

**PETERS FAMILY HISTORY AS RELATED TO
WILLIAM F. BAGGERMAN BY HIS UNCLE
GEORGE A. PETERS IN ABOUT 1973, WITH
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY THIS WRITER.
THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS TAKEN
IN CONVERSATION AND MAY BE SOMEWHAT
REPETITIOUS AND NOT PERFECTLY
ORGANIZED.**

This information was given to me by Uncle George who was residing at Clayton House, a retirement home on Clayton Road and Woods Mill Road. For several years I called on him weekly at the home. Uncle George was about 91 years old at the time this information was given to me.

Francis Henry Peters was born Feb. 22, 1838 in Rothenfeld (spelling may be incorrect), Germany. He died August 24, 1924 at the family home, 2236 St. Louis Ave, St. Louis, Mo. He came to the United States when he was about 14 or 16 years old. His parents never came to the US.

Frederick Peters was the oldest brother of Francis H. Peters. He came over first from Germany. The oldest sister was Kate Peters. She married a man whose name was also Peters. They settled in Bay, Missouri in Gasconade County. Her husband died and she married Simon Boeger (last name spelling may be incorrect). He owned the general store in Bay and was also a land owner. He was a staunch Republican. He would be the postmaster at Bay during the period when there was a Republican administration. He also owned a flour mill at Bay, Missouri. Simon Boeger was the father of Louis Boeger who in later years built a large family home about the 85XX block of Westmoreland in University City. I met the family about

this time as they were active members at the University Methodist Church, University City, where I attended Sunday School for several years.

H. W. Peters was one of the strong early leaders in the Peters Shoe Co. and later in International Shoe Co. He was the father of Oliver Peters, Ella Peters Lauman and Edwin Peters. Oliver Peters was the last member of the family to be an officer of International Shoe Co.

The brothers and sisters of Francis H. Peters were: Frederick Peters, Mrs. Charlotte (Peters) Waldecker, Mrs. August (Peters) Toennis and Louis B Peters. One of his brothers remained in Germany (name unknown). (Note: The Children of Frederick Peters were: Mrs. (Ida) Henry Pauley whose family lived in North St. Louis and had a drug store on Grand Ave. near the old Sportsman's Park. Miss Meta Peters who lived in Bay, Missouri (*Note: Not to be confused with St. Louis relative also a Meta Peters, WFB*) and Mrs. Ernest Schultz of St. Louis. The three Schultz sons, Ernest, Jr., Harold and Frederick live in St. Louis county as does their sister, Mrs. Francis Schultz Bates Weiker.

Mrs. Charlotte Peters Waldecker (wife of Frank Waldecker), of Bay, Missouri. Their two sons were Emil, recently a deputy sheriff in Gasconade County, and Francis, who had worked for the Phillips Oil Refinery in East St. Louis. There is also a daughter Clara who is married to Robert Schnatmaier, of St. Charles. Mrs. August Toennis, lived In St. Louis and was in the printing business. Seldom was in contact with this branch of Grandpa Peters family.

Louis B. Peters was Grandpa Peters brother, he lived in St. Louis and I remember he worked at the Peters Dry Goods Store on 14th St when I was a small boy. His children were John Peters who also worked at the dry good store as a young man then went to live in Arizona due to the health of his wife and daughter. The other child of Grandpa's brother was Mrs. Emil (Edna) Click. The sons of the Clicks were: Louis, Walter and Robert. They were about my age and we sometimes saw them at family parties.

Grandpa's father was in charge of a salt mine or similar operation for the German government (*Note: Probably the only family related item brought over from Germany was a cuckoo bird preserved coated in salt crystals, and shown under a glass bell jar*) Believe when

Grandpa came over, he first settled in Bay, Missouri and worked in the grocery store at that location. He then came to St. Louis and opened a grocery store at Clinton and 14th Street. He then later opened the Peters Dry Goods & Clothing Co. at the 14th and Warren location. Based upon religious belief of keeping the Sabbath holy, window shades on the display windows were brought down on Sunday so that there could be no "window shopping". When the shopping area declined along the retail area of 14th street and it was decided to close the dry goods store and hold a going out of business sale, a selling organization was brought in. This selling organization proposed bringing in other merchandise for the sale. Grandpa Peters forbid it as unfair. Grandpa and Grandma lived above the store when it first opened in 1881. The doctor recommended more exercise for Grandpa Peters and he built a home at 2236 St. Louis Avenue and he then walked back and forth to the store.

The house on St. Louis Avenue was built in 1894. H. W. Peters and Grandpa's son, Fred worked as salesmen for Chaffin Allen Shoe Co., St Louis. The company came to a near failing condition. I suppose through this contact Grandpa learned about the company, though there was another version that grandpa and Mr. Allen were acquainted through church and so bought the company. Taking a partner, it became Peters and Miller Shoe Company. Miller then borrowed money from Grandpa Peters. Mr. Miller defaulted on this personal debt and Grandpa foreclosed the note and gained his interest in the company.

H. W. Peters, Fred Peters, Mr. Sudholt and several others ran the company. They were jobbers and the shoes were bought in the eastern US. Fred (son of Grandpa Peters) had a meeting at the home on 14th and Warren (above the dry goods store) regarding changing to a manufacturing operation. Those in the business accepted the idea and they started to manufacture shoes in a small way, soon moving to a building on 11th and North Market Street. This building was on a corner across from a small park. Later they built a factory at 12th and North Market. It was a three story building. Machinery was operated by belt or rope drive. They enlarged several times and finally extended to the corner of 12th and North Market (Southeast corner). From this location they moved to the Northeast corner of Jefferson and St. Louis

Avenues. They built this factory in about 1900. They also built a factory at Glasgow and North Market.

The last name of Grandpa Peters first wife was Torwegen (or Torwegee). I never heard the first wife referred to and the name was only known to me by having seen the grave stone in the family plot in St. Peters Cemetery. The children of this marriage were William, Fred and possibly another child who died in early life.

Fred was the business power in earlier years of the family. A story in family history and probably true, was that Fred while attending a dinner meeting of officers of shoe companies in St. Louis, was sitting across the table from Jackson Johnson and the two men conceived the idea of merging the companies which along with Peters Shoe Company, became International Shoe Company. The two men were said to have believed that the merger would work out because the companies were conducting about the same kind of business by the same kind of men and methods.

Grandpa Peters second wife's name was Eliza Knollenberg. She was born in St. Louis, near the location of an early Indian mound, probably on or near Mound Street. She was the mother of Charles, Emma Louise (my mother), Martha, Frank E and George A. Peters. Two children Arthur and Clara died while in their teen years. Both I believe died of tuberculosis. All lived in the St. Louis area throughout most of their lives.

Fred Peters and Henry W. Peters started their working careers as salesmen for Chafin Allen Shoe Co. In this way Grandpa Peters came to know about the shoe business. Grandpa Peters had the dry goods business at the time, and was the source of his investment capital needed to go into the shoe business. Chafin Allen was in financial difficulty. To buy out and start the new business probably Charles Zelle, (Note: There was a Zelle Jewelry Store in the Arcade Building on 8th and Olive Streets, I believe this was the owner of the jewelry company) and a Mr Drees came in to help supply capital. The business was renamed Peters & Miller Shoe Co. Miller soon dropped out due to personal financial problems. Grandpa Peters was vice-president of the new company and H. W. Peters was president. He was another

powerful personality in the family and I believe added much to the success of the new company and later International Shoe Co. Grandpa Peters was the largest stockholder. The company started as a jobber, buying their stock from eastern manufacturers.

Though Uncle Fred Peters was the early business power of the family, Uncle Charlie Peters demonstrated considerable business acumen in becoming the founder of Lindell Trust Company, located at Grand and St Louis Avenues. Albert (Delly) Dehelendorf, nephew of Uncle Charlie Peters, served as president of the bank for many years.

In 1916 Grandpa and Grandma Peters celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary and Grandpa's 78th birthday. At the anniversary celebration each of the children, William, Charles, Frederick, Emma Louise, Martha, Frank E and George A Peters were given 300 shares of common and 200 shares of preferred stock in International Shoe Company.

Grandpa Peters was know to have said later in life that he was born poor and wanted to be poor when he died. He meant that he wanted to give away his wealth. His giving was unique and well guided. Photographs show him turning the first shovel of dirt for the Sidney Street Presbyterian Church. He gave the major amount to build the Peters Memorial Presbyterian Church a t Sidney and Minnesota. He gave the amount to build the North Side YMCA he also gave the amount to build the main dining room building of the YMCA College Camp at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. He gave a substantial amount to The Farmington Orphanage a t Farmington, Missouri and many other persons and endeavors announced as "given by a friend".

While in my state senate campaign in 1962 I called on Mr and Mrs. Ben Rau who lived on Randolph Street (across from the park) in St. Charles, Missouri. Mrs. Rau told me that Emma (nee Knollenberg) Bucher, born March 27, 1857 was her grandmother and that her grandmother and my grandmother (Eliza Knolienberg Peters) were sisters . and Nora Peters (Uncertain of the accuracy of relationship of this reference, WFB).

**MY UNCLES, AUNTS AND COUSINS ON THE PETERS SIDE OF THE FAMILY AS
RECORDED BY WILLIAM F BAGGERMAN**

William and Kate Peters last home was on about 86xx Westmoreland Ave, University City, Missouri. Their children were Mabel Peters Wreiden, Nellie Peters Harms, (her husband Emil owned the Peter Hauptman Tobacco Company), and Ruth Peters MacCarthy, (her husband John for many years owned a large Ford Agency near Delmar and Skinker in St. Louis).

Frederick and Lottie Peters last home was on Westminister Place near Skinker, St Louis. Their children were Edgar, Raymond and Frederick. Frederick was the colorful son after success in a large auto repair business on Manchester Ave near Kingshighway in what is now the Cook Paint Co building. At that time the Post-Dispatch newspaper was delivered by a large fleet of trucks. These trucks were maintained at his garage. He then moved his family to Florida because of the health of one of his sons. In Florida he became known as the "Potato King". I remember meeting him in the late 30's or early 40's on a rare visit to St. Louis from Florida. I don't know the size of his potato farming operation, but he said for crop dusting he operated a fleet of eight airplanes, and to do the selling on the commodities market spent about \$8000 per month on telephone charges.

Charles and Kate Peters last home was at Westminister Place near Skinker, St Louis. His first wife was always referred to as Lizzie. Their children were Claribel Peters Rodewald, (the first husband of Clarabel died in Denver, his name not known to me), Grace Peters Dehlendorf and Elizabeth Peters Scheu. Uncle Charlie Peters was widowed in later life and married Ollie Brueggeman. She was always the life of the frequent family parties. She had been active in Republican politics and had a fairly high position in the city or state government during the Harding campaign.

Emma Louise (Peters) Baggerman (my mother), was married to William J Baggerman in 1912. Their children were William F. and Frederick P.

Martha (Peters) Urbach was married to Ferdinand Urbach. He was a theology professor at the University of Dubuque, (Iowa). Professor Urbach died before any of the grandchildren met him. The only child was Walter F Urbach. He was a university instructor and completed his career as a full professor of English at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston. He was our favorite older cousin and was our "model". He was responsible for three of the younger cousins becoming students at M.I.T. He was the true intellectual member of the family. Walter finished his career as a full professor of English literature.. He even told us youngsters in the 1920's about the concept of space travel.

The Frank E. Peters last family home was 6814 Waterman Ave, University City, Missouri. The wife of Frank was always referred to as Nora. The children were Ralph (wife Phoebe), who had a position with Eastman Kodak in Rochester, New York, and twins Francis A (Bud) Peters and Elinor (Peters) Schaper. Bud was about the age of my brother Fred and me. We were close friends as well as cousins.

George A and Elsa (nee Doerr) Peters, as this is written, both live at Clayton House, a nursing home on Clayton Road near Woods Mill Road. Uncle George is now about 93 years old. Aunt Elsa had a serious stroke about four years ago and has been a complete invalid since then. Uncle George worked for Peters Shoe Co. as a young man in the office and related that he paid the workers in gold coins. Uncle George was known as the frail or sickly member of the entire family, but he has outlived all his brothers and sisters and most of his nephews and nieces. As a young man and soon after his marriage he went to the dryer climate of Idaho and started a large apple orchard. This operation was near the town of Weiser. It was not successful, but has even until now given him a stock of stories about life in the earlier west.

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