

Written by Alois Ruthman in 1981.

Today is June 11, 1981. As I was born on August 20, 1897 -- I am not a spring chicken anymore -- so please overlook any poor diction that may emerge. I will try to write only true facts, to the best of my ability.

I am doing this for my five children, their fine mates, the twenty-two grand children and any great grand children that may be created in the future by the help of God.

If only one sentence, or idea will help any of my offspring, in any way, my efforts will not be in vain.

My birthplace was at 957 Richmond Street, two doors from Freeman Avenue, Cincinnati Ohio. My father was a wonderful man, mostly self educated, as he was a constant reader, kept up with the changing times, a hard worker and very charitable. He was born in Cincinnati on Nov 1862 and was named John Ferdinand Ruthman. He was married to my Mother (Matilda Ristner) (born Apr 1864) in June 1885. They had five boys: Edward J, Arthur, Aloysius (ME), Richard and Robert, and one daughter, Hildagarde.

This was quite a large family and they had to be very thrifty on a comparative small income. My Mother was also a wonderful person. She was faithful, and loving to my Father and she was religious, kind and gracious to all her children. Her Father, Mr. Ristner (R was crossed out in pencil and made a P on the copy of this note), was a shoemaker, owning his own shop. My Father's Father was a blacksmith and also owned his own shop. Both of my grandparents had large families, between eight and ten children. The only grandparent I remember is my Father's Mother. She died in 1908. All the other grandparents died before I was born. If I recall correctly, my Mother's Mother's maiden name was Sherer and my Dad's Mother's maiden name was Merkle or Merkel.

My childhood was normal and I recall many times riding in a horse driven surrey. There were very happy memories, especially trips out in the country to Indiana, Batesville, and Hamburg, where my Father's God Mother (Mrs. Weishoff) lived on a farm. Their house was a log cabin. We children had to sleep on the floor. I recall that the mosquitoes were plentiful, so we rubbed ourselves with kerosene to keep them from biting us. The reason for this predicament was that there were no screens in the log cabin.

Among the first things I remember is when McKinley was shot and Teddy Roosevelt, as Vice President, became President.

In October, the sixth, my Father and Brother Edward went to Findley Market in our house and buggy. They met with an accident on Freeman Avenue and were hurt badly. The horse was killed and the buggy was in shambles. I recall seeing them brought home on stretchers. After that, we had no horse.

I went to Saint Anthony School on Budd Street in 1903 and in 1907 moved to Gholson Avenue in Avondale. I changed school to Saint Andrews and after I graduated in 1910 I went to Saint Xavier High School for three years and Ohio Mechanics Institute at night.

I started to work in June 1913 in a small machine shop known as The Ruthman Machinery Company at 216 East Second Street. In the beginning we did primarily repair work, but shortly thereafter, we made special metal parts, some small hand presses, dies, jigs, and models. We also made some tobacco machines, coin dispensing machines for the coal miners in West Virginia and Pennsylvania.

The Company was Incorporated in 1919, shortly after I became twenty-one years old, after six years of hard work, but little success profit wise. So I began figuring out something we could make for the market, especially the machine tool industry. In April 1924, we built the first vertical ball bearing seal-less centrifugal pump. The first order was from The Lodge & Shipley Company.

We tried to market this shaft driven pump, but several companies said it was too expensive to arrange a driving shaft. So, as necessity is the mother of invention, I started on a unit with a direct driven electric motor. The first unit was finished in July 1924. We first considered naming the pump "Geyser". However, the same day we decided to call it "Gusher", as this sounded more forceful. After having a retouched glossy photograph made, with a descriptive article, we sent these photographs to several machine tool magazines, which they printed free. Shortly thereafter, we received some inquiries and soon some orders. The sales improved until 1929 when the great depression came. We were fortunate that we owed very little money. By hard work and perseverance, we were lucky and we survived.



Alois went to this school in 1903. St. Anthony School on Budd Street in Cincinnati's West End was a historic Catholic school that closed in the 1960s, becoming part of the Queensgate Urban Renewal Project. **History of the Original Cincinnati School:**

- **Founding:** St. Anthony's Church and school on Budd Street started in 1860, a significant German Catholic institution.
- **Operations:** It had separate boys' (run by Brothers of Mary) and girls' (run by Sisters of Notre Dame) schools for many years.
- **Closure:** Due to declining Catholic population in the West End, the church closed in 1962, and the property was sold to the city for the Queensgate project

Ruthman Companies began in the year 1912 as the “Ruthman Machinery Company”. Based in Cincinnati, the company serviced the steamboats that traveled the Ohio River.

In April of 1924 Alois Ruthman conceived the first sealless centrifugal pump. “We first considered naming the pump ”Geyser”, however the same day we decided to call it “Gusher” as this sounded more forceful”, stated Alois Ruthman, thus giving birth to the trade name “Gusher Pumps.” Also on that day, he coined the term “coolant pump”.

First company to buy Ruthman new pump design in 1924 was Lodge and Shipley

