

The Potomac Pontil

The Potomac Bottle Collectors – Serving the National Capital

July - August 2013

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Picnic – Saturday, September 28th at 1 PM

Please join us for our annual club picnic at the home of Lee Shipman: 5403 E. Halbert Road, Bethesda, MD. The club will provide hamburgers, hotdogs, and soft drinks. Members are encouraged to bring a dish to pass, but everyone is welcome in any case. Please bring guests and antique glass.

Visitation for Al Steidel – Thursday, August 29th from 6 to 8 PM

We are saddened to hear of the death of long-time club member Al Steidel. Al will be interred with military honors at Arlington National Cemetery on August 30th. The visitation will take place at Demaine Funeral Home, 5308 Backlick Road, Springfield, VA. An August 30 funeral service will begin at 12:15 PM at Demaine Funeral Home.



Al Steidel enjoys a cigar at the Potomac Bottle Collectors 1983 show in the photo on the left. The right-hand view shows Al 20 years later as he delivers a club program on his wonderful collection of Alexandria stoneware.

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

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I.C. Shore: From “Nowheresville,” NC to Petersburg, VA

By Jack Sullivan

[Special to the Potomac Pontil]

Frequently a collector attempting to track down the origins of a whiskey jug and noting that it was made in “Shore, North Carolina,” will consult a map only to discover that Shore is not to be found there. In a sense, the town never really existed although it bore the name of the man responsible for the jug, Isaac C. Shore.

Shore was a descendent of a Swiss native named Friedrich Schor who emigrated to the United States in the mid-1700s and settled in North Carolina. By the third generation, the family members changed the name to Shore or Shores and the extended family was well-known in that part of the state. Isaac was born in Liberty Township, Yadkin County. His parents were John and Leah Carter Shore, farmers, with seven children, four older than Isaac and two younger.

With only rudimentary education, Shore went to work at an early age and learned the distillery trade. At the time there were dozens of legal distilleries working in Yadkin County and Isaac proved apt student of the business. About 1877, at the age of 25, he married a local girl named Sarah Zachary. When the 1880 census found him in Yadkin he was living with his wife, three children, ages two to three months, and two other adult relatives. His occupation was listed as “distiller.”

Early in the 1880s, Isaac determined to strike out on his own and built a distillery not far from his home. Shown here is the original building where the barrels of whiskey were stored (Fig. 1). It later became a tobacco warehouse and subsequently was moved a mile away, restored, and survives today as a tourist cottage. He called his enterprise, “I.C. Shore & Co., Distillers, Rectifiers and Shippers of Pure Whiskey.”



Fig. 1: Original Shore building

Selling his product both locally and regionally, Isaac grew wealthy enough to buy land along the cascades of North Deep Creek, a tributary of the Yadkin River (Fig. 2). In 1895 he built a grain mill, shown here (Fig. 3), installing in it state-of-the-art equipment. He called it the Yadkin Valley Roller Mills. The mill foundation was three to four feet deep with walls 15 feet tall. As one commentator has observed: “The mill must have been a marvel in its time.”



Fig. 2: North Deep Creek Falls



Fig. 3: The Shore Mill

Then personal tragedy struck. Sarah Shore died, leaving Isaac with small children. He married again, this time to Sarah's younger sister, Jettie. She was 17 years his junior but bore him nine more children, the last when he was 62 years old.

Other trouble was on the horizon. In 1903, the North Carolina legislature, in an attempt to appease Prohibitionist forces, passed a law that required all distilleries to operate in incorporated towns. Some were forced out of business, others took the expedient of incorporating. They assigned a post office, chose a mayor and aldermen, wrote bylaws and ordinances. Thus did the Town of Shore come into being, the home of four local distilleries, one of them Isaac's. The "townsfolk" voted to name the place after Shore and his family. Imagine the fun and excitement Isaac and his colleagues had as they chose town officials and adopted phony ordinances.

Shore's distillery became particularly well known for the attractive jugs in which he sold his whiskey. His ceramic containers ranged in size from quarts to four gallons (Figs. 4-6). All prominently displayed their origin as "Shore, N.C." As the local drumbeat for the "dry" cause grew louder, however, several distilleries located in Shore sought other sites in North Carolina as outlets. Isaac chose to open a second sales office in Rocky Mount, N.C., as indicated here on a bailed jug (Fig. 7).



Fig.4: Shore array of jugs



Fig. 5: Shore jug



Fig. 6: Shore 4-gallon jug



Fig. 7: Shore Rocky Mount jug

In 1909 North Carolina dealt all its distilleries a final blow by passing statewide prohibition. Almost immediately, Isaac moved his whiskey operation into Virginia, settling in Petersburg, as shown here on a bottle of his Yellow Rose Whiskey (Fig. 8). From this location, like other Virginia-based distilleries, Shore could send product to the thirsty denizens of North Carolina and advertised vigorously (Fig. 9). He also merchandised through matchboxes, stressing “medicinal and family use” (Fig. 10). Although that traffic was curtailed by federal law in 1913, the Shore distillery was able to operate in the Commonwealth until 1916 when Virginia, following North Carolina, also voted statewide prohibition. Thereupon the I.C. Shore distillery moved a third and final time, to Jacksonville, Florida, located at 722 West Bay Street. National Prohibition ended the business for good in 1920.



Fig. 8: Shore Petersburg bottle



Fig. 9: Petersburg letterhead



Fig. 10: Shore Petersburg Matchbox

By that time Shore, N.C., had disappeared. In 1911, recognizing the sham the town had been, the State Legislature revoked its incorporation. Now its principal reality was the stenciled letters on the ceramic jugs of the Shore distillery. Despite the frequent movements of his operations, Isaac appears to have spent most of his time in Yadkin County looking after his mill. He died there in 1931, 79 years old, and is interred in the Deep Creek Baptist Church Cemetery (Fig. 11). His son-in-law, Joe Styers, took over running the mill.



Fig. 11: Deep Creek Cemetery

Today the jugs Isaac Shore created are avidly sought by collectors. He also is remembered by a Yadkin County nature park that has been created on the Shore-Styers Mill Site (Fig. 12). The foundation of the mill can still be seen, but one of Isaac’s great, great, great granddaughters has complained that the park has been allowed to become overgrown and unwelcoming. The original site of the Town of Shore has not been preserved or memorialized through a plaque. Trying to find it, some may say, is a fool’s errand.



Fig. 12: Shore-Styers Mill Site Park

Note: Some Potomac Bottle Club members may have met Corky Shore, a direct descendant of Isaac Shore, at a bottle show or two. A whiskey jug collector himself, Corky always was willing to talk about his ancestor and the “Nowheresville” town called Shore, North Carolina.

Upcoming Area Bottle Shows

Sept. 14 Downieville, CA
 Sept. 20-21 Aurora, OR
 Sept. 21 Santa Ana, CA
 Sept. 22 Indianapolis, IN
 Sept. 22 Buffalo, NY
 Sept. 28 Memphis, TN
 Sept. 28 Albuquerque, NM
 Sept. 29 Greensboro, NC
 Sept. 29 Lowell, MA
 Sept. 29 Richfield, OH
 Sept. 29 Batsto, NJ
 Oct. 5 Richmond, VA
 Oct. 6 Chelsea, MI
 Oct. 13 Keene, NH
 Oct. 20 Scriba, NY
 Nov. 3 Elkton, MD
 Nov. 9 Royal Oak, MI
 Nov 10 Oakland, NJ
 Nov. 23 Terre Haute, IN



Oct. 4-5 Canyonville, OR
 Oct. 5 Point Pleasant, WV
 Oct. 11-12 Santa Rosa, CA
 Oct. 21 Findlay, OH
 Oct. 27 Glendale Heights, IL
 Nov. 9 Jacksonville, FL
 Nov. 10 Pittsburgh, PA
 Nov 23 Miford, OH
 Dec. 1 Bethlehem, PA

October 5, 2013 (Saturday) Richmond, Virginia – Richmond, VA 42nd Antique Bottle Show and Sale, Chesterfield County Fairgrounds, 10300 Courthouse Road, Chesterfield, Virginia 23832, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm, Admission: \$3, Early Admission at 7:30 am for \$10, Info: RichBottleClub@comcast.net or Marvin Croker 804.275.1101 or Ed Faulkner 804.739.2951

November 3, 2013 (Sunday) Elkton, Maryland - The Tri-State Bottle Collectors and Diggers Club, Inc., 41st Annual Antique Bottle and Collectibles Show and Sale will be held on from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm at the Singerly Fire Hall, Routes 279 & 213, (I-95, exit 109A), Elkton, Maryland 21922. Admission – \$3.00 – Children under 12 Free. Contact: Dave Brown, 302.738.9960 or Email – dbrown3942@comcast.net.

March 2, 2014 Baltimore, MD

August 1-3, 2014 FOHBC national show in Lexington, KY



Show & Tell at our June meeting included Mike Cianciosi's Royal Pilsen sign.



Bill Porter displayed the Coca-Cola bottle at our June meeting. The bottle appears to have Bill's name embossed at the heel. A friend created this item for Bill by carving away glass to leave the William Porter name.