

Elizabetha Usteri Zollinger

The Usteri family of Zurich, Switzerland were prominent people who lived there for 400 years. Elizabetha Usteri was born into this family July 4, 1809. Her parents were Hans Jakob Usteri and Katharina Irminger. Three of Elizabetha's ancestors were ministers of the gospel, four were professors of theology, and five were university professors. Other relatives were merchants, members of the city council, millers, doctors, captains and a poet.

Hans von Usteri was born in Uster about 1460 and was an ancestor of Elizabeth Usteri. The name Usteri was taken from the town of Uster where the family lived originally. Hans von Usteri moved to Zurich and was known there as Hans of Uster.



Elizabetha Usteri and Johannes Zollinger were married May 25, 1829 in Urdorf, Zurich, Switzerland. They were parents of seven children who were all born in Urdorf, Zurich, Switzerland. Their third child, a boy died one month after birth and was buried in Urdorf. The other children lived to adulthood and immigrated to Utah. The children were: Johann Ferdinand, Anna Elizabeth, Johannes who died at one month of age, Anna Barbara, Elizabetha, Dorothea, and Jacob.

The Zollinger family first heard about the Mormons from Mary Horlacher who worked for a minister who lived across the street from the Zollinger's in Urdorf. Mary became a member of the church and was eager to share her newly found religion with her friends. Elizabetha was the first in the family to be converted. Elizabetha and Johannes were baptized November 20, 1861. The rest of the family was baptized later. Elizabetha was prayerful and always taught her family to pray and to be obedient. Elizabetha was industrious and helped sustain the family any way she could. She began weaving silk for a large firm in Zurich and taught her girls to weave also. They had men come in to take care of the looms and keep them working as they should. The silk material was sold in 35 yard lengths. As a rule, no one outside of the city was allowed to do this kind of work. No one objected to the Zollinger family running this business in their home, and it became profitable and added to the family income.

Elizabetha had a desire to immigrate to Utah after becoming a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Her son Jacob said, "His mother being more of a boss, assured Johannes that immigrating to Zion was the right thing to do." They were quite well to do, and it

was a hard decision to sell all their property and leave. In January 1862, they started to make preparations to immigrate. The family all went to a tailor and had suites of clothing made for the trip. They arranged through the church office in Bern to order four yoke of oxen and wagon for their trip across the plains. On the 30 of April 1862, the family, except their married daughter Anna, left Urdorf. [Anna immigrated later] Ferdinand's fiancée, Louisa Meyer also went with them. They traveled by train to Zurich, and they spent the day sight seeing. Elizabetha wore her usual attire which was old fashioned, including a bonnet. People on the streets stared, laughed and pointed fingers at them.



Johannes Zollinger Family – 23 April 1862

Front: Unkown Child, John Ulrich Haderlie, Unkown Child, Anna Elizabeth Zollinger Haderlie, Unkown Child, Elizabetha Usteri Zollinger, Johannes Zollinger.
 Middle: Jacob Zollinger, Elizabeth Zollinger Neeser, Dorothea Zollinger Lau, Louisa Meyer.
 Back: Two friends and Ferdinand Zollinger

The Zollinger family was delayed in France for two weeks. Ferdinand and Louisa Meyer were married in La Havre, France on the 4th of May before their departure to America. Finally, a freighter ship was fitted for passengers, and they all left France on the 15th of May. It was a long and eventful trip to New York, USA. The second day out to sea, they were caught in a terrible storm, and the kitchens on the ship caught fire. After they were repaired, it burned a second time, beyond repair. They were at sea for 54 days. The ship arrived in New York harbor July 8, 1862.

Elizabetha, Johannes and their family left August 8, 1862 from Florence, Nebraska or Winter Quarters on their trek westward. Along the way, Elizabetha and several of her family became ill with Mountain Fever and had to ride in the wagon the rest of the time. Their trek to Utah was difficult, but the family was blessed, and they all lived to get to Utah. There were five people in their company who died along the way. They arrived October 31, 1862. Elizabetha's legs had become so cramped in the wagon she could not walk when she first arrived in Salt Lake City. Her daughter Elizabeth suffered the same way. Elizabetha had great faith and through the blessings she received, she gained the use of her legs. She was given a patriarchal blessing and was told that 15 years would be added to her life.

Brother Serge Ballif who they had met as a missionary in Switzerland invited the Zollinger family to come to Cache Valley. They traveled for seven days and arrived in Providence late at night November 15, 1862. They camped on the south edge of town. They were glad their long journey had come to an end. Elizabetha and Johannes were offered a one

room log cabin by Ulrich Traber which they traded for a yoke of oxen. They spent the first winter in this cabin.

Elizabetha lived in Providence, Cache County, Utah the rest of her life, and she died there February 18, 1881. She was buried in the Providence City Cemetery on February 20, 1881.