

Goetzinger Family



The Goetzinger family came to Frankenmuth in 1860. Christoph Friedrich "Fritz" Goetzinger was born in the Klein-Asback, Kingdom of Wuerttemberg Germany on November 28, 1857. Fritz was the fifth of eleven children born to Johann

Christoph Goetzinger and his wife Dorothea Caroline nee Waldner. At the age of three, Fritz came to America with his family. He attended one of St. Lorenz Lutheran Church's one-room schools with Cantor Riedel as his teacher. At age 14, he was confirmed in the Christian faith at St. Lorenz Lutheran Church by Rev. Ottomar Fuerbringer.

August 20, 1898, Fritz married Gertrude Hubinger, the widow of Georg Adam Hubinger. They built a large 14-room house at 555 S. Main Street in Frankenmuth, now the parking lot for the Frankenmuth Cheese Haus. Though their marriage produced no children, Fritz considered his stepchildren, Otto, Norman and Clara Hubinger, as his own.

Otto Hubinger married Frieda Hegenauer and they had one son, Fred. Norman married Gertrude Rossman and they had two sons, Bob and Jim. Clara married Herman Honold and they had two children, Gertrude and Erwin.

During his adult life, Fritz was an enterprising businessman in the community. His main interest was in livestock and the raising of thoroughbred trotter horses. Many times he ran his horses in county fairs. Of the eleven Goetzinger children raised in Frankenmuth, only Fritz and his brother Herman remained to contribute to the early development and rich history of Frankenmuth. Herman, who married Caroline Kurtz, was engaged in business activities similar to those of his brother. Their children included Louis, Herman, Lottie Flemming, Stella Mahar and Reuben.

In the early days, most farmers raised dairy cattle. Beef cattle were in limited supply. To meet the demand, Fritz contracted with Mr. Andrew Barkley of Millington, a small community located east of Frankenmuth, for the purchase of beef cattle shipped by railroad from the western states. Several men with trained dogs herded the cattle from Millington down Rathbun Road to the Goetzinger farm on Dehmel Road. As the supply of local beef became more abundant, the purchase of western beef was abandoned. Fred Hubinger, Fritz' step grandson, remembers serving as his grandfather's chauffeur at the age of 14, driving his grandfather to farms in the area to inspect and purchase livestock.

To process the meat for retail sale, Fritz built a slaughterhouse behind his residence on the bank of the Cass River. In later years, his stepson Otto Hubinger, and grandson Fred Hubinger, renovated an existing barn and established a retail meat market, where fresh meats and homemade sausages were made and sold. Fred expanded the business into a modern retail food store in 1952. It is now the Frankenmuth Cheese Haus.

Mr. Goetzinger was active in church related activities, serving in various capacities at St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church. He was also a member of the Grey Fox, a local social club which existed in the community into the 1950's. He and his wife enjoyed entertaining friends and family, often using their cottage on the Cass River for weekend activities.

Fritz became ill while attending a Scot tournament (a type of card game) in Wisconsin with Mr. and Mrs. Armin Zucker. He died a few days later on May 27, 1935 at the age of 76. His wife Gertrude died on January 3, 1946. Both are buried in St. John's Cemetery.



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