



A selection of 19th century bottles exhibiting "whittled" glass.

WHITTLE KNOWN FACTS

I've often been asked, "What makes a bottle whittled? Is it made from a wooden mold?" For the advanced collector, this will probably put a smile on your face, because I'm sure you have heard these questions before. Not being a glassblower myself, I can't elaborate too much on the production, but let's try to understand the basic idea of how rippled glass resembling the effects of a wooden mold is created.

Whittle marks; rippled, wavy or wrinkled glass; and hammered with whittle are some of the terms used by collectors to describe a glass texture characteristic that has nothing to do with any of these terms. These bottles were not blown into a wooden mold at all, but rather large cast iron molds, usually two-piece molds, but sometimes multiple leaves were used.

Collectors love this glass texture, which gives a bottle a very primitive and early look. So why do some bottles made from the same mold have a whittled look, when some do not? It all has to do with temperature, when the molten glass approaches a colder iron mold. Although these molds were heated, the temperature of the mold was often much colder, especially when unused for a while when starting a new glass batch. I would imagine that the extreme differences in temperature also created steam during the process. The temperature difference, and vapor from the steam, would create the beautiful ripples that we enjoy today.

To be accurate, the term for this effect should be referred to by collectors as "cold mold ripple" rather than "whittle." However, I am just as guilty of using the term as anyone. So don't take your cold mold

ripple for granted. Enjoy the beauty that was created from this violent temperature interaction.

DR. HUNTINGTON GOLDEN TONIC BITTERS

Alpheus Huntington was born in Monmouth, Maine in 1820, and died at 84 years old (of old age) in 1905. Married with two children, Mr. Huntington did a number of different things to make ends meet, starting his occupation as a "Peddler" (1850 Monmouth Census) and ending as a "Patent Medicine Man" (1880 Deering Census).

Mr. Huntington's first embossed "A. Huntington / Monmouth, ME" bottled product appeared in 1860, a product for "Dr. Huntington's Horse & Ox Liniment" as advertised in the



An Iodine Spring Water mold (looking more like a fire hydrant) must have taken quite some time to heat up.

Hallowell Gazette. The aqua paneled bottle was very similar in style to a number of cattle liniment bottles marketed at this time. Since the bottle is listed with just a name and town, I can only assume that Mr. Huntington (now a self-proclaimed doctor) was selling a number of different products in these bottles, differentiated simply by a label.

A local businessman, John Curtis, opened up the first chewing gum factory in the United States in the 1850s in the neighboring town of Portland, Maine. This quickly became an interest for Mr. Huntington, who jumped on the bandwagon, calling himself “A Manufacturer of Gum” (1870 Portland Census). It is unclear if Mr. Huntington partnered with Curtis, or simply rode the coattails, but by 1870, Dr. Huntington was marketing his “Queen of the North Chewing Gum and Huntington’s Liniment and Golden Tonic Bitters,” as seen on a number of trade cards and advertisements.

The “Dr. Huntington’s / Golden Tonic / Bitters – Portland / Maine” bottles were likely produced between 1868 and 1878. These bottles come in a number of dif-

ferent amber shades, aqua, and rarely in green. I believe they were made at two glass factory locations. Examples of this bottle were found at the South Stoddard, New Hampshire, factory site (which operated until 1873). Afterwards, I believe production carried on at the nearby Lyndeborough Glass Factory as needed. Collectors can recognize distinct contrasts in this production between the earlier bubbly amber glass and the much cleaner later aqua glass.

These bottles, like so many other mid-19th century Maine bottles, are not common and are highly desirable to collectors. We do not know of any commercial glass bottle manufacturing in Maine during this time, so the closest production center would have been in southern New Hampshire. The most prolific merchant during this time was probably Nathan Wood from Portland, followed by various other small local merchants. Bottle production was relatively low, so the supply for collectors today creates high demand. Some Maine merchant bottles are so rare that the number of known examples can be counted on one hand.

BEDFORD WATER – WHO, WHAT AND WHERE

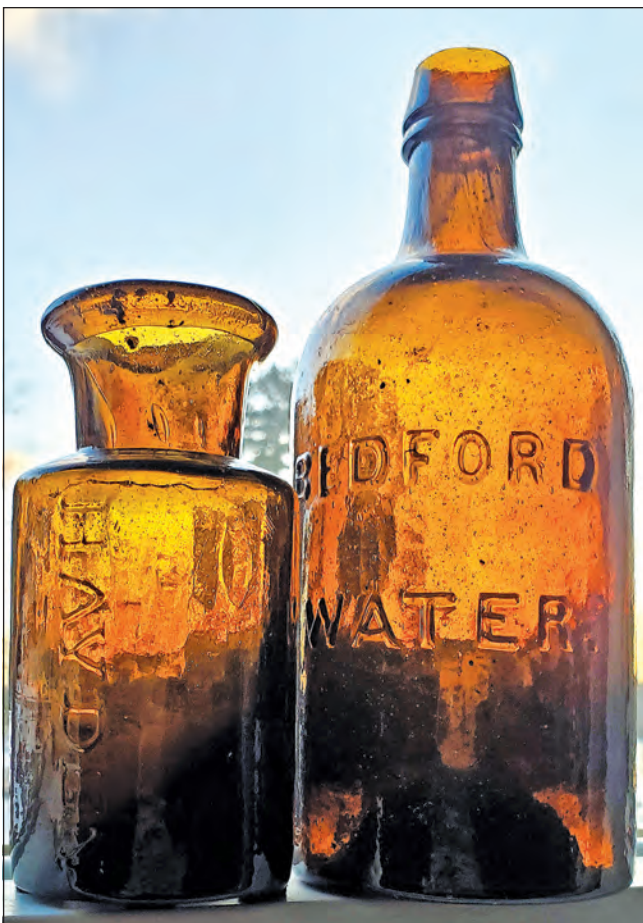
I own an early and relatively rare mineral water bottle, produced at Stoddard, New Hampshire, probably in the late 1850s. I wanted to learn a little bit about the source of this “Bedford Water” and it actually led me to another bottle on my shelf.

In the 1830s, a farm site in Bedford, Massachusetts, was owned by Augustus Pierce. Pierce noticed that cattle preferred the spring water at the small Fawn Lake, and the cows who regularly drank it gave better milk. An analysis from the spring-fed waters revealed that they contained the mineral iron, sulfur, and saline. These results prompted investors to purchase the farm and erect the Bedford Springs health resort, complete with hotel, bath house, stables and bowling alley.

Unfortunately, this early resort was not a commercial success, until it was purchased, in 1856, by Dr. William Hayden. The Springs House, later the Hotel Sweetwater, quickly became an attraction for city dwellers seeking relief from their ailments and stresses.

Dr. Hayden, well-known in the Bedford area as the president of the New York Pharmaceutical Company, operated his business at this location. He eventually moved the whole company to the Bedford Springs in 1867, complete with a full laboratory. The company produced up to 350 different potions based on the spring waters and various healing botanicals. Its principal products were Compound Phosphorus Pills, Uric Solvent, and Hayden’s Viburnum Compound.

As I was reading this information about Dr. Hayden and the famed Bedford Springs, I realized that I actually owned a bottle or jar that was likely used to contain Hayden’s miraculous solvents and compounds. Also of the same era and glass of the spring waters, these Stoddard-made bottles have a form very much like an ointment or balm jar, cylindrical with



PHOTOS:

TOP LEFT: Pair of Dr. Huntington's Golden Tonic Bitters from Portland Maine.

TOP RIGHT: "HAYDEN" marked ointment or balm bottle and a pint "BEDFORD WATER" bottle.

BOTTOM: A small selection of early Maine embossed bottles.



a wide flaring lip, and embossed vertically "HAYDEN." Also like the Bedford Spring water bottle, the Hayden bottle is very rare, and until now, unrelated to the Bedford Springs. The relationship between the bottles is very likely, and I can now relate it to the story of Dr. Hayden and his healing properties of the Bedford Springs.

MODERN DAY COLLECTING

Every collector loves a good bottle show, handling the glass, buying, selling, and the social camaraderie. However, if you have not embraced the opportunities of social media interaction through websites such as Facebook, well you are truly missing out.

Change can be difficult, but often very necessary. If you have been a little disappointed at the attendance of your local bottle club or show, well I have some

strong numbers for you. As I write this, Facebook private social groups are really growing, and becoming a great place to learn, promote, and encourage new collectors. The "Antique Bottle Collectors" page currently has 12,965 members, and the "Bottle Diggers & Collectors" page currently has 15,860 members. These are very strong numbers indeed. If you are not embracing this opportunity to learn and interact, then you are missing out on some incredible information.

As a young collector, I learned and researched about the hobby through the few books that I owned or was able to access. I also interacted with other collectors on a monthly basis, maybe if I was lucky. Now we can access collectors and any information instantly, creating a new "golden age" for collectors, especially new collectors. A vast number of people on these social media pages do not post or comment, but they are there, learning and getting

familiarized with the hobby. As we fear the changes in our hobby, we often don't recognize the underlying growth that comes from this change. We live in a time when information is at our fingertips. Articles and posts can be archived for years of enjoyment. Interact, and take advantage of this exceptional learning center.

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