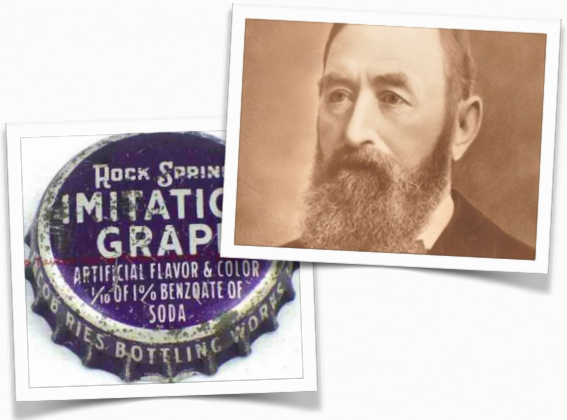
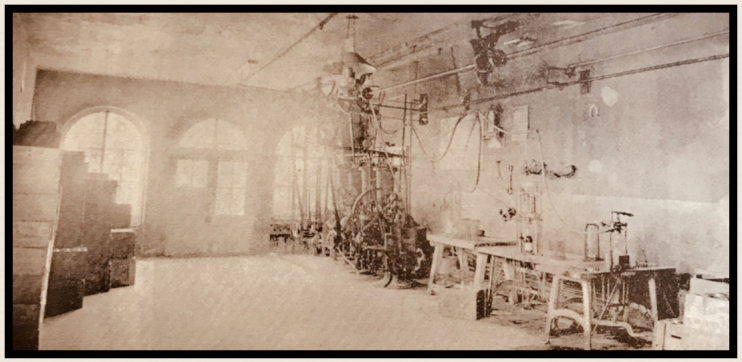






In the early 1900s, a picture of Jacob Ries family was taken by J.E. Jones. The photo included Jacob and Josephine Ries, and family in front of their home. Photograph from the Scott County Historical Society. On right is a picture of Jacob Ries Bottling Works in the 1880s from the Huber Collection, Shakopee Heritage Society.

Jacob Jacques Franz Ries, Sr., was born on December 6, 1830, in Septfontaines, Canton de Capellen, Luxembourg, son of Jean Nicholas Ries and Katherina Kiefer.

When he was 18 years old both his parents died. Jacob was given both literary and musical education in his native country and in 1854 came to America. He lived three years in New York, mainly engaged in carpentry; then he made a six-month visit to his native land, and in the spring of 1857 settled in Shakopee, which was his place of residence except for a time spent at his farm in Spring Lake.

In 1857, Jacob married Josephine Mamer in Shakopee. She was born June 24, 1836, daughter of Jacobus Mamer and Anne Elisabeth Brandenbourg. They went on to raise a family of 14 children.

Jacob and E.A. O'Leary, from Ireland, opened the bottling company on the river (north of Holmes and First Street) in 1872. O'Leary sold out one year later.

Ries moved the factory to Third and Holmes Street in 1880 to avoid the flood plain. A brick factory was erected and had all the facilities for manufacturing carbonate and fermented beverages. It became Jacob Ries Bottling Works, operating from 1872 to 1975.

The bottling works building was on the southwest corner of Holmes Street and Third Street. There was a small building housing the well between the bottling building and the alley. Elmer Dahl, who owned the bakery, lived in the white house across the alley. The office was west of the bottling building. Directly north of the bottling building across Third Street was the parking lot. To the west of the parking lot were the warehouses. Warehouse #3 is now where the Masjid Al-Amin Samaha Islamic Center has been since 2016. Before that it was Eastman's Drug Store and then the Auction Center before becoming a mosque in 2016. The old Ries homestead was on the south side of the bottling plant.

Rock Spring soda was very popular, and trains stopped two or three times a day to load and unload the pop. A garage was established on Lewis Street. In the rear door off the alley was a receiving depot for boxes of liquor.



From *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, Sunday, January 12, 1984



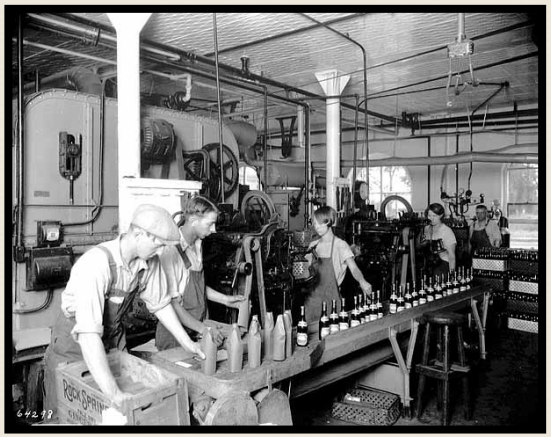


According to Joe Jenn, "There was also a bottling works in town; they'd deliver bottles of pop to St. Paul and return with bottles of whiskey."

Jacob Ries passed away on May 17, 1911, in Eagle Creek, Minnesota. His descendants continued operating the bottling works.

The Jacob Ries Bottling Works operated for over 100 years. The family-owned operation was famous for its sparkling water and ginger ale. Eventually the family sold their





“secret recipe” to the Pepsi Company in 1975. The building was torn down in 1977.

The building is gone but memories of the clacking pop bottles on the bottling line, the smell of the soda flavors wafting into the street when passing by, and their wonderful soda are still talked about by the older locals. After every day, after school, every child used to stand by the windows, watching the bottles go by, full of soft drinks.









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Jacob Ries

1830-1911

Compiled and written by David R. Schleper, Shakopee Heritage Society © 2020