

# Nearly a Half-Century of Friendship with Teal not Nearly Long Enough

By Bill Baab

Augusta, Georgia

I joined the hobby of antique bottle collecting in 1969 and my subsequent research helped fill my knowledge void and also introduced me to many like-minded individuals just starting to collect those fascinating, mostly empty glass containers of yesteryear.

Sometimes I would meet the rare person who turned out to be among the pioneer collectors who had been involved with antique glass years before me. One such person was Harvey Stuart Teal whom I'd first met in the early 1970s. I don't recall the circumstances other than it involved Dr. William H. Tutt's Golden Eagle Bitters.

I had heard of Dr. Tutt, but not his bitters. I knew he was a pharmacist and patent medicine man who had operated in Augusta during the 19th century. I had obtained a few copies of *The Augusta Chronicle* when it was called *Daily Chronicle & Sentinel* and Tutt's advertising of many of his medicines were plastered all over the front pages of the paper.

I had purchased a first edition of Dick Watson's 1965 *Bitters Bottles* book which contained a fascinating chapter called "Lost Bitters." Listed were many bitters virtually unknown to collectors and Tutt's Golden Eagle Bitters was on the list. Naturally, one of my goals was to find examples of all of Tutt's panaceas for my growing collection of Augusta bottles.

Somehow I had heard of Harvey and had been informed that he owned a Tutt's bitters. I had acquired his phone number, called and he invited me to his Columbia, S.C. home. My wife, Bea, and I drove there and met Mr. Teal who took the bitters off a shelf and showed it to me. It was a dark amber version embossed on one panel DR. WILLIAM H. TUTT and GOLDEN EAGLE BITTERS on another. I asked him if he'd sell it, but it was no deal. However, our friendship was born then and there and led to many other visits and an association that lasted nearly 50 years.

Over the years, I was fortunate to dig a pair of the Golden Eagle Bitters, one in honey amber and the other a duplicate of Teal's bottle, but neither with a third variety, it having AUGUSTA, GA. on one of the panels. Neither Teal's nor mine had the city name.



Harvey Teal standing in his home with part of his collection



Harvey signing his book at the FOHBC 2019 Augusta National show



Harvey presenting at the FOHBC 2019 National Show to a room full of people

Much later, I learned Harvey was a serious philatelist who had amassed a huge collection of Confederate covers, many of the envelopes containing letters written to and from Civil War veterans from the South. I, too, was a student of postal history, but my interest was in early Augusta correspondence and businesses.

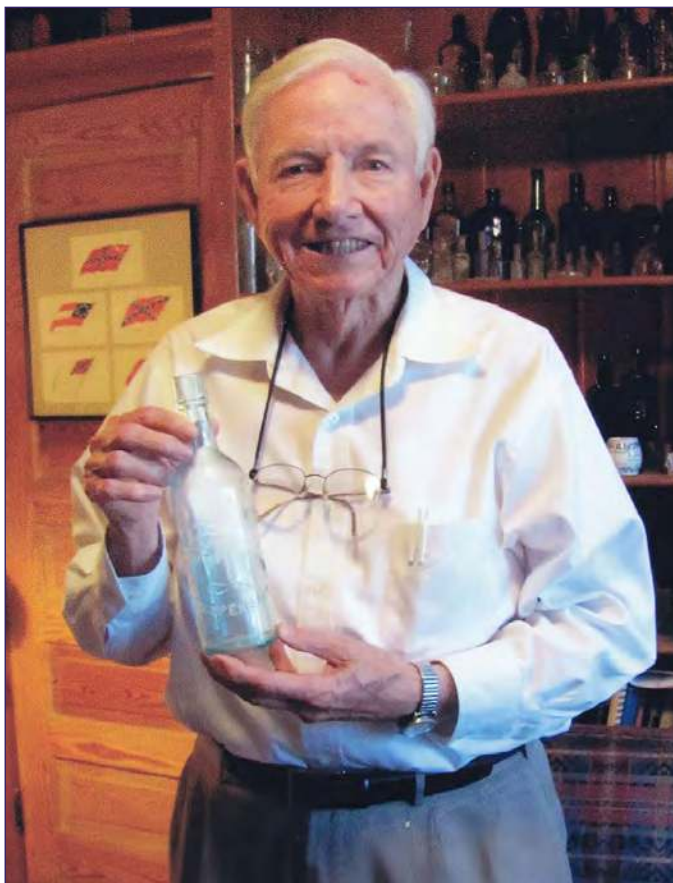
A few years later, as a contributor of stories to *Bottles and Extras*, the Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors journal, I invited collectors in several states to share just how, when and under which circumstances they had become bottle collectors. One of the first I'd asked was Harvey S. Teal. He asked for a few months' time to work up his four-part history.

"A Reminiscence of 53 Years of Bottle Collecting in South Carolina" was eventually published. It was educational, informative and entertaining and just plain fascinating to read. It now occupies a 3-ring binder in my personal library of antique bottle-related books.

Speaking of books, Harvey documented quite a bit of his vast knowledge as author or co-author of books. He was co-author with the late Paul Jeter of "Columbia's Past in Glass." He also wrote "Just Mud: Kershaw County Pottery to 1980" and "The South Carolina Dispensary & Embossed

#### South Carolina Whiskey Bottles, 1865-1915."

In 2002, he was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters by Lander University in Greenwood, S.C., and became Dr. Teal. But he was just plain Harvey to his legion of friends who already miss him. All were saddened to learn he had died April 28, 2020 of complications from Parkinson's Disease and other ailments.



Harvey holding one of his favorite South Carolina Dispensary Bottles

He is survived by a daughter, Teresa Lynn Boswell, and a son, Marshall Dennis Teal, both of Columbia; six grandchildren and five great grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Ella Catherine Teal, and a daughter, Iris Gwendolyn Burgess, as well as all of his sisters and brothers. He was buried in Cassatt (S.C.) Baptist Church Cemetery last May 1.

The family requests memorials to be made in his memory to the Harvey S. Teal South Caroliniana Library Fund (#B12165) with checks payable to the USC Educational Foundation and mailed to University Libraries, 1322 Green Street, L-226, Columbia, SC 29208. For more information on making a memorial gift, contact Beth Well at [wellbeth@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:wellbeth@mailbox.sc.edu) or call 1 (803) 269-9662.

