

# Sohn Family



The Thirty years War (1618-1648) began as a religious war between the Protestants and the Catholics in the German states of Europe but eventually encompassed all of Europe. It was during this war that the "Suhns", who had been Catholic and changed to the Lutheran persuasion, were exiled from Catholic Austria. Georg Lorenz (Suhn/Sohn) immigrated to the Fortress Lichtenau, southwest of Nuernberg. Each generation of Sohns, down to Georg Leonhard, seems to have been born, baptized, married and buried in Wettelsheim, Germany. Most of the men were master shoemakers and soldiers. Georg Leonhard Sohn (b.1819), son of Johann Kaspar Sohn and Maria Margaretha nee Woerlein, attended schools in Wettelsheim. He came to Frankenmuth in 1849 and married Anna Barbara Zucker. Their descendants were: Anna Christine (b.1850); Margaretha Barbara (b.1851) whose daughters were Maria Vates Schellhas and Barbara Vates Trinklein, the mother of Eric and Edward Trinklein; John George (b.1853); Christine Barbara Haas (1855-1929) and Barbara Marie (b.1857).

Upon the death of Anna Barbara in 1857, Georg Leonhard married Maria Katharine Altreuter (d.1868). Descendants of this marriage were: Johann George (b.1859); Marie Elisabeth (b.1860); George Bernhard (b.1862) a Lutheran teacher whose son, Rev. Otto Sohn, was a professor at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri; Andreas Johann (b.1864) a Lutheran teacher; Johanna Elisabeth (b.1865); Fred Wilhelm (1866-1932); Christoph (b.1867) and a stillborn child (1868).

Johann Georg Sohn, the son of Johann Georg (a master shoemaker) and Maria Katharina nee Schwegler Sohn was born in Sammenheim, Germany in 1825. He attended school in Wettelsheim and Heidenheim. He was apprenticed as a tailor. After his confirmation (1838) in Sammenheim, his mother smuggled him out of the province by hiding him in a wagon load of loose hay.

His brothers had served in the military and did not return; and his father had died; so his mother is supposed to have said, "They won't get this one, too".

Johann Georg came to America in the early 1850s. After traveling from New York to Flint, he walked the rest of the way to Vassar carrying a sleeve board, a cast iron for ironing and his knapsack. At one time he was lost in the woods for an entire day during which time the mosquitoes were intolerable. Arriving in Frankenmuth in 1852, he purchased twenty acres of land with a log hut and a small barn from John and Anna Christina Schroll for \$200. Later he purchased an additional 20 acres for \$100, and then 60 acres more. In 1854 he married Marie Elisabeth Hoerauf. Their children included: Johann Michael, Johann Adam, Georg Leonhard, Rosina Barbara, Michael Wilhelm and Johann Georg Adam.

Johann Michael (b.1856) married Anna Katharine Stern. They, along with their family, moved to Havillah, Washington; purchased a ranch and grew wheat on 1000 acres. He helped establish Immanuel Lutheran Church. Johann Adam (b.1857) married Elizabeth Stern and raised their children Richard, Clara and Louis on a farm in Tuscola Township. Georg Leonhard (b.1860) married Christina Woelzlein and raised his son, Herman, on a farm on Reese Road. As of the year 2005, Georg Leonhard's grandson, Norman, owns the farm. Rosina Barbara (b.1864) married J. Michael Roth and raised sons, Franz, Herman and William. It is said that Michael Wilhelm (b.1866) went to Saginaw to buy a new pair of shoes for his wedding but did not return and never did get married. Instead, he moved to Arizona, then California and later settled in Molson, Washington. Johann Georg Adam (b.1874) stayed on the homestead on Junction Road. He married Sophie Reindel and raised two sons, Harold and Elmer. As of the year 2005, Elmer's widow, Irma nee Reinert Sohn-Reif, resided on the homestead farm.



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