

No. 5

# Grant Hafen



Darryl Hafen  
677 Morning Glory  
Santa Clara, UT 84765

HISTORY OF GRANT HAFEN  
1908-2007

### Grant Hafen's Own Story

(Taken from live taped interviews with Kelton Hafen in 1998 when Grant was 90 years old)

I was born on October 30, 1908 in Santa Clara, Utah. My father was Harmon Hafen; my mother was Francis Helen Wilson Hafen. I was born in the family home, which has been remodeled in to the home now occupied by Whit and Penny Jones. I was the eighth and last child of our family.

Some of my earliest recollections are associated with my early childhood with my parents and my brothers and sisters. My father and mother both came from pioneer stock. My father came from Swiss parents, who were members of the original Swiss company that settled Santa Clara in 1861. My mother came from parents from the British Isles, who settled in St. George about that same time.

I remember my grandfather, John G. Hafen very well. He had served as bishop of the Santa Clara Ward for about 28 years. He owned and operated the original store in Santa Clara. I also remember my grandmother, Suzetta, as a very kind lady who knew my name and who I was. My grandfather never called me by my name when I came into his store as a child. I doubt if he even knew that I was his grandchild because he had so many grandchildren.

My older brothers, Harmon Valentine and Leland were pretty well grown up when Clair and I came along. My oldest sister, Leda, was a girl in her teens when I started school. Lee and Leda were twins.

Across the street (old Highway 91) lived my mother's sister, my aunt, Agatha "Aggie" Frei. She was married to Edward R. Frei, Sr. Their children were about the same age as Clair and I. We played together both at our home and at Aunt Aggie's place. Their three sons, Clawson, Owen, and Gordon were our earliest playmates. Gordon had the misfortune to lose his hearing during early childhood, so we grew up communicating with him through sign language and lip-reading.

My mother often remarked that she had two families. The four older children



were H. Val, Lee, Leda, and Belle. The four younger children were Audrey, Dean, Clair, and I. Dean died in infancy before I was born and I have no recollections of him.

Clair and I were only a couple of years apart so we grew up playing together, working together, and going to school together.

I feel very fortunate to have grown up with kind and loving parents, caring brothers and sisters, and friendly cousins. To me, this seemed to be the ideal childhood. I think it was a privilege to grow up in Santa Clara. The old pioneer people I knew back then were deeply religious. They had sacrificed everything to leave Switzerland and immigrate into this desert land. As a small boy, I remember many of the "old people" still spoke Swiss-German. I could only understand a few words. My grandparents always spoke to each other in German. I could never figure out what they were saying except when grandfather would scold grandma for giving away hardtack candy to her grandchildren when they could have sold it at the store. Grandmother was careful not to give out candy when grandpa was around!

I spent considerable time around grandfather's store as a child. My cousins, Preston Hafen and Elgin Graff, lived near the store. We were all the same age, within a few months of each other. I especially remember that we liked to raise "dogie" lambs that fell behind the large sheep bands that were driven across the bench north of town. Often we three boys would help drive the sheep from the three-mile clear to the outskirts of St. George. We would be rewarded with a dogie lamb or two. Usually the newborn lambs came as twins or even triplets and the stronger ones got most of the milk. The dogie lambs couldn't keep up and became easy prey for coyotes. There were several large sheep herds that came by Santa Clara each spring.

As small kids, we spent hours making little corrals and gathering feed for our lambs. We would bottle-feed them on cow's milk. Sometimes we accumulated a small band of 6-8 sheep and lambs to raise and sell later on. We would supplement their feed with hay from the barn. Preston especially liked to tend chickens. In the spring, he would find a hen that was "clucky" and put her up in a cottonwood stump to hatch out about a dozen chicks. It was always a "big day" when the baby chicks emerged from the eggs. Preston carefully removed the hen and her brood down onto the ground where they could grow up as

chickens.

I have a special tender feeling for another of my cousins, Ned Hafen. I still get a lump in my throat when I think of Ned, who died when only eight years old.

As a child, Ned had a little mare called Dolly. He rode her everywhere, always bareback. She was turned out to Bull Valley with the rest of the family horses during the summer, but never showed up during the fall roundup. A small band of 6-8 "Dutch" horses wintered out in the Bull Valley Mountains south and west of Enterprise. As the winter passed, the cowboys gave up hope of seeing those horses alive, as the winter was especially harsh with deep snow.

Meanwhile, Ned contracted a terrible cold and was bedridden for several weeks in a very weakened condition. He constantly asked about Dolly and worried about her safety. Then one day in February, word was received that the "Dutch" horses were safe in Enterprise. They were brought home to Santa Clara and corralled in the town corral. When I saw that Dolly was among those horses, I couldn't wait to tell Ned. I guess that I was over-excited as I ran to tell him the news that Dolly was very thin and shaggy, but would soon be all right. Ned was so excited by the news that he shed some tears when I told him. Soon after I left his bedside, he went to the corral to see Dolly for himself. He was in his pajamas and stocking feet. The weather was cold and there was snow and ice everywhere. Because of this exposure, Ned's cold turned into pneumonia and he soon died. To this day, I still feel somewhat responsible for getting Ned so excited about seeing Dolly that he couldn't resist going to see her himself. I wonder if Ned might still be alive today had he stayed home in bed instead of getting chilled and wet on that raw February day.

My earliest recollections about school days come from our first grade class. There were six of us who started first grade together—three boys and three girls. We went through all the grades together and all six of us attended Dixie High School and Dixie Jr. College. Some of us are still around today. The three boys were Elgin Graff, Preston Hafen, and I; the three girls were Thelma Graff, Olive Hafen Moss and Vivian Leavitt Palmer. We were all cousins.

Our first grade teacher was Josephine Wittwer, who was a sister to Julius Wittwer. A very special teacher was a Miss Westover from Washington. We all loved her. She later married Melvin Wittwer.

We usually kept several horses in our corral located down at the end of the lane about where LeGrande's home now stands. Leavitt's corral and barn were on the east side of the lane, directly across from ours, about where Greg Leavitt now lives.

My father always kept a team of workhorses with an extra horse in case one of the team was lame or sick. He took pride in his "pulling horses" as he called them. He also liked to trade horses frequently with other teamsters he met on the trail or at campsites. We also kept several saddle horses for use in riding the range and handling cattle.

When I was a young boy about 10- or 11-years old, my father stopped riding horses and concentrated on working with the draft horses. He freighted, peddled, and used the horses for farm work such as plowing fields. He seemed to enjoy working with the draft horses and was a great hand in keeping their feet and hooves in good condition, changing horseshoes often, and keeping hooves trimmed. My mother would often walk down to the corral to check on Dad and the horses. She had a difficult time getting acquainted with the horses because Dad traded so often.

I remember Dad sending me out to Bull Valley to ride with the Santa Clara men when I was nine or ten years old. I rode with such men as Sam Wittwer, Jacob Frei, and George Graff. I remember that each morning they would kneel around the table and ask a sincere prayer for their own safety and that their families would be protected while they were away. Some of those older men didn't have very good equipment, as they often rode draft horses and used old quilts for saddle pads.

George Graff was a very good cowboy and taught me how to handle cattle quietly. George said, "The fastest way to handle cattle is slow."

I am now going to relate two or three events from my early childhood that shows my association with horses and cattle at a very early age.



When I was six and in the first grade, I came home one day to find the house empty. My mother was probably across the street visiting Aunt Aggie. Dad was off in the field working. I walked down to the corral to find the team and wagon gone. I jumped on the back of Billy, my favorite pony, and headed east through town toward the St. George fields where my father was working. When I rounded the curve where the Leo Reber home stands, I could hear an unfamiliar noise coming up behind me. My horse was rearing and trying to buck as he was frightened at the first automobile either of us had ever seen. It was a Model T Ford going toward St. George and making a lot of noise. It was driven by Ernest Tobler. It wasn't difficult to out run the car out the lane. I knew that if I let the car pass us, the horse would buck me off so I opened him up and the race was on.

When we came to the forks in the road, I took the fork that goes out over the Black Rocks toward the St. George fields. Later, when I saw Ern Tobler, he exclaimed that "I tried my best to catch up to you but your horse easily outran my car."

When I arrived at the field where my father was plowing, I tied up my horse to the wagon and waited for Dad to finish plowing. Meanwhile, my mother came home and found me gone. She walked down to the corral to check on the horses and noticed Billy was missing. She was worried about me going alone to the fields, so she began walking to see if I was with Dad. She was a fast walker. She met us along the road. We were about a half-mile from the field. She got up on the wagon and rode home with us. I still remember that contented feeling as I sat between Mom and Dad as we talked and laughed on the way back home.

Another event that happened when I was only six occurred while Dad was plowing the field at our 3-mile place about three miles west of Santa Clara. Dad sent word home with George Tobler that one of the horses of his team had dropped dead while plowing. He wanted Clair to bring up the extra workhorse so that he could finish plowing. He also needed to drag the dead horse off the field. Clair couldn't be found so I took it on my own to take the extra horse up to Dad. In our corral was a spirited horse that belonged to H. Val. I rode him bareback and led the workhorse with a lead rope. We trotted most of the way to 3-mile.

When Val found his horse missing, he became very alarmed for my safety, saying something like, "If that kid gets the rope under my horse's tail, he will get thrown and maybe get himself killed!" Fortunately, the workhorse led alongside and we arrived at the 3-mile field where Dad was waiting. I rode back home to find a very relieved family anxiously waiting. H. Val was especially glad to see me coming down the lane safe and sound. My sister, Belle, gave me a big bear hug as soon as I dismounted. They were all certain that I'd be "dashed to pieces" under the hooves of those big horses. I could not understand their cause for alarm.

Another story I wish to relate took place when I was a little older, maybe 13 or 14. By then I was experienced in handling cattle and knew all of our cattle by their brands and earmarks. It seems that a large herd of 600-800 cattle were being trailed to Modena from the Arizona Strip. These cattle drives occurred several times each year, as Modena was the closest railhead around the area. The trail boss of the drive was a cowboy named "Jockey" Hale. He had plenty of experience on trail drives and had a seasoned crew of cowboys to drive the herd.

When they brought the herd across the Virgin River, they accidentally picked up one of my Dad's cows in their herd. It was common practice for our cattle to run out in the area where Bloomington is today. As they drove the cattle north, where Bluff Street is today, they noticed that the stray cow was in the herd. Mr. Hale sent word to our family to send someone to get the cow before they got any farther up the road.

As I was the only one available, I saddled our best horse and started on a trot to catch the cowherd. I caught them as they were having their noon break at Dodge Spring, which is about where the Red Hill Golf Course is now. The cattle were strung out for about a half-mile and some of their leaders had started up the road toward where Winchester Hills is today. The cowboys had their horses unsaddled and were eating lunch when I rode up and announced my intention to find the VH cow and take her home to Santa Clara. One of the cowboys said, "Come over and have some lunch and then we will help you find your cow and cut her out and bring her back through the herd." I told them that I wasn't hungry and that I would ride up through the herd and see if I could spot our cow while they were finishing their lunch.



The cowboys laughed as I rode away. I heard one of them remark, in a sarcastic tone, "If that kid happened to find his cow, he would never be able to cut her off and bring her back alone through the herd." I rode up through the herd, looking over each cow as I passed, until I spotted our familiar earmark. It seemed that our cow wanted to go back "home" and not continue in unfamiliar territory with a foreign herd. She cut off easily and we threaded our way back down the road until we reached the campsite. The cowboys had finished lunch and were saddling their horses when I rode up with our cow.

Jockey Hall called me over to talk to me. He told me that if I ever needed a job as a cowboy, he would hire me any time. It made me feel important to have someone like Jockey Hale treat me as a real cowboy and offer me a job.

I had so many experiences as a cowboy in my early years that it seemed only natural that Clair and I would take our Dad's place in the Bull Valley cow operation. Dad wasn't riding much anymore and Lee and Val were deeply involved in the Hafen and Frei outfit in Nevada. Clair and I each had a few cows of our own. Clair used the XH brand and I branded with HK. Our father continued with his VH brand. We handled Dad's cattle along with our own. When we sold any of Dad's cattle, we gave him the money. We probably had roughly 100 cows between the three of us.

At this time, I'd like to say a few words about each of my brothers and sisters. Since only Clair and I are left, it will be an honor and a privilege to remember each of them, although my memories are growing dim with the passing years.

My brother, H. Val, seemed almost like a dad to me. I spent considerable time with Val as a youth. He took me along freighting, peddling, and hauling wood. We always used a team and wagon and camped out together. He taught me how to harness the team and hitch up the wagon. He often let me drive the team and gave me pointers about handling horses. We chased mustangs together, and often Val would rope a mustang for us to bring home and break. Val loved the problems of the "chase" and catching one with his rope. We had to break it to lead, and then lead it home where Val would break it to ride, and then sell it for 15 or 20 dollars. He sometimes gave me \$5 of the money when he sold one.

I have always looked up to H. Val and felt he was a good example for me to follow. He was agreeable, friendly, and fun to camp with. I shall always remember when Val went away to Cedar City to go to school and work. He came home with a beautiful navy-blue sweater with a large block A on the front. I think he earned a letter in football or wrestling at BAC in Cedar.

He also came home with a beautiful lady from Parowan named Gladys Clark. After they married, they moved to Logan where Val continued his education and worked with the school's dairy herd. I remember how happy we all were when Val and Gladys came home for Christmas on the train to Modena. Dad brought them home in the wagon from Modena. They had three daughters, Claudia, Ramona, and Helen.

After Gladys passed away, Val was very lonely. Gladys had a wonderful nurse named Eda Larson. Val made a promise to Gladys that he would pursue Eda and try to marry her, which actually happened. Val and Eda had three children also. They were H. Val, Steven, and Kaye.

H. Val taught school for 42 years, retiring in 1957. He taught mostly mathematics, including geometry and algebra.

My second brother, Leland, had a much different personality than H. Val. Lee loved sports of all kinds. He was interested in such events as the Kentucky Derby, heavyweight boxing championships, World Series of Baseball, and Olympic Games. It was only natural for Lee to pursue a career in coaching and working with young athletes. For many years, he coached basketball at Dixie High School. For several years, he coached basketball at both Dixie High and Dixie College.

He also liked farming and ranching. He and Val were owners in the Hafen and Frei Brothers' Ranch in Nevada. Lee was a good roper and competed in tie-down roping at local rodeo events.

Everyone liked Lee. His players loved him and continued calling him "Coach" as long as he lived. They would "run through a brick wall" for Coach Lee Hafen if he asked them to.

I attended UEA Convention in Salt Lake City several times with Lee.

Everywhere we went, people recognized Lee and called out, "Hi Coach." Lee would respond with a wave and his famous "Lee Hafen grin."

Lee was by far the best known of the Hafen brothers throughout the entire State of Utah. He was also a veteran of World War I. He was in the US Army Communications Division and worked training carrier pigeons. He received a serious non-combat injury to his hip while stationed in Texas. This caused him much pain and a noticeable limp for the rest of his life. He had several operations over the years.

As a coach, Lee was very emotional as he prepared his teams for their contests. His enthusiasm made his players feel that they could jump from the playing floor up into the balcony of the old Dixie gym! He was called the "living example of the Dixie Spirit."

Lee married Elsie Frei from Santa Clara. She was the daughter of Jake and Lena Frei. Lee and Elsie's children were Maxine, Keith, Clark, Stanley, and Richard Lee.

The next member of our family was my sister, Leda. She was a twin to Lee. I remember her as a happy and loving sister who was so helpful to our mother especially in helping care for the younger children, including myself. She kept up her appearance and took pride in how she dressed.

When she married J. Claud Frei, we were all deeply concerned because Claud was going to France to fight the Germans in the trenches during World War I. Leda and her young son, Don, moved into our home while Claud was overseas. It seemed good to have Don there because I wasn't the baby anymore. I remember how Leda fretted and stewed every day about the War. Our family was so relieved when the Armistice was signed in November 1918.

One event that troubled us was two young men from our neighborhood were killed near the end of the War. With a brother (Lee) and a brother-in-law (Claud) both in the Army, it was a terrible worry for our family. It was a great relief to know Claud was coming home from France and it was "Over, over there," when the boys came home from World War I. I was ten years old at that time.



Claud and Leda's children were Donald, Clayton, LeGrande, Lee, Kelton, and Berkley.

My sister, Golda Isabelle, was the second daughter and the fourth child in our family. I remember her sweet disposition and her willingness to do anything for me. Belle could not stand it when there was discard or strife in our family or home. She was a true peacemaker and encouraged us all to get along. She was willing to share anything she had with all members of our family. I got more loving hugs from Belle than all the rest of the family put together.

Belle married Levi Snow from Pine Valley, UT and they lived in Pine Valley much of the time. During the winter months, Belle brought her brood into our home while Levi stayed in Pine Valley to feed cattle for several other ranchers. Later, they moved into a home in St. George so that the children could attend school. Their children were Roma, Cheryl, Earl, Valerie, Gwen and Burton. Burton drowned in the St. George Swimming Pool when he was young.

Belle couldn't wait for school to let out in the spring so they could move back to cool Pine Valley for the hot summer. She loved her Pine Valley home so much. It was a tragedy that Belle died of cancer at a young age, leaving behind a husband and a young family of six children who needed their mother very much. Belle was a wonderful sister to me. She is buried next to her husband, Levi, in the Pine Valley Cemetery.

My sister, Audrey, was a real live wire in our family. She was nearer my own age than my other two sisters. I remember how athletic and talented Audrey was as a teenager. She could out run, out jump and out dance all the kids her age, even the boys. She took lead parts in school plays and social activities. She was a charmer and all the boys wanted to be around her. Audrey also liked riding the horses. We often rode to 3-mile or the St. George fields together. We rode bareback and she had good control of her horse. It seems like she always wanted to race her horse against mine. Maybe that's where her boys got a desire to drive fast cars and race them!

Audrey married Clement Gubler and they were very happy together. They were among the first to settle Ivins. They worked very hard side by side, trying to make a living and raise a family by farming the red, sandy Ivins soil. Ivins has

never had a reliable source of water and many years were lean for them.

Clem and Audrey raised part of their family in Ivins, but finally sold out and moved to Rosemead, California. Here they finished raising a large family of eight children. They were Herma, Ferrel, Rex, Kenneth, Bryce, Frances, Antone, and Clair. Clement was an owner in Rocky Mountain Service, and the manager of the Los Angeles operation. He purchased produce on the produce market in Los Angeles for many years.

I was so happy that Clem and Audrey were able to have a better life in California rather than struggling for existence in Ivins. They purchased a nice home with plenty of room for a garden, a berry patch, and a barn and chicken coop. They even took their family milk cow and chickens to California when they moved from Ivins. Audrey and Clem made frequent trips back home to see family and conduct business. We saw Audrey frequently after they moved to California. In recent years, most of their family has moved back to Utah. The only one to remain in California was their youngest daughter, Frances.

Clem and Audrey are buried in Whittier, California at the Rose Hills Cemetery. I spoke at Clem's funeral.

My brother, Clair, was just a couple of years older than I was. As kids, we played together and worked together. Clair always liked sports and was a natural athlete, while I was more interested in the livestock, especially horses. As my older brothers started their own families and moved away, Clair and I took on the responsibility of running our father's land and livestock operation.

After graduating from District School (8<sup>th</sup> grade), we went to St. George to school at Woodward and Dixie High School. During those years, we lived in Grandmother Wilson's granary, along with our Frei cousins, Clawson and Owen. The granary had a cellar below ground level for the storage of fruits and vegetables. It was a solid structure with walls made of heavy rocks and it had a strong roof.

The Wilson property was located approximately where Smith's store now stands. We usually went to bed early and got up early and went into Grandmother's house to warm up and get ready for school. She had a cow and some chickens. We usually had a bowl of hot "mush" cereal like oatmeal or cornmeal. Our

evening meal usually consisted of food we'd brought from home like apples, canned peaches, dried fruit, and items we saved from lunch at school.

We would ride to St. George on two horses on Sunday afternoon. The Frei boys and the Hafen boys would each have a horse. We each carried a flour sack of clothes and food for the week. When we arrived at the Wilson place, we would pull off the bridles and turn the horses loose to return home. There were very few cars on the road in those days. On Fridays, we walked home after school, bringing back the bridles, soiled clothes, and empty flour sack. During our high school years, a bus run was started so we went home to Santa Clara each afternoon. Clair was on the ballteams during high school and college.

Over the years, Clair and I have worked closely together farming and ranching. While I became a schoolteacher, Clair found employment working on roads and doing all types of construction. Clair was an excellent carpenter and was skilled in cement work. He worked for Jennings for several years in St. George. Clair was skilled in handling teams of horses, and worked with a 4-horse Fresno outfit putting in much of the road grade between Santa Clara and St. George.

Clair married Glenna Tobler and together they raised a family of seven children. They were Douglas, Kent, Sherman, Arlyn, Mariam, Wendell, and Barbara. Their sons were gifted athletes, receiving recognition for their accomplishments.

In his later years, Clair was the Utah Brand Inspector and also a meat inspector. I have spent more time working with Clair than any other person, doing farm work, ranch work, contract work on fences and cattleguards, and working at Mt. Charleston, Nevada. We did not always agree on how things were to be done, but we finished the projects and we were always ready for the next challenge.

These are a few things that I remember about my brothers and sisters. We had kind, loving parents and a home full of activity. I could not have asked for a better childhood and more positive environment to grow up in than our home in Santa Clara.

I'm now going to tell how I got into teaching school. My brothers, H. Val and