

# Label Casting

Contributed by: Cody Walker

A.K.A "cwalker935"



This tutorial was downloaded from

<http://www.penturners.org>

The International Association of Penturners - 2014

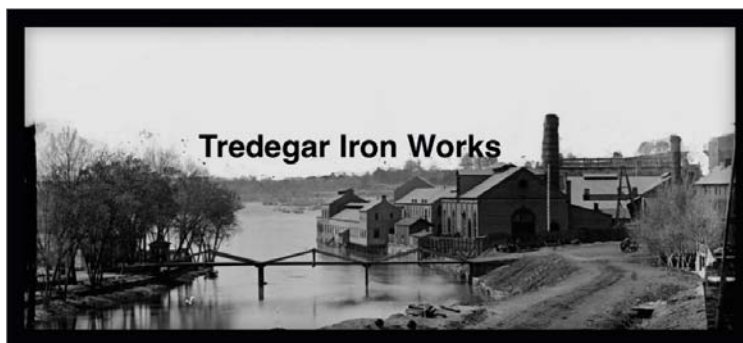
## Label Casting by Cody Walker AKA cwalker935

This will describe my approach to label casting. I hesitate to describe this as "my" approach since I am borrowing heavily from what I've learned from others in the IAP community, primarily Don Ward aka "its\_virgil". Any original contribution that I am making, if in fact it is original, is my development of a historic theme and selection of images.

This approach uses "tube-in" casting and starts with the selection of an image. You can find a number of civil war images that are in the public domain on the national archives website. For the purpose of this write up, I started with the following image:

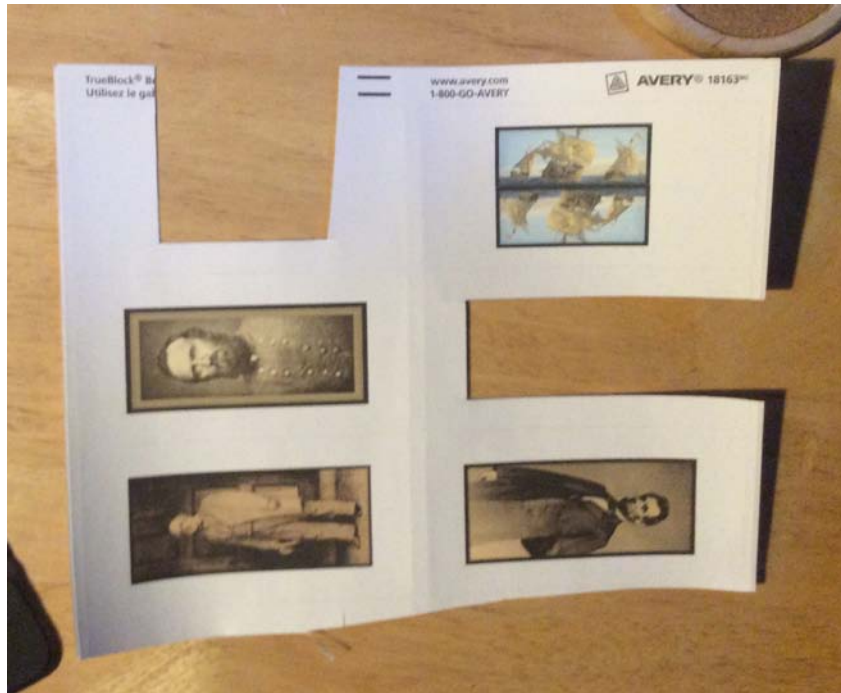


I then use photo editing to resize, re-position, edit, add a border, and add text if needed. I use the Filterstorm" app on my ipad to do this. I size the image to suit whatever pen tube that I will be using. I multiply the diameter of the appropriate drill bit for my tube by pi (3.14) and add 1/16" to get the width of my image and add 1/16" to the length of the tube to get the length of the image. For civil war pens, I resize it to 1.25" x 2.94". Selecting an appropriate Image, resizing and repositioning may require some practice to see what will work on the pen. The importance of adding a border will be explained later. Here is my edited image from the above photo:



I then print the image on mailing label paper, the peel and stick kind. I do this using a free software from Avery called Design Pro. I typically use the 18163 paper from Avery. Using the mailing label avoids the glue mess and the label does not separate from the tube during casting.

I have to resize the image to my original dimensions after inserting the image in the Avery software because the software automatically selects its own dimensions. I usually print several images to save paper. Your images may seem poor at this point but don't panic, the clear resin will bring back some of the clarity. I then end up with something that looks like this (you can see that I have already cut out some images):



I then cut the label out with scissors. This is where the border comes in. The border is needed to help hide the seam. I sized the image with the border so that border will overlap at the seam. After cutting the image, I color the cut edge with a sharpie matching the color of my border so that the cut edge does not show after the image is adhered to the tube.



I typically use a black border since it is easy to match the colors. If everything is sized properly, I end up with a black on black overlap and the seam becomes invisible. You can use other colors as long as you can color the edge with a matching color.



Now peel and stick the label to the tube. You might want to wait overnight before casting to let the label glue set up. I also seal the label with an acrylic sealer "Clearcote" after putting it on the tube and before casting. I let it dry 24 hours before casting. This seems to improve the resolution and reduces the frequency of bubbles. I get the "Clearcote" from hobby lobby. It has a green label. The final step before casting is to trim the excess from the tube ends with a sharp knife or by lightly sanding the tube ends.

At this point, you are ready to use your favorite "tube-in" bubble-free casting approach. There are numerous articles and techniques for this type of casting approaches that you can find in the IAP library that are probably superior to my approach, so I will not go into that here.



### **My simple approach to tube in casting:**

Buy an appropriate resin saver mold. I use the patriot series mold from ptownsubbie.com:  
<http://www.ptownsubbie.com/PatriotSeries.html> for the Civil War pens.

It's a tight fit but it will work, just make sure you spread the mold so that the tube ends are clear of the mold.

I usually measure and pour my resin and wait 5 minutes to let the bubbles clear before mixing in the catalyst. I then pour the resin into the mold and watch for 5 minutes and use a curved dental pick that I bought from harbor freight to move any bubbles away from the tube. I usually run the curve of the pick along the underside of the tube when I first pour the resin. Bubbles do collect there and on the tube ends. Then put the mold into a toaster oven at 110 to 120 degrees F for another 5 minutes check and use the dental pick if necessary. I then let the mold completely cure before turning.

I am sure that there are more fool proof ways for casting that you can find by researching the IAP site but this is an economical way to start.