

Ignatz Willi, Barbara Hafen and Paulina Bosshard

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Ignaz Willi or Ignatz Willie was born 15 April 1837 in Scherzengen, Thurgau, Switzerland to (unsure). He joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints while in Switzerland and emigrated to Utah. He became acquainted with Barbara Hafen and the two were married 18 October 1861 before going south to Santa Clara. He came with the Swiss Company and arrived in November of 1861. We know very little more other than he died in 1863 and was buried in the Santa Clara Cemetery.

Barbara Hafen, the only daughter of John George Hafen Sr. and Mary Magdalena Hafen, was born in Scherzingen, Thurgau, Switzerland on 8 December 1835. She had a younger brother, John George, who was later to become Bishop of Santa Clara. Barbara's mother died in 1854, and she assumed her duties in the home and also helped in the field. The village of Scherzingen was a little town of about fifty families. Most of ... villagers were farmers. The Hafen farm comprised twelve to fifteen acres cultivated intensively. Barbara was reared in a religious home. A blessing was asked at each meal and there was regular reading from the prayerbook around the hearthstone.



Barbara Hafen

When Mormon missionaries came to her home town, she listened with interest to the gospel they brought and was converted. Despite the vigorous opposition of her father and brother, she insisted on attending

the meetings. Finally, through her influence they were converted also in April 1860.

Fathering to Zion in America was being urged by the Mormon Church. Although the Hafen's were doing well materially in Switzerland, the gospel meant more to them than all else so they did not hesitate to leave their home and friends, sell their property and set out for a new and strange land. An emigrating party made up by Elder Jabez Woodard, Mission President, set out from Switzerland in April 1861. Obtaining a fair price for their property, the Hafen's were able not only to pay their own passage but to help out others less fortunate. In the Swiss emigrating party were a number of friends – the Bosshards, Naegli, Tobler, Staheli, and Willi families – who were to continue as neighbors in Utah.

Saints from various parts of Europe assembled at Liverpool, England, where the large company of saints embarked on a sailing vessel, the Monarch of the Sea on 16 May 1861 for the ocean voyage to New York City arriving 19 June 1861 and on to Florence, Nebraska. The Hafen family purchased four wagons and fourteen yoke of cattle, also two milk cows and two mules. The Swiss group of saints was a part of the Sextus E. Johnson Company.

When a Swiss Company was called to settle in Utah's Dixie, Barbara and her family decided to join in the further journey. Before leaving Salt Lake City she was married to Ignaz Willi, one of the Swiss Company. The colonists settled on Santa Clara Creek and began the difficult task of making homes in the hostile land. A new townsite was surveyed in December, 1861, and plots of land were distributed to the new settlers. Part of their home which was passed down from generation to generation was built by Ignaz Willi and was on a lot adjoining that of Barbara's father.

No children resulted from the marriage of Ignatz and Barbara. Nearly a year later, with the consent of his wife, Barbara, Willi traveled to Great

Salt Lake City where he married, in the Endowment House, original Swiss pioneer Paulina Bosshard, sister of Susetta Bosshard Hafen, on 4 October 1862. Of interest is the fact that in the Santa Clara Cemetery records of Susetta Bosshard Hafen her siblings are also listed. By her sister Paulina's name is the notation that she married Ignas (Ignaz) Willie (Willi) which confirms the fact that she was married to Willi. Sometime in 1864 this couple had a daughter who was named Paulina after her mother. This birth was some months after Willi's death which occurred on 24 July 1863. Paulina moved to California, where she was known by her married name of Willi. In 1880, while living with her brother Herman, a daughter, Paulina is noted, who by then is 16 years of age.

Ignatz Willi died in 1863 and Barbara later married Jacob Tobler. To them were born two sons, William Ignatz born 25 November 1866 and John Albert born 28 January 1869. Two daughters Magdalena born 11 April 1871 and Emma Born 26 May 1873 were born to them, but died as small children.

William Tobler, Barbara's eldest son writes: "When plural marriage was being practiced my father married Barbara Hafen Willi who is my mother. I was the first child born out of four children to my mother and father. They had another son John Albert and two daughters who died in infancy. After she gave birth to her child, she died from child bed fever. Six weeks after her death the baby died.

I remember how she took me in her arms and caressed me. I also remember her on her death bed.

It was said that my mother was an outstanding seamstress – making men's clothing as well as for women and children. I was also told that she was a peaceable and kind woman."

Barbara died in 1873 leaving her small children to be reared by her husband's second wife. Barbara Staheli Tobler. This was just ten years after he first husband and twelve years after coming to Santa Clara.

