

American Bottle Auctions will offer Part 1 of the Mel Hammer bottle collection, online-only, from December 10th-19th

Offerings will include many of Mr. Hammer's favorites: schnapps and gin bottles, bitters bottles and inkwells, many boasting 9.5 grades -- in all, 137 bottles.

SACRAMENTO, CA, UNITED STATES, December 4, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Part 1 of [the Mel Hammer bottle collection](#) - an incredible hoard gathered over a 50-year span by a man who dedicated much of his adult life to the acquisition and study of antique glass - will be sold in online Auction #72 that begins on Friday, December 10th and ends on Sunday, December 19th at 8 pm Pacific time, by American Bottle Auctions.

The full catalog, showing all 137 lots, will be posted on kickoff day,

December 10th, on the American Bottle Auctions website (www.americanbottle.com), where people can also register and bid. The offerings will feature Mr. Hammer's favorites, to include [schnapps and gin bottles](#), [bitters bottles and inkwells](#), many boasting 9.5 grades. Mr. Hammer died on Thanksgiving Day.

"Mel was a true collector of bottles," said Jeff Wichmann of American Bottle Auctions. "I didn't know him as well as I would have liked, but I did see him when he made the drive down from his home in Redding to our shop in 2019. He'd purchased one of the nicer bottles in Auction #69. No surprise, it was a square, red amber whittled Turner Brothers bottle, as nice as we'd seen."

That very bottle is lot #124 in the auction. It boasts an applied top with graphite pontil and shows both Turner Brothers locations (Buffalo, New York and San Francisco). The bottle enjoys every attribute a bottle collector is looking for; the color, crudity, rarity and condition are all



M100 staved barrel type teakettle inkwell, a beautiful amethyst in color, said to have been produced for the Henry Harrison presidential campaign of 1840 (estimate: \$2,000-\$4,000).

exemplar. Its one minor flaw – a small flake on the lip – gives it a grade of 9.2. It should realize \$4,000.

Every other bottle in this report has a grade of 9.5, starting with lot #71: the Brown's Celebrated Indian Herb figural bitters bottle (patented Feb. 11, 1868) with rolled lip. Every bottle collection needs to have an Indian Queen in it, and for Mel Hammer he chose this light amber example. He understood the beauty in the Eastern-made figural bitters like this one (estimate: \$2,000-\$3,000).

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The Dr. Renz's Herb Bitters bottle (San Francisco, circa 1868-1881) with an applied tapered top, light lime green in color, 9 ¾ inches tall, is believed to be one of only four known, with a unique style tapered top. They're all in a green hue and exhibit crudity consistent with the era. One has never been sold at auction. This one will be the first,

and it has an estimate of \$10,000-\$15,000.

A Dr. Wonser's USA Indian Root Bitters bottle with an applied top, medium amber in color and showing lots of uneven glass and whittle, is near-perfect and could sell for \$10,000-\$20,000. The amber and aqua Wonser's are among the most sought after and coveted Western bitters out there. For its distinctive design, unique name and overall appeal, Dr. Wonser's are simply hard to beat.

Lot #64 is a bright medium green Wister's Clubhouse gin bottle having an applied top with the earlier sticky ball type pontil. These bottles are very popular with collectors, as they come in a multitude of colors. In addition, they are typically very crude, with lots of character. This one is no exception. The condition is exceptional, except for small scratches (estimate: \$3,000-\$5,000).

A barrel-shaped Greeley's Bourbon Whiskey Bitters bottle with applied top (G102), 9 ½ inches tall, is going to attract bidders for it's a true purple Greeley's. While these barrels come in shades of purple or puce, they are often very dark and hard to see through or are an off color, similar to the bourbon whiskey bitters. Such is not the case with this example. It should bring about \$8,000.

Catawba Wine Bitters bottles are huge with collectors. Lot #119 is a choice example, medium green in color, with embossed grapes, an applied top and graphite pontil. This one was sold by American Bottle Auctions in Part 1 of the Grapentine collection. It boasts good overall whittle and crudity. It's the pontiled version, with all graphite intact, and should reach \$3,000-\$6,000.

A Pride of Kentucky Old Bourbon bottle (Livingston & Co., Sole Agents), made sometime in the mid-to-late 1870s (for whiskey collectors the premier age for Western fifths) is expected to knock down for \$2,000-\$3,000. The lightweight bottle with an applied top is as whittled as any Western

fifth around, and the color, while an old amber, is a perfect depth throughout the bottle.

Turning to inkwells, there are two in the sale expected to fetch \$2,000-\$4,000 each. One is an M100 staved barrel type teakettle inkwell, a beautiful amethyst in color. There are only a couple of barrel inks and they're quite rare and highly sought after. This one has a pedigree: it's said to have been produced for the Henry Harrison presidential campaign of 1840 – pretty heady stuff.

The other is an umbrella ink with a rolled lip and open pontil, 2 ½ inches and grape in color (the color most collectors are looking for). No umbrella ink collection would be complete without a puce or grape colored example. This inkwell has a medium to deeper hue, easy to see through.

Rounding out a short list of just some of the auction's expected highlights is a Udolpho Wolfe's Aromatic Schnapps Shiedam bottle with an applied top and a smooth base. The attraction here is the bottle's color: a beautiful apricot. This one is more pure apricot than most (estimate: \$800).

American Bottle Auctions has a 10-minute rule that applies to bids at the end of the auction. In essence, every bidder has a last opportunity to make a final winning bid. An online printable color catalog will be available soon, and all of the lots will be photographed and displayed in pictures and a streaming video. The buyer's premium will be a flat 15 percent on all purchases.

Every effort will be made to present the items as close as possible to the real bottle. Additional pictures or videos are available on request. Potential customers are encouraged to come by the American Bottle Auction showroom, for an in-person look at all the bottles in the sale, although an appointment must be made in advance. To schedule an appointment, call (800) 806-7722.

Part 2 of the Mel Hammer bottle collection will be held sometime in March 2022 (dates and times to be announced; watch the website for details). "Things will be pretty much split down the middle between Parts 1 and 2 in terms of value, variants and number of bottles," Wichmann said.

American Bottle Auctions is always accepting quality consignments for future sales. To consign a single bottle or an entire collection, you may call them toll-free, at 1-800-806-7722; or, you can e-mail them at info@americanbottle.com. To learn more about American Bottle Auctions and Part



Dr. Renz's Herb Bitters bottle (San Francisco, circa 1868-1881) with applied tapered top, light lime green in color, 9 ¾ inches tall, one of possibly four known (estimate: \$10,000-\$15,000).

1 of the Mel Hammer collection (online December 10-19), visit www.americanbottle.com.

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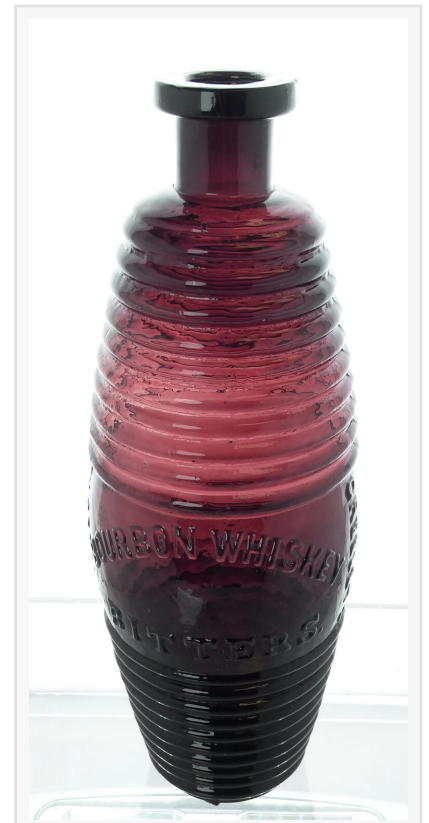
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Catawba Wine Bitters bottle, medium green, with embossed grapes, an applied top and graphite pontil, good overall whittle and crudity, the pontiled version (estimate: \$3,000-\$6,000).



This Dr. Wonser's USA Indian Root Bitters bottle with an applied top, medium amber in color and showing lots of uneven glass and whittle, is near-perfect and could sell for \$10,000-\$20,000.



Greeley's Bourbon Whiskey Bitters bottle with applied top (G102), 9 ½ inches tall, a true purple Greeley's. Others are often dark and hard to see through or are an off color (estimate: \$8,000).

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