

BOTTLES MADE IN NOVA SCOTIA

Trenton, Nova Scotia was the location of three main glass companies starting in the late 1800's. The first one was built in July 1881 and was called the Nova Scotia Glass Co. Limited. There is very little evidence of bottles being made at this glass house. They operated until 1892. Due to the high expenses and tough competition from Ontario glass factories, the company was forced to shut down.

In 1890 two new glass houses were established in Trenton. They were the Lamont Glass Company and Humphrey Glass Works. Lemont Glass was the leading producer. Out of sixty employees fifty of them were in charge of making bottles. The main type of bottles that were made were green in colour and came in all different sizes. They were used for many different products, including: prescription bottles and fruit jars. Sadly the company was leased to the Diamond Glass Company of Montreal in 1898. Unfortunately a fire broke out on August 31, 1899 at the glass house and destroyed almost everything. The company then moved to Montreal in 1902.

In 1891 Humphreys Glass Works started operation. It was run by five brothers and was started in John Humphrey's backyard.

A fire destroyed the first factory, but another one was built in 1901. They distributed and specialized in soda water bottles, fruit jars, milk bottles, medicine bottles, flasks and fly traps. They turned out 1200 to 1500 bottles a day. They were the leading bottle manufacturer in Nova Scotia at the time. Sadly natural gas was cheaper in Moncton, causing the company to move. This ended the era of glass making in Nova Scotia.

THE HISTORIC POP INDUSTRY OF NOVA SCOTIA

The soda water industry began in Nova Scotia in approximately 1836. The first business was located in Dartmouth by Wm. H. Glendinning. A few more soda companies opened in Halifax in 1856. Wm. H. Glendinning moved to New Glasgow and opened a factory in 1867. This business was passed down through the family and it became one of the largest in the province. All of the bottles that were used for this popular company were made by the Humphreys Glass Works in Trenton, Nova Scotia.

"Pop", the word used for the name of present day soft drinks came from the popping sound when the cork was removed from the old soda water bottles. These bottles were simple and lacked a variety of colours.

From Sip to Cash: The *Savvy* Bottle Collector



**FULTZ
HOUSE
MUSEUM**

A Short History on Bottles & Bottle Collecting

THE EARLY BEGINNINGS: FREE BLOWN BOTTLES

Bottles in the 19th century were made out of mainly glass. They came in all different colours, sizes and shapes. The most popular bottles to collect from that time are free blown bottles.

The making and development of free blown bottles allowed for an easier manufacturing process. The process meant that bottles became more easily and proficiently produced with sufficient speed. To make one of these bottles, a small melted ball of glass was gathered at the flared end of a long hollow metal rod. The glass was blown by mouth from the other end of the rod until a bottle shape was formed. The free blown method has been used for over 2000 years.

Even though free blown bottles are the oldest bottles that can be collected, the bottles that were created with chip molds, iron molds and three-piece molds are also different bottles that are sought after by collectors.

THE RAREST OF COLOURS

Regardless of the type of bottle, the older a bottle is, the more it is worth. A coloured bottle is more valuable than a colourless one. The rarest colours are pure red, dark purple or teal blue bottles. A red bottle was very expensive and was only used for expensive liquors or colognes.



Pictured opposite are two coloured medicine bottles found in the Fultz House Museum collection.



Almost all food and medicine bottles were made in the natural colour of glass. In the 19th century the discovery of making glass perfectly clear was found. To make glass perfectly clear the addition of manganese oxide was added to the glass, and this bleached out the aqua green colour.

THE SEARCH IS ON: WHAT TO LOOK FOR...

The most common places to find old bottles are at old abandoned properties, mines and mills. As well, many bottles can be found in yard sales and antique shops. Going to auctions can also be a great opportunity to find old bottles. Since there are so many different types and colours of bottles, it is the collector's choice on what they like to collect.

When looking at bottles it is important to consider two main things. One should look into how old a bottle is. Also, it is important to understand the intended use. By asking and finding the answers to these two issues, it will eliminate a lot of bottles that are not as valuable. There are books and sites on-line that will help a collector date the bottle by asking questions about the bottle itself. This will help narrow down the time when the bottle was made. It is not just the shape and colour of the bottle that makes a bottle valuable. Misspelled words on the bottles or badly deformed bottles would also make them collectable and valuable. These are the types of bottles that will truly stand out and are truly one of a kind.



← There are many old pill bottles found on display at Fultz House. This particular bottle would have held 28 tablets. The drug was known as Cascara Sagrada.



The Fultz House Museum has many milk bottles ↑ featured as part of the summer kitchen exhibit.

A CLASSIC DOORSTEP TREAT

The first use of a milk bottle delivery was in the 1870's. A roundsman with a horse and cart would pour raw milk into a domestic vessel inside a person's back door. The milk bottles would hold either a pint or a quart of milk. These would be delivered daily in exchange for the empty bottles.

The first milk bottles came in a range of different sizes but were of a generic design. The earliest milk bottles were wide-necked jars made of thick flint glass. They were sealed with wax coated cardboard disks.

The milk bottle was a great invention at its time because it meant the milk could be stored for several days without spoiling. This is because the glass bottles could be sterilized. A tool called a dobber was used for opening them up.

Milk bottles are one of the most popular types of bottles to collect. This is because the bottles carry a nostalgic quality of an age that has past. The most valuable milk bottles are the ones that have the painted names of the dairies on them, which were used for home delivery of milk so that the milk bottles could find their way back to the right dairy farm.

In the 1800's a quart of milk would cost around 56 cents.