

# Margaret Rudkin



about 70 years ago. Her name was Margaret Rudkin. She founded Pepperidge Farm, a company still known for its high quality baked foods.

Margaret Fogarty was born in 1897 in New York. She married Henry Rudkin, a broker on Wall Street, in 1923. Three years later Henry and Margaret Rudkin bought a farm known for its sour gum on peppertree trees in Fairfield, Conn.

Legend has it that Mrs. Rudkin used a bread recipe developed by her grandmother to create Pepperidge Farm bread. It is known that Mrs. Rudkin, a mother of three children, learned one of her sons had an allergy to commercial bread that contained preservatives and artificial ingredients. She thus experimented in baking and invented a stone ground whole wheat loaf that contained only natural ingredients.

Her family and her son's doctor encouraged Mrs. Rudkin to sell the new bread outside the home. She formed a small business out of her kitchen and sold the "Pepperidge Farm" bread by mail order. The bread's popularity grew. Mrs. Rudkin approached area grocers about selling the product. Whereas the grocers were used to selling a loaf of bread for 10c, Mrs. Rudkin

The marketing messages all sound so current. Including whole grains may boost the nutrition content of bread. A market exists for bread free of allergens. Companies may ask for and receive a premium price for value-added product.

Yet all these messages sound similar to those spoken by a woman

demanded – and received — 25c for her loaves.

Henry Rudkin took his wife's bread with him on the train at Grand Central Station and sold them at specialty shops. In 1939, Pepperidge Farm celebrated its 500,000 loaf of bread. A *Reader's Digest* article publicized the bread and expanded Pepperidge

driver with a horse and wagon, appeared in a \$200,000 ad campaign in 1956.

The success of the family business allowed the Rudkins to take vacations in Europe, where more innovative ideas awaited. Mrs. Rudkin tried cookies produced by the Delacre Co. in Brussels, Belgium, and wanted

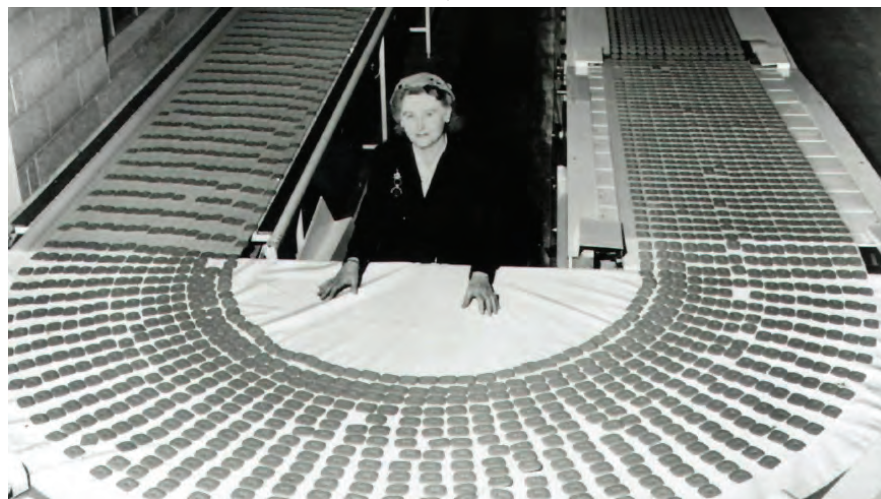
the company. The Campbell Soup Co. in 1961 acquired Pepperidge Farm, Inc. mainly owned by the Rudkin family, through an exchange of stock valued at \$28.2 million. Pepperidge Farm had sales of \$32 million and net profits of \$1.3 million in the year ended April 30, 1960, according to the Nov. 22, 1960, edition of *The Southwestern Miller*.

Mrs. Rudkin became the first woman on the Campbell Soup board. She soon took another trip to Europe, this one to Switzerland, in 1962. There, she discovered the recipe to Goldfish crackers and brought the recipe home with her. The next year, "The Margaret Rudkin Pepperidge Farm Cookbook" made *The New York Times* bestseller list.

Mrs. Rudkin retired from Pepperidge Farm in 1966. Her son, William L. Rudkin, succeeded her.

Mrs. Rudkin died on June 5, 1976, at the age of 69. Thirty years later, her innovative effect on the baking industry was still evident. Her commitment to high quality, nutritious products was still seen in company promotions. Recent Pepperidge Farm introductions include four whole grain bread varieties: soft honey oat, soft honey whole wheat, Hearty 15-grain and Hearty 100% whole wheat.

Pepperidge Farm also has named the "Rudkin Award" after the company's founder. Each year one manufacturing plant wins the award based on performance in customer satisfaction, cost management, consumer satisfaction and safe work environment.



*Margaret Rudkin appears beside cookies traveling from the oven to the packaging room at a Downingtown, Pa., plant. Pepperidge Farm launched The Distinctive line of European-style cookies in 1955.*

Farm's market.

The business moved into a factory in 1940. Pepperidge Farm survived during World War II even though Mrs. Rudkin sometimes stopped production when ingredients such as honey, butter, sugar and flour were in short supply, making it difficult to produce a quality product.

Following the war, the company opened a bakery in Norwalk, Conn., on July 4, 1947. It produced such items as dinner rolls, stuffing and oatmeal bread. TV ads followed. First, they featured Mrs. Rudkin. Then "Titus Moody," a delivery

the cookies to join the Pepperidge Farm product line. Her company reached an agreement with Delacre to produce the cookies in America. Pepperidge Farm launched The Distinctive line of European-style cookies in 1955. The line featured such cookies as Bordeaux, Geneva and Brussels.

After acquiring the Black Horse Pastry Co. in New Hampshire, Pepperidge Farm entered the frozen food business and offered frozen pastries.

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