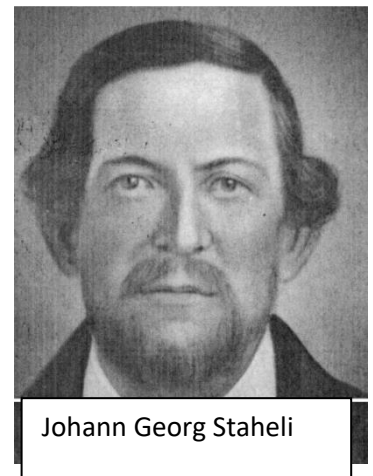


## Johann Georg Staheli and Sophia Barbara Haberli Family

- Wilhemina Staheli
- Elizabeth Staheli
- John George Staheli, Jr.
- Maria Mary Staheli
- John (Johann) Staheli

My father, George Staheli was born 5 February 1826 in Amersville, Thurgau Canton, Switzerland. In Amersville he lived on the outskirts of the city where he owned a small factory and made cotton yarns. The factory was only a sideline as his main occupation was teaching music. He, with three companions, comprised a quartet of players, who traveled not only over Switzerland but often crossed the border into Germany to play for dances, festivals, and celebrations of all kinds.



In 1861, he with his first wife, Sophia Barbara Haberli Staheli along with their children crossed the Atlantic Ocean and came to America as converts to the LDS Church. The voyage would have been a pleasant one had it not been for the death of their year old baby girl.

They went from Salt Lake with the Swiss Company to settle in Dixie. Brigham Young asked Father to stay in Salt Lake and teach music because of his musical ability, but since he could not speak English and because he wanted to be with his relatives and friends he came south even though he understood it would mean greater hardships. Father's wife was expecting a baby so they secured one room in the fort. In an interview by daughter Elizabeth she recalled, " We went to Santa Clara to make our home. We reached there about the first of December. Ira Hatch told us we could live in the upstairs of his rooms in the fort. He with his families, lived in one side of the fort and Jacob Hamblin in the other side. Living quarters were at a premium. A great call had come for

settlers to go to Dixie, and the Staheli's were thankful to push the piles of Indian corn back and make their beds on the floor and use the fireplace for warmth and cooking. It was a little better than a garret but it furnished shelter. The fort was made of rock and had been made years before by Jacob Hamblin and was thought to be a safe retreat in that wild and forbidding country. When the people left the fort their houses were made of willow with plaster of mud on the outside and lived in dugouts also. For months this family lived with no lights in their rooms after night fall except what came from the fireplace. Then the big-hearted Jacob Hamblin, heard about it, and sent them tallow to make dips of. There was no scarcity of cattle in those times but a family coming in from a foreign country among a people talking a strange language and with the timidity that would usually accompany such a delicate situation it is not to be wondered at if at times they did not have the comforts that could have been given them if they had been free in talking to their neighbors. Jacob Hamblin was a very able and very kind hearted man, always good to everybody. After he became acquainted with the family, he sent them suet, every time he killed a beef. The resourceful mother would render out the suet and place some in a dish with a piece of cotton sticking out of the tip and this would burn as long as there was any tallow left to burn. Driftwood was the fuel. And it was while her father was gathering wood from the water that a most hair-raising experience took place. Her mother, on her floor bed in the tiny room upstairs in the fort had given birth to a baby on the 25th of December on Elizabeth's 9th birthday. The Dixie weather was almost warm, and when the baby was a week old, father Staheli heard in the night a peculiar roaring sound no such sound as that had ever been heard in Switzerland, so he got up to investigate and found a flood coming down the river. His thought was to secure all the drift wood he could. Such a project absorbed his attention and he fished it out and leaned it up against the side of the fort to dry. When he had as much as he thought was needed he returned to the house. There to his horror, he found water knee deep running from one gate to the other through the fort. He tore upstairs in a frenzy of concern for his loved one. There lay his wife suffering from shock and heart break for the children were gone in a saddened effort to get help for their mother who was

unable to help herself. The children were discovered huddled in Jacob Hamblin's rooms downstairs, praying for their mother's deliverance. The roar of the raging flood shut out every other sound. All the rest of the fort had been vacated, and folks had gone to higher ground. The Staheli family was entirely forgotten. The children had been awakened by the fury of the flood and when they found the father gone, had gone out into the night only to find everything with which they could assist their sick mother, taken away and every one in the fort gone. Terror stricken, they turned to Jacob Hamblin for help and he was not to be found. Then father Staheli rushed downstairs in his excitement for the safety of the children and he found them all safe, but frightened. He went out the other end of the fort and there was a fork of the before gentle creek a mild sea of water with the crowd of homeless families on the other side of the stream. Among them was Jacob Hamblin who was a powerful man, and threw across the swollen current a rawhide lariat and this he fastened to a gate post and the other end was secured to a stump. The news spread and men volunteered their help to rescue the sick woman and her children from the deserted fort. In the little book called "Jacob Hamblin" by James A. Little this is spoken of but the story does not tell that all the children were there marooned in by the turbulent water.

A man on horseback, held on to the rope with one hand holding the baby and reins with the other hand saved its life. Jacob Hamblin on horseback with the mother's arms tied around his neck swam the horse across the roaring flood. The children were all rescued in the same way. Without the rope it would have been impossible to have saved their lives. Her mother hung like a dead weight from the neck of her rescuer. With battling huge boulders and stones and ice, he afterward said if it had been any further across, he would have sunk beneath the load. Before the children realized there was any danger and they stepped out on the upstairs porch to see what the roaring meant, it was just coming daylight. A shriek, a wrench, and a long howl and they saw the grist mill fall and be swept down the stream into the river. The people were put into wagons and taken to the new townsite. When they had found themselves safe out of harm's way, and with sight of their upstairs room, the angry river slashed itself against the foundation of the stone fort and it caved

in and was buried in the stream. The very wall against which her mother's bed had been an hour before fell in and the fort was a wreck. The new townsite was laid out that New Year's Day in 1862. The next few days the children went to the scene and saw where great trees had upheaved and boulders as big as the room in which they had lived in the wake of the on rushing water.

Pigweeds, segos, wild parsnips, berries, the heads of beef and hogs were all made into edible food. Wheat and corn was ground in a hand mill, and the coarse part sifted out and made into mush. The finer into bread. Jacob Hamblin remained their staunch friend and advisor in their effort to adjust themselves to the new country and conditions. Barbara had a lot of nice clothes when she came to Utah and as long as she lived they managed. Yards and yards of choice linen was traded for a cow. She made dresses for Elizabeth and her sisters out of yardage she had brought from Switzerland. Those dresses lasted for three years. She had yards of calico and factory linen and woolen from this store she provided for her children as long as she lived which was not long. She was never well after the night of the flood. She planted peas in the early garden and before they had matured ready to eat, she had been laid to her last long rest. And for her last robes they had to use window curtains. And the girls always remembered how she had used her linen for the family. After she died life was heavy indeed. Her father would walk to St. George to work and go without anything to eat. If any one gave him anything he would bring it home to give to the children."

Elizabeth continues in her interview: "A factory was started in 1864. We wove yarn for clothing. We spun yarn for knitting. We colored with dock root, used factory colored for dresses, cloth from the factory was made into sheets, pillow cases, dresses and underwear and father's pants were brown, colored from the dock, and made by the girls at his home.

A tannery was started in St. George and all the people in Santa Clara were well fitted for shoes. A brother Hafen made them and they lasted two years. Saturday night my sister Mena and myself would polish them for use in the morning for Church. Then we would have to wear them all week. When I was 16 years old I had my first pair from the store. My father paid corn and molasses for them to brother McClellen.

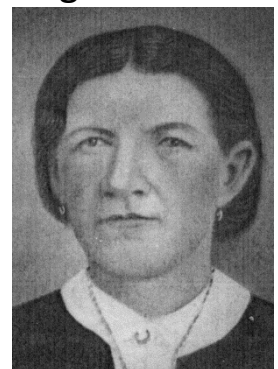
**Sophia Barbara Haberli Staheli**, father's first wife died from typhoid fever. After her death he married **Anna Barbara Blickenstorfer Meier**.



Anna Barbara Blickenstorfer Meier

Father was most well known for his Staheli Band. A while after coming to Santa Clara, a man by the name of John Itten received a portion of an estate which included a set of band instruments. There was much musical talent here so Mr .Itten donated the instruments to the town. They had no sheet music and father wrote the music for each instrument and then devoted hours and hours of time teaching individual members to read the notes. He was an excellent singer and they had no organ or piano so father made use of his voice teaching the notes. Eventually they had 180 pieces and grew in name and fame. Father helped with the building of the St. George Temple and at its dedication the band was stationed on top of the Temple to play. Father also organized a Swiss choir and many times they walked to St. George and carried their babies to sing at conference.

He married a third time to **Rosina Reber Staheli** who had four children, only two living to adults – Frank and Rosina. Johann George Staheli died 28 April 1881 at Santa Clara.



Rosina Reber

### **Sophia Barbara Haberli Staheli**

Sophia Barbara Haberli was born 25 April 1826 in Illighausen, Thurgau, Switzerland to Johannes and Anna Barbara Haberli. She married George Staheli in 1849. They had nine children, two died in infancy. Eight of these

children were born in Switzerland and the last was born in Santa Clara. She was the first child to be born after the Swiss company arrived. They came to Utah to join with the body of the Saints in 1860. Those coming were Wilhelmina, Elizabeth, George, Mary, John, and Sophie (who died at sea).

Their daughter and last child Barbara was born 25 December 1861 just weeks after their arrival in Santa Clara. They were given a room in the fort for the mother and new baby. They were there when the flood came. George was off gathering firewood and did not know of the danger. It was Jacob Hamblin who risked his life to get mother and baby to safety. He almost drowned himself and had to be rescued by others by tying a rope to a tree. In an interview by daughter Elizabeth she recalled, " We went to Santa Clara to make our home. We reached there about the first of December. Ira Hatch told us we could live in the upstairs of his rooms in the fort. He with his families, lived in one side of the fort and Jacob Hamblin in the other side. Living quarters were at a premium. A great call had come for settlers to go to Dixie, and the Staheli's were thankful to push the piles of Indian corn back and make their beds on the floor and use the fireplace for warmth and cooking. It was a little better than a garret but it furnished shelter. The fort was made of rock and had been made years before by Jacob Hamblin and was thought to be a safe retreat in that wild and forbidding country. When the people left the fort their houses were made of willow with plaster of mud on the outside and lived in dugouts also. For months this family lived with no lights in their rooms after night fall except what came from the fireplace. Then the big-hearted Jacob Hamblin, heard about it, and sent them tallow to make dips of. There was no scarcity of cattle in those times but a family coming in from a foreign country among a people talking a strange language and with the timidity that would usually accompany such a delicate situation it is not to be wondered at if at times they did not have the comforts that could have been given them if they had been free in talking to their neighbors. Jacob Hamblin was a very able and very kind hearted man, always good to everybody. After he became acquainted with the family, he sent them suet, every time he killed a beef. The resourceful mother would render out the suet and place some in a dish with a piece of cotton sticking out of the tip and this would burn as long as there was

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Sophia Barbara never regained her health from this ordeal and died 3 June 1862 leaving her young family. She was buried in the property one block east of the Relief Society House. Under a rose bush.

### **Wilhelmina Staheli**

Wilhelmina Staheli was the oldest child of George and Sophia Barbara Haberli Staheli. She was born 2 December 1849 in Amriswil. She joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Switzerland along with her family. They emigrated to Utah and to Santa Clara in 1861. She was only twelve years old when called upon to live the hard life that these pioneers had to withstand. She left a beautiful home and a “well-to-do” way of life in Switzerland. She married Charles Hildebrand in 1867. Their first six children Mary Elizabeth (died at birth), Rachel Salina, Emma Wilhelmina, Sophia Matilda, Julia Amanda, and Dora Georgiana were born in Santa Clara. The last three Charles George, Barbara Caroline and Alice Elmira were all born in Alhambra, California where they moved in 1878. She died there 2 December 1915.



Wilhemina Staheli

### **Elizabeth Staheli**

Elizabeth Staheli was the third child in a family of nine. She was born 25 December 1851 in Amersweile, Switzerland. Her father, George John Staheli and Sophia Haberli Staheli were born in this same district.



Elizabeth Staheli

My mother's people were wealthy, and of the aristocracy. My father owned a grist mill and large farm and hired all of the work done. Mother did not know how to sew when she was married.

Switzerland is all hilly country, but there are low places in between the mountains where there are little farms. The place father built was right on the creek bed. This is the first home that I remember. All the way along the creek were hazel berries, strawberries, and all kinds of bushes. It was beautiful there.

My father and mother and grandparents on my father's side joined the church when I was about four years old. My mother's parents were too wealthy to belong to our church. We all came to Utah in 1861. Grandmother and Grandfather had come the year before. We left Switzerland when the Cherry trees were in bloom. We left our home and went down to the hotel and station combined. We took the train to the ocean. We stayed in Liverpool a whole week as the North Sea was so rough on coming from France that we were too sick to start the journey across the ocean until we felt better.

My brother, George, and I were great hands to teeter. Father told us we would get all the teeter we wanted when we got on the water. When we got on the ship, I go on one side, and George on the other, and we had a good time until we decided to go down where the rest of the family were. They were all sick, and it was not long until we were sick too.

Liverpool was a smoky, dirty looking place; not much like our beautiful home in Switzerland. We got a sail ship, the Amerswile, that was the next to the largest ship on the ocean at that time, and with a large company of saints, sailed in the forepart of April 1860.

It took us seven weeks to cross the water. Mother was sick in bed all of the time, and our baby sister Sophia, who was just past a year old, took sick and died, and was buried in the ocean. She was prepared for burial wrapped in heavy canvas. A heavy weight was tied to the canvas and then it was sunk in the water.

The cook we had was very poor. Everything he would fix was either burned or spoiled some other way. We were given a "sea biscuit". These were made of flour and water with no salt, and were about the size and thickness of a five pound lard bucket lid. They were as hard as a bone. Father would tell us that if we would eat a sea biscuit, he would give us a fig. He had brought these with him from Switzerland. We would try to eat them, but when we found we couldn't we would put them under the mattress on the bed and then would get our fig. We were all very thankful when the journey on the water was over. There were about a thousand saints in the company.

I never will forget how New York looked. We stayed there for a week; mother and the younger children at a hotel; father and the older ones at a place called Castle Gardens. After we were rested up we left for Florence. I do not remember how long we were from the time we left New York until we got there. It was during the time of the Civil War, and we could hear the boom of the cannons and firing of guns.

When we passed through Missouri the people were so bitter against the Mormons that we had to ride in a freight train. When they heard that there was a company of Mormons coming they set a bridge on fire and we had to ride on a freight train so the mob would not know when we went through. Then we had to stop all night in a place where the people were the most bitter toward our people so that the bridge could be repaired. We had to sit up all night on those rough planks, for that was the only kind of seats we had. Everyone had to be quiet; we dared not even speak out loud or have a fire. When morning came we were surely thankful to our Heavenly Father for the opportunity of getting out of the state of Missouri, where we could again have a passenger train. When we arrived in Florence, which is now called Omaha, we crossed the river on flat boats. Here we stayed for a week getting ready for the rest of the journey.

John W. Young was the captain of our company. On the trip down from Salt Lake to Santa Clara Father's cornet fell out of the wagon and was run over by one of the wheels. This made him feel very badly as he enjoyed it so much and

the company had a great deal of pleasure with his music. It was many years before he had money to get another.

A few days later about fifty Indian warriors came to the wagons. They were all painted and about scared us to death. They had lots of beads and bracelets and didn't have many clothes on. We children walked all of the way across the plains. We could walk faster than the oxen, and would get a long way ahead. A man would come along and tell us where the camp would be. George and I would stick straws down the gopher holes and one day a big snake came out of one. My, were we frightened. The telegraph line was being built at this time across the continent and I remember hearing the men talk of sending messages, and saw them work. A great prairie fire swept over the land. For days it was terrible. Two days the cattle had to go without food or water, and the ground was hot to walk on; and at night everything was as light as day. When we were at the Platte River, one man went in swimming and took cramps and drowned. One day we met the soldiers who had come to Utah to kill the Mormons. They were returning to Washington and had with them seven cannons. These were the first cannons that many of us had ever seen. On Sundays, meetings were always held and father, being a good musician, and choir leader, would lead the songs. A great many of these people were Swiss and we had a Swiss choir. They were beautiful singers. My father was also the bugler, and would play his bugle at night and in the morning. Whenever we had a good place to wash, the company would wait for the women to do the washings. One time they were on a little island and mother wanted me to bring her some soap. I did not dare to cross the water for there were polly-wogs in the water. We saw but one herd of buffalo on the trip. After ten weeks of travel on the plains, we reached Salt Lake City the first part of September 1861. The peaches and watermelon were ripe. Just as we were entering Salt Lake City, at a bridge by the side of the road, were melons cut in halves with a knife by the side of them for the emigrants to eat. This was the first melon I ever tasted and I thought I never had anything that was as good. We stayed in Salt Lake five weeks and then there was a call came for some people to go and settle Dixie. Brother Young gave father his choice, as he was a good musician, and Brother Young thought he might be of help in the city.

Grandfather and Grandmother were called, so father and mother wanted to be with them and the rest of the Swiss company so we went to Dixie.

It was the later part of November when we left Salt Lake City, in the year 1861. Bonelli was the captain of the company, and when we reached Cottonwood he went through all the wagons, and everything he thought that we did not need he threw in the wash. But the people went and got them as they needed them greatly in their journey.

Just before we reached Washington, father's cornet fell out of the wagon and was run over by one of the wheels. This made him feel very badly as he enjoyed it so much and the company had a great deal of pleasure in his music. It was many years before he had money to get another. He often walked six miles to St. George to get a chance to play one.

After arriving at the Fort, my youngest sister was born on my birthday 25 December 1861 – ten years my younger. It was Christmas day and my birthday. We rented a room in the fort of Jacob Hamblin and Ira Hatch. Mother did not get along very well and was in bed the middle of January when the flood came and totally destroyed the fort where we were living.

Father got up to see if there was any danger of the fort being washed away; but it was quite a way so he did not think there was any danger of the water coming up to the fort; so he got a rake and fished some wood that was near the edge of the water onto the bank and then carried it over to the all of the fort and leaned it there to dry so we could have a fire.

At this time we lived in one of the upstairs rooms of the fort. When father came inside the water was up to his knees all over the enclosure; so he went to the north gate to see where it came from; and there found a stream as large as the one on the other side. While father was on the outside getting the wood all of the inhabitants of the fort moved out and never thought about us until they saw father. They then threw a rope to him and had him tie it to the gate post so that they could come across to assist in carrying us across.

We children were all up and dressed, and when we saw the water inside the fort we were nearly frightened to death. The first thing we did was to go into a

vacant room and pray; pleading with our Heavenly Father to help us so we would not be drowned. Our dear mother was still sick in bed and we were so worried over her; but when we arose from our knees we saw men coming inside the fort to help us.

Jacob Hamblin carried mother because he was very tall and strong and could better keep her out of the water. Mothers hands were tied around his neck and even while riding a horse across the flood they were both wet. Jacob Hamblin said that if it had been much farther across he would have sunk beneath the load.

Oh, how happy we were when we saw our dear mother and sister safe on the other side of the torrent. Just after they got mother out, the whole south wall caved down into the water and washed the whole town away except two little houses that were up against the hillside.

All of the people were then put into wagons and taken to the new townsite, that was a half mile down the river. Father made a dugout by putting a tent over one end and later putting a willow shed over the other. The people began to make the water ditch to bring the water up to the high land. It was while they were working that the high bank caved in and killed Duane Hamblin, Jacob Hamblin's son. His father was at that time on a mission to the Indians. They then began to build a dam across the creek so that they could have water enough to insure a good crop the following season. They spent the most of their time digging water ditches and preparing the land for Spring planting. When everything was up and growing, a flood came and washed the dam out leaving everything to wither and die for want of water. They did not grow anything that year.

Mother helped carry fence posts to fence the lot and spade up the garden. She planted peach pits that later grew to be the orchard. When the garden was just commencing to grow father got the mountain fever and was sick for six weeks. When he was just recovering, mother took it and was sick eighteen days when she died on June 3, 1862, leaving a family of six children; the baby just a little over five months old. Father didn't have a cent, nor a pound of flour, or anything else except a little cornmeal.

We children would gather greens and would eat them without anything else. Then they would get tough and would not be fit to eat. Pig weeds, segos, and berries were eaten, and none of the parts of hogs or beeves were wasted.

My mother brought a lot of linen and other cloth with her. She traded some of it for the cow that died in Harmony. When she was buried they dressed her in window curtains.

Father went to St. George to see if he could get work so he could get food for us children. He would walk six miles to St. George without breakfast, work at whatever he could find, building stone foundations, and receive as pay a little cornmeal, or once in a while a pound or two of flour or a little bread that he brought home for us; he getting his dinner free. If he got molasses it was eaten right up and did not make any of us sick except the baby.

In the fall after mother died I took chills and fever. As I was the first in the town to have it they didn't know what it was. They would pile everything they had on me to keep me from freezing then I would be burning up. All of the inhabitants of the town had them at the same time. Just imagine, if you can, shaking for about two hours until you felt like your head would burst and every bone in your body was coming a part, and then to be burning up with fever until you would not know anything. It makes my back ache to think about it; yet there was not a murmur from anyone; but they always thanked God for bringing them to Zion. When I think about those days I don't know how we lived. It was three years before I completely recovered; and until I was seventeen I was a regular scrub from being sick so long. Father was so sick that when the fever would come on he would beg us to tie up the sun.

President Brigham Young came down and told the people to drain the slew if they wanted to get rid of chills and fever. When the flood came it made a new channel for the creek, leaving water in the old channel that just stood there all the time. The people did this and got rid of the fever.

There wasn't anything grown for four years; the first year the dam went out; the second year the creek went dry; and the third year when everything was growing good and the people were all so happy, the grasshoppers came at

about noon and settled down in the little town and in less than a week everything that was green was eaten up and the town was as dry as in the winter. They then laid their eggs and flew away all at once just the same as they had come. The next spring the grasshoppers hatches out by the billions and ate everything as fast as it came out of the ground. Then in the summer they flew away.

I remember one time when mother sent me to a neighbors to take a little milk for their coffee as her husband was sick. The neighbor gave me a little piece of white bread about two inches square and a half inch thick. I ran all the way home through the fields to get there sooner so I could give them all a taste. It seemed to me that that was the whitest bread I ever saw, and it is nothing to compare with what we have now. Bread was made from bran or shorts or some coarse flour.

One time father found a five dollar gold piece.

I tell you we used to sing 'Oh Hard Times Come Again No More', in earnest. We children never had all the bread we could eat as long as I was home; but still everyone was happy and united and thanked God in prayer and in song.

There was a town cow herd and brother George and I were herding cows. We were always bare footed and we would jump from rock to rock to keep out of the hot sand which burned so badly. When I was fourteen I worked for Jacob Hamblin while his wife was sick. I worked for three weeks and received for pay three yards of calico. I made me a slip blouse with this and mother had a pretty white petticoat that I wore with it; and I had it for the 24th of July.

A tannery was started in St. George and all the people in Santa Clara were fitted out with shoes. A brother Hafen made them and they lasted for two years. When I was 16 years old I had my first pair from the store. My father paid corn and molasses for them to Brother McClellan.

I made all of our own clothes for years and years. I made the cloth and everything; raised the cotton and picked it and put it in balls. We would make the cotton into yard; then weave it into cloth or knit it. I would dye some of it with the different colored wild berries I found. I would leave the cloth right in



the loom and cut a piece right off the loom whenever I wanted to make the boys a shirt, or a nightgown for one of us. I spun and knit twelve pair of socks for my husband. I thought I might die and I wanted to be sure he would have plenty of socks.

I made almost all my own clothes, all of my husband's clothes; and all of my sons clothes; even those he wore to college in 1883. He was past 19 years of age when he had for the first time clothes I had not made.

We made our own straw hats. I was proud of my hat. I made my husband's and son's hats. My husband bought only one suit in his life. That was the last one he had.

Father rode a horse to St. George one time to play for a dance. This was one he had borrowed and when he was about a mile from home the thing reared and balked throwing father off on his head. Father managed somewhat to get home; but when he got in the home he fainted. We put him to bed; he had three ribs broken, his collar bone broken and hurt internally. It was weeks before he was able to be up or even move. I was the nurse and tried all I could to help him. The neighbors never expected him to live. As I would rub him with olive oil, I would pray that Heavenly Father would heal him and let him live with us. When he began to get better he asked for his cornet and when he commenced to play the neighbors came in; great big men just wept for joy to see him better.

Just after father was better, he helped me make a loom. He dug holes and set posts in the ground, then made beams, and had some carpenters make batten. I made the harness to draw the thread through, and then got our yarn from the Washington factory and we made cloth for sheets and everything we wore. I remember of having one pair of store shoes before I married. Brother McClellan bought some for his daughter and they were too small so father bought them for me. I was going to a dance with father and so he bought cloth to make me a dance dress. This dance was in St. George and Apostle Erastus Snow was going to be there with other authorities.

I shook hands with Brigham Young once when he came to St. George and danced in the same set with him. He was a nice looking man; just about the right size. He loved to see people make their own clothes, and he was always telling them to raise silk worms. I told him I could not do that because I was too fussy about handling the worms. Sister McClellen later made a beautiful shawl and took it back to the fair in Philadelphia.

In the year 1870, Francis Walker, a cooper (one whose business it is to make casks and barrels) and farmer by trade, came to Santa Clara with lumber. Brother Bunker suggested that he court me. We were married 18 April 1870 by Erastus Snow in the St. George Temple. Most of our married life we lived in Spring Valley, Lincoln County, Nevada.

Francis Walker came across the plains with a man who was going to California. It was during the great gold excitement there, so he drove a team to pay his way. When he got to Salt Lake City in 1861 he stayed there and worked for this same man. In a few months he joined the church and then next year he was called to go to Dixie; and then in 1863 he and some other young men were called to go back to the states to get some emigrants. It took them about six months to make the trip and when he returned he worked for Mr. Whitmore looking after his cattle. He next went to Pine Valley and worked in a saw mill until after we were married.

On April 18, 1870 at St. George we were married by Erastus Snow. We had a wedding dinner at Sister Cunninghams. She was owing my husband some money years before this, and said she would cook him a wedding dinner. There were twelve besides the family to the dinner. After the wedding dinner we went to Washington where we stayed that night. Then from there we went to Salt Lake City to get our endowments.

Frank took a load of cheese from Pine Valley to Salt Lake and we traveled with Brother and Sister Anthony W. Ivins. We called him Tony. It took us two weeks to get to Salt Lake. We had a span of young mules. They would be very anxious to go in the morning but by noon they would be ready to stop. When we were in the city we bought dishes and cooking utensils. I am still using the copper boiler and iron tea kettle that we got there.

We moved to Pine Valley where my first son, Francis, was born. We moved back to Santa Clara in the fall of 1872. Then in the spring of 1873 we moved to Spring Valley, Lincoln County, Nevada, where we lived for twenty years. Two sons and seven daughters were born there.

George was born in 1875, and when he was six months old we moved to Desert Springs and took over a mail station, from Bowen who owed us. The station was 150 miles from Pioche, Nevada, and 30 miles from Mountain Meadows. The wagons were light and generally carried passengers from Salt Lake to Los Angeles. Our home here was a stopping place for them. We sold traveling supplies, horse shoes, canned goods and had a supply room where liquor was kept and sold. Pa was in partnership with two others. All day and all night we would have to be ready to cook and get on meals for travelers. And the greater part of them were rough and tough men, who were looking for adventure and money. We saw no rest. I was not strong and the work was hard. I had three children, and I developed a constant cough; and got so poor and thin with the responsibility, worry and hard work that pa's partner told him, "You will have to get Lizzie away from here or you will have to haul her away in a box." We had sent all of our money to Spring Valley, and when we got there we found that there wasn't any left. They said that it had taken all of it to run the ranch.

We had a ranch, farm, cattle, and would make butter and sell to Pioche. I remember flour costing \$30.00 a hundred, calico 75 cents a yard, butter 75 cents a pound and wild hay \$40.00 a ton.

When we first moved there, Maxwell was Presiding Elder and we had a few meetings. Then he moved away and the Bishop of Eagle Valley took charge, and we would go there to meetings which were held once or twice a month. We belonged to Panaca Ward. Our mail came from Pioche. When any one went there they brought the mail for the whole valley.

This was a beautiful place; wild flowers, springs and meadow grass two feet high. Any one that appreciates nature would enjoy this place. There was one place we called mossy canyon and it was filled with flowers, moss and the stream of water; and all kinds of wild berries, within a few blocks of the house.

Once my daughter, Annie, fell out of the buggy when we were on our way to meeting. We had to go down the canyon to town, and it was an awful road down the canyon. I was driving the buggy and George was driving the team. I put Annie to sleep in the buggy. When we got to the bottom of the canyon I looked and saw her lying there in the road. I had seen her falling but I could not catch her. I'll never forget that trip.

I had not been back to my old home for seven years and my husband had a nice team of black mares; and we had a white top buggy, of which we were very proud and he persuaded me to go back home and see the folks. I took my son George, who was nine years old, and the four younger children, and started out. We got lost on some camp roads. The distance was ninety miles and the road was quite rough. As we were going over some of the rough roads the last day, I couldn't take care of the team and the baby too, so I put her to sleep in the back of the wagon. We went over a dugway and I looked to see if my baby was all right and I saw her just going over the wagon over the wagon box; she fell under the wheel and was run over. I did not enjoy my trip much as she was sick most of the time.

In the spring of 1892 my children took diphtheria and we had eight of the children and the school teacher who was living with us, all sick at once. My two children, Joseph A., twelve, and Emma, ten, both died in June of 1892. This was a real trial and the home never seemed to be the same. So we took a trip up to Deseret as there was a great deal of talk about that place. We decided to move. In the fall of 1892, November 30, we left Nevada and traveled for nine days. It was cold winter weather and we traveled with two four-horse teams; some driving cattle as my husband had been a cattle man in Nevada. We reached Hinckley on December 9th, 1892. There were in the company my husband and myself, two sons and five daughters, and my brother George Staheli. He had his feet frozen just before we left Nevada and every time the wagon would go over a bump in the road he would moan for he was in so much pain.

I was in a delicate condition, and the days seemed very long, riding all day and camping at night with no decent place to sleep. We settled on a 200 acre

farm, just twenty-five acres were in alfalfa. The building consisted of one log room 14 by 16 feet and another log room about half a mile west of that. We immediately moved the one room so they would be together. There in July my last child was born, a little son, but he lived eight months and died. We had no doctors there at that time and we didn't know just the trouble but everything was done that seemed possible and we felt our Heavenly Father had taken him to join his other brothers and sisters.

We had little room in our house, but there was always room in our hearts and our home was the gathering place of all the young people every Sunday. As soon as possible we built a nine roomed brick house; and when it was finished we had a big dinner and had the house dedicated. We felt that was really a heaven of rest.

When we first came to Hinckley the people were building a meeting house. My husband gave the Bishop \$20.00 to help in the building. Everyone was very much surprised as money was so very scarce, and everyone was without it except for a little store pay.

Less than a year after we moved to Hinckley I was chosen as a counselor in the Relief Society. Sister Naomi Theobald was the President. From that time on, I filled a great many different positions in the church. I was Sunday School teacher, in the Primary Department for eighteen years, President of the YLMIA for ten years, Stake Counselor in the Primary of Millard Stake, Stake Aid in Relief Society and a visiting teacher in the Relief Society yet. I enjoy my visits and there is never a month that I am able to go.

During the summer of 1907, my husband was unloading wood and the pole slipped that he was using as a pry and hit him in the chest crushing a valve in his heart which caused leakage of the heart. He died on October 24, 1907 after suffering for some time. This was a great blow. I had a big farm and no boys to run it. I leased it for a year, but it was not taken very good care of, so I decided to sell my brick house and buy a place in town. As the town had been moving north, I was out of town where I was living.

I went to California to visit my sisters there, and I surely enjoyed my visit. They did everything possible to make it comfortable for me; taking me to the different resorts and other places of interest. I spent two different winters there besides visiting there several other times.

In August 1927 my son George, who was living in Hinckley was very sick and he was taken to the hospital in Salt Lake. There they found that he had to have an operation for gall and appendicitis. The operation seemed to be successful but he had a hemorage and died August 21, 1927 leaving a large family. This was a blow to everyone as he was well thought of by everyone that knew him.

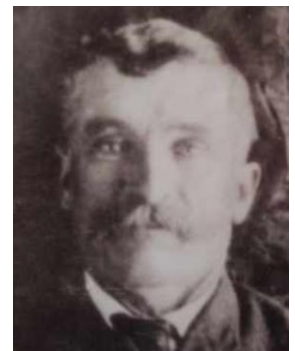
I have done temple work for a great many years and have secured many names from Switzerland that work has not been done for.

For a while my heart was very bad from over work and worry, but I got better and now I am too tough to die. I could not die if someone hit me on the head with a sledge hammer.

### **George Staheli Jr.**

George Staheli Jr. was born 28 May 1854 in Amersweil, Thurgau, Switzerland to George Johannes and Sophia Barbara Haberli Staheli. He came to Utah when he was only six years old. He went through the hardships of leaving his beautiful home in Switzerland and the riggers of sailing the ocean and crossing the plains.

When he was 43 he married Emma Barbara Graf on 27 December 1897. She had previously married Traugott Graf. He was killed in an accident where he was kicked by a mule. After this she married a Mr. Fordham, but was unhappy in this marriage. She had 2 children by Traugott. To this they added three children, Harvey Rulon who married Letha Hagsled Taylor, Vera Grace who married Rulon Stucki, and Lorraine who died at the age of 26 and never married.



George Staheli, Jr

George had a beautiful vegetable garden and several fruit trees on his lot. In front his wife Emma had her own flower garden with flowers and herbs. An arbor stretched almost the length of the lot, covered in summer with purple grapes. Under it were neat stacks of wood ready for use in winter and for bottling produce on an outdoor stove.

He died 39 December 1934 in Santa Clara and was buried there.

## **Mary Staheli**

Mary Staheli was born in Switzerland. She sailed on the Monarch of the Sea with her family, leaving Liverpool 16 May 1861. Her family had been recruited by the Mormons, and their passage was paid for by the LDS Perpetual Fund.



Mary Staheli

The family arrived in Santa Clara, Washington, Utah, on 28 November 1861. This was shortly before the big flood, where she had to be rescued by one of the missionaries. My father remembered her telling of the dances on the second floor of the Hamblin home.

Hans Olson evidently swept her off her feet, and by 1880 they were living with the start of their family in Spring Valley, Lincoln, Nevada having taken a long route through Oregon. He probably emigrated from Kristiansund, Norway about 26 October 1850.

The 1860 Census lists a Hans Olson, age 26, living by himself as a farm laborer in Redwood Township, Santa Clara, California. It lists him as being from Norway, although there is a two year age discrepancy. Hans Olse\on is a popular name.

As recounted by Donald Olson, his grandson, Hans could never stay in one place for a long time. He had to travel, and he even did some mining throughout the west. On March 26, 1872, he was camped alongside Owens Lake California when the hugh magnitude 8.0 Owens Valley earthquake struck. He said that the lake just disappeared into the ground refilling itself shortly.

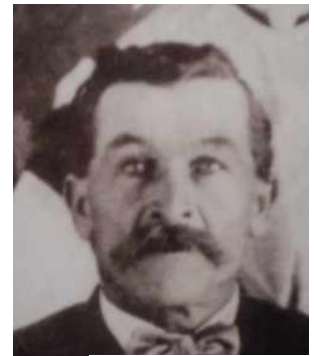
Their children were Josephine, Ida, Henry John, George, Frank, Lillie and Mabel.

By 1910, Mary and Hans and the family were living on Wilson Street (now Atlantic) in Alhambra. Their address in 1920 was 336 North Wilson Avenue. Living with them was their daughter Mabel, her husband Thomas, and boys Frederick and Clifford. Widowed in 1921, she moved in with her daughter Ida Lawyer and her husband at 30 North Third Street.

She died 7 December 1936 in Alhambra, Los Angeles, California and was buried in San Gabriel.

## **John Staheli**

I was born in Amersvile, Thurgau, Switzerland May 28, 1857. When I was four years of age, my parents, George and Sophia Stahei who had previously joined the church, decided to immigrate to America with their family. We left Switzerland in the early spring of 1861, and after an ocean voyage of seven weeks we landed in New York City. From there we traveled by railroad to the city of Florence in the Central States where we were to prepare for the journey across the plains. As we had no means of transportation the church provided us with a wagon and ox team for which we were to pay after arriving in Utah. This fee was known as the Perpetual Immigration Fund and was to be paid in yearly installments with a high rate of interest.



John Staheli

Our company consisted of about fifty wagons with two families to a wagon. The company was well organized for the trip. A captain was appointed and everything was done in systematic order. My father was the bugler and gave the signals for the various orders. At an early hour in the morning the bugle was sounded for the people to get up, get breakfast have prayers and prepare for the days journey. When all was in readiness the bugle was again sounded and the captain led the train out in single file.



At noon and again the evening the train formed a large circle to protect themselves against the Indians and to provide a corral for the oxen. If the grass was not sufficiently plentiful the oxen were herded on the outside.

Several times during the journey the ox train was stampeded by herds of buffaloes, but the country being level no damage was done to the wagons or occupants. The trip as a whole was successful one.

We arrived in Salt Lake Valley in the summer and were given a warm reception by the people there. After remaining in Salt Lake for three weeks, Brigham Young called the Swiss people to go down and settle Dixie. He wanted my father to stay in Salt Lake and teach music, but as the rest of the Swiss people were going down he wished to go also.

Again we had no teams and wagons for transportation, so Brigham Young arranged that the people of each community should take the company to the next place. The trip was a very difficult one. The roads often being so rough and sliding that several men would have to brace against a wagon to prevent it from tipping over.

When we passed through St. George there were but a few houses there. We went on to Santa Clara, arriving there in November 1861. There were about thirty families there, living in the old fort, situated about a mile above the present site of Santa Clara. Some of them had been there long enough to have some land under cultivation and some orchards and vineyards started.

About a month after our arrival heavy storms set in which brought a large flood down through the valley. The fort was surrounded by water and a large part of the stream was running between the fort and the hill. My mother was in bed with a young baby in an upstairs room in the fort. She was rescued by Jacob Hamblin who put her and the baby on his back and waded the rushing torrent by holding a rope that had been fastened from the fort to a post on the hill.

The fort, grist mill and all other buildings were washed away forcing the people to move down to the present site of Santa Clara. Six months later my mother contracted typhoid fever and died.

We lived in dugouts for several years until materials and tools could be procured for building better homes. When spring came we had a very difficult time cultivating the soil. As we had no oxen or implements we spaded the garden and planted what few seeds we had brought with us. The scarcity of food compelled us to live mostly on pigweed greens cooked in water with no seasoning except salt. Flour was twenty-five dollars a hundred, and as we had no money, many months passed that we had no bread. Father worked very hard to provide for his family, often walking to St. George to work all day for a few pounds of corn meal. I well remember how glad I was to herd oxen all day Sunday for other people for a piece of white bread for my pay. When harvest time came we went out into the fields and gleaned wheat. Then with a half a sack of wheat in a cart we pulled it by hand to Washington, which was 10 miles to have it ground into flour. It was years before we saw any money and then it was in the form of gold dust brought in by freighters from California.

Our first clothing was made out of cloth that was much thicker than canvas. It was so thick that holes had to be punched with an awl to set it. When the girls dresses were made they would stand in the middle of the floor alone and it was anything but pleasant to wear shirts and trousers with seams so thick as your finger, especially with nothing underneath them. I was twenty years old before I had my first ready made suit of clothes.

After moving to Santa Clara the Indians became very bold. On one occasion a large Indian came in and demanded bread from my stepmother. She told him she had none, which made him very angry and he pulled a butcher knife from his belt and threatened to kill her. She grabbed the hot fire poker and succeeded in driving him out of the house.

Another time an Indian came in the house and stole my mother scissors which he had hid in his clothing. Mother missed them immediately and asked for them. He denied having them and was going to leave. Father took up the situation and gave him a genuine trouncing which shook the stolen scissors out on the floor. He left the house and marched around the house threatening to burn it down unless Father would give him six hundred pounds of flour for

the damage down to the Indian. Through the influence of Jacob Hamblin the difficulty was settled without any violence.

A great part of our time was spent in making molasses during the fall and early sinter months. Having the only mill in town we had to work almost continually day and night. I often became so sleepy and tired I could hardly work. On one occasion I asked Father if I could go to bed when the roosters began to crow. About twelve o'clock I began crowing which started the roosters in the neighborhood to crowing so Father told me to go to bed.

When I was ten years old Father organized a band of about nine or ten members. On many occasions we were asked to go to St. George to play for Brigham Young as he came to St. George from Salt Lake City. Father also organized a Swiss choir, and he taught them all the Sunday School songs as they were published in the Juvenile Instructor. Many times the women in the choir walked to St. George carrying their babies to sing for conference.

On account of having so much work to do and a lack of money to pay tuition, I have very little opportunity to go to school. When I did go the teacher was so mean that we were afraid to do anything but sit on our book all day, so we learned very little. The only books we had were a reader and a speller. We learned nothing of writing, arithmetic, geography and such subjects.

That was all the schooling I had until I was twenty years old, when I went to Spring Valley to work. There I had an opportunity of attending school for three months. It was very embarrassing to begin school with small children, but as I was so anxious to get what schooling I could that I studied during recesses and all other times in order to learn as much as possible before school closed.

While I was away working I was able to earn enough money to buy a suit of clothes, a saddle and a cornet and still have the hundred and fifty dollars to pay on the farm that father had purchased for me during my absence. Soon after my return home my father took sick and died in April 1881.

On January 18, 1882, I was married to Barbara Tobler, daughter of Jacob and Barbara Tobler, in the St. George Temple. Soon after our marriage we bought

a house and lot for \$225.00. The house had but one room and a porch made of sawed logs.

In 1887 I was called on a mission to Switzerland but due to ill health I was sent home after being in the mission field nine months. Eight years later I filled a second mission to Switzerland.

We remained in Santa Clara until 1917 when we sold out and moved to Enterprise. After going to Enterprise my health became impaired and we decided to move to St. George and spend the remainder of our days working in the Temple. We moved to St. George in September, 1920, and since that time I have worked over 1500 names in the Temple and my wife 1265 names.

He died 25 December 1942 in Enterprise, Utah and was buried there by his wife, Barbara whom had passed away in September of 1941.