

The Biedermann-Rufley Brewery at Fort Stanton, New Mexico  
by Bill Lockhart

On March 18, 2007, the author, along with Wanda Wakkinen, Gary Cozzens, and W. Earl Pittman visited the site of the old Biedermann-Rufley Brewery. Wakkinen and I returned briefly on August 8, 2008, but were soon rained out. The brewery is located on private property, owned by J.C. Nickens, adjacent to the western boundary of Fort Stanton (BLM property). The site is approached down a rough, steep dirt road and is located along the Rio Bonito. The location is idyllic, in an area where the Rio Bonito lives up to its name.

### Background

#### Other Southern New Mexico Breweries

There were only a few breweries in the history of Southern New Mexico, and little is currently known about most of them. A single early brewery in Silver City was operated by five different owners between 1874 and 1890, although I have discovered few details. In the nearby Black Range, another short-lived brewery was operated at Kingston. The Deming Brewery (in Deming) was only open from ca. 1884 to ca. 1890, and little is known about either the brewery, itself, or its products (Van Wieren 1995:214).

The Illinois Brewery at Socorro is better known. It operated as a brewery from ca. 1882 until it was closed by Prohibition in 1918. However, its owners (the Hammel family) were visionary enough to have entered the soft drink market during the very early 1900s, a decision that carried the business through Prohibition and the Great Depression. After the repeal of Prohibition, Clarence Hammel continued to use the Illinois Brewery name but only made and sold soft drinks and ice, although he also distributed liquor. He sold the liquor portion of the business in 1955, and divested himself of the soda bottling segment in 1959. Quinn Walton acquired the soft drink business and operated it until he closed the plant in early 1967 (Lockhart 2005a).

Although not located in New Mexico, the El Paso Brewery (1903-1924) served a significant portion of Southern New Mexico via the railroad. The brewery made and bottled several brands of beer during its existence and was eventually legislated out of business by

restrictive laws connected with World War I that preceded Prohibition. The onset of these laws created an effective date for the end of beer production, but the brewery attempted to survive by brewing cereal beverages (near-beer) and soft drinks under the subsidiary name of Tri-State Beverage Co. The brief near-beer popularity fizzled by 1924, and the brewery shipped all its equipment to Juarez, Mexico, permanently closing its doors (Lockhart 2004a; 2004b; 2005b).

Although not germane to this study, El Paso had two later breweries, both in the same location as the original El Paso Brewery. The Harry Mitchell Brewery went through several stages during its active period between 1933 and 1956. Originally, the brewery was a corporation under Mitchell's management (but not his control). However, he and his wife eventually acquired the controlling interest in 1945, heralding the second major phase of the business. When Mitchell retired in 1951, the plant continued for a few years (the third phase), then sold to the Falstaff Brewing Corp. Falstaff operated the plant from 1956 to 1967.<sup>1</sup>

#### Breweries Connected with Fort Stanton

Lawrence G. Murphy and Emil Fritz opened the initial brewery and a store in Lincoln County in the late summer or early fall of 1866. The pair also operated a sutler's store called the Murphy & Fritz Co., and the brewery probably acquired the same name. Murphy estimated the value of the brewery at \$4,000. The brewery and store were located a quarter mile east of the boundary of the Fort Stanton Reduced Military Reservation and four miles west of Lincoln (Cozzens 2007; Nolan 1992:38). As of this writing, the remains of the first brewery have not been discovered, although the probable location was revealed to Gary Cozzens by a local native.

Godfrey Gauss, from Baden, Germany, was the brewmaster for Murphy & Fritz by at least 1869. At one point, he rented the brewery from Murphy but complained that he was cheated by his landlord. How long Gauss rented the brewery is currently unknown. Both Murphy-Fritz and Gauss sold beer to the soldiers at Fort Stanton and the Mescalero Apaches,

---

<sup>1</sup> As of this writing, I have not published complete histories of the Mitchell Brewery or Falstaff. I have sent a series of articles on Mitchell to the *American Breweriana Journal*, and the first two – on the early life of Harry Mitchell and the first Mitchell corporation – have been published (Lockhart 2005c; Lockhart 2008). In addition, I published a series of articles about dating El Paso beer bottles (Lockhart 2006a; 2006b; 2007a; 2007b).

much to the dismay of Col. A.V. Kautz, the commanding officer of the fort at that time (Cozzens 2007).

Murphy sold the brewery, possibly to Pat Dowlin, who took over the former Murphy business at Fort Stanton on October 23, 1873 (Cozzens 2007). Van Wieren (1995:214) listed a brewery operated by John Copeland & Co. in Lincoln from 1874 to 1875. This likely referred to the same business. At some point, Thomas Catron acquired ownership of the brewery, and, by September 1878, Will Hudgens ran the business. Although a closing date for the brewery has yet to be discovered, it had almost certainly ceased operations by 1885 (Cozzens 2007).

In 1885, a pair known only as Biedermann & Rufley opened a new brewery about four miles upriver from the fort (Figure 1). An 1890 list of Civil War soldiers then living in Lincoln

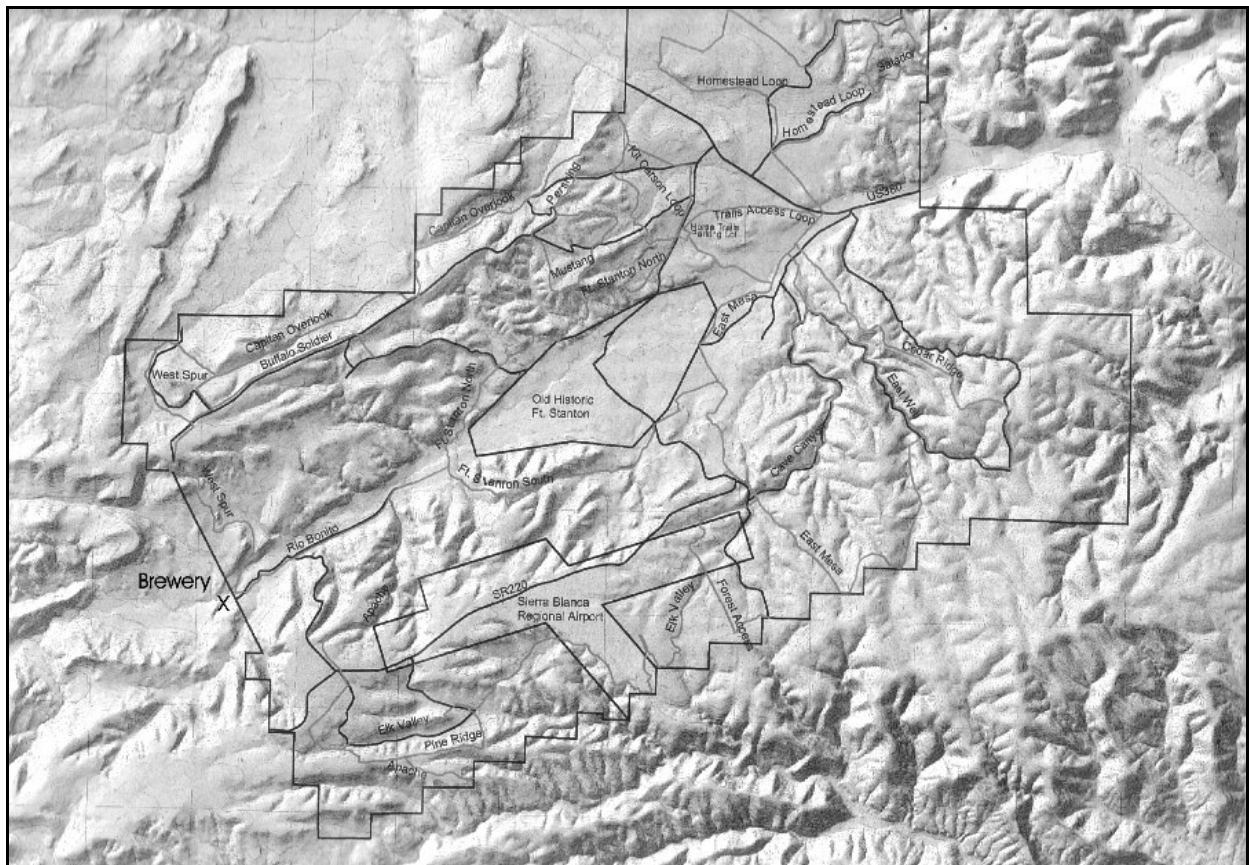


Figure 1 – Brewery location (map courtesy of Fort Stanton)

County listed Private Charles R. Biederman, who served from February 13, 1862, to August 28, 1865 (United States 1890).<sup>2</sup> In Carr Canyon, Huachuca Mountains (Arizona), the gravesite of Prof. Charles R. Biedermann notes that he was born in 1844 and died June 23, 1932, at the age of 93. Assuming that this is our Biedermann, he would have been 41 years old when he opened the brewery with Rufley. Unfortunately, I could find no similar citation for Rufley.

The new operation, run by a “brewer from Germany” (almost certainly either Biedermann or Rufley), produced its first beer in December, in time for the Christmas celebration. The editor of the Lincoln *Golden Era* sampled some of the brew and admitted getting drunk on it. He noted the brewery was “making an excellent quality of beer, and when it is once thoroughly introduced, bottled beer will be shelved and keg beer will be on tap.” Thus, the selling of bottled beer by the second brewery did not commence until 1886 (Cozzens 2007). By 1888, the name had changed to Rufley & Co. (Van Wieren 1995:214). A closing date for the brewery is currently unknown, although it likely remained open at least until the closing of Fort Stanton as a military post in 1896.

#### Location

The Biedermann-Rufley Brewery is located on the flood plain of the Rio Bonito (Figure 2). The remaining walls are situated ca. 60 meters north of the present course of the river, an area that would only be affected by the most severe floods, such as the one that occurred in 1940 (Figure 3). The site was probably chosen because of the spring (now dry) that existed historically just behind (north of) the brewery building and its location along the old wagon road to the post, just outside the military boundary.

The topography discouraged any other building site. Although there is a second terrace ca. 15-25 feet above the



Figure 2 – Rio Bonito

---

<sup>2</sup> The website noted that the spelling of “Biederman” was unclear. The listing included “C 97 PN Inf Feb13 1862 Aug 28 1865 0y 8m 15d.” The math is incorrect; the dates and total time in service do not compute. Either one date is incorrect, or there was an error in addition.



Figure 3 – The brewery walls in 2007

flood plain, the spring entered just above the flood plain and a higher brewery location would have required carrying or pumping water up to the higher elevation. The sides of the valley then rise steeply up from the flood plain, leaving no other possible intermediary location. The buildings were situated in relation to the river/valley walls, rather than a typical north/south, east/west orientation (Figure 4).

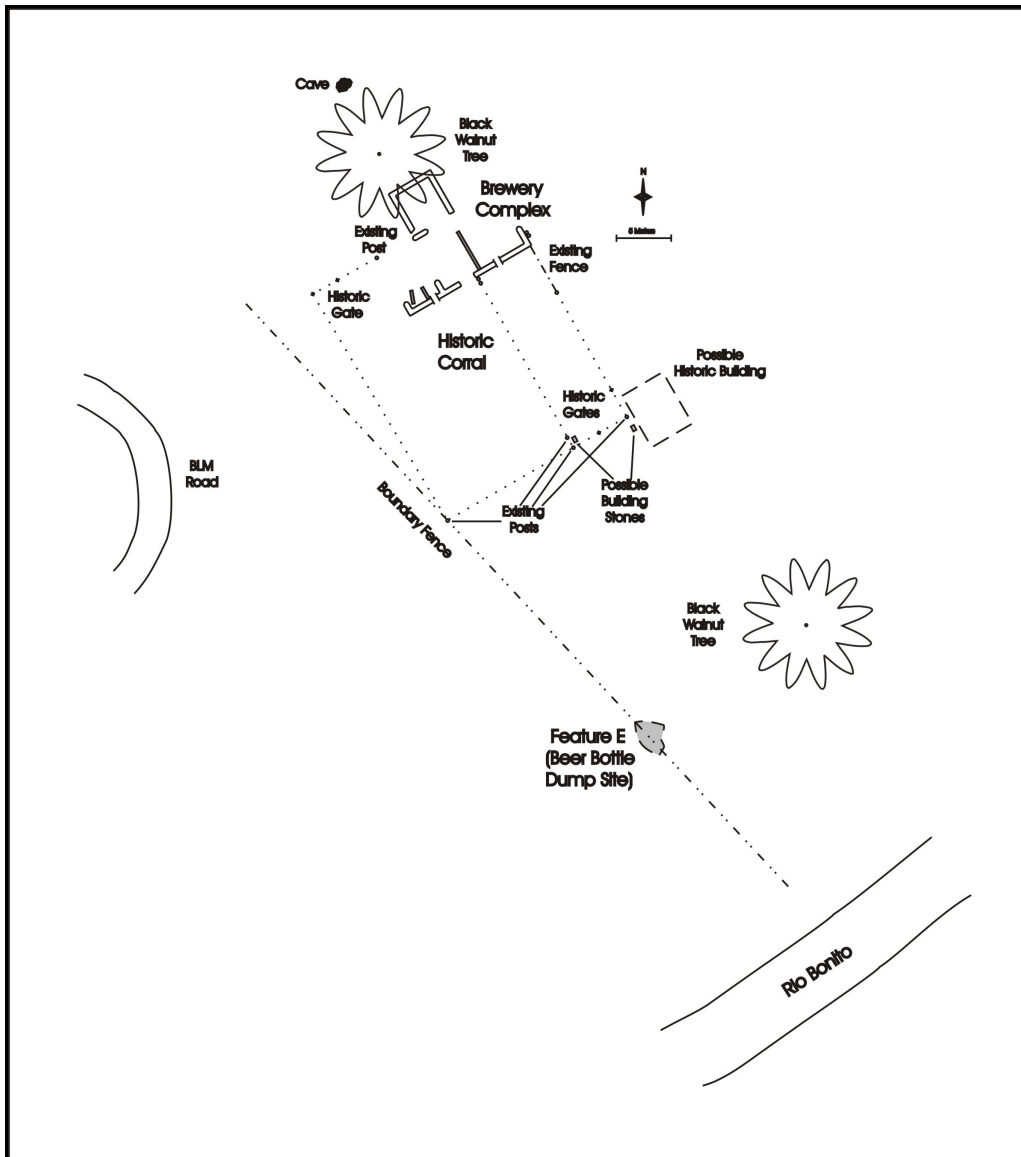


Figure 4 – Site map of the brewery area

A recent steel-post-and-wire fence separates the brewery area from the BLM land to the east, although this division was not apparent historically. A possible bottle dump (described below) straddles the current boundary fence line. A wooden-post-and-barbed-wire fence marked the immediate property in the past.

### Historical Photographs

Nolan (1992:42) included a photograph in his book (originally taken by A.F. Randall) that purported to be “Brewery and saloon at Fort Stanton . . . said to have been the brewery owned by Murphy and Fritz” (Figures 5 & 6). Paul Happel located a copy of the photo from the Robert McCubbin collection. Gary Cozzens contributed a photo taken of the back of the building ca. 1940 (Figure 7). Courtesy of Paul Happel, we also have a photo of the building taken in 1971 (Figure 8) and three others from 1977, two of which are virtually identical (Figures 9 & 10).

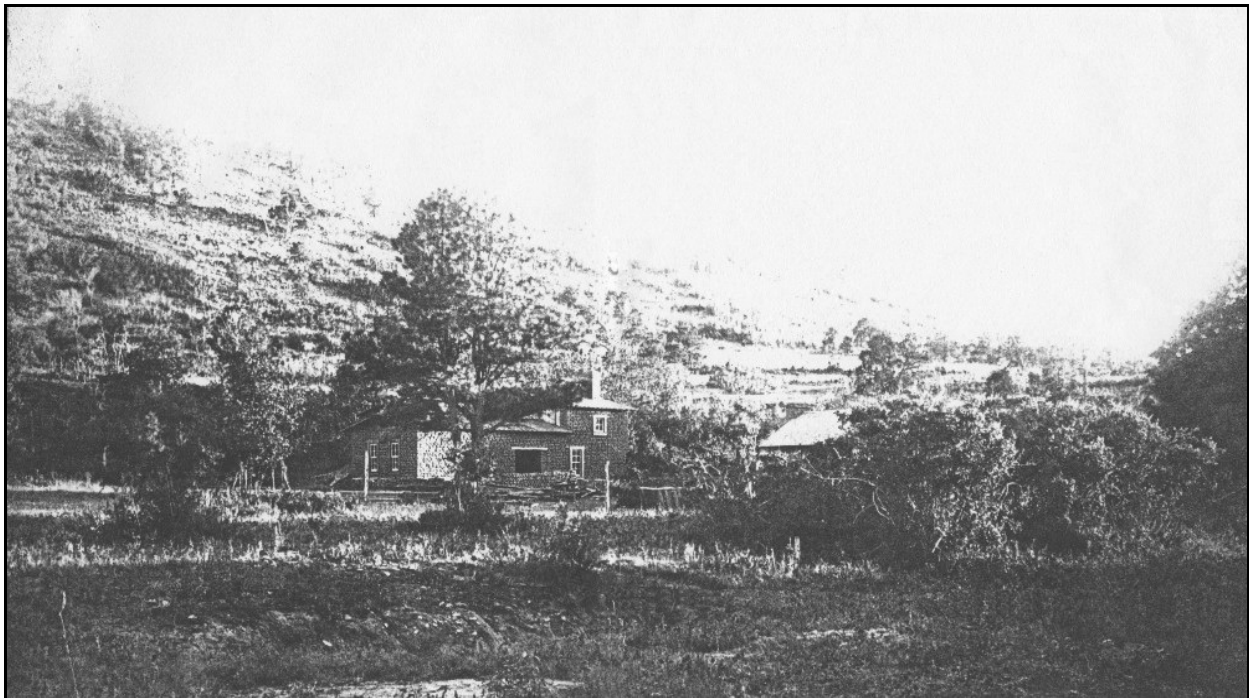


Figure 5 – Brewery in Randall Photo ca. 1880s-1890s (courtesy of Paul Happel)

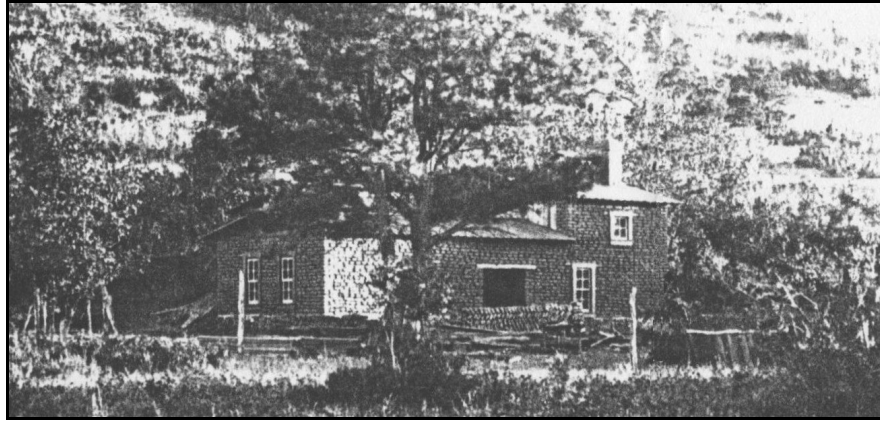


Figure 6 – Closeup of brewery in Randall Photo



Figure 7 – Brewery ca. 1940 (courtesy Gary Cozzins)



Figure 8 – Brewery in 1971 (courtesy of Paul Happell)



Figure 9 – Brewery in 1977 – front (courtesy of Paul Happell)



Figure 10 – Brewery in 1977 – quarter view (courtesy of Paul Happell)

In comparing the Randall photo with the one from ca. 1940, the 1971 and 1977 photos, our photos from 2007 and 2008, and the site map I have produced, I can only conclude that the Randall photo is of the Biedermann-Rufley brewery, instead of the Murphy-Fritz operation. The building is virtually identical in size and shape in all the photos and on my site map. The placement of the fence posts again appears to be identical. The rock foundation on the east end of the building is visible in the oldest photo, and the windows on that end of the building are present and in the same relative position as in the ca. 1940, 1971, and 1977 photos.



Figure 11 – Randall Photo compared with ruins in 2008 [Note that the west section of the structure is hidden behind the bush in the 2008 photo]

The two possible apparent discrepancies are the background and the presence of another structure located at the southwest corner of the historic corral. Our 2007 and 2008 photos indicate that the background difference is caused by vegetation change between the late 19<sup>th</sup>



century and today (Figure 11). The actual topography remains essentially unchanged. The second building does not appear in any of the later photographs, and we could find no surface indications aside from a two squared rocks that could have been building stones.

Another intriguing aspect of the photo is what may be a neatly stacked woodpile or possibly a low stone wall between the front door and the camera. On the south side of the woodpile or wall, there appears to be a stack of poles. These may be awaiting their reduction to firewood size or may be for fence construction or renovation of the building. The second building may be a substantial outbuilding or storeroom. This could even be the sutler’s store, assuming that the store was located on the post, itself. Local tradition suggests that there was a bordello connected with the brewery, so this structure might even have been the brothel. As mentioned above, Nolan (1992:42) suggested that there was a saloon associated with the brewery, so the building may even reflect that barroom.

### Structure

The remains of the brewery consist of four features: A) a broken adobe wall (with a central opening, a door, one window, and three partial side walls); B) a rock-walled spring house behind (north of) the adobe structure; C) a short section of fence; and D) a small cave up the hill, north of the complex (see map, Figure 12). Although the building is not oriented north/south, east/west, it is only slightly off those lines, so I will use typical compass directions in the descriptions below.

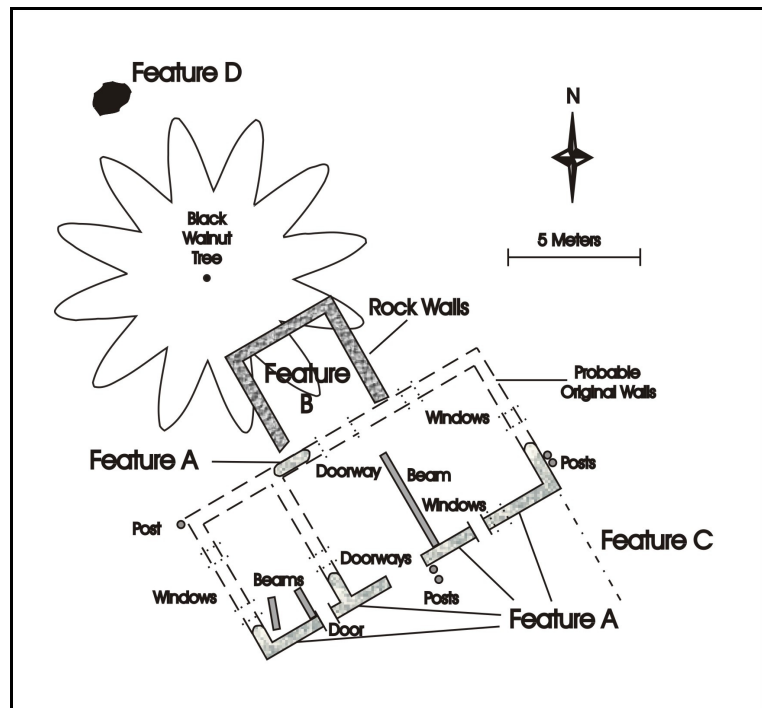


Figure 12 – Site map of Brewery Complex

## Feature A – the brewery building

The building was oriented roughly east/west at its longest axis and consisted of two rooms. The structure was ca. 13.2 meters in length (east/west) and 6.3 meters wide (north/south). The west end of the building was much taller and may reflect a second story, although it more likely had a higher ceiling to allow for taller brewing machinery and/or gravity feeding of ingredients. The structure was topped by two peaked roofs with very slight pitches. The higher (west) roof appears to be more than a meter above the lower roof. Much of the description below comes from the ca. 1940 photo of the brewery, the 1971 and 1977 photos, and the Randall photo from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (Nolan 1992:42) as well as our observations.

The front of the building (south side, facing the river) had one central opening that appears as a gap between the two front wall segments in the surviving structure (Figure 13). There appears to have been no way to close this wide aperture, and it probably existed to allow the spring to flow through the brewery and/or for loading ingredients into the structure and removing the finished product. Another opening in the east segment of the front wall was a doorway, as shown in one of the 1977 photos.



Figure 13 – Front view in 2008

The west front window (with eight panes) is visible in the Randall photo, and the eastern doorway, partly concealed by a tree in the Randall photo, is clearly visible in one of the 1977 photos. The base of the door is notably lower than the window and apparently at the same level as the central doorway. There has been a notable rise in surface level since the Randall photo was taken, possibly a result of wall melt. The Randall photo also showed an upper window (with four panes), west of the lower one and just west of center of the higher portion of the wall. The baseboard of the window remains in the current ruins. A chimney extended above the apex of the roof over the western room. All remaining window and door frames are clearly visible in two 1977 photos of the front of the building.

The east side had two identical windows (each with four panes in the top sash and four in the bottom one), both clearly visible in the Randall photo, although one is partly obscured by shadow in the ca. 1940 photo. By 1971, the window toward the back (north) was gone as the wall had partly collapsed, and all the panes of glass were missing. A major crack had appeared in the wall between the remaining window and the front wall. This crack marks the remaining adobe bricks standing in 2008. Openings in the back wall appear to consist of a small central window, a central opening between the spring house and main room (that appears to be parallel with the central opening in the front), and an upper window on the east end of the wall. These are difficult to describe due to the parallax created by the angle of the ca. 1940 photo, and most of the back wall had been destroyed by 1977.

Two of the 1977 photos show a doorway leading from the east room into the central, larger room. The door is near the south wall. At least one upper window in the outside west wall was revealed in the 1971 photo. The top of the window was roughly at the same height as the bottom of the upper west front window. The size of the window suggests that, like the upper front window, it originally had four panes. The 1971 photo is the only one that shows any detail of the west wall and it only shows the upper inside view of the wall.

Construction of the building consisted primarily of adobe bricks cemented with adobe mortar covered with adobe plaster set upon a flat-rock foundation. Although little of the foundation remains above ground in 2007, it is readily apparent in the Randall photo and one of the 1977 photos. It is notable that the exterior wall was not plastered when the Randall photo was taken, and it does not appear to have been previously plastered. All of the adobe bricks are visible in a neatly arranged pattern.

The mortar either came from a different source than that of the bricks or was mixed with another substance; it was notably darker in color than the surrounding bricks (Figure 14). Numerous small pebbles were embedded in the bricks probably due to their presence in the soil matrix, rather than by design. Each brick was rectangular in shape,



Figure 14 – Masonry – Note darker mortar

and a single representative brick measured roughly 30.2 x 15.0 x 11.0 cm. Much of the internal plaster remains, frequently covered with carved graffiti (Figure 15), although the bricks are visible on the external walls (many showing obvious melt, especially those at the top of the remaining structure).

The current remains of the brewery consist of two sections of the front (southern) wall with short remnants of three north/south walls (see Figure 13) and a tiny segment of the back wall. The eastern section of the front wall is 5.44 meters in length, 2.03 meters at its tallest point, and just under one meter

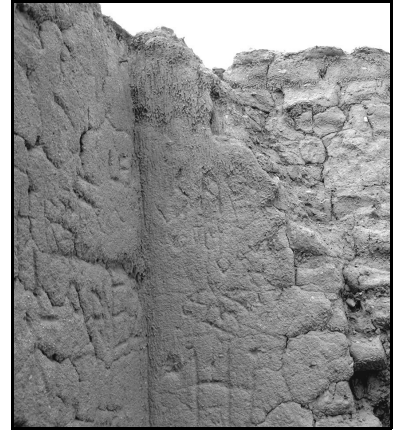


Figure 15 – Plaster on the inside of the front and west walls



Figure 16 – East segment of front wall – front view (arrow points to rock foundation)

in width (Figures 16 and 17). The eastern (smaller) door is framed in wood anchored into boards that are horizontally embedded into the adobe bricks (Figure 18). These are held in place by square nails (Figure 19), although wire nails were driven at intervals high into the west segment of the wall, presumably for hanging clothing or other items. These may have been added later. The door measures 1.92 meters in height, 0.59 meters wide, and just under one meter in depth.

Two north/south wall remnants are connected to the eastern front wall segment (Figure 20). The eastern external wall is only represented by a segment that extends from the southeast corner to a point 1.1 meter to the north. The wall remnant is 1.8 meters in height at its tallest point. All external walls are just under one meter thick. The only extant internal wall extends from a point slightly west of the eastern door for 1.31 meters and is 1.45 meters at its tallest point. Unlike the external walls, this one is only 31 cm. thick.

in width (Figures 16 and 17). The eastern (smaller) door is framed in wood anchored into boards that are horizontally embedded into the adobe bricks (Figure 18). These are held in place by square nails (Figure 19), although wire nails were driven at intervals high into the west segment of the wall, presumably for hanging clothing or other items. These may have been added later. The door measures 1.92 meters in height, 0.59 meters wide, and just under one meter in depth.



Figure 17 – East segment of front wall – back view (arrows point to fence posts)



Figure 18 – Boards anchored into adobe for door frame



Figure 19 – Square nail anchoring door frame

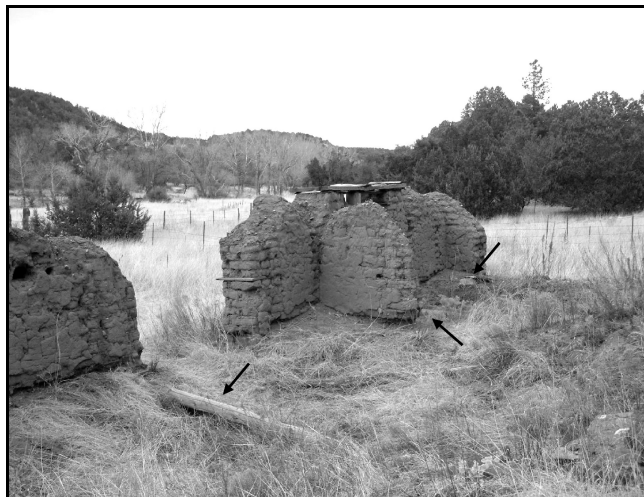


Figure 20 –North-south wall remnants (arrows point at beams)

Photographs show that the space between the two extant segments of the front wall was a wide door to the central room. Although there is no framing of this door as was apparent on the other two, the adobe ends are more squared off than on the three north/south wall abutments. The Randall photo and one from 1977 also show the lack of wooden framing for this central door, although a large lintel supported the wall atop the door. A board was horizontally embedded into the adobe bricks, identical to the ones in the other doors, apparently for support (see Figure 18). This doorway is clearly visible in the Randall and 1977 photos and has no obvious method for closure (no visible door), although the woodpile or wall in the Randall photo was placed directly in front of the opening.

The western segment of the front wall is 6.05 meters in length and ca. 2.65 meters in height at its tallest point (Figures 21 & 22). The window in this portion of the building (Figure 23) is shorter (1.43 meters tall by 62 cm. wide) than the eastern door. Although the taller wall on the western end suggests a second floor, there is no indication of where a ceiling could have connected, and the Randall and ca. 1940 photos show only a ca. one meter distance between the lower and higher roofs.

The 1.16 meter-long board embedded in the wall at its current highest point (also shown in one of the 1977 photos) is almost certainly the base for the small, upper window appearing in the Randall photo. The function of the upper window may have been to provide light for the room.



Figure 21 – West segment of front wall – front view (with author for scale)



Figure 22 – West segment of front wall – back view

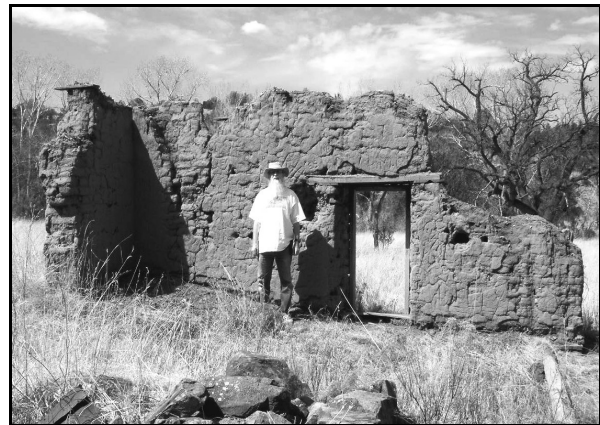


Figure 23 – Author beside window in west segment of front wall

The lack of evidence for a ceiling/floor probably suggests that there was none (Figure 24), and the higher roof on the west end was for a taller section of the larger, west room. Historical evidence, however, indicates that there should have been some form of second floor. This form of construction was called a “gravity or tower brewery.” Wahl and Henius (1901:647) explained:

When entirely new breweries are built they are arranged on the gravity plan. By this is meant that in each department the materials or beer are elevated but once to

the highest floor of the building, from where they fall downward by their own weight or gravity from floor to floor as they progress from one stage of manufacture to the next.

It is possible that a loft was built into the back of the building to allow for the mixing of ingredients at the highest part of the structure. The Randall photo shows the chimney extending from the front half of the highest roof rather than the center. This may imply that the earliest part of the process occurred in the loft at the back and proceeded downward to the kettle in the front half of the room. By inference, the smaller room at the west end of the building may have served as an office.

The relationship between the Randall photo and the measurements of the existing structure to the window base (highest extant point) suggests that the lower wall was ca. 2.5 meters in height (above the stone foundation which cannot be measured without excavation). Based on the photo, the taller, west wall would have been ca. 1.5 meters higher or ca. 4.0 meters in total height.



Figure 24 – Note lack of beams or other upper floor evidence between the lower window (right) and the single board remaining of the upper window sill (upper center)

I originally hypothesized a second internal wall that created a third room. This was based on what appears to be a vertical scar near the eastern edge of the central doorway (see right side of Figures 22 & 23) and a beam that could have been a floor support but could have also fallen from the roof (see lower left corner of Figure 20, right side of Figures 22 & 23). A re-examination of the scar, however, reveals that it is too narrow to have been a wall (at least one made from adobe). Two other beams are also inside the remains of the structure, and a few boards are just south of the western section of the front wall. The 1971 photo shows several planks remaining on the roof or leaning against walls from roof fall but no beams.

The window at the western end of the front wall is similar in shape and construction to the door described at the eastern segment – as are the bricks, mortar, and plaster. The external north/south wall on the western side is only represented by a short fragment, 1.87 meters in length and approximately the same height as the front wall on the western end.

The back (northern) wall is only represented by a short segment adjacent to the east wall of the spring house (see Feature B, below). The section of wall measures 1.4 meters in length, 44 cm. wide, and ca. 70 cm. in height (Figure 25). This remnant is so melted that the dimensions cannot be used as even a remotely accurate guide except for the relative location of the wall. The back wall in the ca. 1940 photo and the 1971 photo appears similar in construction to the existing front wall. The 1971 photo shows that the back wall fell outward (north) obscuring the spring house wall (see below).



Figure 25 – Small section of back wall in front of Feature B

#### Feature B – the spring house



Figure 26 – Feature B – the rock-walled spring house

The spring house was constructed entirely of stacked, flat rocks (with no mortar) in the form of three sides of a square abutting onto the back wall of the brewery (Figures 25 & 26). The ca. 1940 photo shows no roof on the spring house with the walls just under half as tall as the back brewery wall (see Figure 7).<sup>3</sup> Both the western and northern walls measured 4.46 meters in length with the eastern wall slightly shorter (although it was much more deteriorated and was probably the same length as the other two at the time of its construction); all are just

about one meter tall and ca. 60 cm. wide.

Evidence for the spring was partly in the wash pattern at the back of the spring house. A large black walnut tree (requiring a great deal of water had grown directly behind (north of) the spring house (see Figure 3). A second black walnut tree is ca. 46 meters south in a possible line

---

<sup>3</sup> This is only apparent under considerable magnification that is so out of focus as to be brutal to the eyes.



where the spring would have historically drained – but much closer to the Rio Bonito (Figure 27). We have no way of telling how long the spring has been dry; intermittent floods have concealed the historic drainage.

#### Feature C – the fence

Although the ca. 1940 photo shows a combination board and pole fence in a ca. 20 x 30 meter rectangle (Figure 7), only a short, 4.82 meter segment abutting the southwest



Figure 27 – Black walnut tree near the Rio Bonito

corner of the front brewery wall still remains (Figure 28). Ironically, this is the main portion of the corral fence concealed by the building in the ca. 1940 photo. The fence in the photo has gates at the northeast and southwest corners. The 1971 and 1977 photos show the existing section, as well as the plank section visible by the back wall in the ca. 1940 photo and part of the southern fence. Ironically, the oldest photo (Randall) only shows a few scattered poles. The fence in the newer photos, therefore, is probably not an original fence.



Figure 28 – Author and Earl Pittman preparing to measure the fence segment

In addition to the segment of fence at the southeast corner of the front wall, several of the historical fence posts remain. One is at the southwest corner of the historical fence (possibly the corner post), with another east of the possible corner post along what was once the south fence (see posts visible through door in Figures 18 & 23; over wall in Figure 22). A remnant is ca. 1.4 meters north of the second post. The final post associated with the corral fence is in the section that extended east from the brewery back wall (see the post at the right of Figure 17). This post is also shown in the fence in the 1971 photo (Figure 8). It is also possible that a wooden post in the current boundary fence (see Figure 4) was the southeast corner post of the historical fence.

Four other posts are not clearly associated with the fence. Two are immediately adjacent to the west wall remnant (visible to the left in Figure 22). Two more are just south of the western segment of the front wall and just west of the central doorway (see left side of central opening in Figure 17; right side of central opening in Figure 21; and tips of posts just over the wall at the right side of Figure 22). The two posts by the central doorway may indicate another north/south fence that subdivided the yard, and the two against the west wall may have originally connected to the western north/south fence. One of the 1977 photos also shows at least one of the posts by the doorway, and the 1971 photo shows a post in the center of the yard – that may have been part of internal north/south fence.

#### Feature D – the cave

About ten meters north of the back wall of the spring house, and ca. ten meters higher in elevation, is a small, natural cave (Figure 29). The cave mouth is oval and measures 1.5 meters east/west and 85 cm. north/south. The visible portion of the cave is ca. four meters deep, but it extends deeper. The rock forming the sides and ceiling of the cave are very crumbly, and several blocks of ceiling are in imminent danger of falling. We did not explore the inside.



Figure 29 – Author at cave entrance

Although we originally hypothesized that the cave may have been a cold storage unit for the brewery, it is more likely that the opening did not even exist at that time. The spring may have undercut the rock to the point where it collapsed, effectively plugging the water flow. Thus, the occurrence of the cave and the cessation of the spring may have been concurrent events.

#### The “Bordello”

Local tradition suggests that a bordello accompanied the brewery, and, as noted above, Nolan suggested a saloon. The building shown in the Randall photo may be that structure. The building extends roughly north/south with a peaked roof. In the photo, most of the structure is concealed by shrubbery, obscuring the dimensions of the building. None of the later photos show any trace of the structure, and the only possible remnants the we were able to find are two

squared stones that may have been building rocks and several posts that were more likely part of that section of the fence.

## Bottles

About 45 meters (330 degrees) from the southeast corner of the brewery is a possible bottle dump (Feature E). A very light scatter of amber glass shards, all but a few within a couple of feet of the boundary fence, marks the location of dump (see Figure 4 and arrow in Figure 30). Discussion with local people disclosed that most of the surface artifacts have been collected, but the few remaining are thick amber glass, including two shoulder fragments from export beer bottles typical of the ca. 1875-1900 era. No fragments of any other color were discovered.

Assuming the dump was connected with the brewery, it was likely only used for bottles broken during the brewing/bottling/transportation process. A local brewery, especially one this remote, would have reused *any* bottle it could refill. Because this area is within ca. 30 meters of the river, the 1940 flood, if not earlier flooding episodes, probably buried most of the glass artifacts that were formerly on the surface. This was likely exacerbated by later flood episodes, including the high waters throughout the Southwest in 2006. The boundary fence is relatively new, although there is some evidence that an older fence existed. Disturbance of the area by fence building and the removal of the older fence could have created the few deposits currently on the surface.



Figure 30 – Location of possible beer bottle dump

I conducted a very cursory shovel test of the feature in 2008 but did not find a single shard of glass (or any other artifact) within ca. 30 cm. of the surface. I was only able to test two adjacent locations, because an impending storm drove us away.<sup>4</sup> The heavier surface scatter is on the BLM side of the fence, so we were unable to test that area. It is possible that a more thorough shovel test will produce more information.

---

<sup>4</sup> Although not relevant to this study, we just made it to the top of the mesa before an extremely heavy rain and hailstorm hit. We were happy we left.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The brewery walls require immediate stabilization and protection. This will almost certainly require a historic preservation professional. Normal weathering will continue to create relatively rapid deterioration, and another major flood that reaches this far will almost certainly remove the remaining adobe. The front foundation and the spring house, however, will probably survive for some time in the future. It is obvious from a comparison of the historical photographs and the ones we took recently that as much as a meter of the original structure is currently subsurface. Although most artifacts were likely removed long ago, excavation of the inside of the building and around the front might prove useful.

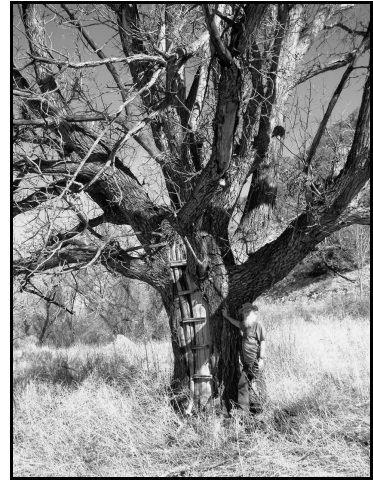


Figure 31 – Large tree at possible location of Murphy-Fritz brewery

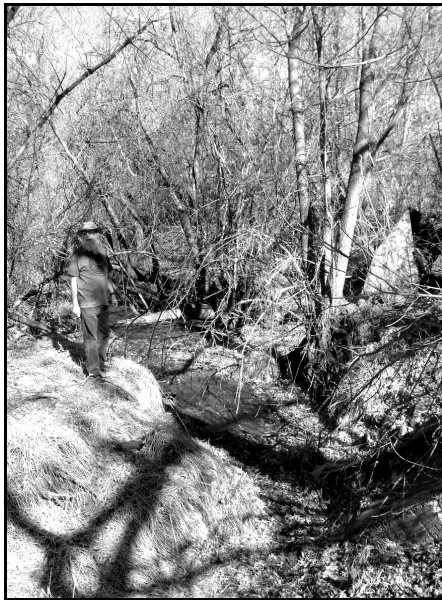


Figure 32 – Spring near possible Murphy-Fritz site

The discovery of any information about the bottle discard area will require further shovel testing or sinking a series of test excavations in the fence area. There is little hope that complete bottles exist in the dump, and fragments will almost certainly reflect those beer bottle artifacts already found in proximity to the the fort. The two places were intimately connected.

Although not pertinent to this site, a serious effort should be undertaken to locate the site of the earlier brewery. As noted earlier in this document, a local informant revealed the probable location of the older brewery to Gary Cozzens. We accompanied Gary to the site on February 26, 2008. The informant noted the actual spot where the brewery stood as being under a large tree (Figure 31), but we were unable to find any artifacts from the 1866-1885 era in the vicinity. Nearby was a spring that had cut into the ground. The area contained several large metal sheets, but we again could not discern any artifacts of late 19<sup>th</sup> century origin (Figure 32).

Although various debris, including colorless bottle and jar fragments, occupy the area, we found no glass artifacts from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Although the early period of the Murphy-Fritz brewery operation would have been prior to the use of bottled beer, the years between 1882 and 1885 would have increased the availability of typical, export beer bottles. We would expect at least some of these to have been used by the brewery.

### Acknowledgments

I would like to thank J.C. Nickens, owner of the brewery ruins for granting permission to explore the brewery and vicinity. Thanks also to Pat Flanary for allowing us to search on the BLM portion of the brewery grounds. Special gratitude goes to Gary Cozzens and Earl Pittman for their hospitality, showing Wanda and I around, generally answering numerous questions, and providing extra information. Thanks also to Gary for his history of the breweries and for sharing the ca. 1940 photo. Additional thanks to Paul Happel for providing the detailed photographs from 1971 and 1977 as well as the high-resolution scans of the original A.F. Randall photo. And a bouquet of gratitude to my wife, Wanda Wakkinen, for taking the photographs of both brewery sites and for being my life's companion.

### Sources

Cozzens, Gary

2007 "The Officers All Got Drunk: The Use of Alcohol at Fort Stanton." In press.

Lockhart, Bill

2004a "Pure Beer Fresh from the Brewery: The El Paso Brewing Association." *American Breweriana* 129:11-15.

2004b "Bottles of the El Paso Brewing Association." *American Breweriana* 130:22-28.

2005a *Fourth Street, Near Manzanaras: The Carbonated Beverage Industry in Socorro, New Mexico, 1880-1967*. Socorro County Historical Society, Socorro.

2005b "Beer in El Paso: The El Paso Brewing Association." *Password* 50(3):122-141.

2005c “The Harry Mitchell Brewery, Chapter One: The Early Life of Harry Mitchell.” *American Breweriana Journal* 138:27-32.

2006a “Dating El Paso Beer Bottles and Cans, Part 1, Pre-Prohibition Bottles and Near-Beers.” *Artifact* 44:iii-iv, 1-40.

2006b “Dating El Paso Beer Bottles and Cans, Part 2, Bottles and Labels from the Harry Mitchell Brewery.” *Artifact* 44:41-74.

2007a “Dating El Paso Beer Bottles and Cans, Part 3: Harry Mitchell Cans, Glasses, and Other Items.” *Artifact* 45:73-106.

2007b “Dating El Paso Beer Bottles and Cans, Part 3: Falstaff Cans and Bottles.” *Artifact* 45:107-124.

2008 “The Harry Mitchell Brewery: The Corporate Years.” *American Breweriana Journal* 152 (March/April):9-17.

2009 “Ten Wagon Loads of Beer Bottles: A Study of Fort Stanton Trash Deposition.” In *Quince: Papers from the 15<sup>th</sup> Biennial Jornada Mogollon Conference*, pp. 212-143.

2010 “Do Numbers Matter? A study of Beer Bottle Bases.” Manuscript. At “Historic Glass Bottle Identification & Information Website: Reference Sources/Bibliography” by Bill Lindsey. <http://www.sha.org/bottle/References.htm> [Revision of the 2006 manuscript]

Nolan, Frederick

1992 *The Lincoln County War: A Documentary History*. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma.

United States of America

1890 “Special Schedule 1890 Surviving Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines and Widows.” Section on veterans from Lincoln County.

[http://newmexicoalhn.net/lincoln/1890\\_civilwar.htm](http://newmexicoalhn.net/lincoln/1890_civilwar.htm)

Van Wieren, Dale

1995 *American Breweries II*. East Coast Brewiana Association, West Point,  
Pennsylvania.

Wahl, Robert and Max Henius

1901 *American Handy-book of the Brewing, Malting and Auxiliary Trades*. Wahl-Henius  
Institute, Chicago.

