

SHARDS OF WISDOM

“Heard it Through the Grapevine”



Not the most expensive...but the bottle that has special appeal just for you.

*Our normal **Ralph Finch** goes for the quirky.*

I don't care about that \$10,000 bottle on your shelf...maybe not even the \$100 bottle, but that quirky item you thought was unusual 10 or 60 years ago that still makes you smile (or raise an eyebrow).

I will tell you about mine—even three of them—and if they make you think of yours, share it with AB&GC readers and include a photo, too.

Here are mine, and if you first glance at the clear, unpontiled, unembossed bottle and say, “That’s not even worth 50 cents,” remember, this isn’t about dollar value but something that pleases you after all these years.

I found this unimpressive bottle decades ago; without the label, I would never have looked at it twice. **[Photo A]**

And the label immediately asked more questions than it answered.

- 1: Where is my magnifying glass? I can't read what's written!
- 2: Can this be real? Could someone a hundred years ago hand-write a label over and over again on however many bottles they hoped to sell?
- 3: It's named “Finch”—but Finch who?

It reminds me of the time 30 years ago—when Jim Hagenbuch called up and alerted me to an item coming up in one of his auctions. He said: “It's you! I mean, it's got your name on it!” In fact, it did: A barber bottle embossed “R. Finch. Tonic.” **[Photo B]**

Now, back to the bottle in question: Here is what the faded label says (as best I can tell): “Finch's ‘Good Samaritan Pain Killer’ Liniment—Directions. For cholic—morbus—1/2 teaspoonful on—(several lines unreadable) until relieved. For rheumatism apply with the hand rubbing in thoroughly / Shake before using. Price 50 cts.” I tried to research the product, but after an hour, this Finch was a pain! I found nothing.

And the bottle with a photo of my mother in her 20s. **[Photo C]** I know nothing about this except it's been around a while. My mother had war-time stories she rarely shared with us. (Hey, in my outdated address file, I still have the phone number of my mother's long-passed WWII boyfriend!)

Editors' note: Got an item that is valuable to you yet likely will never be a star item featured in a glass auction? Share it with readers. Tell Ralph Finch about it, and include a photo, to rfinch@twmi.rr.com.



[Photo A] A hand-written Finch label? How strange. After writing a few dozen bottles, you could have rheumatism of the finger joints and need this product! (I found a Finch Liniment, c. 1930, in Ogden, Utah, but my liniment is too old and primitive.)



[Photo B] A barber bottle embossed “R Finch Tonic,” courtesy of a years-ago Jim Hagenbuch, Glass Works Auctions sale.

[Photo C] My leggy mother Madeline had good days during WWII and has this souvenir photo held by an easel constructed inside a bottle! (What an appropriate item for a bottle collector!)

All Photographs by Janet Finch.



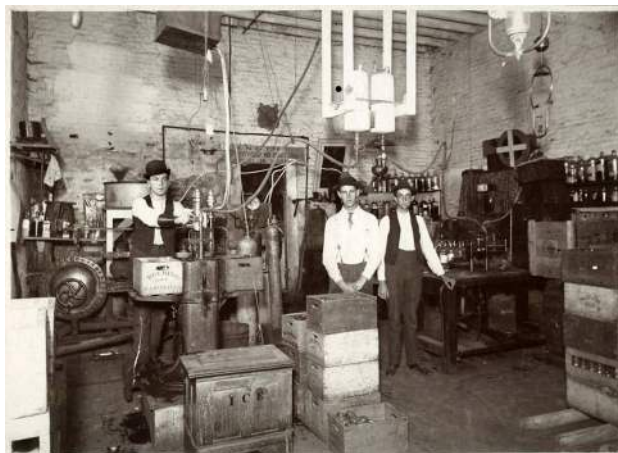
Antique Bottle & Glass Collector

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"Heard it Through the Grapevine"



5-gallon stoneware dispenser found in the Ocklawaha River.



[Above] Tod (von Mechow) sent this picture of how these syrup crocks worked. Notice the crocks are stackable. — DKR

The Mysterious Crock with a Small Bottom Hole

Dear friends, A friend found this 5-gallon crock in the Ocklawaha River (Florida) in the middle of the 1960s. It has a very small hole in the bottom center that looks to have been made by the manufacturer. Any idea what the hole was for? Any information on the proprietor, what the crock was used for, and what value? Any help would be appreciated.

After some searching, I thought the crock might have been used in separating whey from curds to make cheese. However, an advertisement (see attachment below) from them suggests the small hole in the crock might have been used for dispensing and possibly mixing syrups or other liquids.

David Kyle Rakes
Summerfield, Florida

Advertisement for S. Twitchell & Bro., Philadelphia



[Response 1] It is a syrup crock that fed the bottling equipment. I have seen a number over the years. — Tod von Mechow

[Response 2] Bill Wrenn provided a series of stoneware dispenser auction links and illustrations. — David Kyle Rakes

[Right] "Coca-Cola" Syrup Dispenser from the Coca-Cola Company, 1896-1906, Smithsonian, National Museum of American History



Our Special Glazed Syrup Jar

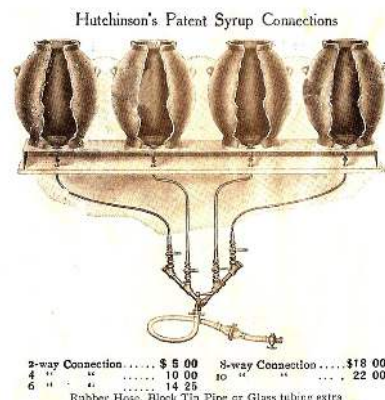
New 1904, 5-gallon egg-shaped, enameled, acid-proof Syrup Jar, with a patent tinned syrup cock, coupling and tail-piece.

Complete, including cock and coupling..... \$3 50

This jar is made only in 5-gallon size, owing to the fact that it is very difficult to make, therefore no other size can be obtained. It is the most desirable style of syrup-jar ever put on the market. Has a very highly glazed enamel finish inside and outside.

Cock and coupling only, complete..... \$1. 00

THIS IS THE BEST SYRUP JAR EVER MADE BARRING NONE



Hutchinson's Patent Syrup Connections

2-way Connection..... \$ 5 00 8-way Connection..... \$18 00
4 " " " " 10 00 10 " " " " 22 00
6 " " " " 14 25
Rubber Hose, Black Tin Pipe or Glass tubing extra

[Above] Syrup Jar illustration and Hutchinson's Patent Syrup Connections illustration included in the description from Cagle Auction Company, January 2022, Southern Pottery Auction.



[Above] Rare 1904 Hutchinson Egg-Shaped Syrup Dispenser — Cagle Auction Company

