



GUAJALOTES, ZOPILOTES, Y PAISANOS

Newsletter of the Hillsboro Historical Society

August, 2011

Volume 4 Number 3

Editor: Harley Shaw

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HILLSBORO HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY MEETING, August 2, 2011

MINUTES

President Larry Cospers brought the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. Board members present were Larry Cospers, Ike Wilton, Stretch Luna, Harley Shaw, Patti Nunn, Matti Harrison, Jim Laupen, and Sonya Rutledge. Guests included June Anders, Susan Jones, Barbara Reed, and Ray Reed.

Harley read the minutes from the May 3 meeting. Stretch moved the minutes be accepted as read. Jim seconded. Passed unanimously.

Matti presented financial statements and Sonya moved we accept them as presented. Patti seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Newsletter: Harley requested increase to \$75 for printing the newsletter in a new and longer format. Jim moved to approve the increase. Ike seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The Arcadia photo history, *Around Hillsboro* was shown to board. June Anders asked how the Black Range might acquire these for resale. Because of our contract with Arcadia Press, she will have to order them from the publisher at wholesale prices. Our society can sell books, but only via direct sales by mail, to individuals, or at events. Retailers will need

to go through Arcadia Press. Barbara suggested that, considering our knowledge and collection of photographs, we consider doing a calendar for the Centennial. Susan Jones asked about the location of the Slease Garage, shown on the book cover.

Stretch reported on a conversation with a Great Grandson of CC Crews. Contacts with the Crews family are available. Stretch is also working on sketch of first floor of the courthouse.

Old Business

Kingston School Building maintenance.

The Spit and Whittle Club has asked for financial help with purchasing a jack post and materials for internal plaster repairs at the Kingston School Building. Barbara Reed gave an estimate of \$600 needed. Barbara noted that the school is owned by the Spit and Whittle Club, but would revert to county ownership if the club should disband. Harley moved that we allocate up to \$600 to Spit and Whittle for the above purchases. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Matti noted that she needs help with tax forms, accounting program, etc. Susan Jones agreed to provide advice and may find someone to help. Susan, who is an accountant, emphasized strongly that appropriate forms be filed to avoid losing our 501 (c) 3 status.

Larry suggested that we plan to hold the drawing for the ironwood carving at the Labor Day Music Festival whether or not we had sold 100 tickets. We have sold approximately 80 tickets, and sales will continue through the festival, with the drawing at the end (or when 100 tickets have been sold). Sonya moved that we accept this approach, Jim seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

A discussion followed regarding the possible involvement of HHS with the Black Range Museum. The Executive Board had discussed this at length at their meeting in July. June Anders, who owns the museum expressed interest in our involvement and asked for ideas. She would be happy to see HHS take it over but does need appropriate compensation for the property and its holdings. Larry noted that we

need to respect the role of Lydia Keyes and the rest of her family in forming and maintaining the museum. Another founder was a Mrs. Simmons. Jim suggested we name the Museum the Lydia G. Key Black Range Museum, and the board felt this was a good idea. Larry says that the USFS staff archeologist would help with listing the museum as a historical site. Susan Jones suggested we consider having a district, and Sonya noted that this has been done, but that the Museum opted out of the Hillsboro Historical District at the time it was formed. June noted that Lydia feared government involvement. Harley suggested we explore a lease with an option to buy as a way to involve HHS more quickly. He suggested a Museum Committee that would explore this approach and work out the details, including a means of generating income. These need not be people on the board. A few names were discussed. Larry feels that volunteers in the area would help could help with maintenance.

Larry's shop is ready and he's ready to move on with truck. Larry noted that it will probably cost about \$3000 to rebuild the engine. Jim suggested that we make it visible somewhere during the Labor Day weekend. Larry agreed to take on the responsibility of moving the fire truck repair and cleanup along.

Gary Harvall has so far used \$2100 for hiring musicians for the Heritage Music Festival. HHS received \$1000 from lodger's tax board for advertising. Patty Woodruff already has about 40 items for auction, including some very nice art pieces. It was suggested that we have the Silent Auction open Friday evening before the Festival to allow locals to view and bid. Everyone agreed with this idea. Larry noted that we have not yet found anyone to provide food at the Community Center.

We had a brief discussion regarding the purchase of a storage facility for HHS. Larry suggested we table the issue and wait until we see what the museum committee does. Everyone agreed.

Barbara Reed announced that the Spit and Whittle now has a \$12.00 membership for non residents and invited members of our board to join. S&W meets the second Tuesday

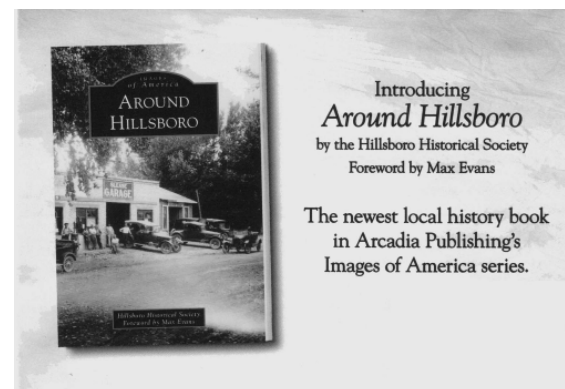
of each month with food provided.

Harley presented a couple of historical items recently received. One was a Warranty Deed for water rights at the spring at the lower end of the Percha Box. This helps explain the development of the bridge in that area that shows up in photographs. This document was located by Charles Brittain of Fort Collins, Colorado, the father of Joseph Brittain who now owns the Ed Ostertag home. Charles has been doing in-depth research on the Hopewell and Bucher families and would be an excellent resource for anyone interested in those families, as well as the Ladder Ranch. The second item was a note from Nancy McCauley congratulating HHS on *Around Hillsboro* and thanking us for her complimentary copy.

Larry adjourned the meeting at about 8 PM.

EDITOR'S REPORT: NEWS AND COMMENTS

We've changed the format of the newsletter to make it a look a bit more professional. We've been distributing fifty printed copies each month, as well as sending the newsletter online to fifty-five individuals. We are happy to add anyone interested in receiving the online newsletter to our email list. Just send a request to hqshaw@windstream.net.



Our big news this quarter is the publication of *Around Hillsboro*, one of the Arcadia Press Images of America series. Matti Harrison, Patti Nunn, Craig Springer, and yours truly spent a goodly bit of 2010 and 2011

assembling this book, scrambling constantly to meet the publisher's deadlines. In addition to these, many individuals with roots in Hillsboro contributed photographs, information, and editorial comment. New Mexico's Dean of Western Writing, Max Evans, was kind enough to contribute a forward. We're proud of the book, all the while knowing that flaws will undoubtedly emerge. Such a publication isn't intended to be an exhaustive history, and we hope that it will create as many questions as it answers, perhaps stimulating others to write aspects of our local history they find interesting but lacking in our book.

We are, in fact, already receiving feedback, both positive and negative. Our own vice-president, Stretch Luna, particularly, is displeased with parts of the book and has asked for space to sound his complaints. His comments are printed below. History is always open to question, and we invite others to share their thoughts, criticisms, or comments. One goal of any kind of scholarly publication--and I'd like to think ours fits that description--is to flush out and air differences of perception. This is the way that knowledge grows.

Around Hillsboro is available from Hillsboro Historical Society for \$21.95 plus \$4.95 postage and handling. We're not set up for credit cards, so you'll have to send us a check at P. O. Box 486, Hillsboro NM 88042.

The book can also be purchased directly from the publisher at with a 20% discount www.arcadiapublishing.com/news. We understand it's also available through Amazon.com. Hillsboro Historical Society realizes a bit more profit if you order directly from us, but we mainly want to see the book out there and being read. However you choose to buy it, we hope you enjoy it.

And speaking of differences of opinion, I hope online viewers are also regularly checking the Hillsboro History blog at <http://hillsborohistory.blogspot.com/>. This is regularly updated by Craig Springer, who brings in historical photos and articles written by a variety of authors. Craig has been researching in-depth claims regarding the peak historic population of Kingston. Some sources place the

figure as high as 7000-8000 people before the 1890s crash. Others doubt the town ever held that many people. We're hoping Craig's article on the subject appears soon and are looking forward to the discourse it creates.

Last but not least we are pleased to present a fascinating paper on bottling works in the Black Range area. Bill Lockwood and Zane Wood have done an immense amount of research on the subject. They continue to be interested in old bottles or information regarding old bottles from our area. If any readers know of other local bottles, please let us know and we'll put you in touch with these gentlemen.

COMPLAINT ON BOOK BY "STRETCH" LUNA

The following is a complaint by HHS Vice-President "Stretch" Luna, on the book to be sold during the Labor Day weekend Heritage Festival.

The Mexican neighborhood of "Happy Flats" dates back to the 1835-1840s. It was comprised of two stores, several families, and a wagon repair shop. Hillsboro founding date is May 20, 1877.

My complaint is two long-time residents, Abel V. Chavez and Daughter Romela (Romie) Chavez Luna-Bird lived their lives there. Abel Chavez (3/16/1861 to 2/12/1912) was of the three "Mexican" jurors on the Fountain Murder. He also helped interpreting the other two Mexican men.

His daughter, Romelia (3/17/1895 to 9/3/1994) was born/raised in Happy flats and lived there 99 1/2 years. She was the longest residing resident.

For whatever reason(s), their personal pictures and accompanying personnel information was not included in any part of the book.

The only reference to "Romie" Luna-Bird is a caption under A. L. Bird's picture, saying he has married her. Not including above information is hurtful if not insulting to me and my family. Here's hoping that this does not fall on deaf ears and such a situation will not re-occur.

Note also: While the depiction of the

book is nice and noteworthy that Lydia Keye and Glorea Anders have maintained the Black Range Museum, it was in fact Ms. Eve Simmons who started it, in 1961, or 1962. By the time it was ready to open, it was also a library. In 1850, my great grandma, Dolorita S. Madrid was living with her parents in Happy Flats 25 years before May 1877 when Hillsboro was founded. Signed: F. "Stretch" Luna, HHS Vice-President.

LOCAL HISTORY

SODA BOTTLING IN THE BLACK RANGE

By Bill Lockhart and Zanę Wood
with contributions by
Ron Fowler, Virginia Beręey, Pat Brown, and
Lynn Loomis

While trying to understand a mysterious soda bottle, noted New Mexico bottle collector and author, Zanę Wood, studied the history of the towns of the Black Range in central New Mexico. Wood discovered references to bottlers in old issues of the *New Mexico Business Directory and Gazetteer*, a few ads in the Black Range newspapers, and an intriguing set of promissory notes and mortgage records. This research remained in Wood's files until Virginia Beręey visited New Mexico in 2010 in search of her relative, Theodore L. Reber. Beręey knew that Reber had been a soda bottler during the late 19th century, with plants at several locations in New Mexico Territory. Her search brought her to Pat Brown's Trading Post & Mining Museum in Cerrillos.

Brown was intrigued. She sent e-mail messages to collectors and others whom she thought might be interested, including Bill Lockhart, a professor at the Alamoęordo campus of New Mexico State University. Lockhart, a sociologist and historical archaeologist, was just as captivated as Brown. As part of Lockhart's ongoing investigation into the bottle-related industries of Southern New Mexico, El Paso, Texas, and Juárez, Mexico, Reber's experience in the Black Hills fit perfectly. The group began sharing information.

The Black Range lies in southwestern New Mexico and extends between the historic towns of Hot Springs (now Truth or Consequences) on its eastern extreme and Silver City at its western terminus. The major mining towns of the region were the ghost towns of Robinson and Chloride to the north, Lake Valley to the south, and the current (and historic) communities of Kingston and Hillsboro more toward the center of the range (Figure 1).

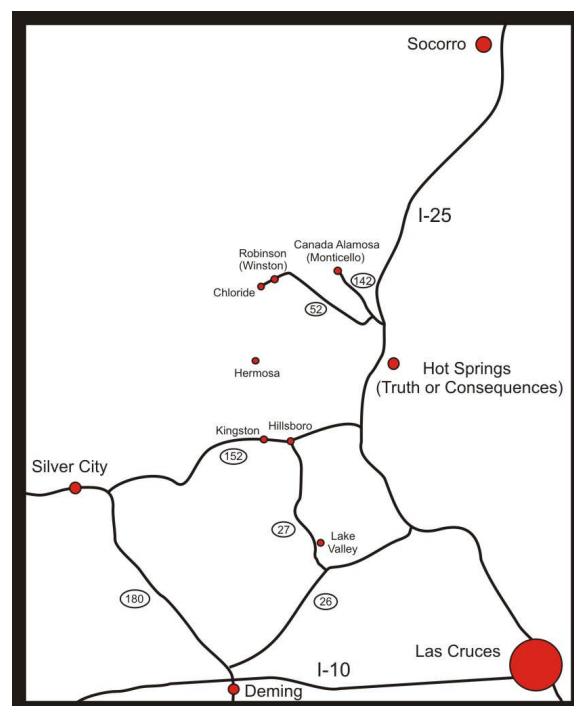


Figure 1 – Map of Black Range towns and 21st century highways.

Miners arrived at the Black Range in the late 1870s. Miners in Lake Valley hit the Bridal Chamber strike in 1878, and a town quickly grew around the mine. By 1883, the Bridal Chamber was pretty much worked out. After that, even though the railroad arrived in 1884, the mines struggled to stay open. The last resident left in 1991. Other towns remained active for a longer period, Kingston and Hillsboro have survived to the present. But the silver panic of 1893, effectively a five-year recession by modern terms, destroyed the silver mining industry in the Black Range.

Like saloons, soda bottlers followed the mines and the towns. By the time the Black Range was being settled, Hutchinson soda bottles, named after the inventor of their internal stoppers, dominated the industry. Patented on April 8, 1879, by Charles G. Hutchinson, these stoppers sealed the bottle by being pulled upward against the base of the neck from the inside. A figure-8 wire arrangement held the stopper in place and protruded through the opening at the top (Figure 2). To drink, a customer had to force the wire down, breaking the seal and creating a space between the shoulder of the bottle and upper surface of the stopper. The bottle could be easily resealed by pulling the wire back up (Paul & Parmalee 1973:12-13).

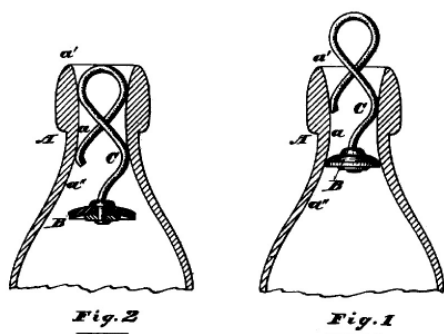


Figure 2 – Hutchinson stopper

Small-town soda bottling actually required very little equipment and a minimum of initial outlay. Soft drinks consist of three major ingredients: syrup, water, and carbonate plus a container for the finished product. The syrup could be created in a vessel where sugar and flavoring could be mixed. The quality of the finished drink depended on the exact mixture of syrup. Water could be poured into the mixture and stirred with a paddle. The uncarbonated mixture could then be placed as high as possible above the filler to allow gravity to do most of the work.

By 1880, various carbonators were on the market, using sodium bicarbonate to create the “fizz.” Aside from bottles, the carbonator was probably the most expensive single investment that a bottler faced. In remote

small western towns, the carbonator was usually a portable, hand-operated model (Figure 3), using a wheel with a crank handle (Riley 1958:75).

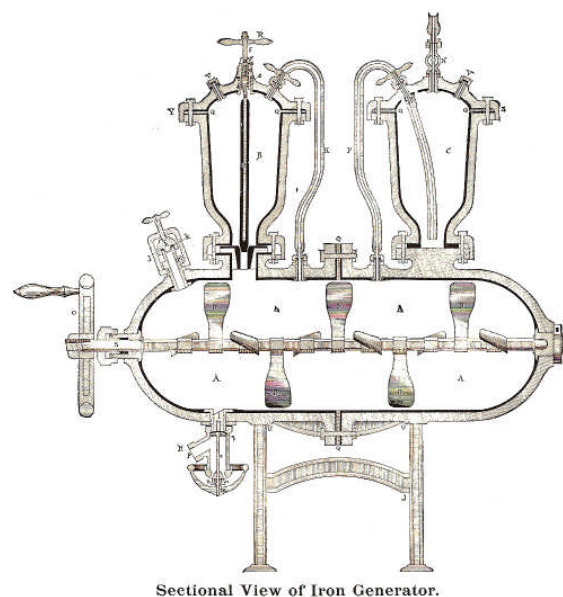
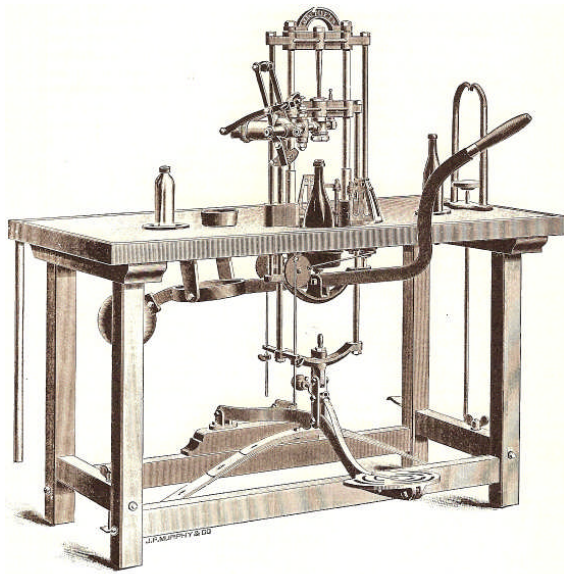


Figure 3 – Carbonator with hand crank – Tufts Iron Generator (Courtesy of Ron Fowler)

The carbonated water was then mixed with the syrup and transferred to a filler via a rubber hose. This apparatus, controlled by a foot or knee operated valve, deposited the liquid (often measured only by eye) into each bottle. The stopper was then inserted with a hand press (Figure 4). Although this process seems cumbersome, it *could* be very compact. Carbonators were probably the most bulky item of hardware – aside from bottles and cases. Syrup vats or stoneware (ceramic) crocks took up little space. Different flavors could be mixed in the same crock, hopefully, after cleaning. Fillers were made as part of a table or a stand-alone apparatus that took up little space (Figure 5). For a highly mobile operation (like the ones probably used in the Black Range), a stand-alone filler was a good solution (Fowler 2011; Riley 1958:83-85). Tables could be found or built anywhere.

The detailed story of Theodore L. Reber and his wife, Rebecca, will be told in another article. This remarkable couple wended their way across New Mexico, leaving a legacy of



Tufts' Improved Bottling Table.
(PATENTED.)
NEW STYLE FOR 1888.

Figure 4 – Filling table (Courtesy of Ron Fowler)

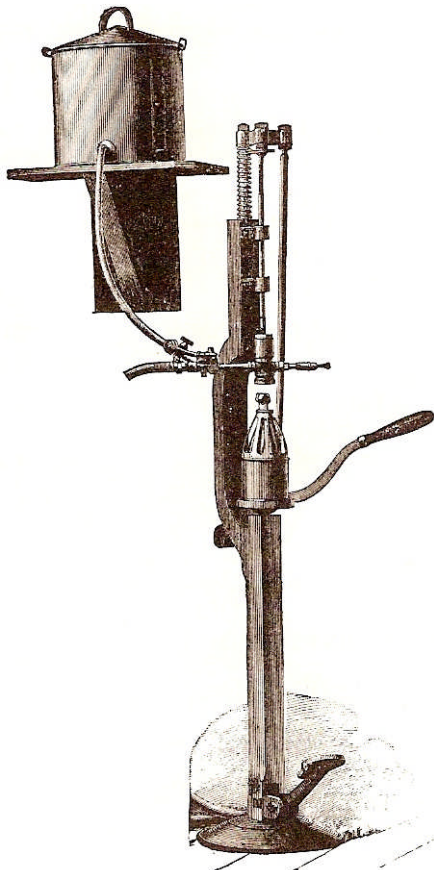


Figure 5 – Small filling apparatus (Courtesy of Ron Fowler)

soda bottlers behind them. Indeed, Reber could be called the Johnny Appleseed of soda bottling. Although probably an apocryphal remark, Reber, claimed to have started more than 50 soda bottling businesses, mostly within the borders of New Mexico (*Santa Fe New Mexican* 9/16/1898). Reber sold soda bottling outfits, built plants, developed businesses, sold out and moved on. Once called "the perambulating soda water manufacturer," Reber's bottling career began by at least 1879 and continued into the first few years of the 20th century (*Santa Fe New Mexican* 9/16/1898). Fairly early, Reber and his wife perambulated into the Black Range.

Reber at Robinson and Hillsboro. Our knowledge about T.L. and Rebecca Reber is limited and comes almost entirely from brief newspaper blurbs and occasional ads (Figure 6). Reber was in business at Silver City in 1880



Figure 6 – Theodore L. and Rebecca Reber (Courtesy of Cynthia Smith)

but had moved on to Mesilla by mid-year. We

have not yet ascertained how long he remained at Mesilla, but Reber claimed to have sold the first soda bottling outfit in El Paso, Texas, to Houck & Dieter, a liquor wholesaler (*Sacramento Chief* 4/22/1899). Houck & Dieter bottled sodas from 1881 until the firm merged with the Purity Bottling & Mfg. Co. in 1912 to form the Empire Bottling Works (Lockhart; 2010).¹

A report in the *El Paso Times* on April 2, 1881, noted "Reber & Co., have removed their business to the new store room on El Paso Street next to Palace Drug Store, where they will be glad to welcome their friends and former patrons." Since Houck & Dieter began soda bottling in April 1881, the firm must have taken over Reber's original place of business.

Reber apparently sold a second bottling outfit to Coffin & Co. about that time, and subsequent newspaper reports ceased mentioning sodas in connection with Reber's store. By September 28, 1881, Reber was again restless, and the *El Paso Herald* stated that Reber needed to sell his inventory within 30 days. He was on the move again by the end of October.

A gap exists in our records about Reber between October 1881 and October 1882. When the Rebers left the Black Range for Socorro by October 1883, the local paper noted that the family had returned to Socorro. This 1881-1882 hiatus is probably when the couple operated their first Socorro business, putting them in a perfect position for their Black Range entry.²

¹ The latest (2010) revision is by far the most complete rendition of the Houck & Dieter business.

² There is also a hiatus from the July 1880 report of Reber at Mesilla to his arrival at El Paso. Since we know that Houck & Dieter opened its bottling works in April 1881, Reber had to have been there by at least March. That leaves as much as a seven-month stretch. Reber had often been to a town, set up, sold out, and moved on in less time. However, the proximity

Reber had moved to the Black Range by July 27, 1882, when an article in the *Las Vegas Daily Gazette* reported the arrival of Mrs. Reber from Robinson. At that point Robinson was a new town in the northern part of the Black Range, possibly settled a year or so earlier. It was the perfect setting for Reber – a fresh territory with thirsty miners.

A February 12, 1883 ad in the *Black Range* stated that "Reber & Co. Soda Water Manufactory makes sarsaparilla, ginger ale, and plain pop. Uses new patent stopper bottle and pure syrups, Robinson, N.M." (Figure 7). The

REBER & CO.,

SODA WATER

MANUFACTORY.

MAKES

Sarsaparilla,

Ginger Ale

and Plain Pop.

Uses new patent stopper bottles and pure syrups.

ROBINSON, N. M.

Figure 7 – Ad for Reber & Co. at Robinson (*Black Range* 2/12/1883)

ad ran from at least January 12 to August 31, and all had the same content. The *Black Range* reported on March 3, 1883, that "Reber is pushing his residence and soda factory to completion, and when finished he will have

of Mesilla and El Paso makes a move directly to El Paso more likely.

things arranged in good shape for manufacturing soda. A driven well under cover will make the supply of water convenient." Availability of good water was a problem at the town, but the newspaper reported on March 27 that Reber had "an abundance of water in his well at his ranch just east of Robinson." Reber began advertising in January, but his bottling plant was apparently not operational until March. His earlier bottling may have taken place at his ranch.

Reber opened a branch at Hillsboro about March 2, 1883 (*Black Range* 3/2/1883). On August 24, he described Hillsboro to the *Black Range* as "equally as dull as the town here [i.e., Robinson]." Reber apparently had become discouraged with business in Robinson and Hillsboro. By February 5, 1884, J.D. Perkins sold "the Reber Building" at Robinson to H.N. Castle. Reber, however, was no longer interested. He had returned to Socorro by October, 1883.

Edward James Ryan-Successor to Reber. Edward James Ryan was in the Black Range by early 1883. He leased seven acres at Cañada de Alamosa that year to grow vegetables. On November 14, 1883, Ryan mortgaged a team of horses for \$110 to T.L. and Rebecca Reber at Socorro – payable on December 1. This deal was in reality a way for the Rebers to finance Ryan in the purchase of the soda business in the Black Range. E.J. Ryan was next listed in the 1884 New Mexico Business Directory and Gazetteer as a "Soda Mfr." at Lake Valley. Ryan undoubtedly moved to Lake Valley to take advantage of the railroad. The New Mexico Railroad Co., a branch of the Santa Fe Railway, built a 13-mile extension from Nutt to Lake Valley. The new line opened on April 5, 1884, and Ryan probably moved the bottling works from Hillsboro to Lake Valley about that time (Myrick 1990:204-205).

On February 15, 1886, E.J. Ryan wrote promissory notes to Philipp Madlener of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, for "Value Received."³

³ The record of these notes and mortgages that follow are on file at the Sierra County Clerk, Truth or Consequences, New Mexico.

These notes described "Soda-Water Apparatus" that included one 18-gallon generator, one 18-gallon fountain, one force pump, one bottling table, one syrup gauge, and 15 Grose (*sic*) Soda Bottles with Patent Stoppers (i.e. 2,160 bottles). One note was due "three months after date" with payment at three month intervals thereafter until the equipment was paid in full by November 5, 1886. Ryan was still at Lake Valley. The listing for "Patent Stoppers" refers to the patented Hutchinson stoppers.

Phillip Madlener. In the Spring of 1873, John Graf and Philip Madlener formed the partnership of Graf & Madlener "in the soda water business." The 1880 census noted the Madlener was born in Bavaria about 1843. He was 37 years old at the time. Graf purchased Madlener's interest in 1883. When Madlener left the business, he became a producer of soda bottling equipment. In 1888, he was listed as "Mfr. Soda Water Apparatus." During the 1890s, Madlener ordered Hutchinson bottles from the Cream City Glass Co. for resale to those he supplied. These were embossed with a PHM monogram on the front of each bottle (Figure 8). Madlener remained in business until 1907 (Currey :450-453; Flower 1888:288).

Ryan's New Equipment. E.J. Ryan purchased new bottling equipment from Madlener on February 15, 1886. He remained at Lake Valley, presumably with the intent to continue bottling operations there. It is worth speculating a bit about why Ryan bought new equipment.

If our assumption that Ryan originally acquired his bottling apparatus from Reber is correct, then we can interpolate three probable conditions for the equipment. First, it was minimal. Reber was mobile and probably used the smallest and most basic equipment available, with a minimal labor force consisting of his wife and himself. Second, the equipment worked on Hutchinson-style bottles. Third, and perhaps most important, the equipment probably was getting old and quite worn from moving and use. The apparatus probably dated at least to Reber's arrival in the Black Range in 1882 and may have been a couple of years older. It had been moved at least once



Figure 8 – Madlener's PHM Hutchinson bottle (eBay)

(Hillsboro or Robinson to Lake Valley) and maybe several more times. Although this is all

speculation, it is reasonable to assume that Ryan felt he needed new equipment.

Assuming Ryan purchased his equipment from Reber, he probably also acquired what remained of Reber's Hutchinson bottles—after some four years, much depleted. Before the use of deposits, customers were slow to return bottles and frequently discarded them. The bottles were theoretically the property of the bottler – not the customer – but soda buyers were either unaware or uncaring. Bottles were lost in three ways: 1) breakage at the bottling plant, the retail outlet, or by the customer; 2) wear from transportation or cleaning; and/or 3) theft by the customer. One study (Lockhart 1999) found that most bottles had been lost by the end of five years. Ryan's bottle supply was dwindling, so what better time to buy new equipment?

The Mary Ryan Mortgage. On May 8, 1886, just three months after E.J. Ryan purchased the equipment from Madlener, and three days after the first payment was due, Ryan borrowed \$300 from Mary Ryan, most likely to pay off Madlener. The collateral for the mortgage is recognizable as the same equipment and the same number of bottles. The "complete Soda Water Machine and Soda Water out-fit" was "now located in the "Town of Hillsborough" and used by said party of the first part" (i.e. E.J. Ryan). Ryan had thus moved to Hillsboro and was bottling sodas. The move was most likely inspired by the collapse of the mining industry at Lake Valley after 1884. The mortgage to Mary Ryan was due in a single payment a year later, but Ryan paid the mortgage in full less than a month later, on June 7, 1886. Mary Ryan was either the wife or mother of James. She was listed as the proprietress of The Cosmopolitan Hotel at Lake Valley, on April 7, 1888. Mrs. D.G. Meredith managed the hotel in March of that year and was again in charge by the end of July, so Mary Ryan was only there for a short time. She apparently moved with James, back to Lake Valley by at least February 1887.

The Cahill and Parker Mortgage. On the same date that Ryan satisfied the mortgage to Mary Ryan he took out a loan with Thomas Cahill and F.W. Parker for \$300, undoubtedly to

pay Mary. This loan was due in six months. Parker recorded on December 13, 1886, that the mortgage was "satisfied and discharged." Collateral was the same "Soda Water Outfit", "situated in Hillsboro"; and Ryan continued as the user, but with interesting changes. Cahill and Parker were bit more demanding, and Ryan had to include a spring wagon in the collateral to get the loan. Collateral for the first two mortgages counted fifteen gross of bottles. This new mortgage lists "one hundred & sixty boxes bottles." The term "boxes" must refer to cases of bottles, typically 24 to a case. That would add up to 3,840 bottles, a sizable increase from the original collateral. We do not have the original mortgage document, but found a *recording* of the document in the mortgage book maintained by the County Clerk. The way many people wrote during that time, a "0" could easily be mistaken for a "6" – leading to "160" being recorded, when the actual document may have intended an even hundred. One hundred cases multiplied by 24 bottles equals 2,400 bottles, closer to the original number and the same as that given in later mortgages. Even so, this correction leaves an additional 240 bottles, so something must have changed. Indeed, this record also includes "one corking machine." Assuming that this is not a misnomer for the Hutchinson machine, Ryan had acquired a cork installer? We have to wonder why. A simple explanation fits both the era and circumstances. First, ginger ale and various forms of specific waters (e.g., Apollinaris Water) were becoming popular on the frontier. Bottles for these were sealed with corks. If Ryan had begun bottling ginger ale and/or specialty waters, this might explain both the corking machine and the additional bottles.

All of this borrowing to pay off other notes amounts to an early form of check kiting—writing a check from one bank to pay off another bank and repeating that until you have enough money to cover the original bad check – which is now illegal. This suggests that Ryan was not doing well in the bottling business. Mining in the Black Range was beginning to seriously decline about then, so sales may have fallen off drastically.

The Charles Lerr Mortgage. On December 4, 1886, Charles Lerr borrowed \$425 from two Hillsboro companies – Sowell & Brandon and Herrin, Keller & Miller. The loan was to be repaid in two installments on April 1 and June 1, 1887. The list of the property mortgaged was the same as Ryan originally purchased from Madlener, "including the soda-water outfit formerly owned by E.J. Ryan." The Mortgage was cancelled just two months later.

This transaction creates far more questions than it answers. Who was Lerr? How did he get involved? Did he, indeed, take up bottling? Did the equipment stay at Hillsboro? This mortgage and the term "soda-water outfit formerly owned by E.J. Ryan" implies that this loan enabled Lerr to purchase the equipment. The mortgage was later *recorded* as cancelled at Hillsboro with a note that "Herrin Keller & Miller and Sowell & Brandon request this mortgage cancelled." Why did they use the word "cancelled" instead of the normally used "satisfied?" Did Lerr cease operations, abandon the equipment, and leave? Did he pay it off? Whatever the case, the mortgage was cancelled on February 1, 1887, a date significant to the next mortgage.

E.J. Ryan again, the Perrault Mortgage. Lerr probably defaulted on the loan without making a single payment. Although we will never be certain, it is likely that the two firms (Herrin, Keller & Miller and Sowell & Brandon) actually regained their money from Ryan, who once more was in possession of the equipment. On the same day that Lerr's note was cancelled, Ryan floated a loan for \$127.85. The mortgage was held by George O. Perrault, with single, full payment due six months later. For this lesser sum, Ryan only put part of the equipment up as collateral: 1 - 7 Gallon Generator, 1 Bottling Table, 100 Boxes, and 200 Doz Bottles with stoppers. Note that the "100 Boxes" did not include the bottles. The total was 200 dozen bottles (2,400 bottles, the same number as in the last transaction). The record added that the "Complete Soda Water Outfit [was] now in Lake Valley." At Hillsboro, on June 7, 1887, Perrault recorded "I hereby acknowledge Satisfaction in full on the within mortgage."

This a date of recording, not necessarily the date that the mortgage was satisfied, so Ryan might have repaid Perrault on time. Perrault, perhaps, simply did not get to Hillsboro to record the transaction until four months later.

The Holz and Cotton Mortgage. The final loan listed for Ryan was \$500 from Conrad Holz and William Cotton. The collateral this time was not itemized in detail, showing "One complete Soda Water Apparatus together with all necessary appurtenances thereunto [*sic*] belonging, also about 100 Soda Water Boxes together with the entire bottles corks &c." The note was due in full three months from the date of the loan. The entry said nothing about the location of the equipment. No record exists of the final disposition of the mortgage. Since this is the last mortgage entry we have found for Ryan, he may have defaulted on the loan and left town – in which case, Holz and Cotton probably repossessed the bottling equipment.

Summing up the Ryan Years. T.L. Reber moved to the Black Range by July 1882, settled at Robinson and opened a bottling works. He branched out to Hillsboro and may have moved his operation there in 1883. He sold the business to Ryan in November. Ryan moved the bottling works to Lake Valley by early 1884. He bought a new bottling outfit in February 1886 and moved back to Hillsboro. He then began a cascade of indebtedness – repeatedly using the new equipment and the original number of bottles as loan collateral. Ryan sold the equipment to Charles Lerr in December 1886, but Lerr defaulted, probably without bottling a single soda. Ryan reacquired the equipment in early 1887. By this time, he may have quit bottling, but nonetheless floated two more loans, using the bottling outfit for collateral. His "kiting" of loans may have ultimately caught up with him, causing him to default on the final loan and leave town.

Ryan appears in local news again in April 1888, when he was peripherally involved in a shooting at Hermosa. He moved to Cañada de Alamosa and took up farming in August, 1888. Our last glimpse of Ryan places him in Santa Fe on February 12, 1898, described as "a

traveling man" who had just come "up from Albuquerque" en route to Colorado. His bottling days were by then almost certainly a distant memory. But a strange loose end remains. Ryan purchased 2,160 Hutchinson bottles in February 1886. By June, the number had increased to 2,400, possibly adding ginger ale bottles. In June 1887, the number remained the same, so during this 16-months Ryan apparently did not lose any bottles. The deposit system did not yet exist, so it seems incredible that no one kept, discarded, or broke a single one! Either the people recording the mortgages were not counting, or Ryan was not bottling.

L.P. Johnson—another Successor to Reber? On March 21, 1884, the *Black Range* printed a brief but intriguing blurb: "L.P. Johnson is fixing up a building adjoining his residence which he will occupy as a soda factory. He has his fountain and bottling apparatus on the way and will soon be ready for business."⁴ The newspaper was printed at Chloride, just a few miles west of Robinson, where T.L. Reber had operated his bottling works in 1883. We have found no other information about the Johnson bottling plant. Johnson may have just been another short-term bottler, but the timing and location suggest a connection with Reber too compelling to ignore. Since Reber was bottling at two locations in the Black Range, he very likely had two sets of bottling apparatus. If Ryan had purchased the Hillsboro set up in November 1883, that still left the Robinson equipment conveniently located and available for Johnson.

Fleischman and Brandon—The Snyder and Johnson Mortgage. On June 25, 1888, Leopold Fleishman and Archie C. Brandon borrowed \$912.85 from R.W. Snyder and S.N. Johnson to buy a large inventory of bottling equipment. The inventory was so detailed that

⁴ The words "on the way" may be misleading. The reader should be aware that newspaper reporters of the period were not known for pinpoint accuracy. Thus, "on the way" could mean shipped from Chicago – or being moved across town that day.

it included such items as "1 punch . . . 1 stove & pipe . . . 1 saw . . . 1 green coat . . . 1 Bay horse," and numerous other items – a total of 63 entries! Of specific interest, the inventory listed: 3 cases ginger ale & bottles, 65 dozen ale bottles, 107 empty soda cases, 36 ginger ale cases empty, 6 doz quart soda bottles, 80 cases sodas filled with soda bottles, and 21 full quart cases filled with bottles. This came to 2,772 regular-sized (about 8 ounce) bottles and 576 quarts (3,348 bottles total). If this were the same soda bottling outfit ordered by Ryan two-and-a-half years earlier, it was a much more detailed inventory and/or had been enhanced. Since the loan was for almost a thousand dollars, this may reflect a new set of equipment. The business was "situated in the Town of Kingston," and the mortgage was to be paid in monthly installments, with a final payment on May 25, 1889. This inventory is very different from the earlier ones by Ryan. If this is the same equipment, either there have been numerous additions, or the early inventories were less thorough. Such items as the bay horse and accompanying tack and livery, however, were clear additions. In any event, the gap of at least a year in the record, and the difference in inventory, suggest a break in the continuity that began with Reber in 1882.

The Peques Mortgage. Fleischman and Brandon took borrowed \$900 from Phil T. Peques on December 31, 1888, to pay off the Snyder & Johnson loan. Snyder & Johnson acknowledged "payment in full of this Mortgage" the same day. This time, however, the clerk eliminated the detail and called it simply "A complete Soda Water Manufacturing Outfit – located in Kingston." Again, the payments were monthly, and they extended to December 31, 1889. As with Ryan's final mortgage, there is no record of the disposition of the loan. Fleischman & Brandon are listed in the 1889 *New Mexico Business Directory and Gazetteer* as "Soda Mfgs" at Kingston – but were not enumerated in 1888. Hence, if Fleischman and Brandon entered the soda business when they mortgaged the equipment on June 25, 1888, they would have needed a while to start production, perhaps placing them too late in

the year to have been included in the 1888 *Gazetteer*. The partners took out ads in the *Kingston Weekly Shaft* from at least May 1889 to July 8 of that year. The ad was short but informative: "KINGSTON BOTTLING WORKS. FLEISHMAN & BRANDON, PROP'S. OFFICE ON WATER ST. Manufacturers of all kinds of Soft Drinks. Goods shipped to any town in Sierra County. Your Trade is solicited. Give us a trial order." (Figure 9). There was no ad in the July 13, 1889 issue nor any that followed. The abrupt cessation of ads in the middle of the prime soft drink season suggests that something was suddenly amiss. This, coupled with the unresolved payment record on the loan is ominous, suggesting that Fleishman & Brandon went out of business in early July.



Figure 9 – Fleishman & Brandon ad (*Kingston Weekly Shaft* 6/8/1889)

Jake Reidlinger–The Last of the Black Range Bottlers. Jacob Reidlinger⁵ advertised as J. Reidlinger and Son in the *Sierra County Advocate* from October 2, 1891, through April 28, 1893. His plant was called the Hillsboro Bottling Works. He advertised an incredibly diverse choice of sodas that included "lemon soda, sarsaparilla soda, cream soda, orange soda, crystal soda, orange color [what *that* means is lost in the recesses of time], ginger ale, birch beer, pear champagne, champagne ciders, Cherrie Ferri Phosphate, iron tonic, Standard Nerve Food, Standard Neur [?] Cure, Waukeshawater, seltzer water, mineral waters, and other waters and tonics. Reidlinger and his son, Jake, Jr., stated their intent to open two new bottling operations in September 1891 (*Silver City*

⁵ Although the name is spelled both Riedlinger and Reidlinger, the later is the spelling used in his advertisements.

Independent 9/18/1891). Jake, Jr., was to operate the Hillsboro works, while “an expert from St. Louis” was being imported to run a new plant at Clifton, Arizona. Apparently, Jake, Sr., was to continue the Silver City business. Jake Jr. may have bought the much newer bottling equipment used by Fleischman & Brandon – already available at nearby Kingston.

The Hillsboro Bottling Works appears on the 1893 Sanborn map (shown as “Soda Wks.”). The plant was located behind the saloon and billiard hall in the center of Block 34 (Figure 10). The saloon faced W. Main, and the block was between 1st and 2nd Avenues. The street behind the bottling works was noted as “not defined” on the map. Although the small building was still shown on the 1898 map, it was not labeled – suggesting that Reidlinger was not succeeded by another bottler.

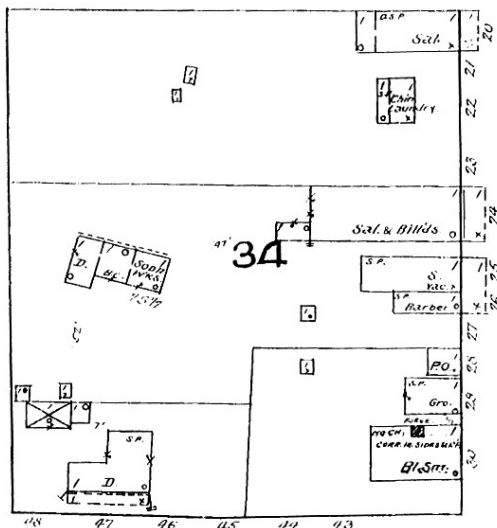


Figure 10 – Soda Works at Hillsboro (Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1893)

Born in 1837, the senior Reidlinger had come to Silver City from Albuquerque ca. 1882 and advertised his bottling works in the *Silver City Enterprise* as early as April 20, 1883 (Wood 1998:[74]). Reidlinger operated his “Soda Water Factory” at the corner of Texas and San Vicente until at least August of 1896 and retained some connection with the Black Range. On August 23, 1895, Reidlinger advertised (with no sons included in the ad) in the *Sierra County Advocate* that he was a

“Dealer in all kinds of Soda Water” and that “Orders from Sierra County [were] solicited” (Figure 11) Jacob Reidlinger, Sr., died in 1911.

Jake Reidlinger

SILVER CITY, N. M.

Dealer in
All kinds of

S O D A Water.

Orders from Sierra County
solicited.

Figure 11 – Ad from Reidlinger in the *Sierra County Advocate* (8/23/1895)

Reidlinger ads appeared in the *Sierra County Advocate* until April, 1893. This was the year of the Silver Panic and a major depression that especially affected mines, and business at Hillsboro had undoubtedly dropped drastically. At that point, Jake, Jr., apparently closed the Hillsboro business and returned to Silver City to work with his father. The *Enterprise* for August 10, 1897 reported that Jake, Jr., was departing to “Torreon, Mexico, where he will work in a large bottling plant. . . .” Jake, Sr., and his younger son, P.J., remained at Silver City.

A Legacy in Glass. The final bottle chapter was written long after all of the bottlers had died. Many of the Black Range settlements became ghost towns, and all of the bottling plants collapsed, but at least one of these bottling firms left a legacy in glass – Hutchinson soda bottles. Soda bottlers from the late 19th century identified their products in three ways. First, the cases or wooden boxes in which the bottles were carried usually had the bottlers’ names either stamped or burned into the wood. The other forms of identification were found on the bottles. The cheapest method was to affix paper labels to the bottles with glue. While

relatively inexpensive, this was messy and required an extra step in production. It also required printed labels ordered from a label maker in the East or printed at the local newspaper office and laboriously cut with scissors.

Many New Mexico bottlers opted for the simpler but more expensive embossed labeling. Embossing is a process that began by at least 1812, whereby letters, numbers, and/or pictures are engraved into the metal of the glass mold to leave a protruding impression on the side or base of the bottle. These raised letters could be seen and felt by anyone handling the bottle. Unlike the paper label, embossing did not wash off with cleaning or cooling in ice-water and did not wear off with handling. Embossing, however, had to be done during the manufacturing process and was permanent. A few bottlers used no identification on their bottles at all, but these were distinct exceptions.

This brings us back to soda bottles in the Black Range – and T.L. Reber. To date, local/regional archaeologists and collectors have discovered four separate Hutchinson-style bottles embossed with Reber's name. One of these also had "SANTA FE" embossed on it, so it was not a Black Range bottle. Another used manufacturing techniques that place its use at a later date. Of the two remaining bottles, one is embossed "REBER" in an arch with "N.M." below it in a round plate on the front. The other is identical but lacks the "N.M." designation. Although we have not been able to trace the exact provenience, tradition suggests that the bottle with "N.M." was found in the Black Range and probably had been used by Reber at Robinson and Hillsboro in 1882 and 1883 (Figure 12).

No one has yet discovered a bottle embossed with E.J. Ryan. Ryan may have only used generic Hutchinson bottles with paper labels, or he may have inherited Reber's bottles and used them until they wore out. In fact, Ryan may have bought a new bottling outfit in 1886, when he was needing to replenish the originals. Only one or two of each kind of Reber bottle has been found, and only three of the ones described below. The absence of a



Figure 12 – Two Hutchinson bottles used by Reber – one was almost certainly his bottle from the Black Range era (Lynn Loomis collection)

Ryan bottle may just mean that we have not found one yet, or we may actually *have* examples of the Ryan bottles. "Black Range Lodge," an article in *New Mexico Magazine* (Groves 2007:40-43) described what has become known to collectors as the "Black Range Hutch." Pete Fust, living at Black Range Lodge at Kingston at that time, discovered the bottle while digging a trench with his backhoe. As a result of the article and photo, the New Mexico Historical Bottle Society subsequently based an annual "bottle dig" at the Lodge.

The Hutchinson bottle found by Fust and two more that have been discovered since, are embossed "BLACK, RANGE, SODA CO." in an arch with "NEW MEXICO" in an inverted arch below, all within a round plate on the front of the bottle. Two of the three known bottles were found at Kingston (Figure 13). The logical conclusion is that the Black Range Soda Co. was operated during 1888 and 1889 by Leopold Fleishman and Archie C. Brandon. This conclusion could, however, be red herring based upon misleading evidence. Bottlers in the Black



Figure 13 – Bottle from the Black Range Soda Co., known to collectors as the Black Range Hutch (Pat Brown collection)

Range, and even those as far away as Silver City, advertised throughout the Black Range. Thus, anyone's bottle might be found anywhere in the area. Also, Fleishman & Brandon called their plant the Kingston Bottling Works, a name inconsistent with the Black Range Soda Co. marking on the bottles.

Reidlinger also is a contender, but he is unlikely for two reasons. He advertised his

plant as the Hillsboro Bottling Works, so the name "Black Range Soda Co." would not make any sense. Also, the manufacturing technique used to make the bottle was rarely still used in the 1890s. Of the five known bottlers in the Black Range, E.J. Ryan therefore becomes by far the most likely candidate as the source of the Black Range Hutch.

Of course, many mysteries remain in the Black Range, especially for the 1887-1888 and 1889-1891 periods. We have not found a bottle made for Fleishman & Brandon. Reidlinger used a very rare embossed Hutchinson bottle at Silver City, but it is unlikely that his son would have continued to use the same bottle in the Black Range. No Reidlinger bottle with Hillsboro embossing has been found. As in Silver City, each bottler may only have placed a single, initial order for embossed bottles – then filled anything he could get his hands on. That behavior would explain the scarcity of bottles in the area. But, the search is never over. Just a short time ago, no one had heard of the Black Range Hutch. New discoveries will provide fresh answers. History is like putting together a jigsaw puzzle with most of the pieces missing – and we take great joy in discovering every piece!

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