

Interview with
LAWRENCE KELTON HAFEN

October 10, 2017

**DIXIE PIONEERS AND STORY TELLERS
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INDEX

Barclay, Nevada	9, 14, 16, 18
Church of Latter-day Saints, The Clover Valley, Nevada	4, 6, 8, 9, 13, 16 - 18, 22 9, 17 - 19
Hafen, Arthur Knight [father]	4
Hafen, Lawrence Kelton "Kelton"	4
Hafen, Minerva Orilla (Woods) [mother]	4
Harradance, Sister [midwife]	4
Woods, Lamond Cresson	9
World War II	7

LAWRENCE KELTON HAFEN

Lawrence Kelton Hafen was interviewed on October 19, 2017 in St. George, Washington County, Utah by Dr. Douglas D. Alder. He related his life experiences. Heber Jones and Roxie Lee, St. George researcher, also participated.

DA: Kelton has deep roots in [St. George, Washington County, Utah], especially with Dixie College since his father, [Arthur Knight Hafen], was involved with that [school]. Heber Jones will start the questioning.

HJ: Kelton, would [you] start out [by telling us] who you are and a little bit about your parents, your grandparents and your background.

KH: My name is Lawrence Kelton Hafen. I have always gone by the name of Kelton. I was born on May 16, 1932. I was the thirteenth of fourteen children born to Arthur Knight and [Minerva] Orilla (Woods) Hafen. I was born at the Heritage home. It was [located] about 340 West Tabernacle Street [in St. George, Utah] or across the street from where the Smiths [Food and Drug] market is now. Sister Harradance was a mid-wife who had been with my mother for most of her children. She also had Dr. [Wilford J.] Reichman there with her at this time.

The McGregor hospital was in operation at that time. That hospital was located at 100 East Tabernacle and about 30 South [Street] in St. George. Mother did go to the McGregor hospital to have her fourteenth child. She felt more comfortable with Sister Harradance at the time, so that is why. All of her children were either born in the home in St. George or at the Harradance's home. Dr. Reichman was there at my birth. Mother found out that she had another son [when] that Dr. Reichman said, "Well, it looks like we have another bishop's counselor."

HJ: [Laughter]

KH: My father was the bishop of the St. George East Ward at the time. In St. George, there were only three wards at that time. There was the East Ward, the West Ward and the South Ward. Dr. Reichman did not know that statement would come true, but it was seventy years later that it did. The bishopric that I was in, I consider one of the most unique bishoprics that ever was in The Church [of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints]. There were four of us and [we were] all over seventy years old.

Merton Lovell was the bishop. He came down from Oak City [Millard County, Utah] and attended [Dixie] College in 1948 and 1949. The other three in the bishopric were Ralph McArthur, first counselor; Kelton Hafen, second counselor; and Lloyd Cannon was executive secretary. It just so happened that Ralph McArthur, Kelton Hafen and Lloyd Cannon all went [from] the first grade

through high school together. That in itself is unique. We had only two years of high school. We would go to the tenth grade in Woodward [School] and then we would go to high school for the last two years. Then we had two years of junior college — all in the same building. It was almost an extension of high school to go through Dixie Junior College. All four of us were there together for a couple of years. It is quite amazing to me that all of those things could come together in one bishopric. It does not seem like it would be at all possible.

In my early life, one of the most important things that happened to me was [when I was] about two years old. It was [in] March 1934. I was burned badly around my arms, my neck and the left side of my face. I will tell that story the way that I have been told [as] I do not remember that far back.

Wood or coal stoves were all that were used for cooking or heating the house at that time. I was playing on the floor while my mother bathed and put my younger brother [Donald “Don”] back to bed. Then she took my [older] brother [Kenneth “Ken”], who was just a year [older] than me, out to get some wood. Before they [came] back, they could hear me screaming. When they came into the house, I was on fire. I had a cold and they [had] put a mustard plaster around my neck. That is very flammable. It is assumed that I had found a match on the floor, struck [it] and held it up to my [neck]. I was on fire when she came in and she burned her hands badly getting all my clothes off. They called the doctor in [to see me]. He put a salve on and wrapped me up, which was actually the wrong thing to do. That held the heat in. They thought they were doing the right thing, but it held the heat in. I have gone through my life with [those scars]. It has never bothered me as far as my social life, or anything like that, is concerned.

Now I will go back to my family. As I said, I was the thirteenth [child] of fourteen children born to Arthur Knight and [Minerva] Orilla (Woods) Hafen. All fourteen children were single births and were born in a twenty year period from July 1913 to July 1933. If you would like me to, I will tell you a little bit about each one of my siblings.

My oldest brother was named Kay Woods Hafen. He was a [very] good looking child [with] blonde hair. When he was five years old, he was tragically killed in an accident [on October 7, 1918]. There was a gentleman by the name of Mahroni Snow. He actually owned the house that my folks bought. He was sexton of the [St. George] Cemetery. My dad had [purchased] several lots near the cemetery and [had] felt like he would like to live closer to the cemetery. So he and dad made a trade. Dad traded him a whole lot of lots out in that end of town for the house that Mahroni did not have quite [finished]. Maybe there was a little money exchanged. Mahroni Snow was a good friend of the family.

He [Mahroni] had an ore wagon — you have a trail wagon behind the front wagon [and] he stopped at our house. My brother, [who was] five years old and his good friend, [Mac Morris]. They jumped off the back wagon with him and were riding

east. Mahroni got to 400 East [Street where] the Ashbys lived on the corner. The boys decided to jump off. They were on the back wagon. The [Morris] boy got off clear. When Kay jumped off, he was run over by the trail wagon and died shortly thereafter. [Mahroni went to the Ashby home to call the doctor and the mother to tell them about the accident]. [It] was quite a tragedy for our folks.

Next in line was my sister, Carma [Hafen] She was a very good student. She had a lot of potential in school. Dad expected her to go on and go through college. She fell in love with Woodrow Wilson Staheli. She wanted to get married before she graduated from high school. Dad was very much against it because he had such great hope and such ideals for her. She did get married. As it turned out, it was a [very] good thing. They have had an exceptional [and] wonderful family. Her children and grandchildren have been a real asset to this area.

Next in line was my brother, Ferrell [Arthur Hafen]. Ferrell did not take life too serious. He mostly found humor in everything that happened. He was a [very] good brother. Dad was teaching school and he could not make enough money teaching school to support a large family, so he did a lot of other things on the side. Carma was married and gone by the time I was born. Ferrell and all the rest of my older brothers and sisters took up the slack and helped make life so wonderful for all of us.

My next sister was Ada [Hafen]. She married McKay Neilsen. Her father-in-law was Israel Neilsen, who was my sixth grade teacher. Israel had one son killed in World War II and another son and his first cousin [were] killed in an airplane accident. It was on D-Day when they wrecked in front of the Neilsen home. That was a tragedy.

My next brother was Hershel [Woods Hafen]. Hershel was quite bashful, quite backward and not very outgoing. When he was inducted into the [United States] Army, he spent his time in North Africa, Sicily and Italy. He went through a lot of those [very] trying times. When he [came] home from the Army, he had a [very] hard time readjusting. He [had what] they call [post-traumatic stress disorder] now. It was tough for him. He met a girl from Washington [Washington County, Utah]. [Her name was] Ramona Sproul. They were married and she was the best wife that he could possibly have [had]. It worked out that he came out of his shell and became [very] active in the church. All of their children were born and raised in Henderson, Nevada. They have all been prominent in that area. One of their boys [Andy Hafen] just retired as mayor of Henderson about a month or two ago.

Next in line was my brother Harold [John Hafen]. He did not take things too serious. He was not really a manager of money. In high school he had a football accident and broke his neck. So he was not able to go to the war. He [heard about] a tire vulcanizing business and he started that [business]. It was an extremely important part of our community for a time. His wife [Colleen May (Atkin) Hafen] at that time, required [more] than he was able to produce. He was not able

to keep the business going and dad had to take it over. When Eldon [came] home from the service, he took over the management of the business. I and my brother-in-law, Phil [Ervil] Squire, worked with him. [It was] a family business. I will get into that later on in our discussion.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

KH: Next in line is my sister Ruth [Hafen]. She is ten years older than I am. She married Phil [Ervil] Squire. She is now ninety-five years old and still doing quite well. Phil was both in World War II and the Korean [Conflict]. He went to Germany in World War II. When [the Utah National] Guard was called up to Korea he went with them. Those folks had some real experiences that need to be told [to someone], but I am not going to go into them now.

Next in line was my sister LeNore [Hafen]. She married [Raymond] "Ray" [Leon] Hobbs. He came here [to attend] flight school and became a pilot. He was in World War II as well. [When] her husband died, he left LeNore fairly well off. She moved back to St. George. She was instrumental in contributing quite a little bit to Dixie College at the time. She had a great love for the school. She passed away just a year or two ago [at the] age of ninety-two.

Next in line was my brother Linford [Lamond Hafen]. He was only three months old, got quick pneumonia and died very suddenly in his mother's arms. He is the only one of the family that we never did get a picture of.

Next in line was Eldon [Eugene Hafen]. Eldon was five years older than me. Just about everything that I have ever done in my life, in [the] way [of] business, Eldon has been involved in [some way]. To me, he is one of the most honest men I have ever known. I have spent more time with him than anybody, except his immediate family. When you can say that about somebody you have spent that much time with, he has to be kind of a special [fellow]. We will get into some other things about our business later.

Next in line was Erma [Hafen]. She married Leo [Thomas] Syphus. They had two sons and three daughters. She is still alive, but she is in a rest home in northern Utah. Her three daughters are close to her up there, so they can see her every week. She is getting along quite well, considering everything.

Next in line was my brother [Kenneth] "Ken" [Ernest Hafen]. I might add the last three of us [who] were born, we are only about fourteen or fifteen months apart in age. "Ken" was a year ahead of me in school. He was born January 10, 1931. I was born May 16, 1932. "Don" was born July 19, 1933. The three of us went through school [one] right after another. "Ken" was a [very] good looking [fellow] and had a great personality. He was loved by everyone that he associated with. He was attending BYU [Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah County, Utah and majoring] in business. His plans were to be the bookkeeper for the O K

Tire store in St. George and the Henderson tire store. He had been to Veyo [Washington County, Utah to] a dance. On the way home, he had an accident and was killed.

I am next in line. [After me is] my brother Donald [Ross Hafen]. At a young age, he delivered newspapers. He went to work for [Hyrum] “Hy” Thomas at JCPenney when he was only about twelve years old. [He was] sweeping [the] floors [there]. He worked his way up. When he [was] about ready to graduate from high school, “Hy” asked him what he planned to do. He said, “Well, I guess I will go on to college.” “Hy” said, “I thought you wanted to have a vocation with JCPenney.” He said, “Well, I do.” He said, “We want to take you and train you. We do not care about you going through college. We want to train you the way we want.” So he worked for JCPenney until his retirement. He worked up to assistant manager. Then he was the manager of several different stores in Oregon, Hawaii, Las Vegas [Nevada] and several stores in California. He retired from JCPenney. He has a home in California and one here in St. George. He has a grandson who has some muscular disease, so he has to spend a lot of time there [in California] helping his daughter take care of him. He has done very well.

That is [information] about my immediate family. If we want to go to my grandparents, we could start with the Hafens.

HJ: Give a short summary.

KH: Okay. The Hafens was converted to the church in Switzerland in the 1850s. [They] moved to Utah and were sent to Santa Clara [Washington County, Utah]. While in Santa Clara, they met Samuel Knight and his family. Samuel Knight was one of the early Indian missionaries in this area. He was actually a counselor to Jacob Hamblin in the Indian mission. He had five daughters. One of his daughters [LeNore “Nore” or “Nora” (Knight)] married my grandpa, [John] “Johnny” Hafen. John G. Hafen was considered the patriarch of the Hafens that we have here [and] had four different families. His father, Hans George Hafen, was converted [to the church] and came to Santa Clara with them. He [John George Hafen] had a sister named Barbara [who] also lived here.

“Johnny” was the oldest son of John George Hafen. He married LeNore Knight, [who was] Samuel’s daughter. She is my grandmother. When we [are] talking about the ranch, I will bring most of these people in again. Samuel Knight was the son of Newell [inaudible] Knight, who was the son of Joseph Knight, Sr. Joseph Knight, Sr. was a very close friend and associate of Joseph Smith. There is a lot of history written about them. We do not need to go into that.

On my mother’s side of the family, her father was named Lamond Cresson Woods. He was raised in Clover Valley [Nevada]. When they first went out there, they thought they were in Utah. It later became Nevada. [It was] Clover Valley in Lincoln County, Nevada. When the railroad came through [that area], they

encountered enough hard clay in the valley that they had to use a crow bar to break it loose before the teams and scrapers could move it. Thus, they called it bar clay. That was Barclay, Nevada [and] is how it got its name. Everything that happened up until about 1905 happened in Clover Valley. After 1905, if it happened out there, it happened in Barclay. There were a lot of weddings and a lot of different activities. In about 1905 was the year that the first train went from Salt Lake City [Salt Lake City County, Utah] to Los Angeles [California]. It was the Union Pacific Railroad that ran through there.

[His] father was Lyman Lafayette Woods. He was born in Fredonia County in New York. His mother [Roxanna (Cresson) Woods] joined the church and his father [Levi Farnsworth Woods] was displeased, got upset and left the family. [They never saw or heard of him again.] Lyman was only a child at the time. His mother died when he was about seven years old. So he was basically an orphan for the rest of his life. However, he was taken in by a family named Rockwood. They lived in Nauvoo [Illinois]. He tells of his experiences playing with Joseph Smith's children. He talks about seeing Joseph Smith on a horse wearing the uniform of a general. He remembered Joseph Smith very well.

It was in [1869] when the Woods family went to Clover Valley. He [Lyman L.] had been called to the Muddy Mission. He went down and started at the place [where] he was assigned, but the water dried up. So he [received] permission to go to Clover Valley. He had [been] through there earlier and fell in love with that little valley. The valley only has 200 or 300 acres of good meadow. There is not much else there, but it is a valley that over the years has had an impact upon thousands of people. It is hard to imagine the number of people [who] have actually had contact and association out there.

Thomas Sirls Terry married two of Zera Pulsipher's daughters. Zera Pulsipher had joined the church earlier. He was actually quite a bit older than Joseph Smith. He had become a Seventy in the church. When he came here, his sons were sent up to Hebron [Washington County, Utah] to take care of the church cattle. He was kind of the patriarch of the town up there.

Thomas Terry had been converted to the church [while living] back East. He had some real experiences coming across the plains. We cannot go into too many of those [experiences]. He was a very spiritual man. He actually had three families. Two of them were Pulsiphers and one of them was Dudley Leavitt's oldest daughter. Interestingly enough, most of Thomas Sirls Terry's daughters were older than his third wife [Louisa (Hanna) Leavitt]. [Laughter] She was the one [who] was sent down on the Beaver Dam Wash [Arizona]. Her children grew up there.

I guess that kind of tells a little of my background. I might tell a little bit about my growing up here in St. George. I was not much interested in school. I had a desire

to be outside. I liked farming, ranching, cattle [and] horses. [I liked] those kinds of things. You have —.

[END OF RECORDING ONE.]

KH: They told a story about your nephew, Calvin [Wright] that I relate to [now]. They said he went to school. [It was] the first day of kindergarten. When he [came] home, they asked him, “Calvin, how did you like school?” He said, “It was very, very hode.” [They said], “What do you mean very, very hode?” He said, “It was very, very hode to sit there all day.” It was a little difficult for me to sit in school, too. My mind was always somewhere else. However, I did enjoy school because of the social aspect. I had great friends in school. I loved the social aspect of school. So it really was not —.

HJ: Who were some of your friends?

KH: I had several friends. Living right next to me were Don Sorenson and Karl Stucki. [Donald] “Don” Esplin was a good friend of mine growing up. Clayton Neilson was a neighbor. Off the top of my head, I cannot really name them all off, but there were a lot of good friends. I enjoyed school, but I did not like to study. When I was growing up, we had to be more or less self-sufficient. On our lot we had a big garden. We had grapes, pomegranates, figs and all kinds of things that we used. We had several cows [which we] would milk [and] sold milk in the neighborhood.

Dad was a school teacher all of his life. He taught at Dixie Junior College. The wages were not all that great, so he had to do a lot of extra things to supplement our income. One way we did it was that my Grandpa Hafen in Santa Clara had a farm and an orchard. My Uncle Guy Hafen had a nice farm up on the Ivins Bench. During the summertime, we would go over and help with gathering the fruit, hauling the hay and doing those [chores]. In turn, we would get hay for our cattle and fruit to bottle [can] for the winter. We always had plenty to eat. [We] never had to go hungry. We did not have a lot of extras. However, I did not feel that I was deprived of anything because everybody else in the town was in the same situation. That is kind of the way I grew up. From the time we were [young], we all had to help with everything. When I was in my teens, I went to work for some of the farmers in Washington Fields [Washington County, Utah]. [I worked for] George [Harmon] Seegmiller and [David] “Dave” [Joseph] Foremaster.

“Dave” had a small dairy [and] I would milk his cows at night. He would milk them in the morning. [That happened] during [the] school [year]. In the summer, I worked for him as well. From the time that I was twelve [years old], I was able to feel like I was supporting myself. The folks bought my clothes and fed me, but I never had to ask them for a penny after that [time]. I always took a little pride in the fact that I was somewhat self-sufficient.

I have written some [things] in my history about my schooling, so I will not talk too much about that [part of my life]. After I graduated from high school in 1950, a group of us, which included several boys [James Charles Goodwin, Lamar Terry, Stan Hafen and Karl Stucki] from here, went to Butte, Montana. [We got] a job at the Anaconda [Copper Mining Company] smelter. We lived in Butte [and] took a bus over to Anaconda. We worked there that summer. Blaine Gubler another one of my classmates, had an older brother, Cal, who lived up there. [He] worked at Anaconda [and] knew we could get work, so we went up there.

The summer after I graduated from Dixie [Junior] College, a little group of us [Clayton Neilson, Karl Stucki, Gary Mathis] went to Longview, Washington to work in the fiber plant up there. We started out working in the timber [as] choker setters. We would put the chains around the logs that were hauled off. We were all sent to a different camp. They got up early in the morning and went to work. [We] were finished with work by early afternoon. [We] would sit in those lumber camps for hours before it got dark. There was nobody to associate with except a bunch of winos. It was extremely hard and we became homesick, so we all moved back to Longview and got a job [at] a fiber plant. We all lived together happily ever after. That is kind of what happened there.

I went into the [United States] Army on October 20, 1952. I was at Fort Ord, California. I had sixteen weeks of basic training [and] was sent to Korea. I [arrived] there on April 20, 1953. That was just three months before the cease fire. They sent us directly up on the front line. I spent my first three months in Korea on the front line. However, the worst of the fighting was over. There was a trench clear across the 38th Parallel and we were in bunkers. We would stay hidden all day. They would send us out on patrol at night. When we would encounter the enemy, they were not much more interested in fighting than we were [at that time], so we would fire a few rounds and everybody would go home.

I do not feel like I did anything special while I was in Korea. I was given a Bronze Star, but I do not feel I did anything really to earn it. Interestingly enough, after the cease fire — I was in the 45th Infantry Division. It was a National Guard outfit from Oklahoma. After the cease fire, they were pretty much all sent home. They needed some rank. Out of our whole company, I was the only one who had any college [education]. I had graduated from Dixie Junior College, so they made me supply sergeant. They gave rank [very] fast. I got to be a sergeant first class in just a few months. [That] is quite unusual because most people would take years to receive that [rank]. They needed the rank and they needed the people. There again, I do not feel like I did anything special, but it was interesting to me that out of that whole company, I was the only one [who] had any college education.

After I [came] home from Korea, I spent four and a half months in Fort Lewis, Washington before they mustered me out. It was only twelve days after my discharge that my wife, Peggy Nielsen, and I were married. She had come down here to college the last part of 1950. Shortly after she was here, I started going

with her. We had been going together from late 1950 up until late 1954 when we were married. We had our plans all made. I spent a lot of my time in the tire shop in St. George. I always had to get out and do something, so deer hunting became an extremely important thing to me. I have always been mad at the Army because they cost me three deer seasons.

DA: [Laughter]

KH: I went into the Army on October 20, [which] was the day deer season opened. I got out of the Army on October 20, [which] was the day deer season opened. I was going to be married in about twelve days and I was too nervous to go deer hunting [the third year].

DA: [Laughter]

HJ: [Laughter]

RL: [Laughter]

KH: And, of course, I missed the deer hunting season in between. I got a lot of good deer hunting [in] after that [time].

DA: That is a new kind of religion, isn't it?

KH: It is for a lot of people. Since we [have] the ranch and I have been able to spend all my time out in the hills, deer hunting was not as important because I was out in the hills all the time. However, I did enjoy the hunt. The last several years you have to draw out, [so] I just do not try to draw.

Peggy came down here from Blanding [San Juan County] Utah. She had three friends with her. They were all related to her. One of the girls [Joan Palmer] married Clive [Milton] Burgess. Clive's boys have done quite well in this area. Another one of the girls [Mildred Wright] married Jack Seitz, who is quite closely associated to Heber. Peggy married me. I did the least of any of them. Jack became an optometrist and was up in Vernal [Uintah County, Utah]. [He] did very well. [He] became highly involved in the church. [He was] stake president, [involved] in politics [and] was temple president. [He did] those kinds of [activities]. Those three girls coming to Dixie [Junior College] in St. George were a help to us.

DA: Moving up!

HJ: [Laughter]

KH: Yes. We, Peggy and I, had four children. Lyman [Hafen] is my oldest [child]. He was born September 2, 1955. He has done very well for himself. As a boy, he was

involved heavily in rodeo and 4-H. He has the ability to decide he wanted to do something and then go ahead and get it done. That is a trait that very few people have. Everybody wants to accomplish, but very few people have the ability to push themselves to accomplish it. As far as being naturally adapted to rodeo, he really was not, but he worked hard enough at it that he became the state high school all-around champion and bareback riding champion in [1973]. He has been an author and is quite well known in this area.

RL: Was it] 1957?

KH: He graduated from high school in 1973. My next [child] was a daughter, Linda [Hafen]. She participated in rodeo a little bit and 4-H horse shows. She did not excel too much, [but] she enjoyed it. After she [was] about twenty-three or twenty-four years old, she found out that she [was] bipolar. She has had a struggle and has to keep on her medication. She has lived with us.

My next son was Kenneth [Hafen]. He was born kind of a rebel.

DA: [Laughter]

KH: I knew it from the time he was born. He never cared for church. He never wanted to go to church. He did not want to be involved. He developed some bad habits when he was young. He went to work for Jay Ence in construction. He learned construction very well [and] made it his life's vocation. When we built our house at the ranch, he built it for us. It was very much appreciated. Twenty years ago here, when the economy here went south, he was working as a cement man and work just shut off — just that quick. My nephew, Ralph Staheli, who has a big farm in the Washington Fields, had sold some of his property there. He made enough money that he could go to Colorado and buy a nice big farm and ranch and still have a little bit of money left over. He had my son come out and help him on the ranch and the farm for a few years. He later [was] working [with] one of the fracking companies [who] were fracking for natural gas. He worked for them for a time. While he was there, he met a girl [Lea Stanley] and they were married. She has been the best thing that ever happened to him. He has straightened himself out. His biggest desire in life was to come home and become part of the ranch. When the economy out there kind of slipped, two or three years ago, they moved back. He has been working out at the ranch and building up a little herd of cattle for himself.

My youngest boy [is] [Edward] “Ed” [Hafen]. “Ed” did well in school and went on a [LDS] mission. When he [came] home from his mission, he slipped away some [and] has had some problems. He has been divorced. He has two sons who have [done] exceptionally well. They graduated from Hunter High School in West Valley [Salt Lake County, Utah]. His oldest boy was valedictorian in the year he graduated. There were several thousand students in the graduating class, so that was quite an honor. He has done well and has gone on to become a CPA [certified

public accountant]. He graduated from the University of Utah [Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah]. His next son [Nicholas “Nick” Hafen] was here at Dixie State College for a couple of years and then went up to the University [of Utah where] he is now. That is kind a brief synopsis of my family.

I indicated earlier that my brother, Harold, started the O K Rubber Welders. [That is what] it was called. Then it was turned over [A. K. Hafen]. Dad had to keep it together and keep things going. When Eldon [came] back from the service, he took over as manager. When I [came] home from the service, I went to work there. My brother-in-law, “Phil” Squire, worked there. Eldon and our brother, Herschel, started a tire store in Henderson [Nevada]. They built two more [stores] in Las Vegas [Nevada]. They did quite well with those businesses.

I knew as soon as I got out of the service what I was going to be doing. I went to work at the tire store. In 1963, our uncle’s ranch, which was my great-grandfather’s ranch [originally], came up for sale. As children, we would go every summer out to Barclay and spend time with our grandfather out there. The whole family fell in love with that area and that valley. When we found out the ranch was for sale, we felt like we needed to keep it in the family. Between Eldon, Herschel and I and the tire businesses, we were able to buy the ranch and pay for it. It took us close to forty years to get it paid for. We did not ever take anything much off of it. To me, it was the best investment we could possibly have made. The ranching way of life is the life that I have always longed to live.

DA: How many acres [are out there]?

KH: We only have about a couple hundred acres of good meadow. We had around 1,300 acres of mountain ground [for] grazing. It would not support many cattle. We had to have BLM [Bureau of Land Management] grazing permits in order to sustain a viable cattle operation.

DA: Was it once a homestead?

KH: Part of it was homesteaded. Some of it — what do you call it when you just kind of take it up?

HJ: Squatters?

KH: Yes. They kind of squatted on it. One of my uncles homesteaded a 640 acre piece. When the Simkins family moved in, Willard Simkins homesteaded a 640 acre piece. To begin with, they kind of [had] squatter’s rights. They were smart enough to get all the water rights recorded back in the 1800s. We have one of the more secure water rights of anybody in the [area]. We have some [very] good springs that do not vary [and] keep our meadows green all the time.

I am not going to go into the history of that area, but there is a whole lot of history that goes with it. It has been a wonderful [situation] for us and our family. We have a situation that most people cannot believe — that Herschel, Eldon and I and our wives have always got along. We have not always agreed on everything, but we have never had any very bad disagreements. We got along fine and the business has gone well. We could not have done it if our wives and the three of us had not been so compatible. Interestingly, we have put the ranch in a family trust that all of our descendants will have a minute interest in it. [It is] mainly so they have a place to go and feel like they are part of the ranch. That is basically the way Eldon, I and Herschel felt about it. We did not actually own the ranch, but we were stewards of it for a time. Then the family would — hopefully, we can keep going without too many problems.

Part of the Terry ranch out there is in a similar situation. Anybody who wants, has a place to go put their trailer house. They have Fourth of July, Twenty-fourth of July and Terry reunions [where] everybody comes and has a good time. They have leased the ranch to someone else to operate. They all own a little interest in it and they have a place to come to when they want to, which is one of the most difficult things for people to do now. If you want to have a family reunion and decide you want to go to Pine Valley [Washington County, Utah], you have to make reservations five or ten years in advance.

DA: Kelton, did you ever hear of Nels Anderson?

KH: You bet. You want me to talk about Nels?

DA: Yes.

KH: In the very early 1900s —.

DA: 1906 or somewhere there.

KH: Yes. Nels Anderson was a hobo. Times were tough back east. He and his brother [Bill Anderson] had to get out and look for work. The way those hobos worked then is they would get on a train and go to where there was some work. When that work was finished, they would either have to go back home or go find some other work. The railroad did not like the hobos riding on the train, so every time they got a chance, they would kick them off. Nels had heard there was work on the Panama Canal. He was on his way to California to get —.

DA: His brother was already there.

KH: Yes. At Acoma [Nevada, which was] about four miles north of Barclay, he was kicked off the train. So he walked down the track. This would have been about July 1 because my grandfather was cutting hay in one of the meadows. Nels needed something to eat and something to drink. They took care of him and

immediately determined that he had a special intellect. [He had] a special brain. They talked him into staying with them. He went through a few years of school there in Barclay. [I think] he only went to the eighth grade, but he did some schooling at Barclay. When he got through there, he went to work for the railroad to earn enough money he could go to Dixie College and BYU. He was quite well known at both places.

DA: He had contact with Juanita [Leone (Leavitt) Pulsipher] Brooks.

KH: Yes. He had contact with Juanita Brooks. They had a [very] good association. The only time I met Nels [was when] my mother was having her eighty-fifth birthday party at Dixie College. Where is it that you go out on top?

DA: The old student center.

KH: That is where [the party was held]. Nels Anderson came in on the airplane. Karl Brooks picked him up and brought him over to our birthday party for mother. That is the only time I met him. He wrote the book, *Desert Saints*. To me, it is about as good a history of this area [that] you can find. Nels did join the church. In my mind, I do not think he was 100 percent converted. He loved the Woods and the Terry families. He felt like they were part of his family. [He had] a great respect for them. To me, that is kind of one of the reasons he joined the church. He always considered himself a Mormon. In some ways, he was a little bit of a rebel.

In this book, *Desert Saints*, he wrote a piece about my great-grandfather that describes him so well. Every time I read it, I have to cry. He was a very great writer [and] became a world renowned sociologist. A lot of what he wrote was about the hobo culture and those kinds of [issues]. When he came to Dixie [Junior] College, he stayed with my Aunt Roxie Terry. When he went to Provo, he stayed with my Uncle [James] "Jimmy" Woods. He always felt like the Woods and the Terry families were as close to a family as he had.

DA: Are you aware that his diary from the war was recently published?

KH: Yes, I have a copy. I have not read all of it, but I am well aware of that [diary].

HJ: Hold it right there, Kelton. We will let this tape run out and we will put a new one in.

RL: While you are doing that, I would like to say that I like the [very] personal [information] and I appreciate all that you have said. Why have you always loved the farm life or the ranching life?

[END OF RECORDING TWO.]

KH: When I was [young], I wanted to be involved in ranching. I assume it was inherited in my genes. All of my ancestors, in one way or another, were involved in ranching and the livestock business. I think you have natural inclinations. My natural inclination was that I loved horses and cows and wanted to be involved with them. That is basically the reason how I could tell you that was the direction that I wanted to go.

I worked at the tire store. I loved the work because I [was able] to [get] acquainted with just about everybody in Washington County. I had a natural love for people. I loved to talk to people. I loved to know their history. I loved to know all about them. So working at the tire store I got to know just about everybody in Washington County. It was great, but I also loved to be out on the ranch. I did not mind it if I was alone for several days at a time. I always felt like if I was alone, I was with the best company in the world. I enjoyed being alone, but I also enjoyed the people.

My grandfather and great-grandfather Woods lived at Clover Valley. It was very, very secluded. Panaca [Nevada was] about twenty-five miles away. The Terry ranch and Hebron [Washington County, Utah was] about twenty-five miles away. They were the nearest neighbors. My great-grandfather, Thomas Sirls Terry, was the bishop of the Hebron Ward. My great-grandfather, Lyman Lafayette Woods, was the presiding bishop of the Clover Valley Branch. However, in the history, it does indicate that the Clover Valley Branch [was] quite often a little derelict in their duties. Brigham Young wanted everybody to live in town, be together and associate [with each other]. He did not want them to going to the mining camps with the gentiles. The church was in its infancy at that time. It was necessary for the members to stay as close together and keep the association as close as they could.

There was a fellow [named William Haynes] “Gunlock Bill” [Hamblin] who was Jacob Hamblin’s brother. He was interested in mining and prospecting. He was the first one to find the ore in Pioche [Nevada]. An Indian showed him the ore in Pioche. He was not quite up to Brigham Young’s standards and was excommunicated for a time because he was not doing what he was asked to do. There was a saw mill on the mountain in Clover Valley. They had a lot of teamsters and people to haul the lumber as well as mill it. They were far enough away from the church that they did not keep as close contact as they should. A lot of the history indicates that they were not quite doing as they should. It all worked out eventually.

I indicated that we bought the ranch in 1963. It was my opportunity, because I was the least needed at the tire store, to run the ranch. Herschel ran the store in Henderson. Eldon ran the store in St. George. I got to run the ranch. I did get my wages from the tire store. I worked there when I could, but I spent most of my time at the ranch. It was just exactly what I wanted.

DA: How did you wife feel about that?

KH: She went along with it. When we were first married, if I wanted to take a weekend off and go chase mustangs, she would cry and say I did not love her. After we had been married quite awhile and I spent my time at the ranch, I [might] tell her I was going to go for two weeks. If I came home in a week, she would say, “What the hell? Are you home already?” They learned to adapt to what the circumstances are [at the time]. She has spent a lot of time with me at the ranch, but she has been more concerned about taking care of her family and her home here in St. George. She does love the ranch as well.

When we went out there in 1963, on what is now called the Barclay Allotment, there were somewhere around eight to ten people running cattle on that range. Leo Leavitt of Veyo was one [of them]. We had Aaron Leavitt and Faye Leavitt in Mesquite [Nevada] who each had permits out there. We had the Simkins family [there]. [There was] Waldo Simkins, his brothers, Jack and Clyde, and Waldo’s boys were all involved there. Levi Snow had a permit out there. I had association with all of those [fellows] when I first went out [there]. Max Cannon was one of the ranchers out there. Max’s daughter [Janice Cannon] had married my first cousin, Lister [“Lit”] Woods. He was involved out there. Max was the kind of [fellow who] had the best horses and all. He was a [very] good [fellow] and took a lot of time [with me].

I had never owned or operated a ranch at that time. He took an interest in me. When we would get our cattle gathered, everybody [who] was involved wanted to do this and that with the cattle. I had no idea what I was supposed to be doing with mine. Max would say, “Now, this old cow is pretty poor. You better haul her up and put her in the meadow. This cow looks good. Let her go on the mountain by herself.” Max helped me in so many ways to get involved and learn the cattle business.

HJ: Tell what happened to Max.

KH: Okay. Max did have the best horses. He had one horse named “Brandy” that he really liked. He was a palomino horse. He was a half-brother to the horse that I had named “Judge” that was one of my and Lyman’s most favorite horses. Max lived out on the Escalante desert toward Modena [Iron County, Utah]. [Inaudible] had his ranch out there. He had cattle running [right] up next to the railroad track. He was out there in the summertime when a thunderstorm came in. Max was always scared of thunder and lightning — always petrified about it. He was very careful not to be around it. He and “Brandy” took off on a dead run toward the railroad track. There was an underpass there that he could get under. Before he got there, lightning struck him. It killed both him and “Brandy”. My boy, Lyman, had a great respect for Max because he rode with him a lot when he was a [young boy]. Max always took an interest in Lyman. I had great association with all of those [fellows].

You wanted to know a little bit about the Arizona Strip. When we were in the tire business, anybody [who] went out on the Arizona Strip —. We had the only complete tire business in the county. We did pretty much everything. So any time anybody went out on the Strip, they always had to come see us to get some tires or get them fixed before they could do anything else. I [was] well acquainted with all of the folks [who] were out on the Arizona Strip — the Bundy family, in particular. I have always enjoyed visiting with people, so I learned a lot about the Bundys and their family.

DA: Now you are doing interviews and so forth out on the Strip?

KH: For some reason, I decided I wanted to do a lot of verbal interviews. First, I like to learn about people. Second, I wanted to learn some of the history out in Clover Valley and I wanted to learn some of the history out on the Arizona Strip. I have done thirty [or] forty interviews mostly concerning the Arizona Strip.

DA: Have you shared them with our [Dixie State University] archives?

KH: Yes, I have given them to your archives. If they are worth anything to anybody, I am happy to be able to do it. I [was] well acquainted with most of the people on the Arizona Strip. I have made trips out [there] with a lot of them [to get] acquainted. In Lyman's book —.

HJ: *Roping the Wind*?

KH: Not *Roping the Wind*, [it was in] *Far From Cactus Flat* [that] he tells about —. I apparently told stories about the Arizona Strip that kind of intrigued him as well. We just had a good relationship with everybody [who] was out there.

DA: Did you ever know Preston Nutter or William Atkin?

KH: I did not [know] either one of them, but I know quite a bit about them and their families. I do not think we need to go into Preston Nutter's history here. About a year ago I was asked by Washington City Historical [Society] if I would give a history on the Arizona Strip. I kind of built it around Preston Nutter. He has been [a] very interesting [person].

There is one story that is interesting to me because in a way I was involved. When I was ten or twelve years old, or something like that, there were some stables on the old rodeo grounds where they built the new Heritage School. [Sherman] "Sherm" Shelley had roped a great, big, tall steer. [It] seemed to me [it] was as tall as this ceiling, but [it] was not quite that tall. He brought him in and [it] had Preston Nutter's brand, which is the circles. He had two circles in his brand. I went down and saw that steer. I was very intrigued with it. They later took it over

to Snow's Butcher Shop and butchered it. I think they gave the meat to needy people around town.

Later on, my cousin Grant Hafen, who I spent a lot of time cowboying with [at that time], told me this story. Paul Hafen and Rex Frei both had cattle and range up Sullivan Canyon down here. They were gathering their cattle up and they [had] an old cow that belonged to Nutter. This was after Nutter had left the [area] and his cattle were pretty well gone. They drove her for a day and she had twin bull calves. They marked the calves and branded them for Nutter. They were just freshly born, but they made steers out of them and [had] them branded.

Several years later when they were down there, they ran into these two steers. Rex was chasing one of the steers up quite a steep slope. It was off both sides quite steep. He roped it, the steer turned and went down, he could not hold it. In those days, they tied their ropes hard and fast. This steer got next to the edge and Rex had to take his knife and cut his rope or the steer would have pulled him right over the edge — horse and all. That steer was gone. They never did see the other one again. It is my belief and it was Grant's belief that this particular steer that came into St. George was the one that got away. I was interested in that because I remember being involved when he came to town.

HJ: Tell more about wild cattle and your associates.

KH: Out on the Arizona Strip, the Mathis family had [the Pine Spring] Ranch [at] Parashant, which, by my estimation, was one of the nicest cattle ranches in this whole [area]. The Parashant ranch was right near the edge where you start dropping down into the Grand Canyon. They would winter their cattle off what they called Snap Canyon, Tincanebitts [Canyon and] Joe Springs, those kinds of places. There was an area named Twin Canyon [where] a lot of the Mathis cattle [went] down into [and] they became wild and never did come out. They just stayed there year round.

The Mathis's wanted to get those cattle out of there forty years ago or so. They hired the Cox brothers [Wayne, Chester and Norris] from out at Cane Beds [Arizona] to build a road down into the canyon so they could gather the cattle and haul them out. When you would drive them out and they [were] on top, the cedars and the brush was so thick that two or three men could not handle cattle in that [area]. The last time we were down there, we brought a bunch out, because we had six or eight [fellows]. Most of them had a son with them and we were able to drive them out. In order to get them, you needed to drive a power wagon down in there, rope them and haul them out. The Cox boys were given permission to gather what cattle they could down there and [they would] own them. They were not really great cowboys, so they did not get many gathered. My brother, Eldon, and Clive Burgess [went] with them and made a deal to go down and gather cattle. It was always done during the wintertime because it too hot down in there to do much else in the summer. I [was able] to go with them two or three times.

Lewis Black was quite a character. He was an old bachelor for a time. Then he married in his older age. He and his wife did not get along as well as they should have. I said to Lewis one time, "Lew," where did your wife come from?" He said, "She came from down there in California. Sometimes she talks like she would like to go back. I wish to hell she would."

DA: [Laughter]

KH: When he married, somebody asked him, "How do you like married life, "Lew"?" "Lew" said, "Well, I think the end to patience is greater than the realization."

RL: [Laughter]

KH: He was with these [fellows] and me when we went [down there]. We had a lot of good times. We got quite a few cattle out of there. The last time we went [Fernard LeMoyné] "Buster" Esplin and Reed [Miles] Mathis went with us. They were both excellent cowboys. Reed took one group down one canyon. "Buster" took another group down the other canyon. They drove the cattle down and we had quite a rodeo gathering cattle for [awhile]. We finally got them all gathered and [came] out of there with twelve head or something like that. That is the last time that anybody has been down in Twin Canyon to get cattle. Those kind of [activities] were [what] I dearly loved. We chased a lot of mustangs in our time. I loved chasing mustangs, but wild cattle were a little bit better for me because you had something when you got a wild cow. When you got a mustang, you did not have much.

A lot of my friends and me and a lot of different people, were out there with us. Fenton [Lewis] Bowler, [Robert] "Bob" Bowler, Dennis Iverson [were out there]. Marv Jones was always with us. We had so much fun. You talk about an adrenalin rush! If we spotted a bunch of horses, we would decide how we were going to handle them. Some [fellows] would wait until the others got into position. Then you would [start] them. I remember so many times sitting there waiting. My legs were shaking so bad I almost could not keep them in the stirrups, I was so excited!

DA: I think you were seventeen [years old] all of your life! [Laughter]

HJ: [Laughter]

RL: [Laughter]

KH: [Laughter] I have said many times that having that ranch, being able to be out and do these kinds of things, I believe I had a better life than 99.9% of the people in the world.

DA: You were slightly different than your father.

KH: Dad did run cattle. He was interested in them, but he was more interested in the academics. When he [was] a little older, he sold his herd of cattle to Paul Hafen, a cousin. He spent the rest of his life in academics. It seems like it was thirty-nine years that he was involved in the education system here [at] Dixie College. He wrote the schools song, which they still [use]. He taught English, German and Spanish. I never did take a class from him, so I never learned to speak any of those languages. I always felt like I was better off not to embarrass my dad by being in his class.

DA: [Laughter]

KH: He was a good dad. He spent his whole life working several different angles to keep us going.

DA: Even though you were going to ranching?

KH: That is right. He actually discouraged his [children] from doing that [work]. He had seen drought years when the majority of your herd of cattle would die on the range. He knew those [times] were going to come and happen. He did think that we ought to be involved in it. The fact that we got the ranch and [had] it paid for — he felt good about it after it all happened. [Do you have] any other questions?

HJ: Are there any things that you would like to do that you have not done?

KH: I think everybody feels like they have fallen short of what they should do. I have been involved in the church all of my life, but there have periods of time when I have been kind of slack. Probably I would be a little more involved there, but I do not feel like I am a heathen.

HJ: [Laughter]

KH: I would probably be a little more involved. There are a couple of things that I did do that I enjoyed. I was a member of the Washington County Sheriff's Posse for many years. I joined the club in 1960 [and] was [involved] until it dispersed. We had a lot of good times. We had what we called the Western Riding Club. The Hurricane Riding Club was part of that group. I had a lot of good association with the people in Hurricane [Washington County, Utah]. [Calvin] "Cal" [Spendlove] and Zona [(Ruesch)] Wright were two of those people. I have a lot of association with "Cal" in the tire business [and] in the riding club. To me, he was one of those [very] good [fellows]. He was good and honest. Along with a lot of other people in our tire business, we did not have to worry about them. We charged [sales] a lot. Most people could not write you out a check when they needed something; they would have to pay it off later. We had a lot of association with them. I just wanted to mention that so you could understand how I feel about them.

RL: I can tell that my father [Calvin “Cal” Wright] spoke highly of you. If he spoke highly of you, it was sincere. He loved your family. I remember hearing, as a child, that he really thought a lot of the Hafen boys. That is a big compliment.

KH: We felt the same way about him. He had a son, Billy, [who] had a son named Cody. Stratton Brothers [Winston and Glen] [had] a construction company in Hurricane. Ray [Snow] Schmutz and [Stanley] “Stan” [Mahonri] Schmutz from St. George had an interest in the ranch out in Nevada. They bought that ranch out. They hired Afton Lee to come run the ranch. They were neighbors to us. Afton and I [were] very closely associated. I would help him and he would help me. It worked out [very well]. It is pretty hard to run a ranch without some help. He had a lot of friends from Hurricane who would come and want to spend some time with us out there. [William] “Billy” Wright and his sons, Cody and Calvin, were [two] of them [who] came [to the ranch]. We hired Cody when he was only about twelve or thirteen years old to work for us during the summer. He had a friend named Jake Netto, a Hurricane boy. The two of them, along with Calvin, would come out and spend the summers with us. They were just young boys, but they were the best help you could get anywhere. I have said many times that they were better help than a man.

I had such a good association with [Cody]. When he became involved in rodeo, I followed him extremely close. He became a world champion bronc rider. [Inaudible] two or three times. His brothers and his sons [were] all involved in high school rodeo. I feel a very closeness to that family. Billy’s wife, Evelyn, to me, is one of the best women I know. I have known a million good women, but that gal is something special. I think a lot of the whole family. I just kind of wanted to mention that [about them].

DA: Are you still taping?

HJ: Yes, but we are just about to run out of tape.

RL: I know that you [folks] have made an impact on them as well. I appreciate that. They gained a lot from working for you. I know my brother [Billy] is also very appreciative and Cody as well.

KH: “Cal” Wright’s family, to me, are special people. You fall in that same category.

RL: Thank you.

DA: I see your wife takes care of the garden.

RL: [Laughter]

KH: My wife is very meticulous about her lawn and her house. I might try to help her, but I know I cannot do it good enough to suit [her].

DA: You cannot do it correctly.

KH: I just let her do it.

RL: [Inaudible]

KH: Yes.

[END OF RECORDING THREE. END OF INTERVIEW.]