

THE

VOL. XVII No. 2
No. 98 1990

MINIATURE BOTTLE COLLECTOR

FROM JAPAN . . . THE WARRIORS



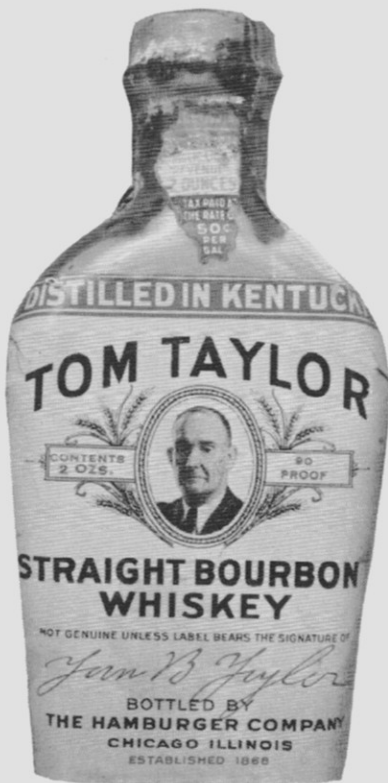
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By David M. Spaid and Harry A. Ford Jr.

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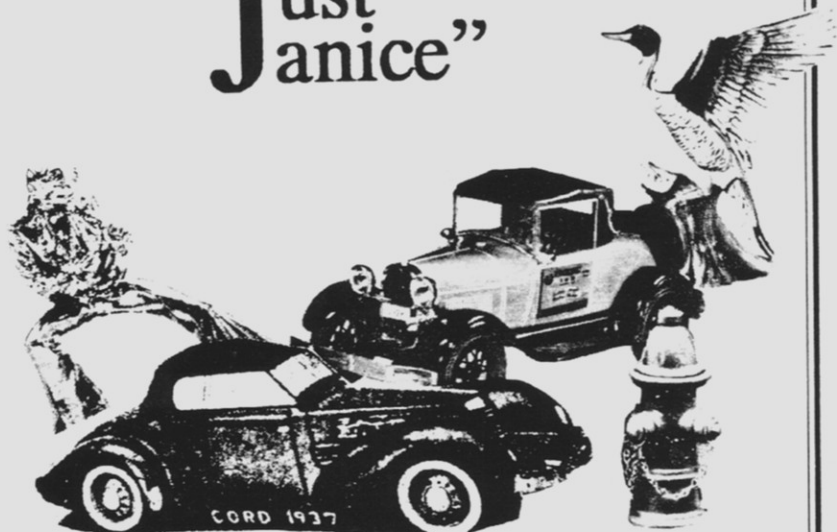
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Let's Talk

If you're the type of collector who appreciates a little bit of everything, then this is the issue for you! This particular issue probably has the greatest variety of articles and bottles that we've had for some time.

We welcome back Harry Ford, David Smith, Butch Jones and Ivan Uhlik. For those who can't live without a whiskey article, Taizo Shiratsuchi shows you the newest from Japan. Mike Olson will be back next time with pictures and info on some splendid ryes.

And, delightfully enough, one of the most heavily filled columns for the next few issues at least will be What's New. There's a whole lot new around the country and I'm not just talking about the different schnapps bottles that I enjoy ridiculing every now and then.

Does the name Crystal Comfort mean anything to you? Well, it will. After all these decades, Southern Comfort has finally come out with a new bottle. And how about Yukon Jack Gold? These are just two of the new ones you'll see in issue #99. Be aware of what's available in your area.

A story was related to me recently of a collector who sent in an order to a dealer. The cost of the order was almost double that of what our collector could have bought the bottles for in his own neighborhood. So, words to the wise.

We'll be back in October with one short of our century mark. Egad!

—DMS—

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MINIATURE BOTTLE COLLECTOR

Editor/Publisher DAVID M. SPAID

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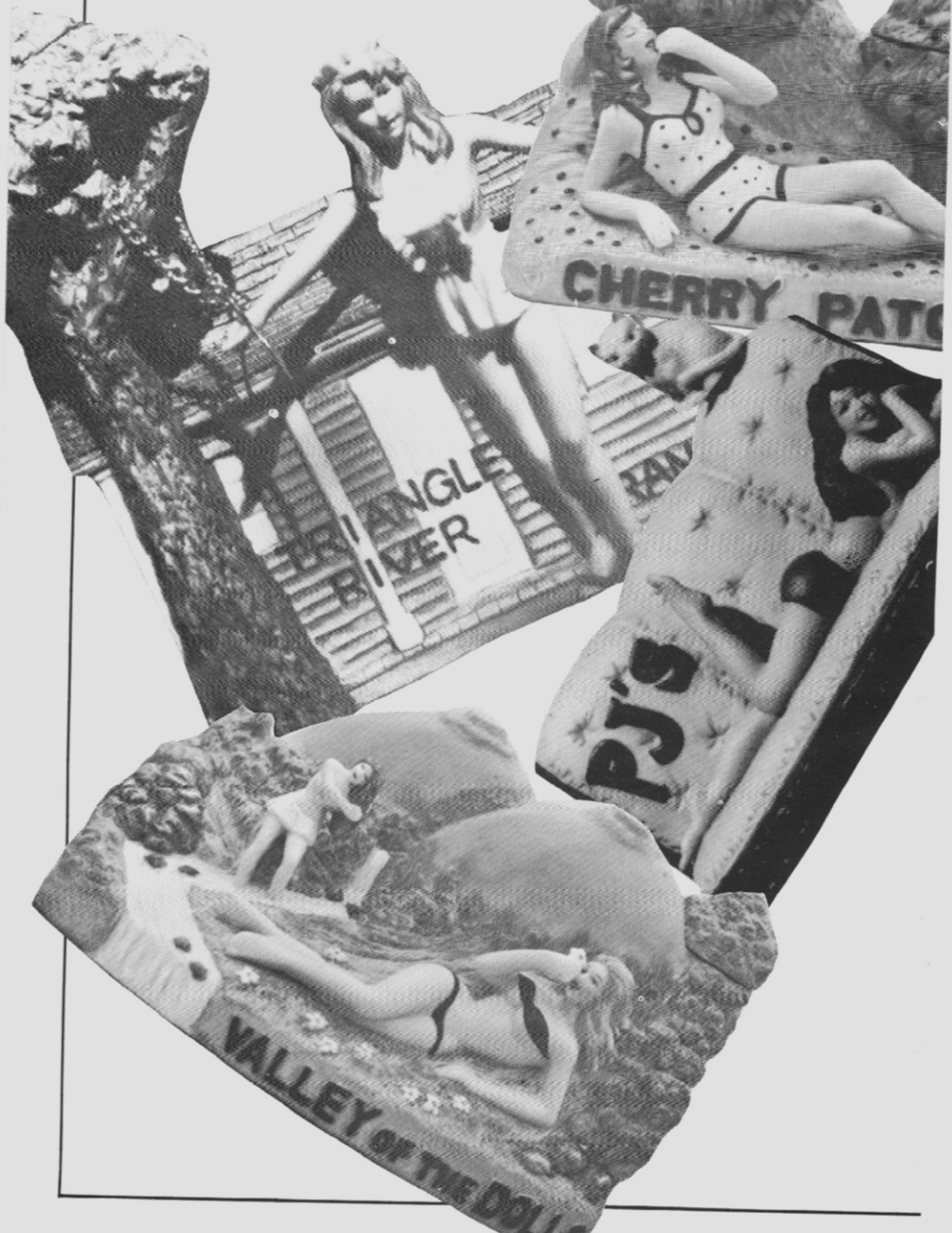
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Our Cover

The five generals steeped in the samurai code here on our cover were recently made available in Japan. As well as being a most interesting group, they illustrate a point that some people forget. Many collectors have reached a point of specialization where they only want items from certain narrow categories. When this happens, bottles such as these pictured are often neglected. What a shame!

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WHAT'S NEW Old, Odd, or Unusual



It's definitely a potpourri this time. They come from near and far, mostly far. A great many parts of the world are represented this issue.

From near, we have S.O.B. gin. This is a specialty item in plastic to celebrate Bill O'Fallon's 75th birthday. As you can tell, S.O.B. stands for Sweet Old Bill! If you don't know Bill, you haven't been attending the Chicago and/or West Coast Show as Bill makes them all. Bell's sentiments concerning life may be found at the bottom of the label.

Now we go to far. First off is Juarez Tequila Silver Label from south of the border. This is a fairly short plastic bottle which is available in the midwest. From Mexico we go East to the Caribbean and specifically Jamaica. Here we have two liqueurs from Daniel Finzi. These are Coconut Rum Finzi and Banana Rum Finzi. The story is that these were samples brought into the U.S. and currently are not available as Mr. Finzi didn't find an importer or wholesaler.



From Jamaica go north to a little cooler clime, Iceland. This is the new Elduris Icelandic Vodka which is eventually to be sold throughout the U.S. Like the other bottles so far, this is also a plastic. However, we'll end our look at plastic bottles this time by going all the way to Israel for the Hallelujah Liqueur. This one at least is a flask which makes it more interesting. I don't know the flavor of this one, but it is now being marketed throughout the world so someone is expecting big things from it. Or hoping.

The last two bottles are from Japan. Mercian is a well known name in Brandy in Japan. This Arpege Napoleon is the newest in their collection. It's not as fancy such as some of those you've seen in the *From Japan* articles by Taizo Shiratsuchi; however, it's definitely worth having. Finally, we come to the name-it-and-you-can-have-it bottle. It's either a sake or a shochu and my bet is on the latter. This is a 50ml but a 100ml is also produced.

More new ones next time.

TREASURES OF THE PAST

Many people know that there are twelve thermal springs in Carlsbad, the greatest spa of Czechoslovakia. These springs gave back good health to many thousands of patients from all over the world. But what's the thirteenth spring of Carlsbad and what has it to do with our common hobby?

Well, the 13th spring is a humorous name for the Original Carlsbad Becher's Liqueur produced by Jan Becher Distillery at Karlovy Vary (the Czech name of Carlsbad). And since the Bechers produce a miniature bottle too, the connection to our hobby is evident.



People in more than sixty countries of the world drink the famous liqueur because they like its fine taste and appreciate its curative power over stomach troubles. The curative effect comes from about twenty herbs which are used for creating Becher's Liqueur. The fine taste comes from the over 180 years old formula as well as from the careful work of the Becher's distillers.

Part of the herbs come from the vicinity of Carlsbad while the rest are from overseas. There are many bags and cans full of herbs in the Herbal Chamber at Becher's. However, there is no name on the bags nor any recipe on the walls in this chamber. Only two men, the director of the distillery and the production manager, have the recipe in their heads. The original formula stays safely in a thick safe in the Bank of Carlsbad.

The original formula was created by a Mr. Froebingen sometime in the year 1805. In this year this Englishman stayed in Carlsbad because of his studies of the local herbs and thermes. He lived at the home of Mr. Josef Becher, a druggist in Carlsbad. Before he returned to England at the end of 1805, he dedicated a recipe for a stomach elixir to his new friend, Mr. Becher.

Soon Mr. Becher offered the elixir in his drugstore. Within a short time the "new medicine" won big popularity among the spa guests as well as with the local citizenry. Therefore Mr. Becher bought the house opposite to the Eger Bridge and set up a distillery there. Since 1807 they've produced the elixir in the originally shaped green glass flat bottles under the name "Original Carlsbad Becher's Liqueur."

Many distillers in Europe have tried to create an equal liqueur like the Becher's but they have never had any success. Mr. Froebingen's formula has kept its secret until now. Today the Jan Becher Distillery produces its liqueurs in the old house with modern equipment but under the old formulas.

80 kg of herbs are necessary for the 12,000 litres of Becher's Liqueur. For 2-3 hours Mr. Otcovsky, the produc-

firm's laboratory controls the quality of the intermediate products.

After a triple filtration and the final control, the ready liqueur comes into the bottling hall where it starts (in the original Becher's green bottles) its way to the consumers in all five continents. Not only the Becher's Liqueur carries the Becher's name around the world, though.

Mr. Jan Becher, the son of the firm's founder, created a number of



tion manager, must mix up the various herbs in the Herbal Chamber. He says, "That's the pure nature. We don't know any essence!"

Firstly the herbs mixture macerates in the wine spirits. It must be heated and cooled down many times. Then the macerate must be mixed with sugar, clear water from the firm's own spring and the pure eau-de-vie in a gigantic vat. A day later the young liqueur must be filled into little wooden casks where it matures for three months. During all the processes the

other liqueurs such as the Rapid Bitter and Cordial Medoc. Today the Bechers produce the Becher's Liqueur, Rapid Bitter, Cordial Medoc, Royal Aperitiv, KV 14 Herb Liqueur, and the newest creation KV 15 Aperitiv.

Now, miniature bottles. . .

The firm used bottles in various sizes in the first years of its existence. Today no one can say when the first mini bottles were used at Becher's but the flask with the bakelite drinking-cup on its top was well-known as early

as the thirties. This flask was 100 ml in capacity and its shape isn't essentially different from the flask we know today.

After the second world war, there were the Becher's Liqueur, Cordial Medoc, Royal Aperitiv and KV 14 Herb Liqueur bottled into miniatures. The Becher's Liqueur was a green glass flask of 1.6 oz stopped with a cork. The text on the blue-red labels was in the English language. The Royal Aperitiv and the KV 14 were round shaped clear glass bottles of 47 ml. The Cordial Medoc was the miniature of the big porcelain bottle which had no label. The text was written directly on the bottle with pure gold!

Later the green glass changed to a clear glass flask of 50 ml and the Cordial Medoc received a new clear glass conical bottle of 1.6 oz. Today only three products are bottled in miniature. They are all green glass flasks of 50 ml stopped with a metal screw cap and with the same shaped labels. The blue-red label is the Becher's Liqueur, the yellow label with the drawing of the spa of Carlsbad is the Becher's Fine Bitter Liqueur especially created for West Germany, and the green-golden label is the KV 15 Aperitiv.

Interestingly there were a lot of different miniature bottles in West Germany that were produced by the firm Johannes Becher GmbH Kettwig. Since this firm only distributes the genuine Becher's liqueurs from Carlsbad today, there are no West German miniatures in this country. It could be a theme for an article for a West-German collector.

— Ivan Uhlik —



UPDATE



This is the newest release from the Silver State Specialties Company. . . and you'll never guess where it's to be sold. Well, then again, you just might.

In the 1970's there was a similar bottle issued by M B C. However that one had a bar between the two sides of the horseshoe and the Las Vegas name was placed there. Those bottles

were made here in the U.S. in literally a backyard kiln and needed that crosspiece so that the sides of the horseshoe would stand up.

This new bottle is porcelain and produced in Japan to more exacting standards than the original M B C piece. According to the company, this piece should be available in August in Las Vegas and environs.

Glass!



Port Nicholson Miniature Bottle Club have commissioned this set of 6 + 1 miniatures (more on that later) as part of New Zealand's 1990 Celebrations.

The labels are white with a traditional Maori motif border in brown and black. The map of New Zealand is outlined in green to represent the land on which the prosperity of the country depends. The horizontal lines are blue representing the sea around us. The name and dates are in red with the other writing in black.

Now, let me give you a bit of history.

Europeans first discovered New Zealand in 1642 when the Dutch ex-

plorer Abel Tasman landed here. It was another 127 years before another European came, Captain Cook, who claimed the islands for Great Britain. Settlers started arriving in small numbers in the 1830's.

Our first bottle is for the Treaty Waitangi. This was signed in February 1840 between local Maori Chiefs and the Crown. It led the way to European settlement in much greater numbers. By the treaty New Zealand officially became a British colony and it is from this year that New Zealand dates itself as a nation.

Our next bottle is for Akaroa. This is the only French settlement in New Zealand and is on the South Island



not far from Christchurch. By the time the French arrived in August 1840, the Treaty of Waitangi was already six months old and so they were unable to claim sovereignty. Akaroa has remained a small village with a distinctly French feel.

Our next bottle depicts Wellington, the capital of New Zealand and the home of Port Nicholson Miniature Bottle Club. Said to be the world's most unpolluted capital as the winds that reach us blow across the largely uninhabited southern oceans. The city lies on one of the world's great natural harbours, Port Nicholson.

The city of Wanganui is at the mouth of a major river of the same name. The settlement was originally called Petre after Lord Petre, one of the directors of the New Zealand Company. The name Wanganui is a Maori one meaning Big Harbour or Estuary.

Johnsonville is a suburb of Well-

ington just north of the City Centre. It was originally a village and then a town in its own right.

In 1915 Australia and New Zealand officially pitched into World War I in their own right with the formation of The Australia and New Zealand Army Corps, or ANZACS. This partnership lasted beyond the Second World War and the armed services of the two countries still work very closely together.

The seventh bottle, Commonwealth Games, is not for an anniversary. However, a number of members insisted we commemorate this event and so it sort of got tacked onto the end of the order. For anyone who doesn't know, The Commonwealth Games is second only to the Olympic Games as a sporting spectacular.

The bottles are available from Club Supplies Officer Dianne, Garsed Road, RD2, Patea, Taranaki, New Zealand.

FROM JAPAN

by TAIZO SHIRATSUCHI



This time I would like to present to you some of the bourbon whiskey miniatures which are available only in Japan or have a Japanese label.

The first is the BELLE OF KENTUCKY. Did you notice the design of letters which show the distillery? Yes, this is bottled by The Clear Spring Distilling Company which is a chain company with the James B. Beam Distilling Company of Clermont, KY. It is a square plastic bottle and has a



white label with golden belts at the top and bottom. This whiskey is four years old.

The PENTHOUSE 10 year old Kentucky Straight Bourbon is an original brand from I.W.A. Japan. This company also imports the Chester Graves Bourbon, too. It is a clear plastic with a black label framed by white which has white letters and red Penthouse on a gold back.



The third bottle, ROLLING-K, was produced by The Old Crow Distillery Co. only for the Japanese market. "K" means Kentucky, but it would be "Rocking" as the line under the "K" is always used for rocking... not rolling! The label is tan and black.

Next is OLD CROW which has appeared with a new tan and black label. It is a common clear round plastic bottle with a reddish-yellow cap. They state that this whiskey is 5 or 6 years old. Old Crow and Rolling-K are sold only as a set in the stores for the St. Valentine's Day 1990.

The last bottle is the EARLY TIMES which has a new label. It is a familiar square plastic bottle and has a black metal cap.

All these bottles are 10.5cm tall and contain 50ml at 40% alcohol.

Until next time. . .



the g-r-r-eatest

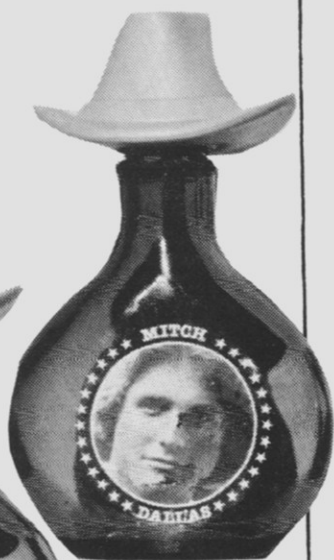
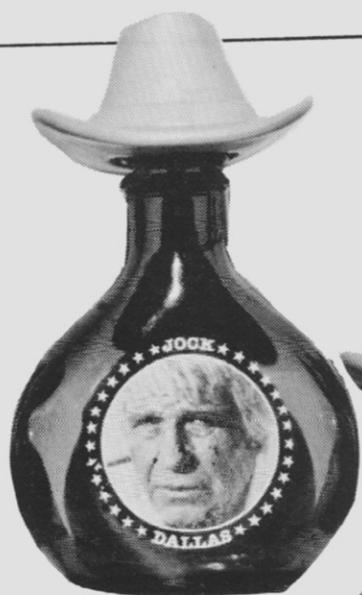
by BUTCH JONES

DALLAS

SOUTH FORK. The TV show Dallas has been popular in Europe for years. When I lived in Germany (1980-83), I picked up these cobalt blue bottles in Echternach, Luxembourg. The bottles were from two different companies but each featured the actors and actresses from the early 1980's programs. Lorimar Productions licensed the production of these bottles. Although I bought all I could find, I'm certain there must have been several I missed.

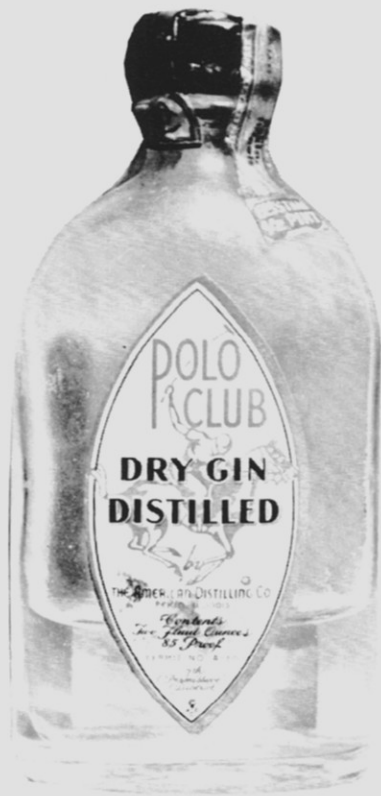
— B.J. —





SMALL TALK

by
Harry Ford, Jr.



I'm back again with six more unusual gin bottles. My favorite of this entire group is the SILVER FOX Gin from the Ron Virgin Company of Cambridge, Massachusetts... "with quality since 1884". Have you ever noticed the "Quality, Purity and Prestige" referenced by the names

and labeling of many gin bottles? The POLO CLUB certainly attempts to take advantage of that wealthy image. For trivia buffs, the back label shows the New York Wholesalers as B. & O. Stores, Inc. at 11th Avenue and 28th Street in New York City.

The next four bottles are rarities from Illinois. You Paramount collectors should drool over YE OLD MILL STREAM. This has a beautiful gold foil label supporting our "rich" theme. Next we have an even more unusual TILBURY Brand, which is bottled by Walter P. Powers of Chicago. (Ben Franklin Whiskey is another rare one from Powers.) This is also the exact same bottle as those used by Paramount.

The A C F has a beautiful silver, red and black foil label. I'll have to admit that I don't know what a "Deptford Type" gin is though. (Can someone help me out on this one?)

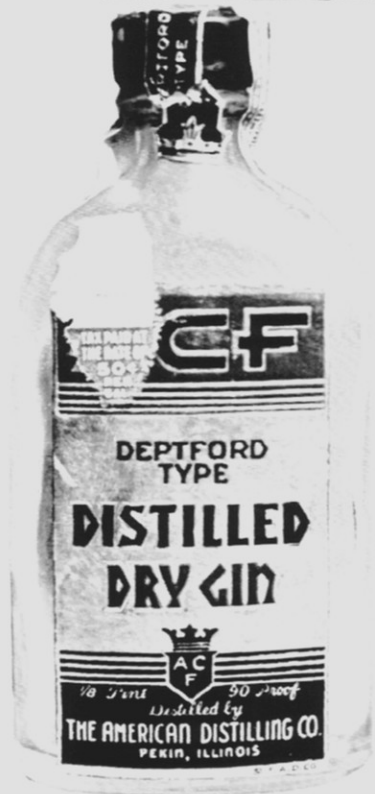
The back label shows the rush to get this one out as it was produced in the Spring of 1934.

Finally, while Hiram Walker's gins are quite common, this FIVE O'CLOCK brand is quite unusual. I wonder if the red cock is crowing for a five o'clock in the morning wakeup or for the afternoon quitting time for work? I'll bet on the latter for those "punching the time clock".

I hope that these beauties will whet your appetite for more of the quality old glass straights. Next time I'll have some European gins with absolutely fabulous labels. That will be in #99!



SMALL TALK



A little aside now. For those of you interested in the quality of these photographs, here's my current approach. I use a Nikon FE2, with a 55 mm F2.8 micro lens. I shoot on automatic at around 1/125 of a second in 11:00 a.m. sunlight (slightly overcast is best) is what I strive for. I've been using the fine grain of ASA 32 black and white film, but will be switching to EKTAR 25 Color print film because of the increasing difficulty and cost of getting quality black

and white developing and printing. Besides, Gary Anderson of Lyngate Printing here in the Los Angeles area can do an excellent job of screening color prints for publication. And, they are much better if you like to show off and catalog pictures of your collection.

Remember, next time. . . Dutch bottles with magnificent labels!

— H.F. —

CREAM of the Crop



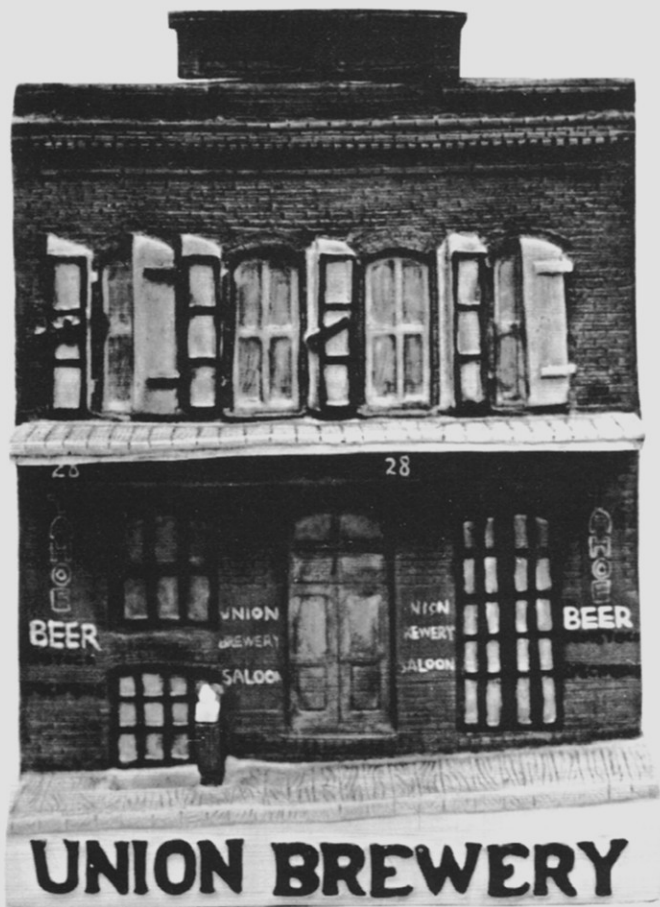
Probably this is much ado about nothing; however, a good many readers seem to enjoy the cream liqueurs as much as I do. So, for all you liqueur collectors out there, here are the two newest available in the U.S.

Emmets has a nice label, but alas, it is in plastic. It's imported from Dublin and is known as Ireland's Cream Liqueur. For those who collect statistics, it's 17% alc/vol and naturally 50 ml. There is no government warning.

The non-import is Joshua Bennett's American Cream. (Note the

red, white and blue of the label. I hope no one tries to burn the bottle.) It's made with cream, straight bourbon and corn whiskies, grain neutral spirits, natural and artificial flavors and artificial coloring. It's only 15% alc/vol which places it in about fortified wine territory. The government warning is there for all to see. Gee, you know, if we really worried about it, maybe we could have them list calories, sodium and cholesterol contents. There's got to be a congressman somewhere who's a big enough nincompoop to introduce the legislation. Don't you agree?

MINI WORLD



You're looking at the front and back of a new decanter which will appear this Fall. It is the Union Brewery bottle and it's been produced to acquaint collectors, beer drinkers, and historians about the Union Brewery of Virginia City, Nevada.

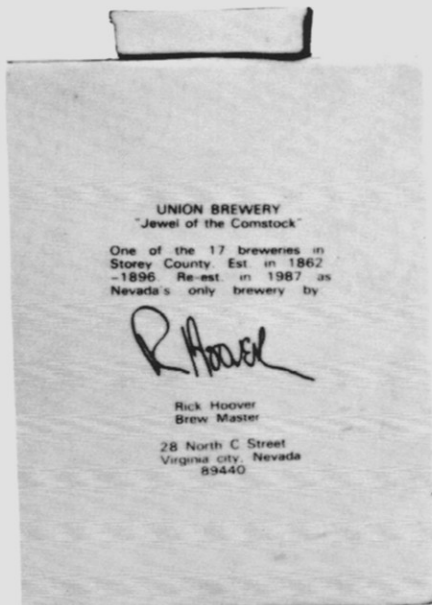
The decal on the back of the decanter tells that Union is currently the only brewery in Nevada, and also that it is of no small historical significance in the story of the Comstock Lode. To find out more about what old Virginia City and its saloons were like, let's

turn to a paper done a little less than two years ago. The paper is *Brewery Saloons of the Comstock Lode* by Dr. William Rowley and G. Francis Smith. This was from a seminar on public history given at the University of Nevada-Reno. The paper tells a good number of interesting facts about the saloons and breweries as well as the fact that Nevada actually passed a prohibition bill one entire year before the rest of the U.S.

In any case, we'll turn now to the paper on the saloons. "Union Brewery Saloon in Virginia City occupies a unique place among brewery saloons of the Comstock. The only one currently in operation, it is the first to legally brew beer in Nevada since the demise of the Reno Brewing Company in the late 1950's.

"Originally named the Union Saloon by founder John Brown in 1862, it was located at 15 North C Street in Virginia. Two years later a German took over the business, changed the name to Union Brewery Saloon and location to 40 North C Street. Fire destroyed the brewery and building forcing Charles Baker to move to 28 North C Street and to take in George Duttonhoffer as a partner. From 1869 until 1873 they leased the operation to William Andre and later to Barney Clark and Tom Buckner, and then to Fredrick Hertlein and Company.

"Partner Duttonhoffer was a German immigrant active in local community affairs, at one time forming a band 'to represent the German Community in parades.' When he died in 1871 Hertlein managed the business but did not brew beer on the premises until his purchase became final in 1877. After Hertlein's death, his widow closed the brewery in 1886 but continued to operate the saloon until sold in 1891 to Leonard Braun.



"The brewery did not operate again until 1987 and the Union Brewery Saloon passed through several hands until Joe Pardini took it over in December of 1920 and operated as a 'soft drink parlor', code words for a wet bar during prohibition. Control passed to Tom and Marty Pardini in 1926 and they operated the UBS as a restaurant until partner Frank Lazzeri bought the business in 1930. When he died in 1949, ownership of the building passed to his daughters who still retain it.

"Gordon Lane became proprietor in 1950 and operated until 1985 under the mottoes, 'We Serve Whiskey' and 'This is my DAMN House and IDO as Idamn please' (sic). Under Lane's proprietorship little changed at the UBS for thirty-five years. A *Life Magazine* cover from 1949 showed the decor and back bar remained the same until 1985.

"SPECIAL" COGNACS



Several months ago a set of four cognacs were introduced into the So. California market and we dutifully showed them to you. Now there is another new set, and a fancier one at that.

In May this set of five Brillet cognacs first appeared. Previously Brillet had a group of five bottles in a wooden box but this set was never sold in the U.S. This new group, also

in a wooden box, is a most welcome addition to any cognac collection. We've included here a picture of all five of the bottles in their wooden case as well as larger shots of three of the bottles. An interesting note is that although the entire set is called a cognac set you'll note that the first bottle in the group is actually a Pineau des Charentes. This is only a most minor quibble though.



The bottles are (from left to right): Pineau des Charentes, Grande Reserve, Ville Reserve, heritage (Tres Rare), and Belle de Brillet. As far as is currently known, the Vielle (Old) Reserve and Heritage have never been sold in the U.S. previously.

Within six months there have now been two different sets of cognacs and that bodes well for the future. Hopefully a good many more will be imported to sate our bottle appetites.



Jerry Cohen

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contd. from
page 23

“Lane sold the business to Julie and Rick Hoover that year. The flavor of an old saloon is faithfully preserved, the major changes are in the basement where Rick Hoover has installed equipment from the Truckee Brewing Company’s expansion. Production is about forty-five gallons of beer per week, for consumption on the premises. Also in the basement is a museum dedicated to the material culture of the brewing industry. Beer cans, memorabilia, and brewing hardware are on display as well.

“Thus, the Union Brewery Saloon is the only operational brewery saloon on the Comstock at this writing and it may be for some time under the legal restrictions now in place in Nevada. In order to restore the Comstock brewing tradition, it was necessary to have legislation passed during the

67th session of the Nevada Legislature (1987). The new law allows brewing of beer for consumption on the premises only in buildings on the Comstock Historical District which once housed brewery saloons.”

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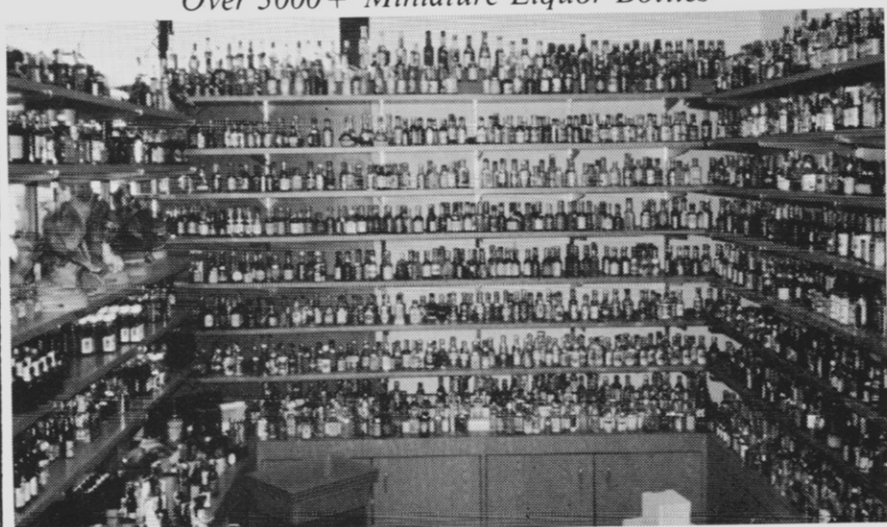
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