

# The Potomac Pontil

The Potomac Bottle Collectors – Serving the National Capital

## October 2006

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### Meeting October 31st

#### (Yes, this is Halloween)

Please join us at 8 PM on Tuesday, October 31<sup>st</sup> at the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer in Bethesda for our monthly meeting. We hope that our meeting time is late enough that those with children can come after trick-or-treating .

**Next Meeting** will be November 28<sup>th</sup>. We will not have a December meeting due to the Christmas holiday.



Our September meeting was the club picnic. We enjoyed good food, good weather, and good bottles. Top photo includes Torrey Smith, Joan Goldfrank, and Mary Banwarth from left to right. Second photo shows Andy Goldfrank, Mary Banwarth, Lynn Fisher Sears, Jim Sears, Joan Goldfrank, and Richard Lillenthal in back row. Front row includes Jack Sullivan, Dodd Delph, Mike Cianciosi, and Roland Longerbeam. Next month's newsletter will include more picnic photos showing the obstacle course and adventures with the grill.

**A Touch of Glass** exhibit on the American glass industry is now the Manassas Museum, 9101 Prince William Street, Manassas, through the end of this year. See <http://www.manassascity.org/CurrentEvents.asp?EID=1755> for more information.

Meetings: 8:00 PM on the last Tuesday of each month in the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, 6201 Dunrobbin Dr., Bethesda, MD 20816.  
President: Andy Goldfrank Vice President: Al Miller Secretary: Jim Sears Treasurer: Lee Shipman  
Pontil: Jim Sears (email: searsjim@usa.net, PH: 301/588-2174) & Andy Goldfrank (email: amg\_sticky@yahoo.com, PH: 202/588-0543)  
Web Site: [www.potomacbottlecollectors.org](http://www.potomacbottlecollectors.org) Maintained by Peter Rydquist: pehraug@aol.com

## A City's Fame: Hunter Baltimore Rye

by Jack Sullivan

Special to the *Potomac Pontil*

“There is no article made in Baltimore that has done more to spread the fame of the city as a commercial centre than has Hunter Baltimore Rye.” From *Baltimore: Its History and Its People*, published in 1912.

That high praise for their liquor must have been eye candy for the William Lanahan family, by 1912 one of the prominent families of Baltimore, whose fortunes and social standing were built on making the first whiskey to call itself Baltimore Rye.

Not that the founding father, William, was shanty Irish when he founded the business. While there is scant information about his life, he is said to have achieved some wealth and influence by 1860 – the eve of the Civil War – when he began producing and selling a whiskey he first called Hunter Rye and, soon after, Hunter Baltimore Rye.

### “The American Gentleman’s Whiskey”

From the beginning, the brand exhibited aristocratic pretensions: The label and ads featured a man dressed in fox-hunting garb astride a horse set to gallop with the hounds (Fig. 1). Subsequent branding featured a horseman with top hat and the slogan: “The American Gentleman’s Whiskey.” (Fig. 2). This pitch clearly was attempting to appeal to the upper classes or people aspiring thereto.



Figure 1 - An early Lanahan ad

In 1870, say the earliest city directories, Wm. Lanahan & Son already was doing business at 20 N. Light Street. The company was at that location in 1904 when the great Baltimore fire destroyed its building. It relocated at 205-207 Camden shortly thereafter but got permission to rebuild at its old location after the widening of Light Street. In 1906 the family firm resumed business in a newly constructed building at 20 Light St. Its three story facility, known as the Lanahan Building, loudly announced its purpose with the word “whiskey” in prominent letters on its face (Fig. 3) It also proclaimed Wm. Lanahan & Son as

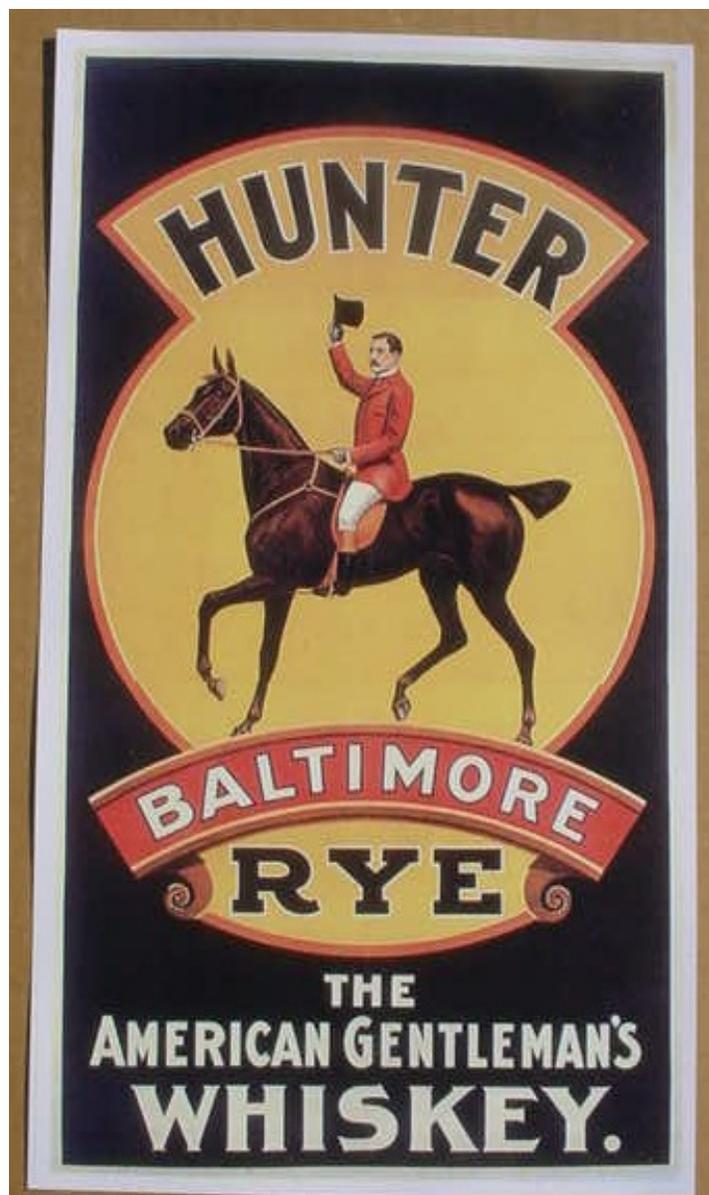


Figure 2 - Hunter Baltimore Rye label

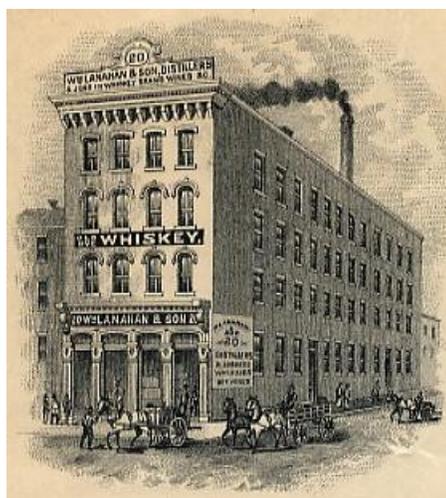


Figure 3 - The Lanahan Bldg. at 20 Light Street

“distillers.” Jim Bready, the noted expert on Baltimore whiskey, insists that the Lanahans actually were “rectifiers,” who took alcohol distilled by others, mixed it with other ingredients and merchandised it.

Although the firm marketed other whiskeys, among them “365,” Bodega, and Hunter Bourbon, Hunter Baltimore Rye was its flagship brand. The Lanahans embarked on a major advertising campaign, painting its logo and huntsman on the outfield fences in major league baseball parks in New York and Chicago as well as in Baltimore. Several years ago when a building was torn down at Broadway and 64th St. in Manhattan, the heart of the theater district, it uncovered a huge, colorful ad for Hunter Baltimore Rye (Fig. 4).



Figure 4 - The off-Broadway sign in NYC

**Marketing Genius**

Unusual for the time, the Lanahans employed a sales force of six men who traveled the country marketing the whiskey and signing up local distributors. In 1896, for example, Christy & Wise of Sansome St. in San Francisco advertised themselves as sole agents for Hunter Rye. As was common with brands seeking national attention, the Lanahans issued a wide range of advertising items. Among them were including nips, including a miniature ceramic teapot (Fig. 5) and a glass bottle in the shape of an oyster shell (Fig. 6). It issued at least three varieties of paperweights. A scalloped one declared Hunter Baltimore Rye “unexcelled in purity.” (Fig. 7) Other Hunter give-aways were salt and pepper shakers (Fig. 8) and playing cards (Fig. 9).



Figure 5 - Hunter Rye ceramic teapot nip (above left)  
 Figure 6 - Hunter Rye glass oyster shell nip (above right)

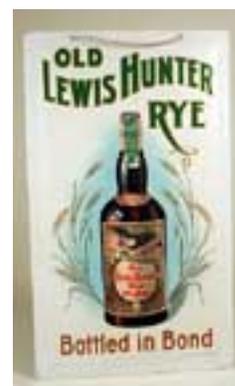


Figure 7 - Hunter Rye paperweight



Figure 8 - Hunter Rye salt & pepper  
 Figure 9 - Sign for Old Lewis Hunter Rye (below)

Never shy about extolling the virtues of their whiskey, the Lanahans advertised Hunter Baltimore Rye as “The Perfection of Aroma and Taste...the Leading Whiskey of America.” Perhaps recognizing that its appeal as a “gentleman’s” whiskey might have a negative effect on potential female customers, their rye also was touted as “particularly recommended to women because of its age and excellence.”



All this hype worked. Hunter became the largest selling rye whiskey in America, bringing the praise from the 1912 book that opens this article. Others were not so sure of its benefits. In 1900 Robert M. La Follette, the governor of Wisconsin, was pressing his opposition controlled legislature to pass an elections reform bill but action was blocked during a night session of “wild carousals and debauchery” not seen in a Wisconsin legislative hall even in frontier days. Mrs. La Follette later wrote: “The Assembly floor was a sight to behold. Just in front of the tier of desks was an empty bottle marked “Hunter’s Rye.”

**Hunter Rye Goes Global**

Having conquered America, the Lanahans looked abroad to expand their markets. In London in the program of a performance of “Sherlock Holmes” Hunter Rye was advertised as “The Popular American Whisky.” (Brit spelling) – the lone Yankee booze sold at the Duke of York Theater that season.

In 1902 the firm tried to get a concession from the imperial court of China. Letters to that effect exist from Wm. Lanahan & Son to Gen. Thaddeus S. Sharretts in Shanghai. Sharretts had been appointed by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1901 to negotiate with the Government of China on the import of U.S. goods. The Lanahans’ effort may have paid off. A Hunter sign in Chinese recently sold on Ebay. Another Asian port in which Baltimore rye found a place was in Manila, the Philippines. A photo exists of American soldiers of the 8th U.S. Infantry, in the islands to put down an insurrection, swigging down quarts of Hunter Rye during their off-duty hours.

With success came competition. Many other whiskeys began to call themselves Baltimore rye – even products made hundreds of miles from the Maryland city. Moreover, in 1895 the Shields-May Company of Cincinnati issued its “Hunter’s Own Bourbon” and Sherbrook Distillery of the same city had its “Hunter’s Lake” whiskey. From Lair, Kentucky, came the brand “Old Lewis Hunter Rye. In likely reaction to these presumed copycats, the Lanahans registered “Hunter Rye” with the government as a trademark in 1890 and again in 1905; and “Hunter Baltimore Rye” in 1898 and in 1908.

Wm. Lanahan & Son and its brand survived for 59 years, a long corporate life in the turbulent history of Baltimore whiskey-making. By the time the doors to the operation finally closed in 1919 with the coming of Prohibition, the Lanahans had moved into the world of banking and high finance. One Lanahan became a governor of the New York Stock Exchange. Another achieved a measure of fame by marrying Scottie Fitzgerald, the only child of author F. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald. Those Lanahans moved to Washington, D.C., where they were a glamour couple during the 1950s and 1960s.



Figure 10 - 1930s pint bottle of Hunter Rye

The Hunter Rye name survived Prohibition having been bought by one of the big whiskey cartels. Shown here is a post-Pro pint bottle with the familiar horseman trademark (Fig. 10). As late as 1942 the brand was being advertised in national magazines, as shown here (Fig. 12). The brand subsequently faded from view and remains today only as a reminder of the whiskey-making family that put Baltimore rye on the map.

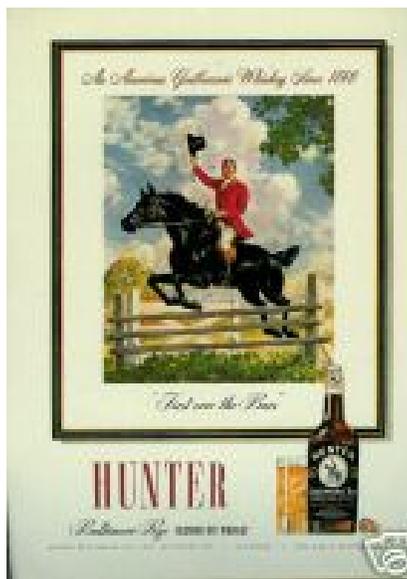


Figure 11 - 1942 national ad for Hunter Rye

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NOTES: Material for this article has been gathered from a wide range of sources. A key one was the article by Baltimorean Jim Bready entitled “Maryland Rye: A Whiskey the Nation Long Fancied – But Now Has Let Vanish” that appeared in the Winter 1990 issue of the *Maryland Historical Magazine*.



Do you recognize the man in the suit? That’s Roland Longerbeam at Jim Sears’ wedding.

## Not All Bottlers Were Men

By Mike Cianciosi

I can only imagine how tough it was for a woman to run a business 100 years ago. That's why I'm always surprised when I see a woman's name listed as a bottler in an old Washington DC city directory. I decided to try to come up with a list of some of the women who were bottlers in DC, and find out whatever information I could about them.

I had a little bit of a setback to writing this article when I was researching Florence A. Sullivan. City directories list John Sullivan at 1016 1<sup>st</sup> St NE up until 1902, then starting at 1903 they list Florence A. Sullivan at that same address. I assumed that Florence was John's wife, and that John probably passed away and she took over his business. But then when I checked the US Census, I was surprised to discover that Florence was a man! I realized that writing this article was going to be tricky. I knew I had to be careful with names like Francis and Lindsey, but who knew Florence could be a man's name? I'm pretty sure the rest of the women in this article actually are women, but one can never be positive. **Error! Reference source not found.** shows a Florence Sullivan bottle.



Figure 1- F.A. Sullivan bottle

The following is a list of all the women bottlers (and beer brewers) that I could find.

### Bowman, Katharina

Katharina was listed as a brewer at the corner of S.C. Ave and 9<sup>th</sup> East in the 1866 directory. The previous year (1865) listed Edward Bowman as a brewer at that same address, and in the 4 years before that (1860-1863) Paul Bowman was listed as a brewer at the corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and D Streets. If I had to guess, I'd say that Paul was the father, Edward was the son, and Katharina was either Edwards's mother or his wife. Probably Edward tried to

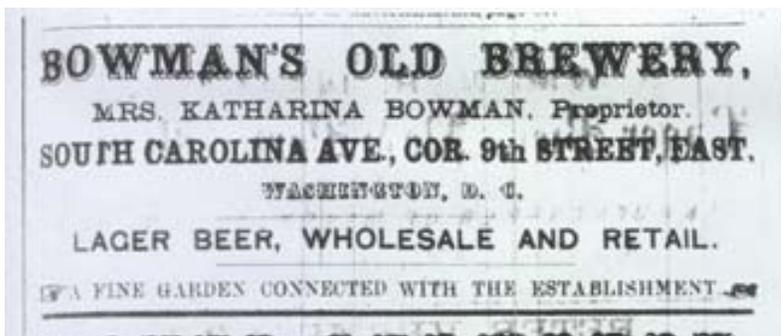


Figure 2 – 1866 Bowman Brewery advertisement

take over his father's business, and then Katharina had a go at it, before they both gave up. Was it tough for a woman to run a brewery? Did the brewery lose customers or employees because a woman was in charge? I've tried to find Katharina, Paul and Edward in the U.S. Census without any luck. The Census was only taken every 10 years, which is plenty of time for a woman to remarry and get a new last name, so it's harder to track women than men with the Census. **Error! Reference source not found.** is an advertisement for Katharina's brewery.

### Buckland, Belle J

Isabella J. Buckland (b. 1860 in Indiana) is listed as a bottler at 734 14<sup>th</sup> St NW in the 1900 directory. Her husband Charles N. Buckland (b. 1858 in NY) was listed as the proprietor in the 2 years before (1898-9) and the 2 years after (1901-2). I wonder if maybe Charles was sick for a year, then got better. Or maybe there was some kind of corporate/family power struggle going on.

### Danhakl, Margareta

Our club book lists bottle number 170 under "Beers and Sodas" as being embossed with "M. Danhakl", but unfortunately I don't have a picture of it to provide here. I believe the bottle was from Margareta Danhakl (b. 1862 in Germany). Margareta's husband John Danhakl (b. 1858 in Germany) ran a saloon at 1370/1368 C St SW from 1894-1913. Margareta is listed as the saloon owner in 1913 and 1914. In 1915, her residence was still at 1368 C St SW, but there is no listing of a business there. In 1916, she was listed as a grocer, and in 1917 as running a dry goods store. After that she was listed as a clerk, so I guess she gave up trying to own a small business. I wonder if oncoming prohibition had something to do with her leaving the saloon business.

### Dentz, Catharine

Catharine Dentz (b. 1851 in Maryland) was listed as a beer brewer from 1877 to 1884. That's eight full years as a brewer, which is longer than most male brewers lasted in 19<sup>th</sup> century DC. Prior to that, her husband Simon was a brewer for 3 years (1874-76). Their brewery was in Georgetown on Green St (modern day 29<sup>th</sup> St NW). After 1884, Catharine was listed as a grocer. I find it impressive that Catharine lasted 8 years in the beer brewing business. I wonder if she was involved in the business while her husband was in charge, or if she had to learn it all after he passed away.

### Juenemann, Barbara

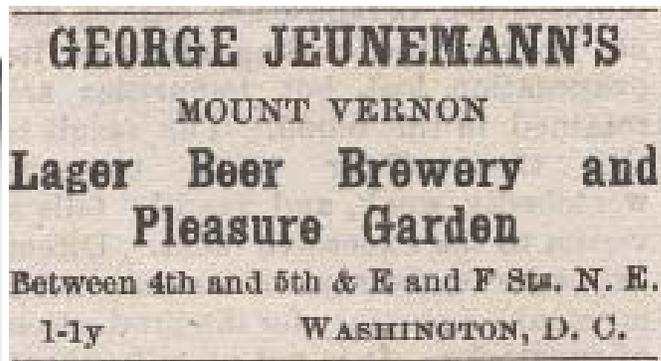


Figure 3 – George Juenemann advertisement

Barbara Juenemann (b. 1831 in Germany) was the widow of George Juenemann (b. 1824 in Prussia). George started a brewery at 400 E St. NE in the 1850s and ran it until 1884. **Error!**

**Reference source not found.** shows an ad for George Jeunemann's brewery. In 1885, Barbara was listed as the proprietor, and then in 1886 George Jr. (Barbara's son) was the proprietor. After that it was sold to Albert Carry, and in 1889 became the Washington Brewery (that's the one that had the popular crown top bottles with a picture of George Washington embossed on them). I wonder if it was a difficult decision for the Juenemann family to sell their brewery that George had run for so many years.

#### Otto, Elizabeth

George Otto was a bottler from 1877 to 1886, and then in 1887 the proprietor was listed as his widow Elizabeth (b. 1845 in Germany). What's really strange is that George was listed as the proprietor again in the following year – not bad for a dead man. I'm thinking that the 1888 listing of George was a mistake, since Elizabeth wasn't even listed in the residential section of the directory that year. Or maybe Elizabeth tried to keep the business going but went back to using her husband's name? Or maybe Henry Otto, another DC bottler (who I think was related to George but I'm not sure how) tried to run George's business as well as his own?

#### Rosenzweig, Sarah H

I think Sarah is the real deal. She's listed as a bottler in the 1895 through 1898 directories. That's 4 years that she lasted, and I don't see any evidence that she simply took over for her husband. The residential section of the 1897 directory lists both Sarah Rosenzweig and Samuel Rosenzweig as bottlers, but the other years list just Sarah. I don't know if Samuel was her husband or her brother, but it seems clear that it was Sarah's company. Sarah is not listed in the residential DC directories after 1898, so I presume she moved away. Another possibility is that she got married, possibly to another bottler and picked up a new last name.

**Error! Reference source not found.** is a picture of a Sarah Rosenzweig bottle.



Figure 4 – Sarah Rosenzweig bottle

There's also Mary Helen Palmer who took over as president of the Samuel Palmer bottling company in the 1930s after her father Samuel had passed away. And I'm sure there are a lot more women that I missed, especially since some bottlers were only listed with their first initial, which gives no indication whether they were male or female. So there were at least 8 women in DC who bottled soda or beer, maybe more. I wonder how that compares to other cities, or other industries. That would take too much research - I'll stick with my DC brewer and bottler

directories. If anybody has additional information on these women, drop me an email at chosi@cox.net.

Sources:

1. Various Washington DC directories on microfilm (from the Washingtoniana section of the Martin Luther King Jr. Library in DC)
2. Antique Bottles from the Washington DC Area by Potomac Bottle Collectors, 4th edition
3. The U.S. Census for various years, accessed via Ancestry.com

## Upcoming Area Bottle Shows

### November 5 – Elkton, Maryland

Tri-State Bottle Collectors and Diggers Club, 34th Annual Show & Sale, (9 AM to 3 PM), at the Singlerly Fire Hall, Routes 279 & 213, Elkton, MD. Info: **Dave Brown**, PH: (302) 738-9960.

### November 12 – Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

The Pittsburgh Antique Bottle Club's Annual Show & Sale (Sun. 9 AM - 2 PM, Early buyers 7 AM) at The Ice Garden, Rostraver, Twp. (Exit 46B off I-70 to Rt. 51 North), Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Info: **Bob DeCroo**, 694 Fayette City Rd., Fayette City, PA 15438, PH: (724) 326-8741 or **Jay Hawkins**, 1280 Mt. Pleasant Rd., West Newton, PA 15089, PH: (724) 872-6013.

### November 19 – Greensboro, North Carolina

The Southeast Bottle Club's 4th Annual Show & Sale (Sun. 9 AM to 3 PM, Early buyers 7:30 AM) at 501 Yanceyville Street, Greensboro, North Carolina. Info: **Reggie Lynch**, PO Box 13736, Durham, NC 27709, PH: (919) 789-4545.

### November 26 – Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

The Forks of the Delaware Bottle Collectors Association's 33rd Annual Bottle & Antique Show & Sale (Sun. 9 AM - 3 PM, Adm. \$1; Dealer & Display set-up 6 - 9 AM, Early buyers 7:30 AM) at the Bethlehem Catholic High School, Madison & Dewberry Ave. (2 miles South of Rt. 22, Center Street, Rt. 512), Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Info: **Bill Hegedus**, 20 Cambridge Pl., Catasauqua, PA 18032, PH: (610) 264-5945.

