

### Johannes Boss Sr.

Excerpts from biography by his son, Arnold Boss and his daughter, Rosetta Lena Boss.

Johannes Boss Sr. "John Boss" was born in Gundlischwand, Berner Oberland (Canton of Bern), Switzerland Nov. 2, 1831. His father had been a carpenter and so he became one too. Later he became a prominent architect designing buildings and also became a contractor. He built several of Switzerland's hotels. He later became the mayor of Gundlischwand for some years. He was a member of the school board and Lutheran of faith (as had been his ancestors), and on the standing committee which appointed ministers or cancelled their services.

During these years the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was growing. On November 24, 1850, Lorenzo Snow held a special service on Mount Brigham, Piedmont, Italy and called Thomas B. H. Stenhouse, a high priest, to introduce the gospel in Switzerland.

He first proceeded to Geneva. In September 1852 the LDS church officially declared proligamy as doctrine although it had been practiced earlier in Nauvoo, IL. Later the U.S. Congress enacted legislation against this social feature of this "wicked and unpopular sect" and it was upheld judicially. Much bitter persecution followed the missionaries and members of the church at home and abroad.

In Switzerland, Mormon members and Elders were blacklisted and brought into court and in some instances asked to leave cantons (states). While the year is unknown, Johannes was somehow placed into contact with the missionaries and baptized on December 26, 1875 at age 54. It is told that he had to sneak them into his house to give them food or a night's lodging.

He had been married many years and had a large family of 12 children, he was considered a man of wisdom, understanding, and his works proved an integrity and stability that was acknowledged by all. His was an exemplary family having social prestige. But, when father embraced the Mormon faith, he signed his death warrant to social standing, religious respect, and civic responsibility.

Public sentiment had downgraded him. So to his family was broken up over the acceptance of the new religion. His wife seeing the effect it had upon their children by others refused to embrace the new faith. Some of the children refused adherence and were pronounced against it. Family solidarity was in turmoil. Time passed and some of Johannes's children were married and his wife became ill. After a lingering illness she died in August 22, 1885. But the seeds of the new faith took root in most of the children and after her death every son and daughter, except the oldest three and a little girl who died accepted the principles and were baptized.

The spirit of gathering was strong in the church at this time and affected Johannes children and him. He began preparing to leave for the "new Zion" in the Utah Territory. He married his second wife, Margaret Gertsch on April 28, 1891 and left in early May 1891 for Salt

Lake City, Utah and rested for a short time before going on to Midway, Utah. He was preceded by several of his children.

Johannes sold his land; his home, and left his building business to his oldest son John. Meanwhile, on April 29, 1859 10 men left for what is present day Midway, which at the time was known as "Upper Provo Valley". A surveying party had preceded the colony. The report that it was cold there proved true. They knew they could not temper the elements but knew in other valleys that God had tempered the elements. After they erected a log cabin, they met together for a day of fasting and prayer. They prayed fervently that the elements might be tempered and they were. A heavy layer of snow covered the ground and shortly after their prayer they noticed " a warm current come in upon them and in a short time the ground was bare". It was dried enough so they could till the soil and plant their seeds. While there were subsequent frosts the climate changed and was made suitable for permanent family locations. By the time Johannes Boss and family arrived the land was prepared, water ditches and roads done, Midway and Heber existed.

Johannes purchased land from his brother-in-law, Ulrich Probest on April 16, 1895. He went about to herding goats on the mountain slopes by Mount Timpanogos, making cheese and devoting his time to his family of nine children and his wife, while his wife tended a small garden and she and her daughters made and sold lace. He never again entered public life.