

San Diego Soda Works

By
Mike Bryant

San Diego Soda Works opened for business in 1887. Gustav H. Gaedke and A. Seifke were the owners. At that time, the bottling plant was located on L st. In 1888 Seifke left the business and Gaedke became the sole proprietor, and moved the business to 424 Logan Ave. Gustav was no stranger to the bottling business having spent ten years prior to opening the San Diego plant working in the various branches of the soda business. Born in 1841 in Germany, Gustav's family would immigrate to the United States and he would become an American citizen in 1879. In 1885 the Sante Fe Railroad was completed to San Diego, and with that came a multitude of people. San Diego was booming, and Gustav decided to use all the bottling skills he had learned, and open his own soda works.

He began by manufacturing sodas, sarsaparilla, ginger ale, champagne cider, iron water and mineral water at his Logan Ave. plant. In 1914 Gaedke sold his business to Caleb W. Hoopes who moved the plant to 1848 Logan Ave. In 1916 Gustav Gaedke bought back and again became the proprietor of San Diego Soda Works. He kept the plant at 1848 Logan.

The soda works expanded its product line to include, Bludwine, Cherry Cheer, Apple Cider, Orange Cider, and seltzers in syphon bottles. Also sold were different kinds of syrups, and they would become one of the first bottles of 7Up in San Diego.

One of the first employees of the soda works, was Gustav's nephew also named Gustav H. Gaedke, but who went by Henry. Henry was a delivery driver, but died after a long illness in 1917. The death hit the elder Gustav hard and by 1920 nearing 80 years of age, he decided to sell the business for good. The new proprietors were Jacob L. Foerster and George F. Boehrig. The business was then moved to 333 11th St.

According to Peck & Audie Markota in their book *California Hutchinson Type Soda Bottles*, In 1922 just two months shy of his 82nd birthday, Gustav H. Gaedke fell and fractured his skull and passed away on April 29th. Both Gaedkes are buried in Greenwood Cemetery.

San Diego Soda Works would be relocated and be owned by many different proprietors over the ensuing years. In 1947 Herbert W. Hurd and Alan T. Baum moved it to its final location, 40 20th St.

By 1962, small bottling operations couldn't compete with the likes of Coca Cola and Pepsi, and San Diego Soda Works went out of business for good.

For us San Diego bottle collectors, the 75 years the business was in operation, left a legacy of highly desirable and sought after bottles, that are a highlight of many a great collection.



Just a Few of the Different Colors & Styles of San Diego Soda Works Bottles