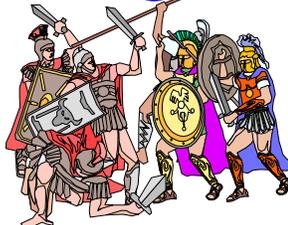


War Drums Along the Potomac?



During the Potomac Bottle Club's meeting on January 28, the wife of the club's president suggested a war between their club and the Baltimore Antique Bottle Club should be declared. No one knows the reason for this provocative action and some believed she was joking. Not to take any chances, our president sent a letter to the editor of the Potomac Pontil. In the letter he warned against such mischief and even offered an olive branch. Undaunted, their militant editor fired back. This could get ugly. The respective letters are shown below.

Dear Editor,

Intelligence sources informed me that the First Lady of the Potomac Bottle Club is interested in launching a war with the Baltimore Antique Bottle Club. I am unclear as to the reasons for this bellicose attitude but I can tell you that ours is a peaceful club. Although we are surrounded by forces, such as Delmarva on our eastern flank, York to the north, Pittsburgh to the west and Potomac and Richmond to the south, we have never threatened war with any club, we are not imperialistic, and we desire to exist in peace.

Make no mistake about it, we would be a formidable opponent to conquer. True, the average age of our membership is 78. But if you drop the oldest 2 members from our ranks, the average age then becomes 41. Moreover, we have an arsenal that is unparalleled by most clubs: our members have Baltimore torpedoes, fire grenades, poisons, and a wide array of demijohns and stoneware. Even more imposing, we have apple parers—quite the unique weapon in a bottle club.

In the unlikely event we would lose such a war, our foxhole diggers are prepared to go back and fill all the holes they created, leaving behind only the shards from their efforts and a few common beers. In addition, our members who continuously lose out on the eBay front are willing to place their unlimited unspent resources in a vast war chest.

To avert a war, I invite the Potomac's First Lady and others carrying your flag to join the legions of inspectors and visit our Essex palace on March 2. Our members, along with allies from over 25 states, the District of Columbia and 3 foreign powers, will occupy over 300 positions.

Everyone will be able to seek out and inspect tens of thousands of vessels of glass construction. All items will be on the table in clear view of the inspectors; nothing will be hidden under the tables. Any damaged or reproduced vessels must have full disclosure or there will be a material breach of the contract.

Led by our illustrious commander, **Col. Robert F. Ford, Jr.**, our palace will be well organized, fully staffed, secured and efficient. The palace gates will be

opened at 0800 hours to all those who wish to examine and procure these vessels of glass construction. We'll even tell everyone what his or her vessels are worth. And Col. Ford will strongly enforce the doctrine of no parking on the grass so that we can keep the palace for years to come.

In the end, we will prevail. I'm inspired by my war hero and fellow president George Washington, who said, "I agreed to what?"

Best wishes during these turbulent times,
Steve Charing
Commander-in Chief
Baltimore Antique Bottle Club

Steve,

For centuries Baltimore has been amassing poisons, fire grenades, torpedoes, and other dangerous containers. Year after year, the Baltimore club members have gone to elaborate lengths, spent enormous sums, taken great risks to obtain and keep bottles of mass destruction. But why? The only possible explanation, the only possible use they could have for these bottles is to dominate or attack.

Despite an ultimatum from the Potomac Security Counsel, **Steve Charing** has left Potomac diggers to seek these banned bottles in waterlogged dumps and exceptionally deep privies. Now it is time for Baltimore to show exactly where it is hiding its bottles, to lay those bottles out for the world to see, and to relinquish them as directed.

The Potomac Bottle Collectors will ask club members to convene at Essex on March 2nd to consider the facts of Baltimore's ongoing defiance of the world. First Lady **Lee Shipman**, **Jim Sears**, **Richard Lilienthal**, **Peter Rydquist**, **Andy Goldfrank**, **Al Steidel**, and other members will present information and intelligence about Baltimore's bottles, its attempts to hide those bottles from diggers, and its links to questionable groups.

Secretary of the Pontil,
Jim Sears