

# The Potomac Pontil

The Potomac Bottle Collectors – Serving the National Capital

*April 2007*

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## Meeting April 24th at 8:00 PM

Please join us Tuesday evening at the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer in Bethesda, Maryland. **Andy Goldfrank** will discuss his recent experiences digging and setting up at a Civil War show in Chantilly, Virginia (see photos beginning on page 6). Also, **Al Miller** and **Peter Rydquist** plan to bring in a laptop computer and show off some new additions to our club web site: [www.potomacbottlecollectors.org](http://www.potomacbottlecollectors.org). Features of the web site now include

- Forums: a gathering place for discussion about collecting, digging, bottle & go-with history, etc.
- Image Gallery: a collection of photos of bottles/jars/events/go-withs, and the ability for users to submit new photos for use on the site. All photo submissions are reviewed by and admin, and then added to the site.
- Event Calendar: a list of upcoming events - club meetings, bottle shows, etc.
- Links: the usual collection of links to related websites, with an easy mechanism for user submission of new links.
- Site-wide search of all content (newsletter content, photo descriptions, forum posts, etc.)



Show & tell items at the March meeting

**Future Meetings:** We will meet at 8 PM on the last Tuesday of the month unless otherwise announced. Upcoming meetings will be **May 29<sup>th</sup>** and **June 26<sup>th</sup>**.

**Peter Rydquist and Bob Ford (far left) show off some recent finds at the March meeting.**



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  
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Web Site: [www.potomacbottlecollectors.org](http://www.potomacbottlecollectors.org) Maintained by Peter Rydquist: [pehraug@aol.com](mailto:pehraug@aol.com)

## Is it a Paperweight or a Fruit Jar?

by Jack Sullivan

Special to the *Potomac Pontil*

A collector's passion can lead in unusual directions. My interest in whiskey jugs has morphed into a collection of whiskey advertising paperweights. A kindred collector is Carl Sturm, current president of the Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors (FOHBC). His bottle collecting has led him into assembling a group of vintage paperweights from glass companies. Both of us have noticed that a number of paperweights feature bottles as an important part of their decor.



1. Royal Fruit Jar weight

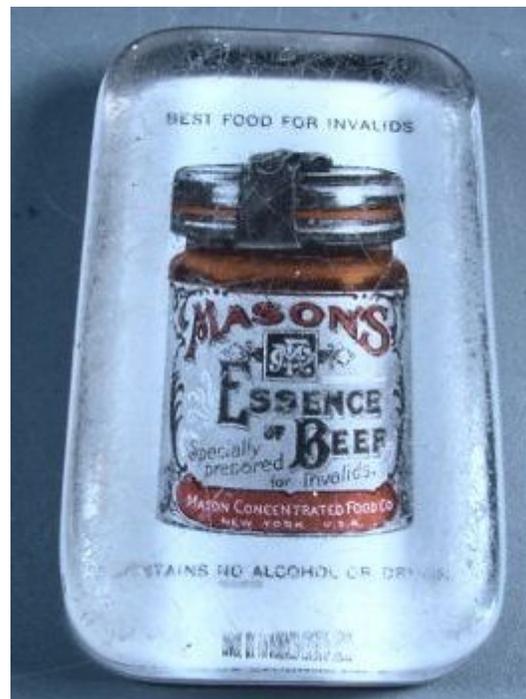
Let's begin with a handsome weight that depicts a canning jar (**Fig. 1**). The A.G. Smalley Co. of Boston, Mass. was one of the earliest firms to feature square canning jars, beginning about 1890. The company was a jobber not a glass house. It dubbed its square jars with the "Royal" brand and advertised its wares as being more space-saving than its round competition. Note the elaborate closure. Royal jars were made in clear and aqua colors as well as the amber shade shown here (**Fig. 2**).



Another interesting jar appears on a paperweight advertising Mason's Essence of Beef (**Fig. 3**). The striking red color of the label and contents render this a particularly interesting antique. The jar itself features an elaborate closure with a metal clamp. The paperweight and the product were from the Mason Concentrated Food Co. of New York City. Note its claims that its beef essence is "the best food for invalids" and "contains no alcohol or drugs." My research was unable to find any additional information about the company.

2. Amber Royal canning jar (left)

3. Mason's Essence of Beef weight (below)



Similarly obscure are details about Colton Select Flavors, Westfield, Mass., a firm that issued a paperweight that contained the image of a bottle that might have contained any one of a variety of flavors in the firm's inventory (**Fig. 4**). To believe the Colton advertising weight, all its products were "perfectly pure... more delicious... unequalled in strengthen... more economical," when compared to the competition.



4. Colton Flavors weight

Sal Hepatica is a better known product, shown on a paperweight in a slightly waisted bottle (Fig. 5). It was Bristol-Myers' first nationally recognized product, a laxative mineral salt that, when dissolved in water, has the taste and effects of natural mineral waters. Introduced in 1895, the product soared to national prominence in 1903 and – along with Ipana toothpaste – made Bristol-Myers a major national pharmaceutical and home care products firm. Its ads, showing Sal Hepatica in the bottle, emphasized the benefits of its “dose of salts” to happiness and eating a good lunch (Fig. 6).



5. Sal Hepatica weight

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*Poor me... at 8...*  
 Waked up feeling so sickish and headachy, I thought I'd never get dressed for my big date at lunch. But mother brought me two teaspoonfuls of Sal Hepatica in a glass of water and...

*Happy me... at 1...*  
 My head clear, my pep back, I must have had good to Jim. For it was over the lunch table that he asked me the question I'd been longing to hear. Mother's right—it pays to take a laxative that counteracts acidity, too.

*On important days... take the laxative that COUNTERACTS ACIDITY, too*

HAD YOU REALIZED...? Acidity is the usual thing when you're constipated. And unless you counteract that acidity, as well as rid your intestine of wastes, you won't feel top-notch. But try Sal Hepatica—the laxative that helps Nature do both quickly.

*How Sal Hepatica helps*  
 Sal Hepatica not only cleanses the intestinal tract—quickly, gently, thoroughly—but Sal Hepatica brings about a definite alkaline (base-and) action to swing your system toward the alkaline reserve so necessary to buoyant health. And what a difference these two actions make in the way you feel! Head clearer, energy returned, you'll be peppier, in higher spirits!

Sal Hepatica acts in natural ways —is not irritating nor is it habit-forming. Get Sal Hepatica today.

**Sal Hepatica does BOTH!**

NOTE: Dr. Fred Allen's "Took Hal Tinkle"—Full hour of music, drama, fun. Every Wednesday night—S.B.C.—don't to miss.

6. Sal Hepatica ad (above), 7. Perrier weight (below)

Perrier has been known for the distinctive shape of its bottle so perhaps it was a natural to adapt the shape for a paperweight (Fig. 7). Compared to examples like Mason's Essence, however, it appears positively dull in its gray, lumpy appearance. More invigorating is Perrier advertising which has emphasized the positive effects of the potable on attractive and scantily clad women (Fig. 8).

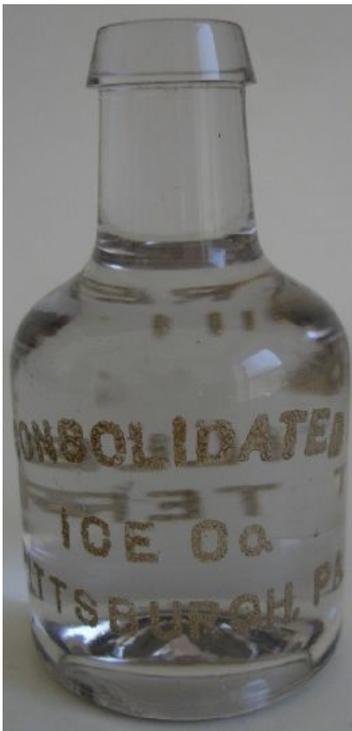




8. Perrier ad



10. Fleming Whiskey weight



A more attractive bottle paperweight is a solid glass example from the Consolidated Ice Company (Fig. 9). This was the first company in Pittsburgh to manufacture ice rather than ship it down river from upstate New York and storing it for sale. Consolidated Ice had huge freezing tanks, ice storage warehouses, and a fleet of wagons that plied Pittsburgh streets during the first part of the 20th Century. At its Factory No. 2, the company made its last ice in 1950 and shut down. The building, now an artist's studio, is on the National Historical Register at 100 43rd St.

9. Consolidated Ice weight



11. Mount Vernon Whiskey weight

I currently own two bottle/weight combinations. The Fleming Old Export Whiskey weight shown here (Fig. 10) was issued about 1910 by Jos. Fleming and Son, wholesale druggists of Pittsburgh. The item includes the admonition that “physicians should recommend” their brand, a whiskey-is-medicine theme intended to emphasize the therapeutic nature of imbibing as Prohibition loomed. The weight was made by the Abrams Paper Weight Company of Pittsburgh. The second example was the product of the Hannis Company of Baltimore. Its signature brand was Mount Vernon Rye (see my *Pontil* article of January 2007), whose bottles were a distinctive square shape. The paperweight is a miniature bottle in amber glass with a paper label (Fig. 11). In raised letters on the sides it states, “purity guaranteed by Hannis Distilling Co.”

Is it a paperweight or is it a bottle? The answer: At least sometimes, it's both.

Note: Material for this article came from several Internet sources.

# My New Bottle Tumbler

By Mike Cianciosi

I've tried various cleaners and chemicals, but I've never had much success cleaning my bottles. I'd always heard that the only sure way to get a bottle clean is with a bottle tumbler, but buying a tumbler is a big step – they're expensive, they take up a lot of space, and they're noisy. But I finally decided to take the plunge. At the March 4<sup>th</sup> Baltimore bottle show, I bought a tumbler from the Jar Doctor (Wayne Lowry) along with all the gear necessary to tumble 2 bottles at once (see figure 1).



1. New jar tumbler from the "Jar Doctor"

If you're not familiar with tumblers, here are the basics. You put a dirty bottle into a plastic PVC-pipe canister, and then load the canister (inside the bottle and outside) with small copper pellets, water, and a powdery polishing oxide. With stopples at both ends to hold the bottle in place and keep all this stuff inside, you then put the canister onto the tumbler, which has a motor that turns large rollers. As the canister spins around, the copper pellets deliver the polish onto the glass, which cleans the dirt and makes the glass shiny. You allow the bottle to spin on the



2. Two canisters spinning on the tumbler

tumbler for anywhere from 24 hours to 5 days. If the bottle is particularly dirty, you can use a more abrasive polishing compound known as "1200 grit silicon carbide", but that will leave a slight frost on the glass which will require you to tumble it again with the normal polishing oxide. Figure 2 shows the tumbler with 2 full canisters spinning.

Unfortunately the Jar Doctor was out of copper when I bought my tumbler, so I had to wait 2 weeks before the copper came in the mail. Two weeks with a new toy that I couldn't use – it was torture. When the copper showed up I quickly loaded up a bottle. I chose a bottle that I happened to have 2 of, in case I did something wrong and damaged the bottle. I put it on the tumbler and let it whirl.

Boy did it make a lot of noise. I had the tumbler set up in my basement laundry room, but I could hear it when I went upstairs, and I could even hear it from my 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. I knew it would get even louder with 2 bottles going at once, so I had to do something. The first thing I did was put some weather stripping around the door to my laundry room to try to keep the sound from getting out. That helped a little. Then I built a giant box with foam board and duct tape to put over the tumbler. That helped a little more. Then I put some carpet padding under it. It's still noisy, but I think I can live with it now. Figure 3 shows the tumbler with its cover box all nestled between my washing machine and my hot water heater. The cover box has an access panel that I removed for the picture – normally it's covered completely.



3. Tumbler encased to reduce noise

After a couple days I was ready to remove that first bottle and see how it came out. Taking the bottle out was a big mess. Inside the canister everything was black. There was some nasty dark-gray foam (see figure 4), which apparently is to be expected according to the Jar Doctor's directions. And that nice shiny copper will never look shiny again – it's now black. It took me about 45 minutes to get everything all rinsed off and cleaned up. I've since gotten more efficient at it, so I can now unload a bottle and clean up in about 20 minutes, mainly because I've learned to do it without splattering that grey foam all over my kitchen.



4. Bottle emerges from tumbler covered in nasty gray foam

I got good or at least OK results with the first few bottles I tumbled, then I tumbled a clear "H. COSGROVE" crown top bottle with horrendous results! It went in clear with a few rust stains, and came out black! I consulted with Richard Lilienthal (a veteran bottle tumbler), and determined that I probably had a bad ratio of water to polish. Luckily a second tumble got the bottle clean again (see figure 5).



5. initial cleaning attempt turns a bottle black.

Richard pre-mixes his polish and water, which seems like a good idea, but he also re-uses the polish-water mixture from one tumble to the next. I haven't been able to bring myself to try that yet – it's just too black and nasty looking. But he gave me a few other pointers and I've been doing some experimenting, mostly with good results. Figure 6 is a blue hutch that I bought several years ago on ebay®. Its picture on ebay® made it look like a nice clean bottle, but when I received it I found it was covered with oil, and washing the oil off revealed that it had nasty stains on it that wouldn't wash off. But now with my tumbler I've made it look as good as its picture on eBay® was, without having to cover it in oil.



6. Mike successfully cleaned this blue hutch

I'm not yet confident enough to tumble one of my good DC squat sodas, but I'm almost at that point. I've still got an awful lot of dirty crown-top bottles to practice with. I guess I should give the Jar Doctor a plug, because I'm pretty happy with my tumbler, so please check out the Jar Doctor's web site at <http://www.jardoctor.com/>.



Scott Jordan offers dug bottles at Civil War show in Chantilly, Virginia.



Andy Goldfrank and friends face a pack of customers at a Civil War show sponsored by the Northern Virginia Relic Hunters.



These 1860s era bottles sold briskly at the Civil War show.



Scott and Andy filled four tables with their dug bottles.

## Upcoming Area Bottle Shows

### APRIL 29 - HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA

The Historical Bottle-Diggers of Virginia's 36th Annual Antique Bottle & Collectible Show & Sale (9 AM - 3 PM) at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds, (US Rt. 11 South, Exit 243 off I-81), Harrisonburg, Virginia. INFO: **SONNY SMILEY**, PH: (540) 434-1129 or E-mail: [lithiaman1@yahoo.com](mailto:lithiaman1@yahoo.com).

### MAY 4-5 - GRAY, TENNESSEE

The State of Franklin Antique Bottle & Collectibles Association's 9th Annual Show & Sale (Sat. 8 AM - 2 PM, Free Adm.; Early Buyers & Set-up, Fri. 9 AM - 6 PM, Adm. \$10 ) at the Appalachian Fairgrounds in Gray, Tennessee (Johnson City - Bristol, Tennessee area). 150 Tables Available. INFO: **MELISSA MILNER**, PH: (423) 928-4445 or E-mail: [mmilner12@chartertn.net](mailto:mmilner12@chartertn.net).

### MAY 20 - BRICK, NEW JERSEY

The Jersey Shore Bottle Club's 35th Annual Antique Bottle & Post Card Show (Sun. 9 AM - 2 PM) at the Brick Elks, 2491 Hooper Ave., Brick, New Jersey. Limited amount of tables. INFO: **RICHARD PEAL**, PH: (732) 267-2528 or E-mail: [manodirt@msn.com](mailto:manodirt@msn.com).

### MAY 20 - WASHINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA

The Washington County Antique Bottle Club's 33rd Annual Show & Sale (9 AM - 2 PM) at the Apline Star Lodge, 735 Jefferson Ave., Washington, Pennsylvania. INFO: **RUSS CRUPE**, 52 Cherry Road, Avella, PA 15312, PH: (724) 345-3653 or (412) 298-7831.

### MAY 31-JUNE 2 - GRANTVILLE (HERSHEY), PENNSYLVANIA

The National Association of Milk Bottle Collectors' 27th Annual Convention (Fri.-Sun.) at the Holiday Inn in Grantville (Hershey), Pennsylvania. Commemorating the era of milk bottles and other related collectibles, as well as the milkman and their delivery vehicles. Members will transform the hotel into a weekend of nostalgia packed with buying, selling and trading. INFO: **NAMBC**, 18 Pond Place, Cos Cob, CT 06807, PH: (203) 869-8411 or [www.nambconline.org](http://www.nambconline.org).

### JUNE 1- 2 - LUMBERTON, NORTH CAROLINA

The Robeson Antique Bottle Club Annual Bottle, Coin & Collectible Show & Sale (Fri. 3 - 9 PM; Sat. 9 AM - 1 PM) at the Expo and Farmer's Market, 1027 US 74 East, Lumberton North Carolina. INFO: **MITCHELL McCORMICK**, PH: (910) 628-6245 or **BRET LEE**, E-mail: [dex@intrstar.net](mailto:dex@intrstar.net)

### JULY 21-22 - ADAMSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

The 6th Annual Shupp's Grove Bottle Festival (Sat. & Sun. 6 AM to dark, Fri. Dealer Set-up 3 PM followed by Early Buyers 5 PM) at Shupp's Grove in Adamstown, Pennsylvania. INFO: **STEVE GUION**, E-mail: [sguion124@comcast.net](mailto:sguion124@comcast.net) or **JERE HAMBLETON**, E-mail: [jshdetector@webtv.net](mailto:jshdetector@webtv.net) or PH: (717) 393-5175.