



BREWERS,
IMMIGRANTS AND
ST. LOUIS: THE
ELLIS-MOSBLECH
FAMILY HISTORY

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to our ancestors, who paved the path that we walk on today. We only recorded it.

This book is especially dedicated to Grandpa and Grandma, Gilbert Ellis and Alvina Ellis nee Mosblech. We miss you.



Figure 1 - Caroline Ellis and Gilbert Ellis in 1920s

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Introduction and Challenge to the Next Generation

Our family history begins in England, Germany, and Ireland. The Ellis and Mosblech families journeyed through numerous states and areas but they are intrinsically linked to Missouri in general and St. Louis, MO in particular. You will meet some family members that you know or knew and numerous family members that you do not know or never knew. I hope by tracing your roots, you can develop a sense of your history, appreciation for the family and your place in it.

I will not write much about our family members, who are still alive. I will primarily concentrate on past generations because of identity theft and the open environment in which we live. You will be delighted, surprised and sometimes shocked by these stories. We have produced a few garden variety scoundrels as well as ministers, land owners and lots of military men.

I can be quite opinionated particularly about things I am passionate about such as the family history. I do not intend to offend anyone with anything that is said. I

want this family history to be a
blessing to you not a weight.



Figure 2 - Grandma Alvina Ellis and my mother as a toddler

Ellis Mosblech Family History

This book is dedicated to the ancestors of my maternal grandparents, Gilbert P. Ellis and Alvina M. Ellis nee Mosblech. Grandma and Grandpa were the children of first-generation Americans. Both of Grandma's grandparents were German immigrants to St. Louis. Her parents, Eduard Mosblech and Magadalena Mosblech nee Elker, were both first generation Americans born to German immigrants in St. Louis.

Grandpa's maternal grandparents were also German immigrants. Frederick and Joanne Johannpeter settled in St. Charles, MO with their large family.

Grandpa was a member of a North St. Louis German family. Grandma was a member of a South St. Louis German family. This reason among others led to some conflict between my grandfather and his father-in-law, Eduard Mosblech. Years ago just like today, some of the most trivial things cause rifts in families.

Due to both families recent immigration and a lack of information about William P. Ellis, who died when my grandfather was 2 years old, we only trace this branch of the family back four or five generations.



Figure 3 - Gilbert and Alvina Ellis on Christmas Day at the Osceola House

Chapter 1 - Who Was William P. Ellis?

William P. Ellis was my great grandfather. Unfortunately, he passed away when my grandfather, Gilbert P. Ellis, was two years old. My great grandmother did not know much about William's family. The actual information that Grandpa had on him was pretty sparse, so William was the real mystery man in the family history up until 2006 or 2007.

Grandpa had a picture of William sitting on this fake moon. William appeared to be a giant of a man. I would say 6'4" to 6'6". My

grandfather was 6'4" himself. Thanks to the digital age, I actually know more about my great grandfather than his own son did but the journey was complex and will illustrate the joys and challenges of the genealogical journey.

I started out knowing that he died in St. Louis, Missouri between June 22, 1917 and June 21, 1918. My grandfather was the most truthful, direct person that I have ever known, so I know the information was as correct as his memory could be. I felt pretty comfortable limiting my search to this time frame even with

memory not being 100 percent accurate.

The Missouri Secretary of State had put most death certificates online from 1910 to 1955, when I began this search. The first few times, I could not find William P. Ellis. Finally one night, I decided that I would do a search for every death certificate from St. Louis City in both the year 1917 and 1918 with the last name Ellis.

Fortunately, I hit pay dirt in 1917. You see my great grandfather's death certificate was listed as first name, "W.P." and last name "Ellis", so I could have search William Ellis

throughout the state until the cows came home and would have never found him. William's death certificate was liking hit the lottery.

I found out that he was born August 1, 1877 to William H. Ellis and unknown in the state of Kentucky. He was living at 5311A Magnolia Avenue, where died of lung disease on December 4, 1917. The death certificate also listed his occupation as a clay miner. St. Louis had a large amount of clay mines along S. Kingshighway Boulevard and in areas such as "Dogtown" at the turn of the century.

These mines turned out

the materials for the bricks that St. Louis is still famous for. I also saw that my great grandmother only had limited knowledge of William's background because she did not know his mother's name or where she was from. It is the challenge of both genealogy and history. If you don't tell someone or don't record it, the information is lost.

It appears that he moved to St. Charles, MO, sometime before 1900 because I believe that he mustered into one of the volunteer units going to fight the Spanish-American War on July 9, 1898 at St. Charles, MO. He

served in the 6th Volunteer Missouri Regiment, Light Battery A. He served for two years and was mustered out on May 10, 1899.

My great grandmother, Caroline Ellis, lived in St. Charles, MO also. They met sometime prior to 1912, when they married. On May 15, 1912, William P. Ellis married Caroline Leah "Lee" Johannpeter in St. Charles, MO. They would welcome my grandfather, Gilbert P. Ellis, into the world on Tuesday, June 22, 1915, by which time, they were living in St. Louis City. They may have moved to the city to be closer to his work.

Several clay mines were located within a couple of blocks of their flat on Magnolia Avenue.

Whether it was from the working in the clay mines, environmental factors, etc., William was troubled with lung problems for six months prior to his untimely death on December 4, 1917. He was just 40 years old.

His obituary was printed in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch on December 5, 1917: Obit of Wm P Ellis, St. Louis Post Dispatch, 05 Dec 1917 Ellis-Entered into rest on Tuesday, Dec. 4, 1917, at 11:20 am at

residence, 5811 Magnolia Avenue,
William P. Ellis, beloved husband of
Lena Ellis (nee Johannpeter), dear
father of Gilbert, our dear son,
brother, and son-in-law at the age of
40 years, 4 months and 3 days. Funeral
Friday at 2:30 pm from Blederwieden-
Dunkmann's Chapel, 1934 St. Louis
Avenue, to New Bethlehem Cemetery.
Motor.

For years, I thought that William's lineage traced back through Susan Mustain through to the Plantagent Kings of Cowardly King John and King Edward III. I recently discovered that I may have traced our

lineage through the wrong William H. Ellis. Unfortunately, William Ellis is a very common name in both Virginia and Kentucky. I don't know if or when I will be able to trace this side of the family back past William P. Ellis and his father, the yet to be clearly identified William H. Ellis.



Figure 4 - William and Caroline Ellis with Frederick and Johanna Johannpeter in Window

Chapter 2 - Caroline Leah "Lee" Johannpeter Ellis

My great grandmother,
Caroline Leah "Lee" Ellis nee
Johannpeter was born to Frederick
William August Johannpeter, 1839 -
1903, and Joanna Grieve, 1843 -
Unknown, in St. Charles, MO on June
13, 1881. She was the second youngest
of six siblings, Gustav, Anna, Amalia
"Marie", Julius "Jules" and Charles
Frederick. Great Grandma was said to
be a very strong willed person. Mom
says her personality came down through
Grandpa, to my mother and then to me.



Figure 5 - Caroline Johannpeter in Her Youth

Great Grandma went to work in the garment cutting industry at an early age. She met and married William P. Ellis on May 15, 1912, shortly before her 31st birthday. In 1915, she would give birth to my grandfather, Gilbert P. Ellis. Great Grandma told my mom years later that her doctor told her, "Have a baby or have a nervous breakdown. I didn't want a nervous breakdown, so I had a baby."

Tragically, Great Grandpa died on December 4, 1917, when my grandfather was only two years old.

At the time, it was believed that

Great Grandpa's family had some money but they expected her to ask them for some assistance. Mom said, "That wasn't going to happen. She was not going to ask for charity."

She continued to work in the garment industry and worked to support herself and my grandfather. In 1918, she was the Manager of the Mutual Manufacturing Company. A woman managing a manufacturing company was very rare in early Twentieth-Century America.



Figure 6 - Caroline on a Moon. I have seen William on the same moon in another picture.

Sometimes, she lived on her own and sometimes she lived with family members. In 1920, she lived with her mother and sister at 2136 Salisbury Street across from the Bethlehem Lutheran Church. In 1930, it appears she shared a two-family flat with an aunt at 1942-44 Hebert Street.

Sometime in the 1920s, they moved in with Great Grandma's brother, Julius Johannpeter (March 5, 1875 - November 13, 1961) and his wife Bertha Johannpeter nee Horst (July 19, 1880 - October 22, 1952). Uncle Jules was a surrogate father to Grandpa. Grandpa always talked about the fun he had

living with his aunt and uncle and their four kids. The two boys and two girls were like brothers and sisters to Grandpa.

Grandpa always said Uncle Jules had a very limited spoken vocabulary but he wrote the most beautiful letters. Grandpa told me one time he and Uncle Jules were sitting in the living room. Uncle Jules had been drinking a little too much home brewed German beer, when he looked up at the clock. He said, "Gil, you know that is a delicate piece of mechanicismism." Grandpa got the biggest kick out of retelling that

story.

Mom told me that Uncle Jules was a typical German husband. He did not do anything around the house. Great Grandma sometimes felt he did not always appreciate Aunt Bertha. Since Great Grandma adored Aunt Bertha, she sometimes let her feelings be known.

After a Saturday or Sunday meal, Great Grandma wanted to play cards but the table needed to be cleaned off first. Uncle Jules went to sit in the other room, while Aunt Bertha was going to clean off the table and do the washing up. Great

Grandma took the situation in hand by grabbing the table cloth, pulling it off the table and dumping the china dishes onto the floor. The dishes shattered upon hitting the floor with broken plates and cups everywhere.

Uncle Jules exclaimed, "What the hell are you doing Lee!?!". Great Grandma replied back, "It's about time you bought Bertha some new china. Sweep this mess up and let's play some cards." Great Grandma got to play cards sooner. Uncle Jules bought Aunt Bertha a new set of china.

Great Grandma continued to progress in her profession until she

was the fore lady in the garment
factory, where she worked.

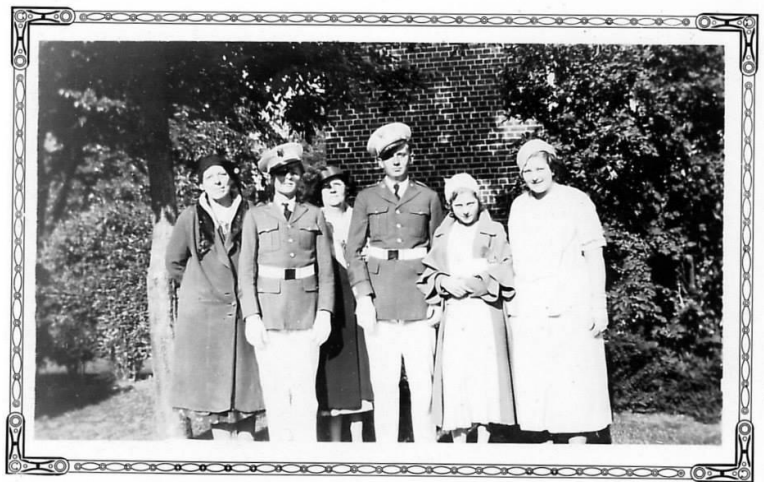


Figure 7 - Caroline Ellis and Gilbert Ellis at Missouri Military Academy

She sent my grandfather to the
prestigious Missouri Military Academy

in Mexico, MO. Grandpa did very well his first two years but started goofing off in his junior year. Great Grandma told him that if he did not buckle down second semester, she would not send him back for his senior year.

Grandpa thought she was bluffing but found out very quickly not to call her bluff. His grades did not improve, so she did not send him back for his senior year. He often told me that was one of the biggest mistakes of his life and one of his greatest lessons.

He had to be responsible for his actions.

My grandmother, Alvina, who

would marry my grandfather in 1938,
worked for Great Grandma at the
garment cutting factory. Great
Grandma lived with them for a couple
years after they got married and in
1940, they all worked in the same shop
although Grandma quit work soon after
the census was taken. Great Grandma
would go on to manage one of the
garment shops Downtown.

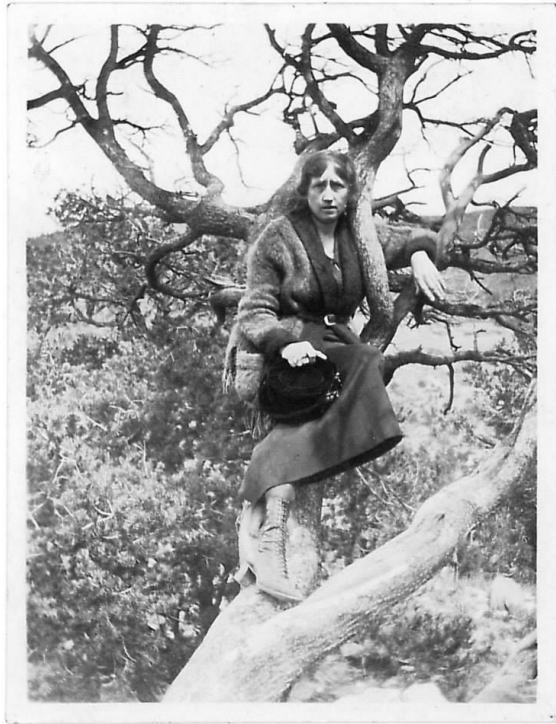


Figure 8 - Caroline Ellis posing in a tree. Your guess is as good as mine.

Great Grandma used to take my mom to the Fox Theater, when they still showed movies. They spent a lot

of time together. When Grandma and Grandpa moved onto Kingsland Court, Great Grandma moved in with them for several years. She always told my mom that she was going to live to see who she was going to marry. My mom and dad got engaged in late 1967 and Great Grandma died in April or May 1968, six weeks before my parents got married.

Great Grandma's will was strong to the end.

No one has built a statue to Caroline Johannpeter but she was a foundational figure in our family.

Faced with circumstances that would have broken a lot of other people, she

persevered and accomplished things that were unheard of for her sex in that day and age. I never met Great Grandma but I admire her strength and character. I saw that character in my grandfather and still see it in my mother. We come from sturdy stock.

**Mom's, Patricia Ellis Diaz,
Recollections of Her Grandmother**

My Grandpa used to tell me that Mom and Great Grandma were very close. Great Grandma could be very stubborn, so Grandpa used to send Mom to talk to her about going to the doctor, etc. I will let Mom tell you

about her grandmother in her own words.

Caroline better known as Lee was a woman before her time. In a period when most women wanted to be stay at home Mom's and be subservient to their husbands my Grandma was a rebel. When Grandma and Grandpa decided they wanted to get married both her parents and his parents were against it. Grandma was German and Grandpa was Irish and the parents wanted them to marry within their own nationality. Grandma being who she was married William anyway. I remember her telling me that before she married my

Grandpa; she made it very clear to him that he would NEVER hit her. (Apparently at that period of our history it was an acceptable practice.) However it wasn't acceptable to my grandma. In her words to William "At some point you will have to sleep. I will tie your arms and legs to the bed post and beat the holy hell out of you." If my Grandpa had lived longer I am sure we would have had some great stories.

Lee didn't like to cook or clean, but she loved to go out and to travel with her girlfriends. She told me that when my Dad was in the

Military Academy if she went out to dinner with her girlfriends she would send Dad money to get an ice cream soda when he went to town. It was important to her that he knew she cared. When Dad was about 8 they lived across the street from the Lutheran church they belonged to. Grandma wasn't a regular attendee, but thought Dad should be. She told me that one Sunday she just didn't feel like going to church, so she told Dad that the church was too crowded but he needed to go. She stood on the porch to make sure he got there safely. Dad went in the church, came back out and hollered

across the street "Mommy, there is a lot of room". She never used that excuse again.

Grandma was a great seamstress and a career woman. She made my sister and me many matching outfits, but she always sewed them completely by hand. Her stitches were so even that it looked like they were done on a machine. When I was in my 30's I worked in the garment industry for a few years. There were seamstress's that still remembered my Grandma. She was the type of woman that wasn't easy to forget.

When I lived in Illinois, my

parents would put me on a Greyhound bus and send me to St. Louis. Grandma would meet me at the bus station. She took me to fancy restaurants, movies, shopping excursions. We took the bus to get there, but usually took a cab home because we had too much to carry.

When I was 13 one of my birthday presents was a recipe card box. Now 55 years later I still use it and think of her with love.

One of my fondest memories was my Grandma taking me to the Lowe's State Theater to see Irma La Dolce starring Shirley McClain. She told me I could NEVER tell my parents she took

me to that movie or they would never let me come visit her again. I had no idea what I was going to see, but if it was "forbidden" it must be good. Well I saw the movie, but I was very naive and had no idea what it was about. Years later I figured out it was about prostitutes. I never did tell mom and dad that Grandma took me to see it. It was OUR secret.

Grandma introduced me to horse racing, slot machines, poker, canasta and liquor. She was quite a lady.



Figure 9 - Caroline Ellis in her bugler's outfit

**The Difficulties of Genealogy or
the Many Aliases of Caroline
Johannpeter Ellis**

Great Grandma also illustrates the difficulty of tracing the family history. I don't know if she did not trust the government or liked to mess with the census taker but here are all her aliases in the census records from 1910 to 1940.

In 1910, she is living with her parents on 4244 John Avenue in St. Louis, MO. It appears that the address was once a two-family flat but it has been since torn down. In this

census, she lists her name as Lena E. Johannpeter.

In 1920, she is living with her mother and my grandfather at 2140 Salisbury Street, which has since been torn down for a parking lot at the Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church across the street. She is listed as Leona Ellis. I would never have found her but Grandpa is listed as 4 1/2 year old, so I was able to confirm it was them by Grandpa and her mother, Hanna Johannpeter.

In 1930, she and an aunt are living at 1942-44 Hebert Street in a two-family flat that is still barely

standing but will soon be torn down.

She is listed as Caroline Ellis, which I believe was her actual name but even I am not sure anymore.

In 1940, she is living with my grandparents, who married in November 1938. They were living at 3511A Miami Avenue, which is still standing. I have found that to be the case with most of the buildings in the family history. If they are in South St. Louis, which was built out later, they are still standing. If they are in North St. Louis, they have been torn down or soon will be. Her name is listed as Caroline A. Ellis. I

don't what the A stands for, maybe AKA (also known as). My mother told me her name was Caroline Amelia "Lee or Leah" Johannpeter Ellis.

Great Grandma's public records clearly illustrate the greatest challenge for a genealogist.

If the records are not completely accurate or the relative shielded their identity for some reason, it is very difficult to find them. If you want to do family history, you have to be a bit of a detective and have a fair measure of perseverance. You just have to keep digging.



Figure 10 - Caroline Ellis in her golden years.

Chapter 3 - The Johannpeters

Great Grandma and most of her brothers and sisters were first generation Americans. Her parents, Frederick William Johannpeter (January 7, 1839 - February 21, 1915) and Johanna C. Grieve Johannpeter (August 20, 1843- December 17, 1920), were born in Prussia before the unification of Germany. Her oldest brother Gustav was born in Prussia in 1868, two years before they moved to the United States and settled in St. Charles, MO.

Frederick, who records seem to indicate went by William, was a

carpenter as his son Julius "Jules" would be.

At some point, most of the family moved to St. Louis, MO from St. Charles, MO. Frederick died in St. Louis during 1915. I originally found him in a family tree with him passing away in 1903. However, I have a picture of Great Grandma and Great Grandpa Ellis on their wedding day in 1912. Her parents, William and Hanna, are clearly visible in the window behind them. This picture is at the end of William's chapter.

Frederick and Johanna had eight children: Gustav in 1868, Anna in

1869, Amalia in 1873, Julius in 1875, Marie in 1876, Herman in 1879, Caroline in 1881, and Charles Frederick in 1883.

Originally, I thought Herman died in childhood. Actually, he died on September 19, 1921 from a single gunshot wound to the head. Herman, a widower, committed suicide at his home at 4032a North Grand Boulevard. Like many of the men in his family, Herman worked as a carpenter. Herman was born March 4, 1978 and was 43 years old at the time of his death.

Herman was married to Alice Riedlinger Johannpeter, who died on

June 17, 1916 from a sudden heart attack at age 35. I don't know if grief over his wife led to his suicide. It likely was a contributing cause to his decision to take his own life.

Marie and Great Grandma appeared to be close. They often lived together after Great Grandpa died. Grandpa also talked about her a lot. He said Marie was very nice but had terrible taste in men.



Figure 11 - Marie Johannpeter

Grandpa was very close to Julius "Uncle Jules", who served as a surrogate father to him. Uncle Jules married Aunt Bertha Horst and they had five children. Grandpa was close to his cousins Emily and Gene. I can remember going to see Emily in the mid-1980s in her home in Walnut Park.

I am not sure if it was 5039 Thrush Avenue or not but it was in the area.

Gene died before I was born but he was like an older brother to Grandpa.

Julius, Jr. known as "Punks" was a pilot, who flew the mail planes with Charles Lindbergh. The Missouri History Museum used to have a picture

in its archive of all of the mail pilots including "Punks" at Lambert Field. Grandpa said "Punks" was a tremendous athlete, who could knock a heavy bag or speed bag off of the mounting chain. Grandpa told me one time a heckler was really riding Gene in a ball game. "Punks" asked him to stop because his parents were present.

The man replied with profanity at which time "Punks" knocked him out with one punch. Grandpa said "Punks" sat him back in his chair and placed his hat over his eyes like he was sleeping. The man came to a few seconds later and did not say anymore

to Gene.

One of the interesting things that I found was that Uncle Jules was a fairly successful businessman. He owned both his own home and carpentry business. When Grandpa was courting Grandma, her father looked down on Grandpa because he was from a North St. Louis German family, while they were a South St. Louis German family.

The fact that Grandpa was only half German also probably did not weigh in his favor. However, Uncle Jules was far more successful than Eduard. Great Grandpa Mosblech always rented houses and always worked for

tailor shops. He never owned his own shop. However, he always looked down on Grandpa. He told Grandma that if she married him, she would work for the rest of her life. Grandpa made it his personal mission that she would be a housewife. She only worked briefly when they first married and then when Grandpa had his stroke. She was a homemaker the rest of the time.

I have not been able to trace the Johannpeters past Frederick William and Johanna. If I am able to trace them beyond this generation, I will add it in a later edition.



Figure 12 - Johannpeters in 1912 on William's and Caroline's wedding day in 1912. Marie on the far left was probably the bridesmaid.

Chapter 4 - The Family Comes to St. Louis in the 1800s, the Elkers and Mosblechs

The Elkers, August and Bertha, were both originally from Germany. August H. Elker was born May 22, 1847 in Hannover or Baden in Lower Saxony. I do not know who his parents were. He emigrated to the United States around 1854. In 1870, the family records show him living in a boarding house. He married Bertha Lipke on October 28, 1879 in St. Mary of Victories Church. He was 32 years of age.

Bertha Lipke was born on October 11, 1851 to Christ Lipke (1828-1871) and Rosalia (1826 - 1891) in Prussia. They immigrated to the United States in 1854 also. Bertha married August Elker at the age of 28.

In 1890, they lived at 1917 Park Avenue. In 1900, they lived at 1128 Hickory Street on the Second Floor.

August and Bertha had four children: Clara (1883-1962), Magdalena (1885-1945), Henry Elker (1888-Unknown) and Rosa (1890 - Unknown).

August, who was a street car conductor, died on February 7, 1906.

Bertha died ten months later on

October 29, 1906. Tragically, they both died in their 50s.

Bertha's parents Christ and Rosalia lived in St. Louis, MO.

Christ passed away at the age of 43 in 1871. Rosalia lived until 1891, when she died at the age of 64, which was a long life for the Elkers.

The Mosblechs, Gustav and Bertha nee Monse, arrived in New York from Liverpool on April 18, 1881 with their children Bertha (1876-Unknown), Antoinette (1878- 1944) and Franz (Frank) (1881- Unknown). Gustav was a brewer. One of the numerous breweries in St. Louis most likely

brought him to America.

Mary Mosblech was the first of the children to be born in St. Louis in 1881. Eduard was born in 1884 and died in 1956. Clara was born in 1888 and died in 1918. Her widowed husband, Fred Krull, would then marry Clara Elker, Great Grandma Magdalena's sister. I think this development also shows the close knit community that the families belonged to at the time.

They would live in High Ridge, MO until the 1960s. Anthony was born in 1891 and died in St. Louis, MO in March 1970. In general, the Mosblech tended to have very large families.

Gustav Mosblech was the son of Frederick Mosblech and Antoinette Schulte. Bertha Monse was the daughter of Fredrick Monse and an unknown mother. I lose all generations of the families past these ancestors.

Eduard Mosblech was born to Gustav Mosblech (1850-1924) and Bertha Monse Mosblech (1853 - 1925) in St. Louis, MO. Eduard was a first generation American as his family came from Wuppertal, Borussia, Germany before Germany was a unified country.

Gustav was a master brewer and most likely was brought over to work in one

of the many breweries in St. Louis.

Eduard was a tailor. In 1906, he married Magdalena Elker Mosblech, the daughter of August Elker (1847 - 1906) and Bertha Lipke Elker (1851 - 1906). Grandpa Ellis told me that Great Grandma told him that her parents got sick in 1906 and knew they were going to die. They asked Great Grandpa Mosblech to make sure that she was taken care of. Grandpa said, "Boy did he. Fourteen kids later."

Eduard and Magdalena would have fourteen children. Margaret (1908 - 1954) was the oldest. She was followed by Agnes (1909 - 2002),

Gertrude (1911 - 1993), Bertha (1913 - 1999), Dorothy (1914 -1999), my grandmother Alvina (1916 - 1991), Sylvia (1918 - 2009), Dolores (1919 - 1991), Edwin (1920 - 1999), Francis (1922 - 1988), Loretta (1925 - 1930), Mary Ann (1925 - Still Living), Virginia (1928 -2013) and Christian (1929 - 1996).

Grandma Ellis was very close to her mother but had a strained relationship with her father. He ran the house with an iron fist and expected everyone to take their marching orders from him. That was not going to fly with Grandpa Ellis,

so they did not get along very well.

It is easy to make Eduard out to be a bad guy but he was probably just modeling what he had seen throughout his life. Family norms were different a hundred years ago.

In 1930, they did something that no parent ever wants to do. They had to bury their child. Aunt Loretta developed diphtheria and was confined to the Isolation Hospital. She died at only four years of age. She is buried in St. Peter and Paul Cemetery.

Great Grandma Mosblech got it also and almost died.

On May 10, 1945, Great

Grandma did pass away from the effects of diabetes. They had to break it easy to my grandmother, who was pregnant. After Great Grandma died, Great Grandpa would remarry. The family did not like the new wife and the feeling was mutual, so Mom said that did not see much of Eduard. He had to bury his second child in 1954, when Aunt Margaret, the oldest, died from the effects of breast cancer at age 45.

Eduard would die himself on May 16, 1956. He was found floating at the foot of Iron Street in the Mississippi River. For years, the

family suspected his new wife of having him killed. The death certificate could not determine if foul play was involved. Some family members believed he jumped from the Eads Bridge and killed himself. I subscribe to the second theory. I think he jumped to his death on the anniversary of Great Grandma's death.

I don't doubt that his second marriage was unhappy. I do doubt that he was murdered. Eduard and Magdalena left a large family and legacy.



Figure 13 - Grandma and Mom in the 1940s

**Wuppertal, Borussia, North Rhine-
Westphalia, Germany**

Wuppertal is the area of Germany that the Mosblechs came from but when they emigrated it was not actually Wuppertal. It was the cities of Barmen and Elberfeld during the 1800s. A family member says that there are still Mosblechs living in Wuppertal. Wuppertal takes its name from the nearby Wupper River. It has a population of 350,000.

Wuppertal is also home to a suspension railroad, which was built between 1897 and 1903. It has been in

operation since 1901 and is the oldest operating metro rail with hanging cars. The train is on an eight mile track and the cars are suspended about 39 feet above the Wupper River. As of 2008, 25 million passengers rode the train annually. If you rode the train from beginning to end, it would take you about 30 minutes to make the trip.

In 1959 as part of a publicity stunt, some circus people transported an elephant on the train. The elephant became upset and started bumping the car. The circus owners had to push the elephant off the train into the river to keep the train from

having an accident. Neither the elephant nor anyone else was seriously hurt. The exhibitor received a hefty fine for his actions though.

Wuppertal has 4,500 building considered German national monuments. The town also produced a President of Germany, a President of the Parliment, Fredrich Engels and Friedrich Bayer, the inventor of the aspirin. Bayer founded his company in Wuppertal.

It is a dream of mine to travel to Wuppertal and meet any of our family still living in the area.



Figure 14 - Aunt Gert and Mom at Her First Communion

Chapter 5 - Grandma and Grandpa Ellis' Story

Grandma and Grandpa Ellis' Early Years

Gilbert P. Ellis was my grandfather, hero and mentor. He was born in St. Louis, MO on Tuesday, June 22, 1915 to William P. Ellis and Caroline Leah "Lee" Johannpeter Ellis.

Grandpa said Great Grandma had wanted to name him Marmaduke but fortunately changed it to Gilbert. Grandpa said, "Being named Gilbert was tough enough.

If I had been named Marmaduke, I would have been the meanest kid on two

feet or the biggest wimp you ever saw."

Grandpa's dad died when he was two years old, so he and his mother lived with relatives most of the time during his childhood.

Grandpa told me the same story Great Grandma told Mom about going to the Lutheran church across the street from their address on Salisbury Street.

Grandpa said he was quite "the religious fanatic" at the time. One of my prize possessions is his copy of Luther's Small Catechism from his personal library.

When Grandpa was away in military

school, Great Grandma lived with her sister Marie. Grandpa enjoyed his time in the Missouri Military Academy in Mexico, MO, immensely. His favorite time at the academy was shooting in the armory. He became good friends with the Range Master becoming his Student Assistant. He said that any time he could find time to be at the range, he would go down to get some shooting practice in.



Figure 15 - Grandpa as a Young Boy

When a new Range Master came in at the beginning of his junior year, he questioned if Grandpa should still be the assistant. The other kids told him that Grandpa was the best shot and could put an M-1 carbine back together blind folded. The Range Master said it was impossible, then handed Grandpa an M-1 carbine and a blind fold. Grandpa took it apart and put it back together without any problem. The new Range Master told Grandpa that he could shoot in the range any time he wanted with or without supervision.

Grandpa also talked about

being the runner-up in the heavyweight boxing competition. Grandpa was already 6'2" and his opponent was 5'10" guy from Chicago, who was pretty stocky. Grandpa said he was winning the 1st Round but got clipped about halfway through. He said he did not remember much until he started to get his bearings back in the 2nd Round.

He used his jab to win that round and knew that the winner of the 3rd Round would win the championship of the school. He was doing okay but got clipped again and barely survived to the bell. The other guy won a unanimous decision. Later, Grandpa

went to the other dorm to congratulate the winner. He told Grandpa that Grandpa was the only boxer he had not knocked out since he had been at the school. His friends showed Grandpa the dorm doors. The young man had broken them by knocking out the panels with his fist during punching practice.

Grandpa also got promoted to platoon leader. He and his two Native American friends from Oklahoma wanted to go to town on Saturday night but one of his platoon members got into trouble. It was part of Grandpa's duties to watch the cadet.

He was not going to be able to go to town. His friends tied the cadet to a stool. They told him if he yelled or told on Grandpa they would give the cadet a beating that he would not soon forget. The cadet did not say a word until they came back and untied him. Grandpa and his friends enjoyed their time in town that night.

Grandpa was not concentrating on his studies during his sophomore and junior years. Great Grandma told him that she was not going to send him back to school if he did not buckle down. He thought she was bluffing. He found out very quickly that she

was not. He came back home before his senior year, lived with Uncles Jules and started looking for work. It was 1932 and the country was in the midst of the Great Depression. Grandpa was 6'4" and over 200 pounds, so he said he could always find work. The men would line up outside of factories and a foreman would pick them. They would take one look at Grandpa's size and say, "You there. C'mon on."



Figure 16- Grandpa at Missouri Military Academy

One of his jobs was a light hauler. The heavy hauler moved products with equipment. The light hauler carried around a 20 pound piece of steel, which was loaded with about 40 pounds of metal product, which he delivered to the different work stations. The plant was located a couple blocks from Uncle Jules' house.

Grandpa said it took him about ten minutes to walk to the job and a half of an hour to walk back home after work.

Eventually, he went to work in the garment industry with Great Grandma. It was there that he met my

grandmother, Alvina M. Mosblech, who worked for my Great Grandma.

Grandma was born Alvin M. Mosblech on May 15, 1916 to Eduard Mosblech (1884-1956) and Magdalena Elker Mosblech (1885-1945) in St. Louis, MO. Grandma was one of 14 siblings. She had 11 sisters and 3 brothers. They all attended Catholic School until Eighth Grade graduation and then went to work. It was at work, where Grandma met Grandpa.

Grandma did not talk much about her childhood. She was very close to her mother and her sisters Agnes, Betty and Dorothy. She did not

talk much about her father other than to say he was a product of his times.

She said he was very authoritarian and did not like Grandpa although the feeling was mutual. Grandpa liked Great Grandma Mosblech a lot and would always bring her ice cream sodas, one of her favorite treats. When he learned Eduard did not like it, he made sure to bring her one every time. He did not think Eduard treated her right and he knew it would aggravate Eduard. When Eduard remarried after Magdalena's untimely death at 59, it does not seem that Grandma and her young family saw much of them.

Grandma said the first time she saw Grandpa walk in to see his mother, she told the young lady that was sitting next to her, "There is the man who I am going to marry." Grandma had to let Grandpa catch her first though. Another young man, who was working as a tennis pro, wanted to marry her but Grandpa told her, "You don't want to marry that guy. He won't treat you like I would. And tennis pros are all playboys too." It must have worked because Grandma did not see the man anymore.

Grandma stated that the first time Grandpa came to pick her

up, her youngest brother Uncle Chris came running in and said, "Mom, the biggest man I have ever seen just sat down in the living room and he offered Gert (Aunt Gertrude) a cigarette!"

Grandma got such a kick out of telling that story.



Figure 17 - Grandma in the late 1940s

Grandma loved to dance. She was a champion ball room dancer at the Casaloma Ballroom. Grandpa did not dance but he would pick her up, take her to the ballroom and wait outside until she was done dancing.

No other guy was going to take her home. Grandma said a few guys tried to tell her that they would never let their girlfriend dance with other men and where was this guy. They were going to tell him that they were taking her home. She would say, "Sure. You can speak to him. He is right outside." As soon as they walked out and saw Grandpa sitting

there, they walked away from Grandma
like they did not know her.



Figure 18 - Uncle Oscar, Grandpa's Fishing Buddy

Grandpa met his best friend, Uncle Oscar, who would marry Grandma's sister, Aunt Dorothy, this way. Uncle Oscar did not dance either but felt the same way as Grandpa, so they would sit outside together and talk about a variety of subjects.

They became great friends, hunting, fishing and card playing buddies and generally just good pals. Grandma said she only saw Grandpa cry twice, when Uncle Oscar died in the late 1970s and when I graduated high school.

Grandma and Grandpa were married in November 1938.



Figure 19 - Grandma and Grandpa Around the Time They Got Married

After Grandma and Grandpa got married, they lived with my great grandmother, Caroline Ellis, at 3511A Miami Street. Grandma and Grandpa told me two stories from these early days. After they were married, they were having a party for friends and an unmarried couple tried to make their

way into Grandma's and Grandpa's bed.

Grandpa caught them and asked what they thought they were doing.

The man told him, "You know how it is." Grandpa said, "Actually, I don't. I didn't defile my marriage bed. Get out." He told me that they did not see the couple again but Grandpa said, "No big loss."

A more telling story was one he told me about an interchange he had with my great grandfather, Eduard Mosblech, when they were visiting.

Eduard did not particularly care for Grandpa and the feeling was mutual.

Grandpa thought Great Grandpa was too

domineering. Grandpa said they were all sitting outside, when Eduard came home. He announced that he wanted to go inside and look for a picture.

Everyone in the yard, Great Grandma, daughters and son-in-laws all got up and started to head into the house.

Grandpa patted Grandma on the leg and said, "Just sit here, Alvina."

When Eduard noticed that they had not gotten up, he walked over to them and told them that he wanted to go inside and look for a picture.

Grandpa told him by all means go look for it. Eduard said that he meant for everyone to go look for the picture.

Grandpa told him, "My wife doesn't take orders from me. She is not taking them from anyone else. Hope you find your picture." Grandpa said, "You could have fried an egg on his head he was so mad but he knew where things stood. He didn't like me too much anyway." I wonder why.

In the early 1940s, Grandma gave birth to Aunt Maureen and Mom.

Shortly after this time, Grandma and Grandpa built a house in Mascoutah, Illinois, where Grandpa went to manage the Forest City Factory. They came back to St. Louis again in the 1950s and bought a house on Dryden Avenue in

St. Louis, MO. After Grandpa moved the family to Pickneyville, Illinois, he quit buying houses. He never knew when his job would force him to move, so he rented from that time on.

Mom said one time, when Aunt Maureen was watching her at the Dryden house; she decided to go outside in the rain. A wind came under her umbrella and lifted her off the porch into the driveway. Grandma and Grandpa had a fit when they got home.

Grandma was a homemaker during their time in St. Louis and Illinois, while Grandpa continued working in the garment industry.

Grandma took Mom and Aunt Maureen to church each Sunday. They also attended Catholic school. Grandpa was not going to church at this time but Grandma felt it was important for Aunt Maureen and Mom to be in church each Sunday. I trace our families faith heritage to my Grandma, who always prayed for us and made sure that we knew going to church was important.

Grandpa would move to Mascoutah, Illinois in the mid-1940s to be the manager of the Forest City garment cutting factory.

Grandma and Grandpa Ellis Head Into Mid-Life

When Grandpa became the manager of the Forest City plant, he built a house in Mascoutah. Grandma, Mom and Aunt Maureen lived in St. Louis at first but they all moved into the basement until the upstairs was finished. Grandpa and a few friends finished the inside of the house after he helped the men put up the exterior framing.

Grandma slipped on ice in the driveway and broke her leg. Aunt Maureen and Mom said she had quite a time getting up and down the stairs,

while they were living in the basement. Aunt Maureen and Mom were very young still. Mom was a toddler and did not starting go to school until the moved to the house on Dryden Avenue.

One day, while Grandpa was at work, a burglar tried to crawl through the dining room window. Grandma was alerted to the man by their dog, Silver, barking and going after the man. Grandma grabbed a large cast iron skillet and swung the pan at the man's head. He saw it coming and dropped backwards out of the window. Grandma and Silver went outside and

chased the burglar for half a block before he jumped in a car and made his escape. He might have been a reformed character after this experience.



Figure 20 - Grandma and Grandpa Camping in the Early 1950s

Grandpa enjoyed running the factory and had a few simple rules.

If you told him you quit, you quit.

He would not allow you to take it back. He did not hire anyone back either. He also was very careful with electricity after he watched an electrician accidentally stick a screwdriver into a 480 watt outlet.

Fortunately, it had a wooden handle so he was not hurt but the metal was completely melted down to the handle.

Grandpa said if a trained electrician could make such a mistake, an amateur could get killed very easily. He would not do any electrical work over

220 watt house current.

Grandpa created his hiring and retention policies based on what he did as an employee. Grandpa always demanded top dollar as an employee.

If he found out anyone including the foreman was making more than him, he would quit. Washington Avenue contained so many garment factories that he could simply walk down the street and get another job. He was so well known in the garment industry that he did not have problems finding a job. One owner hired him back four or five times after he quit on him. He was not going to let anyone do that

to him.

When Grandpa took the Forest City job, he thought it would be the job that he would retire from. Forest City was a very profitable company, when he went to work for them. He told me that he got called to St. Louis for a meeting. When they got there, they were told that the company was going out of business and they would all be out of a job.

Grandpa was shocked. He decided no company was "too big to go out of business or fail". Situations change and businesses have to adapt.

Grandpa worked in St. Louis

again but soon he was hired to be one of two foreman working at a garment cutter factory in Pickneyville, IL. Grandma and Grandpa Ellis moved to Pickneyville in the 1950s. It was here also that Grandpa would convert to Catholicism. It must have been a very happy time for the family because Mom and Aunt Maureen both speak fondly of their time here.

Grandpa worked at the factory until he had a blood clots in the late 1950s and the family decided to return to St. Louis. Grandma and Grandpa rented a house with enough land for a small farm. Grandpa had

chickens, which Mom hated. She said they are nasty, stupid animals. She said Grandpa would cut their heads off and throw them into the yard, where the headless body would run around for a bit. After the body quit moving, Mom would take it in to Grandma for dinner.

Grandma had continued to take Mom and Aunt Maureen to church.

The parish priest, Father McCormick, asked about Grandpa. Grandma told him that Grandpa did not go to church with her but that he was Irish also. Even though Grandpa was half-German and had a lot of English in him that we did

not know about, he was always very proud of being Irish. He always identified himself as an Irishman.

Father McCormick quickly won Grandpa over and eventually converted him to Catholicism. Grandpa always said Father McCormick was the most Christian man that he ever knew. How Father McCormick won him over though was to appeal to their common heritage as Irishman.

When Father McCormick first met Grandpa he said to him was that he "wanted to meet the fine Irish husband of Alvina". They discovered that each liked the outdoors and began to do

things together on the weekend.

Grandpa said, "He was full of blarney half the time but before I knew it he had me going to church on Sunday. He converted me to Catholicism." Grandpa must have been serious about his conversion because he has a number of Catholic fiction and non-fiction books in his personal library from this time.

Grandpa told me that he planned the Annual Church picnic for three years straight. He told Father McCormick that he could not do it after the third year because of his factory responsibilities. Father

McCormick said don't worry about it; he would take care of it. A few weeks before the picnic, Father McCormick would say, "Gilbert, I have most of it planned but I am having a couple problems. One Irishman to another, can you help me out?"

Father McCormick would bring over chicken and they would start to work on it. Grandpa would tell him, "You don't want to do that. You want to do it this way." Father McCormick would show him something else and Grandpa would take a pencil and diagram it out for him. On about the third point, Grandpa would say, "Just

give it here." Grandpa would plan the whole thing out again. He said he must have planned out another two or three picnics for him that way.

Grandpa would probably have still been planning the picnics but he got blood clots that almost killed him and the factory fired him. The doctors did not think he was going to make it but he pulled through. Mom told me five or six times in her life doctors told her Grandpa was not going to make it through the night but he pulled through every time.

After Grandpa Ellis' blood clots, he received an offer to manage

a factory in Arkansas. Grandma did not want him to take it because when he got sick in Pinkneyville, she did not have anyone to help her. They moved back to St. Louis. It was a good thing that they did because a year or so later Grandpa had a stroke.

He was out of work for close to a year.

Grandma took a job at Pope's Cafeteria to make ends meet. I know it was a tough financial time for them. It was also emotionally challenging for Grandpa. Grandma's father Eduard told her that if she married Grandpa, she would be working

the rest of her life. Grandpa was determined that Grandma would never work. Outside of this one year, Grandma never held a job after Aunt Maureen was born.

Grandma talked about working at Pope's Cafeteria every once in a while. I always got the feeling that she was proud of the assistance that she provided for that year but would never make too much of a deal about it. When I think of Grandma, I think of quiet strength. You could always depend on her, when you needed to talk about something. She was more perceptive than Grandpa.



Figure 21 - Grandma and Grandpa in Pinkneyville

Grandma and Grandpa Ellis Head Into Their Golden Years

When Grandma and Grandpa moved back to St. Louis, they originally moved to Shaw Avenue.

Dorothy Elliot, a family friend and widowed mother, asked them if they would move into a two-family flat if she could find one to buy. She looked at several and found one she liked on Kingsland Court. Grandma and Grandpa agreed. They lived on the first floor and Dorothy lived on the second floor.

They lived there until Grandma passed away in 1991 and Grandpa moved out three years later in 1994.

Grandma always prayed for us. She was a devout Catholic her entire life. If I go to Heaven and Grandma is not there, I am not in Heaven.

The 1960s and 1970s were big decades for Grandma and Grandpa. Mom and Aunt Maureen both got married.

Within 15 years, they had nine grandchildren. Grandma started hosting Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve each year. We would all eat so much that even the kids took naps. Grandma also led the sing along each year before we opened Christmas presents. The singing would be concluded by everyone

singing Silent Night.



Figure 22 - Grandma and Grandpa in Golden Years

The one thing that you knew was not to interrupt Grandma between 12:30 and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, when her soap operas were on.

Aunt Joanie, her brother Chris' wife, was the only person, who could call during this time.

Before I speak about Grandma babysitting us, I want to provide one of the things Grandma excelled at. Grandma was a fantastic cook. I have known several good cooks in my life but none that are her equal. What shocked me is that Grandma did not know how to cook when she married Grandpa. With so many

children, her family could not afford to mess up a meal. Great Grandma Mosblech cooked all the meals and did not teach the girls to cook. Grandma taught herself. Grandpa said that she was a gifted cook almost from the beginning.

He did tell a humorous story about her cooking one day. Grandma surprised Grandpa with a rhubarb pie.

Grandpa asked, "Rhubarb pie! Who eats rhubarb pie?" Grandpa said he almost wore the rhubarb pie.

I remember sitting at the breakfast table with them, when I was in my early teens. Grandma would be

making breakfast for us. Grandpa would say something like, "Lets get that breakfast on the table old woman.

And don't go flirting with disaster just cause your grandson is here."

Grandma would turn around and say, "Gilbert Ellis, I would whip you the best day you ever had. You'll get it when I'm done." Grandpa would laugh and tell me, "She would do it, too."

They were still obviously in love after all those years.

In 1979, Grandma started babysitting us because Mom went back to work. Grandma set the tone on her first day. Mom always made our

breakfast, when we got up. I got up the first morning and told Grandma, "I would like bacon, eggs and toast."

Grandma said, "Sure. Eggs and bacon are in the refrigerator. Bread is on the counter and the pan is in the bottom drawer of the stove." When I looked incredulously at her, she said, "You are old enough to start making your own meals. I will teach you and then you are going to cook on your own."

Grandma would eventually teach me how to cook, do laundry, iron, vacuum, etc. She told me I was not going to marry the first woman,

who cooked me a meal or did my laundry. She taught my sisters to cook also but they did not like it much. They bribed me to do the cooking. They did the dishes.

My parents would divorce in 1980. My sisters and I were pretty messed up but our grandparents influence was the stabilizing force in our life at the time. Grandma was also the first martial artist in the family. She could wield a fly swatter like a samurai warrior. When we got out of control, she put us back into check real quick. One time my younger sister was looking under the bed, when

I came up behind her and kicked her in the behind. Grandma saw it and said that she should kick my behind. I said, "Grandma, you can't kick that high." I am here to tell you she could kick that high.

In 1981, Grandpa decided that he was going to retire. He came with Grandma when she baby sat us, so we got to spend 6 out of 7 days a week with them. The only day we did not always see them was Saturday. Sometimes, we even saw them on Saturday.

After Grandpa retired, he taught us a lot. My younger sister

and I have to review reports in our job. We both credit our grandfather for teaching us the grammar rules that we have never forgotten. I would say, "Me and Joe went to the store yesterday." He would say, "Take out the 'and Joe'. Me went to the store.

That's Tarzan English. If you want to know if you chose the proper variation take out the and ____."

Grandpa was a great storyteller. During the summer, we would sit out on the back porch with Grandma and Grandpa and listen to the Cardinal's game on the radio. They would tell us stories about their life

together, growing up in St. Louis and a variety of topics. Grandpa sometimes would tell a story that was not humorous but we would still be waiting for the punch line.

Whenever we rode with him to the store, he would always say after he parked, "Hold on. I need to comb my hair in case someone wants my autograph." We would laugh and he would say, "See if they let me get out of there without signing something."

He always did have to sign an autograph, either to his check or the credit card receipt.

We spent every Sunday

during the summer down at Grandma and Grandpa's lake lot on Lake Tishomingo.

We used to play badminton, swim all day long and occasionally drive Grandpa's bass boat. I could probably write a book about our experiences at the lake.

In November 1988, Grandma and Grandpa celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary. Their marriage was a model for all of the family.

They told everyone the secret to marriage was to be best friends. They would only have a little over two more years together but we did not know that at the time. Grandma would pass

away on February 12, 1991. Grandpa would pass away ten years later on April 18, 2001. Grandpa said he missed Grandma every day.

I am going to end their story here. If I wrote down everything that they taught us and our times together, I would be writing a multi-volume set. Grandma and Grandpa live on in our memories and the life lessons that have stayed with us all these years. At the end of their life, it was a celebration of a lives well lived.



Figure 23 - Ellis Family in 1980s

**A Customer Service Lesson from
Grandpa (A Typical Gilbert Ellis
Lesson)**

In the late 1990s, my grandfather, Gilbert Ellis, was living with my Aunt Maureen and Uncle Dale. They had decided to have a large garage/shed installed, so Grandpa and my uncle would have a workshop. They had the shed assembled and engaged a local electrical contractor to run electricity to the workshop.

Uncle Dale had to run some errands on the day that the company was going to perform the work, so Grandpa waited for the electricians.

They did not show up. A week or so later, Grandpa was home and the men showed up to run the electric connections. About half way through the job, they realized that they did not have a required part.

They told Grandpa that they would be back after lunch to finish the job. Grandpa had planned to go to the casino that afternoon but he wanted the workshop operational. He told them to get the part and come back. They never returned.

On the day that the men returned, Grandpa wanted to let them know how unhappy he was with their

service but Uncle Dale did not want him too. Uncle Dale lived in a rural area of Jefferson County and told Grandpa, "Dad, you are used to things in St. Louis. It's a different lifestyle out here. People don't mind waiting."

Grandpa was not satisfied but he was supposed to pay for the job, so he just bided his time. After a couple hours, my uncle came back to get Grandpa. He told Uncle Dale, "Now, I am going to talk to those guys."

Grandpa addressed the foreman and said, "The first time that

you guys were supposed to come out here, you didn't. And I waited up here all day for you. The second time you came out here, you forgot a part. I changed my plans, so you could finish the job but you didn't come back and you didn't call me."

He summed up by saying, "So since you made me wait, you are going to get to wait. You send me a bill. I'll send you a check." He turned to my uncle and said, "It's a different lifestyle out here, Dale. They don't mind waiting." And an electrical contractor learned a lesson about the detrimental effects of not

communicating with customers.

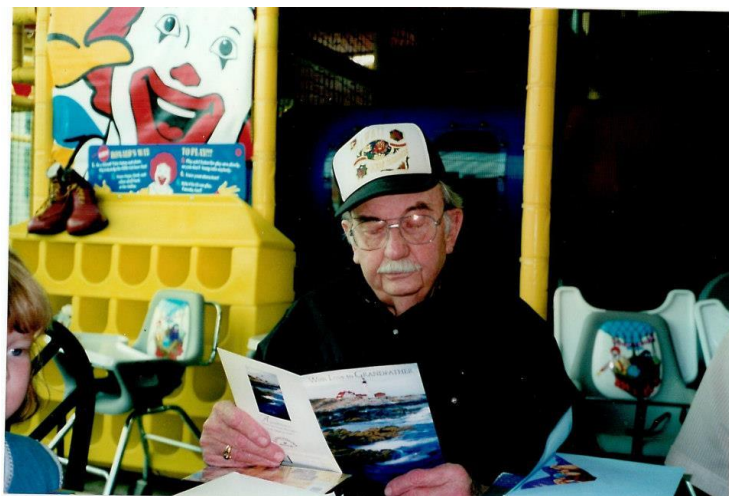


Figure 24 - Grandpa at 84

Chapter 6 - The Ellis Family and the Garment Industry

In St. Louis, MO, the garment industry played an important role in the local economy from the early 1900s to the 1970s. In the 1970s, overseas factories began to take the work once performed Downtown.

During the 1920s, the garment district encompassed fifteen blocks of Washington Avenue. Buyers used to walk the fifteen blocks during certain times of the year to purchase merchandise for their stores.

For the Ellis Family, the

garment industry played a prominent role in our family. It allowed my great grandmother, Caroline "Lee" Ellis, to support her young son as a single parent. My great grandfather, William P. Ellis, died on December 4, 1917 at the age of 40, when Grandpa Ellis was two years old.

Great Grandma was often a fore lady and even managed a garment factory in 1920. She brought my Grandpa into the industry, when he was in his early 20s. He would spend the remainder of his working life as a garment cutter, foreman and manager in the garment industry. He retired in

1981 at 66 years of age after more than 40 years in the garment industry.

Grandpa also met my Grandma Ellis, who worked for my Great Grandmother. She met Grandpa, when he was visiting his mother. She decided that he would be her husband but she had to let him catch her first. They all three worked for the Women's Dress Company in 1940. Grandma quit working once she got pregnant.

In 1979, my mother also began working in the garment industry.

She met my stepfather, Ernest C. Diaz, when they worked together at the Fashion Square Building at 1311

Washington Avenue. Grandpa Ellis worked with them on the seventh floor.

We went to get their paychecks after they got married during a family vacation. We rode up in the elevator, which was run by an actual elevator operator still.

When the Fashion Square Building was built in 1926 for a million dollars, the garment industry was one of the dominant downtown industries. By the 1970s, the garment industry was dying in the United States. Outside of New York and Texas, it has pretty much disappeared.

Back then, the union was

fighting for its existence and filmed the famous "Look for the Union Label" commercials. My parents were in the St. Louis ad. By this time, it was really all over but the crying. By 1983, the last union shop closed up in the city. Unlike Grandpa, my parents were not able to retire from the garment industry.

Today, most of the old Washington Avenue garment district has been made into apartments. The Fashion Square Building has also been renovated into commercial space on the ground floor and apartments through the rest of the eleven story building.

Most clothing is made overseas. And
an entire American industry passed
into history.



Figure 25 - Grandpa Cutting Garments

Chapter 7 - Summers at Lake Tishomingo

The Ellis Family history would be incomplete without a chapter on Lake Tishomingo. My grandparents, Gilbert and Alvina Ellis, owned a lake lot on Lake Tishomingo. We spent almost every Sunday, some Saturdays and any other day that we could find an excuse to go during the Spring, Summer and Fall between 1976 and 1990.

Lake Tishomingo was a very large man-made lake in Hillsboro, Missouri. Uncle Oscar Von Berg bought a house on the lake in the early

1970s. Uncle Oscar always tried to talk Grandpa into buying a lake lot, which he did by purchasing K60 in 1976. K60 was not a lake front property, so Grandpa bought L9 in 1977. L9 fronted the lake, had a shed and allowed us to build a boat dock eventually. Grandpa sold K60 to my mother.

Grandpa wanted to buy an adjacent lot and build a retirement house but he was never able to purchase one of the adjacent lots. We did spend a lot of summer days down at the lake though.

We usually started going

down to the lake in March or April.

We usually took the boat out and put everything up in October. Every year in the Fall, we would get together, rake and burn the leaves and do any work that needed to be done before we closed up for the winter.

We swam in the lake a lot.

We always had to wear ski belts but we swam every week. We stored our gear in a coffin next to the shed. Spiders infested the coffin, so we had to be very careful in getting out all our swim gear. We usually took it out, threw it on the ground to get rid of any spiders and then picked it up.

We also had rafts and inner tubes. My sisters and I could easily have two of us stand on the inner tube but we could never get all three of us on it. We spent years trying to get all three of us standing on the inner tube at the same time.

When Grandpa retired, Grandma and Grandpa would take us down to the lake during the week. They told us stories about growing up in St. Louis, their courtship and their marriage.

We loved to listen to their stories of the "good ole' days". We would swim, play badminton and do any odd jobs Grandpa needed us to do.



Figure 26 - Grandma Celebrating Mother's Day at the Lake

We had to do a fair amount of work to maintain the property. Grandpa built several retaining walls, a set of steps and built a driveway. We put up a retainer of railroad ties around the driveway. Grandpa then had a ton of gravel dumped. We had to use shovels and grass rakes to spread the gravel out on the driveway. Grandpa would have additional gravel dumped every few years, which we spread again. We also had to paint every few years. Weekly, we had to sweep and wipe everything down.

We also had to cut the grass. Grandpa would usually cut the

Lower 40 with the riding mower, while I cut the Upper 40 with the push mower. He let me ride the mower but was hesitant to let me cut grass on the hilly Lower 40. He was afraid it might roll on me.

Grandpa and Dad would often fish early on Sunday morning, so they would get me up to drive the boat.

Grandpa bought a Bass Tracker in 1978, which was his pride and joy. He taught my sisters and me how to drive it at an early age. I never liked to fish, so he and Dad put me to work as a boat driver.

After Grandma died on

February 12, 1991, we did not go down to the lake as much. Grandma and Grandpa had spent so much time down there, I think it was too painful for him to go down like we used to. My generation was mostly working adults and could not get down to the lake like we used to either. Grandpa decided that it was too much work any more and sold L9 to a St. Louis Police Officer in the middle 1990s.

The lake represented family.

We spent many Sunday with our grandparents, parents, aunt and uncle, siblings, cousins and eventually nieces, nephews and second cousins.

We swam together, worked together and always laughed together. Those days were inspiring. When the Rock of the Family passed, some of what the lake represented died as well. This era in the family history was over but it would be incomplete without recording them.



Figure 27 - Grandma and Grandpa at the Lake

Chapter 8 - The Holidays in St. Louis During the 1980s

I thought this article would be the appropriate way to conclude the Ellis Family history. I will continue to add information to the family history as I get it but often, when I think of my family, it is in regard to the holidays.

I don't remember much before the 1980s and we didn't celebrate the holidays the same way after my grandmother, Alvina Ellis, passed away on February 12, 1991. The holidays I will describe were typical

of our holiday gatherings from 1981 to 1990.

The holiday season kicked off on Thanksgiving at Grandpa and Grandma Ellis' house. Grandpa and Grandma had two daughters and our families would gather at their house. Grandma, a cook without equal, always prepared the meal with some help from the granddaughters. With nine grandchildren, she was cooking for an army.

Grandpa and I would put the leaves in the dining room table.

We would also put out as many card tables as we needed to accommodate the

kids. I was at the big table by this time sitting next to Grandpa. We would get our jobs done before 11:00 a.m., so we could watch football.



Figure 28 - Grandma and Grandpa at Christmas on Osceola Street

Grandpa was a huge Dallas Cowboys fan. They always play on

Thanksgiving.

When the turkey was ready, he would kick everyone out of the kitchen but his assistant, which was usually me. We would then take all the food in and everyone chowed down.

Usually we were so full we could barely move. The adults would occasionally play cards but a number of us watched the football game.

Christmas Eve was also at Grandma and Grandpa Ellis' but it was quite a bit different. We could not turn on the television. Grandpa would play their Christmas records. We would eat a buffet type dinner of ham,

corned beef and roast beef. We would then open our presents by picking numbers. Each present was numbered, so you could receive all your presents at once or you may wait awhile.

Another Christmas Eve tradition was all the grand kids would sing a song, do a skit, etc. before we opened presents. Grandma would then lead us in "Silent Night" after the kids were done singing. My mother has preserved these traditions.

Christmas Day was at our house. The whole Diaz clan would gather. All eight kids, my sister's husbands, kids and Grandma and Grandpa

Ellis would squeeze into the house on Villa. We were packed in so tight that you had to go outside to change your mind.

One of the funnier things occurred when someone went into the kitchen for food or went to use the bathrooms. They would yell, "Shift" and everyone would move a little bit to the left or right to let the person through.

Most of the adults played cards. Dad (Ernest C. Diaz) would usually be wearing his new flannel shirt. Dad loved flannel shirts and always got a new one for Christmas.

My younger sisters and I would sit in the living room with a couple of my brother-in-laws and watch movies. Everyone had a good time.

We have many new traditions now but I still look back on those holidays as some of the best of my life. I am thankful that my parents and grandparents taught us that the holidays were about family, rest and memories.



Figure 29 - Grandma in Her New Coat on Christmas Eve

Chapter 9 – Additional Posts after 2013

The following posts were added after publishing this book in 2013. They are added here for your convenience.

Gertrude "Gert" Henrietta Mosblech

On Saturday, July 15, 1911, Eduard and Magdalena Mosblech welcomed their third child, Gertrude Henrietta Mosblech, into the world. "Aunt Gert" was born in St. Louis, Missouri, the third oldest of fourteen children.

"Aunt Gert" holds a special place in the Mosblech family history for her warmth, joy and affection for her many nieces, nephews, great nieces and great nephews.

We called her our great-aunt but the genealogy term is grand-aunt.

Aunt Gert was grand. She lived in the same four family flat that we did in the 1970s, so we saw her every day.

Even though she was in her sixties, she always had time for us kids. She never tried to brush us off and enjoyed when we come over and watch television with her.

Aunt Gert did not have the easiest time in life. When she was younger, she did not learn as quickly as her siblings. While her siblings went to work after they graduated eighth grade, Aunt Gert stayed home and helped Great Grandma take care of the house. When Great Grandma died in 1945, Aunt Gert helped take care of the house.

Great Grandpa was going to take care of Aunt Gert in his will.

However, Eduard remarried in 1946 and all his money went to his new wife upon his death in 1956.

Aunt Gert worked cleaning houses until she fell down some steps, when she was in her 50s. She could not work any longer and went on Social Security Disability. The disability payments were not enough to cover her expenses, so most of her brothers and sisters chipped in each month to take care of her living expenses.

Aunt Gert lived on the second floor of our flat for a long time until the lady downstairs moved out.

We were able to move her downstairs.

While she lived on the second floor, my mom always worried about her falling down the steps, so she used to

take stuff downstairs for her. Mom would walk down the stairs with Aunt Gert, whenever she saw her coming downstairs.

Aunt Gert had lots of reasons to be bitter but I don't ever remember her complaining. She always seemed so happy whenever we would go see her. I think she did get lonely at times but I never saw bitterness in her. I used to think Aunt Gert was Mom's godmother but it was actually Aunt Dolores. Mom said that when she was growing up, Aunt Gert was always the cousin's favorite aunt. They told her they were going to call her "Aunt Trudy"

and she got the biggest kick out of it.

Aunt Gert loved to talk and could not keep a secret. My grandmother, who was Aunt Gert's younger sister, used to say Aunt Gert was the biggest gossip in the family, which is covering a lot of ground. When I inadvertently shared this information with Aunt Gert, she asked Grandma if she said it. My grandmother did not lie and stated, "Yes, Gertrude. You are the biggest gossip in the family."

They talked it out though and Aunt Gert wasn't mad. Grandma was always protective of Aunt Gert. Grandma

would not speak to one of her brothers, who did not help with Aunt Gert's care.

In 1980, my parents divorced. Aunt Gert ended up being our babysitter every once in a while. Right before Christmas 1980, Dad let us know that he was getting remarried. My younger sister and I were really struggling with the changes and Christmas was coming up. Aunt Gert was going to watch us while Mom went shopping. She kept talking about how we were going to watch a Christmas movie that night.



Figure 30- Mom and Aunt Gert

A Christmas movie was the last thing on my mind. To be honest, I didn't really put too much stock in her endorsement. When we went over

that night, she had fixed us popcorn. The movie on TV that she had hyped so much was *White Christmas* (1954). It was everything that she said it would be. For those two hours, we forgot about my dad's upcoming wedding and felt the Christmas spirit again.

The movie was just the right medicine. To this day, it is still my favorite Christmas movie. Despite the passage of 30 years, I still vividly remember watching that movie with her that night, eating popcorn and her joy at how much we got into the movie.



Figure 31- Our Old Flat in the 4200 block of Osceola

In 1981, my mom remarried. We moved across town to Dad's old house on Villa Avenue. In the late 1980s, Aunt Gert could no longer live on her own. Even though she lived in a care facility, one of her siblings would pick her up and bring her to the family reunions. She still remembered

everyone and we were so happy to see her. She just had difficulty getting around and eventually was wheel chair bound.

On Monday, February 1, 1993, Gertrude Henrietta Mosblech passed away at 81 years of age. She outlived a number of her young siblings including my grandmother. She was laid to rest in St. Peter's and Paul's Cemetery on February 3, 1993.

There's Tuna in Tuna Casserole?

My sisters, cousins and I had to help Mom cook the evening meal. One Spring evening in 1981 before my mom,

Patricia Diaz, married my stepdad, Ernest Diaz, we were having our dinner. This evening's cook made my mom's tuna casserole recipe. The cook's name is not being published to protect the truly innocent.

I do not like tuna fish but my mom's casserole was extremely good.

The cook produced the casserole. It looked and smelled just like Mom's.

We were all ready to dig in. The cook waited expectantly for the praise that she knew would be hers. We all took a big slice of the casserole and the taste test began.

It was very good but it was missing something. I spoke up first.

"It is really good. It's not quite the same as Mom's. What did you do differently?" Mom said that she was thinking the same thing. The cook stated, "I followed what you told me."

We could see the crushed potato chips on top. Mom asked, "Did you put the peas in?" The cook, "Yes." "Did you put the cream of mushroom soup in?" "Yes." Mom again asked, "Did you put the peas in?" "Yes." "Did you put the noodles in?" After almost a minute, Mom said, "Did you put the tuna in?" The cook replied, "There's

tuna in tuna casserole?" And that was the night, we had noodle, pea, mushroom soup and potato chip casserole.

This story is still memorable to my family members that were there that day. The story has lived on 33 years after it originally happened. All families have stories like this one but you have to record it somehow.

Otherwise, it will soon be forgotten or lost. It is the challenge of both genealogy and history.

Card Night at the Ellis' House

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, my grandparents used to host a monthly card party with three of Grandma Ellis' sisters and their husbands. Uncle Tony and Aunt Agnes Giraudo, Uncle Oscar and Aunt Dorothy Von Berg along with Uncle Art and Aunt Betty Clemmings would join Grandma and Grandpa to play Pinochle. Each family would host one card game a month on Saturday night.

Grandma and Grandpa Ellis' house on Kingsland Court had a large dining room. The dining room table sat eight normally. All the men smoked but I don't believe Grandma or my great

aunts smoked. It was smoking that would bring their card playing days to an end. Uncle Tony Giraudo developed lung cancer in 1974.

While Grandma Ellis had fourteen siblings, she was closest to Aunt Agnes, Aunt Betty, and Aunt Dorothy.

The four families would do things with each other throughout the years.

When Grandpa Ellis had his blood clots in 1959 or 1960, Mom was on vacation with Uncle Oscar and Aunt Dorothy. Grandma Ellis talked Grandpa into moving back to St. Louis, so they would be close to her family if they needed help. Oscar Von Berg was

Grandpa Ellis' best friend and had more influence with him than most.

Sometimes the brothers-in-law would get together to work on projects. Grandpa Ellis once told me that he and the other two brothers-in-law were helping Uncle Tony fix up his new house. Uncle Tony was working on a ladder, when he felt like it was going to tip. He reached up to steady himself and grabbed a 110 volt wire in the ceiling. After it finally let him go, he crashed to the floor.

When they heard him fall, Grandpa, Uncle Oscar and Uncle Art

came running. After they helped him to his feet, Uncle Tony asked, "What is a matter with you guys? I was yelling my head off for you." They told him that they didn't hear anything until he crashed to the ground. He was trying to yell but the electricity was preventing the words from coming out.

Anthony "Uncle Tony" John Giraudo passed away in June 1974 from the effects of lung cancer. Uncle Tony's death convinced all three of his brothers-in-law to quit smoking. The United States government did not start putting warning on cigarette packages

until 1966 but all four men kept smoking. When Uncle Tony developed lung cancer, it really hit home for Grandpa, Uncle Oscar and Uncle Art. Sadly, the card games also came to an end.

Eugene August Johannpeter (1908 - 1969)

Eugene "Gene" August Johannpeter was born on May 20, 1908 to Julius and Bertha Johannpeter. He was the second son of Uncle Jules and Aunt Bertha. His older brother was Julius "Punks" William Johannpeter, Jr., who flew the mail out of Lambert Field

along with Charles Lindbergh. "Punks" was seven years older than Gene.

My grandfather, Gilbert P. Ellis, lived with Uncles Jules and Aunt Bertha off and on after the death of his father William P. Ellis in December 1917. Grandpa was seven years younger than Gene but they got along very well. When Grandpa and Gene reached adulthood, they would often do things together like hunting.

"Punks" was fourteen years older than Grandpa, so they did not do as much stuff together. Grandpa looked up to "Punks" though. Besides being a

talented pilot, he was also a good athlete.

Grandpa and Gene continued to hang out together in adulthood.

Grandpa said that Gene was visiting him at the house in Mascoutah. Gene was showing Grandpa a new .45 caliber handgun that he purchased. Gene pointed the gun to the corner to unload it. Grandpa did not have a clearing barrel but wished he had after this incident. Gene accidentally discharged a round, which ricocheted several times but did not hit either one of them. However, the

noise from the discharge deafened them for a half hour or so.

Grandpa also told me about how Gene passed away at such a young age.

Gene had been out for the evening with his wife Evelyn. When they arrived back home, Gene sat down in his chair. He looked up at his wife and said, "I don't feel good.

Goodbye. I love you." His head slumped down to his chest like he was sleeping. However, Gene had passed away.

On October 3, 1969, Eugene August Johannpeter died at 61 years of age.

He was laid to rest in the same grave as his parents, Julius and Bertha, in St. Peter's Cemetary in Normandy.

Gene was gone but not forgotten particularly by my grandfather.

The Lost Mosblech Sisters

When I was growing up, I often heard Grandma Ellis, Alvina M. Mosblech Ellis, talk about her two lost sisters. She lost her oldest sister Margaret and her little sister Loretta before her 40th birthday.

Margaret B. Mosblech was the first of fourteen children born to Eduard and Magdalena Mosblech. Great

Aunt Margaret was born on June 10, 1908. As the oldest child, she was probably called on often to help Great Grandma Mosblech with her growing brood.

Grandma talked about losing her little sister Loretta in 1930 to diphtheria. Loretta was four years old and died on March 4, 1930 in the Isolation Hospital. The Isolation Hospital at 5600 Arsenal Street would later house the criminally insane in St. Louis.

The death was particularly hard because they had limited contact with

Loretta in her last days. Several of the younger siblings caught it but only Loretta died from diphtheria.

Loretta Mosblech was born on August 7, 1925. Great Aunt Loretta was laid to rest with much of the rest of the Mosblech family in St. Peter and Paul Cemetery.

Great Aunt Margaret married Joseph H. Hartmann on June 6, 1936 four days before her 26th birthday. Uncle Joe was born on September 20, 1907. He was 26-years-old at the time of the marriage. He would later serve in World War II.

On January 30, 1946, Great Aunt Margaret and Uncle Joe welcomed Joseph Edward Hartmann into the world in Texas. Their only child Joseph Edward would also die young. He was only twenty-four years old when he died in St. Clair, Missouri on July 11, 1970.

Great Aunt Margaret got very sick herself in 1952. She was diagnosed with breast cancer, hypertension and arteriosclerosis. Breast cancer would take her life at only 45 years of age on June 5, 1954. She was laid to rest in St. Peter and Paul Cemetery.

She and Uncle Joe were living in Kirkwood at the time of her death in a house on Monica Drive. They had lived at the address for four years. Uncle Joe was now a widower with an eight year-old son.

I think Uncle Joe used to come to the Mosblech family reunions. Close to the end of his life, I remember him coming over to Grandma and Grandpa Ellis' house on Kingsland Court. I remember him having gray hair and being distinguished looking. He was apparently sick and visiting all of his in-laws.

I remember that after he left Grandma was very sad. She shared with me how hard it was losing their oldest sister so long ago. It was almost thirty years before that Aunt Margaret passed away but it still seemed painful for Grandma.

On July 20, 1982, Joseph H. Hartmann passed away. He was laid to rest in Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery.

Most of the Mosblech siblings would pass away between 1988 and 1999. Grandma and her sisters outlived Great Aunt Margaret and Great

Aunt Loretta by fifty to seventy years. Despite such a long span of time, the deaths were still painful for the remaining siblings. I don't think Grandma ever completely got over it. They were gone but never forgotten.

Arthur C. Clemmings (1913-1992)

Arthur C. Clemmings was born on Thursday, April 3, 1913 in St. Louis, MO. Arthur C. Clemmings was inducted into the United States Army as a private. He was assigned as a semi-skilled metal worker. His term of enlistment, which began on September 2, 1942, was for the duration of the

war plus six months. Arthur was 29 years old at the time of his enlistment. He was dishonorably discharged at the end of the war as a Sergeant.

On November 26, 1949, Arthur C. Clemmings became "Uncle Art". He married Bertha Johanna Mosblech at St. Maries of Victories Church. They were both 36 years old. Interestingly, Aunt Betty was born one day after Uncle Art on April 4, 1913. Aunt Betty was the fourth of fourteen children born to Eduard and Magdalena Mosblech. Uncle Art and Aunt Betty had two children, Kathleen and Arlene.

As kids we saw Uncle Art and Aunt Betty fairly regularly because they were my youngest sister Becky's godparents. We would go over to their house on Cologne Avenue on Christmas Eve before we went to Grandma and Grandpa Ellis' house. They had a small little home that Aunt Betty kept immaculate. Uncle Art had some interesting miniature cars but the neatest thing he had was a train set.

He took Grandpa Ellis and me downstairs one day to show us his train set. It took up a significant portion of his basement. It consisted of a model town and a train that

traveled through it. For a twelve year old kid, it was one of the neatest things that I had ever seen.

Uncle Art also had a distinctive way of speaking. He pronounced his words very distinctly. Uncle Art also read quite a bit. He also watched documentaries that he would tell us about when we visited on Christmas Eve. Uncle Art's precise way of doing things sometimes irritated Grandpa Ellis.

Grandpa thought that Uncle Art wasted money with all the additives that he put in his car. Uncle Art's

careful way of pronouncing words could also irritate Grandpa. I never quite understood this aspect of their relationship because Grandpa loved language. Grandpa was always turning phrases in his personal letters.

Grandpa must have liked Uncle Art though. Grandpa did not tolerate people he did not like.

The Mosblech Family had a rough time from 1988 to 1993. A significant number of siblings and brothers-in-law passed away beginning with Uncle Francis Mosblech in 1988. Uncle Art was one of the family that passed away during this time. On Wednesday,

September 09, 1992, Arthur C. Clemmings passed away at 79 years of age.

Grandma Ellis also passed away during this time on February 12, 1991.

Grandpa Ellis often drove both Aunt Betty and Aunt Dorothy Von Burg to their doctor's appointments.

Eventually they would join Grandma in heaven but it would not be for several more years.

To Uncle Art, Arthur C. Clemmings, a kind, generous and intelligent man.

Frank Mosblech Marries Adelheide Breeher

What I did not realize until a few weeks ago was that my great grand-uncle, Frank O. Mosblech, was one of the grooms that day.

Frank O. Mosblech was born on February 12, 1881 in Barmen-Elberfeld, Germany. Frank emigrated with his parents shortly after his birth. They settled in St. Louis, MO. Gustave Mosblech worked as a master brewer for one of the many breweries in St. Louis.

Frank O. Mosblech married Adelheid Breeher in November 1904. They were one of the 151 couples who

obtained marriage licenses on Wednesday, November 23, 1904. Most of the couples wanted to marry on Thanksgiving Day 1904.

Frank Mosblech lived at 215 E. Schirmer. He would buy the house next to his parent's house. They would host all the Mosblech family gatherings. Frank was 23 at the time of his marriage.

Adelheid Breeher lived at 2243 Montana Street in a house that is still standing. Built in 1890, the house is in the Marine Villa neighborhood. Adelheid was born in

1885 but I do not have the exact date yet. Adelheid would have been around 19 years old.

Frank and Adelheid Mosblech were married for over 38 years. Frank O. Mosblech passed away from heart failure at 61 years of age on January 29, 1943. Adelheid was 58 years old.

Frank's and Adelheid's marriage occurred during a significant day in St. Louis history during the most significant year in the city's history. It is discoveries like this one that make researching the family history so enjoyable.

LICENSE RECORDS IN STATE BROKEN; AND MINISTER MARRY COUPLES ON THE SPOT

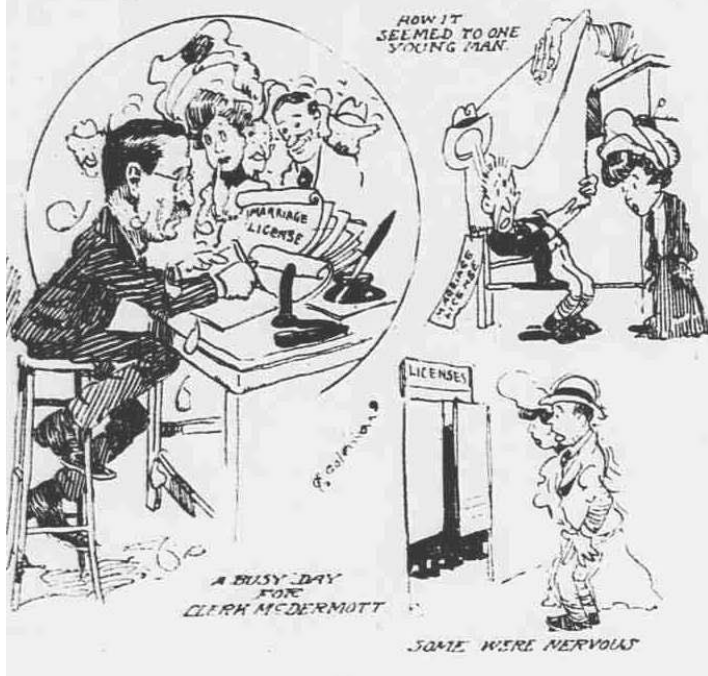


Figure 32-Cartoon from November 24, 1904 edition of St. Louis Star-Times

Hanging Out With Great Grandma Ellis

Growing up I heard lots of stories about my Great Grandmother Caroline "Lee" Ellis from my mother.

She spent lots of time with her grandmother who lived in St. Louis.

Grandpa Ellis moved to Illinois a couple of times during the 1940s and 1950s. Mom would come back to St. Louis frequently to see Great Grandma Ellis. Grandma and Grandpa Ellis would bring Mom to visit when she was younger. When Mom got older, she would ride the bus from Pickneyville back to St. Louis. Great Grandma would meet her at the bus depot.



Figure 33- Great Grandma Ellis at her house on Connecticut Avenue in St. Louis

One of the things that they did often was see movies at the Fox Theatre. Today, Fox Theatre hosts

muscial shows and plays. In the 1940s and 1950s, it was one of the movie palaces that the studios built to distribute their films. Eventually this distribution chain was dissolved by court action. Without the studios building the theaters, builders started making smaller movie houses.

Great Grandma occasionally took Mom to see movies that Grandma and Grandpa Ellis would not approve of.

Mom had to hide what they had seen for fear that Grandma and Grandpa would not let her go to Great Grandma's house. Great Grandma lived with her friend Emily and one other

lady in a house in the 3800 block of Connecticut Avenue. Mom said some of her best memories with her grandmother were during her time living at this house. Built in 1905, Great Grandma Ellis lived there in the 1950s and 1960s.

Emily out lived my great grandmother by a decade or so. I remember going with Grandpa Ellis one day, when he went to check on Emily.

She was living at the Jefferson Arms Hotel in Downtown St. Louis. I seem to remember her at several of the family gatherings at Grandma and Grandpa Ellis' house in the 1970s.

Great Grandma Ellis started the family stubbornness that has travelled down to the present generation. Mom was one of the few people Great Grandma would listen to. Grandpa Ellis would often have to get Mom to talk to Great Grandma, when she would not see a doctor, take medicine, etc.

Great Grandma made it clear to everyone that she would do what she wanted when she wanted.

My mother recently asked me for my thoughts about something but told me at the beginning and the end that she was only asking, she was not saying she was going to follow my

advice and it was very iffy if she even considered it. I wonder where she got that from.

Great Grandma Ellis passed away in May 1968 a month before her 87th birthday and my mother's wedding.

Even though she was not in great health in the few years prior to her passing, she told my mother that she was not going to die until she knew who Mom was marrying. She willed herself to go on until she reached her goal. My only regret is that I never got to meet this great lady but I think I know how she was through my

mother and grandfather. Thank you,
Great Grandma.

Goodbye to Aunt Mary Ann

I was recently notified that my
Great Aunt Mary Ann Duchek nee
Mosblech passed away on May 20, 2014.
She was the last surviving child of
Eduard and Magdalena Mosblech. Eduard
and Magdalena married on August 28,
1907. They would have fourteen
children between 1908 and 1929. Aunt
Mary Ann was the eleventh child.



Figure 34- Aunt Mary Ann

Aunt Mary Ann married Harold W. "Uncle Dutch" Duchek. Their marriage lasted 64 years. Uncle Dutch was an officer with Emerson Electric. We often had our family reunions at the

Emerson Electric Park in North St.
Louis County.

Our thoughts and prayers are with
Uncle Dutch, their daughter Donna and
their entire family.

Uncle Oscar and Aunt Dorothy Von Burg

Uncle Oscar Von Burg and Aunt
Dorothy Von Burg nee Mosblech were my
grandparents' closest friends.
Grandma Ellis and Aunt Dorothy were
sisters separated in age by about a
year and a half. Grandpa Ellis and
Uncle Oscar became close friends when
they were dating the sisters. Neither
Uncle Oscar nor Grandpa danced, so

they would escort Grandma and Aunt Dorothy to the Casa Loma Ballroom. While the sisters danced, Grandpa and Uncle Oscar sat outside talking. They would become good friends and hunting/fishing buddies.

Uncle Oscar, who was born on February 24, 1915, married Aunt Dorothy on May 29, 1937. Aunt Dorothy was slightly older than Uncle Oscar as she was born on August 20, 1914. They lived with Uncle Oscar's parents, Jacob and Margaret Von Burg, for a few years after their marriage.



Figure 35- Uncle Oscar With a Catch of Fish probably from a Fishing Trip with Grandpa

Uncle Oscar worked for a medical supply company, where I think that he eventually became a vice president. I know that he patented a piece of medical equipment and deferred the money until his retirement. He told Grandpa that the money from the patent would take care of Aunt Dorothy long after he was gone. Uncle Oscar did not know how prophetic those words would be.

Aunt Dorothy loved to play cards. I remember that she was always dressed immaculately. Like Grandma, I don't believe that she ever swam but she loved to ride in their pontoon

boat. She and Grandma talked just about every day. One of the things that we thought was neat was that Aunt Dorothy had an intercom system in their house by Suson Park, which allowed them to talk to each other in different parts of the house.

Uncle Oscar's father Jacob lived with them. Jacob was a very skilled carpenter. He built my sisters and me a replica kitchen out of wood that was still in its original condition twenty years later. At some point, Jacob had neck surgery and could only speak by using one of the electronic assist

devices that he put up to his neck to activate his vocal chords.

Uncle Oscar and Aunt Dorothy bought a lake house at Lake Tishomingo. Grandpa Ellis bought a lake lot a few years later. When Uncle Oscar retired, they were making plans to spend a lot of time at the lake together. Unfortunately, Uncle Oscar died unexpectedly on June 19, 1978 at the too young age of 63. Grandma said it was the first time she saw my Grandpa cry. Grandpa probably worked two more years because of Uncle Oscar's untimely death.

Grandma and Grandpa continued to do things with Aunt Dorothy at the lake. Aunt Dorothy would occasionally play cards but most often Grandma and Aunt Dorothy would sit and chat. When Grandma Ellis passed away in 1991, Grandpa Ellis would take Aunt Dorothy and Aunt Betty, one of Grandma's other sisters, to their doctor's appointments.

Aunt Dorothy would survived Uncle Oscar by almost 21 years exactly as she passed on June 23, 1999 at 84 years of age. They are both laid to rest at Mount Hope Cemetery. Grandpa was the last surviving member of the

awesome foursome. He passed away in 2001.

Uncle Oscar and Aunt Dorothy Von Burg are gone but not forgotten.

"Punks" Johannpeter Flew the Mail

One of the first times I ever heard my family talk about our history was in regards to my grandfather Gilbert Ellis' cousin Julius William Henry "Punks" Johannpeter. "Punks" Johannpeter was a pilot who flew the mail with Charles Lindbergh out of Lambert Field in St. Louis, MO. Since Lindbergh's famous flight across the Atlantic. The Missouri History Museum

save much of the photos from Lindbergh's time in St. Louis. One of the photos at the museum was a picture of Lindbergh with all the other mail pilots at Lambert Field. "Punks" Johannpeter was one of the pilots in the photo.

"Punks" was born in St. Louis during 1901. Since he was 14 years older than Grandpa Ellis, I don't think that they did much together but Grandpa always spoke about "Punks" in terms that showed how much he looked up to him. "Punks" was one of the few people that I ever heard Grandpa talk about in those terms.

"Punks" was still in St. Louis living at his father Julius G. Johannpeter's house on Thrush Avenue in 1928. Robertson Aircraft Company of Missouri bought a 1927 Travel Air 4000, Model NC2709 on June 14, 1928. While flying the plane on September 15, 1928, "Punks" had an accident in the plane. Fortunately, he was not injured. Flying aircraft in the early days of aviation was quite dangerous. The plane itself was slightly damaged.

By 1930, "Punks" moved to Cuyohoga County, Ohio before moving to Memphis, TN in 1935, where he would live for the remainder of his life.

"Punks" also married a lady named Dorothy prior to the move to Memphis. According to the 1940 Census, Julius W. Johannpeter, Jr. was a commercial airline pilot for a Memphis airline. "Punks" must have done very well financially because his home in Memphis is worth \$300,000 plus today.

During World War II, Julius William Henry "Punks" Johannpeter was an officer the U.S. Army Air Corps, which would eventually become the United States Air Force.

I don't think "Punks" came back to St. Louis much. My grandfather

never spoke about him much after he was a kid. "Punks" left St. Louis when Grandpa was in Missouri Military Academy. I don't think they saw much of each other after "Punks" moved.

"Punks" died in 1950 at the age of 49 from a massive heart attack. He is buried in Memphis. I am hoping to find his actual birth and death dates soon.

"Punks" is one of the most famous members of our family. His life appeared to live up to the legend. Thanks for your service, "Punks".

Customer Service Lesson from Grandpa

In the late 1990s, my grandfather, Gilbert Ellis, was living with my Aunt Maureen and Uncle Dale. They had decided to have a large garage/shed installed, so Grandpa and my uncle would have a workshop. They had the shed assembled and engaged a local electrical company to run electricity to the workshop.

Uncle Dale had to run some errands on the day that the company was going to perform the work, so Grandpa waited for the electricians. They did not show up. A week or so later, Grandpa was home and the men

showed up to run the electric. About half way through the job, they realized that they did not have a part.



Figure 36- Grandpa and Grandma Ellis in the 1970s

They told Grandpa that they would be back after lunch to finish the job. Grandpa had planned to go to the casino that afternoon but he wanted the workshop operational, so he told them to get the part and come back. They never returned.

On the day that the men returned, Grandpa wanted to let them know how unhappy he was with their service but Uncle Dale did not want him too. Uncle Dale lived in a rural area of Jefferson County and told Grandpa, "Dad, you are used to things in St. Louis. It's a different lifestyle out here. People don't mind waiting."

Grandpa was not satisfied but he was supposed to pay for the job, so he just bided his time. After a couple hours, my uncle came back to get Grandpa. He told Uncle Dale, "Now, I am going to talk to those guys."

Grandpa addressed the foreman and said, "The first time that you guys were supposed to come out here, you didn't. And I waited up here all day for you. The second time you came out here, you forgot a part. I changed my plans, so you could finish the job but you didn't come back and you didn't call me."

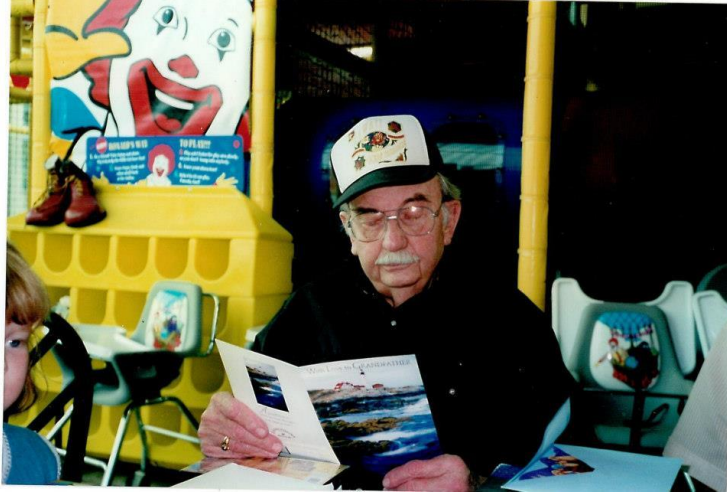


Figure 37- Grandpa Ellis in 1999

He summed up by saying, "So since you made me wait, you are going to get to wait. You send me a bill. I'll send you a check." He turned to my uncle and said, "It's a different lifestyle out here, Dale. They don't mind waiting."

This story is pure Grandpa and one of my favorite from the latter part of his life. He was in his early 80s but still as mentally sharp as he had always been.

Grandpa Gets a Pop Rivet Tool

At one point before I bought my own house, I thought home repairs were one of my skills. I helped my grandfather, Gilbert Ellis, make repairs to our house and the flat he lived in. Grandpa Ellis taught me how to replace electrical outlets, washers on sinks and build lots of things with wood. I put together lots of

prefabricated furniture over the years.

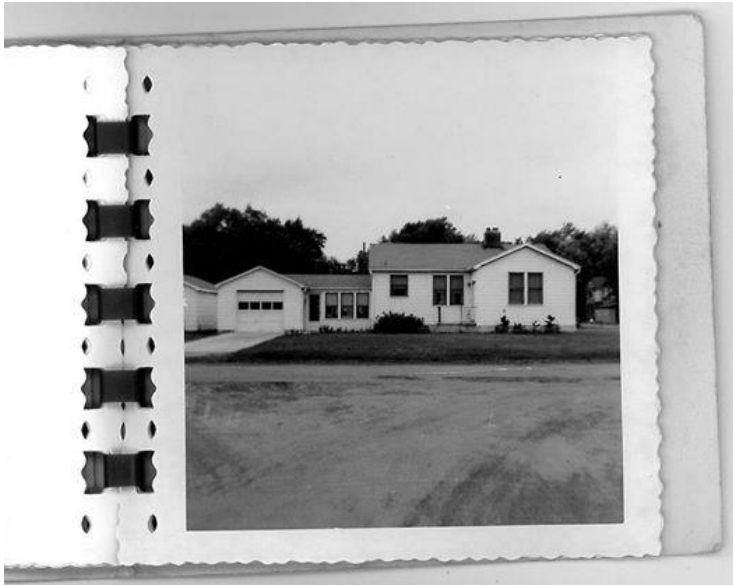


Figure 38 - Mascoutah House Grandpa Built By Hand

In 1997, my wife Tamara and I bought a house. I quickly discovered that I did not have any talent for home repairs. Grandpa Ellis had all

the talent. I was there to hand him tools, lift stuff and laugh at his jokes which were really funny anyway.

Grandpa Ellis possessed excellent mechanical ability. In the 1940s, Grandpa built a house from the foundation up in Mascoutah, IL. When my parents bought our house on Villa in St. Louis, Grandpa found aluminum wire in the ceiling. Grandpa took it all out himself and replaced it with copper wire.

After he retired in 1981, Grandpa liked to do repair projects for family members. We removed a mini-wall in

our house on Villa, built retaining walls down at the lake and built shelves and other furniture.



Figure 39- Grandpa Cutting Garments. I believe this picture was taken at the plant he managed in Mascoutah.

In 1986, when Grandpa was 71 years old, we built a boat dock at the lake. Grandpa was 71 years old, standing in the boat and driving all the poles into the lake with a 16 pound sledge-hammer. No one called him an old man.

Around the same time, Grandpa bought a new tool to fix his lawn chairs. Back in the 1970s and 1980s, lawn chairs were made of webbing. The webbing would occasionally become frayed or break. You would then have to throw away the chair.

Grandpa bought a pop rivet tool to repair the webbing. He loved this tool so much that before I knew it, we were taking in every lawn chair in the family, buying webbing from Hannecke's Hardware and repairing chairs.

We could fix a chair in less than fifteen minutes. I would hold the webbing in place, Grandpa would make sure my hands were out of the way and then sink the rivet. Grandma Ellis has 11 living siblings with large families of their own, so we had plenty of business that summer. Grandpa charged \$5 a chair plus supplies.

One day we were working on some chairs from an uncle, who I knew got on Grandpa's nerves. I asked why we were doing chairs for him. Grandpa said, "I'm charging him \$7 a chair; two dollars extra for pain and suffering."

Grandpa made a couple hundred dollars that summer, which more than paid for his pop rivet tool. He considered starting his own lawn chair repair business but decided it might interfere with his fishing schedule.

We didn't use the tool much for the next several years because we had

replaced the webbing on about every chair in the family but it led to a summer of fun times working with Grandpa.

I was lucky to be able to spend so much time with my grandfather, whose life lessons have benefited me and which I passed down to my children. Thank you, Grandpa.

A Found Family Treasure

A few weeks ago, I was looking for a copy of *Ivanhoe* by Sir Walter Scott from my grandfather's old library. Grandpa Gilbert P. Ellis had a library that he gave me in the early

1990s. These books and his desk are treasures that will stay with me until the day I die. As a kid, I used to sit in his office while Grandpa Ellis wrote letters to his friends on his old manual typewriter. Even after electric typewriters became popular, Grandpa always typed away on his old manual typewriter.



Figure 40- Great Grandma Ellis and Grandpa Ellis, while he was in Missouri Military Academy around 1930

After I found *Ivanhoe*, I was
thumbing through the pages when I

discovered a new treasure. Grandpa had written a letter to his friend Jim during the summer of 1932 but had never mailed it. 82 years later, I found it in a book that I had thumbed through before but not got around to reading yet. For the benefit of my family, I am going to record it here. The letter was written on a Monday at noon.

Dear Jim,

Received your letter and was glad to hear from you. Would have written sooner but met a couple of girls. Swell looking and being my room mate

you know how I am where girls are concerned.

Went over to my aunt's house and her daughter was there (no relation). It took me three mornings to cut the lawn. I came home at twelve o'clock.
Elevate your mind brother.

Are you going back to school? Don't think I shall as the damn depression has hit us rather hard. Cramalia, I won't be able to report you next year. Sorry, I won't be able to come up this summer but may have a chance after the depression. If ever. Franklin was down in Santa Luis

staying at Major Brown's house. He wanted to see me but was unable to so because some foolish romance. How is your little sister?

The people with whom I live at the present time have a daughter who is a trifle smaller than your sister. You have my heartfelt sympathy.

Whereas in the past I have held your mentality in the lowest degree, I find you are a bit brighter than I. You did not mention a girl in your letter. I imagine you are not in love. But I being a damn fool, I'm in love with three girls. But of course,

I like the little blonde I had up at school the best. (Sometimes) Yo say muy loco par lum tunda tres querides, uno as malo a uno temprano en eso diaz.

Adios amigo, Bert.

This letter was a treasure for a number of reasons. First, it gives us a glimpse of my grandfather at 17 years of age. While he grew out of his girl crazy phase and married my grandmother six years later, his ability to turn a phrase and his sense

of humor are clearly visible in this letter.



Figure 41- Grandpa and Grandma Ellis in the late 1930s

I remember sitting in his office while he composed letters to his friends. He was always trying out his phrases on Grandma and me. "Lake, as I doubt that your shooting has

improved much, your ability to lie convincingly about your prowess is greatly improved." He wrote to President Ronald Reagan one time, "Most of the time, I walk into the polling booth, hold my nose and vote for the lesser of two evils but I actually thought you had something on the ball and chose you." President Reagan answered the letter.

Second, I never knew that Grandpa ever went by Bert. He must have used it in high school because Grandma and most of his friends called him "Gil", while his family called him "Gibbs" growing up. I have never seen him or

anyone else refer to him as "Bert" before this letter.

The challenge of history and genealogy is that if information is not recorded, it is soon lost. Finding this letter was like discovering gold. I hope you enjoy it.

Julius Johannpeter (1875 - 1961)

Julius "Uncle Jules" Johannpeter was born in St. Charles, MO on March 5, 1875 to recent German immigrants Frederick William Johannpeter and Johanna Johannpeter nee Grieve. "Uncle Jules"

was seven years older than his sister Caroline Leah "Lee" Johannpeter, my great grandmother.

When Lee's husband William Ellis died in 1917, Lee had the challenge of raising her two-year-old son Gilbert as a single mother. Uncle Jules stepped in as a surrogate father to Grandpa, who would live with the family off and on. Uncle Jules died almost a decade before I was born but I felt like I knew him from all Grandpa's stories.

Uncle Jules married Bertha Hoorst. Uncle Jules and Aunt Bertha

would have five children as Uncle Jules built his carpentry business. Uncle Jules was a second generation carpenter, who owned a successful carpentry business. Uncle Jules owned both his home at 5039 Thrush Avenue and a carpentry shop.

Grandpa told me stories during the Great Depression of unemployed men walking the streets of St. Louis begging for a meal. Grandpa said, "Aunt Bertha never let any of these men leave hungry." Instead of developing a hoarder's mentality, Uncle Jules and Aunt Bertha helped out other St. Louisans in need.



Figure 42-Johannpeters in 1912. Uncle Jules is here somewhere.

Uncle Jules was not above playing a prank. When Grandpa started working after Prohibition had been repealed, he came home to find Uncle Jules with several bandages on his face. At the

time, my grandfather was a powerful 6'04" man.

Uncle Jules told Grandpa he had been drinking at the local tavern, when a young tough came in and beat up the 60-year-old Uncle Jules.

Grandpa started heading out the door to clean out the place, when Uncle Jules grabbed his arm and said, "Hold on, son." He peeled away the bandages to reveal he did not have any injuries. Grandpa laughed as he realize his uncle had pulled a prank on him.

Uncle Jules life was not without its challenges. In 1921, he discovered the body of younger brother Herman. Despondent over the early death of his wife from a heart attack in 1916 and his mother in 1920, Herman shot himself in the head during September 1921.

The biggest tragedy for Uncle Jules would come on October 22, 1952, when his beloved wife Bertha died from a heart attack. Uncle Jules suffered with the loss of his spouse. Suffering from Alzheimer's disease in November 1955, the 80-year-old Uncle

Jules lived at the Penn Nursing Home for the remainder of his life.

Mom remembered Grandpa used to get depressed after seeing Uncle Jules in the home. Towards the end of his life, he did not remember anyone. We believe Grandpa's strong desire not to die in a nursing home or hospital resulted from Uncle Jules' illness.

Uncle Jules passed away from heart disease and a stroke on November 12, 1961. Senile confusion was a contributing cause. Uncle Jules was buried with Aunt Bertha at St. Peter's cemetery.

Uncle Jules long life involved family, laughter, stories, tragedies but ultimately a successful life. He made a powerful impression on the men in the Johannpeter family including his nephew, who he treated like a son. There are not enough Uncle Jules in the world.

Herman Johannpeter (1878 - 1921)

When I started researching the family history, I only knew about two of my great-grandmother Caroline "Lee" Ellis' nee Johannpeter's siblings. My grandfather told me a lot about his Uncle "Jules", Julius Johannpeter.

Grandpa lived with Uncle Jules from

the time he left Missouri Military Academy in 1932 until he married my grandmother, Alvina Ellis nee Mosblech in 1938.

Grandpa also talked about Great Grandma's sister Marie Robinson nee Johannpeter. Aunt Marie was Great Grandma's closest sibling but Grandpa remembered her for her poor taste in men. Aunt Marie was Great Grandma's Maid of Honor, when Great Grandma married Great Grandpa, William P. Ellis, in 1912. The families did not want them to marry because William was Irish and Great Grandma's family was

German. No one was telling Great Grandma what to do though.

Great Grandma actually had eight siblings. Her older brother Herman, who was three years older than Great Grandma, was one of the siblings I didn't know about originally. I discovered him in the Missouri Secretary of State Death Certificate registry.

Through his death certificate, I learned Herman, a widower, took his life in 1921. Looking into the death certificates, I discovered his wife Alice passed away from a heart attack

on June 17, 1916 at their home, 4026 Peck Street. She suffered the attack suddenly about 2:00 pm on June 17th.

Born on July 28, 1880, Alice was only a little over a month from her 36th birthday.

I figured Herman was despondent over the loss of his wife and took his own life five years later. Since Uncle Jules was the informant on the death certificate, I assumed he found him when he went to check on him after the family hadn't heard from Herman.

However, I recently found the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* shared a short

blurb about his suicide. Newspapers often shy away from any coverage of suicides but this blurb was invaluable in providing a correct narrative.

First, I learned Herman and Alice had a daughter named Melba. Melba was fifteen years old at the time putting her birth year around 1906. After Melba departed for school, Herman took a revolver from a drawer and shot himself in his room.

Herman was not found by Uncle Jules but his mother-in-law, Kate Renfro, who he and Melba lived with after Alice's passing. Mrs. Renfro

lived at 4032 N. Grand Avenue. Mrs. Renfro called for an ambulance, when she heard the shot at 8:30 am. It was too late though. Herman died at the City Hospital around 1:45 pm.

Herman was born on March 4, 1878 and was 43 years of age at the time of his death. Herman died to a single gunshot wound to the head. Despondent over the loss of both his wife and his job building cars, Herman shot himself after being out of work for a while.

Herman was a trained carpenter like his father Frederick William and brother Uncle Jules but seemed to have lost hope about finding work.

It is fortunate, when you find a newspaper article like this one because it cleared up several mysteries around Herman's death.

Anyone, who could have told me what happened to Uncle Herman, were long since passed on themselves. Little bits of information are hidden treasure for genealogists and historians.

Eduard Mosblech (1884 - 1956)

Eduard Mosblech is my maternal great-grandfather. Eduard was born in St. Louis, Missouri on October 24, 1884 to German immigrants Gustave Mosblech and Bertha Mosblech nee

Monse. Often written as Edward but actually pronounced like putting together aid and ward, Eduard was as unique as his name.

I struggled with writing much about him because the stories I heard about him growing up were not positive. Eduard ruled his house with an iron fist and did not brook dissent from anyone including my great-grandmother Magdalena. Eduard was not a violent man but he was described mostly as cold and remote.

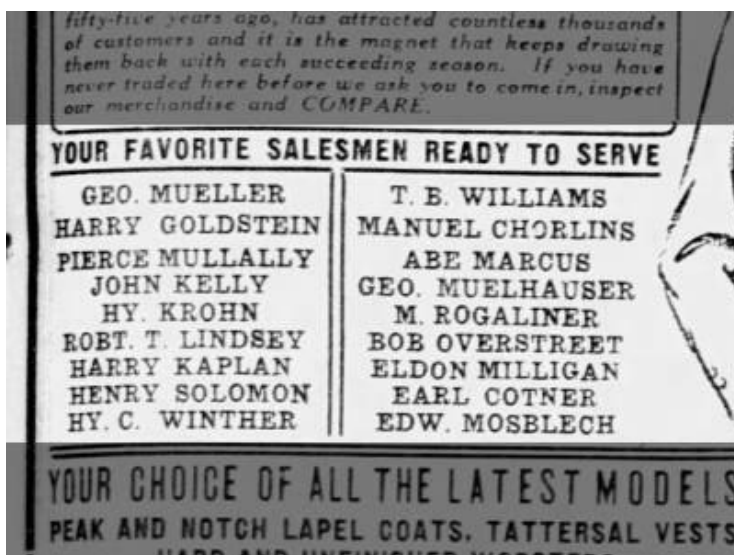


Figure 43 = Tailor Shop Ad with Great Grandpa Listed

When Eduard would come home from work, he might announce that he wanted to go look for a picture. After making this announcement, everyone was expected to join in on the search including sons-in-law, etc. This practice would lead to a famous blow-

up with my grandfather, Gilbert Ellis, after Grandpa married Eduard's seventh child, Alvina Mosblech.

It is easy to disparage Eduard but recently my view has softened a little. Eduard and Magdalena raised 14 children. They also suffered the loss of one of their children, when 4-year-old Loretta died from diphtheria in St. Louis' Isolation Hospital.

Despite the financial challenges of raising such a large family, Eduard put every child through Catholic grade school. Once the kids graduate eighth grade, they were expected to go to

work. It may seem harsh today but it was unusual in 1910 -1930 for children to complete eighth grade. Many children had to work to support the family.

One of the mysteries around Eduard was the manner of his death.

Eduard was found floating in the Mississippi River at the foot of Iron Street. For years, my grandmother and several of her sisters believed Eduard had been killed. After his death, his second wife Mary inherited all of Eduard's possessions.

In 2006, I was able to access a copy of Eduard's death certificate.

The coroner could not determine if it was suicide or homicide. However, a couple of things struck me. He died a few days after Great Grandma Magdalena's date of death, which was May 10, 1945. The death certificate also did not note any other injuries.

When I told my mother I thought it might be suicide because he missed Great Grandma and was not happy in his second marriage, she told me that the police thought he may have jumped in the river on the anniversary of Great

Grandma's death. They had a reported jumper on that day.

Eduard was not a gregarious man but I don't know that we could have expected much different at the time and with his background. However, his dedication to his children's education and the manner of his death show the depth of those hidden feelings. History should be kind.

Amalie "Mollie" Johannpeter (1873 - 1946)

Amalia Maria "Mollie" Johannpeter was born to Frederick William August Johannpeter and his wife Hanna, the former Johanna Grieve, on March 21,

1973 in St. Charles, Missouri.

"Mollie" was the fourth child and third oldest daughter born to Frederick and Hanna.

Like quite a few of the Johannpeters, I only have a little information about "Mollie". She was eight years older than my great grandmother, Caroline Lena "Lee" Johannpeter. Great Grandma was the youngest daughter and second youngest of the nine Johannpeter children.

"Mollie" grew up in St. Charles, Missouri. Sometime prior to 1896, "Mollie" married Lincoln County

resident Noah Pierce. Together, Noah and Mollie would have three children, Anna Marie Pierce, William Pierce and Franklin Pierce.

Anna Marie Pierce was born in Carrollton, Carroll County, Missouri on March 11, 1896. Anna married a St. Charles Police Officer, Clifford C. Jones. However, Anna died from chronic heart problems on April 17, 1931 at only 35 years of age.

I do not have much information on either William or Franklin Pierce. Based on their probable birth dates,

I have to believe they have both passed on as well.

Mollie lived to be 72 years old but was treated as an in-patient at State Hospital No. 4 in Farmington, St. Francois County, Missouri from May 13, 1943 until her death on February 5, 1946. Mollie developed psychosis not long after her 70th birthday.

Her husband Noah Pierce outlived Mollie by seven years. Noah had been born in Lincoln County, Missouri on August 17, 1870. A carpenter like her father Frederick, Noah moved Mollie and their children to St. Charles,

Missouri, where they lived for the rest of their lives outside of Mollie's confinement in the State Hospital. Noah died from heart disease like his daughter on July 17, 1953 at 82 years of age.

Anna's husband Clifford was mentioned in Noah's obituary.

Clifford did not outlive his father-in-law for very long. Two weeks later on August 2, 1953, Clifford died from a heart attack, three days before his 65th birthday. Anna and Clifford may have had a daughter as the informant on his death certificate was Mrs. Ralph Brooks of St. Charles, Missouri.

Marie H. "Babe" Johannpeter Kimker

Marie H. "Babe" Johannpeter was born in St. Louis, Missouri on June 17, 1903. "Babe" was the second child and first daughter born to my second great-uncle Julius "Uncle Jules" Johannpeter and his wife Bertha Johannpeter nee Horst. My grandfather Gilbert Ellis spent a lot of his time with Uncle Jules family, while he was growing up.

Grandpa Ellis' father died when Grandpa was only two years old. Uncle Jules was Great Grandma Ellis' older brother. Uncle Jules was a surrogate father to Grandpa, so Uncle Jules

children were surrogate brothers and sisters for Grandpa. While "Babe" was 12 years older than Grandpa, he still spoke well of her and continued to see her until she passed away in 1994.

I still remember a trip we took up to "Babe's" house in the mid-1980s.

"Babe" still lived in the same house she and her husband Elmer bought between 1927 and 1931. The house was in the 5000 block of Emerson Avenue, five blocks from her parent's house at 5039 Thrush Avenue. The house was located in the Walnut Park East neighborhood, which was becoming one

of St. Louis' highest crime neighborhoods.

I remember it pretty well because it is one of the few times I saw Grandpa carrying his revolver.

Grandpa was 6'02" and weighed 250 pounds. Even in his late 60s, he still was an imposing figure and not a good target for criminal activities.

The criminals in the neighborhood must have agreed because neither we nor Grandpa's 1977 red Ford Thunderbird were bothered.

"Babe" was in her eighties at the time. I remember her as being a

little on the frail side but very welcoming. I also remember an antique high back chair next to a window in her dining room. The house felt "old" to me in that most of the furnishings seemed to be from an earlier time.

"Babe" also seemed to miss her husband Elmer Kimker, who passed away in January 1980.

A few years after we visited, a cowardly burglar broke into "Babe's" house, knocked her to the ground and took a few items of little street value but great sentimental value.

"Babe" was already suffering from Alzheimer's Disease. Due to some head

injuries, "Babe" had to move out of the house she lived in for 60 years to a long-term care facility.

"Babe" and Elmer experienced tragedy in the home prior to the burglary, which forced "Babe" out of her home. On January 22, 1930, Elmer and "Babe" welcomed a son, Robert G. Kimker. A few days before his first birthday, Robert began having trouble breathing. The doctor's diagnosed emphysema in Robert's left lung.

Elmer and "Babe" took Robert home but he did not recover. A month later on February 20, 1931, Robert passed

away due to a collapsed lung. He was only 1 year, 28 days old. Elmer and Babe never had any more children.

Grandpa and my mother would continue to visit "Babe" in the care facility but Mom said the visits were often sad. Sometimes "Babe" remembered Grandpa but she remembered him as he was when he lived with them as a kid. Sometimes, she did not remember Grandpa.

On May 20, 1994, "Babe" passed away a month before her 91st birthday.

Marie H. Kimker was laid to rest with her husband Elmer, her son Robert,

father Julius, mother Bertha and brother Eugene at St. Peter's Cemetery in Normandy, St. Louis County, Missouri.

Unfortunately, I only knew "Babe", when she was in her eighties after her husband passed away. I don't have any of the stories about what a fun loving person she could be or how she took care of my Grandpa.

Mom remembers the card games at Elmer's and Babe's house as fun times. They were very welcoming to her and Aunt Maureen.



Figure 44- Elmer's and Babe's House - Courtesy of Google Earth

"Babe" could tell us a lot from her 90 years but we don't have a way to find those outside the official records. It is one of the challenges of genealogy.

Francis Mosblech Marries Rosemary Kalt

On February 23, 1946, my great uncle Francis Mosblech married Rosemary Kalt at St. Peter and Paul Catholic Church. The 23-year old Francis had recently returned from service in the U.S. Army during World War II. Aunt Rosemary was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William J. Kalt.

Father Clarence Winkler officiated the ceremony. The March 3, 1946 edition of *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reported Aunt Rosemary wore a white brocaded moir gown with a tulle veil. She was attended to by her maid

of honor and sister, Dorothy Kalt.

Mary Ann Mosblech and Miss Rosemary Walsh were her bridesmaids. Judith Lamping and my aunt, Maureen Ellis, served as flower girls.

Oliver Sucker was Uncle Francis' best man. Vernon Bauer, Louis Kettenbach and Christian "Chris" Mosblech were the groomsmen.

Tragically, Great Grandma Magdalena Mosblech died from diabetes in May 1945 causing her to miss the weddings of her younger children.

After the wedding, the party had breakfast at the Saum Hotel. The

wedding reception occurred later in the evening at Swiss Hall. Uncle Francis and Aunt Rosemary took a wedding trip before returning to live in St Louis.

Uncle Francis and Aunt Rosemary had a long and happy marriage. One of fourteen children, Uncle Francis would bring 12 children into the world with Aunt Rosemary. The Mosblechs believed in large families.

My grandfather, Gilbert Ellis, told me he respected Uncle Francis because he sent all twelve of his children to Catholic schools. Grandpa

thought Uncle Francis was tight with a buck but said you had to respect him for overcoming the financial hardship of private education for 12 children.

I remembered Uncle Francis because he and Uncle Chris looked so much alike. Later, when I met Uncle Eddie, all three brothers strongly resembled each other. I found it interesting because Grandma's eight sisters did not all favor each other.

Uncle Francis enlisted in the U.S. Army on November 14, 1942, after the United States entered World War II. I wonder if his service delayed

his marriage to Aunt Rosemary because they married not long after he returned from the service.

Thanks to Uncle Francis for his service.

August H. Elker (1848 - 1906)

My second great-grandfather August H. Elker was born in Hanover, Germany on May 22, 1848 in the year of revolutions in Europe. Whether related to the revolutions or not, August's family travelled to America in 1854. After landing in New York City, the Elker family made its way to St. Louis, Missouri. St. Louis had a

large German Catholic community, which attracted the Elkers.

Besides being a devout Catholic, August was a talented musician, who played in several Catholic bands.

August played in the band for the Catholic fraternal organization, Knights of Father Matthew. When an early St. Louis Mayor, Arthur B. Barrett, was laid to rest on April 27, 1875, August and his fellow band mates played in the funeral pageant.

The Knights of Father Matthew was a temperance organization that believed in total abstinence from

alcohol. The St. Louis Chapter was founded in 1872, when August joined it. When August died in 1906, he was buried in the uniform of the organization that he was a member for 34 years.

On October 28, 1878, August Elker married Bertha Lipke at St. Mary of Victories Catholic Church. August was 31 years of age, while Bertha was 28 years old. In 1882, they would welcome their first child Agnes H. Elker. In 1883, Clara E. Elker was born.

In 1885, their middle child and my great-grandmother Magdalena Elker was born. Magdalena married Eduard Mosblech in 1907. They would have 14 children including their sixth child, my grandmother Alvina Mosblech nee Ellis.

In 1888, they welcomed their only son, Joseph Henry Elker. The baby of the family, Rosa "Rose" A. Elker, was born in 1890.

August Elker died at only 57 years of age on February 7, 1906. I believe he died from the effects of diabetes but I'm not sure. I've never

found a death certificate for August.

The three newspaper posts about his death do not indicate what caused his demise.

I do not have any pictures of the Elkers either. I only recently discovered a newspaper picture, which included Eduard and Magdalena. I didn't have pictures of them until this discovery. I don't know if pictures exist of the Elkers but I will share them if I find them in the future.

Chapter 10 – Your Memories

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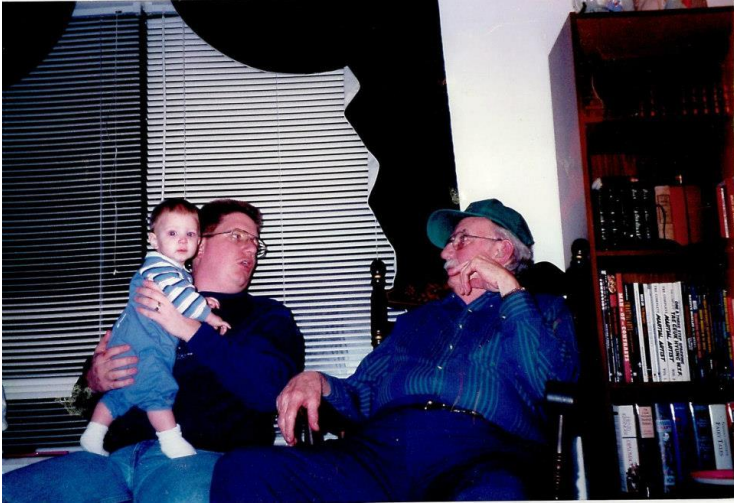


Figure 45 - My Favorite Picture of Grandpa and Me: It is full of symbolism. What I learned at his knee, my kids will learn at my knee.

Conclusion

In writing the family history, I had to pick certain what to include and what to exclude. You may have made other choices. I also tell this history from my perspective. It is easier when I am writing about past generations, who I never met. I am a historian when writing about these generations. It is more difficult to write about family members that I knew.

To make up for these short comings, I am adding several pages at the end of this book for you to write your own personal recollections. I

hope you enjoyed this book.

About the Author

Ken Zimmerman Jr. is the father of three children, grandfather of two grandsons and uncle to 40 plus nieces, nephews, great nieces, great nephews and two great-great nieces and two great-great nephews. Hopefully, one of them will continue to document the family history.