



Historic Windsor Spring - Spring House

Top Image: Two Clark Children standing at the Spring

Bottom Image: ephemera from the Windsor Spring

The Windsor Spring Water Company was established in 1905 nine miles from Augusta “in piney woods 300 feet above the city” in south Richmond County by W.H.T. Walker Jr., a son of the Confederate general of the same name killed during the Civil War Battle of Atlanta in 1864.

The spring’s name reportedly originated from British soldiers who camped there during the American Revolution and named the spring after Windsor, England.

In 1905, George M. Clarke and his family moved to the site and occupied a historic home, “Seclusival,” built in the early 19th century by Freeman Walker, a future U.S. Senator. Clarke bought the land and spring in 1907 and went into partnership with the junior Walker.

Clarke delivered hundreds of gallons of Windsor Spring water in 5- and 10-gallon bottles daily to businesses in Augusta and area, as well as the coolers on stands to mount the bottles. The writer can recall holding a paper cup beneath the cooler’s spout, pressing a button to release the water and watching bubbles rise as air replaced the water.

“When Papa came home at night (after making deliveries over mostly clay roads), he’d be as red as the roads,” recalled his daughter, the late Ella Clarke Nuite. Clarke eventually bought out Walker. So 114 years later, the spring still flows and the water company is still in business.

The purity and freshness of the spring water tasted better than “city water” to lots of folks, which is why even today bottled water is so popular with the masses.

The 10-gallon aquamarine demijohns embossed WINDSOR SPRING WATER, AUGUSTA, GA. were manufactured by the Illinois Glass Company and are popular with today’s collectors. There is an example complete with cooler and stand in the Bill & Bea Baab Collection in the Augusta Museum of History.

Other Windsor Spring collectibles in the collection include one-gallon and half-gallon table water bottles capped by porcelain Lightning stoppers, carafes etched with the Windsor Spring name for the same purpose and booklets extolling the value of drinking the water.

Shortly after the end of WW II, Fender’s Spring Water Company was established and its waters sold to the public in 10-gallon demijohns embossed FENDER SPRING WATER, AUGUSTA, GA. An example is in the Baabs’ collection.

In 1952, the company name was changed to the Crystal Spring Water Co., and a labeled demijohn also is in the museum collection..

Other spring water companies served Augusta area residents, including Daniel Spring in Greene County, Georgia; Mertins’ Crystal Water Company in nearby Beech Island, S.C., Panther Springs in south Richmond County, Harris Lithia Springs in Laurens County, South Carolina, Benscot Lithia Springs, Bowles Crystal Spring and Flowing Wells Water Company.

Bottles, some embossed, some labeled, are in existence for all except Panther Springs (a porcelain top marked by its name exists) and Bowles Spring.

(Images courtesy of <https://csrlt.org/>)

