

The Potomac Pontil

The Potomac Bottle Collectors – Serving the National Capital

April 2012

In this issue:

Virginia Whiskeys: Labeled and Embossed by Jack Sullivan.....page 2
Upcoming Area Bottle Shows.....page 4



Small Bottles displayed by Mike Cianciosi

Meeting – April 24th at 8 PM

St. Mark's Orthodox Church, 7124 River Road, Bethesda, MD 20817.

Our theme for this meeting is **small bottles**. Please bring your smallest bottle or your favorite little bottles for show & tell.



Views from recent meetings:

Bob Ford displayed a collection of porcelain bottle stoppers from Baltimore (above left).

Roland Longerbeam revealed his latest auction finds including a pair of yellow Flaccus jars (above right).

Peter Rydquist received the club plaque for "digger of the year" (left). Lee Shipman provided a plaque originally won by Karl Shipman and had it updated with Peter's information for 2011. Lee hopes we will continue to add names to this same plaque in future years.



An announcement from Jack Sullivan:

The *Washington Post* cartoon strip "Flashbacks" currently includes a series on S.T. Suit that is motivated by one of Jack's *Pontil* articles. The cartoonist and author Patrick Reynolds contacted Jack Sullivan some time ago asking for permission to use the material. Jack agreed and has been waiting some months for the strip to appear. The first entry appeared on April 15 with another to follow. It features Suit's "little brown jugs."

Meetings: 8:00 PM on the last Tuesday of each month January-June, October-November; picnic in September.

President: Andy Goldfrank

Vice President: Al Miller

Secretary: Jim Sears

Treasurer: Lee Shipman

Pontil: Jim Sears (email: searsjim@usa.net, PH: 609/472-5473) &

Andy Goldfrank (email: amg_sticky@yahoo.com, PH: 202/588-0543)

Web Site: www.potomacbottlecollectors.org

Maintained by Mike Cianciosi (chosi@cox.net)

Virginia Whiskeys: Labeled and Embossed

By Jack Sullivan

[Special to the Potomac Pontil]

Some collectors profess to prefer labeled bottles. That is understandable since labels often are colorful, show good design, and give a considerable amount of information about the contents, the maker, the location and even the date of issue. On the other hand, labels seldom can be found on antique bottles and almost never on dug ones. Then the embossing can offer important clues to the origin, ones that can't be scrubbed off. Moreover, embossing often has an interesting design or a special color to set it apart.

This month's article has something for both sets of collectors, around the topic of Virginia whiskey bottles. Our first is from I.C. Shore & Co., a brand he called "Yellow Rose." It features a fancy label with, what else, a yellow rose as the centerpiece of the label (Fig. 1). Isaac Shore was a North Carolinian from Yadkin County who early on ran a distillery in a town called Shore, North Carolina, that really existed only as an incorporated sham to meet State law. When North Carolina went completely dry in 1909, Shore about the same year took his distilling operation north to Petersburg, Virginia.



Fig. 1: "Yellow Rose" Whiskey flask

When Virginia voted complete prohibition of alcohol in 1916, Shore moved once again to Jacksonville, Florida. That's where I.C. Shore Co. was in 1920 when National Prohibition went into effect. This bottle can be dated to the seven year period between 1909 and 1916 when Petersburg was home to the distillery.

The Virginia Chief Corn Whiskey is another liquor flask with an attractive yellow themed label (Fig. 2). It comes from J. Frank Hodgkin who is listed in the Roanoke city directory for 1915 as a saloon keeper. The only other record I can find on J. Frank is that in 1892 he married Ida Cheatwood Taliaferro in the Bethany Presbyterian Church in Roanoke. Given the views of most Presbyterians of that time on saloons and drinking, one wonders how Hodgkin fared among the faithful.



Fig. 2: "Virginia Chief" Corn Whiskey flask

The Rooney Malt quart shown here demonstrates the fragility of labels (Fig. 3). It obviously once was a handsome piece of paper but time has taken its toll. Luckily, the bottle also comes with an attractive script embossing on the back (Fig. 4). The Rooney brand was a well-advertising whiskey from the Strauss-Gunst Company of Richmond, about which I have written before in the *Potomac Pontil*. "Old Henry" Gunst was an unreconstructed Confederate soldier who left a wife and three children to fight for the cause, returned to a hostile occupation in Virginia, and subsequently became a very wealthy man making and selling whiskey all over the East. From time to time I hear from Gunst's descendants looking for artifacts.



Fig. 3: Rooney Malt bottle



Fig. 4: Rooney Malt embossing

I have also written about J & E Mahoney and their “Mahoneyville” rectifying (blending) and wholesale operations in Alexandria and Norfolk (Fig. 5). This aqua bottle was a new one to me. It is interesting that the Mahoneys, John and Edward, repeatedly billed themselves as distillers. It was a definite stretch of the truth, albeit one that many other liquor wholesalers also employed.



Fig. 5: Mahoney flask

M. Hofheimer & Co. called their whiskey “Eagle Rye” and embossed a bird looking more like a vulture than an eagle on the bottle (Fig. 6). This company was in business in Norfolk, according to directories, from 1903 to 1915. Their locations were 78-80 Plume St. (1903-1904), Atlantic opposite the Post Office (1906-1908), 31 Atlantic (1909-1912), and 122 Atlantic (1913-1915). The Hofheimer family were early Jewish settlers in Virginia, including having stores in Colonial Williamsburg. The Norfolk liquor business terminated when Virginia went dry.



Fig. 6: Hofheimer Rye bottle

Solomon Friedberg, as shown on the embossing of the next flask (Fig. 7), advertised himself as a “Cut-Rate Mail Order House.” The firm first showed up in Norfolk directories in 1906, located at 80-82 Commercial Place. In 1912 Friedberg moved to the address shown on the bottle, 57-59 Commercial Place and his business disappeared from directories the following year. This would allow the bottle to be dated from a narrow time span.



Fig. 7: Friedenberg liquor bottle

A third Norfolk outfit was responsible for the clear flask with an embossed circle on the front. It was the Southern Distilling Company (Fig. 8). This liquor wholesaler first appeared in city directories in 1909 at 115 Commercial Place. It subsequently had several other addresses, including the store front shown here (Fig. 9). In 1915, probably another victim of prohibition in Virginia, Southern Distilling disappeared from listings.

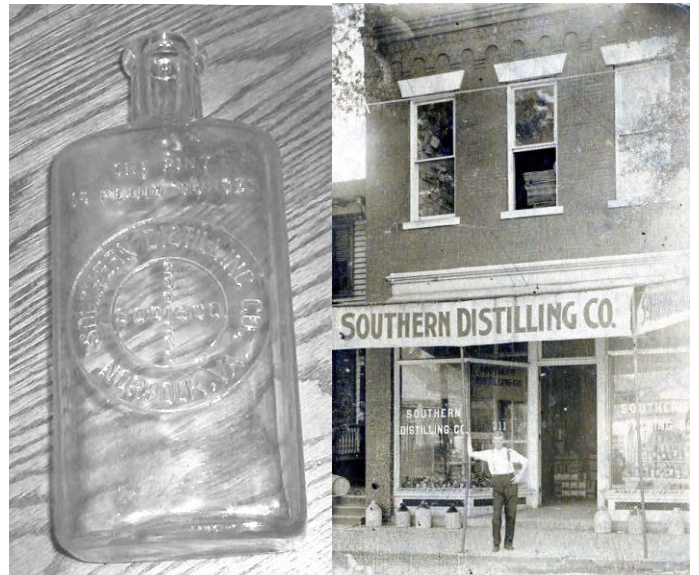


Fig. 8: Southern Distilling flask (left)

Fig. 9: Southern Distilling storefront photo (right)

The final two whiskeys are from Culpeper, Virginia, advertising “Wakefield Rye.” The larger bottle (Fig. 10), is highly sculptured with an embossed label that identifies the origins as the Culpeper Liquor Company. The second (Fig. 11) is a small flask, described as about twice the size of a cough syrup container. It bears similar embossed labeling. The digger

who found it is a native of Culpeper who has been trying to learn more about the company origins for the past 22 years, with no success. My efforts, considerably less time consuming, have been similarly fruitless. This one remains a mystery.



Fig. 10: Wakefield Rye bottle
Fig. 11: Wakefield Rye mini-flask

Notes: The information and images contained in this article were derived from a variety of Internet sources, chief among them Robin Preston's pre-pro.com website.

Upcoming Area Bottle Shows

22 April 2012 (Sunday)
Harrisonburg, Virginia The 41st Historical Bottle Diggers of Virginia Bottle Show at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds, U.S. Route 11 South, Harrisonburg, Virginia, Sunday 22 April 2012, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm, No early admission, Set up 22 April, 6:00 am to 9:00 am, Admission for show \$3.00 with children under 12 free, Contact: Sonny Smiley, Show Chairman, 540.434.1129, email: lithiaman1@yahoo.com



06 May 2012 (Sunday) Brick, New Jersey Jersey Shore Bottle Club's 40th Antique Bottles, Post Cards and Local Memorabilia Show and Sale, Brick Elks, 2491 Hooper Avenue, Brick, New Jersey 08723, Sunday, 06 May 2012, 8:30 am to 2:00 pm, No early admission, Set-up 7:00 am Sunday, Admission: \$3.00, Contact: Monte Boshko, Show Chairman, 365 16th Avenue, Brick, New Jersey 08724, 732.887.2116, e-mail: mjb142@comcast.net

12 May 2012 (Saturday) Winchester, Virginia. The Apple Valley Bottle Collectors Club presents the **38th Annual Show and Sale** at the Frederick County Fairgrounds Whitacre Building, US 11 North, 3 miles from I-81, Exit 317, Winchester, VA., 8AM to 3PM, admission: \$2, early entry at 7AM: \$10. Contact Richard Venskoske, 2038 Chestnut Grove Road, Winchester, VA 22603, (540) 247-4429.

20 May 2012 (Sunday) Hammonton, New Jersey The New Jersey Antique Bottle Club presents the **2nd Annual New Jersey Bottle Show** at the Hammonton Volunteer Fire Company #2, 51 N. White Horse Pike, Hammonton, New Jersey 08037, Sunday, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm, No early admission, 7:00 am set up, \$3.00 admission, www.newjerseyantiquebottleclub.com, Paul DelGuercio, Show Chairman, 548 Spring Road, Hammonton, New Jersey 08037, Tele: 856.252.7730, paulhavoc@comcast.net

20 May 2012 (Sunday) Washington, Pennsylvania The Washington County Antique Bottle Club presents the **38th Annual Washington County Antique Bottle Show & Sale** at the Alpine Star Lodge, 735 Jefferson Avenue, Washington, Pennsylvania 15312, Sunday 9:00 am – 2:00 pm, Set-up Sunday at 7:00 am, \$3.00 admission, Attn: Russ Crupe, President/Show Chairman, 52 Cherry Road, Avella, Pennsylvania 15312, 412.298.783, heidirus@gmail.com

09 June 2012 (Saturday) Atlanta, Georgia 42nd Annual Atlanta Antique Bottle Show and Sale, Smyrna Community Center, 200 Village Green, Smyrna, Georgia 30080, Saturday 9:00 am to 4:00 pm, Early Admission: Saturday 6:00 am to 9:00 am, Set-up: Saturday 6:00 am to 9:00 am, Admission for show & early admission: \$3.00 and \$10.00 for early birds, Atlanta Bottle Club, Contact Name: Jack Hewitt, Co-Chairman, 1765 Potomac Court, Lawrenceville, Georgia 30043, 770.963.0220, email: Hewittja@bellsouth.net

06 October 2012 (Saturday) Richmond, Virginia Richmond 41st Antique Bottle Show and Sale, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm, Admission: \$3.00, Early Admission: 7:30 am, \$10.00, Chesterfield County Fairgrounds, 10300 Courthouse Road, Chesterfield, Virginia 23832, Info: RichBottleClub@comcast.net or Marvin Croker 804.275.1101 or Ed Faulkner 804.739.2951

May 5 Gray, TN
May 6 Utica, NY
May 12 Ballston Spa, NY
May 19 Coventry, CT
June 2 San Diego, CA

May 6 Antioch, IL
May 11-12 Mansfield, OH
May 18 Columbia City, IN
June 1-2 Butte, MT
June 9 Atlanta, GA