

## **Hellmers-Bopp 50th Anniversary**

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### HELLMERS – THE HELLMERS HOLD A GOLDEN WEDDING

The Famous Fred, Identified With the City's History,  
Gathers His Descendants for a Unique Ceremony,  
Reversing the Old Custom by Refusing Gifts,  
and Insisting Upon Being Host in Every Sense of the Sacred Word.

[PHOTO – FRED HELLMERS]

[PHOTO – MRS. FRED HELLMERS]

Kind indeed has providence been to Mr. and Mrs. Fred Hellmers. Possessed of more than the average of the world's goods which fall to man, and better than that, endowed with good health, contentment and happiness, this worthy couple last Tuesday celebrated the golden anniversary of their marriage. Down the pathway of life they have walked, but few thorns presenting themselves, and no great misfortune beset them through life. Industrious, frugal in their habits, and exactly suited the one to the other, their long married life has been happy as well as prosperous.

Everybody knows "Old Fred," few know Fred Hellmers, but that is really "Old Fred's" name. Mrs. Hellmers, a matron of excellent qualities, quiet, sedate and a loving mother and devoted wife, it is little wonder that they have been happy together.

Fifty years ago last Tuesday Frederick Hellmers was married to Miss Catherine Bopp, a charming young girl then, by Rev. Bergu [Ernst Berger] of the Clio Street Church.

Fred Hellmers was born on Dec. 8, 1831, and when a boy of 16 years he came to New Orleans from his native city of Bremen, Germany. Willing, nay, anxious, to work, he first obtained employment as a carpenter, then he became a brickmason and then a slater. He took care of his money, was economical and industrious, and after three years of hard work, determined to embark in business for himself in an humble way. He peddled eggs from a basket, and being honest, as well as energetic and enterprising, he soon extended his business. Then he wheeled his stock around to his customers in a wheelbarrow, and finally his business grew so that he bought a horse and wagon and thus served his patrons.

He became well known, especially among the old Germans who engaged in business along St. Charles Street, where for the past forty-two years Fred's name had been as well known as was the Old Drury.

Some idea of the extent of the business he had thus built up may be formed when the fact is mentioned that between Perdido and St. Charles Streets he sold on an average 300 dozen eggs daily. He became known far and near as "Eier Fritz," which, translated into English means "Egg Fritz." It was not at all unusual for him to purchase at one time 200 barrels of eggs, and at that time they were worth as high as 75 cents a dozen. His transactions were all of a character that did not require keeping of a set of books. He boasts to this day that he never took a receipt, nor gave one. Those whom he purchased from needed no recommendations, for he was known as strictly honest, and he dealt only with those whom he knew to be the same. Of course, he made a success of the business, and in 1857, having accumulated a little money, he married Miss Bopp.

She proved a helpmate as well as a helpmeet, and carefully took care of what her husband earned, her aim being to make the burden on him as light as possible and saving all she could.

Forty-two years ago Fred located himself on St. Charles Street and purchased a restaurant with a man named Miller, where the present McCloskey building now stands, opposite Union Street. Since that day he has seen many changes in the street; men lived and died, houses disappeared and new ones took their places; men made fortunes and then lost them; others left, and of all that forty-two years ago established themselves in business on that street only "Old Fred" is left, and he is not yet an old man, if activity and energy be any criterion.

The property bought by Hellmers & Miller was owned by the once famous character, "Buffalo Bill," or Bill Davis, long since dead. After purchasing and selling several other buildings on St. Charles Street, between Union and Poydras Street, Fred bought out Wibel's restaurant and saloon on St. Charles, near Poydras Street. He conducted this establishment, which then became known as "Fred's," and in conjunction with a lodging-house, which business he is still engaged in, he made a thorough success of it, and eventually sold out to William Troegel and moved to the opposite side of St. Charles Street.

Such in brief is the life's history of the groom of last Tuesday night, and proud indeed he had a right to be of his success in life, for what he wrought for he earned.

Mr. and Mrs. Hellmers determined to celebrate their golden wedding fittingly, but only among their children and grandchildren, for it was their intention to have a kind of family reunion. There were Henry Hellmers, Fred Hellmers, William Hellmers and Anthony Hellmers, the four sons, three of them married and the fourth William, still in the ranks of bachelorhood. Then there was Mrs. Josephine Schneider, the eldest daughter, whose husband is employed on the Texas and Pacific Railroad; Mrs. L. C. Jacobs, wife of a liquor dealer on Poydras Street; and the second eldest daughter Miss Katie Hellmers, the third daughter, and lastly Mrs. A. C. Jansens, whose husband is an employe of the New Orleans Gaslight Company and the youngest son. Just four pair of children. Then there were thirty-one grandchildren, ranging in age from 8 months to 18 years; and surely that was enough to make quite a respectable-sized party. A few of their neighbors had been invited, but that was all, and instructions had been given by old Fred that he did not want any presents. If anyone was to make any present he was the one, for he was the happiest among them all, he reasoned. He set aside a large sum of money with which to present his children and grandchildren with remembrances of the golden wedding, and then, what was left, he donated to the "Alten Heim," the German Protestant Orphan Asylum, and the Clio Street Church – now, however, located on Carondelet, near St. Mary Street.

This was the church in which the aged couple had been married, Pastor Berger performing the ceremony. Last Tuesday Pastor Becker officiated at the golden wedding, and a most eloquent and impressive address he delivered. A procession was formed. First the younger grandchildren, followed by the elder ones, then the children, their wives and husbands, and lastly Fred and Mrs. Fred Hellmers, each with a handsome golden spray on their bosoms, marched into the room. Congratulations followed, and then all were invited to a banquet, which was a gem in its way.

The occasion was one which will long be remembered by those who participated, and many were the good wishes for a longer and still happier life.

Fred Hellmers is known throughout the States of Mississippi and Louisiana, and his name is one of the first asked for by travelers from these States. His house has a reputation for honesty and while

Fred keeps no books and gives no receipts the first complaint has yet to be heard of any losses. His method is to take his guests' money, intrusted to him, write the name and amount in pencil on a card, roll these up together and deposit the package in his safe. "If I gave the man a receipt," said Fred, "he might lose it and someone else find it and collect the money. This way, only the man to whom the money belongs gets it. No orders go with me."

Mrs. Hellmers is a native of Bavaria, and is 73 years of age, while Fred is 75, neither appear to be older than 50 years.

The names of the children and grandchildren who took part in the procession were as follows: Anna Jacob, Amelia Hellmers, Edna Jansen, Hilda Hellmers, Edna Schneider, John Hellmers, Alma Jansen, Emile Hellmers, Ollie Hellmers, Herbert Jacob, Lillian Jacob, Louis Jacob, Agnes Hellmers, Henry Hellmers, Mrs. Bertha Jacob, Robert Schneider, Katie Jacob, Tony Schneider, Ruth Hellmers, Charles Hellmers, Josie Schneider, Fred Hellmers, Lula Hellmers, Katie Hellmers, Fred Schneider, Annie Schneider, Charles Jacob, Nellie Hellmers, and three infants in arms too young to march.

Mrs. A. C. Jansen, Mr. Tony Hellmers, Miss Katie Hellmers, Mr. Wm. Hellmers, Mrs. S. C. Jacob, Mrs. J. F. Hellmers, Mrs. Ed Schnieder, Mr. J. H. Hellmers. Then came the groom, Mr. Fred Hellmers, and his bride of 50 years, wearing a golden crown.

Among the guests were the following relatives: Mrs. Schmidt, Mr. H. Hellmers, Mrs. R. Macardhy, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Pohlman and family, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Hite and family, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Zimmer and family, Mrs. C. Schmett and Mr. L. Armstrong, Mr. and Mrs. John Grashop and family, Mr. and Mrs. Vobel and Dannie Vobel, Mr. P. Domeneck.

Rev. A. H. Becker officiated at the ceremony. The union of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Hellmers was blessed with ten children. One died in infancy and only a little over a year ago their youngest daughter, Miss Bertha Hellmers died.