

# Vates Family



The family name Vates came to Frankenmuth in 1846 when more than 90 emigrants came to Frankenmuth. Among them were Johann Friederich Vates (b. November 13, 1819), his wife, Eva Barbara Vates (b. November 25, 1810) and their two daughters, Margaretha Barbara (b. December 14, 1844) and Margaretha (b. September 9, 1845). They came from the region of Heilsbronn in the province of Central Franconia.

On March 6, 1846, the emigrants assembled at Nuernberg and left by rail to make their way to Bremerhaven. On March 18, ten engaged couples were married in the living room of Pastor von Hanfstenge's parsonage. They sailed from Bremerhaven on March 22, 1846. The ship, Tuckewitz, had been converted from a two-mast freighter, hauling tobacco, to a passenger ship. They were all crowded together in one warehouse-like room. On the fifth day out, six-month-old Margaretha died and had to be buried at sea. Pastor Lehmann conducted the rites. There was seven weeks of stormy weather before the ship arrived in New York Harbor on May 9. From there they went to Albany, Buffalo and finally to Detroit. In Detroit, according to a letter that Johann Friederich Vates wrote on November 7, 1846, they attended services at Winkler's Church and enjoyed hearing the Gospel in their native tongue in the New World. On May 27, 1846, they arrived in Frankenmuth. They lived for four weeks in a communal shelter until their land was surveyed, cleared, some logs prepared, and a primitive home built. Next they cultivated a small garden, planting potatoes, beets and cabbage.

Frankenmuth City Hall, Frankenmuth Township Office, the property of the former Universal Engineering complex and the property to the north are located on the original Vates farm. The 250 West Genesee building was formerly the home of Hulda Vates, a granddaughter of Johann Friederich Vates.

A third child, named Friederich, was born on March 28, 1849. Friederich Vates and Margaretha B. Sohn (b. March 2, 1851) were married on May 27, 1871, by the pastor of St. Lorenz, Ottomar Fuerbringer.

They had eight children:

E. Barbara (February 11, 1872 to June 16, 1925) married George Trinklein.

Anna B. (March 7, 1874 to March 10, 1911) married Michael Schellhas.

Johann M. (June 29, 1876) died in infancy

E. Maria (September 26, 1877 to February 13, 1976) married Caspar Schellhas.

A. Margaretha (January 29, 1880 to June 16, 1901) married William Schellhas.

Friederich (May 11, 1882 to June 22, 1882) died as an infant.

L.G. Bernhard (July 13, 1883 to May 28, 1920) married Emma Naegele.

Emma M.R. (December 12, 1885 to November 22, 1912) married William Bauder.

After Margaretha nee Sohn Vates died in 1886, Friederich married Eva M. Bickel (September 8, 1858-February 7, 1934) on November 3, 1886.

This marriage produced nine children, of which only four lived to adulthood:

A.M. Bertha (September 26, 1887 to December 20, 1960) married Lorenz Loesel.

J. Friederich (May 8, 1890 to January 9, 1957) worked on the family farm and never married.

Elizabeth C. (September 20, 1895 to October 1, 1981) married John Bauer.

Hulda (September 9, 1901 to January 8, 1985) never married.

Friederich served as an elder at St. Lorenz Lutheran Church from 1882 to 1901. He died April 7, 1901. A number of his descendants have also served as pastors and teachers of the Lutheran Church.

