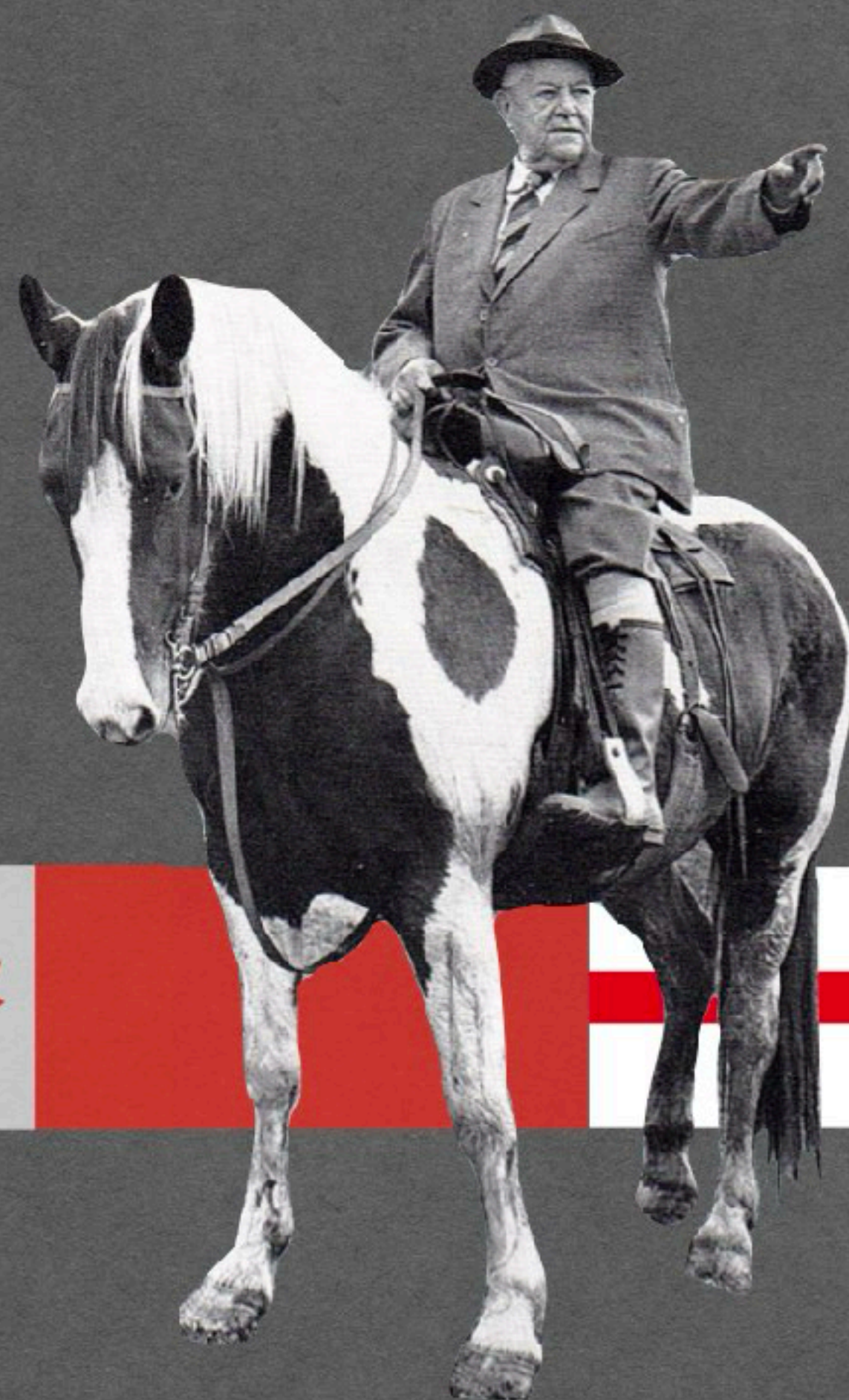


Joseph W. Hobbs

1891 - 1963


The Last Whiskey Baron?



1891

1900

1963



Joseph W. Hobbs

The Last Whisky Baron?
A remarkable person in the whisky trade

Background

-1900

1900-1918

1918-1932

The Prohibition

The Marine Building

1932 - 1963

The Distilleries (1930s)

The Companies

The Distilleries (1944-)

Ind. Whisky Assoc.

- Emigration to Canada
- Pilot training and WW1

- The move to Vancouver
- The business in Vancouver
- The First Trans-Canada Flight (Basil Hobbs)

- Rumrunning
- The ships
 - When Prince Albert cut the the Frisco Honolulu cable
- The Hobbs messages

- Back in UK
- DCL and National Distillers - The cooperation plans that failed
- Ferrolene and the patent
- The Great Cattle Ranch
- Inverlochy Castle
- Torlundy and Ocean Mist
- Hobbs passes away 1963

- Glenury Royal
- Bruichladdich
- Glenlochy
- Highland Esk/North Esk/ Montrose/Hillside/Glenesk
- Benromach
- Fettercairn
- Strathdee

- W.A Gilbey
- W.H Holt
- Associated Scottish Distillers (ASD)
- Train & McIntyre
- McNab Distilleries

- Glenmavis
- Lochside
- Ben Nevis

JOSEPH W. HOBBS – The Last Whisky Baron?

For some years I have been gathering information about a person who directly or indirectly owned many distilleries and whisky companies. The reason for my interest was that he was involved in the Glenlochy Distillery, Fort William. As he was more connected to Ben Nevis Distillery I thought the information may be of interest.

In books and online, he is usually mentioned in a negative and rather sarcastic tone. The information is often different to what I have found, and it is quite scarce.

He was an incredible person, who managed a lot during his life. He was a creative entrepreneur and often had ideas that went against the established view of how things should be done. He made big money during the Prohibition era in the US but also later. He also lost big money. Hobbs sometimes teetered on the edge of what was allowed but was never convicted. Almost 100 years has gone since "rum-running" stopped but no companies or people want to be associated with it.

I have put all the information on the website glenlochy.com. There are also other topics: Glenlochy Distillery, Spirit Safes, the Pattison crash, Swedish Whisky History and Whisky Statistics.

I have received a lot of help from people in Canada and in Scotland and Gustav Tullberg has helped me with the website. I have dedicated the Joseph Hobbs part to one of them, Colin Ross, Ben Nevis Distillery who is no longer with us.

I thought I would "portion" out the story of Joseph W. Hobbs. Picture 2 shows the layout of the website.

PART 1

Joseph W. Hobbs was born in 1891 in Berkshire, England. Three years later, his brother Basil was born. These gentlemen would become involved in whisky and Basil's family is still in the business in Canada today. The father was a farmer but had financial problems and the whole family emigrated to Canada in 1900. His grandfather Joseph (1832-1912) was a butcher in Newbury but sold the business and bought a cattle farm. In 1851 he lost his wallet which contained a check for £1,500. This with "Money easy come - easy go" was probably included in the grandson, Joseph's DNA.

The family settled in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario and the father takes over a cattle farm. 17-year-old, Joseph buys a small boat Unome and his brother the boat Daphne. Together they take up passenger traffic in the strait between Canada and the United States.

Here Joseph also meets his first wife Mabel Dell. She comes from the city of the same name, Sault Ste. Marie, but on the American side of the strait - handy!

Then the First World War broke out and, like many young Canadians, the brothers were interested in aviation. Both trained as pilots. Joseph at Curtiss Flying School in Toronto and Basil at Wright School, Ohio (Wright Brothers).

They go to England and participate in the war. Brother Basil becomes famous for having shot down a Zeppelin on 14 June 1917. It may sound easy, but with a single-engine aircraft and simple weapons, you had to get close. The risk of being shot down was great. Later that year, he also sinks a German U-boat.

They returned to Canada after the war.

