



## Dr. J. J. McBride - Elko, Nevada's King of Pain

Some issues back in BOTTLES and EXTRAS, an excellent article on a Nevada Bottle Twiaba was written. The ingredients were promoted as a scalp tonic to restore and grow hair. Of course, these claims were all promotional.

These bottles are rare with only 2 or 3 known. I auctioned mine in the Hot August Nights Holabird – Kagin Auction, the results of which can be found via Google. This bottle should not be referred to as a medicine but rather as a topical hair tonic. The alcohol probably helped to kill off a yeast called *Pityrosporon Ovale*, one of the major causes of dandruff scruff, and thus it probably sold well, even though the scarcity of these bottles suggests otherwise.

Dr. J. J. McBride's The Great King of Pain is the only known "cure" from Nevada. This bottle had lain buried in an old Nevada collection from which it was purchased.

With the help of the wonderfully knowledgeable docents at the Nevada State Historical Society in Reno, an advertisement for this "cure" was found in *Elko Independent* on Wednesday, April 13, 1870. A copy of this advertisement can be found on microfiche at the Reno Historical Society. Its claimed attributes clearly qualify it as a "panacea." It not only claims to "cure" various maladies, but also tells you the time expected to do so! Wow has

modern medicine stepped backward!

Even though its ingredients are not revealed in a review of cures, the book *Nostrums and Quackery* published by the press of the American Medical Association lists strychnine in tiny amounts, and morphine in tiny amount as ingredients in most cures. The U.S. Government banned these cures containing strychnine and morphine because of the high number of deaths resulting from their use.

Even though the demise of Dr. J. J. McBride's The Great King of Pain is not known, most likely it was associated with morbidity, which accounts for its short life and the rarity of this bottle.

The reader is directed to the book *Sagebrush Doctors* by Edna B. Patterson, 1972, and to Howard Hickson's *Histories on King of Pain Elko Nevada 1870s*. It is fun to read the advertisements in the *Elko Independent* about this cure and truly amazing that a bottle of this rarity has even survived. I hope the readers enjoy this article as much as I have in researching it.

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