

The CASE of the Spuds and the Bolting Bootlegger

by Edith C. Duffy, Edwards Historian

Edwards most infamous citizen in the days of Prohibition and "importing" illegal alcoholic beverages, was known as "Junky." He owned a big truck, which he used to transport Canadian whiskey that he had purchased across the border to bring to the U.S. to sell at a profit. Of course, the merchandise had to be disguised as freight of another nature and he managed to do this with sensible ruses.

One time, under cover of darkness, he was driving through Russell with his truck loaded with "booze" underneath sacks of potatoes, covering the "good stuff." As he started up the big hill going out of Russell village toward Edwards, he saw a car backing down the hill, with a spotlight shining backward. Unbeknownst to Junky, it was a friend, Leon C., who hadn't made the steep hill and was backing down for another try, but it put Junky on the alert - then, to make it more exciting, he saw behind him, another car coming up the hill! This really made him nervous, and he began to think that maybe he was in a tight situation. However, again, unbeknownst to him, it was a friend, Ernie T. At this moment, he panicked! He quickly backed his truck into the ditch, abandoned it, and bolted into the woods.

Ernie and Leon stopped and repeatedly called to him, but Junky, thinking it was a trick by the authorities, kept quiet. Knowing whose truck it was, they continued to call to him. It was a long time before he finally recognized Ernie's voice and ventured out.

They questioned him as to what he had on the truck and he replied, "Potatoes, you damned fools!"

Apparently, he believed that "discretion is the better part of valor" if you wanted to continue in that business.

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