

DIGGER ODELL'S

SODAS, MINERAL WATERS, PORTERS & ALES



INTRODUCTION

How this Book is Organized

This book is organized by categories and subcategories based bottle shape and style. Within each subcategory listings are alphabetized. Terminology for similar bottle shapes varies in different areas of the country creating difficulties for a comprehensive classification system. The broad categories chosen for this book are:

Crowns- Crown top soda bottles with applied or machine made tops. These date from 1892-1930. There are no subcategories.

Hutchinsons and similar styles: The Hutchinson stopper was patented in 1879. From the early 1880s through the 1900s Hutches dominated the industry. Numerous similarly shaped bottles, which technically did not used a Hutchinson stopper are included in this category. These are mostly soda and mineral water. The subcategories are:

- Cylinders**- having a cylindrical body
- Mug bases** – having a cylindrical body and paneled base
- Sided** – having a cylindrical paneled body



Squats: This style refers to the basic shape of the bottle. These bottles date from the 1840s - 1880s. Some geographic areas distinguish between a “pony” and a “squat soda” both are included in this category. These bottles usually held soda or mineral water but some contained ale or porter. The subcategories are:

- Cylinders** - having a cylindrical body either with shoulders or conical in shape
- Mug bases** - having a cylindrical body with paneled base
- Sided** - having a cylindrical paneled body



Porters: Called squats in some areas of the country, a short squatty body usually with pronounced shoulders. These date from the 1840s -1880s. These bottle mostly contained porter or ale. The subcategories

- Blob tops** – having a blob type lip
- Double collars** – having a tapered collar with a lower flange or ring
- Lagers** – having a conical shaped body with double collar lip



Flavor Beers: These oversized soda bottles are mostly found in New York, Ohio and parts of Canada. They are larger than most other soda bottles and are often paneled. There are no subcategories.

Ten-pins: some will quibble with my lumping every rounded or semi-rounded based bottles together. The terms are useful only to describe a general style and some bottles are difficult to classify. The subcategories are:

- Torpedos**: having a pointy rounded base such that the bottle cannot stand upright
- Round bottoms**: having a rounded or partially rounded base and stands upright.



Unembossed: Bottles having no embossing.

Prices

Because many of the bottles listed in this catalog have not been sold at auction, some prices are an estimate based on input from collectors blended with my own opinion. Prices from **GlassWorks** and **American Bottle Auction** have been used as well. Anyone who has ever overbid in an auctions knows that these prices are often inflated or the result of a battle between two bidders.

Some price trends are very clear however. Eastern collectors prefer colored torpedos, mug-base squats, sided squats, off-color examples, odd shapes in color and regional rarities. Western collectors have fewer colored bottles so many of the best colored examples get very expensive. Desirable regional rarities include aqua Hutchinson's from Western States and Western Territories. The further west you go the better aqua becomes. An Iowa iron pontiled aqua squat will always draw a crowd.

Price is always fickle and an auction price is no guarantee of future value. Some declines in value have been noted in the last five years. Sodas are a unique category. Many soda bottles have survived because they were made to do so. They were blown to be reused and most examples show some wear. The majority of the sodas shown here were dug and cleaned. Cleaning especially when done poorly, is controversial and impacts value. Attic mint soda bottles are very rare and often command premium prices.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to Larry Grotz, Joseph Perniciaro, Jeff Wichmann, Jim Hagenbuch, Jesse Sailor, Ralph Wenzel, Bill Granger and John Van Gorder for their help and pictures.