

(1832) Karl (Charles) Eisenbeis (b:2.1.1.1.6-9.5.4)

The following information was received in February of 1983 from Craig Eisenbeis (b:2.1.1.1.6-9.5.1.8.1-1).

#### **Profiles of Pioneers:**

Eisenbeis, Charles 1832-1902. Under the corporation form of government, which replaced the town trustees, he was elected the first mayor of Port Townsend [Washington], February 12, 1878. .... Eisenbeis served three terms. He came to Port Townsend in 1858, having journeyed from Rochester, NY to San Francisco via Panama. It was to Rochester that Charles and his brother emigrated from Prussia in 1856. A master baker, he opened a shop in Port Townsend for the manufacture of crackers and ship bread. Two years later he moved to Steilacoom, engaged in the same line of work and, after an absence of five years, returned to Port Townsend.

He expanded his commercial operations to include the platting of real estate areas, and the erection to stone and brick business blocks. In 1873 he built the original stone building on Water Street; several years later erected the Mount Baker Block. At the corner of Water and Tyler streets, he built a frame structure, which was occupied by the government as a customs house. He was interested in a brick yard, wharfs and docks, lumber mill, the Port Townsend Southern Railroad, Port Townsend Steel Wire and Nail Co., banks, hotel. In 1892 he built a three-story residence of brick and stone, topped with a slate roof, which years later was transformed into Manresa Hall, Jesuit educational institution. He was married to Elizabeth Berghauser, native of Prussia, in San Francisco, in 1865. She died in 1880, being survived by two sons and two daughters, Sophia, Charles, Frederick and Louise. Two years later he was married to Kate E. Marsh, native of England. Four children were born to this union: Lillian, Otto, Hilda and Josephine.

#### **Port Townsend "Morning Leader" 11 Mar 1902**

Chas. Eisenbeis DEAD ... Pioneer Resident and Leading Citizen Passes Away.

Hon. Charles Eisenbeis, a pioneer of 1858 and one of the leading citizens of Port Townsend ever since the day of his arrival, died yesterday morning at 6 o'clock. He had been in failing health for several months past, and the end was not entirely unexpected. He was a victim of Bright's disease.

Mr. Eisenbeis was born in July, 1832, in Prussia, where his ancestors had long been resident. Of his father he learned the trade of a baker, and was prepared upon his arrival in the United States in 1856, to earn thereby an independent livelihood. In company with his brother he began operations in Rochester, NY. In 1858, via the Panama route, he came to San Francisco, thence to Port Townsend, arriving February 24th of the same year. Without financial means he here began to work for wages, which were carefully saved, and a few months later he opened a small shop and prepared for market the first baker's goods manufactured in town, the same consisting of crackers and ship's bread. With him was associated as partner Mr. J.F. Bloomburg, now a stock broker of San Francisco. The site of the store was the same as that now occupied by his fine building on Water street. Two years later he removed to Steilacoom, and after a successful engagement of five years in the same business he returned to Port Townsend and purchased the site of his first enterprise and there continued the bakery, grocery and provision business up to January, 1891. Upon that site, in 1873, he erected the first stone building in the town, the original structure being one story, 27.5 by 70 feet, to which he subsequently added, making the present fine three-story building. With the accumulation of means, the improvement of real estate was the policy of Mr. Eisenbeis' life. In 1878 he erected a frame building, corner of Water and Tyler street, which for twelve years was occupied by the government officers of the custom house. In improving the water front, associated with J.A. Kuhn, he erected 1320 feet of sea wall between Taylor and Van Burin street, which improvement added materially to the appearance of the town, and reclaimed valuable property for business purposes. In 1884 he erected a two-story stone building, corner of Quincy and Water street; in 1890, the Mount Baker block corner of Water and Taylor streets, one of the most imposing business blocks in the city, and besides these, has erected numerous smaller buildings in various parts of the city, for business and residence purposes.

In 1889 he started a brick yard, thus supplying the town with building material. He was connected with building the Taylor street wharf, Union wharf, Commercial and Harrison street docks, and the wharf in the Eisenbeis addition. He has been interested in the organization and management of the Port Townsend lumber mill, the Port Townsend Southern railroad, the First National bank, the Merchants bank, and Port Townsend Steel Wire and Nail company. He organized the Eisenbeis syndicate, which purchased 800 acres of land adjoining the city, which they cleared and platted, and erected there the elegant Eisenbeis hotel. After spending years in developing the city, through these

various channels, in 1892, Mr. Eisenbeis began the erection of a spacious and elegant home, in the Eisenbeis addition, the same being of brick and stone, and three stories high, slate roof, and all modern improvements. He has recently lived a retired life in this home his business being conducted by his son, Frederick W., who was his father's partner. Mr. Eisenbeis served three terms as mayor of Port Townsend, being the first to hold that office, one term as city treasurer and two terms as members of the board of health. He leaves a widow and seven children, Sophia, Frederick W., Louisa H. Lillian, Otto, Hilda and Josephine. He also leaves seven grandchildren. The funeral is to be held on Wednesday from the family residence. A curious coincidence in connection with the death of Charles Eisenbeis was the fact that when a telegram was being sent to his elder brother Fred, at Steilacoom, a message reached the family here telling of the death of his brother at Steilacoom.

**Manresa Castle, 7th & Sheridan, Port Townsend, Washington 98368, Phone 206-385-5750**

Built in 1892 for his young wife, the Castle was Charles Eisenbeis' dream home. Leading merchant and first mayor, Charles Eisenbeis made major contributions to the economic and political growth of Port Townsend. His fine 30 room landmark mansion, recognized on the National Register of Historic Places, commands panoramic views of the city, shipping lanes, the Olympics and the Cascades.

Acquired by the Society of Jesus in 1925, the home was enlarged and adapted for use as a Tertian School. It was named Manresa after the place in Spain where St. Ignatius founded the Jesuits. The Castle lost its elegance and for years served only the austere needs of the priests. (The original section of Manresa Hall consisted of a basement, three floors and attic, all of sturdy construction with finely crafted hardware, redwood and oak paneling and tile fireplaces.)

Considered by most to be a "white elephant", the 81 year old Castle, like so many rundown historic buildings, was stripped of all its dignity and character. In 1972, the Smiths concluded that the Castle could be renovated to use as overnight lodgings and that viable business could restore the grand old edifice to some of its earlier flamboyance.