

**THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF CHARLES PETERS, IN
1915 THE OLDEST PIONEER LIVING IN
CALIFORNIA; ALSO HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS,
INTERESTING INCIDENTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS
OF THE OLD MINING
TOWNS IN THE GOOD LUCK ERA, THE PLACER
MINING DAYS OF THE '50S**

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The autobiography of Charles Peters, in 1915 the oldest pioneer living in California; Also historical happenings, interesting incidents and illustrations of the old mining towns in the good luck era, the placer mining days of the '50s by Charles Peters

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CHARLES PETERS

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PLACER MINING DAYS OF THE '50S**

The Autobiography
of
Charles Peters

In 1915 the Oldest Pioneer Living in California
Who Mined in

*"The Days of Old,
The Days of Gold,
The Days of '49."*

Also Historical Happenings, Interesting
Incidents and Illustrations of
The Old Mining Towns in

The Good Luck Era
The Placer Mining Days
of the '50s

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Preface

This book is published with the expectation and for the purpose of assisting the autobiographer in obtaining sufficient funds to supply him with the necessaries of life in his declining years; also, to picture with historical happenings, interesting incidents and illustrations, the Good Luck Era; the Placer Mining Days of the '50s.

“Those days of Old
Those days of Gold.”

When every man
With his pick and pan
Could make his stake;
When an ounce a day
Was very poor pay
And looked much like a fake;
When a few sardines,
With pork and beans,
Which every man could bake;
Made up a feast—
Not fed back East—
When he flopped a flapjack cake,



CHARLES PETERS
Aged 90 Years and 6 Months

The Autobiography of Charles Peters

MY full name is Carlo Pedro Deogo Laudier de Andriado. It means in English: Charles Peter James Laudier of Andriado. The latter being the name of the city my family originated in.

Like an animal encumbered with too long a tail, I found my full name to be unwieldy, so I amputated it at the second joint soon after leaving home. I have called myself and have been known for nearly eighty years as Charles Peters.

I was born on January 12, 1825, on the Island of Fiol, which is off the western coast of Portugal and belongs to the Government of Portugal.

My father's name was the same as my own. He held a position in the service of Emperor Dom Pedro when I was born. He was the owner of a large vineyard, employing about twenty-five men to handle the harvest of grapes and make the wine which he marketed.

My mother's maiden name was Anna Isabel Pellates. My parents were both descendants from the ancient inhabitants of Portugal called Lusitanians; who ruled the land before the Carthaginians under Hannibal and the Romans under Julius Caesar conquered the country.

I was the only child. My father lived his three score and ten, while my mother was 99 years, 11 months and 20 days old when she passed away. It was a great shock to me when I learned of her death in *her* prime, for I fully believed she would outlive the nineteenth century and reach the average age of her ancestors of over 120 years.

Owing to the continual absence of my father from our home, attending to his official duties in Lisbon, I was almost all of the time under my mother's care, and looked to her entirely for guidance and instruction. I was sent to school when I was five years old and, while there were one or two studies I was good in, it soon developed I was not born to be a scholar, and I steadily fell behind the other scholars of my age in my studies, until, at the age of ten, I was in an embarrassing position. The social standing of the scholars was divided into two classes; the children who wore shoes and those who went barefoot. My mother had strong objections to my associating with the poorer children who went barefoot, but, somehow, I preferred to mix with them, rather than with the children of the more prosperous parents. On account of this preference, my mother caught me in the only untruth I ever told. She accused me of playing with the barefoot children, which I denied, but she had the proof. I got a severe whipping and had red pepper put into my mouth. Then I listened to a lecture on the evil of lying that I remember to this day and I have been truthful ever since.

On account of my inability to learn my lessons, I began at the age of ten to look for my future career on the deep blue waters of the sea. A desire to emulate the deeds of my famous countryman and ancestor, Magellan, began to kindle the fire of a marine ambition in my brain. One day an American vessel came in and anchored in the bay; the school teacher dismissed school and with about four hundred school children, I went down to the dock and cheered and cheered and saluted the American flag. When I heard that the captain was so pleased with our reception that he had told the Consul he wanted one of the boys to go with him as his cabin boy, I applied for the place. I pleaded with my mother and got her consent to go upon my promise that I

would obey her precepts and come back the captain of a ship. The captain promised to be my guardian, and while my mother, before we sailed, regretted her action, yet, she bade me keep my word. My father was now the private secretary of Queen Donna Marie at Lisbon. When my mother sent the document she and the captain had signed, to him, he was very angry and sent messengers to take me from the ship, but they came too late for the ship had sailed, and for the next thirteen years I was with Captain Pendleton on whaling voyages on the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. His home was in New London, Conn., and we delivered our cargoes and obtained our supplies from the New England ports we arrived at and sailed from on our voyages. My experience on board the whaler was uneventful, except in one instance. Of course, for the first few weeks after leaving home, I was seasick and homesick, but the feeling of distress from these causes soon passed off. But, had I had the authority, I would have turned the vessel back and returned to my native land never to be a sailor again.

One afternoon the captain and the first mate left a large plug of chewing tobacco, from which each had cut a piece and put in their mouths, on the cabin table. I thought that it would make me more of a sailor if I followed their example, so I took a good sized chunk in my mouth and began to chew. I swallowed the saliva it produced, not knowing it was necessary to expectorate it. The result was I became the sickest boy that ever fell into a bunk on a ship. The captain thought I was going to die but never knew what disease I had, because I was afraid to tell him the cause. I have never tried to chew tobacco since.

On a whaling voyage to the Arctic and Pacific oceans in 1846, our vessel entered and anchored a few