

# HISTORICAL ARCHEOLOGY

## Sartin Hotel

A large wood-frame building at the main cross-road in Bolivar was known as the Sartin Hotel. There were other hotels in Bolivar in the 1800s, but the Sartin was the largest and most famous. It was apparently built and owned in the 1870s by Lysander Holland, but it was Jesse Sartin who expanded it and ran the hotel in the 1880s and 1890s. Sartin came to Bolivar from North Carolina and bought the hotel in 1881, during the heyday of the Chisholm Trail. He lived there with his wife and four children.

No photographs of the hotel exist, but written accounts suggest that it was a two-story hotel with "ell-shaped" wings. Some stories state that the hotel lobby once had a pond with flowing water, but this has not been confirmed. Several sources confirm that the Sartin Hotel was the stage stop for

different stagecoach lines running through Bolivar.

Jesse Sartin died in 1899 and was buried in the Bolivar Cemetery. Exactly what happened to the Sartin Hotel after his death is unclear, but it was apparently in ruins by the early twentieth century.

Archeological excavations uncovered a large section of the building's original rock slab foundation, a vertical iron pipe that had served as a lightning ground rod, the possible remnants of a collapsed brick chimney, and a hand-dug well.

Thousands of nineteenth-century artifacts were recovered, revealing that the Sartin Hotel catered to a mixed clientele of travelers on the Chisholm Trail and the stagecoach lines, ranging from cowhands to wealthy ranchers to families with children.



Photograph of Jesse Sartin (1820-1899) and Sally Ann (Nance) Sartin (1847-1909), who owned the Sartin Hotel. They are buried in the Bolivar Cemetery less than one-quarter mile east of the hotel site. Image from Find-A-Grave online.



A milk glass jar lid from a cosmetic or cold cream jar, with an embossed mark: "PAT. APRIL 10 1900."



A brass trigger guard for a Model 1849 Colt pocket pistol. The serial number shows it was manufactured in 1864.



American-made ceramic hotel ware.



Tiny ceramic teacup from a child's play set.

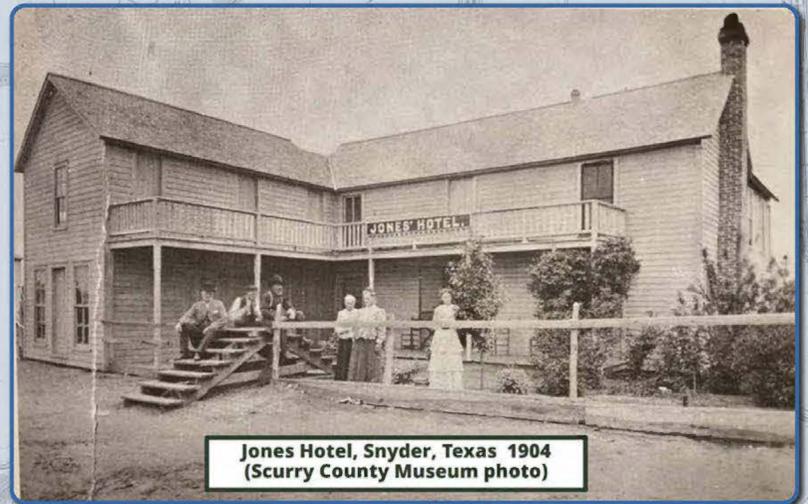


Square glass bottle for fountain pen ink.



A fancy knife with a bone handle and inlaid brass.

The artifacts found at the hotel site suggest that the owners, first Lysander Holland and later Jesse Sartin, catered to a broad range of patrons. While some artifacts are relatively plain, many are fancy items that would have appealed to wealthier guests. Some travelers brought their children to stay at the hotel, too.



Jones Hotel, Snyder, Texas 1904 (Scurry County Museum photo)

This historic photo is NOT the Sartin Hotel in Bolivar, but it shows what it may have looked like. The Sartin was a two-story building in an ell-shape, and it probably had a brick fireplace on one gabled end.



The original Sartin Hotel well was lined with limestone rocks and had an expanded platform of larger slabs at the old ground level. The well was located on the back side of the two-story hotel. The line of bricks and mortar to the left is the foundation of a 1950's house.



Two views of the Sartin Hotel Site excavations in December 2020. Left photo shows the excavations and features. Right photo has highlights showing the features associated with the nineteenth-century Sartin Hotel.



- Hotel Foundation
- Vertical Lightning Rod
- Brick Rubble from Collapsed Chimney
- Dripline Depression, Filled with Historic Debris
- Hand-Dug, Rock-Lined Well



Sartin Hotel Foundation Cornerstone

Lightning Ground Rod, 5-feet long

A 5-ft long rod of twisted steel was found adjacent to the back corner of the hotel foundation. The rod had been driven vertically into the ground to serve as a lightning ground rod.

