

Thomas and Rose **Williams**

By Douglas H. Shepard, 2012

The earliest notice is in the *Fredonia Censor* of 8 November 1911: "Bargain at East Main Store. Thomas **Williams** begins a special sale at his Department Store, *No. 17 E. Main street*, Friday. Some of the prices will be found in this paper and are sure to attract customers. His shoe department is a marvel for cheapness and the shoes are good. His shelves are full of fine goods. Go in and look at them. Miss **Williams** is very pleasant and will show you goods and prices cheerfully."

The 1912 Directory lists Thomas and Rose with a "Dry Goods and Shoes" store at *17 East Main Street*. They live there as well, no doubt over the store. Phebe **Williams**, clerk, works at *17 East Main* and resides there. Mylan and Letitia **Williams** live at *120 Eagle Street*. He is a clerk in the dry goods store. The business is listed in the 1913 and 1915 Classified Directories printed in the *Fredonia Censor*.

The 1915 Federal Census lists on East Main Street "Thomas **Williams**, dry goods merchant, 57, born in Syria. Came to the U.S. 15 years ago. Still an alien. His wife, Mary, 50, born in Syria. To the U.S. 13 years ago. Their son Louis, 29, a dry goods merchant and daughter Mary, dry goods clerk, both born in Syria and to the U.S. 13 years ago. Ida, 13, born in the U.S. and Thomas, 11, also born in the U.S."

1915 Directory: Louis **Williams**, dry goods, *17 East Main* and Mrs. Lizzie **Williams**.

1917 Directory: Louis and Rose **Williams**, dry goods, *17 East Main Street*.

On 1 May 1918 Louis married Anna **George** of Buffalo at St. Joseph's Church in Fredonia. (A cousin?)

1919 Directory: Lewis and Rose **Williams**, dry goods, *17 East Main Street*, Samuel **Williams**, grocer, *20 Water Street*, resides at *17 East Main Street*, Thomas **Williams** resides at *17 East Main Street*.

16 July 1919, Mary Rose George **Williams** died, age 57. Born in Syria. Survived by her husband, Thomas, eight children. A brother, Ayoub George. Funeral at St. Joseph's. Burial at St. Mary's.

22 September 1920. Ida married Joseph **Thomas** of Lackawanna at St. Joseph's.

1921 Directory: L. **Williams** & Co Louis and Peter **Williams**, Wholesale confectioners, *17 East Main Street*, Louis and Amara **Williams** reside at *17 East Main Street*, Peter **Williams** resides at *17 East Main Street*, Thomas **Williams**, retired, owns *17 East Main Street*, Thomas **Williams**, Jr., glassworker, resides at *17 East Main Street*.

1923 Directory: L.W. & Co. (Louis and Peter **Williams**) Wholesale confectioners. Louis and Anna **Williams**, Peter and Martha **Williams**, Thomas **Williams**, Retired, Thomas **Williams**, Jr., all at *17 East Main Street*.

1925 Directory: Louis and Amora **Williams**, Wholesale confectioners, *17 East Main*

The Assessment Rolls for 1926 through 1931 show Thomas **Williams** as continuing to own *17 East Main Street*, although by 1930 it had become the **Herrick** Electric Shop.