

The Potomac Pontil

The Potomac Bottle Collectors – Serving the National Capital

October 2009

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Meeting October 27th

Please join us at 8 PM at the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer in Bethesda for our first regular meeting of the fall season. Because the threat of rain kept some of us from displaying our recent acquisitions at the September picnic, we will share our summer finds on the October meeting.



To learn what the "Colorado boys" are digging up in the picture above, see Andy Goldfrank's article beginning on next page.



Thank you to all who braved the questionable weather for our club picnic in September.



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: 609/472-5473) & Andy Goldfrank (email: amg_sticky@yahoo.com, PH: 202/588-0543)
Web Site: www.potomacbottlecollectors.org Maintained by Al Miller: www.potomacbottlecollectors.org/contact.php

The Dream Dig

By Andy Goldfrank

This past spring during the 2009 Digathon, Scott, the Colorado boys Marty and Mike, and I were riding through the streets of Williamsburg, Brooklyn, searching for another spot to dig some outhouses. Mind you, we had already excavated three privies and two cisterns but the pickings were still relatively slim for the digging crew. Riding through the urban grid in the truck, Scott told me about a site he thought we should dig. Located on Skillman Street inland of the water off of Myrtle Avenue, Scott directed me to a large, densely overgrown lot and said “I have often dreamed . . .” No, he was not sampling MLK or even Obama, but rather Scott had apparently had nighttime visions of this particular lot many a time; specifically, that there was a privy sitting under the sweeping branches of a massive weeping cherry tree which sat in the right hand corner of the site. This dream dated back to when there had been a falling down wooden, gothic revival manse on the property sometime in the late 1990s; however, a decade later in 2009, we were staring at an empty lot cordoned off from the world with a chain link fence and a padlocked gate. As it was late in the day, I said let’s check the spot on the historic 1850s New York City insurance atlases and the newer 1890s Sanborn atlas tonight and decide how to tackle this site over dinner.



Fig. 1: The empty lot

That evening, as we poured over the reference documents, Scott proposed a plan. We did not know who owned the site and our efforts to locate the owners through contacts and the internet hit a dead end. Scott suggested that we visit the site at 9 AM the next morning, start to clean-up all of the trash and debris on the sidewalk and along the fence, and eventually the owner would show up. Without an alternative site to dig – and with the maps telling us that there should actually be two privies on the lot – we all bought into Scott’s plan. As Scott worked on the front part of the lot, Mike and Marty slipped in with trash bags and started picking up all the loose (and disgusting) trash that littered the lot. I grabbed a probe and started looking for the pit where Scott had dreamed it

would be located. Failing on that end, I wandered over to the opposite corner and immediately probed through cracks in the concrete floor of an old garage directly into a large privy. All of a sudden I heard a heated discussion and turned to see Scott trying to talk to a rather agitated, young Hasidic man who was fumbling to open the lock on the gate. Walking over, I introduced myself and explained what we were doing (picking up trash) and what we hoped to do (dig for bottles). After some protracted negotiation, including a conversation with the owner of the lot via cell phone, we struck a mutually beneficial deal. In exchange for the right to dig for bottles, we would pick up the trash, chop down the overgrown weeds, and generally make the lot look acceptable for the city’s inspectors. And then I was given the property manager’s number and a key to the gate so we could easily come and go.

Fireman Jack was already thigh deep into the stone-lined privy by 10:20 AM and off on a wild ride we went. The top few feet of the privy cap was composed of dark dirt, ash, plus some artifacts and bottles dating to the 1880s-90s. Frankly, these newer bottles were cause for some concern; however, by 2:30 PM, we were 6 feet into the pit and finding signs that there was going to be something older in the hole. This was not your typical Williamsburg privy as it was a large rectangle (rather than a circle or oval) some 4 feet wide and 8 feet long. An hour later, when we were at the 8 foot level, we finally exposed what seemed to be the nightsoil layer mixed with some more ash fill material. Jack was sent in to see extract something good and all we managed to do was get disappointed. Working a 2-foot deep swath across the entire pit, all Jack could find were unembossed laundry bluing and extract bottles from the 1870s, plain yellow ware and iron stone shards, and bits of a Bennington teapot. The sticking was easy with the soil being soft and fluffy but there was not much to show for his work; Scott and I were also concerned the pit was going to bottom out because the few rectangular holes we had dug in this area tend to end at 9 feet or so.



Fig. 2: Tripod set up with Scott in the hole as the other diggers look on



Fig. 3: Fireman Jack appears less than thrilled with the early finds.

Trying to change the karma on this dream-driven dig, Mike went into the pit to find some good bottles. And less than 45 minutes later, he pulled out a pontiled teal cone ink! Beautiful and perfect. Then in short order, as he was cleaning out the fluff from his tailings, I picked up a fantastic pot lid that literally rolled out of a bucket of dirt being dumped. Sporting a transfer image of the U.S Capitol, this large lid comes from Worsley of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Gorgeous and amazing! Mike pulled out a few stoneware beers and then it appeared he was scraping the bottom in one corner at about the 10 or 11 foot mark. Marty joined Mike to see what else could be extracted and the two of them found a pair of neat, small size, pontiled inks: a sided *Harrison's Columbian Ink* in aqua and a *S. Fine. Blk. Ink* in an uncommon, terrific shade of green. At the very bottom, in the last corner we also pulled out an intact brown glazed stoneware jug. Soon after that we were done with the hole.



Fig. 5: Teal cone ink



Fig. 4: The nightsoil layer begins eight feet down.



Fig. 6: Pot lid featuring U.S. Capitol



Fig. 7: Harrison's Columbian Ink
Fig. 8: S. Fine Black Ink

Dodd joined us at that time and helped to partially fill in the hole. Throughout the day, all of us had taken turns probing in an effort to locate the privy that Scott's dream told him was under the cherry tree. Although we all have faith in Scott, we were also driven by fact that the maps indicated there had been two houses on the lot and we had only located a single privy. Eventually, we could not probe anything definitive and just elected to sink a test hole at the base of Scott's cherry tree. And we landed smack on the edge of a privy.



Fig. 9: Probing for privies



Despite torrential rains, the next day at the site, Jack, Marty and Mike dug the cherry tree pit. (Dodd, Scott and I worked on the neighboring yard which we had gotten permission to dig in the interim which turned out to be a dug but at least we crossed it off the list). In turn, the Fireman and Colorado boy worked tirelessly to literally carve an opening through the root system of this massive tree that sat directly over most of the privy opening. This pit was a round, stone-lined hole that was mostly soft dirt and ash filled with a minimal nightsoil layer. Working through the roots lead to some frustration and few bottles but in the end the boys managed to extract a pretty green cathedral pickle and a colored *Knebel* soda.



Fig. 10: Green Cathedral Pickle



Fig. 11: H. Knebel Soda

We then all helped to fill the hole, clean up the lot further, and then pack the trucks. Calling our new found friend, the property manager, I locked up the gate and waited to turn over the key. When he finally arrived to get the key, after shaking my hand, he proceeded to tell me that he and the property owner were enthralled with our passion for history and the relics we found. Hmmm, wonder what they want I thought but, no, they did not want anything. Plus, they were willing to assist us in getting more sites in the neighborhood. Later in the car ride, Scott and I talked about how this had been quite the dream site that led us to some excellent bottles and relic plus some solid connections for future digs.



Fig. 12: One last view of the first pit

*Dream on, dream on
 Dream yourself a dream come true
 Dream on, dream on
 Dream until your dream come true
 Dream on, dream on, dream on . . .
 Aerosmith (1973)*



Samantha Goldfrank shows off her bubble blowing skill at the club picnic.

The Rise, Fall, and Rebirth of Coca Wine

By Jack Sullivan

[Special to the Potomac Pontil]

Few products through the years have reached the pinnacle of coca wine. Bottled under hundreds of labels, sales mounting into the hundreds of thousands, endorsed by potentates and the Pope, it was the world's favorite tonic. The rise of coca wine was abruptly ended in 1914 when the U.S. Congress banned its sale only to have it morph into the beverage the world most closely identifies with America – Coca Cola.

The story begins with a French chemist from the island of Corsica whose name was Angelo Mariani (1838-1914) (Fig. 1). His particular contribution to humankind was inventing coca wine. Importing tons of coca leaves (Fig. 2) from the Andes to France, Mariani soaked them in Bordeaux wine. Ethanol in the wine acted as a solvent and extracted the cocaine from the leaves, which then laced the beverage.



Fig 1: Angelo Mariani photo



Fig. 2: The coca plant

In 1863, at the age of 25, Angelo began marketing this cocaine-added alcoholic drink. He called it, "Vin Mariani." Its green bottles contained six mgs. of cocaine per fluid ounce of red wine (Fig. 3). Colorfully advertised (Fig. 4), almost from the beginning Vin Mariani was hugely popular in Europe. The French writer Emil Zola bubbled over in praise, calling it: *The Elixir of Life...a veritable scientific fountain of youth, which in giving vigor, health and energy would create an entirely new and superior race.*"



Fig. 3: Coca Mariani bottle



Fig. 4: Vin Mariani poster

Other notables who were reported to be regular imbibers of Vin Mariani were Queen Victoria of Britain and U.S. President William McKinley. Thomas Edison endorsed the wine, saying that it allowed him to stay awake (inventing?) for longer hours. The most famous customer was Pope Leo XIII who is said to have carried a flask of the stuff around with him to bolster his spirits in times of need. So grateful was the Pope that he twice invited Mariani to visit the Vatican for a blessing. On the second trip Leo also awarded him a gold medal. A hustling entrepreneur as well as inventor, Mariani saw the benefits of celebrity endorsements and frequently featured the gold medal and the Catholic pontiff in his advertising (Figs. 5,6).

It took many years for Mariani to begin exporting his “elixir of life” to the United States. By that time a host of American nostrum-makers had figured out how to make coca wine and most of them had ratcheted up the cocaine contents. As a result Angelo was forced to advance his formula from 6 mg. to 7.2 mg. of cocaine per fluid ounce. He also spiced up his advertising. We can assume he did not seek the Pope’s blessing for a 1896 ad featuring a Titianesque beauty (Fig. 7).



Fig. 5: Ad featuring Papal medal



Fig. 7: Mariani ad with nude



Fig. 6: Ad featuring Pope Leo XIII



Mariani competed in the U.S. with more than one hundred brands of coca wine. Among them was Washington D.C.’s own Downey’s Vin Coca (Fig. 8). Another was Theodore Metcalf’s from Boston. Metcalf (1812-1894), who ended his formal education at 14, at the age of 25 in 1837 set up a drug store on fashionable Tremont Street. It was the beginning of what contemporaries termed “an immense business.” Metcalf marketed his cocaine drink as a “pleasant tonic and invigorator” (Fig. 9).

Fig. 8: DC’s Downey “Vin Coca” bottle



Fig. 9: Metcalf coca wine bottle



Fig. 10: Caswell Hazard ad

Caswell Hazard & Co. were another major source of coca wine (Fig. 10). With offices in Newport, Rhode Island and New York City, the firm dealt in medicines, perfumes, brushes, soap, a host of proprietary dentifrice's, and Feke's Vegetable Dyspepsia Bitters. Even Sears Roebuck got into the act. Purchased from its popular catalogue, a bottle of its Peruvian Wine of Coca cost 95 cents (Fig. 11).

Meanwhile in Atlanta a local pharmacist named John Stith Pemberton (Fig. 12) had studied Vin Mariani and its success very carefully. He issued his own version of the beverage which he called "French Wine Coca." His ads in local newspapers claimed that his cocaine tonic promoted healthy digestion, a clear complexion and bright eyes (Fig. 13).

PERUVIAN WINE OF COCA.

A Genuine Rich Wine Imported by Ourselves and well known throughout Europe for its Strengthening and Nourishing Qualities.

It sustains and refreshes both the body and the brain, and has deservedly gained its excellent reputation and great superiority over all other tonics. It is more effective and rapid in its action. It may be taken for any length of time with perfect safety without causing injury to the system, the stomach and gastric juices. On the contrary, Peruvian Wine of Coca aids digestion, removes fatigue and improves the appetite, never causing constipation. For many years past it has been thoroughly tested and has received the endorsements of hundreds of the most eminent physicians of the world, who assure us of their utmost satisfaction with the results obtained by using it in their practice. They urgently recommend its use in the treatment of Anemia, Impurity and Impoverishment of the Blood, Consumption, Weakness of the Lungs, Asthma, Nervous Debility, Loss of Appetite, Malarial Complaints, Biliousness, Stomach Disorders, Dyspepsia, Languor and Fatigue, Obesity, Loss of Forces and Weakness caused by excesses, and similar Diseases of the Same nature. It is specially adapted for persons in delicate health and for convalescents. It is very palatable and agreeable to take and can be born by the most enfeebled stomach where everything else would fail.

If you wish to accomplish double the amount of work or have to undergo an unusual amount of hardship always keep a bottle of our Peruvian Wine of Coca near you. Its sustaining powers are wonderful.

It is used in most of the Hospitals in Europe, and many of our American public institutions are adopting it. After many severe tests it has been effectually proven that in the same space of time more than double the amount of hardship and work could be undergone when Peruvian Wine of Coca was used and positively no fatigue experienced.

Expecting a large demand for this wine we have made arrangements for an extra large shipment, which enables us to let our customers in at the very lowest price.

No. D1521 Per bottle, 95c; per dozen \$10.00

Fig. 11: Sears catalogue ad



Fig. 12: John Pemberton photo
Fig. 13: Pemberton's French Wine Coca ad

Even established health beverages, to meet competition, added a cocaine-laced wine to their repertoire. A case in point was Maltine (Fig. 14). This nostrum was the brain child of John Carnrick (1837-1903), a pharmacologist who invented a whole shelf of elixirs with such imaginative names as Lacto-peptine, Peptenzyme, and Kumysgen, the latter reputedly made from fermented mare's milk. The product was sold through the Maltine Manufacturing Company of Brooklyn.



Fig. 14: Maltine glass paperweight

As early as 1894 company officials in letters to medical journals across the country vigorously insisted that Maltine was not a "patent medicine" and that their intention was to reach patients only through physicians. On the other hand, they could not resist mixing Maltine with additional trendy ingredients. Their best seller became Maltine with Coca Wine (Fig. 15). Ads suggested drinking a full glass of this potion during or after

HEALTHY DIGESTION.
A Clear Complexion.
BRIGHT EYES.

PREPARED BY THE
MALTINE MANUFACTURING CO.

A happy and contented state of the mind, the most agreeable, as there is no danger with it, the invalid and dyspeptic, and those suffering from nervous prostration. No other tonic will so certainly and promptly bring about these results.

PEMBERTON'S
French Wine Coca.

The Most Successful and Pleasant Tonic of the Age.

It promptly invigorates the Brain and Nerves from within, restores the exhausted and emaciated glands to healthy action, thereby improving the appetite, enriching the blood, producing calm, refreshing sleep. It is as pleasant to the taste as rich and creamy Wine, adapted especially to weak and delicate stomachs, which result of the ordinary common habits.

Beware of imitations. No other Coca Wine is of the same composition or possesses the same medical properties, found by analysis. Beware of cheap bottles, or do not be misled by cheap imitations.

Send for Book on the Wonders of Cocaine and Maltine-Cocaine made by Pemberton's Wine-Shop,
J. B. PEMBERTON & CO.,
Manufacturing Chemists,
Atlantic City, N. J.

every meal. Children were cautioned to take only half a glass. Maltine with coca wine annually in the U.S. sold 10,000 bottles.



Fig. 15: Maltine Coca Wine bottle

Meanwhile, health and political authorities were becoming increasingly concerned about the growing number of cocaine addicts in America. The coca plant derivative was becoming so popular that it had become a serious public health problem. People were consuming multiple bottles of coca wine daily to feed their cravings. Maltine's management was faced with a dilemma: Dump Maltine with coca wine and lose millions of dollars in sales, or keep selling it and risk angering the medical fraternity.

In 1907 a company lawyer told the Federal Bureau of Chemistry (FBC), forerunner of the FDA: "Simply because all these cocaine preparations are getting into such bad odor, the Maltine Company does not want anything to do with one. We thought it advisable to be on the safe side and give up the preparation altogether rather than get mixed up in something unpleasant."

It was a wise decision. In 1914 the Congress passed the Harrison Act that outlawed cocaine and heroin in over-the-counter products. Later Dr. Harvey D. Wiley, first director of

the FBC, singled out Vin Mariani as the most widely used of the cocaine-riddled drinks. The injury caused by it and other coca tonics, Wiley asserted, "cannot be overestimated."

As this saga was unfolding, Pemberton's French Wine Coca was proving wildly popular in Atlanta and environs. When Fulton County went dry in 1886, he responded by developing a nonalcoholic version with a sweet syrup and eventually called it Coca Cola (**Fig. 16**). By 1914 Pemberton had removed cocaine as an ingredient, but the name remained. Out of coca wine, therefore, arose America's classic beverage. In consequence, some have called Angelo Mariani "the grandfather" of Coca Cola. John Pemberton might well agree.

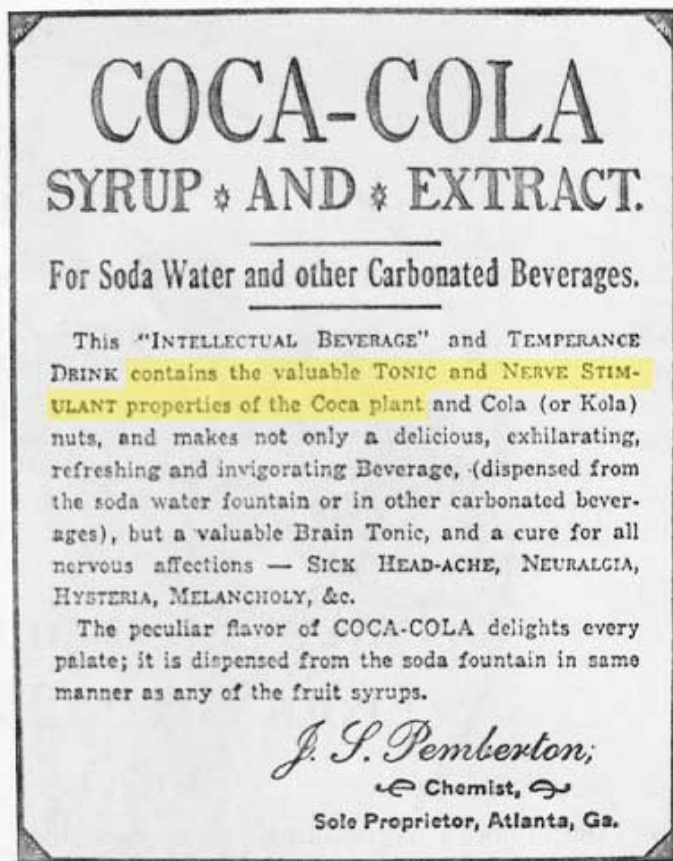


Fig. 16: Early Coca Cola ad

Notes: Coca wine bottles can be dated from 1863, when the drink was first merchandised, to 1914 when such tonics were banned. The material for this article and the illustrations were from a wide range of sources, including the Internet. Dr. Wiley's indictment of coca wines appears in his 1919 book, "Beverages and Their Adulteration."

Upcoming Area Bottle Shows

NOVEMBER 1 ELKTON, MARYLAND

Tri-State Bottle Collectors and Diggers Club 37th Annual Show & Sale, (9 AM to 2 PM), at the Singerly Fire Hall, Routes 279-213, Elkton, MD. Info: **DAVE BROWN**, PH: (302) 738-9960.



NOVEMBER 8 OAKLAND, NEW JERSEY

North Jersey Antique Bottle Collectors Assn. 40th Annual Show & Sale, (9 AM to 2 PM, early buyers 8 AM), at the Oakland Elks Club, 33 Ramapo Valley Road, Oakland, NJ. Info: call **KEN** at (973) 907-7351 or **JIM** at (516) 454-8993.

NOVEMBER 8 PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

The Pittsburgh Antique Bottle Club Annual Show & Sale, (9 AM to 2 PM, early buyers 7 AM), at The Ice Garden, Rostraver Twp., Exit 46 B off I-70 to Rt. 51 North). 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 22 - GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

The Southeast Bottle Club's Greensboro Antique Bottle, Pottery & Collectibles 8th Annual Show & Sale (Sun. 9 AM - 3 PM, Adm. \$1, Set-up 7 - 9 AM; No Early Adm.) at the Farmer's Curb Market, 501 Yanceyville St., Greensboro, North Carolina. Free appraisals, free bottles for kids, food available, 160 tables. INFO: **REGGIE LYNCH**, 4734 Pimlico Lane, Waxhaw, NC 28173, PH: (704) 221-6489, E-mail: rlynch@antiquebottles.com. Website: www.antiquebottles.com/greensboro.

NOVEMBER 29 BETHLEHEM, PENNSYLVANIA

Forks of the Delaware Bottle Collectors Assoc. 36th Annual Show & Sale (9 AM to 3 PM, early buyers 7:30 AM), at the Bethlehem Catholic High School, Madison & Dewberry Avenues, Bethlehem, PA. Info: **BILL HEGEDUS**, 20 Cambridge Place, Catasauqua, PA 18032, PH: (610) 264-5945.

MARCH 7, 2010 BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

The Baltimore Antique Bottle Club's 30th Annual Show & Sale, (8 a.m. to 3 p.m.), Physical Education Center, CCBC-Essex, 7201 Rossville Blvd. (I-695, Exit 34) Info: **ERIC EWEN** PH: (410) 265-5745, e-mail: teresaanderic@comcast.net www.Baltimorebottleclub.org