

# Oscar H. Peterson

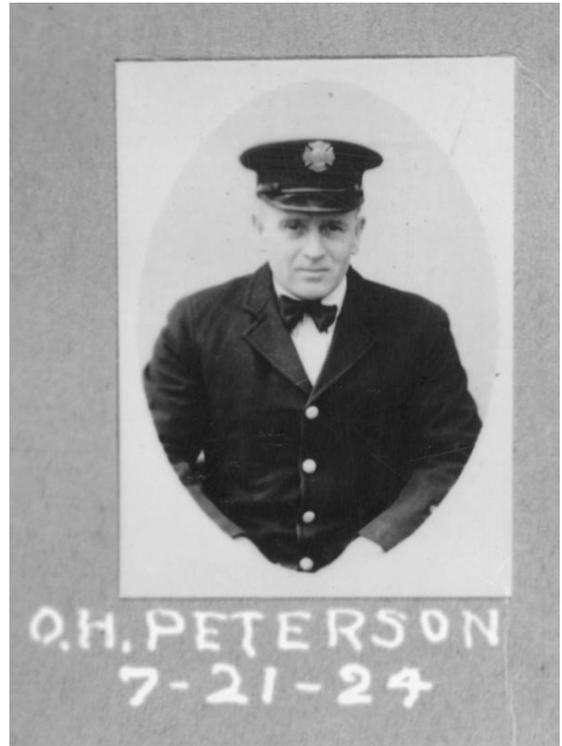
Source - City of Portland Letters from Chief Lee Holden

Oscar Henry Peterson was a Portland Firefighter from July 21, 1924 until his death on November 10, 1946.

Oscar received a "Notification to Eligible" on July 17, 1924 from the city of Portland, Department of Public Affairs. It notified him that he had been certified by the Civil Service Board for Probationary Appointment to the Fire Bureau as a Hoseman. His salary would be \$130. The letter asked Oscar to go to Room 101 of City Hall at 9:00 AM on July 21, 1924.

On July 21st, Oscar received an additional letter, signed by Chief Lee Holden, verifying his appointment as a Hoseman. He was to report to work at 6:00 PM that same day to Engine 12. Engine 12, at that time, was located at 203 NE 28th Avenue (NW corner of NE 28th and Davis). This would begin the career of Oscar Peterson.

Oscar's Assignment to Station 12 would last eleven months when he would be transferred to Engine 8 (45 NE Russell Street). He would remain there for three years then be transferred to Engine 4 (1724 SW 4th Avenue). His assignment would only last one month before being transferred to Truck 7 at 5340 N Interstate Avenue. Oscar would remain at Truck 7 for three years, then be transferred back to Engine 8. Two years later, he would remain in the same station, but move to Truck 5.



Oscar would remain on Truck 5 until November 10, 1946, when he would lose his life to stomach cancer. Oscar is one of 24 members known to have died prior to retirement age of cancer. In those days, it was not necessarily presumed that cancer was related to the job so his death was not considered service connected or line of duty.

Oscar passed away at the age of 51 with 22 years of service with Portland Fire.

Much of this story was derived from the letters pictured below that were found in the wall of a Portland home during a renovation by a member of the Fire Bureau Logistics staff. It will likely never be known how these documents ended up inside the wall of a home, but it offers a compelling story to consider.

FORM C-17



**NOTIFICATION TO ELIGIBLE**  
CITY OF PORTLAND, OREGON  
July 17, 1924.

DEPARTMENT PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
BUREAU OF FIRE

NAME Oscar H. Peterson  
ADDRESS 361 Holladay Ave.

YOU HAVE BEEN CERTIFIED BY THE CIVIL SERVICE BOARD FOR PROBATIONERY APPOINTMENT TO THE POSITION OF

TITLE HOSEMAN

SALARY 130.00

PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT Bureau of Fire

The following are the rules regarding this Certification as adopted by the Civil Service Board:

"An eligible may waive certification once, when his or her name is reached for appointment, on giving reasons satisfactory to the Board, without losing the position then held on the register."

"An applicant for a position of any kind under Civil Service who has been certified to an appointing authority and unqualifiedly declines appointment to such position shall be removed from the eligible list."

**FAILURE TO REPORT MAY CAUSE YOUR NAME TO BE DROPPED FROM THE ELIGIBLE LIST.**

YOU ARE HEREBY REQUESTED TO CALL AT THIS OFFICE

AT Room 101 City Hall ON July 21, 1924, at 9 a.m. IN REGARD TO THE ABOVE MENTIONED CERTIFICATION.

FORM A-96



**CITY OF PORTLAND, OREGON**  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
C. A. BIGELOW, COMMISSIONER  
BUREAU OF FIRE

L. G. HOLDEN,  
CHIEF ENGINEER

Portland, Or

July 21 1924

Mr. Oscar H. Peterson

Dear Sir:

Your appointment to the position of Hoseman in the Portland Bureau of Fire will be in effect from 6 p.m. o'clock July 21 1924. Kindly report to Eng 12 at that time for duty.

SALARY \$ 130. Per Month

List No. 2574

Yours truly,  
*L. G. Holden*  
CHIEF ENGINEER