

Uncle Edward J. Von Pein the Inventor



Edith and Frank Morris with
Great, Great Uncle Edward J. Von Pein
and Great Grandmother Lena C. Von Pein
on November 26, 1944.
Photograph taken by Uncle Charles Youngflesh.

Fienning Family Reunion
July 11-13, 1997

Uncle Edward J. Von Pein, the Inventor

Remembrances Recorded
at the Fienning Family Reunion 1995

Bob and Rosamond Fienning of Sherman, Texas, recorded a bit of family history for the 1995 Fienning Family Reunion. At the reunion, Betty, Ed, Edith, Esther, Rudy and Ruth added their own special memories to those which Bob and Rosamond had written.

This bit of family history should be of interest to all ages. The older family members will remember Uncle Ed. School age children should be able to brag about their ancestor, about his accomplishments and his famous friends.

- Uncle Ed was a noted inventor who worked for National Cash Register, Dayton Scale Company (which he developed and sold) and IBM at Endicott, New York. He was chief mechanical engineer for National Cash Register when Tom Watson invited him to be chief mechanical engineer for IBM. He developed the calculating scale for IBM. During his tenure at National Cash Register he developed the multiple drawer cash register.

- He held patents for 300-400 inventions including parts of the fishing reel, scales, and the mini shuffle board. Upon his retirement, he had a workshop at Boston, Indiana, in an old bank building and a home in St. Petersburg, Florida. It was in St. Petersburg that he invented the portable mini shuffle board which had wheels on the pusher and a two piece stick. For the fishing reel, he developed a mechanical counter for the amount of line one had out.

- Among his friends and contemporaries were Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, Orville and Wilbur Wright and GM executive Charlie Wilson. Also, he was a member of the exclusive Dayton Engineering Club, where he met many of the leading scientists of the day. Charlie Wilson was the first \$1 a year man in the government, at one point being more powerful than the president; his responsibility was production of supplies for the war effort.

- When Bob and Rosamond lived in Duncan, Oklahoma, they knew a patent attorney who worked for Halliburton Oil Well Cementing Company. He said that he often saw the name Edward J. Von Pein when he was searching patent records.

- Uncle Ed Fienning, who was named for Uncle Edward J. Von Pein, found Ed V.P. to be an inspiration in his life and was moved by his optimism. Uncle Ed V.P. advised him to never do anything just to make money; if boredom set in, to just move on. Ed F. recalled that Uncle Ed V.P. said that he had ten jobs in his first ten years of employment, starting out in bicycle repair. When he couldn't learn anything new, he would leave to another job. Uncle Ed V.P. lost a fortune in the 1929 stock market crash, but he realized that he could make another fortune and did so.

- Edith recalled that he graduated only from high school, but each year took an engineering correspondence course through the Hamilton Institute.

- He came to our family home at 1011 nearly every Saturday evening for sheephead and German songs, which he enjoyed singing and swaying to. He gave the kids boxes of Cracker Jacks (5 cents then). He never stayed with any relative when he visited Richmond. At the end of his visits

to 1011 South Eighth, he would never say good-bye to anyone; he would simply leave.

- He would often demonstrate how he could kick the light fixture hanging in our living room. Betty Coleman recalls that he was very special to her, a young grand niece, and that he was still limber enough in his eighties to kick the chandelier.

- He lent Uncle Bob \$150 for his junior year at Earlham College (1939) and again for his senior year (1940). Uncle Ed Fienning recalls that in 1938, Uncle Ed Von Pein loaned him \$15 to take the train to Chicago for an interview which he had arranged for Ed F. at IBM. As a result, Ed F. got an IBM position in the sales/service division.

- Edward J. Von Pein was born in Emden, Germany, on 4/16/1871. He died at age 86 on 11/22/1957.

- Edward's parents, John Henry Von Pein (1825-1901) and Etta Classen (1827-1900), were married in 1851. Ed's parents settled in Cincinnati because of Classen relatives there. John Henry was a ship's carpenter. At that time, the Ohio River was an important waterway for development of the West of our country. The story goes that Etta told her husband that their five sons needed a father at home to help raise them, so they decided to go to America. Ed's four brothers were Matt (Richmond), George (Indianapolis), John (Chicago) and Fred (Richmond).

- His first wife was Stella Dingfelter (1875-1925); His second wife was Edith Krumm (1893-?).

Ed Von Pein, Inventor, Dies

Edward Von Pein, 85, of 335 Watervliet av., died unexpectedly at St. Petersburg, Fla., where he and his wife were spending the winter season. He suffered a heart attack while riding on a city bus.

Mr. Von Pein, born in Cincinnati, was an inventor at the National Cash Register Co. from 1899 to 1927. During World War I, he designed the class 1700 register. He left the NCR to go with a scale company, which later was acquired by the International Business Machines Corp. and Mr. Von Pein was associated with that firm for a number of years.

He is survived by his wife, Edith. Services and burial will be held in Dayton.

*November 23, 1957
Dayton Daily News*

EDWARD VON PEIN, 85, of 35 Watervliet avenue, died yesterday at St. Petersburg, Fla., where he and his wife were spending the winter season. He suffered a heart attack on a bus. Mr. Von Pein was an inventor at National Cash Register company from 1899 to 1927. During World War I, he designed the class 1700 register. Mr. Von Pein left NCR to go with a scale company which later became International Business Machines Corporation. He was a member of Belmont Evangelical United Brethren church, Dayton lodge F&AM, Scottish Rite Valley of Dayton, Reed Commandery No. 6 Knights of Templar, Antioch Temple and St. Petersburg, Fla. Shrine club. Surviving is his wife, Edith. Services and burial will be in Dayton.

*Daily Journal Herald - Dayton
Saturday 11/23, 1957*

Edward J. VonPein

Services for Edward J. VonPein, 85, of 335 Watervliet av., will be conducted at 1:30 p. m. Tuesday at the Tobias funeral home, 648 Watervliet av., by Dr. M. B. Kleppinger.

Burial will be in Woodland cemetery. Friends may call at the funeral home from 3 to 5 and 7 to 9 p. m. Monday.

Mr. VonPein died Thursday.

*Sunday 11/24, 1957
Dayton Daily News*