

Biermann Family



The Biermann name came to this area when Johann Leonard Biermann, a farmer and baker in the area of Nuernberg, Germany, along with his brother George Michael, came to Frankenmuth in 1853 seeking to find more farm land.

Johann Leonard purchased land on King Road just four miles north of Frankenmuth. In 1860, Johann Leonard married Magdalena Friedericka Riethmeier, daughter of Konrad Riethmeier, who owned a neighboring farm. Konrad turned his farm in Gera over to Johann Leonard and Friedericka after they were married.

Leonard and Friedericka were active members of St. Bethel Lutheran Church of "Middle Franken". The log house and church were located on Dehmel Road, several miles west of their residence. Leonard was the first trustee of the congregation. In 1879, the members of St. Bethel's joined other Lutherans in the area and formed St. John's Lutheran Church. In 1880, the frame church building, which was located on Tuscola Street, was erected (St. John's is now located on E. Genesee). Leonard continued to serve there as a trustee of the congregation. Leonard and Friedericka had ten children: Margaretha, Caroline, John Michael, Leonard Jr., Peter, Friedericka, George, Margaret, Anna Maria, and Ernest.

In 1862, Leonard bought another farm on Block Road. Ten years later he sold a parcel of land to the Pere Marquette Railroad Co. so they could build the railroad through Gera. Some more land was sold for the establishment of an elevator and a small foundry. Gera, named after a St. Lorenz pastor's hometown in Germany, began to grow. Soon there was a hotel, a cheese factory, a country store (where John worked part-time and also at one time was part owner), a blacksmith shop, and a post office.

In 1884, Leonard bought another farm adjacent to his Block Road farm. The following year he bought yet another farm in Gera, south of the railroad. Leonard died in 1888 and is buried in St. Bethel Cemetery. Friedericka was left to raise her family, ranging in ages 7 to 21. As a result of her husband's farming success, Friedericka was able to place each one of her sons on a farm.

John, the oldest son had the farm north of the railroad in Gera. Peter farmed south of the railroad in Gera. Leonard and George each had a farm on Block Road and Ernest, the youngest, had the homestead on King Road. Leonard's farm on King Road remained in the family from 1853-1946. John later bought his brother's, Leonard Jr., farm, when he moved to Saginaw. George also moved to Saginaw. Both brothers worked for the City of Saginaw. John worked as weigh master in Gera for the Sugar Beet Co. after he retired from farming.

John and his wife had four children: Herbert, Elmer, Norman and Florence Loesel. When the oldest son, Herbert, got married in 1916, John gave the adjoining farm to the north to Herbert and his wife, Laura. Elmer, the second son, served in World War I. Later he married Frieda Miller and moved to Bay City. When John was ready to retire from farming he turned the homestead over to his youngest son, Norman, and his wife, Florence.

The Leonard Biermann farm in Gera stayed in the family from 1861-1982. Roy Biermann and his wife Evelyn took over his dad's farm in 1942 when his dad, Herbert, moved to Saginaw and worked for Morley Brothers. This farm was in the Biermann family for 87 years until Roy's retirement in 1982.

There were more than 160 descendants in the ancestry, as of the year 2005.



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