Memories of Growing Up in Santa Clara in the 1940s and 1950s

Duane J. Gubler

Duane (Dutch) J Gubler was born in Santa Clara, Utah, a small farm/ranch community in the southwest corner of the state, on June 4, 1939, the third of eight children of June and Thelma WhippleGubler. The town was settled in 1861 by Swiss immigrants, converts to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints sent by Brigham Young, President of the church, to grow grapes and cotton. The town had a population of about 250-300 during the period of Duane's youth, most of whom were descendants of the original settlers. The Santa Clara Creek, with its head waters on Pine Valley mountain to the north, flowed along the southern edge of the town and provided the limited fertile land and water used for farming, mainly fruit, vegetable and alfalfa farms. Most men were farmers and small-time ranchers, running cattle on US forest and Bureau of Land Management lands. The women were housewives, worked at home, and helped on the farm; outside jobs for women were very rare. The community was close knit with one church and one three room primary school (2 and sometimes 3 grades per room, depending on the number of students). People were generally poor in terms of material possessions, but that was offset by the close family and community ties. Santa Clara at the time had only one small store, but no restaurants or service stations. St George, a larger town with about 4000 population was about 3 miles to the east, and provided

shopping amenities. Both towns were located on US 91, the main highway from Salt Lake City Utah to Los Angeles California, about 450 miles to the southwest.

From the time Duane was about 5 years old, his father was calling him Dutch. The reason for this nickname is uncertain, but there is an old saying that when a person gets into trouble, he/she is getting into “dutch”. Some claim, without any evidence, that was the reason his father gave him the nickname. In any case, the name stuck and most older people in southern Utah do not know him by any other name.

Dutch had four brothers and three sisters, two older than him and five younger. Dutch and his two older siblings were 18 months apart and were responsible for many of the chores around the house and the farm when growing up. At young ages, they were given increasingly more responsibilities, thus developing a good work ethic, and learning the importance of dependability and doing a good job. Dutch’s brother, Ward was 3 years older and became a role model for him. Dutch often tried and thought he could do everything Herm (Ward’s nickname; his middle name was Herman, after his grandfather) could do. For example Dutch was trying to milk cows at age 5. They worked together throughout their youth on the farm/ranch and became very close. By the time Dutch was 12, he and Herm had assumed much of the responsibility for keeping the farm/ranch functioning while their father was trying to make a living buying and selling cattle, and peddling fruit and vegetables. “Dad would give us instructions on what had to be done for the week on Sunday and leave on Monday

morning, usually returning on Friday night (see Trucking with Dad below). Herm and I had chores before and after school, and almost always on the weekends when Dad was home, we would have work to do" (see below).

The work was varied and often hard, but it was a terrific education for us. We gained a set of values from Dad that has served us well over the years. A series of short descriptions of the various jobs we did and my recollections of learning from working with my mother and Dad are outlined below. As you read the descriptions of the work that follows, you may find yourself asking-- why didn't they use modern equipment? The answer is simple; Dad was a subsistence farmer and with 8 children, there were many uses for the limited cash on hand that took priority over expensive farm equipment especially when he had two healthy boys. Remember too that this was the 1940s and 1950s, a period before modern farming methods became widely available. Dad had quit school in the 8th grade to help his aging father so one lesson I learned from him was to get an education.

The following are a series of jobs/responsibilities Herm and I did before and after school, on weekends and summer break to keep the farm/ranch going when Dad was gone.

Fertilizing the Fields

In the 1940s and 1950s commercial fertilizer was non-existent for poor farming communities. Farmers therefore, relied on the age-old tradition of using domestic animal manure to fertilize their farms. That meant cleaning out the corrals where a year of cattle and horse feces had accumulated, every spring. We did not have a tractor with a front loader, nor

did we have a manure spreader. As a result, everything had to be done by hand and muscle. Herm and I would spend our Saturdays in March and April mucking out the corral and hauling the manure to the fields where it had to be spread. Our corral was fairly large and surrounded our barn on three sides, including a large area for the cattle and a smaller horse corral. We shoveled the manure onto the truck bed using 8-tine pitch forks. When we had the truck loaded, we would drive to the field and Dad would drive slowly while Herm and I in the back of the truck, spread the manure by throwing it as far as we could on each side of the truck, again with the pitch forks. We usually did one load per weekend as it was hard work. The manure was always damp to wet and heavy. It was one of the most unpleasant jobs we had, but it was necessary to keep the fields healthy. The upside if you can call it that, was that it did build strong bodies.

Harvesting the Hay

A major crop from our farm was hay (alfalfa) to feed the cattle and horses during the winter months when they couldn't graze. If we had enough water, we would usually get 4 crops of hay during a summer season. As noted in fertilizing the fields, we didn't have modern farm equipment. Dad had an old Farmall tractor that had a hay mower attachment that had to be lifted manually when you reached the end of a row and had to turn around. Either Herm or I would cut the hay with the tractor. We had neither a modern rake

nor hay baler. About 3 days after cutting, we would have to rake the hay into windrows so it could be easily separated into piles that could then be loaded on a truck bed. The rake we

used was one adapted from a horse drawn rake; we just pulled it with the tractor instead of a horse. So one of us would drive the tractor while the other would sit on the rake and manually dump the hay along the windrow. After the hay was raked into windrows, we would go down the row with a pitch fork and separate the hay into piles (pile it). We would then drive a flatbed truck between the windrows and manually stack the hay piles onto the truck with pitch forks. We would usually have one of our younger brothers (and sisters) on the truck stomping the hay as we loaded it so we could pile it higher. Once loaded (about 10-12 feet high) we would tie it down with a rope and drive to the barn, where we unloaded and stacked the loose hay, again using pitch forks. We often complained that our lives would have been much easier if we would have had a manure spreader and a hay rake and bailer. But it was basically subsistence farming and we didn't really know what we were missing until we were older.

Milk and Manure

We always had a milk cow to provide milk for the family. Ma would skim the cream from the top of the milk and use it to churn butter or make whipped cream for deserts. Herm and I had the responsibility of milking the cow every morning before going to school and every night after school. We would take turns with the

morning and night shifts, but were flexible when one of us had something special on our schedule. This was a daily duty regardless of the weather or time of year. In addition to milking, morning and evening chores included feeding the horses and cattle that happened to be in the corral.

As noted, Dad bought and sold cattle for a living. During one period when Herm and I were in our teens, Dad began buying springer heifers (young heifers that were pregnant with their first calf). He would sell the calf to another buyer who raised them for veal, and bring the springers home for Herm and I to train as milk cows. This exercise was somewhat like a circus as these were not docile animals. First, we had to rope the heifer and tie it up to the corral fence, usually after being dragged around the corral a time or two. We would then put hobbles on the hind legs to prevent the heifer from kicking us and the milk bucket, again usually after being kicked a few times while trying to hobble it. We would then begin to try to milk her. After a period of a few weeks of doing this every day, most springers would relent and accept their fate. Dad would then sell the heifer to dairies to add to their herd. It was a good business for Dad, but Herm and I did the dirty work. And dirty it was! For some reason, which I cannot remember, Dad always brought these heifers home in the winter when the corral was wet and the manure slippery. The heifers invariably had wet manure on their feet and tails, which continuously lashed Herm and I as we tried to hobble and milk them. We were usually liberally covered with cow manure after these sessions. Most people know that their milk comes from

dairy cows, but they probably have no idea of the fight those docile cows put up before accepting their fate of providing a product so vital to human health.

Take the High Water

Irrigation water was a valuable commodity at that time and most farmers didn't have enough. Fields were irrigated by flood irrigation, and farmers bought water shares, each share being worth so many hours of a "field or lot stream" of water. In order to get the water to the fields or to town, the farmers had gone up stream on the Santa Clara Creek and dug ditches, sometimes for miles. Each spring those ditches had to be cleaned of weeds and debris (they were not concrete in those days), and farmers either paid a fee to the water company or worked off their fees by helping clean the ditches. We always worked our fees off, with Herm and I spending many Saturdays in the spring when we weren't spreading manure, out cleaning ditches.

By August each summer, southern Utah was pretty dry; the creek was usually down to a trickle of water, and there was not enough water to irrigate all of the fields. Although we got very little rain on the desert, August was a time when it periodically rained on Pine Valley Mountain, the headwaters of the Santa Clara Creek. The rainclouds would gather over the mountain every afternoon, and sometimes it rained hard. When that happened, there would be a flood (we called it "high water") down the Santa Clara Creek. High water was free water, and was available to anyone who wanted to water their fields. Unfortunately, it would take six

to eight hours for the flood to reach Santa Clara, which meant getting up in the middle of the night to go and “take the high water.”

Dad watched the rain on the mountain closely, and when it appeared certain to flood, he would go to our farm located about 3 miles west of Santa Clara on the creek near the Indian Reservation to take the high water to irrigate our field. When he was on the truck, however, this responsibility fell to Herm and I. Many an August night we would take a horse or the old tractor and go to 3-mile in the middle of the night, often having to wade across the flooded creek using the shovel to keep from being washed down. We would then hike up over the hill to the head of the ditch, turn the water in and then hike back to the field to regulate the water to where we wanted it.

Mesquite, Yucca and Tomatoes

Men and women of Santa Clara in the 1940s and 1950s were pretty self-sufficient, essentially using natural materials to make nearly everything they needed. Money was in short supply in those days and it was not spent on artificial products that could be made from natural materials. Ma and Dad were no exceptions, making everything they could to save money.

We always had a large garden, planting corn, tomatoes, green beans, and a variety of other vegetables. Our biggest crops were corn and tomatoes. We often planted the whole west part of the “upper lot” where Grandpa’s barn used to be, in tomatoes, which Dad peddled and Ma bottled. Herm and I were responsible for helping plant, hoe and water, and

for harvesting the corn and tomatoes. The tomato plants had to be tied to stakes so the tomatoes would not lay on the ground and spoil. The stakes were cut from the branches of mesquite trees. We always had a stack of them, but in the spring we would have to cut more to replace those that were lost or broken. The twine we used to tie the plants to the stakes was homemade from the Yucca plant, a type of fleshy cactus with long spine-like leaves. We would find large plants that had spines at least 12 inches long. These were cut, taken home and soaked in water. I don't recall how long they had to soak, but after they had softened, we would cut them lengthwise, and twine was made by stripping the stringy outside covering from the fleshy spines. The 12-14 inch lengths of stringy spine skin were then spread out to dry in the sun; when dry they made relatively strong twine that could be used to tie up the tomato vines. The local Indians used this type of twine to weave.

Like digging ditch, cutting mesquite stakes and making twine for staking and tieing tomato plants were a springtime chore that had to be done. As I recall, Dad, Herm and I would spend one day collecting Yucca and another cutting stakes, depending on how many we needed. After the tomatoes would get 12 to 15 inches high, we would water them well. In those days we used the "lot water" to irrigate the gardens, which had furrows along which the tomatoes were planted. When the ground was well soaked, we would go down the rows putting a stake in the ground by each plant, being careful not to get it too close to the roots. A few days later, after the ground had dried out a bit, we would then go down each row tying the plants loosely to the stake, making it easier to pick the tomatoes when they ripened.

Cedar Posts and Tony Yellow Jacket

All fences, when we were young, were made using cedar posts and barbed wire. Although the wire was one of the few things Dad had to buy, the cedar posts had to be cut with an axe (in those days, we had no chain saws). I know that Dad cut posts, but I cannot remember him doing so, because after Herm and I were old enough to swing an axe, we cut them. Dad would usually hire Tony Yellow Jacket, a Piute Indian from up on the reservation ("Indian Farm"). Tony was probably not that old, but to Herm and I, he seemed old. Dad would load us all in the truck and usually take us out into Nevada, near Panaca, where there were a lot of cedar trees. There he would drop us off to cut cedar posts while he went off to buy cattle at some ranch in the area.

Tony Yellow Jacket was amazing. I think he cut 3 to 5 posts for each one Herm and I cut; his efficiency was probably due to a combination of knowing how to swing an axe and how to choose the right limb to cut. Anyway, Herm and I were always embarrassed about letting this "old Indian" out work us. My guess is that Dad had two reasons for putting us out there with Tony, first to insure that he got enough posts cut, but also to let Herm and I learn from a pro. At the end of the day, Dad would come back and we would load the posts and go home. On occasion, we camped out and spent two days there cutting posts.

Feeding the Family

Ma was an amazing woman, as were most southern Utah women of the day. She had eight children, in the early years one each 1.5 to 2 years. On top of that, she held the fort down and ran the family while Dad was gone. Under her supervision, we spent the summers preparing for winter by “putting up” food of all kinds. Every fruit or vegetable that came in season, Ma bottled, including apricots, plums, and peaches, as the main fruits, and tomatoes, corn, green beans and beets, as the main vegetables. In addition, she bottled meat, both beef and venison, churned butter and made soap from the tallow of butchered cows.

Every year, we had a large garden that Herm and I were responsible for. We generally had corn, tomatoes, carrots, beets, radishes, and green beans. Generally, Herm and I would pick, and Ma, Pat and Doris (Fritz and Toodle, two of my sisters) would bottle. The corn was the biggest production; Herm and I picked and husked, the girls cut the kernels off the cob, blanched them, and then put them up in bottles.

Making soap was another big production day. Ma would collect tallow from the cows we butchered. When she had a certain amount, she would put the tallow in a large wash tub over a fire we built out in the backyard. I am not sure what ingredients were included except tallow and lye. We had to stir it for some time as it cooked. Then we let it cool and solidify. Ma would then cut it into bars for use as laundry soap.

Grandpa’s old house where we lived had a cellar under it, with stone steps down and mostly unfinished. It was lined with shelves. By the end of the summer, we had the cellar packed with many of the foods we needed for the winter. Later when Dad was hauling

produce from Los Angeles, we often had fresh fruit and vegetables that he had left over from his peddling; these were always kept in the cellar where it was cool. It is hard, I am sure, for our children and their spouses, to really understand what life was like in Santa Clara in the 1940s and 1950s. It was a hard life for everyone, but in fact, a very good life that instilled values that are difficult to comprehend today.

Picking and Packing Peaches

Dad made good money peddling fruit. He didn't own his own orchard, so he leased one from Uncle Edmund down in the Santa Clara fields. It was a good peach orchard, with several types of peaches, mainly lemon and regular albertas. During peach season, the whole family would get up at the crack of dawn and go pick peaches. Dad, Herm and I picked while Ma, Pat and Toodle packed. We would do this sometimes twice a week. Dad would then head out to Pioche, Nevada, and surrounding towns to peddle peaches to families who then bottled them for their winter use. This was a good cash crop for him.

Those that weren't taken to peddle, were bottled. Ma and the girls would spend days on end bottling fruit, corn, tomatoes, etc. which we would then have for winter.

The Santa Clara Canyon (Snow Canyon)

When Dad was a young man, he purchased approximately 650 acres, on the western side of the Santa Clara Canyon, later known as Snow Canyon. Carved from the Navajo sandstone formations by wind and water, the canyon has exquisite geological features that

include extinct cinder cones, lava tubes, lava flows, and sand dunes intertwined with the red and white Navajo sandstone.

Dad had a fence across the southern entrance and down over the black lava rocks on the northeastern side of the canyon. Dad's property included the narrows in the southwest and the land north to the white sandstone mountain. There was a spring up a small draw in the white sandstone and there were depressions (pockets) in the sandstone in the center of the canyon that collected rainwater. Dad used the canyon as a winter pasture for a few head of cows, and occasionally horses. The main problem was that the water was undependable. Therefore, when we had cattle or horses in the pasture, the water holes had to be checked every week. This task generally fell to Herm and I. We would take turns on Saturdays to ride the canyon and check on the cattle and the water holes. We would leave early in the morning, taking all day to ride by horseback (in those days there were no ATVs) to the white sandstone spring and check the other water holes, making note of the cattle on the way.

This land was, along with the pasture up at the ranch, Dad's pride and joy. He knew the ultimate value of the canyon because of its beauty, red and white sandstone with a lava flow and an extinct volcano at the head of the canyon. Several movies were shot in the canyon, including Jeremiah Johnson, The Conquerors, The Run of the Arrow and the King and Four Queens, with such stars as John Wayne, Robert Redford, Clark Gable, Brian Keith, Charles Bronson, and Rod Stieger. Dad, therefore, resisted attempts by others to purchase the land. Orville Hafen was especially persistent. He was trying to purchase the land to make the Snow

Canyon State Park. After several years of continuous offers and pressure from the state and politicians, Shelby Frei, who owned the eastern part of the canyon where the road came through, agreed to sell for an amount that Dad considered far below the actual value. That established the price for the land and the state then condemned Dad's part of the canyon, paying Dad the same price. Dad received a paltry amount of money. Although he was allowed to use the land as long as he and Ma were alive, he was very resentful of the fact that he was cheated out of a fortune by the state. A few years after the land was condemned (<5 yrs), the Archie Gubler family, who owned the mouth of the canyon that was not included in the park boundries, sold their 100 acres for over $300,000. And Orville Hafen, who had bought the land west of the canyon towards Ivins, made even more when they developed Tuacahn.

Trucking with Dad

Some of my fondest memories of Dad were of going on the truck with him. In the 1950s, Dad had an old Chevy flatbed truck, probably a three-quarter ton, to which he added a set of dollies (an extra axle and 2 wheels behind the drivers). He used to load it up with fruit and vegetables from our farm, usually peaches and tomatoes, but at times corn, etc., and leave early in the morning to "peddle" them out in Nevada in places like Modina, Panaca, Pioche and Caliente. I often went with him, and would go from door-to-door asking people if they wanted to buy fruit or vegetables. At the time I hated peddling, but am convinced that I learned the art/confidence of selling from that experience which helped me later in my life. Dad had many regular customers that depended on him to bring the fruit that they bottled for the winter.

For several years, Dad also sold meat. He and Fred Rose (not sure how he became involved) would butcher a cow or two and Dad would sell the meat dressed. He took orders for a quarter or half a beef. Herm and I helped them butcher cattle and pigs. The slaughterhouse was up at the corral, where the animal would be put down with a 22 caliber bullet between the eyes, the throat slit and the animal strung up with a block and tackle with head down. The animal was allowed to bleed out, skinned and dressed, all right there in the corral full of manure. For pigs, we would put a 55 gallon drum, filled to about half with water, on a fire. When the water was boiling, we would hoist the dressed pig with a block and tackle and lower it into the hot water for a few moments, then hoist it out and scrape the hair off with a knife.

Later, Dad bought larger trucks (2-ton) and began buying and selling cattle. He would make the rounds to ranches in Utah, Arizona, Nevada and California and buy cattle on sight. Dad could judge the weight of a cow very accurately and he and the owner would sit on the corral fence and discuss the weight, eventually agreeing on a weight and a price. Dad would then load them up and haul them to the stockyards in Los Angeles and sell them. He made pretty good money at this, mainly because he followed the prices of livestock selling at the Los Angeles Stockyards carefully and was such a good judge of weight. The ranchers trusted him; I don't ever recall an incident where he was accused of trying to cheat a rancher.

When I was 14-16, I frequently went with Dad on the truck during the summer months. Although I regularly drove the truck on the farm at 12-13, it was during this period going to Los

Angeles with Dad that I really learned to drive a truck. We would usually leave on a Sunday night or early Monday morning, load the cattle he had bought, and drive straight into Los Angeles, getting into the stock yards on Monday or Tuesday night, depending on where we had to go for the cattle. The cattle were assigned to a seller who sold them for Dad on commission. We would then clean and wash out the truck so we could load produce for the return trip. We would always stay in seedy hotels, but Dad loved to go to Leonard's restaurant in downtown Los Angeles. This was a restaurant decorated like the tropics, with all kinds of tropical vegetation and water. We would usually go there for dinner if we had time.

On Wednesday morning early, we would go to the wholesale produce market in Los Angeles. Dad would buy a variety of produce, which we hauled to Las Vegas for delivery to restaurants, small stores, etc. Dad had regular customers who ordered from him every week; his main competition was Rocky Mountain Produce Co. This experience, watching Dad bargain for cattle and produce, is where I learned to bargain.

We would usually leave Los Angeles very early Thursday morning, drive to Las Vegas, and spend Friday delivering produce to Dad's regular customers. If Dad got a particularly good price on an item, he would buy extra, which meant we were always peddling some kind of produce at the end of the day before we headed home. Peddling was in Dad's blood, a long held tradition handed down from his father and most of the immigrants who settled Santa Clara. This tradition also meant that we nearly always had fresh fruit and vegetables at home during those years.

On occasion, Dad would buy more than one load of cattle. When that happened, it was a tough week because we would pick up the first load of cattle, take it to Los Angeles, turn right around and go back for the second load. We would then load produce for Las Vegas. On these trips, we got little sleep since we didn't stop. One such trip is imprinted forever in my memory. Dad had bought a herd of cattle in Alamo, Nevada. We left Sunday night and drove to Alamo, loaded the cattle and headed to Los Angeles, unloaded and turned right around and drove back to Alamo. We got the second load and drove back to Los Angeles without stopping, then loaded produce for Las Vegas as scheduled. On trips such as this, we just traded off driving and sleeping. When we left Las Vegas for home that Friday night, both Dad and I were beat. Dad told me to drive and he would take a nap and take over up the road. I made it to Beaver Dam okay, but going up Utah Hill, I couldn't keep my eyes open. I woke Dad up and he said to drive to Castle Cliffs and he would take it on in. At Castle Cliff I woke him again and he said take it to the top (of Utah Mountain) and he would then drive. I had no memory of driving most of the way from Castle Cliffs. About 100 yards from the top of the mountain, I ran off the road to the right. Luckily there wasn't a steep barrow pit or incline, and the truck was empty. We went bouncing down the hill with Dad bouncing up and down, hitting his head on the ceiling of the cab (seat belts had not been invented yet), pushing his hat down over his ears. When the truck finally stopped, I looked over at Dad with his hat down over his ears and I couldn't help laughing. He said "you damned fool, why didn't you wake me up?" I told him I had several times, but he had refused to drive; he then began to laugh as well. We got out and

checked the truck—there didn't appear to be any damage, so I just drove it back up on to the road. Needless to say, neither of us slept the rest of the way home; I drove.

It was these kinds of trips later when there was no one to help him, that led to his accidents. The first was when he rolled his truck coming around the Gates turn in Santa Clara. And later, he had the front end of his truck clipped off by a train. Those two accidents traumatized him and probably caused some neurologic damage as well. The doctors attributed a pinched nerve he got in the first accident contributing to his Parkinson's symptoms. Certainly, the wear and tear of the many years on the truck, combined with nagging pain and injuries from the accidents contributed to his rapid deterioration in his later years.

I spent a lot of time with Dad those 2-3 summers, and got to know him well. Although he was a hard bargainer, he was honest and fair. I never saw him cheat anyone. He got into it with Preston Hafen on occasion. Preston was his nephew, although about the same age as Dad, and somewhat of a partner, but also a competitor. They often traveled together and helped each other. I learned many of the values that have served me very well during my life, from those summers spent trucking with Dad.

Dad was not a quitter. By all accounts, he should have died in several accidents he had during his life, the last one when the train hit him at the stockyards in Los Angeles. Although I didn't see the truck after the accident, they said the train was going fast enough that it cut the front end of the truck right off, leaving the cab pretty much intact. One accident that exemplified Dad's "no quit attitude," was when, as a young man, he was chasing a cow

through the mountain mahogany up at the ranch. I heard Ma tell this story so am not sure of the details. He had gone to the ranch on the horse, about 20 miles, and was trying to move some cattle through the mahogany. As often happens when chasing a cow, one doesn't watch where he is going; this was the case with Dad and he ran a mahogany branch through his leg (not sure where). He was bleeding profusely and a lesser man would have bled to death. However, he tied a tourniquet around his leg, got on the horse and rode the 20 miles home. That is the kind of "True Grit" that few men have today.

The Ranch, Rain, and Mud

We always kept a few head of cattle in the ranch pasture during the summer. That meant that in the spring we would have to go to the ranch and spend the day fixing the fence, which was usually damaged each winter by snow, deer, trespassers, etc. Then we would have to go periodically to check on the cattle and make sure all was well. These were usually one-day trips, and it was always late afternoon/early evening by the time we finished and headed home. Actually, we were always late leaving for home because Dad loved it there, and would find every excuse to stay a little longer.

Invariably in August, however, it would rain on us in the afternoon. And, when it rained hard, the "Blake and Gubler Clay" became wet and very slippery. The road at that time went up around the north end of the field, by the old houses, then down along the west side of the field. There was one spot by the old house at the top of the field that we had to go around a tree because the limbs were too low for the truck to pass under. There was a wash off to the

west side of the tree. When it had rained hard, the truck would slip into the wash and we would spend hours digging it out. We would have to dig down to dry dirt so the truck would have traction. This scenario occurred on many occasions over the years. Later, Dad made a new road around the south end of the field, but that was after I had left. In retrospect, I am not sure why we didn't prune the tree that blocked the road near the house.

Singing

Dad loved to sing. He had an old 4-string banjo that he strummed, and he never lost an opportunity to sing with someone. He had a beautiful voice and loved to sing tenor to many of the old songs of the day, such as My Wild Irish Rose, You Are My Sunshine, That Silver Haired Daddy of Mine, Sweet Adeline, etc. Mom used to sing with him on occasion; the song I remember them singing so well was "Let Me Sleep in Your Barn Tonight Mister."

When Herm, Pat, Doris and I were pretty young, Dad bought a steel guitar from a traveling salesman. He was determined that one of us kids was going to learn to play it, so we all took lessons. It was murder because as I recall, none of us wanted to play it, and as a result, none of us learned to play very well. I think Dad gave up in disgust, and used the amplifier to broadcast Christmas music during the holidays. I do not know what ever happened to the guitar and amplifier.

I learned the "G" cords on the banjo from Dad, and during my high school years, I played that old banjo and sang as well. It was then that I learned the relaxing value of strumming and

singing. Later I switched to a guitar that Bobbie gave me, but I still enjoy it today and often think of Dad when I sing those old songs.

The Little Guy

Dad was always for the "little guy." To put this in perspective, you have to remember that he and Ma went through the depression, getting married towards the end, and then going through the war years with shortages and rationing. He watched those with resources get richer and the poor remain poor. Many times I heard him talk about several people there in Santa Clara getting rich by selling black market goods during the war; he despised them for what he thought was cheating, and frequently supported politicians who watched out for the "little guy." He was a democrat because he felt they did this. He worked hard, however, and never asked for government help. I remember when the land bank program came into effect, it never occurred to him to have the government pay him for not farming his land. Thus, he was a bit of an enigma in that he always supported the government aid programs verbally, but I never saw him take advantage of them financially. Perhaps that is why his children all turned out to be politically conservative.

Dad was not afraid to take a stand. One of the stories that epitomizes Dad's fight against those in control who never considered the little guy, involved the Rocky Mountain Produce Company. Rocky Mountain was started by our neighbor across the street, who Dad always said made his initial money on the black market during the war. The Rocky Mountain dock was just up the street and across from Don Beecham's house. As the company grew, they acquired

more and more trucks. The produce would be brought in from Los Angeles on Saturday night and the distribution trucks would all be loaded Sunday afternoon, ready to go out early Monday morning. As they acquired more trucks, they ran out of room to park them around the dock, and they began parking them on the street in front of our house. Dad complained to our neighbor and to the dispatcher about this, to no avail. It went on for months. Finally one Sunday evening, Dad lost all patience. He got in one of the trucks parked in front of the house and ran it into the ditch across the road. Needless to say, they stopped parking trucks in front of our house.

Another “Big Guy” that Dad was always at odds with was the US Forest Service. They controlled the Taylor Grazing Act permits that determined how many cattle the Santa Clara cowboys could run on the ranges at Pine Valley and Bull Valley. Every cow that was put on the spring and summer ranges had to have an ear tag. In the spring roundup, the cattle would be gathered from the winter range over a period of weeks. On a certain date, the cattle herd would be driven to the corral at the spring fence at the foot of Pine Valley Mountain, where the calves born during the winter were branded, ear marked, dehorned, and castrated if they were bull calves. The adult cattle were all tagged with metal ear tags that had the current year stamped into them. This process was tightly controlled by the forest ranger in charge of the Dixie National Forest.

Invariably, there were stragglers, cattle that were missed during the spring roundup. The cowboys would bring these in and call the owner, who would go and get them. Dad would

wait until he had a truck load, or until he had accounted for all of his cattle (he knew everyone by sight, and expected Herm and I to do so as well. He would get very upset if he referred to one of his cows and we didn't know which one he was talking about.) All of the cattle had to be tagged by the ranger before they could be put on the mountain. When Dad had a load, we would take them over to St. George to the ranger's house (it was always on a weekend, usually Sunday, and always at 5 or 6 in the morning.) Dad would go bang on the door, get the ranger up and ask him to come out and tag the cattle. The ranger often objected to this, reminding Dad that it was a weekend and to come back at a decent hour. On more than one occasion Dad threatened the ranger with Herm or I, saying that if he didn't get out there and tag the cattle, he (Dad) would have one of his boys come in and beat the hell out of him (the ranger). The rangers were nearly all young easterners who had just graduated from Utah State University in range management. Often they didn't know a brouse range from grass, and Dad couldn't stand them lording it over the ranchers in the area. I am sure that Dad planned the trips to the ranger at inopportune times, designed to irritate them. This fight between the US Government and small ranchers in southern Utah is still going on today.

Education

Ma and Dad, especially Dad, always encouraged us boys to "get an education." Interestingly, I rarely heard them say this to the girls; you have to understand that the culture in Utah in the 1950s was one of "male breadwinner" and "female homemaker." Their emphasis on education was a reflection of their lack of it; Dad made it through the 8th grade I

think, and quit school to help his aging father on the ranch. Ma attended school through the 10th grade.

In retrospect, one of Dad's strong points was that he did not do much to facilitate our education, other than consistently reminding us that we should get one. Instead, he expected Herm and I to work before school, after school and during the school holiday breaks. Many a time I remember having to haul hay or pick peaches or tomatoes instead of playing ball with the other kids. At the time, we thought we were picked on, but it was that work ethic and the responsibility that he placed on our shoulders that made us what we are today.

Dad gave Herm and I each a heifer to begin building our cattle herd when we were young. We nurtured them and at one point we each had five or six head. We would usually select a steer to groom each year for the 4-H program. I could never seem to tame mine enough to lead it around the arena for judging. Fittingly however, and with Dad's approval, we used those cattle to finance our education. I traded my last cow to Dad in 1962 for a steer, which Bobbie and I had butchered; we took 300 pounds of beef to Logan that fall when we went to Utah State University. We had no money (we lived on Bobbie's unemployment check of $35/month and what little I could make working in the lab), but we ate very well. Bobbie tended the neighbors' kids and was paid in potatoes, so we ate steak and potatoes the year I graduated from Utah State University. I think Ma and Dad were happy with the use of our cattle herd to support our education.

Fresh Bread

Growing up, one of the highlights of the week was the day Ma would bake bread. As a kid, I don't remember ever having store bread. On a certain day each week, Ma would make several loaves of bread, enough to last the family the rest of the week. There were two treats associated with this bake day. The first was fried bread. Not always, but quite often, Ma would keep some dough aside and deep fry it; we would eat it with honey or with jam or jelly that she had made. The other treat was the freshly baked bread, hot out of the oven. We all looked forward to having a piece with homemade butter and jam. When I was in high school, Dennis (Tuck) Tuckness always knew when there was fresh bread, and usually came home with me after school so he could have some. Ma came to expect him on these days and I think enjoyed the fact that her bread was so popular.

Santa Clara Culture Clashes

The culture of a small ranch/farm community and Mormon doctrine often clashed in the Santa Clara of the 1940s and 1950s. Life was tough and men and women worked hard for very little return. The men thought it was their right to have a party now and then (some of them every weekend), and of course this was against Mormon doctrine "the Word of Wisdom," which came to be the defining doctrine of Mormonism in those days, or so it seemed. The women, on the other hand, felt it was their duty to God and community, to keep their men from straying. Some women did foolish things like following their husbands to the field to make sure they didn't smoke. The result of this "battle of the sexes" in the name of the

Church, was not infrequent fights between husband and wife, usually about the former's partying.

Ma and Dad were no different. Dad loved to party; he and his friends would tip a few and sing with Dad accompanying on his banjo. Ma was more patient and understanding than most Santa Clara wives, but on occasion, she would get bent out of shape and they would have it out, usually when the kids were not around. However, I remember more than once them fighting while we kids watched from the porch outside their bedroom window (that was before they enclosed the west porch and the stairs on the old house). Dad smoked when he was young. He claimed he could roll a Bull Durham on a horse with one hand in a wind storm. One of his proudest accomplishments was to quit smoking. To hear Ma tell it, he just up and quit one day, and never had another Bull Durham. I too smoked when I was a young man, and like Dad quit cold turkey when we arrived in Calcutta, India in 1969; I figured if he could do it, I could too. Also, Calcutta was such a culture shock to me that I figured my mental condition couldn't get any worse if I quit smoking.

Back to the battle of the sexes, the incident that epitomized this continuing saga which I only remember vaguely (I was 6 years old), was on VJ-Day in August 1945, which ended World War II. When word came that the Japanese had surrendered, everyone wanted to celebrate. I think a big party had been planned for that night. I was at the corral with Dad doing the evening chores. Dad had finished milking and was feeding the stock. We heard this loud commotion down the "Block." In those days, Santa Clara was laid out like a Swiss village, with

the houses in town, and the corrals and barns mostly situated along the red hill on the north outskirts of town. A dirt road ran along the hill behind the corrals; this was loosely called the "block." Anyway, in a few minutes, here comes this truck around the block with a bunch of men in the back, singing and drinking. Clearly, they had started their celebration earlier than planned. They stopped at our corral and yelled at Dad to come on, that they were headed for "Ari-Vada" to get some booze for the party that night. Southern Utah was dry at that time and you had to buy liquor from a state-run store. I am not sure, but I think that the liquor store was closed. Ari-Vada was a bar in a place called Beaver Dam, Arizona, located in the corner of the state where Arizona, Nevada and Utah joined. It was "the place" to go for booze, about a 45-mile drive up over Utah Hill. In fact, it was still the place to go when I was in high school in the 1950s, sort of a "right of passage" into manhood, where everyone would go to party and to buy booze. It is a wonder there were no serious accidents on that road back, because most participants were pretty well juiced by the time they got back to Dixie, and it was a time before the designated driver concept.

Anyway, back to the VJ-Day story. Dad told me to finish feeding the cattle and horses and to take the milk to the house; he told me tell Ma he would be back later. Well they never came back later! As the night wore on, Ma and several other wives got together to plot some strategy when they returned, but the men never showed up. Finally, early in the morning, they decided to go look for them. They had small children and some had to find sitters. Vella Hafen was taking her kids over to St. George to leave them with someone, when she saw the

“Dutchmen” at a service station. She tried to run Pres Hafen, her husband down. Vivian Graff hit her husband over the head with a frying pan when he came in the door and knocked him out cold. Ma and Dad just had a good shouting fight. I can’t recall what happened to the others.

This incident epitomizes the husband/wife and church/culture relationships of Santa Clara in the 1940s and 1950s. It was clearly a male dominated society, but the women usually had the last say.

“Markers” and Staying Put

Two pieces of advice that Dad imparted to us as kids, has stayed with me all my life. One was that whenever you go somewhere new, make sure you look for “markers.” He, of course, meant geographic markers that could help you find your way back if necessary; Dad must have gotten lost a few times as a young man. The other bit of wisdom was that if you are told to stay at a particular spot, stay there regardless of the length of time he was gone. The rationale was that if something happened, that would be the first place they would look for you.

There was one incident that drove both of these bits of wisdom home to me. Dad and I were at the ranch, looking for stragglers on the spring range (cattle that had not moved on to the mountain summer range). Every year, we turned the cattle on the spring range, an area about five miles south of the mountain. The corral at the spring fence was where we branded, etc., the winter calves and tagged all cattle before turning them loose on the spring range. Later in June, as I recall, the gates were opened and the cattle migrated on to the summer

range, which included Pine Valley Mountain. As with the winter range, there were always stragglers, cattle that stayed down on the spring range where water and feed became scarce as the summer came on. The cowboys would take turns riding the spring range to push more cattle on to the summer range.

This particular day, we parked the truck at the corral and headed southeast along the spring fence. After awhile, Dad picked up some cow tracks and we followed them over into some very rough country, with lava rock, cedars and deep valleys. Dad told me to wait at a particular spot because I was holding him up (I must have been about 9 or 10 years old). He said the country was very rough, that he would go on and find the cattle and come back for me. Off he went, and I waited, and waited, and waited. At that age, I began to imagine things and then began to think of scenarios if he didn't return. Finally, I figured Dad must have forgotten me, and got on my horse, old Sunny and headed back, or at least I thought so. I soon realized that I didn't know the way back, and I hadn't made note of any "markers" that would guide me. I looked down the mountain and could see Moore's Diamond Valley Ranch in the distance, so I headed down until I ran into the spring fence. I went along it until I found a place to let the wires down, got Sunny across, put the fence back and headed for Moore's Ranch. I then hit the Diamond Valley road and headed back up to the ranch. I met Dad on the road, and he was livid. He had spent hours looking for me, finally picked up my tracks and saw that I had gone through the fence. Figuring I was alright, he went back to get the truck, and headed down to Diamond Valley to find me. He was probably relieved, but did he ever give me a

tongue lashing about “markers” and “staying put.” I never forgot that lesson, and to this day, I look for “markers.” And I have passed these two bits of wisdom on to my boys.

I learned another lesson that day as well: to trust old Sunny. He kept wanting to go where I didn’t. Dad said that if I had let him have his head, he would have taken me back to the corral and the truck.

Dad and His Horses

Dad loved horses. As kids, we heard frequent stories about Grandpa’s champion draft team, Sam and Dewy, who could out pull any other team in the area. One of Dad’s favorite stories was about “Sunny,” who was born on Easter Sunday in 1930. He was coal black, born to a draft mare; I can’t remember the sire. Grandpa gave Sunny to Dad, who raised and broke him, and ultimately trained him to be the best “cow horse” in southern Utah, according to Dad who claimed Sunny could not be beat in “turn the stick,” a race that measured the quickness of the start and the ability of the horse to stop and turn, in other words, how good a cutting horse he was. A stake was placed in the ground about 10-15 yards away. The trick was to run the distance, turn around the stick and back to the starting line in the fastest time. Sunny was the horse we all grew up on; his lope was like a rocking chair, it was so smooth. Sunny would never let you lose a cow. Many a time I would go to sleep on him while trailing cattle; if one would stray, Sunny would simply go get it back in the herd, regardless of whether I was awake.

I used to ride Grandpa’s old saddle when I was little because it had straps on the stirrups that I could put my feet in. In 1977, I was visiting Ma from Indonesia. I was poking around up

at the grainery and found that old saddle buried under chicken dung. It was in that part of the grainery that was turned into a chicken coop. I pulled it out and sprayed it off; the leather was so dry it was brittle. I asked a saddle maker if it could be fixed; he said he doubted it, but before anyone could work on it, the leather had to be saved. He said to soak it in water for about three weeks and then rub neats foot oil into the leathe to replace the waterr. So I packed the saddle in a box and took it back to Indonesia with me. I threw it in the "Mundey" (a concrete tank) and let it soak for three weeks, and then had my Jagga (night watchman) rub the oil in. I had bought several cans in Utah and by the time he rubbed in the fourth can, the leather was pliable. I then took it apart and repaired it as best I could. One of the stirrups was missing so I had one made in Indonesia, a copy of the old stirrup. I donated the saddle to the Santa Clara Museum where it is now prominently displayedt. Every time I see it, I think of old Sunny, and the many hours I spent on him.

On one occasion, I went on Sunny out to the halfway to feed the cattle and check on things (we had a feed lot about half way to St George called "Halfway"). One of the cows had gotten out and was in the tamaracks (a type scrub bush that grows in thickets in river and wash bottoms) north of the fenced area. I tried for an hour to get that cow out of there and nearly ran Sunny to death. He was so tired he dropped on his front knees. I jumped off, thinking I had killed him (he was an old horse at that time). When I got off, Sunny stood up and began to walk around me. I let him walk for a long time; he seemed to be alright so we headed home, leaving the cow in the Tamaracks. When I told Dad about this, his only comment was

something to the effect that I hope you learned your lesson, that you can't get cows out of the tamaracks on a horse. He never said a word about Sunny. Sunny finally died on the mountain in 1963, just as Dad had predicted; he was 33 years old, a grand old horse.

Dad bought Tobe when Sunny began getting older. Tobe was part quarter horse and part thoroughbred. He was a beautiful horse and Dad never ceased to admire his looks. For some reason, Dad didn't train Tobe himself; he had someone else do it. Tobe was a good cow horse, but not as good as Sunny. When he was still a young horse, Tobe floundered on water. It made his front legs stiffen so he always walked stiff legged until he got warmed up; then he was ok.

Tobe was a fast horse and Dad would race him at Thanksgiving, when we would have local races out at the rodeo grounds near the black rocks. Herm and I would ride Tobe bareback in those races; I can't remember who won. Tobe died of a heart attack while Dad was riding him up the red hill. It is a wonder Dad was not hurt.

Dad had several other horses, including Virgil, who got hit by a car, and Buck, a mare. Neither were outstanding horses. In 1969, before I left for India, I took the buckskin mare to Pauquitch, Utah and had her bred to a triple A running quarter horse owned by Liege Moore's family. The colt was a buckskin that Dad called Smokey. This was Dad's last horse, and even though he couldn't ride him, he spent a lot of time with Smokey. Dad died in 1973, when Smokey was three years old. Because I was in Asia and the Pacific, Herm took Smokey and kept him until he died in 1997.

Sunday Afternoons

In Santa Clara of the 1940s and 1950s, there was not a lot of activity on most weekends. We always worked on Saturdays and often Dad had chores for us on Sunday mornings. If not, we went to church. But Sunday afternoons were a time of rest, relaxation and visiting. Ma would always fix a "Sunday dinner," which was always the best of the week. It was always eaten at lunch time, leaving the afternoon free.

When we were kids, Sunday afternoon was for visiting relatives. Ma and Dad insisted that all the kids go on these outings. We would all pile in the car or truck and go visit an aunt or uncle in Santa Clara or up on the Bench (Ivais). In the summer, the adults would usually sit on lawn chairs out on the grass in the shade of a weeping willow, a cottonwood or mulberry tree and talk while the kids ran around like "Indians." After a couple of hours, we would head home and have a light supper before bed.

The Fruit Stand on Utah Hill

In the 1940s and 1950s, the main highway from Los Angeles and Las Vegas, Highway 91, came up over what is known as Utah Hill, then down through the Shivwit Indian Reservation, past 3-mile, across the Bench and into Santa Clara. Several people in own had fruit stands where they sold fruit and drinks to travelers. At some point, I think in the late 1940s, Ma and Dad decided to set up a fruit stand down on the "slope." The "slope" was an 18-mile grade from Beaver Dam to the top of Utah Hill, mostly desert until you got up to Castle Cliffs. Many easterners didn't know how to drive up the slope, driving in high gear and lugging their car.

The result was many over-heated cars in a desert area where there was no water. So Ma and Dad hauled water and fruit down to the slope and sold them to travelers whose car was heating up. I don't recall any specific incidents, only that it was hot (many days the temperature was over 100°F), and there was little shade. I am not sure how profitable the venture was since they only did this for one summer as far as I can recall. It does typify the lengths people at that time went to in order to make a few dollars.

By Duane J. Gubler (Better known as "Dutch")