**The Story of Coca-Cola**

Atlanta Beginnings
1886-1892

It was 1886, and in New York Harbor, workers were constructing the Statue of Liberty. Eight hundred miles away another great American symbol was about to be unveiled. Like many people who change history, John Pemberton, a Civil War veteran and Atlanta pharmacist, was inspired by simple curiosity. He loved tinkering with medicinal formulas, and one afternoon, searching for a quick cure for headaches, he stirred up a fragrant, caramel-colored liquid in a three-legged pot. When it was done, he carried it a few doors down to Jacobs' Pharmacy.
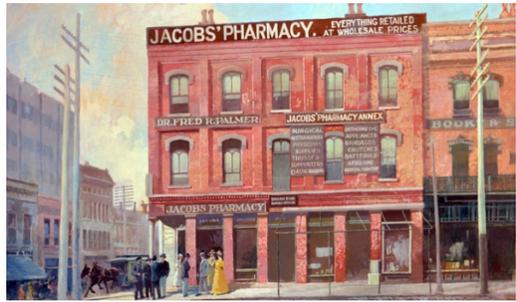
Here, the mixture was combined with carbonated water and sampled by customers who all agreed – this new drink was something special. So, Jacobs' Pharmacy put it on sale for five cents a glass. Pemberton's bookkeeper Frank Robinson named the mixture Coca-Cola, and wrote it out in his distinct script. To this day, Coca-Cola is written the same way.

In its first year, the Company sold about 9 glasses of Coca-Cola a day. A century later, The Coca-Cola Company has produced over 10 billion gallons of syrup. Unfortunately for Pemberton, he was more of an inventor than a businessman, and had no idea that he had invented one of the greatest products in the world. Over the course of three years, 1888-1891, Pemberton sold the Company to Atlanta businessman Asa Griggs Candler for a total of about $2300. Candler would become the Company's first president, and the first to bring real vision to the business and the brand.

Beyond Atlanta
1893-1904

Asa Candler, a natural born salesman, transformed Coca-Cola from an invention into a business. He knew there were thirsty people out there, and Candler found brilliant and innovative ways to introduce them to this exciting new refreshment. He gave away coupons for complimentary first tastes of Coca-Cola, and outfitted distributing pharmacists with clocks, urns, calendars and apothecary scales bearing the Coca-Cola brand. People saw Coca-Cola everywhere, and the aggressive advertising worked. By 1895, Candler had built syrup plants in Chicago, Dallas and Los Angeles.

Inevitably, the soda's popularity lead to a demand for it to be enjoyed in new ways. In 1894, a Mississippi businessman, Joseph Biedenharn, became the first to put the drink in bottles. He sent 12 of them to Candler, who responded without enthusiasm. Despite being a brilliant and innovative businessman, he didn't realize then that the heart of Coca-Cola would be with portable, bottled beverages customers could take anywhere. He still didn't realize it until five years later, in 1899, two Chattanooga lawyers, Benjamin F Thomas and Joseph B Whitehead, secured exclusive rights from him to bottle and sell the beverage – for the sum of one dollar.

Safeguarding the Brand

1905 – 1918
Imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery, but The Coca-Cola Company was none too pleased about all of copycat beverages taking advantage of its success. This was a great product, and a great brand. Both needed to be protected. Advertising focused on the authenticity of Coca-Cola, urging consumers to "Demand the genuine" and "Accept no substitute." The Company also decided to create a distinctive bottle shape to assure people they were actually getting a real Coca-Cola. In 1916, the Root Glass Company of Terre Haute, Indiana, began manufacturing the famous contour bottle. The contour bottle, which remains the signature shape today, was chosen for its attractive appearance, original design and the fact that, even in the dark, you could identify the genuine article.

As the country roared into the new century, The Coca-Cola Company grew rapidly, moving into Cuba, Puerto Rico, France, and other countries and U.S. territories. In 1900, there were two bottlers of Coca-Cola, by 1920, there would be about 1,000.

The Woodruff Legacy
1919 – 1940
Perhaps no person had more impact on The Coca-Cola Company than Robert Woodruff. In 1923, five years after his father Ernest purchased the Company from Asa Candler, Woodruff became the Company president. While Candler had introduced the U.S. to Coca-Cola, Woodruff would spend nearly 60 years as Company leader introducing the beverage to the world beyond.

Woodruff was a marketing genius who saw opportunities for expansion everywhere. He captivated foreign markets with innovative campaigns: Coca-Cola traveled with the U.S. team to the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics, the logo was emblazoned on racing dog sleds in Canada and the walls of bullfighting arenas in Spain. Woodruff pushed development and distribution of the six-pack of bottles. When it became clear to the Company that housewives would be more inclined to buy six-packs they could open easily at home, women were sent door to door, installing branded Coca-Cola bottle openers. This is exactly the kind of "outside-the box" thinking that thrived under Woodruff's leadership, and it made Coca-Cola not just a huge success, but a big part of people's lives.

The War and Its Legacy
1941-1959
In 1941, America entered World War II. Thousands of men and women were sent overseas. The country, and Coca-Cola, rallied behind them. Woodruff ordered that "every man in uniform gets a bottle of Coca-Cola for 5 cents, wherever he is, and whatever it costs the Company." In 1943, General Dwight D. Eisenhower sent an urgent cablegram to Coca-Cola, requesting shipment of materials for 10 bottling plants. During the war, many Europeans enjoyed their first take of the beverage, and when peace finally came, Coca-Cola was doing a lot of business overseas. From the 1940s until 1960, the number of countries with Coke bottling plants nearly doubled.

A World of Customers
1960-1981
After 75 years of amazing success with brand Coca-Cola, the Company decided to expand with new flavors: Sprite (1961), TAB (1963), and Fresca (1966). The Company's presence worldwide was growing rapidly, and year after year, Coca-Cola found a home in more and more places: Cambodia, Montserrat, Paraguay, Macau, Turkey and more. During the 1970s, advertising for Coca-Cola reflected a brand that was fun and playful. The international appeal of Coca-Cola was embodied by a 1971 commercial, where a group of young people from

all over the world gathered on a hilltop in Italy to sing "I'd Like to Buy the World a Coke." In 1978, The Coca-Cola Company was selected as the only company allowed to sell packaged cold drinks in the People's Republic of China.

Diet Coke and New Coke
1982-1989
In 1981, Robert C. Goizueta became chairman of The Board of Directors and CEO of The Coca-Cola Company. He released diet Coke. Within two years, it had become the top low-calorie drink in the world, second in success only to Coca-Cola. In 1985, he initiated the release of a new taste for Coca-Cola, the first change in formulation in 99 years. In taste tests, people loved the new formula. In the real world, they had a deep emotional attachment to the original, and they begged and pleaded to get it back. Critics called it the biggest marketing blunder ever. The original formula was returned to the market as Coca-Cola classic, and the product began to increase its lead over the competition – a lead that continues to this day.

Coca-Cola Now
1990 – Now
In 1886, Coca-Cola brought thrilling refreshment to patrons of a small Atlanta pharmacy. Now well into its second century, the Company's goal is to provide that magic every time, in over 200 countries, with 2,800 products. The only two countries not selling Coke products are North Korea and Cuba. Many varieties of Coca Cola exist including Caffeine-Free Coca-Cola, Diet Coke Caffeine-Free, Coca-Cola Zero Sugar, Coca-Cola Cherry, Coca-Cola Vanilla, and special versions with lemon, lime, and coffee. Based on Interbrand's "best global brand" study of 2015, Coca-Cola was the world's third most valuable brand, after Apple and Google. In 2013, it was estimated that consumers drank more than 1.8 billion servings of a Coke product each day. Coca-Cola ranked No. 87 in the 2018 Fortune 500 list of the largest United States corporations by total revenue.

Website Sources:
Wikipedia
Coca-Cola Company