

German immigrants brought the first wineries to Western Prince William

HEINEKEN & PETERS FAMILIES LEFT THEIR MARK ON HAYMARKET

by John Toler

By the end of the Civil War, the Town of Haymarket had been virtually destroyed, with all of the buildings except St. Paul's church and three small residences burned by Union troops.

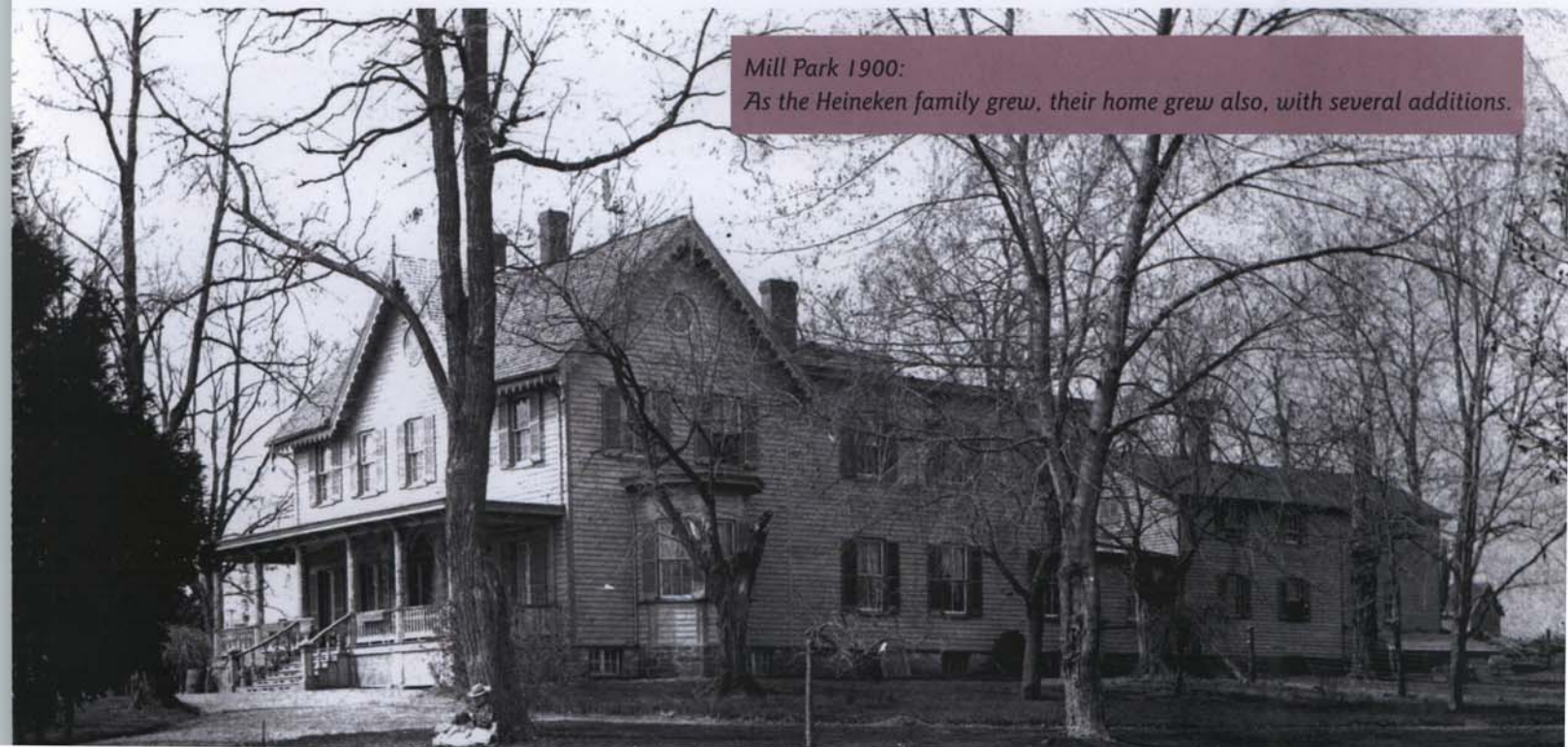
Remarkably, the farms and formerly productive plantations around the village were spared, including Snow Hill, Waverley, Evergreen, the Shelter, Woodlawn, Cloverland and Mill Park. But the landowners who held on to their properties through the war faced the same problems as elsewhere in the South: loss of farm labor, confiscated livestock, lack of credit to buy needed seed and supplies to rebuild, and long-fallow fields.

During the late 1860s, newcomers began moving into arriving in the area, bringing with them money, new ideas and the possibility of a new start. One group was comprised mainly of well-to-do German immigrants, led by Christian A. Heineken (1843-1917), who came to Haymarket about 1866.

Christian Heineken was just a child when his family arrived in America in 1846. His father, also named Christian, was the German consulate to Baltimore, Md. during the Civil War. The elder Heineken had heard about a 1,000-1,200-acre estate three miles north of Haymarket, and recommended that his son purchase the property and settle there as a "gentleman farmer," according to the family history.

Mill Park 1900:

As the Heineken family grew, their home grew also, with several additions.



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1 Make a chart of people who you already know. Seems obvious but is often overlooked.

2 Research several groups for the right fit. Do you want to learn something new, volunteer, meet others with common interests or make business connections?

3 Be genuine and listen for ways to help others.

4 Ask who, what, where, when, and how questions as opposed to those that can be answered with a simple yes or no.

5 Understand what makes you special or different from others doing the same thing.

6 Stay positive. Avoid trashing the competition; you may be speaking to the niece of the competition.

7 Follow through right away on referrals you are given.

8 Thank the person who gives you a referral by letting them know you made the connection.

9 If you are attending a business to business function, dress accordingly. It shows and garners respect.

10 Arrive in a good mood.

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Mill Park

The George Gray Tyler family built the five-bedroom main house with detached kitchen on the property before the Civil War. After moving in, Christian and his wife Marie (1845-1915) connected the kitchen to the main house and added a porch and two bedrooms over the kitchen. As the family grew to the parents and six children, bedrooms were added on the upper floors and in the attic, and at one time, there were eleven bedrooms – and one bathroom.

Heineken met Hermann C. Hagedorn while traveling by ship from Germany back to New York, and the men became life-long friends. In 1868, Hagedorn came to Haymarket, where he built a water-powered mill on the Heineken property, which he ran in partnership with Christian Heineken until 1873. The Heinekens later named their home “Mill Park,” in reference to the water-powered mill and the wind-driven mill on the farm.

Other buildings on the farm included a barn and carriage houses. Farm animals were kept to provide meat and milk for the family, and Christian Heineken kept horses for transportation, as well as a hobby. Servants cooked, cleaned and did most of the housework.

In 1869, Heineken established the Mill Park Wine Co., with vines on the property producing grapes for Claret, Burgundy, Rose, Sauterne and Rhine wines. Early on, Fellow German Franz Peters (1854-1915) came to Mill Park to work as Heineken's associate in the wine business. Born in Hanover, Germany, Peters was educated at Oxford College, had served for a year in the German army, and had made the bulk of his money selling pharmaceuticals in the 1850s. He first lived in Baltimore after coming to the United States, and often stayed at Mill Park between business trips. There, he became acquainted with the Heineken's eldest daughter, Ella Johanna.

“Since Ella was 13 when they met and he started courting her, the parents felt it proper that she wait until she was a bit older,” according to the family history. “In fact, to keep them apart they sent her back to Germany, where she stayed with Christian's sister, Mary P. Heineken Plate (1849-1925) at Heineken Schloss. While living there, Ella studied art and music. Each year, a tutor taught the younger Heineken children at home, and when they were older, all of the Heineken boys were educated at the University of Heidelberg, where they studied engineering.

Indeed, the connection with Germany remained strong long after the Heinekens were firmly established in Haymarket. “Often, they would go home to Germany, and when they did, they took most of their furniture with them,” according to the family history. “This was apparently to prevent things from being stolen, or if for some reason they decided not to return, they would still have all of their possessions. Or if something happened to them while in Germany, their parents could see to disposition of the furniture.”

Life at Batavia

Franz Peters and Ella Johanna were married at Mill Park in 1887, when he was 33, and she had turned 17. Franz built a new home on 200 acres at the western edge of Haymarket, which they named “Batavia,” after a place in Germany. There, Franz continued his work with the family wine business, and the couple would farm the land and raise their family, eventually having eight children. Another connection with the Hagedorn family was established, when daughter Emma Johanna Peters married Hermann Hagedorn's son, Alexander.

Mill Park Today:

Batavia is long gone, but the house at Mill Park still stands, although greatly altered from the original structure, and being surrounded by new homes.

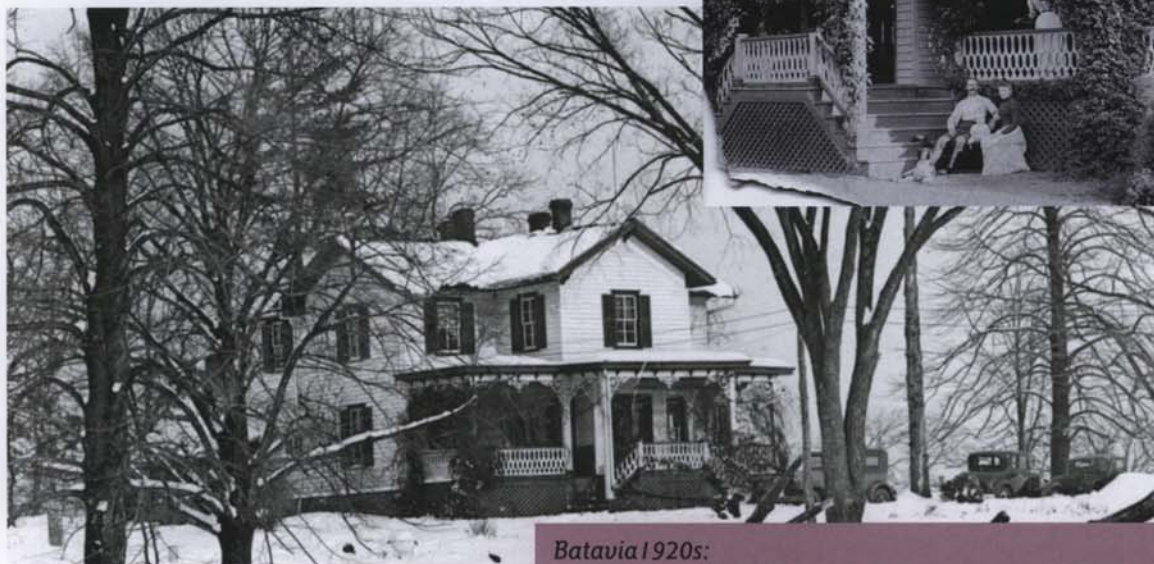


Wedding:

The only wedding ever held at Mill Park was in 1887, when Ella Heineken married Franz Peters. The parents and Heineken children gathered on the front steps. From left, Christian Heineken (father of the bride), Mary, Emma, Marie (mother of the bride), Ella (bride), Enoch, Averick, the children's' tutor, Franz Peters (groom), and unidentified guest.

Batavia:

Franz and Ella Peters sit on the steps of Batavia, their home in Haymarket, about 1889.



Batavia 1920s:

Batavia, at Haymarket, as it appeared shortly after the death of Franz Peters in 1919. Both Franz and Ella Peters are buried in St. Paul's Episcopal Church Cemetery.

In an article written in 1922, daughter Josephine Peters Jackson (b. 1902) recalls growing up at Batavia.

"We had a large garden and acres of lawn. Every kind of vegetable you could think of was grown. Hundreds of jars of food were canned, preserved and kept in the cold cellar. We had a vineyard, and the grapes were made into wine and aged in a wine cellar. There were no electric refrigerators or freezers in those days; we had two large iceboxes. The ice was cut from our frozen pond, stored in a deep icehouse and covered with straw.

Since we had no electricity, we used coal oil lamps, the cook stove burned wood and the hot air furnace burned coal. We were among the first people in our town to have a bathroom, which was built about 1905. We fetched drinking water from a deep well, which had a hand pump. We had barrels to catch the rainwater from the roof.

Our mother and father were very strict about manners. We had to stand up when our parents entered the room, and remain standing until they were seated. We had to stand when older people or guests entered the room. We loved our father, although he was very strict; we did not know that a child could say 'no' to a parent. We had to do chores, even though we had servants.

St. Paul's Episcopal Church was where we were all baptized and confirmed. We attended Sunday school regularly, and for many years our mother taught a class. I can still picture those little girls walking to Sunday school in their freshly starched white linen dresses. The church was very old, even back then. All around the church are hallowed grounds, then burying grounds for many years of then old families.

Mother was a great civic-minded person and did many fine things for our little community of about 200 persons. She staged all of the school plays and made the costumes. She played the piano, organ, banjo and guitar. Sang very well, and was a good artist in oils and watercolors."

The Peters family supported the community in important ways, including donating part of the farm for use by Haymarket's first public school.

Winery continued on page 11

HAYMARKET LIFESTYLE

The Mill Park Wine Company



Winelabel:

One of the Heineken and Peters wine crate labels.

For about 20 years, the winery prospered, using grapes grown on the farm, and grapes brought in by other vineyards for processing. In 1880, the Mill Park Wine Company produced 9,000 gallons of wine from about 30 acres of vineyards, which most likely included grapes from Batavia.

Heineken owned and operated a small distillery near Haymarket, manufacturing brandy to sell to barrooms from the 1880s to about 1900, according to R. R. Turner in Prince William County, Virginia 1805-1955. The Heineken Distillery is listed in the Virginia Business Directory several times between 1884-1898, and in 1898, Heineken is also listed as a "Fertilizer Agent."

In the 1890s, the "gentlemen farmers" of the area formed the "Haymarket Agricultural Club," meeting regularly at each other's homes to learn about new farming techniques and discuss the goings-on at their farms. The meeting would start in the morning, and conclude with a luncheon, and closing with a toast and a song. By then, the German immigrants and the natives had shared much and found that they had much in common, so it was a very congenial group.

But as with all things, the good times would end. In the early 1900s, the local vineyards were devastated by blight and drought. According to the University Archives of Virginia Tech, "...the grape industry in Virginia had been virtually destroyed; apple scab, bitter rot and fire blight were exacting large tolls from fruit growers' pockets." The plague ended what had been a promising industry in Prince William County for nearly a century.

By 1871, there were two vineyards at Mill Park covering ten acres. An early account of the activity there by Jock Elliott of Haymarket, published in the Alexandria Gazette, noted that "The growth of the vines at Mill Park was most luxuriant, fully demonstrating the fitness of the soil and climate for grape culture, and convincing even the most skeptical that there is almost absolute certainty of their doing remarkably well, and being a most profitable speculation."

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RED WINES.

PRINCE WILLIAM. Nortons Va.	\$ 1.50 pr Gall.	\$ 6.00 pr Case.
ROSE OF VIRGINIA.	" "	" "
VIRGINIA OLARET. Extra.	1.00 "	4.50 "
VIRGINIA OLARET.	.80 "	4.00 "

WHITE WINES.

VIRGINIA SAUTERNES.	\$ 1.25 pr Gall.	\$ 5.00 pr Case.
Mt. VERNON. Hook.	.80 "	4.00 "
VIRGINIA PORT.	\$ 1.50 pr Gall.	\$ 6.00 pr Case.
VIRGINIA SHERRY.	" "	" "

In quantities less than 40 Gall. \$ 1 is charged for the Keg.

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Winelist:

Prices of the Mill Park wines were modest by today's standards.



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Changes come to Haymarket

Family matriarch Marie Heineken died in 1915, and Christian Heineken died in 1917, just as World War I broke out.

Franz Peters was bitten by one of the farm animals, and developed tetanus, requiring him to travel by train to Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore every week for treatment. "It was an ordeal for him as he was a German, and was under observation to watch that he was not a spy," wrote Mrs. Jackson. "About the same time, my mother was in a horse and buggy accident, at which time she lost the partial sight in one eye."

Another troubling wartime incident further threatened the family, when persons claiming to be U.S. Government agents came to the farm and confiscated all of the hams and bacon in their smokehouse, saying the food was needed for the troops in Europe. "I wonder if the food ever reached the boys over there," wrote Mrs. Jackson. "My mother was reluctant to feed her children salt codfish for breakfast, but that was what we were told to eat."

Two of Franz and Ella's sons, Franz and Gustav, were in the U.S. Army and sent to fight in France, and both were wounded in battle. Sadly, their father died in 1919 during the terrible influenza epidemic of 1918-1919, which took the lives of 10 million people worldwide before his sons returned home from the war.

After Franz died, the family could no longer farm their property. "The fields were rented out for grazing land, and the apple orchard went wild from neglect," wrote Mrs. Jackson. "Times were bad in Virginia after World War I."

After Christian and Marie Heineken died, daughter Mary Parker "Mamie" Heineken (1878-1969) took over the house, and "... she mismanaged the place and it went broke," according to the family history. "Also her brothers and sisters all wanted their inheritance, so eventually she was forced to sell." Mamie gave some of the family's furniture to her close friend, Klara Wahnschaffe (1888-1979), who liquidated it to raise money to send to needy family members in Germany. Mill Park was eventually sold at auction in the 1930s.

Passing through different ownerships over the years, the condition of the house at Mill Park deteriorated, but it was later refurbished and used as a private residence. It is currently owned by Toll Bros., and is part of their Dominion Valley project. Currently in an undeveloped section of the property, the old house is surrounded by new multi-million dollar homes and

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Haymarket

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Agclub:

Members of the Haymarket Agricultural Club met at "Waverley" in 1905. Front row: unknown guest, Dr. Henry M. Clarkson of "Wateree," Col. Edmund Berkley of "Evergreen," Andrew Love, and Bowman Price. Back row: Col. Newland DePauw of "Waverley," Louis Heuser of "Burnside," Christian Heineken of "Mill Park," William Dodge of "Bonnie Brae," Franz Peters of "Batavia," William Brown and Edward Wilkins.

championship golf courses.

Although it deserved better, Batavia suffered a worse fate. With the re-routing of the Old Carolina Road (U.S. 15) to the west, the farm property was divided, with the house in the northeast corner of the U.S. 15/Rt. 55 intersection. An investor bought the property at auction, and in 1964 the house was deliberately burned in a fire department training exercise. "Unfortunately, the log cabin (on the property) which was to be disassembled and moved to a buyer was also burned down in the same way," according to the family history.

But with the opening of Chris Pearmund's "Winery at LaGrange" in the hills west of Haymarket in 2006, a new chapter in the history of the town – and the increasingly important Virginia viticulture industry – has been written. If Christian Heineken and Franz Peters were still alive, they would have welcomed the new vintner.

For more information about the Heineken and Peters families, Batavia or Mill Park, visit www.millpark.org. The photographs accompanying this story courtesy of www.millpark.org and many more photos from 1850-on and other information is available at that Website.

Author John Toler is a writer and historian and has served Fauquier County for over 50 years, including 4 decades with the Fauquier-Times Democrat. He has written and lectured about many legendary characters in Fauquier County's history. Toler is the co-author of *250 Years in Fauquier County: A Virginia Story*.



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