

Autobiography of Bertha Schiess Haderlie

Written by Bertha for Camp Fort Wall of Daughters of Utah Pioneers of Utah County, Lehi, Utah

I, Bertha Schiess Haderlie, was born October 9, 1868 in Herisau, Appenzell, Switzerland, the daughter of John Schiess and Anna Barbara Kerstiener (Kuer steiner).

My parents were very religious people. My father went from one church to another but none seemed to satisfy him. His sister wanted him to join the African Church and go to Africa, but lots of immigrants had joined this church and had never been heard from. I had a brother that was full of mischief. In the African Church, they took boys and girls that were mean and tied them on a bench and beat them till the blood came. My mother said, "Oh, please don't go there." My father said, "Oh where can I find the right religion where my family can be happy?"

Father was haying one day, and while he was resting, he saw two well-dressed men coming. They came and spoke to him and told him they were Missionaries from Utah and were preaching the true everlasting Gospel that no man can be saved without being baptized for the remission of sins. My father knew immediately that it was the true gospel. He came and told Mother. She said, "I will wait and see. You have tried so many Religions." The next day father and my sister were baptized, but my older brother said he would wait until mother joined. My father was very happy now.

The next day my mother came downstairs and ran a large sliver into her big toe. She surely suffered, and was bedfast. The Elders promised her that if she would be baptized she would walk home. It was around Christmas time, and the Elders had to break the ice to get a hole to baptize her in. It was two miles from her home, and they carried her there, but she walked home. That was a testimony to my parents. They were so happy that they had found the true gospel.

Father had a large home and orchard which he sold when we came to America. The house had three stories. There were two weave cellars, one apple cellar, a cider cellar, and a large barn. In the orchard there were 175 cherry, apple, pear, and prune trees. He also owned two pieces of timber land.

My parents were very good to the poor and those in need of help. When the Elders came they always had the best room in the house, and mother washed their clothes. Every time they left, father gave them a piece of silver. Father helped four families to come to America besides his own family. He only had \$3.00 left when he landed in Utah. This was in 1876 when I was still seven years old.

Lots of Mormons left the Church and joined the Josephites. The house we lived in had belonged to some Josephites. There were holes sawed out of it where the Josephites could look out and see if any Mormons were coming. The house was a two-room log house plastered with

clay, and when it rained, the plaster came off the walls. Mother would put the trunks under the table and tell me to lay there so I wouldn't get wet. However, these trials didn't make my parents wish they were back in Switzerland. They were so happy in Utah with the true Church.

My brother Jacob and I went to school together. We couldn't understand English and the teacher couldn't understand us. The children would call us names, then my brother would take me by the hand and we would run for home. I went to my girlfriend's home one day. Her mother gave me bread and preserves. This made me very happy.

Our schoolteacher was a very good woman. Every morning she prayed for the Lord to preserve us from evil, so I went and told mother we were going to get some preserves as our teacher had prayed for it. (This schoolteacher was also the town doctor, and was with me with my first four children.)

I will never forget the grasshopper plague. The grasshoppers were so thick they darkened the sun. The Primary children all went out to fight the hoppers. The men dug trenches in the fields. Part of us children would get on one side of the trench and part on the other and shoo the hoppers in it. Then the men with shovels would cover the trench over.

One year the alfalfa weevil came and took the hay crop. The men made rollers and went over the alfalfa and crushed the worms. That winter the cows just had sticks to eat so they didn't give much milk. The Lord was with us and we didn't go hungry.

When I was twelve years old my parents went to Salt Lake with an ox team to have their endowments done. They were happy to have them.

When they started to build the Manti and St. George Temples, the people that my father had helped to come to this country went to work on these buildings. They received welfare orders for their work and they gave these to my father. He took them to the Bishop at Logan who sent him to the Church Farm to pick out a cow. That is how the immigrants repaid father and how we obtained a cow.

At that time milk was 5 cents a quart. The women would skim the cream off the pans of milk to make butter and then sell the blue milk. We were very happy to have our own cow so we could have our own milk and butter. My father didn't know, however, that sometimes people turned in old cows for tithing, so he didn't look at the teeth of the cow he bought and it turned out to be an old one that soon died. That left us without milk again until someone sent father an order to get another from the Church Farm. Father never complained. He would say, "These things are to try us to see how strong our faith is." I am thankful I had such good parents that taught me to pray and to pay tithing.

Fast Day was on Thursdays. My father never missed a month of taking butter, flour, or eggs to the Fast Office to pay his Fast Offering. Every ten eggs he got he would save one for tithing. I never remember the Relief Society Teachers coming that mother didn't give them 10

cents (to help the poor) even if she had to go without, herself.

I was married April 15, 1885, in the Logan Temple to Charles Henry Haderlie (Also known as Karl Heinrich Haederli). (She became his second wife as Charles was already married to her older sister Babetta (Anna Barbara) Schiess. It must have been hard on her to watch her husband get all dressed up and with a sack of candy in his pocket, go off to court her younger sister. Only certain men were chosen to be polygamists. They were interviewed by their Bishops, Stake Pres. and possibly the Pres. of the Church. To each wife was born 13 children. Those to Charles and Bertha were: Fredrick William, Charles Marion, Clifford Moroni, Carlett, Oliver Romeo, Roy Legrant, Ernest Lavon, Mabel Artella, Ina Bertha, Leo Lester, Della Rosalie, Blanche Idell, Wanda Florence.)

The fall after I was married my husband was called on a mission to Germany and was gone for 3 years. My first boy (Fred) was born while he was gone. I lived with my parents and was very happy, but when my boy was two years old my mother died. When my husband returned from his mission he and my sister (and their 4 children) moved to Star Valley.

(I stayed in Providence and took care of my father for the next 12 years after mother died, until the spring of 1900.)

My husband would come down to visit and bring wood from his saw mill for us to burn. He would get fruit and vegetables to take back to Star Valley to the other family. The authorities kept trying to catch him.)

At midnight one night right after my third son (Cliff) was born, while I was still living in Providence with my father, someone knocked on the door and said, "Let us in!" I said, "My father is getting up." They turned my father's bed over and looked in and under my bed. (They were trying to find my husband. Since they couldn't they were going to arrest me.) Then my father had to get witnesses and borrow a team and buggy and go to Logan to go my bonds until my baby was old enough so I could appear in court.

One of the marshals stayed with me and he asked me some terrible questions. I could smell liquor on his breath. My two little boys and I were really scared. I was surely glad when my father came back. Then they had the nerve to say, "We hate to arrest a pretty young woman like you but the government says we have to." When my son, Cliff, was eleven days old my father and I had to appear in Ogden before the jury. My baby cried all the way down. My father fasted and prayed that all would be all right.

When we got there we walked sixteen blocks in the hot sun to a girlfriend's place. Then we went to the Court House. I almost fell with my baby I was so give out. When we got to the waiting room it was so crowded we couldn't find a place to sit. There was a murder case ahead of us. The marshal brought me a drink and said he would see if we could go first. They said we could.

They threw questions at me from all sides. The Lord was on my side however, and I never got crossed or mixed up. My father just stared when they asked him anything, and finally the interpreter said, "Are you dumb?" Father said, "No, just thinking." Then he answered all their questions all right and they turned us loose.

We walked back to the depot. The train was just pulling out, but two conductors pulled me and my baby up the steps and father jumped on. I was nearly dead from the heat and excitement. My other two boys were really glad to see me when we got home.

I stayed with my father until the spring of 1900 when my fifth child, Oliver was about 8 months old. Then I moved to Star Valley. I lived up in Tin Cup (by the other family) for three years and then moved to Thayne.

I was Relief Society teacher for eighteen years. Ethel Humphrey and I went for thirteen years together. We never had a cross word with each other. We always had to walk. Mrs. Jed Nelson and I went teaching one year and Lora Moser and I went for four years.

I am the mother of thirteen children. My oldest son died when he was twenty-seven, a faithful Latter-day Saint. He was hurt when young and developed a bone disease which later caused his death. I have had eight sons and five daughters.

My son, Cliff, was in World War I. My son, Ernest, was in World War II. Also, I had four grandsons in the World War II — Cliffs son, Eugene; Carl's son, Gale; Charles' son Junior, and Oliver's son Van K. My children are all married but two sons, Roy and Ernest. I have thirty nine grandchildren at this time.

I have seen all the presidents of the Church up to the present time except Joseph Smith. I am having temple work done all the time and am happy about it. I am now seventy-seven years old (1945). I am able to take care of a flock of chickens, do my own work, and wash on the board.

My husband died in November, 1943. On October 7, 1948, I suffered a stroke which left me paralyzed on one side. I have had to sit in a chair now for over a year. I spent last winter with my girls, Mabel, Blanch, and Wanda, in Utah. In April I came back to my nice little home in Thayne where the children have hired a woman to care for me.

On my 80th birthday, October 9, 1949, my children held an open house for me. About one-hundred people called during the day. Many old friends came to cheer me up as best anyone can. I can still read and write and enjoy the radio.

--Lehi, Utah February 23, 1950.

Bertha Schiess Haderlie died January 18, 1951, at Afton, Wyoming. Her funeral was at the Freedom Church House and she was buried at Freedom, Wyoming (Caribou County, Idaho) January 22, 1951.