

Artifact of the Month

Tribal Historic Preservation Office

November 2021

Originally introduced in 1900 by French perfumer Édouard Pinaud, at the Exposition Universelle, *Brilliantine* or brilliant, is a hair grooming product made for softening men's hair including men's beards and moustaches. This product was sold in the United States by companies that adopted the product into a pomade form, rather than the liquid.

The FW Fitch Manufacturing company out of Des Moines, Iowa, however, kept the liquid form and the name *Brilliantine* on their bottles but embossed the name "Fitch's" at the bottom of the bottle along with adding a label. The bottle came in 2.5 or 3 ounce sizes and the product was very popular. So popular in fact that for the Canadian adaptation of the movie *Grease*, the title was changed to *Brilliantine*.

The bottle we have in our collection unfortunately does not have the original label or cap which also designated the bottle as part of the Fitch company but does sport the embossed bottom. F.W. Fitch sold the company in 1949 after declining sales after World War II and now the building is owned by a brewery. The patent for the *Brilliantine* dates back to 1926 and was renewed again in 1946. On the left and middle is the bottle we collected in 2021 and on the right is how to the would have looked originally.



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