

## The Columbus Buggy Company

The brain child of George M. Peters began in the early 1860s as a carriage painting and repairing business in Columbus, Ohio. In 1865, Peters bought out another shop and began manufacturing carriages. He utilized a revolutionary format for constructing the vehicles – one that systematized the work, not unlike an assembly line and with this plan he cut a carriage's cost in half. After his initial success, Peters financial backers began to withdraw, fearing his new system would ruin their reputations. Lacking capital, Peters met with an enthusiastic Clinton D. Firestone who provided the necessary financial support but soon this enterprise failed too.

Next the two created the Iron Buggy Company. With Peters' expertise and his duplication plan, the new company specialized in building one of a kind iron carriage, but a fire in 1875 stopped production. Again they reorganized, this time with Oscar Peters, George's brother, as a partner. The trio's new venture was the Columbus Buggy Company and the Peters Dash Company.

What started in one building on the corner of Wall and Locust streets grew into several buildings along High Street and the nearby railroad tracks. The first years profit was \$50,000 and soon grew to \$2 million annually. By 1892, 100 vehicles and 1,500 dashboards were manufactured daily. Through the years the company continually innovated and was the first to position the steering wheel on the left side and use corde tires of rubber. Its first automobile, The Columbus Electric, was produced in 1903. Eddie Rickenbacker (Columbus, Ohio's famous World War I flying ace) worked for the company testing cars and raced one in the 1911 inaugural Indianapolis 500.

In 1913 the company went bankrupt, but continued to produce automobile parts as the New Columbus Buggy Company.

### Sources:

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