

Johan Matern and Family Come to America

It is 1844 and we are in a poor but well-kept home in Bavaria. Johan Adam Matern is now eighteen, and eager to begin a new life in America.

Johan: Well, Mother, now that Father has gone from us, and I am of age, I want to go to America to seek my fortune.

Mother: Oh, Johan, but what of me and your five brothers and two sisters? It is very important to me that our family does not drift apart.

The Children: We don't want you to leave us, Johan!

Johan: Keeping our family together is very important to me too, Mother. I want us all to go to America together.

The Children: We want to go to America, too!

Mother: Oh, Johan, I am afraid this journey will be too much for us. How can we manage to travel across the ocean and through canals and railroads to Illinois?

The Children: We want to travel to the East Coast of America, and through the Great Lakes, to Illinois!

Johan: Yes, although I think having so many brothers and sisters is a pretty great thing, it sure can be hard to get anything done. They seem to always want something. I've always admired your ability to manage the whole crowd. But now I am eighteen, and am the man of the family, and I will take care of us.

Mother: Oh, Johan, I do want what is best for the Matern Family, and if you think this is our best opportunity, our whole family will travel to America together.

Johan: Yes, Mother. I have a feeling that when we get to America, the Matern Family will become a very rich and important family. The Materns will be famous and known throughout the land, and nobody will ever mispronounce our last name.

The Children: We want people to pronounce our names correctly!

Mother: Oh, Johan, you are a good boy. When we get to America, and I have a house of my own, I will be lonely without Father. Will you come and stay with me? Maybe you can stay in the basement. I promise not to keep track of your coming and going.

Johan: Well, that sure sounds great, Mother. I think this decision to come to America will be a great thing for the Matern Family, and maybe someday someone will include it in a Family History Pageant.

The Children: Yay! We are all going to America!