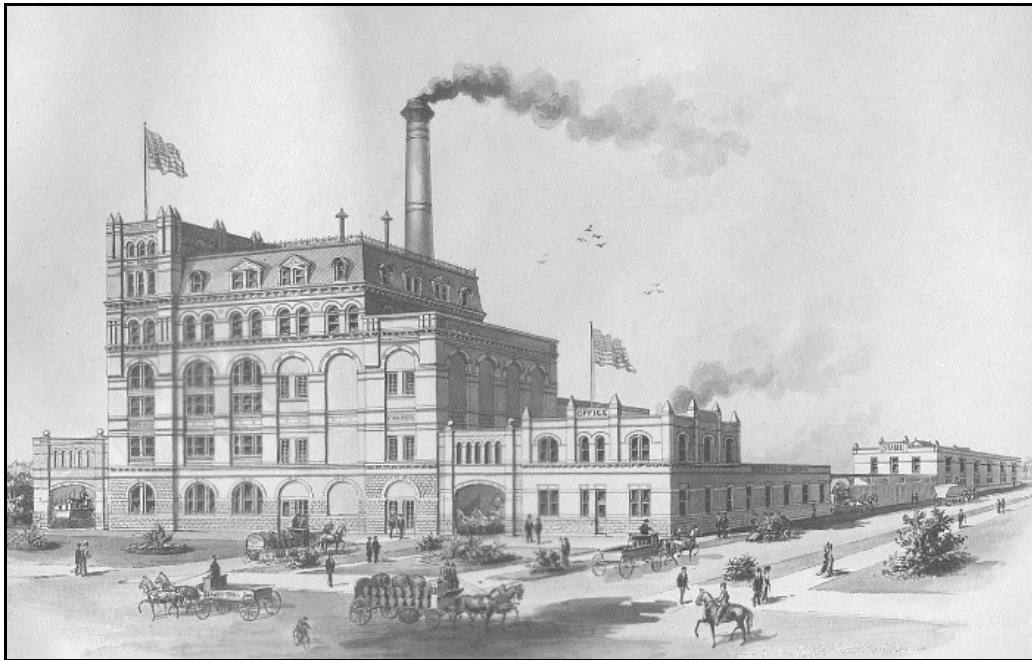


Breweries
and
Beer Bottles
at
El Paso, Texas



Bill Lockhart
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Preface

I never intended to become a bottle researcher. I was a student of prehistorical archaeology, interested in lithics (stone tools). Although I will not tell the full story here, circumstances continually pushed me into bottle research. Eventually, I gave up and devoted my free time to the research of bottles and bottle-related companies.

Originally, I planned to concentrate on soda bottles, but I branched out to include all bottles used at El Paso, Texas. It is very ironic that I – a long-time recovered alcoholic – ended up with a collection of beer bottles. The bottles, of course, led me into research on El Paso breweries and the introduction to local collectors.

Much of the good history of the world is written by authors climbing upon the shoulders of those who came before them. Typically, the first researcher combs the currently-known sources and produces a credible history only to be replaced by a later researcher who uses the publication of the first as a springboard for his or her own work. Throughout time, the process continues.

This work is no exception. In 1988, Richard R. Chavez wrote the first history of the Harry Mitchell Brewery, entitled *The Bell Rings Again (A History of the Harry Mitchell Brewing Co.)*. Privately published, the book contains most of the core material found in this volume. As always, more material has come to light, providing the main reason for the writing of this history. In addition, Rick's work was aimed at the collector – with no citations. The current work, while of use to the collector, is also aimed at historians and archaeologists of Western Texas and Southern New Mexico and includes sourcing of data.

Prior to my own research, Rick and I became good friends, and he has been kind enough to open all of his files to me as well as sharing his vast knowledge about the Mitchell Brewery (and El Paso brewing in general). Where possible, I have cited the primary sources for each entry as well as the Chavez book. Without Rick's help, this would be a much smaller and poorer history of Harry Mitchell.

In 1990, Mike Hennech published the *Encyclopedia of Texas Breweries: Pre-Prohibition (1836-1918)*. This volume had an extensive history of the El Paso Brewing Assoc. and its

brewery. Mike had access to the brewing industry journals, where my sources were local – especially the El Paso newspapers. The two complemented each other immensely. In addition, Mike sent me his entire file on the El Paso breweries. As with Rick’s material (noted above), this would be a much poorer work without Mike’s help.

In this work, I have attempted to follow a temporal pattern for both the historical and bottle chronologies. Neither history nor bottle patterns are absolute or neat, so there are numerous overlaps. The dating guide (Chapter 2) is distinctly aimed at the history of the export beer bottle, although it touches on other styles. The chapters that follow are specific to different phases of beer/brewery development in the city.

Where practical, I have divided the chapters into history and bottle description/chronology – although that, too, was not always precise. For example, Chapter 4a is the history of the El Paso Brewery, followed by Chapter 4b, the bottles and accouterments used and/or offered by the brewery.

I hope each reader finds something that suits his or her needs.

Bill Lockhart
August 2, 2012

