



## SALUTE THE NEW COMMODORE OF THE NAVY

Throughout history important countries have had armies and navies. They still do today. In the 20th century they added air forces, but since this is an antique bottle magazine we won't consider the 20th century. The two bottles in this article are both from the mid-19th century.

The army bottle is the U.S.A. Hosp. Dept. It isn't a common bottle, like a Warner's or Kilmer's, but it is a bottle that is probably known to most collectors. I'm going to call it an important bottle because of the Civil War history associated with it, and because of the desirability. Even though there are numerous examples, the value is relatively high. A mint example sells for hundreds to thousands of dollars.

U.S.A. Hosp. Dept. bottles are well documented. There are numerous articles about them. As I said, they were introduced during the Civil War. Many contained "medicines" with some herbs and alcohol. Others contained pure alcohol. Alcohol has always been important to mankind, and it is especially important during wartime when there are injuries, pain and distress.

The army accepted the fact that alcohol had both good and bad uses. The good obviously was to disinfect wounds, implements and to preserve medicines, and also to calm wounded soldiers before treatment. The bad was drinking for pleasure often resulting in drunkenness. Drinking for pleasure is common to all mankind. It has never been stopped.

The navy had the same thoughts as the army, but it knew that it would cause



**TOP:** U.S.A. Hosp. Dept. and U.S.N. Alcohol Med. Dept. bottles.

**BOTTOM:** A view of the bases of each bottle.



impossible problems on ships. The navy essentially outlawed alcohol on ships. I suspect that they produced the U.S.N. Alcohol Med. Dept. bottle to use it in a highly restricted way on a ship. It must not have worked because it wasn't used for very long.

I have collected bottles for more than fifty years and I never knew about a navy alcohol bottle until John Pastor's recent auction. When I received American Glass Gallery Auction No. 25 I knew I had to own Lot 196, if possible. I also knew it might not be possible because it was from the Chebalo Collection.

Chebalo's bottles are highly desirable because Jim mostly collected the rarest of rarest and best of best pieces. Chebalo thought it was a valuable bottle, as reflected in John's estimate: \$6,000-\$12,000. My bid of \$6,500 near the end

of the auction put me on top. I was ready to go higher during callbacks, but I won at that price. John said I was very lucky because ordinarily two of the other bidders would have gone higher, too. Special lucky circumstances got me this bottle.

My U.S.A. Hosp. bottle is also from Jim Chebalo. I bought it shortly before he passed away in 2018. I will always cherish both of these bottles. The USN bottle was originally purchased by Chuck Moore in the 1980s from an unknown eastern collector. He later sold it to Jim Chebalo.

To Chuck's knowledge, it is the only example. He has heard that there is another one but he has never seen it and he thinks he would know if one existed. Please let me, or the magazine, know if you have the navy bottle, too. I doubt you will.

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**ABOVE:** Lot 196 in the American Glass Gallery Auction No. 25. Joe was fortunate to snag this bottle with his bid of \$6,500.

**TOP LEFT:** A closer look at the embossing on the U.S.A. Hosp. Dept. bottle.

**BOTTOM LEFT:** Close-up view of the U.S.N. bottle embossing.

