

THE TEXARKANA POTTERY, Bowie County, Texas

The renown potter Jacob Bachley departed his initial training at the UHL Pottery Company, Evansville, Indiana, and relocated and potted at the Lafayette Glass pottery operation, Benton, Arkansas. Bachley became very attached and quite acquainted with Arkansas cities, rivers and trail routes, and the general America's Midwest Region. Next, he relocated and potted for the Kirkpatrick Brothers in 1875 at Anna, Illinois. In 1878 he partnered with train conductor John, "Jack" Weed and established the Texarkana Pottery that operated until 1885. Jacob Bachley died suddenly of phenomena January 25, 1885, at the young age 45 years old.

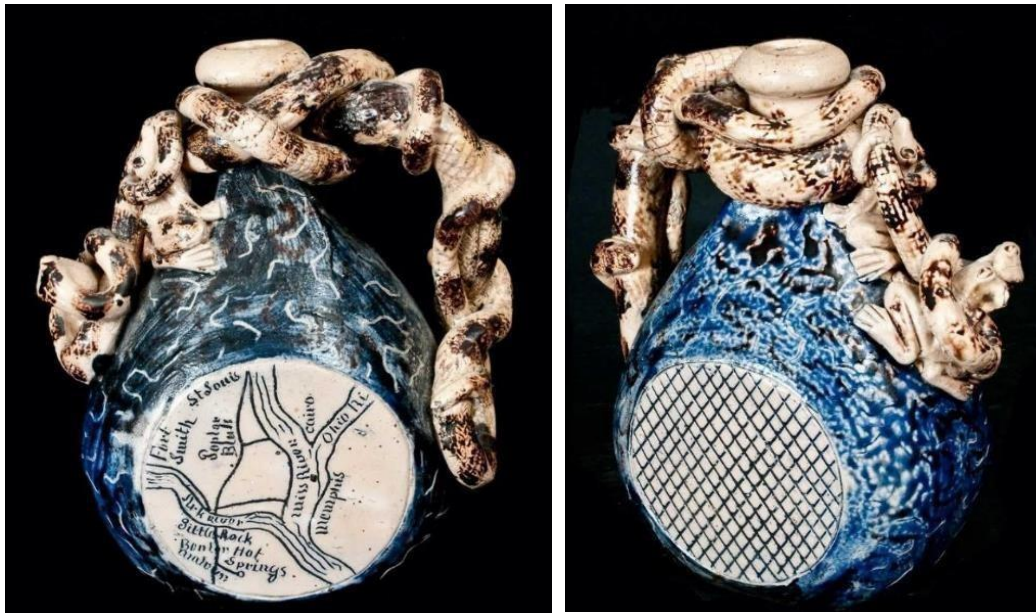


FIGURE 189: Half Quart Temperance Snake Flask, attributed to potter Jacob Bachley. 8.5”h, cc: 1875

The small elaborate flask features an applied multi-colored rattlesnake that warns against excessive alcohol consumption and public drunkenness.

The flask's obverse displays a finely detailed domed bordered map of the South Central Region of America, spotlighting Arkansas and Missouri, the Arkansas River, the Mississippi River, and the Ohio River, specifically depicting Fort Smith, St. Louis, Poplar Bluff, Cairo, Memphis, Little Rock, Benton, Hot Springs, and Malvern. The flask's reverse features a cobalt incised dome bordered medallion bearing a cobalt-filled incised busy-work crosshatching.

Evident are many highly skilled potting and decorating techniques Bachley learned and used in wheel-turning, hand sculpting and glaze applications with heavy cobalt, Bristol, and manganese. His mapping incisions of towns, trails and rivers are neatly cobalt filled in a stylish hand script, display his attachment to the Arkansas region.



Temperance flask featuring frogs being entrapped by an evil rattlesnake. Conveys - Minds captured by excessive alcohol consumption and public drunkenness.



FIGURE 190: Bachley's sculpting talent warrants high esteem among great American folk art.



FIGURE 191: Snake flask attributed to Jacob Bachley while at the Anna Pottery, displaying the great influence of the Kirkpatricks, utilizing Anna Pottery clay and glaze colors. cc: 1875.

Many skilled contemporary potters of the Kirkpatricks appreciated and were influenced by Cornwall and Wallace Kirkpatrick creations. Visits between them and the Kirkpatricks obviously occurred at State Fairs and other special pottery exhibitions. They likely even visited each other's pottery operation, admiring and sharing ideas and skills.

Known are very scarce temperance related snake flasks with elaborate Arkansas and Missouri mapping and cobalt filled busywork crosshatching that Bachley exquisitely sculpted while employed at the Anna Pottery, along with aquarium castles, pig flasks, and oddities, that were sold at Kirkpatrick businesses.

Through the exhaustive archival research of Brock Buckner, one most significant newspaper article proves Bachley factually worked at the Anna Pottery, being employed by the Kirkpatrick Brothers pottery operation in and around 1875: *The Jonesboro Gazette* July 29, 1876 edition reports **"Aquarium. - the Anna Pottery has achieved, considerable celebrity for the variety, beauty and usefulness of its products. The Kirkpatrick Brothers have hitherto manufactured with their own hands the various articles that have been deemed unique, such as cairo (sic) cups, porcine wine bottles., temperance jugs that resemble the Gorgon head and ate the concrete embodiment of the drunkards dream, rustic cottages, &c., but they have found an artist, Mr. Jacob Batsley (sic), to whose hands they can trust this class of work. The statuettes in the Kirkpatrick drug store are specimens of his skill. He is making an aquarium in clay that will be his master piece. It is not easily described. Its style of architecture carries one back to the feudal days of old England. It will be placed in the Kirkpatrick drug store."**

TIMELINE: Bachley first trained at the Uhl Pottery in Evansville, Indiana, and worked in 1875 for the Kirkpatricks. Afterwards, he moved westward to Texarkana and connecting with Jack Weed to establish their Texarkana Pottery in 1878.



FIGURE 192: Aquarium Castle Anna Pottery styles samples attributed to potter Jacob Bachley. cc: 1875.

Established Arkansas newspapers have documented and reported Jacob Bachley being a highly skilled potter of the famed Texarkana Pottery and have conveyed Bachley, “Humbug Jake,” being a well-known and established potter artist in Arkansas, especially around Little Rock.



FIGURE 193: Cobalt filled fine hand incisions attributed to Jacob Bachley script style. . cc: 1875

Historians and advanced collectors intensified the Texarkana Pottery mystery, holding the “not farfetched” notion that a Texarkana Pottery’s existence was a mere hoax played by the Anna Pottery, despite several known marked Texarkana Pottery ceramics do factually exist. Mr. Brock Buckner’s archival research efforts ended the Bachley “mystery,” by uncovering and reporting significant information in the aforementioned *Jonesboro Gazette* article of July 29, 1876. Accolades are in order for Mr. Buckner.



FIGURE 194: Snake flask displaying the great influence of the Kirkpatrick's Anna Pottery. 9”h, cc: 1875

Bachley figurals s h o w the significant connection of the inscribed towns and scrolling rivers to the real development of Midwestern America and the State of Arkansas. A Midwest “guide” appears on both snake flasks and pig flasks, that depict the simple trails and short cuts that detail the passage by horse, wagon, stagecoach, rail car, and riverboat. Here nurtured was an Arkansas history of grandest magnitude. This history and mapping comprise the Overland US Mail Stagecoach/Rail Route, Diamond Joe Riverboat Routes, and the Malvern Narrow Gauge Rail to Hot Springs. The Hot Springs was a key location for the mineral baths, and many people travelled for the medicinal cures of the water.



FIGURE 195: Temperance flask featuring frogs entrapped by an evil rattlesnake. cc: 1875

Excessive alcohol consumption and public drunkenness signifies alcohol entrapment and Cornwall Kirkpatrick's ironic mayoral posturing on temperance at middle ground of both sides politically, and socially. There would have been far fewer deadly shootings in Malvern saloons had patrons drank less, remained less bold, less mouthy, and kept more in control their senses.

Few incredible Jacob Bachley creations have survived that convey our nation's Midwestern horse and wagon trails, rail hubs, and river travel, that connect us to Arkansas' rich history. Bachley's ingenuity and talent certainly warrants our high esteem among great American folk art. Snake flask featuring Bachley's great Kirkpatrick's Anna Pottery style traits, busy-work, clay and glaze colors.



FIGURE 196: Elaborate half quart flasks attributed to Jacob Bachley, while employed at the Anna Pottery. 7 ½" h. cc: 1875.

Each flask features a map that depicts St. Louis, Poplar Bluff, Cairo, Miss River, Ohio River, Fort Smith, Ark River, Memphis, Little Rock, Benton, Malvern, and Hot Springs (vessel at left includes Hope and Texarkana). The flasks reverse sides bear an incised rectangular cross-hatching busywork, forming a diamond pattern with incised interior dots.

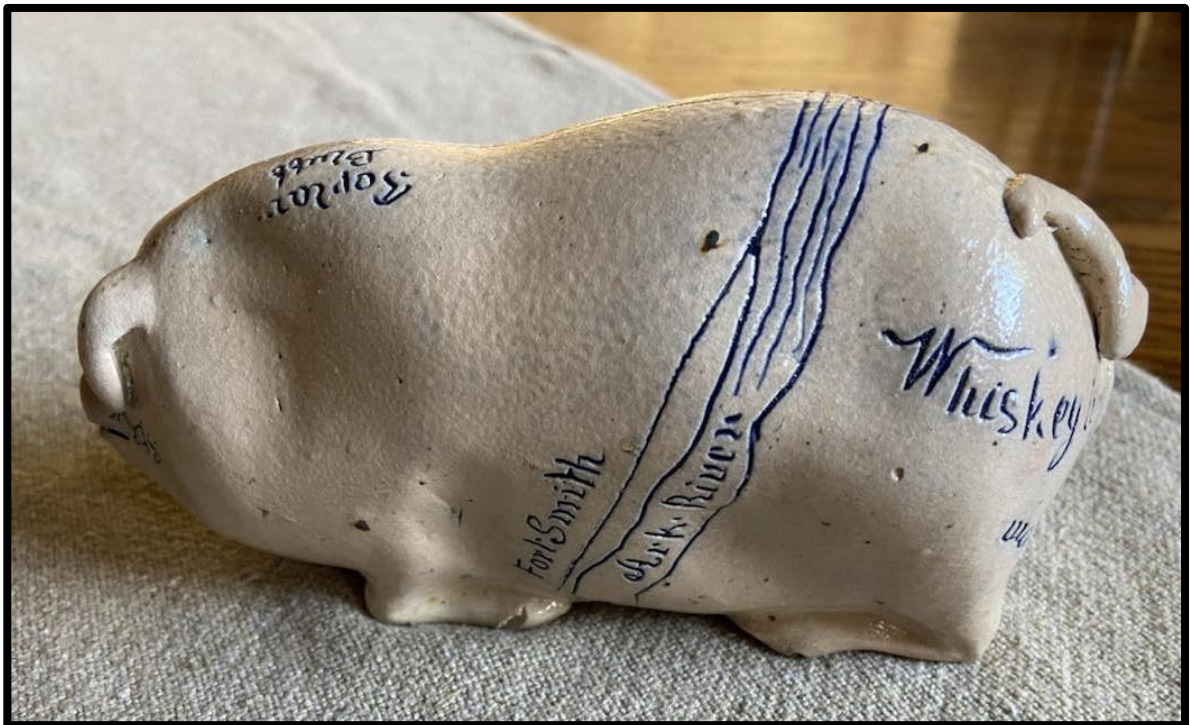


FIGURE 197: Railroad & River Guide pig flasks attributed to Jacob Bachley. cc:1875



Bachley pig flasks with Arkansas Railroad & River Guide. cc:1975



FIGURE 198: Bachley pig flasks with rivers, Overland Mail, and rail routes. 3" H, 6" L, 2 1/2" W.

The Arkansas Weekly, Little Rock, Arkansas reports “the Jacob Bachley (1840-1885) Arkansas art potter, known as Humbug Jake, the "pottery man" of Texarkana, originally trained at the Uhl Pottery in Evansville, Indiana, before he came to Arkansas in the 1870s to work with Lafayette Glass in Benton. (Around 1875 Bachley was employed by the Anna Pottery, Union County, Illinois).

In 1878 he ventured westward to Texarkana, where he partnered with Captain "Jack" C. Weed, a conductor with the St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern Railway. The pair formed the Texarkana Pottery Company, with Weed as the proprietor of the "celebrated fancy pottery works" and Bachley as potter.

The *Daily Arkansas Gazette* stated on April 5, 1879, that “among our visitors yesterday was conductor J. C. Weed, of the Texas Division, St. Louis, Iron Mountain, and Southern Railroad. Jack is proprietor of the celebrated fancy pottery Work of Texarkana, and we are pleased to know he is meeting unexpected success. His foreman is famous Humbug Jake, with many of us acquainted at the State Fair. He’s a skillful workman and designer. The many articles shipped from the establishment include hanging baskets, water pitchers, beer mugs, and so on.”

The April 10, 1879, edition of the *Arkansas Democrat* reports “the guy is glazing the ware like porcelain and that’s almost transparent. In fact, it’s difficult to conceive people of the truthfulness of the statement that it is Arkansas made. The pottery is much finer than the average. Mr. Weed telling us that it really brings \$.12 per gallon. The novelty work is most striking and artistic, Mr. Bachley having crown the exhibit with his own head and face. Among the most remarkable pieces are the Dog Catching the Rabbit, Darwinian Theory, Cat in a Sack, frog, and Arkansas Traveler in the Velvet Veiled Profit. If you failed to see this, you may miss half of the show.”

“The Texarkana pottery company, Jacob Bachley, and conductor Jack Weed, proprietors, make an excellent exhibit in Floral Hall, Arkansas. Mr. Bachley is one of the most expert workmen in the country, and the display would be credible to a much older and much more extensive company. The pottery exhibit, most of wiches for sale, consist of mental ornaments, aquariums, **Arkansas traveler**, ornaments, flower, vases, chamber sets, water, coolers, **medallion jugs** and cups, and a thousand and one original ‘little tricks’ that could only have been found in the fertile brain of old Humbug Jake. Don’t fail to see the curiosities.”

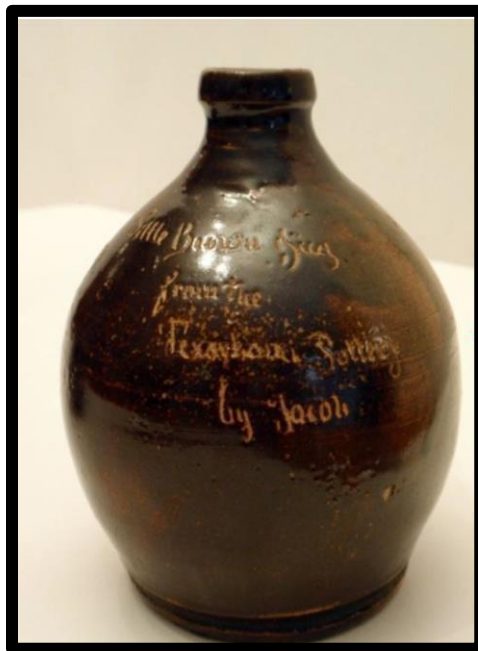
Reported in the *Daily Arkansas Gazette*, Friday, January 23, 1885, is “the special telegram, announcing the sudden death of Mr. Jake Barkley at Texarkana. The deceased was a member of the firm Weed and Bachley, proprietors of the Arkansas pottery, and was well known in Little Rock. He was a man of genius, a skilled workman in his business.” Bachley appears potter” in the 1880 federal Arkansas census.



FIGURE 199: Cat in Bag figural attributed to Bachley at the Anna Pottery. 2.5” h. cc: 1875



FIGURE 200: The “Eakin Arkansas Traveler” watering hole setting, featuring multiple cobalt and manganese decorated figurals and mottled base application. 10” H, 11” L, 11” W. See PLATE 21.



Incised "Little Brown Jug/ from The / Texarkana Pottery / Jacob."

cc: 1878, 4" H, 3 ¾" L (jug w/handle).

3" H, 6" L, 3" W. (pig flask),

FIGURE 201: Samples of marked Texarkana Pottery.



Albany slip pig flasks attributed to the Texarkana Pottery, based on clay and glaze colors, are known that bear political statements. One is inscribed “Send with full instructions / to the Cincinnati Convention / by Texarkana Pottery,” and another flask has the message designating the hog “A Delegate to the National / Convention at Chicago/with instructions / in ---” (pointing to butt spout hole). A one pint Albany slip glazed jug inscribed “Little Brown Jug / from The Texarkana Pottery / by Jacob” is known.



FIGURE 202: Flask marked “T.P.” on genitals and “Texarkana Pottery” at right of hole.

Complicating matters is that Cornwall and several Kirkpatricks bore strong bonds to family, friends, businesses, political positions, elections, Cincinnati, and Chicago. Hence, such flask messages as “Delegate sent with instructions” could be of direct Kirkpatrick influence on Bachley’s mind set..

All current and future theories seek securing data to pin down the exact Texarkana Pottery kiln site location and additional historical and manufacturing information about the Texarkana Pottery. Pertinent newspaper editorials and atlas biographical descriptions of the Texarkana Pottery are eagerly sought, as important early records were destroyed in a Texarkana courthouse fire. Thus, more mysteries continue.