

VON TRAPP FAMILY

Life in America

In September 1938, they arrived in New York. There were nine children with a tenth on the way, and they were accompanied by Father Wasner (/the-real-story/franz-wasner/), who had become their family chaplain. Under his direction, singing turned into a profession and they became known as "The Trapp Family Singers". The family traveled throughout the United States on concert tours for eight months. After this period, their US-visa was expired and the Family Singers were forced to leave the country. Thanks to concert invitations, however, they managed to get their visas for Scandinavian countries.

When World War II broke out in September 1939, their American manager sent them tickets for the next crossing, so that they could fulfil their contracts with him.

In the early 1940s the family settled in Stowe, Vermont, where they bought a farm. They ran a music camp on the property when they were not on tour. In 1944, Maria and her stepdaughters Johanna, Martina, Maria, Hedwig, and Agathe applied for U.S. citizenship by filing declarations of intention at the U.S. District Court in Burlington, Vermont. Georg apparently never filed to become a citizen; Rupert and Werner were naturalized while serving in the U.S. armed forces during World War II; Rosmarie and Eleonore derived citizenship from their mother; and Johannes was born in the United States and was a citizen in his own right.

After World War II, the Trapp Family started a musical charity organisation: "Trapp Family Austrian Relief Inc.". The family sent countless parcels of food and clothing back to their homeland Austria.

After the war, they founded the Trapp Family Austrian Relief, Inc., which sent hundreds of tonnes of food and clothing to impoverished Austria.

The bus with "The Trapp Family Singers" painted on it was their only home during the first two years in the United States.



For the next eighteen years, the entire family was constantly on the road with their traveling family singing act. Maria demanded total loyalty of the children, and after their father died in 1947 they began to rebel at her unwillingness to let them live their own lives.