

## **THE BREYLINGERS IN AUSTRIA**

### **And perhaps in Switzerland and Germany**

It seems as though the Breylinger surname, at least as we spell it, is unique to our family. Today (in 2012) there are only 22 known people alive who are direct descendants of Ferdinand Breilinger and his wife Katherina Schochin, in Tosters, Voralberg, Austria, in 1803, the earliest record of our known family that I have found.

In the German language the joined letters (or diphthongs) ei, ai, ey, and ay have the sound of a (ai), that is, a long (i). In the birth record of Ferdinand shown below, taken from birth records compiled from 1784 to 1877, the spelling is given both ways. The first change of the spelling to Breylinger that I have found was made by Xaver after 1835. All the other records of events after 1835 that I have were transcriptions of earlier pastoral records done in 1938.

How our English pronunciation moved to the “bray” sound that we all use today is a mystery. It could have been changed by Ferdinand (Fred) J. Breylinger when he immigrated to America. His grandson, and my father, Fred H. Breylinger, who worked as a boy in his grandfather’s hardware store in Monticello, Wisconsin, said that the name was pronounced “Bri” in German, but had been “Americanized”.

Searches of genealogical databases reveal many families spelling their name Breilinger, so it is possible that we could be related to them in some way.

Interestingly, there was a Nicholas Brylengerus in Basel, Switzerland in the mid-1500s. He was one of the few earliest printers and his surviving books are well known and treasured volumes among museums, rare book dealers and collectors. In a review of one of his books offered for sale by rare book dealer Bennett Gilbert, he stated that Nicholas died in 1565. In the [Name List of Printers in the Utrecht University Library](#) his name is seen spelled as Breyling, Brylenger, Breylinger, Breyllinger, Breylingerus, and Bruellinger. I have found no genealogical records on him, but I suspect that such records exist in Switzerland, should others wish to make that leap.

## FERDINAND BREILINGER

The earliest direct Breylinger forebears I have been able to find were Ferdinand Breilinger and Katharina Schochin, of Tosters, Voralburg, Austria. They are shown on the 1803 birth record of their son, Franz Xaverius (Xaver) Brei(y)linger, as his parents.

Ferdinand is shown as a Private First Class under the Captain of Company 5. Katharina's parents are shown as Xaverius Winder and Barbara Stellis, both citizens of nearby Feldkirch, Austria. The only other information about Ferdinand and Katharina Breilinger is revealed in that same birth record. In parentheses following Xaver's name is the information that he was Catholic, and was born in house number 16 in Tosters.

Most revealing however, is the word "unehelich." The English translation of that word can be "illegitimate", or more gently, "of an unmarried mother." I certainly prefer the latter among the choice of words.

We don't know if Ferdinand was a native of Tosters who was in the army, or if he was there as a soldier stationed there in that late stage of the Napoleonic War. Soldiers were recruited from all over the Holy Roman Empire. We will probably never know what really happened.

Pfarramt Tosters  
Rückfragen an Günter Sartor, Tel. 72289

zH. Fr. Hundertpfund

### Franz Xaver Brei(y)linger

Eintragungen in den Tostner Geburts-, Trauungs- und Sterbebüchern

**Geburtsbuch: (Buch von 1784 bis 1877)**

*Xaverius Breilinger (kath., unehelich, geb. im Haus Nr. 16)*  
Eintragung auf S. 14 (alte Nummer) bzw. 25 (neue Nummer)  
20.4.1803  
Vater: Ferdinand Breilinger (Gefreiter unter einem Hauptmann der 5. Kompanie)  
Mutter: Katharina Schöchin  
Patén: Xaverius Winder und Barbara Stellis (beide Bürger und Bürgerin von Feldkirch)

From the bare facts presented in Xaver's birth record one can only speculate as to the further origins of the family. I have only found one other reference to a Breylinger earlier than our Ferdinand. That was Friederike Breylinger, born about 1785 in Durlach, Karlsruhe, Baden, Germany, and married to Jakob Gottlieb Eisenlohr in 1814 in Durlach. There must be some connection, but I leave it to someone else to make it should more genealogical information become available in the future.

## **FRANZ XAVER BREI(Y)LINGER**

We know little of Xaver from his birth in Tosters on April 20, 1803 until he was in his late 20s. The first bit of information we have of him is from the Stadtarchiv (City archives of) Feldkirch Faszikel (bundle of records) 3 No 40. (Note: Tosters is now a district of the town of Feldkirch.)

### **Document 1. March 26, 1834**

Xaver Breilinger applied to become a citizen of Feldkirch. He intended to marry Krenszenz (Kreszentia) Sutter, daughter of a citizen of Feldkirch. He learned the profession of both mason and stone mason working for 2 1/2 years in Switzerland. He has a certificate from Mr. Volkert in Zurich that he worked 2 years in his company, and he is able to draw. He also stated that "there is no other stonemason in Feldkirch".

### **Document 2. May 6, 1834**

A Certificate of Demission from the Village of Tosters stating that he was formally a member of that village, and that he has become a citizen of Feldkirch.

### **Document 3. April 23, 1834**

A letter from the Lord Mayor of stating the conditions under which Xaver may become a citizen of Feldkirch: He has to pay a fee of 150 Gulden, and pay 5 Gulden to buy a bucket for fire extinguishing.

### **Document 4. May 21, 1835**

Permission from the "Landgericht" (District Court) that Breilinger may work as a mason and stonemason.

### **Document 5. August 8, 1835**

A letter to the city asking for permission to store stones at the Gossacker. ( N.B.: Gossacker is now called Jahnplatz.)

Franz Xaver did indeed marry his first wife, Maria Kreszentia Sutter of Feldkirch, on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1834. Franz was 31 years old, so he may have waited to marry until he was well established as a stonemason in Feldkirch. Maria Kreszentia was born on Sept. 4, 1805, so she was 29 years old. The couple was married in St. Nicholas Cathedral, Pastorate of Feldkirch. The church was built in 1478 and, with the exception of new stained glass windows, remains today much as it was when built.



**St. Nicholas Cathedral, Main Entrance**

Six months after they were married, Xaver and Kreszentia (as she was called) bought a house at 113/134 Vorstadt in Feldkirch on

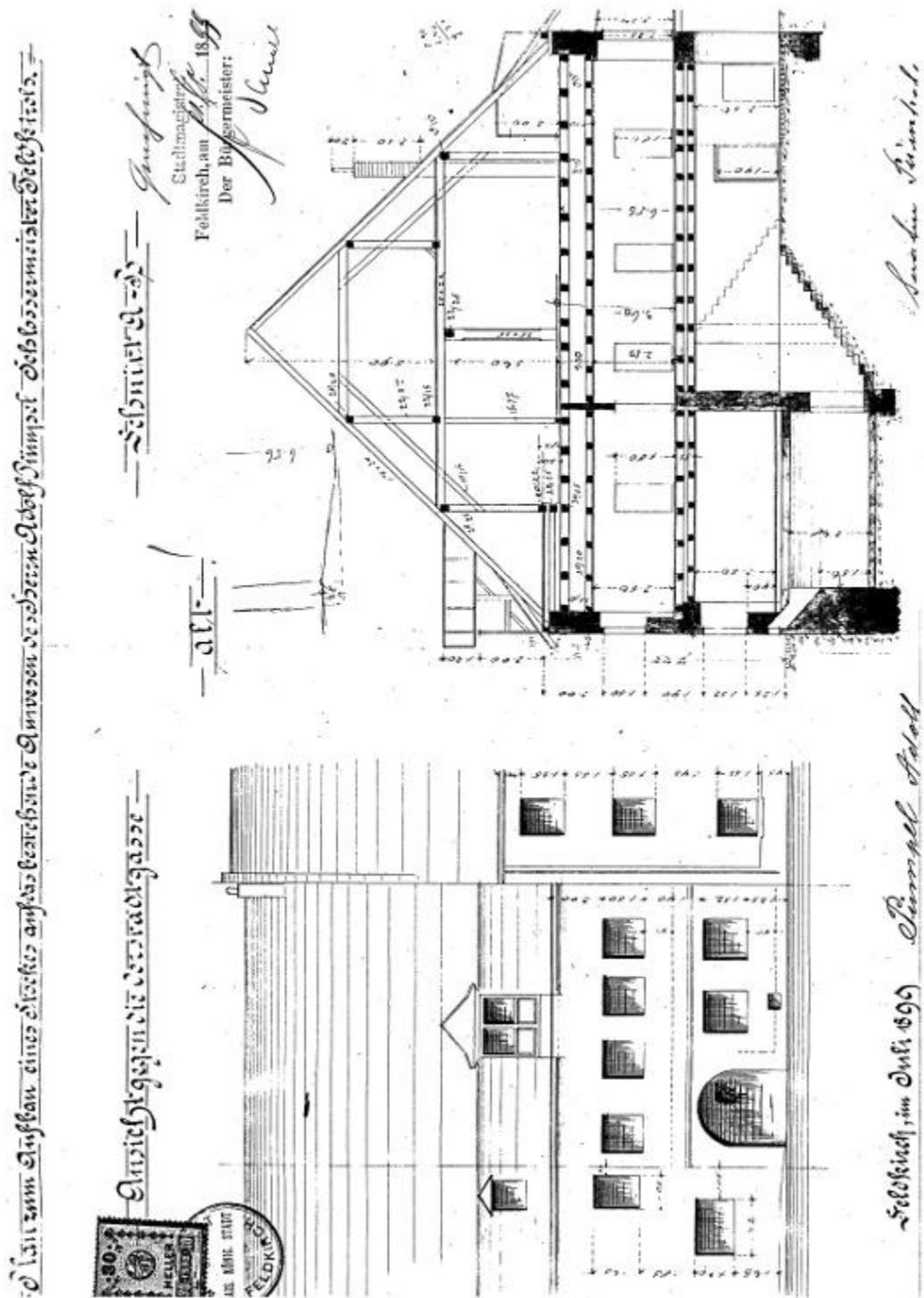
Feb. 21, 1853. Vorstadt translates to suburban in English, and indeed the street in those days was in a lovely area along the River Ill.

When Barbe and I visited Feldkirch in 1996, our guide took us to view the house. Much to our surprise and disappointment, we found that the house had been torn down only a few years before. As the city had grown over the hundreds of years, no one could have anticipated the need for automobile parking places. Behind the homes in that block there was considerable space for gardens and “back yards”. “Our” house had been simply removed from the houses on either side in order to make an entryway for cars to park behind the remaining homes.

In typical European practice it had been one of a very nice group of connected homes, all different, but sharing adjoining outside walls. Barbe took this photo showing the outlines of the beams of “our” house where they had joined the house next door on one side.



This 1888 drawing of the house clearly shows those same beams.



Zaver and Kreszentia had two children. Daughter Katherina, was born on Oct. 13, 1836. Katherina married a butcher named Ludwig Heinzl, and the couple immigrated to America in 1864, where they settled in or around Dubuque, Iowa.

Son Franz Xaver was born on Feb. 21, 1838. Nothing more of Franz Xaver Jr. is known. It is possible that he did not survive. There may be more records of him in the Feldkirch archives. Perhaps in time someone else might search for them there. Kreszentia Sutter Breylinger died on July 15, 1842, at the age of 37.

On Nov. 16, 1846, a little over 4½ years after Kreszentia's death, and at an age of 43, the widower Zaver married 25 year old Salome Nescher (born Sept. 13, 1821) of the village of Gamprin, Pastorate of Bendern, in the Principality of Lichtenstein. Salome was working in Feldkirch, but we have no idea in what capacity. It was very common for young women from nearby rural Lichtenstein to find work in the good sized town of Feldkirch.

Our direct ancestor Ferdinand Josef Breylinger was born to the couple on March 15, 1847, in Feldkirch. Salome died just one year and five months later on August 23, 1848, at an age of only 27.

[When Barbe and I visited Feldkirch in April of 1997 we took the short bus ride to Gamprin. An enquiry at the small town hall led us to a local retired Priest who had made up the whole genealogy of Salome's line and kindly provided us with a copy. While we were not able to take the opportunity of doing so, there is no question that a visit to Gamprin today would lead to meeting some of our cousins there.]

On Sept. 2, 1852 Xaver applied for permission to deal in kitchenware, but permission was denied. (City Archives as above)

On July 26, 1853 Franz Xaver asked for city authority to marry the widow Mrs. Katharina Fiel Marxer. The dispensation was necessary because the death of Mr. Marxer was less than three months prior. He did not get the permission because first the bride had to bring a certification of a surgeon that she was not pregnant. (City Archives as above)

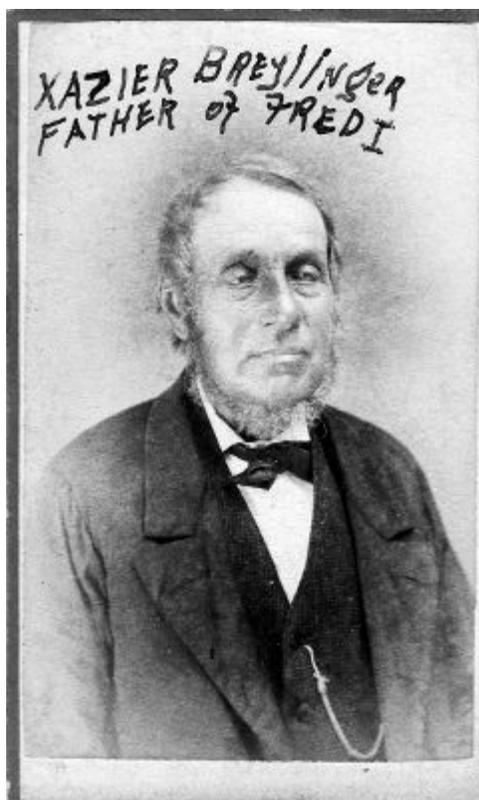
Franz Xaver Breylinger then did indeed marry his third wife, Katharina Fiel Marxer, widow of an Innkeeper in nearby Tosters, on August 8, 1853.

On Sept. 19, 1853 Xaver asked the City for permission to be an innkeeper in Tosters. (City archives as above) This substantiates the family story of his being both a master mason and innkeeper.

Xaver and Katharina had two children, Marcus, born in 1854, and Johan Georg, born in 1856. Both died in infancy.

I was told by the Feldkirch City Archivist that following the marriage, Xaver and six year old Ferdinand moved into the new Mrs. Breylinger's Inn and continued to operate it. That sounds right, as on Feb. 21, 1853 Xaver had sold the house at 113 Vorstad. It is probably safe to assume that Katharina acted as Ferdinand's mother until Katharina died on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1861, when Ferdinand was 14 years old.

From the death of Katharina in 1861 and on for another 19 years no other details on Xaver's life have been found. Then in 1880, at an age of 77, he turned up in no less a place than at the home of his son Ferdinand Joseph in Monticello, Wisconsin! That little gem of information only came up via the June 1, 1880 US Census. Interestingly, he is listed as Married, rather than Widowed. Whether that was a misunderstanding of the Census Taker, a slip of the pen, or true, is a question. That same Census shows Xaver to have been born in 1802 and thus being 78 at that time. I am sticking with the many pastoral records showing the 1803 date.



This is the only image of Franz Breylinger known to me. It was in the earliest Breylinger album. When it was annotated and, by whom, is a question. The photo was taken in the studio of William Kasten, Photographer, in Freeport, Illinois, who was in business there from 1872 to 1897. It could have been taken when Xaver was in Monticello in 1800. If so, he is certainly a young looking 78 year old. Another question is: what was he doing in Freeport, Illinois?

During the great waves of immigration of Europeans to America in the mid-1800s it was common for those from the same families or same local areas to follow the first to settle into those same areas. The area around Dubuque, Iowa became a center for those from Voralburg, Austria. We know from pastoral records that Xaver and Krenzientia's daughter Katherina and husband Ludwig Heinzl, immigrated to America in 1864, where they settled in or around Dubuque.

Katharina Breylinger Heinzl's younger brother Franz Xaver Breylinger Jr. is listed on the 1870 Feldkirch record of "military authorities" as being in America. It therefore seems safe to assume that he could have been in or around Dubuque with his sister, but when he actually went there is unknown.

The smaller city of Freeport, Illinois was another place where immigrants from Liechtenstein and Vorarlberg settled. Freeport is just 65 miles from Dubuque. We know that Ferdinand Joseph Breylinger,

step brother of Katherina, was in working in Freeport, Illinois for a time after he came to America in 1866 (History of Green County, Wis, 1884). Ferdinand eventually settled in Monticello, WI, in 1872, at an age of 25, and Monticello is only about 35 miles from Freeport.

Other photos to be seen in the following chapter on Ferdinand Joseph Breylinger were also taken in the same Kasten studio in Freeport. They lead me to believe that the Heinzl family lived in Freeport after Dubuque, and that Xaver was visiting them there.

I have found nothing more about Franz Xaver Breylinger after the 1880 Census. My only hope is that some other (and younger) descendent might journey to Feldkirch/Tosters to dig further into the pastoral and other records to put closure to his story.

Gary F. Breylinger  
Bigfork, Montana  
Jan. 12, 2013

**Marriage of Xaver and (1) Kreszentia Sutter and (3) Katharina Fiel**

No. 2970

EXTRACT from the FAMILY BOOK  
of the PASTORATE FELDKIRCH

B r e y l i n g e r Franz Xaver, from Tosters, stone-mason, born 20 April 1803, since 1853 in Tosters by Feldkirch, married on 3 August 1834 to Maria Kreszentia Sutter of Feldkirch, who was born on 4 September 1805. A daughter, born 13 October 1836, married Ludwig Heinzie, butcher, since 1864 in America; a son Franz Xaver was born 21 February 1838. Maria Kresz. Sutter died 15 July 1842. The second wife of Breylinger Franz Xaver from Tosters was N e s c h e r Salome from Bendern in Lichtenstein, born 13 September 1821, married 16 November 1846, died 23 August 1848. A son, Ferdinand Josef was born on 15 March 1847 to this couple, since 1866 or 1867 in America. The third wife of Breylinger Franz Xaver was Katharina Fiel, widowed Marxer, from Tosters, whom he married on 8 August 1853 and who died on 4 July 1861 in Tosters.

In the baptismal register next to Katharina (\*1836) and Franz Xaver (\*1838) the family name "Breilinger" is recorded, yet at their wedding in the year of 1846 and also at the baptism of their son Ferdinand Josef the name is written as "Breylinger".

TOWN CLERGY FELDKIRCH, 30 November 1938.

seal of: Town Clergy  
Feldkirch, St. Nicolaus

signed by: Josef(illegible)  
Secretary

**Purchase of 113 Vorstad house by Xaver and Kreszentia Breylinger**

7. XII. 35 kaufte Xaver Breylinger und  
Kreszentia geb. Sutter das Haus No  $\frac{113}{134}$   
Vorstadt. Es grenzte auf an die Grenz-  
wachkaserne, oben Franz Josef Roth,  
rückwärts an den Bach und den Stall  
des Roth.  
1888 besitzt es Martina Geser.

## Marriage of Xaver and (2) Salome Nescher

Vorarlberg

Apostolic Admin. Feldkirch

Political District Feldkirch  
(Town w. own Statistics)

Pastorate Feldkirch

### MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE

Valid only as  
proof of  
Caucasian descent

From this Marriage-Registrar Tom. V, page 125

it is certified herewith that

in (place and church) Feldkirch, St. Nikolaus-Parish Church

on (date) Sixteen November

in the year of One thousand eight hundred forty and six

in numerals 16. 11. 1846

by the right reverend sir, Father Jenny, Cooperator

in the presence of witnesses (First and last name, character):

Franz Xaver Winder and Johann Petsch

ecclesiastically married were:

GROOM (First and last name, profession, religion, character, birthplace, residence, proper quarters, age):

B r e y l i n g e r Franz Xaver, widower after Kreszenz Sutter, born  
20 April 1803, stone mason and master mason, living and residing here;

PARENTS: (First and last name, character): Ferdinand Breylinger and  
Katharina, nee Schöch

and his BRIDE (First and last name, etc., as groom): N e s c h e r Salomaa,  
single, born 13 September 1821, working in Feldkirch, belongs to Gamprin,  
Pastorate Bendorf, principality Lichtenstein, legitimate daughter of parents:

Franz Josef Nescher and Katharina, nee Hasler.

Documented by the undersigned who in his own handwriting affixed his signature  
and the official seal.

(Seal)

Feldkirch, 30 November 1938

signed (Signature illegible)

( Note than on the Marriage Certificate of Xaver and Salome Nescher above, the Certification of Caucasian Descent. In 1938 the Nazis went through all family records to determine which families were Jewish. Those who were not Jewish survived the Pogroms.)

### Sale of 113 Vorstadt

21. II. 53 kaufte Fawer Gaser, Schlosser aus  
✓ Gebratshofen von Franz Brailinger,  
Steinmetz das Haus № 113 Vorstadt  
um 2300 fl. R.W.

---

**Household Record**

1880 United States Census

[Search results](#) | [Download](#)[Previous Household](#) [Next Household](#)**Household:**

Name	Relation	Marital Status	Gender	Race	Age	Birthplace	Occupation	Father's Birthplace	Mother's Birthplace
Ferdinand BREYLINGER	Self	M	Male	W	33	TYROLL	Tinsmith	TYROLL	TYROLL
Mary C. BREYLINGER	Wife	M	Female	W	28	WI	Keeping House	NY	NY
Leon BREYLINGER	Son	S	Male	W	7	WI		TYROLL	WI
Nellie L. BREYLINGER	Dau	S	Female	W	1	WI		TYROLL	WI
Xever BREYLINGER	Father	M	Male	W	78	TYROLL	Retired Mason	TYROLL	TYROLL

**Source Information:**

<b>Census Place</b>	Mt. Pleasant, Green, Wisconsin
<b>Family History Library Film</b>	1255428
<b>NA Film Number</b>	T9-1428
<b>Page Number</b>	171A

© 1999-2002 by Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved. English approval: 3/1999  
 Use of this site constitutes your acceptance of these [Conditions of Use](#) (last updated: 3/22/1999).  
[Privacy Policy](#) (last updated: 10/12/2001). 27 <http://www.familysearch.org> v.2.5.0

