



Johann (George)
Staheli

My Family Tree



George Staheni SR
Father's Father



Rosina Reber Staheni
Father's Mother



FREDRICK Reber
Mother's Father



Anna Marie Long Reber
Mother's Mother



FRANKLIN Staheni
Father



Paula Reber Staheni
Mother



WOODROW WILSON Staheni
My Name

Family Name History

Staheli



The Swiss surname Staheli is occupational in origin being derived from the work a man did or the profession he pursued. In this case, Staheli is associated with the German word "stahl" which means "steel". Therefore, the initial bearer of this surname worked with steel and perhaps even made the substance. The latter involved cementation, a process of heating two bars of iron with charcoal in a small furnace for a long period so that the surface of the iron acquired a high carbon content. The iron bars were then fused together to yield a metal harder and stronger than iron. "Stahl" can also mean "dagger" so that it is also possible that the original Staheli was a maker of swords and daggers - an important occupation in a war-torn Europe. This surname is numerous not just in Switzerland but in other German speaking lands like Austria and Germany as well.

Variants of the surname Staheli are Stahilli, Staehelli, Staehilli, Staehle and Staehli. Early instances of this surname in Europe include one Rudigerus Stahil who lived in Salzburg in the year 1202 (Zeichschrift fur die Geschichte des Oberrheins) and one Fridrich dickus Stahel who is recorded in Hssigheim in 1285 (Topographisches Workerbuch des Grossherzogtums Baden). In 1244, there is reference to one Berthold Staehellinus of Villingen. Notable bearers of this surname include George Ernst Stahl (1660 - 1734), a German chemist who in 1716 became court physician to the king and who published many learned books in Latin and Friedrich Julius Stahl (1802 - 1861), a German jurist and professor of law at the Universities of Wurzburg, and Berlin.

BLAZON OF ARMS : Azure; a mound of three vert; surmounted by a crescent or; in chief two mullets of the same.

Translation : Azure (blue) signifies Truth and Loyalty. The crescent is the sign of Faith and Hope. The mullet denotes Honor and Achievement.

CREST : A crescent as in the arms.
ORIGIN : SWITZERLAND



27 June 1996
 By [Signature]



Hell-Mühle, Amriswil.

J. Noh

GERMANY, AMRISWIL, AARGAU



Recent picture of the Staheli Home
in Amersville, Switzerland



"Dixie Spirit"

"Dixie"—it is the embodiment of all that is progressive, all that is good, all that is noble—a name, the very sound of which, sends the blood tingling in the veins of every loyal student.

The "Spirit" of the Dixie is one of loyalty to home, to school, to nation. Through our school activities we seek to show our devotion to these institutions, our willingness to sacrifice more, to express our ideals in our service.

In the Dixie we feel that spirit, which, today is both trampled under foot and idealized—the spirit of the brotherhood of man. We are here as one family, made to sense more keenly, to appreciate more fully that elbow relationship that makes our school an undivided unit of joyousness, friendship and patriotism.

The paramount aim of the Dixie is character building, and through united effort, to develop such a stimulation of thought that the industrial and social activities of this section will spring forth into a newness of life—causing many blades to grow where one grew before and making room for many active men and women.

No matter how far away we may go, there is still a warm spot in the heart of every real Dixie student. It calls out: "Dixie! where we lived; Dixie! the home of true worth; Dixie! the school of all schools; Dixie! we love thee."

To you, dear Dixie student, may the "D" that stands for Do, Determination, Development, Devotion and Dixie be a part of your Life and Thought.

BESSIE MCARTHUR.

OUR PIONEER HERITAGE

When Grandpa came to Utah,
It wasn't on a train;
It wasn't on a great big bus;
It wasn't on a plane.
He walked across the prairies
Or sometimes rode a horse.
And when he felt discouraged,
He sang a song, of course.

When Grandma came to Utah,
It wasn't in a car.
She had to drive an oxteam,
And it was very far.
Sometimes it was very cold;
Sometimes it was hot.
And when she felt like crying,
I think she sang a lot.

But when they got to Utah,
They made the valleys ring!
And even now the mountains
Still echo what they'd sing.
Just listen to their voices,
And hear the truth they tell.
Obey our Heavenly Father,
And know that all is well.



SOWER OF THE SEED

I REMEMBER EARLY SPRING
AND FATHER'S LARGE HANDS
PLACED FIRMLY
UPON MY OWN,
WHILE TOGETHER WE PLOWED
THROUGH WEE MORNING HOURS
OF MY CHILDHOOD
AND FERTILE CLODS
OF THIRSTY CLAY
THAT WAS SOON TO BE
OUR FAMILY GARDEN.

HOW I LOVED THAT MAN!
THE SUN-KISSED WARMTH
OF NEW-TILLED EARTH
SIFTING THROUGH MY TOES.
THE STEADFAST MIGHT
BEHIND THAT CALLOUSED GRIP.
STRENGTH OF A GOLIATH
CLAD IN HEAVY OVERALLS
DRENCHED WITH SWEAT,
ARMED WITH AN IRON PLOW
AND A LOVE OF THE SOIL.

NOW, IN THE SUMMER OF MY LIFE,
I STAND GAZING UPON
MY OWN FURROWED PLOT.
I MISS THOSE WEATHERED HANDS
LEADING,
GUIDING,
LOVING ME
DOWN UNSWERVING ROWS
OF STRAIGHT AND NARROW.
OVER STUMBLINGSTONES OF YOUTH.

WITH TEAR-FILLED EYES,
I THINK OF FATHER
AS HE LABORS ABOUT
GOD'S THRESHINGFLOOR.
HIS SWEATLESS BROW.
THE SEEDS HE NOW
SO TENDERLY SOWS.
THE HARVEST
HE WILL GLADLY SHARE
WITH THOSE HE LOVES
AND I REJOICE!



JACLYN THOMAS MILNE

GEORGE JOHANNE STAHELI
#1 SOPHIA BARBARA STAHELI
#2 BARBARA BLIGGENSTOFER
#3 ROSINA REBER

(History told by son, Frank Staheli, to Carma H. Staheli. Submitted by Mary Esther Staheli to Washington City Historical Society January 1993. Music in Santa Clara from "Enduring Legacy," Volume 8, pages 238-243 regarding music. Typed by Georgene Cahoon Evans January 1993.)

SWITZERLAND

GEORGE JOHANNE STAHELI was born February 5, 1825 in Amerswil, Switzerland. In Amerswil 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.

LDS CONVERTS EMIGRATE TO AMERICA - 1861

In 1861 he with his first wife, SOPHIA BARBARA STAHELI, and their children crossed the Atlantic Ocean and came to America as converts to the LDS Church.

The voyage would have been pleasant enough had it not been for the death of father's year-old baby girl who died and was buried at sea.

There were around 600 immigrants who took the train from New York to Florence, Nebraska, my father's family among them. At the time of this journey, the Civil War was in progress, and the windows of the train were shuttered. Everyone was instructed to be very quiet so the train would not be attacked.

At Florence the company was met by teams of wagons which were provided by the Church and (transportation and goods) were to be paid for in yearly installments. This was known as the Immigration Fund.

FATHER AND HIS BUGLE

Father was the bugler for the company and gave signals for the various orders. He sounded the bugle for the people to get up, get breakfast, have prayers and prepare for the journey. Around the campfire, made mostly of buffalo chips, they enjoyed programs of singing and dancing.

Many people in this company had to walk as the wagons were heavily loaded.

THE DIXIE MISSION - THE MOVE SOUTH

When they arrived in Salt Lake City, they camped for a few weeks at the old tithing block, where Hotel Utah now stands. Many who had met on the journey, and many who had known each other in the old country, were married before being sent to the various parts of the state.

THE LAND

There were many Indians in the territory, but they were fortunate in having Jacob Hamblin among them to keep down the Indian trouble.

Father had no money to buy land, so he was dependent on the work of his hands. Jacob Hamblin and those who came before had taken up the land and sold it to those who came after. This land was covered with cottonwood and black willow and a dense growth of brush, which had to be cleared before it could be farmed. Father would clear plots of this land for Jacob Hamblin and receive some land for pay. It was in this way our family secured our property in Santa Clara. So he began to raise a few crops. He later rented a sorghum mill and made and sold molasses.

MUSIC

"George Staheli had training as a bugler in the Swiss Army. As has been mentioned, he was heartbroken when his cornet was crushed under the rear wheel of the wagon on their journey to Santa Clara. He was without an instrument for three years. The people satisfied their musical hunger after a fashion by playing on "mouth swabs."

It was about 1864 that the community, by a stroke of luck, received a set of ten band instruments. John R. Eaton (Itten) received word that he was heir to a small portion of an estate in the old country. With this notice came a request that he accept a set of used band instruments in payment of his shares of the estate. He accepted the instruments toward settling his share of the estate to the amount of \$80 (eighty) dollars. When the instruments finally arrived, he gave them to the community. Thus it was that George Staheli got his hungry lips once more to the mouthpiece of a cornet.

He went to work and taught the willing Switzers how to play the other instruments, which included cornets, a tuba, a tenor horn, an alto, a bass, and a valve trombone. Here were the ingredients of a typical German band, and the eager Swiss made the most of them.

They had no music, but George Staheli soon remedied that problem. He knew many Swiss airs, and his experience as bandman in Switzerland now paid its dividends. He wrote the music for each instrument and taught his brethren how to play. It was not long until the Swiss band from Santa Clara was playing at all sorts of public gatherings.

Members of the band played for dances in Santa Clara and the towns nearby, even going as far as Pioche, Nevada, a bustling mining town to which the Santa Clara people exported their fruits and vegetables. The Swiss band performed frequently in St. George on occasions when there were gatherings and celebrations that drew the people of the Cotton Mission to the mission's headquarters.

On the momentous day of the ground-breaking ceremonies for the building of the St. George temple, the Santa Clara band was there to help with the music. Again, when the temple was dedicated, the band participated in the sacred festivities, playing its music from the top of the temple at the conclusion of the dedicatory services.

The entire Swiss company was sent to the Dixie Mission to help raise cotton. 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.

Although they had left their homeland well supplied, the long journey exhausted their money and again they had to depend upon the Immigration Fund. The trip was very difficult because of rough and sliding roads. Often several men would have to brace against a wagon to keep it from tipping over.

Father had his cornet tied to the wagon box. One day while traveling over these rough roads, the cornet was jarred loose and was crushed under the wagon wheel. Father felt very badly and so did the entire company as it was the only musical instrument in the southern country at this time. "They lightened their burdens by singing the songs of their native Switzerland."

SANTA CLARA - 1861-1862

They arrived at Santa Clara Fort, built by Jacob Hamblin, in November 1861. The few families that were there had a little land under cultivation and had started fruit trees and vineyards.

Father's wife was expecting a baby, so they secured one room in the fort. On Christmas Day the baby was born and named Barbara. Just five days later the big flood of 1862 came. The fort began to wash away, and great boulders were battering against it in the flood. A rope was strung from the high post in the center of the ford to the opposite bank and men clung with one hand and carried people to safety.

This was not much of a welcome for people who had come so far and left so much. But they had the Swiss tenacity of purpose, plus faith in their religion and their leaders, and though they lost nearly everything they had, they were not disheartened. The fort, grist mill, and all other buildings were washed away, forcing the people to move down(stream) and build the present town of Santa Clara.

They lived in dugouts for several years and had no oxen nor implements to till and cultivate the soil. The scarcity of food compelled them to live mostly on pigweed greens. Flour was \$25.00 a hundred and as they had no money, many months passed by that they had no bread. My father walked barefoot day after day to St. George and back at night to work for a few pounds of cornmeal. Then with a half of a sack of wheat, they pulled it by hand to Washington, ten miles away, to have it ground into flour.

Along with other hardships, the people suffered, was the disease they called chills and fever (known now as typhoid fever). My father's first wife died from this disease the year after Santa Clara was settled.

WIFE NO. 2

After her death, father married BARBARA BLINNENSTOFER. She had also come from Switzerland. She made a good wife and mother for his children.

Altogether, we must conclude that this pioneer organization played a highly significant role in Dixie's cultural life and well-being."DUP George was an excellent singer, and as they had no organ or piano, father made use of his voicing teaching the notes. Eventually they had 180 pieces in the band. Father also organized a Swiss choir and many times they walked to St. George, carrying their babies, to sing at conference.

WIFE NO. 3

My father married the third time to ROSINA REBER, who was my mother.

He died April 28, 1881 (age 66) at Santa Clara, Utah.

History of: GEORGE JOHANNE STAHELI
Born: February 5, 1825, Switzerland
Died: April 28, 1881, Santa Clara, Utah

Places Lived: Amerswil, Switzerland
Santa Clara, Utah

Date Submitted: January 1993

By: Georgene Cahoon Evans, Washington City Historical Society

Source: History told by son, Frank Staheli, to Carma H. Staheli. Submitted by Mary Esther Staheli to Washington City Historical Society January 1993. Music in Santa Clara from "Enduring Legacy," Volume 8, pages 238-243 regarding music. Typed by Georgene Cahoon Evans January 1993.

HUSBAND: GEORGE JOHANNE STAHELI
WIVES: #1 SOPHIA BARBARA STAHELI
#2 BARBARA BLIGGENSTOFER
#3 ROSINA REBER

Life in Santa Clara was good but band needed instruments

Early Santa Clara was the promised land for Georg Staheli and his family except for one thing — he needed music instruments. An accomplished musician, Staheli was a leader of singing and instrumental groups.

Staheli had musical training as a bugler in the Swiss Army and he brought his cornet with him to America, hanging it from the wagon bows. But there was a great deal of swinging and swaying on the rough trip across the plains, and the cord holding the bugle wore thin, finally breaking. It was crushed beyond repair by the wagon's rear wheel.

He was heartbroken at the loss of his cornet but continued to lead singing groups and taught music. A few years later, fortune's wheel stopped at his door, and a brass band was in the making. (More of this later.)

Life in Santa Clara in the 1860s is depicted in a colorful letter written by George Staheli on Jan. 26, 1868. I had heard of this letter, and was able to make a copy of it during a recent visit here of some lifelong friends, Vern and Clara Bullock. Clara's maiden name was Peterson, but her mother was a Staheli, born in Santa Clara. Georg Staheli was her great-grandfather.

"Now I like to tell you about our life here," he wrote in a letter to relatives in Switzerland. He said that he, his wife, and six children were well and happy, adding: "I have four cows, one calf, eight oxen, two heifers, a wagon, a house and 10 acres of fertile land. Here you don't plant food for all cattle, we can bring them to the hills where they will graze."

He mentioned that he had a 200-pound pig slaughtered, and besides this a 300-pound beef for his family.

"This year I will plant cotton, sorghum, one acre of grapes, and the rest wheat. After the wheat I will plant corn, which will ripen yet. We also plant peas, beans, turnips and melons, which will have good fruit from July until winter sets in. Wine here is as good and some better than you have it in the Swiss, the grapes in August are already as sweet as sugar. Peaches are plentiful. I planted pits when I came here and this year I could harvest some already, of three acres we had 5,000 lugs."

Staheli told his relatives that "in this village are about 25 families from Switzerland, and we have a singing society. We live happy here while around us whole nations destroy themselves through wars.

"We feel we sit here like a ship come safely to a harbor. Many people from the States come here to look for shelter, many of them from New York. They ask President (Brigham) Young to allow them to stay, which he gladly did. He (Young) is a good

father, and comes to see us once a year. He seems to love to see what we are doing, and loves to hear us sing. He says of all singers in the Territory of Utah, we are the best."

Staheli explained that the village was on the highway leading to Arizona and California.

"Not far from here is a silver strike, and I with many others could be a partner in it. If only I had my inheritance from home, I could be one of the richest men here, but Brigham Young said we should till the soil to have food, and later we will see what can be done.

"Nevertheless, America is a free land. The American laws are wonderful, only so many misuse them."

As for the Indians, "They live around here and visit with us every day. We don't need to fear them. When they make a pact with you they keep it; they are more honest than some of the so-called civilized people."

Pointing out that the ground here is very rich, Staheli said that last year (1867) he harvested 80 bushels of wheat from one acre. "Cotton was also plentiful and brings a good income, but grapes do best. In one year you can harvest about \$1,000. We plant tobacco and many other things. Because of the variety of the crops life is easy and without worry."

One of the major benefits, he said, was that the settlers didn't have to mortgage their properties, and pay interest as in Switzerland. "Of course, this is not the main reason we are here. If not now, sometime you will understand, and be convinced that what we have chosen is right."

His mother, he said, was also well and happy, and has land and cattle. His father had died.

Staheli expressed a longing for news about his relatives in the old country. He said although he had written four times he had not heard from anyone. He added that if the recipients of this letter didn't want to write, to find someone who would.

"We here love the music. It brings happiness and gayety in our lives, for all innocent happiness is allowed. Brigham wishes that we should at all times be happy and rejoice and be kind with each other."

Coming to the second purpose of his letter, Staheli wrote that the settlers would like to organize a brass band but lacked music and instruments. He asked that a message be sent to his friend Schur, asking that he copy the music "we played so often together" and send the music to Santa Clara through some immigrant.

He wrote that if some immigrant would pay for the music and bring it to Santa Clara, "I will be more than happy to pay them back. You see, I

cannot send gold dollars, and paper money has only half the value."

His children, he explained, were now in the English school. "Georg just now home and asked me, 'Father, to whom are you writing?' I told him, 'to your godfather,' and he said, 'Please, Father, ask him if he would like to send me a trumpet, I would gladly pay for, if he would bring it himself even.'"

"Oh, loved ones," Staheli entreated, "please help me to get the music sheets; I will be grateful in all eternity. I would like the sheets in six voices, one trumpet, piano, 13th trumpet, oldhorn, one bass trumpet and Leombarton ... I beg you to see to it that someone get them for me. The music instruments are far better from Europe than America. It would make me more happy than you could ever guess."

Staheli expressed the hope that "this writing comes as good to you as it leaves me, and I pray that All Highest will bless you."

"Also, a thousand warm greetings to all, and maybe a happy reunion some time. All of you, I wish to live happy."

Concluding, he said that there should be no doubt about who wrote the letter. "It was not dictated for me, or it would not have so many mistakes in it. Everyone can write as he wishes."

In that same decade, by a stroke of good fortune, the community received a set of 10 band instruments. John R. Itten, a member of the Swiss company, received word that he was heir to part of an estate in the old country. And would he, in settlement of the estate, accept a set of 10 band instruments, valued at \$80.

Itten gave the instruments to the community. Once more Georg Staheli was able to play the cornet, and to teach the other instruments to the music-hungry Swissers. Besides the cornets, there were a tuba, a tenor horn, an alto, a bass and a valve trombone.

Lack of sheet music was only a temporary handicap. Because he knew many airs from his days in Switzerland, and since he was musically gifted, Staheli was able to write the music for each of the instruments.

The band played for dances in Santa Clara and surrounding towns, even going as far away as Pioche, Nev. It performed frequently in St. George, and played during groundbreaking ceremonies for the St. George Temple.

And when the temple was dedicated, the band from Santa Clara was on hand to take part in the sacred ceremonies, blending their tones as they played from the top of the temple.

"If I want my children and grandchildren to know those who still live in my memory, then I must build the bridge between them. I alone am the link to the generations that stand on either side of me. My grandchildren will have no knowledge of their family's history if I do nothing to preserve it for them....A life that is not documented is a life that within a generation or two will largely be lost to memory. What a tragedy that can be in the history of a family. Knowledge of our ancestors shapes us and instills within us values that give direction and meaning to our lives."

April Conference 1999 Elder Dennis B. Neuenschwander

"I am convinced that as we study the lives of those who have gone before, we are influenced by their testimonies and strength. I know that family stories can become legacies of faith in our lives."

Sister Mary Ellen Smoot, Church Relief Society President