

A SHORT SKETCH OF THE LIVES OF EDWARD R. FREI. AND HIS PARENTS
JOHANN RUDOLF FREI AND ANNA MARGARETHA NAGELI FREI.

In the year 1850 when the Swiss Mission was opened, missionaries were sent to that country and many of the people would accept the Gospel, mostly all middle-class people. Among them were the parents of Edward R. Frei. As soon as these humble people were baptized they had a desire to mingle with the Saints in Zion. One reason for this was that there would be only one or two converts in a town and the persecutions were so severe, and also there was no way for them to gather with others of their faith, as at that time there were too few to organize a branch of the Church.

Johann Rudolf Frei, a young man of 24 years, from, Reitnau, St. Argau, Switzerland came in 1859. Anna Margaretha Nageli, a single girl came with a company of Swiss emigrants in 1860. It happened that these two young people met in Salt Lake City. They had a short courtship and decided to get married in the Endowment House in January 1861. Soon after, they were called to go with a company of Swiss emigrants to the extreme south of Utah as colonizers. Ninety-one were in the company, its destination was Santa Clara. This part of the territory of Utah had previously been explored by some of the Church Leaders. Among these were Parley P. Pratt, Jacob Hamblin and Samuel Knight. A Mission was opened and about twenty people were sent ahead at one time to make preparations for the Swiss Emigrants. However, the leaders left after they had organized the Mission, Jacob Hamblin was set apart as the head of the Mission.

Edward R. Frei now speaks: My father, J. Rudolf Frei, was born October 7th 1835 in Lutisburg St. Gallen, Switzerland, a son of Hans Jakob Frei and Anna Barbara Aerni. My father and mother Margaretha Nageli, were married on the 19th of January 1861, in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City, Utah. My mother was born February 4th 1830 in Altnau, Thurgau, Switzerland, a daughter of Hans George Nageli and Anna Margaretha Schilling. They both came to America for the Gospel, which they had embraced a few years before in Switzerland. They met in Salt Lake City, for the first time, and after a short courtship were married in 1861, later that same year they were called by President Brigham Young to go on a Mission together with 91 other Swiss emigrants who resided in Salt Lake and Vicinity. The leaders of the Church were concerned about how these brave, hard-working people could best make a living. Not being able to speak English this Mission was to colonize. (Now, before I go on I want to mention what a hardship it was for these emigrants in those years to leave everything that was near and dear to them for the Gospel. Crossing the ocean would take them from three to six weeks and that wasn't the hardest, especially for those who came with handcarts like Sam Stucki and many others.) The trip to Santa Clara took more than three weeks. The Church furnished the teams and wagons for those who couldn't afford to buy them, but my parents were

able to buy their own. Those Swiss people tried to be cheerful and happy on their long, weary trip. They even sang at times and told stories to pass the time. Arriving in Santa Clara at last, they could see more sagebrush than anything else, also many Indians, but they didn't harm the white people unless they were mistreated.

The hardest thing was to find a place to live in. They all had to go through many hardships the first years. Most of them had to live in wagon boxes. My parents did until a dugout was made to live in. A few years later they built a log house, and every time it rained we had to put pans on the beds so that the bedding wouldn't get wet. I also remember when we had nothing to eat. One day my father learned that Brother Leavitt had come home from a trip up north with some flour. My father was a very reserved man but seeing us hungry as we were, he took courage and went to Brother Leavitt. When Brother Leavitt saw him coming he knew what father wanted, and he said, "Brother Frei all the flour is gone except a little more than half a sack, and you are welcome to take it". My father had tears in his eyes, for joy. He thanked Brother Leavitt and left his blessing with them. As he walked out Sister Leavitt called him back, she had a dripper full of warm biscuits, she turned them out onto a napkin saying, "Here take these home for your children". You can bet we thought we had a big feast when father came home with them, for biscuits and molasses was our best food.

My parents had seven children. Jacob was born November 27th 1862, he married Lena Reber of Santa Clara. Mary and Carl, twins were born June 6th 1865, Carl died soon after birth, Mary married Fredrick Reber. I, Edward R. was next and was born September 25th 1867. The next three children, Emma Margaret, George, and Joseph, all died the same year as very young children.

My father was the first postmaster in Santa Clara, a job which he held for twenty years. He was also School Trustee for many years. My parents worked very hard together to make a living. I remember when we children were small, we would go barefooted with them to the St. George field to plant crops, walking both ways and working hard all day with only one frugal meal. I also remember when I was young that everybody was making wine. This was all they had to give them strength. My father made some too but they used it sparingly. One day a neighbor gave me a drink of wine and it made me very sick. This taught me a lesson for life.

In later years my parents built an adobe house where they lived for the rest of their days. My father died in 1902 and mother died in 1911. My brother Jacob got her home and he sold it to his son Vivian, who had it remodeled. Vivian was married to Jessie Hafen in 1914. They are running the Post Office now.

When I was a student at the B.Y.U. I was called on a mission for the Church, this was in 1893. I labored in Switzerland for six months, but will say here before I go on, that I was engaged to my future wife when the call came, so we decided to get married before I left. We were married at the St. George Temple on May 5th 1893. My wife Agnes stayed with her mother while I was gone. I spent the rest of the two years in Hanover,

Germany, where I had much success in my labor. When I came home from my mission we started to keep house together. We had no furniture except what was given to us by loved ones. A returned missionary in those days was indeed a poor man. We lived upstairs in mother's home for a while, later we lived in part of my brother's home until I was able to get me a small adobe house with a lot, onto this home we built more rooms as the family grew larger.

I taught school for sometime, but it did not agree with me as I liked the outdoors better, so I started to freight from Santa Clara to Milford, Utah. My first Church activity was as Ward Clerk which I held for sometime. I was Superintendent of the Sunday School for many years; Sunday School Class Leader for ten years. I was on the Stake Board of the Mutual for twelve years. I was First Counselor to Bishop Hafen for ten years and Bishop of the Santa Clara Ward for fifteen years. After I was released as Bishop, I was ordained a Stake High Counselman. I was first Counselor in the Stake High Priests Quorum.

Six children were born to us, 5 boys and one girl. The last two children died while young. My wife died in November 1930. After that I was called on a short term Mission, to California. When I came back I married again. In July 1931 I married a cousin of my brother Jacob's wife, Anna Reber Schoni. She was a widow living in Salt Lake City. After we were married in the Salt Lake Temple (only for life) we came to make our home together in Santa Clara. I had my public jobs. I was constable for two terms; School Trustee a long time; County Commissioner for two terms; Commissioner for the Farm Adjustment Department and on the Board of Education many years; Justice of the Peace four terms and other minor jobs. My main occupation is farmer and stockman. I love to help the community as well as the Church. At present I am Senior Class Leader in the Mutual and chairman of the Genealogical Committee. I also served two terms on the Town Board.

During the summer of 1937 my wife Anna, had a light stroke that affected her left side, it crippled her left foot and it was so swollen that the Dr. in St. George sent her to his brother Dr. H. Reichmann in Salt Lake City, who was a specialist. The Dr. helped her a great deal, but advised her to remain there where she could receive medical attention as needed. She had been living with her youngest unmarried son, while in Salt Lake City, but he was married so I put all my things in order in Santa Clara, and moved to Salt Lake City. We lived in an apartment.

For two years I spent most of my time working in the Salt Lake Temple as we had just received a large record of names from Switzerland on my father and mother's line. We received almost 9,000 names. This kept both of us busy as Anna did all the research work and helped with the temple work. The folks in Santa Clara also helped a great deal and we got the entire group of names done in the two years.

In 1943 I took over a light night job as custodian at the Utah Smelter and Mining Company in the Doole Building. I loved this work as it gave me something to do. I

would go to the temple in the morning, rest in the afternoon then go to work in the evening from 5 to 9 PM. In 1944 the company made a change and wanted me to take on more responsibility and work more hours but I declined. I then went to work in a war uniform factory (Carlisle's at 3rd South and 2nd East) which was near to where we lived. I was custodian first but soon the boss made me overseer and packer. I worked there until the fall of 1945.

In March 1945 I began having trouble with my heart, and the Doctor advised me to go on a diet as I was putting on too much weight. As I lost some weight I began to feel much better. In September I had a two weeks vacation which I spent in Santa Clara with my family, I came down to bless my first Great- Granddaughter.

In October we had lots of conference visitors, Jacob Frei and wife Lena who were staying with their daughter Effie Cottam, Henry Graff and Wife, also members of MY family, I went to work the next day but had a heart attack and had to come home early Anna was at the temple so I laid down to rest, when she came home she got hold of a heart specialist and he gave me shots and pills, I slept for a while, my brother Jacob, wife and daughter Effie came and stayed while the doctor examined me, the doctor told me that I couldn't work any more and had to be real quiet. The next day I didn't eat much and stayed in bed all day.

Anna now takes over the story.

About 5 o'clock he said the pain was all coming back so Anna called the Doctor he came at once and gave him more shots and left some tiny pills for him to take in an emergency. His brother Jacob came to see him and they talked together about olden times and many different things, then Jacob left to return home to Santa Clara the next morning. About 9 o'clock that evening he was in very much pain and agony. The water just poured out of him. Anna called the Elders to come in and administer to him. She called the Doctor and he came also his brother Jacob. They sat up with him until about 3 AM. when he finally went to sleep. At 6 o'clock the next morning he started to cough a little, Anna was by his side but he didn't wake up, At 7 o'clock she looked at him and he was real white so she lifted his head and called to him but he didn't answer her he had died in his sleep. This was a great shock to all those near and dear to him. A great and useful man had left this life to take up the work on the other side.

Edward Rudolph Frei died October 13th 1945 in Salt Lake City and was buried in the Santa Clara City Cemetery.