

# Reichle Family



he Reichle name came to this area through Michael Ludwig Reichle. Michael was a wagon maker. He was the son of Leonhard Balthasar and Johanna Elizabeth nee Hoffman Reichle. Michael was born in Obersteinfeld, District of Marbach Wuerttemberg, Germany in 1808.

In 1836, Michael immigrated to America and located in Philadelphia, where he worked at his trade in a wagon shop making wagons for the government for use in the war with Mexico.

Michael was married in Philadelphia to Elizabeth Schoenewald. He heard about the new German colonies started in Michigan and moved with his family to Ann Arbor in 1847. After a short stay of four months, during which time a son was born, he decided to move his family to Frankenmuth.

The family was blessed with nine children: Louis, Christian, and Henry were born in Philadelphia; Friedrich was born in Ann Arbor; Elizabeth, Johanna, Leonard, Martin and Margaret were born in Frankenmuth.

Michael Ludwig was engaged in the wagon making trade in Frankenmuth. At that time he was the only man in the township besides Pastor Craemer who could speak good English. He died on the 27<sup>th</sup> day of March 1879.

A grandson, Herman C.J. Reichle, son of Martin and Friedericka Zeilinger Reichle followed his grandfather's trade in wagon making and later was engaged in carpentry. He married Agnes M. Rupprecht, daughter of George M. and Margaretha Deuring Rupprecht.

An only child, daughter Irene Reichle Szymanski is the lone "born" Reichle family member still living in Frankenmuth as of 2005. Herman died in 1943. Agnes later married William Zehnder Sr. in 1945. Agnes died September 25, 1971.

When Johann Sebastian Bach composed his cantatas, he used the Calov Bible (a three-volume 17<sup>th</sup> century Bible that contains German translations and commentary by Martin Luther and additional commentary by Wittenberg theology professor Abraham Calovius) as his reference guides. For some time these were important missing links of Bach's library. Michael Reichle, a devout Lutheran, who wished to own a Bible, purchased the three volumes from a book dealer in Philadelphia, in the early 1800s, not knowing he was buying Bach's Bible. The volumes were passed on to his son Leonard Reichle. In June 1934, a Lutheran minister, Dr. Christian G. Riedel, was attending a convention of the Missouri Synod in Frankenmuth. While a guest in the home of his cousin, Leonard Reichle, Pastor Riedel was shown a book in which he recognized Bach's signature on the frontispiece. Leonard Reichle subsequently located the other two volumes in his attic, relating that his family had purchased them in the 1830s, in Philadelphia. With the upheaval of World War II the discovery was forgotten, but remembered in 1962, with eventual donation to the Concordia Seminary Library in St. Louis, Missouri, where the Calov Bible is held today.

The Calov Bible contains 348 underlinings, marks of emphasis, and marginalia in Bach's hand, an attribution that has been proven by handwriting analysis and carbon dating of the ink.



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