

Hahn Family



The Rev. John L. Hahn (1836-1922), son of Adam and Eva M. nee Lange Hahn (1812-1878), left Ansbach Bavaria, Germany at the age of 15 with two of his brothers. The voyage across the Atlantic by mailing vessel took six weeks. After spending a short time on a farm in Aurora, Illinois they were employed on a farm in Dwight, Illinois. When John had saved enough money for schooling, he enrolled at Concordia College in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. He continued at Concordia Lutheran Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. He was ordained a Lutheran minister at Hillsdale, Michigan where he served as pastor for eleven years.

In 1860, John married Hanna Mueller who came from Germany at the age of eight with her family. The weather was so calm that the ship drifted towards a sand bar and grounded for many days; food supplies and fresh water were scarce. After 90 days and near starvation, the vessel finally made port at Baltimore, Maryland. The Mueller family settled on a farm in Jonesville, Ohio, but after a few years moved to a farm in Lake Ridge, Michigan. At the age of 15, Hanna started doing housework for a doctor in Adrian and earned \$2.50 a week, saving enough money so that when she married John Hahn she was able to furnish their home and purchase a horse and buggy. During their eleven years in Hillsdale, four of their children were born.

In 1873, Rev. Hahn accepted a call to Sebewaing, Michigan. He packed part of his belongings in the buggy and drove to Sebewaing. The trip took three weeks. Hanna and the four children traveled to Bay City by train and boarded a boat to Sebewaing on the Saginaw Bay. Rev. Hahn was installed as a pastor in the old log church and four weeks later a new frame church was dedicated. A son William was born in 1873 and was the first child to be baptized in the new church. Four more children were born in Sebewaing.

In 1891, the Rev. John accepted a call to Lenox, Michigan where he remained until he retired in 1910. During his 50 years in the ministry he baptized 1,100 children, confirmed 700 and officiated at 500 funerals. He organized congregations in Burr Oak, Sturgis and Coldwater, Michigan.

The Rev. John wanted his youngest son, Walter, to study for the Lutheran ministry since only one brother was a pastor and three were in the teaching profession. So Walter went to Concordia College, Fort Wayne, Indiana. His love for music, however, caused him to want to become a teacher. His father approved the change and he attended Concordia Teachers College in Addison, Illinois, graduating in 1904. His first teaching assignment was in Pennsylvania. On July 11, 1906, he married Eleanore Burger. The marriage was blessed with 7 children. Mr. Hahn served as teacher and organist in congregations in North East, Pennsylvania; Danville, Illinois; St. Louis, Missouri; Blackjack, Missouri; and in 1927 he was called to St. Lorenz in Frankenmuth.

Upon his death in April 1958, the Frankenmuth News published the following editorial: *“Teacher Walter Hahn and music...especially the soul-awakening music of a deep-throated organ...have been synonymous in Frankenmuth for many years. Under his talented fingers, an organ was transformed from a mere musical instrument to a vibrant, living thing. Scores of St. Lorenz School graduates remember their musical education under Mr. Hahn’s direction and many others remember the joy they experienced in hearing the music he drew from his choirs, his organ and his piano. He was a respected master in his classroom who his pupils regarded with affection. Frankenmuth pauses today to pay tribute to a man who claimed this community for his own, who chose to build his retirement home in Frankenmuth which has been so greatly enriched by his years of service here.”*



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