

Early Bottling in Atlantic

Frederick Durr was born in Germany in 1818, came to the United States at age of 19, lived in Pennsylvania where he married, and between 1855 and 1859 moved to Rock Island County, Illinois. Later the family moved to Orion in Henry County, Illinois. The family operated a store in Orion where Frederick was Postmaster. Among the items they sold at the store were bottled beverages that they produced themselves.

In 1874 Frederick's oldest daughter, Mary, married Frederick A Saxe, also a native of Germany. In May of 1875, the Durr and Saxe families moved to Atlantic where they immediately opened the Atlantic Pop Factory¹. When they moved from Illinois, they brought with them the 12-sided quart stoneware bottles that were used to hold the beverages. Their specialty was lemon beer. Over the years the venture was known variously as the Atlantic Pop Company, the Atlantic Bottling Works, and Saxe & Durr.

The Atlantic Pop Factory was a small operation that initially employed only 2 persons, but in 5 years employed 5, was making 1000 quarts of lemon bear each week and was shipping beverages to Shelby and Stuart². In 1882 Frederick Durr was appointed janitor at the courthouse³, a position he held until 1892⁴, but he continued helping with the bottling operation.

In October of 1891, Frederick's youngest daughter, Elizabeth, married Chris G. Fuhlendorf whose family had moved to Atlantic from Scott County, Iowa, about the same time as the Durrs. Two months later Frederick A. Saxe died. Mary Durr Saxe, her younger brother who was my grandfather, Fred J. Durr, and my great grandfather continued to operate the bottling works. In 1893 Frederick Durr reduced his role in the business.⁵

In March of 1895, the families of Chris Fuhlendorf and C. D. Bell left Atlantic and moved to Lebanon, Missouri, where they operated the Magnetic Bottling Company⁶. In March of 1896, Charles Ostrander moved from Lebanon to Atlantic to manage the Atlantic Bottling Works⁷, a connection most likely made through Chris Fuhlendorf. Frederick Durr died in June of 1896. Soon after his arrival in Atlantic, Charles Ostrander started seeing Mary Durr Saxe's oldest daughter, Emma. Emma and Charles were married in August of 1896.

In September of 1897, Mary Saxe sold the bottling works to her son-in-law, Charles Ostrander⁸. In the meantime, Fred J. Durr had been appointed administrator of Frederick Durr's estate who had died intestate. In November of 1897 Fred J. Durr, acting as administrator of the estate, filed suit against Mary Saxe and Charles Ostrander⁹. Eventually the court found in favor of the plaintiff and awarded a judgement to the heirs.

In April 1902, Fred J Durr filed his final report with the court indicating that Charles Ostrander was still in possession of the assets awarded to the heirs¹⁰. It seems that the heirs forced the sale of the bottling works in order to receive their due. My grandmother indicated that Grandfather Durr was trying to arrange financing when the bottling works was sold to L. C. Reichert.

Mary Saxe, her sister Augusta Durr, and the Ostrander family left Atlantic for California in December of 1902 or early January 1903¹¹. Fred J. Durr and Matt Coker launched the Pioneer Bottling Company in April of 1903¹².

¹ Atlantic Daily Telegraph May 30, 1881, p4, col1.

² Atlantic Daily Telegraph September 21, 1881, p4, col 4.

³ Atlantic Daily Telegraph November 18, 1882, p2, col2.

⁴ Atlantic Daily Telegraph May 3, 1892, p3, col 5.

⁵ Atlantic Daily Telegraph November 13, 1893, p3, col 3.

⁶ Atlantic Daily Telegraph March 2, 1895, p3, col 1.

⁷ Atlantic Daily Telegraph March 9, 1896, p3, col 3.

⁸ Atlantic Daily Telegraph September 10, 1897, p3, col 3.

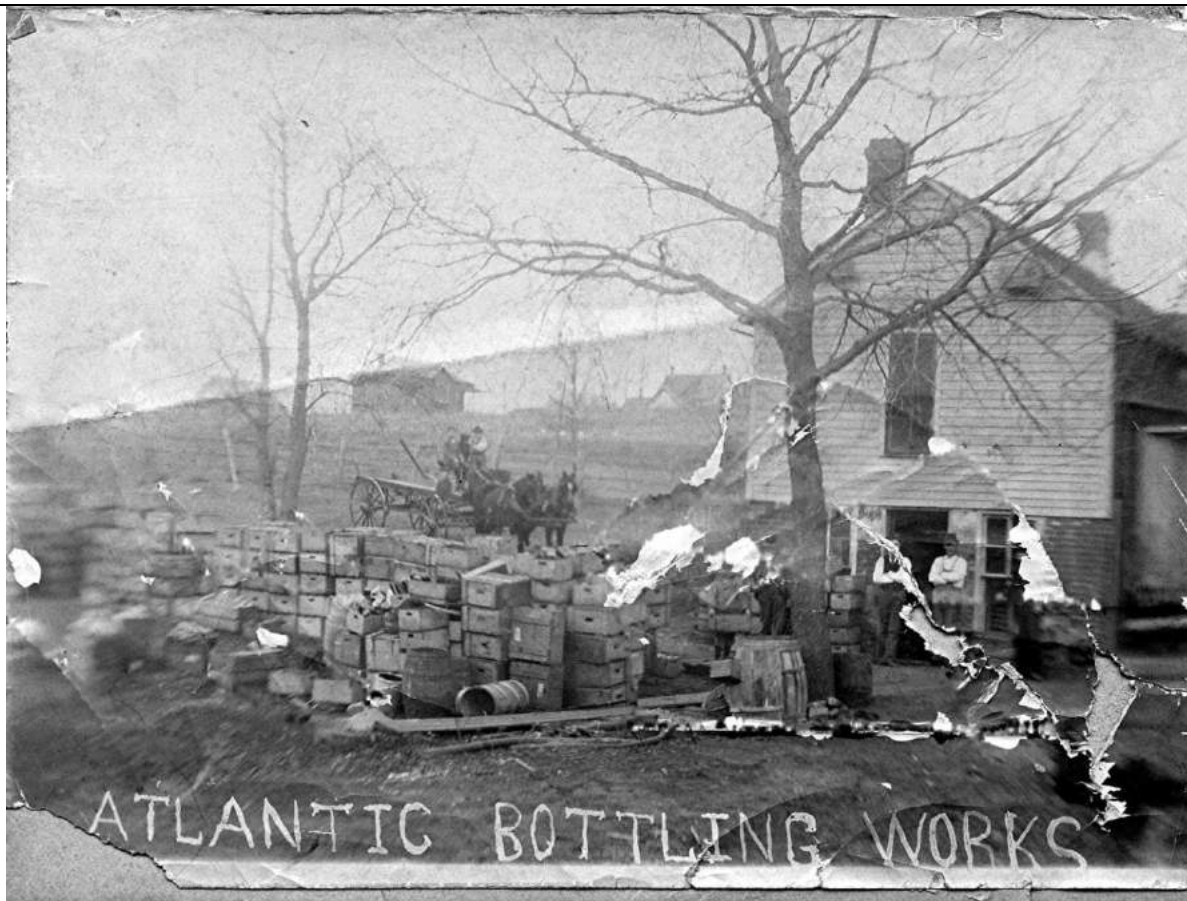
⁹ Atlantic Daily Telegraph November 5, 1897, p3, col 3.

¹⁰ Cass County probate record box 77, no 987.

¹¹ Atlantic Daily Telegraph January 28, 1903, p 3, col 2

¹² Atlantic Daily Telegraph April 20, 1903, p2, col 2

L. C. Reichert only operated the Atlantic Bottling Works for a short time before trading it in June of 1903 to J. F. Brandt for some farmland in Adair County¹³. For a few months Atlantic had two competing bottling companies, but in September they merged¹⁴. Brandt had some financial difficulty, and his assets, including the bottling company, were seized by court order¹⁵. The Atlantic Bottling Works was sold at a sheriff's auction in November of 1903. The purchaser was none other than Chris Fuhlendorf, husband of the recently deceased Elizabeth Durr and operator of Magnetic Bottling¹⁶. Chris and John Fuhlendorf operated the Atlantic Bottling Works until 1930 when it was sold to the Tyler brothers.¹⁷¹⁸¹⁹



Atlantic Bottling works near 10th and Palm Streets circa 1885

¹³ Atlantic Daily Telegraph June 17, 1903, p3, col 2.

¹⁴ Atlantic Semi Weekly Telegraph September 15, 1903, p 4, col 3.

¹⁵ Atlantic Cass County Democrat November 12, 1903, p1, col 3.

¹⁶ Atlantic Cass County Democrat November 26, 1903, p10, col 1

¹⁷ Atlantic Cass County Democrat July 20, 1905, p4, col 5.

¹⁸ Atlantic News Telegraph December 5, 1929, p2, col 5.

¹⁹ Atlantic News Telegraph June 12, 1930, p1, col 6.



12 sided quart stoneware bottle moved by Saxe & Durr to Atlantic in 1875 from Orion, IL; since the bottle's contents were not visible from the outside, various marks painted on the neck designated the contents. In this case a blue "x". The bottle was manufactured by the W. H. Hutchinson Company of Chicago.



Saxe & Durr Hutchinson blob top bottle used for soda pop circa 1890. The wire stopper was patented in 1879 and this type of bottle became very popular from the early 1880s up to WWI.