

The Potomac Pontil

The Potomac Bottle Collectors – Serving the National Capital

June-July 2005

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Winter Camp at Stoneman's Switch, Virginia.

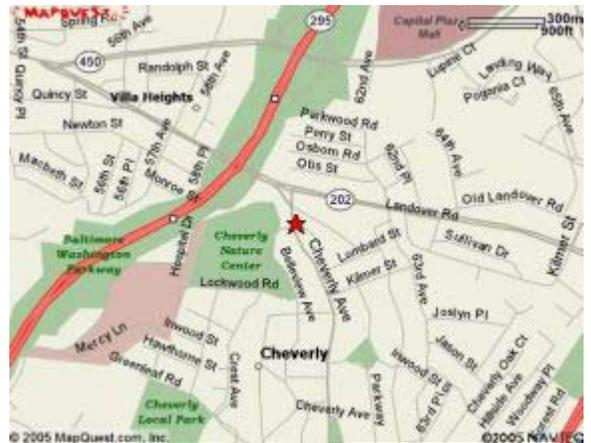
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Show June 26th – 9 AM to 3PM

Dealer set-up begins at 7 AM. The show is at the same location it was last year: the American Legion post in Cheverly, Maryland.

This is inside the DC Beltway, just off the Baltimore-Washington Parkway (I-295) at the 202 exit. See map at right. The show will feature the release of our new fourth edition *Washington, D.C. Area Bottles and Related Items*.



Meeting June 28th (No meeting in July or August)

Please join us on Tuesday, June 28th at the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer in Bethesda. Prior to the meeting will be the dedication of the new steps (shown at right), which have been donated by Lee Shipman in loving memory of her beloved husband Karl and other departed relatives and friends. Karl served a president of both the Potomac Bottle Collectors and the Baltimore Antique Bottle Club, and he is fondly remembered by many bottle diggers and collectors.

Dedication of the steps will take place at 7:30 PM on Tuesday, June 28.



Steps in memory of Karl Shipman

New Web Site: www.potomacbottlecollectors.org

Our new club web site is up. Thank you to club member **Nick Patch** for hosting this site.

New Bottle Book

The June 26th show will feature the release of our new fourth edition *Washington, D.C. Area Bottles and Related Items*. This book will be available at club meetings and shows for \$20. Copies may also be ordered for \$23.85 including shipping from Potomac Bottle Collectors

c/o Andy Goldfrank

1421 Columbia St., NW

Washington, DC 20001-3315



Big Flask Brings Big Bucks

When Andy Goldfrank brought a gallon scroll flask (shown at right) to our club meeting, he was unsure whether it was even old. Now we know that it is both old and desirable. It is currently at \$1300 in a Glass Works auction. Congratulations, Andy.

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: 703/243-2409) & Andy Goldfrank (email: amg_sticky@yahoo.com, PH: 202/588-0543)

Web Site <http://members.aol.com/potomacbtll/bottle2.htm>

Maintained by Peter Rydquist: pehraug@aol.com

**Examination of Glass and Pottery Bottles
Recovered from the Union Army's Fifth Corps'
Winter Camps at Stoneman's Switch, Virginia.**

by Andy Goldfrank

Last March, it was my honor to participate in Diggin' in Virginia III at the location of Union winter camps near Fredericksburg, Virginia, where I recovered some remarkably well-preserved artifacts that harkened back to the Civil War. The tale of my finds was told in these pages (see April 2005 issue of *The Potomac Pontil*); however, there were many other participants who likewise made awesome and meaningful recoveries. This article will highlight the bottles salvaged at this hunt along with the prior invitational digs held at the same location and on a neighboring property over the previous couple of years.

These glass and pottery artifacts provide significant and tangible insight into the lives and diet of the troops and civilians that participated in the Civil War. Each of these recovered relics is a testament to the people, on both sides, who perished in and survived this terrible conflict. To some it may seem corny or trite, but to me Abraham Lincoln's immortal address at Gettysburg seems a fitting reminder about why we recover, treasure and talk about these relics:

*Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers
brought forth on this continent a new nation,
conceived in liberty and dedicated to the
proposition that all men are created equal.*

*Now we are engaged in a great civil war,
testing whether that nation or any nation so
conceived and so dedicated can long endure.
We are met on a great battlefield of that war.
We have come to dedicate a portion of it as a
final resting place for those who died here that
the nation might live. This we may, in all
propriety do. But in a larger sense, we cannot
dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot
hallow this ground. The brave men, living and
dead who struggled here have hallowed it far
above our poor power to add or detract. The
world will little note nor long remember what
we say here, but it can never forget what they
did here.*

*It is rather for us the living, we here be
dedicated to the great task remaining before us
– that from these honored dead we take
increased devotion to that cause for which they
here gave the last full measure of devotion –
that we here highly resolve that these dead shall
not have died in vain, that this nation shall have
a new birth of freedom, and that government of
the people, by the people, for the people shall
not perish from the earth.*

In other words, the finds made at these sites and all over the United States are corporeal evidence of the blood and emotions,

or life and times, of the troops “engaged in this great civil war.” And by bringing these physical remains (in the form of bullets, buttons, combs, bottles and many other relics) to the surface, the participants in the Diggin' in Virginia hunts encourage us all to contemplate this conflict, and the “brave men” so that “the world . . . can never forget what they did here.”

John Kendrick, along with his terrific wife Rose and a number of other well-know Civil War relic hunters, runs the Diggin' in Virginia invitationals (known by the acronym DIV). These well-organized and productive relic hunts are dedicated to friendship and fun along with the proper recovery, identification and preservation of historical artifacts along with the story of the Civil War. A website called www.mytreasurespot.com, hosted by Donnie Smith, has a Diggin' forum where folks can learn about and sign-up for DIV hunts, discuss the history of the sites selected, post pictures of recoveries, inquire about relics, and make other DIV-related posts. One demonstration of this commitment to the preservation of Civil War history, John and Rose arranged for the donation of \$1400 to the Brandy Station Foundation; these funds were raised by selling at DIV buckles manufactured and donated by Gary Williams of Hanover Brass. Brandy Station Foundation (www.brandystationfoundation.com) is non-profit group dedicated to preserving the natural and historic resources of the Brandy Station area of Culpeper County, Virginia where, on June 9, 1863, there occurred one of the greatest modern equestrian engagements involving over 17,000 cavalry. It is said that although the Union advance was repelled, the overwhelming dominance of the Confederate cavalry was broken as a result of this battle. The Foundation is located in the Graffiti House, so named because the second floor's walls contain inscriptions, drawings, messages, and signatures of Union and Confederate troops.

The Battle of Brandy Station occurred after the Union troops occupied the winter camps that were explored at the DIV hunts. Occupied in the Winter of 1862-63, DIV I was apparently the site of a Michigan camp while DIV II and III were at the location of camps for units from a variety of states including New York, Maine and Pennsylvania. These camps were in close proximity to the Potomac Creek and near the railroad that ran out of Fredericksburg located just a handful of miles away. During the Civil War, with the arrival of the Union forces to this area, the army had created a station and an extra track for a switch was laid, to transfer supplies and munitions – this was named Stoneman's Switch. The Union troops that occupied the camps at Stoneman's Switch, due to their close proximity to the station depot and sutlers following the Fifth Corps to their winter encampment, had a steady allotment of rations. The provisions for officers were likewise not lacking.

Contrary to popular thinking, the average Union soldier at these encampments seldom went hungry. Although fresh vegetables, eggs, beef, and soft bread was often lacking, there was plenty of the basic rations: hardtack or hardbread, salted meat, beans and coffee. The Union War Department organized supplies to the army in a process that was inefficient and often corrupt. (As an aside, some sources indicate that the corruption associated with the supply of salt pork to the Union army apparently became the basis for the modern term of “pork barrel politics.”)



This Civil War image shows Stoneman's Switch and the Depot laden with supplies (off to the right). The DIV encampments are off the image to the left and in distant top left.

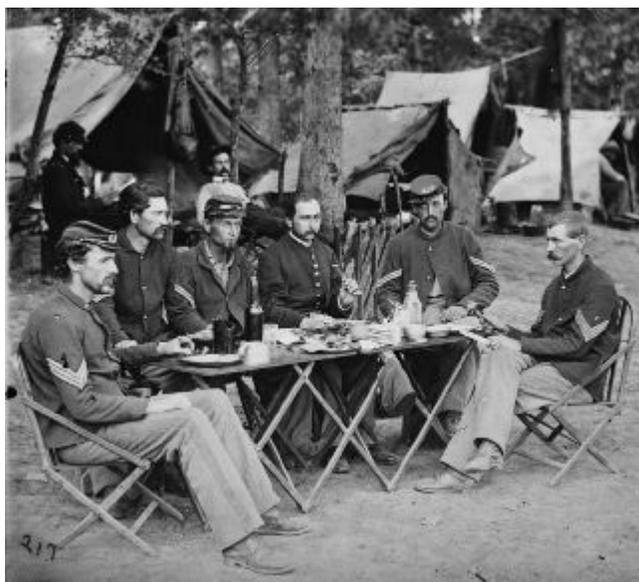
According to Williams C. March, in an article entitled "Food and Rations in the Civil War" from the Cincinnati Civil War Roundtable (2000), the Army's General Orders No. 54, dated August 10, 1861, specified the rations for Union troops:

22 ounces of soft bread or flour, or 1 pound of hardbread; fresh beef was to be issued whenever possible, rather than salt; 1 pound of potatoes three times per week whenever practicable; 12 ounces pork or bacon, or 1 pound 4 ounces salt or fresh beef. To every 100 rations 15 pounds beans or peas AND 10 pounds rice or hominy; 10 pounds green coffee or 8 pounds roasted (or roasted and ground) coffee; 1 pound 8 ounces tea; 15 pounds sugar; 4 quarts vinegar; 3 pounds 12 ounces salt; 4 ounces pepper; and 1 quart molasses. By 7 July 1863 this was reduced or modified to 12 ounces pork or bacon; 1 pound 4 ounces fresh or salt beef; 18 ounces soft bread or flour, or 12 ounces hardbread, or 1 pound 4 ounces of corn meal. To these camp rations were added one pound and four ounces of star candles and four pounds of soap. The same orders told commanding officers that beans, peas, salt, and fresh potatoes might be purchased, issued, and sold by weight and that a bushel of each should be estimated at 60 pounds. When necessary, fresh fruits and vegetables, dried fruits, molasses, pickles, or any other proper food might be purchased and issued in lieu of any other component.

Rations were generally handed down to regimental commanders where they were doled out at the officers' discretion. No doubt many of these rations, such as pickles, spices, molasses, salt, vinegar, pepper, were provided in glass and pottery bottles. Whiskey rations likewise often bottled were provided, with regimental commanders again exercising discretion on their distribution.

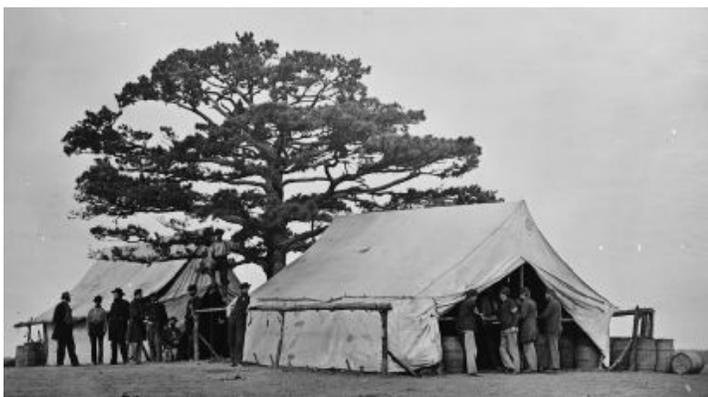


Officers of the 114th Pennsylvania Infantry playing cards in front of tents at Petersburg, Virginia, in August 1864. In this Library of Congress glass image there is a champagne bottle on the servant's tray and a labeled whiskey on the table.



Noncommissioned Officers Mess of Company D, 93rd New York Infantry at Bealeton, Virginia, in August 1863. This Library of Congress glass image shows an aqua pickle and a whiskey bottle on the table.

Another means for soldiers to obtain goods was from sutlers who were generally licensed traders that sold pickles, cheese, canned goods, cakes, candy, tobacco, wine, beer, whiskey, champagne, soda, mineral water, along with writing utensils, needles and thread, pots and pans, and anything else one might need. The prices charged by these merchants were sometimes outrageous considering that a private might make in the range of \$13 a month and a bottle of liquor might cost \$2 or \$3 a quart. No doubt the difficulties of supplying such items during war and to an army in the field required a price markup; nonetheless, sutlers were often resented and sometimes lost their goods to a mob of soldiers. Yet a third way troops got supplies was by mail from home; however, the postal service was not always efficient or honest, and these foods were often stale, rank, or moldy.



Sutler's tent at Army of the Potomac Headquarters at Bealeton, Virginia, in August 1863.

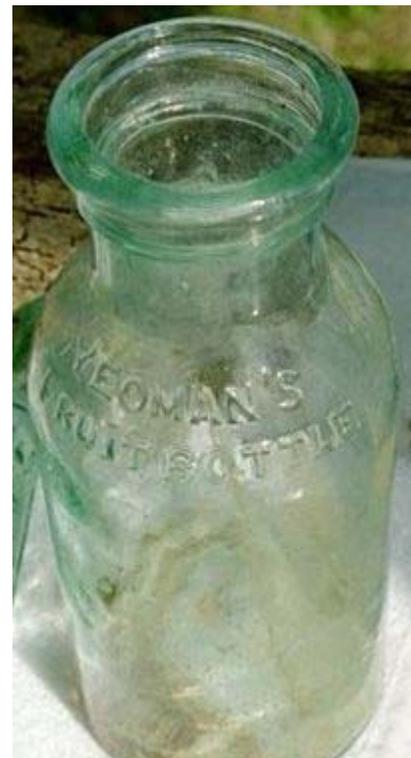
The bottles recovered at the various DIV hunts illustrate the products that were sought after or available to the troops. The vast majority of these products are categorized by bottles containing beverages (whiskey, ales or beers, sodas and mineral waters, wine and champagne, bitters), condiments (mustards, sauces, pickles), medicines, inks, and canned foods.

Turning to the last category first, there were a few canning or fruit jars located that are an indication of how during the Civil War, the United States' primary economy changed from agrarian to industrial. It is unequivocal that the development of canning and fruit jars is a product of the need to feed troops during times of war. As David Hinson wrote in an article called "A Primer on Fruit Jars" from the publication of the Federation of Historic Bottle Collectors, *Bottles & Extras* (December 1996):

Some of the greatest advancements in science have come about as a result of the necessities that wars and hardships create. One of the greatest challenges that armies faced in the early nineteenth century was feeding troops. It was through this need, generated by war, that the hermetic preserving of food came about. In order to give French troops the competitive edge, Napoleon, in 1809, offered 10,000 francs to the man who could come up with an idea to assure delivery of wholesome food to soldiers. Nicholas Appert - a French chef of the time - is generally credited as the father of hermetic

preserving. Appert won Napoleon's challenge by introducing the concept of preserving food hermetically. In 1810, Appert published his discovery in a book entitled L'Arte de Conserver les Substances Animales et Vegetables.

This article is available at on the Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors web site (www.fohbc.com) The first fruit jar of note is the "YEOMAN'S FRUIT BOTTLE" (found by Donnie Smith at DIV I), which would have taken a waxed cork closure. Although relatively common, the context it was recovered in shows how food goods were being transported to troops either via the military, sutlers or mail. The Yeoman's was recovered with a number of other food, liquor and ink bottles from a hut obviously occupied by the camp slob or used as a dumping spot after being abandoned. The cathedral sauce bottle, located next to the fruit jar, likely is American made and contained a peppersauce while the bottle on the far left probably held small pickles, mince-meat, chutney or relishes.



Another canning jar of significance was found by Mark Swann at DIV II. This rare relic is known as a small mouth pint Crowleytown Mason jar with embossing in straight lines, which is identified in the fruit jar collector's bible, *Red Book of Fruit Jars* 9, as RB No. 1773. According to knowledgeable Mason fruit jar collectors (such as Jim Sears), there are at least six intact examples of this jar, not counting two damaged specimens and the actual number known in good condition is certainly not more than a dozen. The history of the jar is interesting. In summary, John

L. Mason patented his glass fruit jar with a closure on November 30, 1858 and paved the way for glass canning jars. The first production of these Mason jars is attributed to the Crowleytown Glass Works (also known as the Atlantic Glass Works) in Crowleytown, New Jersey. The jar that Mark Swann dug is likely from those early production runs as the shape of a Mason's Patent jar changed quickly because the squared-off bottom of the Crowleytown Masons were (and are) quite fragile. The jar was designed much like a soldered tin can which makes sense considering that John L. Mason's profession was as a tinsmith in New York.



Britain and the United States. The large number of bulk pickles recovered at Civil War troop sites is remarkable to me because over the years, I have dug a fair number of privies from this era (likely more urban East Coast privies than the number of huts dug at all three DIVs combined) and I have not even seen as many pieces of bulk pickles as the number of intact ones recovered. It is apparent to me that this was a favored means of transporting and storing food up to and during the Civil War (and this is supported by the number of pickles recovered from Gold Rush sites and on salvaged steamships such as the Arabia). One embossed example of food bottle (found by Ray Cutler) is embossed "ESPY / PHILA" in block lettering. This bottle was used by Philadelphia, Pennsylvania's Mills B. Espy (or his wife Rebecca Espy after he died in 1860). Espy had broken from the firm of Wendell & Espy that started in 1852 and lasted until they split in 1856. Both firms manufactured pickles, preserves and



Value for the Crowleytown is dictated by color, embossing style, condition and whether the jar has a matching lid. Fewer than a dozen pints have been reported with MASON'S embossed in a straight line, and this variation is only known in aqua. The lids for the Crowleytown jar had no glass lining and sometimes had "lugs" extending vertically to give the canner something to put a wrench into when removing them from jars. Jim Sears wrote an excellent article on Crowleytowns in the November 2001 issue of *The Potomac Pontil*. This jar is quite a piece of history that illustrates the intersection between war, through a soldier's life and eating habits, and the rapid change in industry visible in the rapid transformation of fruit jar design in just a few years.

Many other typical food bottles from the 1860s were recovered including numerous mustards (both glass and crockery), bulk pickles of every imaginable variation (with a beautiful green square pickle), and smaller condiments, chutneys, mincemeat, sauces and oils in different sizes from both Great

mince meat – and this is likely what this bottle held considering its large size and wide mouth. This is a collectible bottle and particularly so with a pontil, although this example is smooth-based.

Also of interest are the beverage bottles found at the winter camps with whiskeys topping the list simply because of the massive quantities (broken and whole) found at these winter encampments. Whiskeys from the 1860s are usually shades of black glass, olive-green and amber. The rarer colors are green, cobalt, yellow, puce, purple and aqua. Those from this era that are actually embossed on the shoulder or the base (e.g., “Willington Glass Works,” “Whitney Glass Works,” etc.) are more collectible than unembossed variants. One crisp example recovered (by Rick Horsley) in an unusual color was an aqua “PATENT” whiskey. Aqua “PATENT” whiskeys show up relatively frequently at bottle shows but they are a rare occurrence out in the digging world. My personal experience is that one can probably find hundreds of black glass “PATENT” whiskeys in the ground before recovering an aqua one.



The origin and evolution of “PATENT” porters and whiskies is not well-documented (or at least, I could not find any full discussion) but, in general, “PATENT” bottles started with the registering of the “three-piece mold” by the H. Ricketts & Co of Bristol, England in 1821. In reality this mold is comprised of four pieces: the base, the cup and two movable shoulder parts. Often times there will be embossing on the base and the mold makers would also put in embossing into the shoulder. Ricketts started the trend with embossing on the shoulders but his patent expired in the 1830s; therefore, the continued use of the word “PATENT” on the shoulders may have been an effort by bottle manufacturers to produce a consumer-accepted type or shape of bottle. Others may have more insight, but that is the only explanation I have heard (or rather that I can recall). By the 1850s, it is evident from various glass works’ advertising that the factories were offering “patent porters” in the “old” and “new” styles; namely, the difference between the earlier whiskeys more

squat in form and the elongated versions recovered during the DIV hunts. Moreover, by the mid-1870s, this “PATENT” embossing was phased out because manufacturers and purveyors started to place their own name on the shoulders.



These photos show other kinds of beverage containers found in the Civil War context of winter huts. There are a number of tan and white pottery ginger beers that were manufactured in Great Britain and transported with contents to the United States (although they may have been recycled by American merchants). Also shown are two Pennsylvania bottles: one is a greenish-aqua iron-pontiled and embossed Cider/ Pittsburgh (next to a square amber bitters shape and a green champagne) while the other is also iron-pontiled but dark green with a double-collared lip and embossed “McCran/Lancaster” Lancaster



(found by Mark Gerrick). These are classic soda or beer shapes, which also could contain porter, ale, cider or mineral water. This bottle shape was common from the late-1840s up to the mid-1860s; however, these are iron-pontiled which means they are likely from the late 1850s. Pennsylvania, compared to any state, has the most varieties of colored, pontiled beers and sodas from the 1840s to the 1860s. In general, sodas and beers from Philadelphia or Pittsburgh are common but as you get into the smaller towns outside of the big cities, these sodas tend to be scarcer and more desirable to collectors. The significance of these bottles is that generally they would not have been available for sale outside of Lancaster or Pittsburg; in addition, these bottles had a deposit on them (which might be more than the contents) and were usually returned. Therefore, unless these bottles were taken from Pittsburgh or Lancaster and reused somewhere, these sodas were likely purchased in the respective cities by either the soldier or the sutler (who then sold the bottle to a soldier). Other sodas and minerals were recovered from Philadelphia, Baltimore and New York thus showing the widespread source of goods for the troops.

Looking at the other beverage bottles discovered at DIVs, I am somewhat stumped by all of the plain, unembossed square bitters bottles in shades of amber and green. They are attractive bottles that appear throughout these camps wherever anyone digs. The fact that these have not shown up as frequently in urban privies from the same era suggest that these bitters bottles contained government-issued rations or were absolute rot-gut, cheap whiskey sold by the sutlers.



The more unusual bottles recovered from these sites in the beverage category were flasks and case gins. There was evidence of hundreds if not thousands of whiskey bottles being used at these camps but few case gins or flasks. The two applied collared-lip Eagle flasks, one green and the other amber, apparently were smooth-based while the aqua Washington/Sheaf of Wheat flask is pontiled. One can only surmise that these were either personal treasures of soldiers, gifts that arrived by mail, or purchases on special occasions from the sutlers. The case gin (found by Mike O'Donnell) has a seal on one corner but it is difficult to determine if this is American, English or Dutch; this bottle could have contained gin, bitters or schnapps. Generally by the middle of the 19th Century, the Dutch were the predominant traders in gin and schnapps so it is likely that this bottle is not American in origin; however, only by researching the seal (embossed "R&V") could one verify the source and maybe the content of the bottle.

A good transition bottle between food and beverages to medicines is the ubiquitous "Essence of Jamaican Ginger," which was (and is) used both as a flavoring for food and drinks but also as a rub (much like Tiger Balm or Ben-Gay) for spasmodic muscles. This particular bottle is embossed from Brown's in Philadelphia; however, there are many variants from Philadelphia, New York, San Francisco and other cities. Essences also come both pontiled and smooth-based. A few were found at the DIV hunts but not in any significant number and certainly in proportion to the number generally found when privy digging.



The number of patent and proprietary medicine bottles recovered from the huts also does not seem that significant considering the amount of food and whiskey bottles uncovered. Perhaps whiskey was the medicine of choice since most proprietary "medicines" were predominantly alcohol. Nonetheless, there was an interesting mix of medicines found ranging from the most common to the relatively rare. Of note is that the recovered medicines tended to be smooth-based if relatively popular but open-pontiled if less common or rare. This may be the product of larger scale proprietary medicine operations having used all of their stock bottles or perhaps the smaller quack medicine and local pharmacists used less-expensive glass works that had not invested in the technological transition from pontils to snap clamps.

One common bottle found at the DIVs is "LYON'S KATHAIRON FOR THE HAIR" that usually come pontiled even into the 1860s. This concoction was created by chemist Emmanuel Thomas Lyon sometime in the late 1840s who worked with the famous firm of Heath & Wynkoop in New York. It is said that over a 1,000,000 bottles a year were sold (and I certainly



believe that with the number of Lyon's Kathairon I have found over the years). In fact, the company was so successful they issued scrip or paper currency in their name.

In contrast, one digger (Mike Kuzminski) found a couple of cool medicines that I had never stumbled across previously. The first is a smooth-based "REV. T. HILL'S VEGETABLE REMEDY," about which I could find little about other than the fact it is well known. The second bottle he discovered is likewise aqua and smooth-based, and was apparently found in the Michigan winter camp at DIV I. It is embossed "B.O. & G.C. WILSON / BOTANIC



DRUGGISTS / BOSTON." Turns out Benjamin Osgood Wilson and George Carlos Wilson established their

business in 1846 and it lasted at least into the 1930s. One 1868 advertisement notes that they sold "Choice Liquors of all Kinds for Medicinal Purposes" including whiskey and bourbon. Botanic drugs were also defined by the Wilsons as "Consisting of the Usual Selected and Prepared Herbs, Solid and Fluid Extracts, Spices, Essential Oils, Chemicals, Concentrated Preparations, [and] Patent Medicines." These bottles do come pontiled but for the most part are better known with snap case, hinge molds such as this variant.

Another interesting bottle recovered (by Ray Cutler) is an "H.G. FARRELL'S ARABIAN LINIMENT" from Peoria, Illinois. It is a small open-pontiled aqua medicine. H.G. stands for Hiram G. and he was the brother of William B. Farrell. According to *Digger Odell's Pontil Medicine Encyclopedia*, "William was the older brother of Hiram. There was . . . a falling out after their father's death in 1843. Hiram tried to copyright the medicine unsuccessfully in 1848. Each [brother] sold his own brand of Arabian Liniment." Arabian Liniment continued to be sold up to the late 1890s.

This "DR. S.A. WEAVER'S CANKER & SALT RHEUM SYRUP" is a large, 9 inch tall aqua medicine that originated from New London, Connecticut or Providence, Rhode

Island. It comes with both iron and open pontiled plus smooth



based. Salton A. Weaver advertised that he was the sole proprietor and had sold by the early 1850s over 50,000 bottles. This syrup was, as advertised in the 1850s, "warranted a perfect cure for canker, salt rheum, erysipelas, scrofulous, humors, liver complaint, and all diseases arising from an impure state of blood."

Another neat proprietary medicine was an aqua, open-pontiled "BRAGG'S ARCTIC LINIMENT" (found by Craig Nesmith). It appears to be relatively scarce but is listed in Nielsen's book on pontiled medicines. Other sources indicate that the proprietors were Bragg & Burrowes of St. Louis, Missouri and the product was advertised in 1858. Personally, I think this is a pretty cool bottle (no pun intended) and makes me think of either a soldier who was freezing in the winter of 1862-63 and needed something to warm him up, or of some guy who had a bad fever or gangrene and needed something to cool him down. Maybe this Arctic Liniment could be used for both ailments?



Another category of bottle that shows up with marked frequency in these winter camps are ink bottles. The Civil War is also viewed as a remarkable conflict by historians because of the significant amount of documentation that survives in the form of letters, diaries, and drawings from even the lowest ranking infantryman. This sure explains the vast number of ink bottles found in the old hut sites at the Stoneman's Switch camps. The most common recoveries were umbrella inks; however, there were also cone, teakettle, and even pottery inks found at the DIVs. The umbrella inks come in the usual range of colors from aqua to amber.





In almost every pre-1870 outhouse or pit that I dig there is a bottle that I have never dug before – even after 25 years of privy digging. DIV III was no exception because in my last pit out popped a green, iron-pontiled umbrella ink (along with an open-pontiled aqua umbrella ink). Before finding this iron-pontiled version, I had been examining the other inks found at the DIV III on the tables during the display session and noticed a fair number of green and aqua, iron-pontiled inks mixed in with the usual open-pontiled inks. After speaking with Ed and Lucy Faulkner, who are in the process of writing an authoritative book on inks, they told me that iron-pontiled inks are significantly scarcer than open-pontiled ones (and at least 2 or 3 times more in demand as indicated by the open market price). The Faulkners also confirmed that they believe these inkwells originated from a northern glass works. Another relic hunter, Ernest Bowers, who has extensive training in archaeology and is a specialist in American military material culture, likewise said that these are relatively common recoveries from the Union winter camps in Stafford County. In contrast, let me put this relative scarcity discussion in the context of my privy digging experience: over the last decade, I have probably been involved in digs where at least 150 pontiled umbrella inks were found and only one was iron-pontiled. Now I have seen these iron-pontiled versions in aqua and green; in contrast, I have witnessed come out of the ground open-pontiled inks in those two colors plus yellow, pink, puce, amber, cobalt, black glass, olive, gasoline and a few other colors too. The inks found at DIV III were in excellent shape and the green ones came in quite a number of shades from light green to dark green.

While at DIV and in emails afterwards, a number of diggers asked about the unusual shape and the time period of umbrella inks. For starters, the reason for the shape is to make



these bottles bottom heavy to prevent tipping and spillage. It is generally accepted that umbrella inks date roughly from the 1820s to the 1880s, with the majority of them being made from the late 1840s through to the 1870s. The transition for pontiled to smooth-based for inks tends to be a bit later than the transition for many other kinds of bottles such as sodas, beers, fruit jars, utility bottles and such. This means you may get pontiled and smooth-based inks (and other types of bottles) that date from the exact same era – and that is specifically the time period of these winter camps. For the most part, bottle collectors will agree that the late 1850s was when pontil rods (which makes the pontil marks) stopped being used. A small minority suggest this date is actually 1860 or so; but I have dug way too many privies from that time period that were loaded with smooth-base bottles plus pontiled inks indicating to me that the technology had already changed. This lag time and evolution in the glass blowing may differ depending on the particular factory and how quickly that factory changed its technology. In fact, the relative rarity of iron-pontiled inks that are recovered at Union winter camps in Virginia may reflect a particular transition for the factories supplying government contracts – but more research needs to be done. Logically, if some ink manufacturer had warehouses of pontiled inks to be filled in 1861 to ship to the troops, the merchant was not going to throw them away in favor of the smooth-based variants but instead would use the old stock for product.



Gary finding Blackwood & Co. bottle

Last but not least, one of the most beautiful bottles recovered at any of the DIVs was Gary Crist's recovery of an amazing 12-sided, cobalt bottle. When it was shown to me at the hunt, my first reaction (after being quite stunned) was that it was a master ink because of the pour spout but then I saw the embossing. This reads "BLACKWOOD & Co. / LONDON" on one side and "BY ROYAL LETTERS / PATENT / SYPHON BOTTLE." The fact that it had a funky top with the words syphon made me think that it could also be an early seltzer or mineral water bottle. In fact, just recently there was an long article about early siphons in *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector* magazine. Two other experienced bottle collectors, Ernest Bowers and Jim Dews, both said to me that they thought it was an English ink because there are a number of famous patented and funky looking inks by Blackwood & Co. While at DIV III, I sent



off an email to a few folks in England (to whom I have sent back British pieces I have dug); after I returned home their responses were sitting in my email inbox. These guys all told me that the bottle “is a master ink, and is quite a sought-after one, not extremely rare, but very collectible and fetching into the hundreds of pounds.” The bottle most likely dates from the 1850s-60s because apparently Blackwood & Co. soon switched over to more durable pottery versions of the same. The “bird beak” is characteristic of their bottles based upon a patent issued for the hole in the rear of the neck crafted to accommodate a metal device to retain a cork. The embossing about royal letters is either related to the issuing of the patent or the fact that Queen Victoria obtained her ink from Blackwood & Co. This find, along with a number of English bottles makes me wonder if a British sutler was at Stoneman’s Switch. Another possibility is that the Union soldier “obtained” the master ink during the house-to-house fighting in Fredericksburg prior to their returning to winter quarters.



Although it is likely that we will never know the precise answer to all of the questions asked about the recovered artifacts and these camps, the individual and combined efforts of these DIV relic hunters will allow our generation and future ones to understand a bit more about the lives of individuals at Stoneman’s Switch during “this great civil war” which tested the endurance of our nation. And in this way we are again reminded of the soldiers that allowed all of us to “have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.”

Upcoming Area Bottle Shows

June 26 – Cheverly, Maryland

The Potomac Bottle Collectors Annual Show & Sale (9 AM to 3 PM) at the American Legion Post 108, 3608 Legion Drive, Cheverly, MD 20785. Info: **Jim Sears**, 4211 N. 2nd Rd., Apt. 1, Arlington, VA 22203 PH:(703) 243-2409, Email: searsjim@usa.net or **Andy Goldfrank**, PH:(202) 258-2389, Email: amg_sticky@yahoo.com

July 16-17 - Adamstown, Pennsylvania

The 4th Annual Shupp’s Grove Bottle Festival (Sat. 6 AM - dark, Sun. 6 AM - dusk) at Shupp’s Grove, Adamstown, Pennsylvania. INFO: **Jere Hambleton**, 12 S. Eastland Dr., Lancaster, Pennsylvania 17602, PH: (717) 393-5175, E-mail: jshdetector@webty.net or **Steve Guion**, PH: (717) 560-9480.

August 21 Moorefield, West Virginia

Potomac Highlands Antique Bottle Club's 7th Annual Show and Sale, (9 AM to 3 PM), at the Moorefield Fire Co. Auxiliary Bldg (along the RR on Jefferson St.), Moorefield, W.VA. Info: **Rodney Funkhouser**, 1968 Brants Teets Rd, Baker, W.VA. 26801. PH: (304) 897-6910, email: rfmfg@hardynet.com

September 11 Lewes, Delaware

Delmarva Antique Bottle Club 13th Annual Show & Sale), 9 AM to 3 PM, early buyers 7:30 AM), at the Cape Henlopen High School, Lewes, DE. Info: **Peter Beaman**, PH: (302) 684-5055.

September 17 - 21 Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

All-Dairy Antiques & Collectibles 8th Annual Show & Sale, (Sat. 9 AM to 5 PM, Sun. 10 AM to 5 PM, Mon, Tus, & Wed. 8 AM to 4 PM), at the Farm Show Complex, 2300 North Cameron St., Harrisburg, PA. Info: **Charles A. Itle**, PH: (717) 423-6789 or **Lolly Leshner**, PH: (717) 787-2905.

October 1 Richmond, Virginia

The Richmond Area Bottle Collectors 34th Annual Show & Sale, (9 AM to 3 PM, early buyers 7:30 AM), at the Showplace Annex, 2003 Mechanicsville Turnpike, Richmond, VA. Info: **Ed Faulkner**, PH: (804) 739-2951, email: faulkner@antiquebottles.com or **Marvin Croker**, 4718 Twila Lane, Richmond, VA 23234, PH: (804) 275-1101.

October 9 Bedford, Pennsylvania

Bedford County Antique Bottle Club 28th Annual Show & Sale, (9 AM to 1 PM, early buyers 7 AM), at the Bedford County Fairgrounds, 4H Building, Bedford, PA. Info: **Leo McKenzie**, PH: (814) 623-8019 or **Charles Hazlett**, PH: (814) 695-0128.

November 6 Elkton, Maryland

Tri-State Bottle Collectors and Diggers Club 33rd Annual Show & Sale, (9 AM to 3 PM), at the Singerly Fire Hall, Routes 279 & 213 (I-95 exit 109A), Elkton, MD. Info: **Dave Brown**, PH: (302) 738-9960.