Barkley-Berryman Phoenix, A. T. extract bottle but no new Hutches have appeared. I personally have had the pleasure of identifying many new Arizona bottles including both ACL

and embossed milks, ACL and embossed crown top sodas, one new pharmacy bottle and both the before mentioned Barkley-Berryman bottle and Willcox mini jug, but up until now not one new Hutchinson.

Furthermore, many diggers came and went in both the early years and lesser so in recent times with no success in finding a Hutch from Bisbee, Arizona even though the Bisbee dump was dug extensively for many years with many thousands of bottles and some jugs found.

So as time has passed, many had begun to wonder if all of the Arizona Hutches were already found and identified. The long drought had in some ways lifted the idea of a new Arizona Hutch to legendary status. That is, until a couple of days before we left for vacation and the Reno Expo.

You can only imagine my excitement and desire to share this news at the Expo with everyone who would listen. Yet, due to my superstitious nature and the fact that the bottle was so called "in the mail" and not yet in my hands, I remained all but mute on the subject of the bottle headed for my collection. Only a hint of what was to come was shared with Ron Fowler; that I would be describing a new Hutch for his national Hutchinson data base. I can't decide what is more amazing, the newest Hutchinson from Arizona or how I was able to keep quiet to everyone about possibly the best bottle I have ever owned from my home state. And for someone that bores a person to tears talking Arizona bottles that is quite a feat indeed. (X)

Drawing 5



Drawing 6



Drawing 7

