

The Pagel Family Times

Volume 20

June 2016

PAGEL FAMILY CRAYON PORTRAITS

Several members of the Pagel family have large old pictures of our ancestors that appear to have been drawn with charcoal. These are known as crayon portraits and were quite popular in our area in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Perhaps they are abundant because of offers like the one photographer Louis Rice made in a Schultenburg Sticker advertisement on November 2, 1899: "A fine Crayon picture 16X20 given with each dozen cabinet pictures."

The term "crayon" does not come from the "Crayolas" children use, but rather from Conté crayons which are still used by artists and are more like sticks of charcoal or a dense pastel. (In case the term "cabinet photograph" that was used in the advertisement is also new to you, they were simply photographs mounted on 4.25-inch X 6.5-inch cardboard backing that often contained the photographer's name. They were extremely common at the time.)



Wilhelm Pagel died at 39 and his wife, Magdalena, was photographed much later. Apparently, the artist who combined the two photos softened her features in an attempt to picture her at the age her husband had last been photographed. Her clothing and pose in the original photograph alert us to the trickery and, otherwise, here she bears little resemblance to the original. We would like to locate the original photograph of Wilhelm Pagel, which is probably 3.5" tall.



Fredericka and Fritz Ladewig

2016 PAGEL FAMILY REUNION

**The Hallettsville cousins invite you to join them
on Saturday, July 9th at 10 a.m. at
the First United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall**

The church is on the corner of East 4th (Hwy 90A) & S. Dowling Streets in Hallettsville (See map on reverse side.)

Our catered lunch will include dessert and is \$13 per plate for single adults, \$25 for two adults, free for children under 12. Please r.s.v.p. to Glenn Pagel by Friday, July 1st. Please return the enclosed form along with your check. If you get in a bind at the last moment, you may phone (361) 798-2182 or e-mail gpapel@sbcglobal.net and pay at the reunion.

At the Fellowship Hall, we'll have lots of family heritage displays and a scanner on hand if you'd like to share your old photos or memorabilia.

Please consider bringing something interesting for our silent auction.

Bring the children and teens! Besides our usual balloons, the church has a playground and we will set up a video game area.

We look forward to seeing everyone!

Crayon portraits were enlargements of cabinet photographs or even earlier, smaller photos. The photographer made a negative and then projected that image onto light-sensitive paper. 16 X 20 inches was a common size. The weak photographic solution used to sensitize the paper produced only the basic shapes and outlines of the subject, which was then enhanced by an artist. The process was described by J. A. Barhydt in his 1882 book, *Crayon Portraiture: Complete Instructions for Making Crayon Portraits*

(continued on back page)



Family members have the original photo of Ernst Pagel, from which this portrait was made. However, we have not seen the original photo used in this crayon portrait of his wife, Anna Appelt Pagel.

IN REMEMBRANCE

This issue of *The Pagel Family Times* is dedicated to the memory of those who have passed away since last year's newsletter was printed:

Betty Jane Bell Mohrmann
John W. "Billie" Mueller
Victor Charles Roeber

(continued from front page)

on Crayon Paper and on Platinum, Silver, and Bromide Enlargements.” It’s likely that nearby small town photographers mailed off the original photographs and the crayon portraits were actually produced elsewhere.

Because crayon portraits might be made many years later than the original photograph, they can be extremely difficult to date. When the original photos can be located, it is interesting to see the kinds of manipulations made in the enlargements. A full-length subject may have been changed to a bust portrait. Frequently, two individual portraits were combined into one enlargement of a married couple. One person might be extracted from a family portrait to make a larger individual portrait, especially after that person’s demise.

Whether the end result was actually a life-like representation depended upon the skill of the artist who applied charcoal, Conté crayon, and/or pastels to make the finished portrait. If the artist wasn’t particularly skilled, the portraits bore very little resemblance to the original photograph.

If you have the original photo from which any of the portraits shown here might have been made, please contact us

Sources:

Albright, Gary E. and Michael K. Lee, “A Short Review of Crayon Enlargements: History, Technique, and Treatment”, <http://cool.conservation-us.org/coolaic/sg/topics/v03/pmgto3-007.pdf>

Paul Messier, “Crayon Portraits,” www.paulmessier.com/#resources/cvpo

Many thanks to Tina Tinker, Rose Egbert, Linda Hudson, Frank Pagel, Victoria Orsak, and Henry Ladewig for allowing me to copy their crayon portraits.

This issue of *The Pagel Family Times* was edited by Rox Ann Johnson, historian of the Pagel Family Reunion, who takes full responsibility for its content. Comments and questions may be directed to her at 6907 E. State Highway 159, Fayetteville, TX 78940, (979) 249-3236, e-mail roxannjohnson@me.com. Please notify us of family births, deaths, and marriages.

The Pagel Family Times © 2016



This selection of portraits shows a dramatic variation in artistic skill. Clockwise from top right: Wilhelmina (Schiller) and Frank Pagel, Unknown Fischer or Sebastian family child, Anna (Rother) and Julius Pagel, Nathalie Ladewig Appelt, and the Ernst and Anna Pagel family at their home in Tivoli.



Like Us on Facebook

Check out our new Facebook page, The Pagel Family in Texas, for the latest family news, plus photos—both old and new.

www.pagelfamily.org

Our cousin, Clay Maeckel, generously provides space on his server for our family reunion web site. Check it out!