

APPENDIX A

Warden Harris

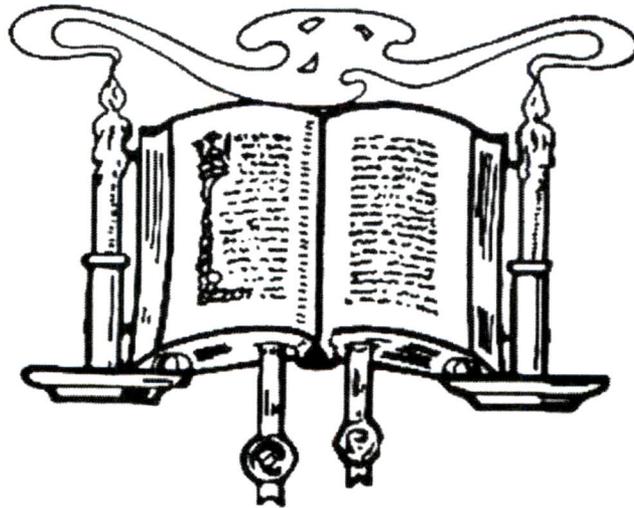
Lesson in Compassion

Letters

Family Life

John Hafen- Utah's Premier Artist

Children- William and Martha Ann Harris



Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and thought on his name.

And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

Malachi 3:16-17



UTAH STATE PRISON AT SUGARHOUSE AND WARDEN JOHN E. HARRIS

The following history is adapted from *Deseret News*, "Valley Close-up," by Anne Wilson, 1 March 1978.
(All photos courtesy Afton Harris Felt)



Utah State Prison Administration Building

Located at 1490 East 2100 South, Salt Lake City, Utah. Warden Harris and family lived on the second floor.
Notice the flowers John E. Harris had planted into a star shape.

The first Utah State Prison was located at 1490 East 21st South, Salt Lake City. Beautiful Sugarhouse Park is now on 113 acres of the former 120-acre prison site. The castle-like prison was demolished in 1955. The land once trodden by feet of convicts is now covered with abundant flowers, grass, and stately trees. Children splash in the creek once used by inmates to irrigate the prison farm. Families picnic where once executed men with no family or friends to claim them were buried. (In 1955, guards relocated the graves of 29 prisoners, five of whom had been executed.) Clarence Hubner lived just across the street from the prison and said, "So of course, sometimes you could

hear the firing squad and the executions."

Until 1854, Utah Territory had no penitentiary. Building funds were appropriated and the following year the first prisoners—nine in number—were incarcerated in the new penitentiary at Sugar House. During the next eight years, 75 prisoners were committed—12 of these were pardoned and 12 escaped for good. A report written by Warden Albert Rockwood in 1878 said, "There were convicts in custody who were prayerful, meek and humble; there were others who always prayed, both long and loud as though their Lord was deaf or afar off." The prison once housed 568 convicts. On 12 March 1951, the prison moved to the Point of the Mountain.



On the day of the concert, Roberts drove to Salt Lake to pick up Al. But the friend was having second thoughts.

"I can't do it," he said.

"You've got to," insisted the desperate Roberts.

"Look, I'm organist in my ward. My wife is a counselor in Relief Society. A thing like this—I just can't."

"It's only a joke, Al."

"People won't think it's funny. You could be called on the carpet. If this backfires, you could lose your job at the Y."

"But the house is sold old, even the standing room. What'll I do?"

"Tell them the professor cancelled out."

"After all this buildup, he's got to show."

"All right, Professor," said Al, handing the beard and wig to Roberts. "Do it yourself. Good luck."

When Professor Koch walked onto the stage that evening, he fit the image of the eccentric genius. Thanks to the reluctant help of Earl Pardoe, he looked the part in a bright red necktie with a rusty full-dress suit, tennis shoes on his feet. He was looking through thick glasses and seemed so shortsighted that he stumbled over the piano stool. This accident brought only gasps of sincere concern.

The professor announced in a thick accent that he would interpret the deep meaning of the first composition he had ever learned. He sat down at the piano and raised his hands. Following a dramatic hesitation, he stood up and adjusted his stool. He raised his hands a second time, only to pause, then adjust his stool again.

When his fingers finally touched the keys he played "Chopsticks." At the conclusion of this first number, he arose in dead silence and bowed to the audience. The applause came like thunder. The people of Provo certainly weren't going to disagree with a style that had received rave reviews from the European critics.

From that point Roberts had to improvise. "Chopsticks" was the only piano num-

ber he knew. Next he demonstrated his famous percussion technique that had taken Europe by storm, beating on the keyboard with his fists and elbows. Provo showed it was in tune with the Europeans by giving him a lusty applause.

Following a brief intermission, Koch returned to the stage, wearing boxing gloves, which added a new dimension to the percussion technique. Again his performance received cheers.

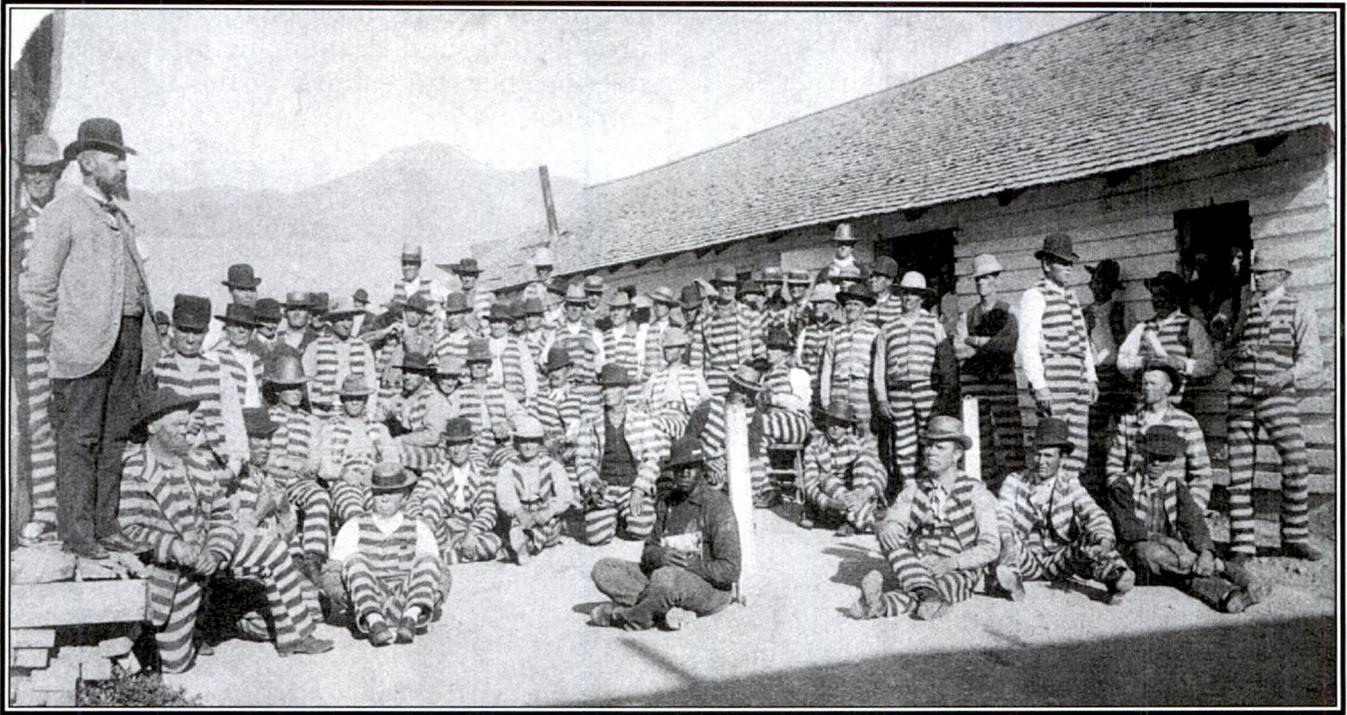
For the final number, it became apparent that the tennis shoes were not just an eccentricity of dress. He climbed on top of the piano, seated himself with his sneakers on the keyboards, and proceeded to stomp on the keys. He received a standing ovation.

At the curtain call, the professor had planned to rip off his beard and wig and have a good laugh with the audience. But the applause had been too generous, too warm. Certainly his Provo friends had been shocked by the noise he had made, but they had been warm and accepting in their response. Sure, they had their conceits and shortcomings, which included being too generous with standing ovations, but did they deserve to be made to feel like fools?

With the ovation sounding loud in his ears, Roberts let go of the beard he had planned to remove and instead waved a kiss to the audience before disappearing behind the curtain.

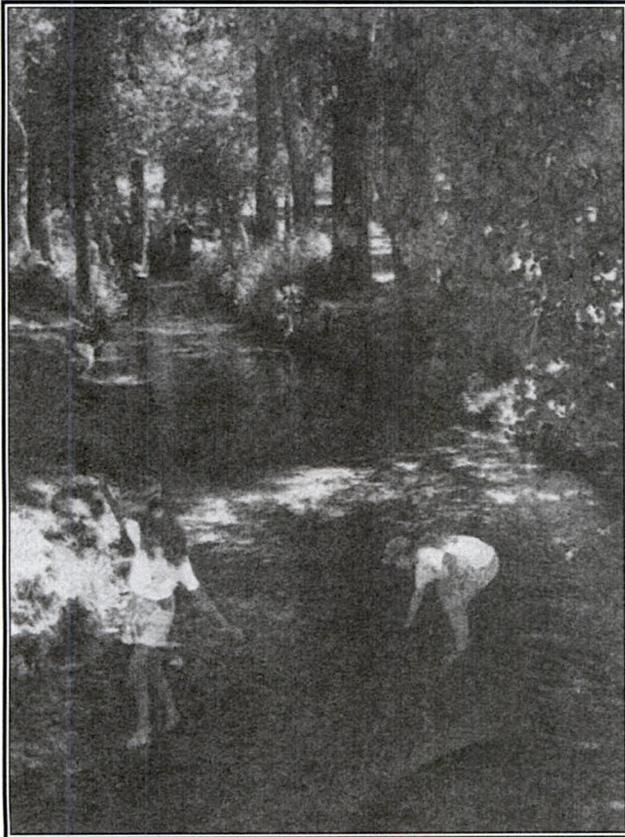
Not everyone was fooled, including *Herald* editor Ernest Rasmussen, who did not review the performance, but wondered why Koch and Roberts were never seen together. Where was Roberts on the night of the performance, and how did the professor get out of town? As the people of Provo got wise, laughter swept through the community.

According to Samuel Taylor in his book *Rocky Mountain Empire*, which gives a more complete account of the exploits of Gene Roberts, "They had the westerners' appreciation for the practical joke and certainly this was one in the grand tradition."



Utah State Penitentiary Prisoners, 1887

Polygamists made the best of a dreadful situation. (Courtesy Utah Historical Society)



Splashing in the Creek

Beautiful Sugar House Park, site of former Utah State Prison.

John Earnest Harris, grandson of Martha Ann Smith and son of William Jasper Harris Jr., served as prison warden for ten years at the first prison. His story is told in an article in the *Deseret News*, Sunday, October 3, 1948, under "Personality of the Week":

Warden Noted as Man With "Iron Fist in Velvet Glove"

By Palmer Chase

Warden John E. Harris of the Utah State Prison was once described by his predecessor as having "an iron fist in a velvet glove."

It was not only a high compliment but a fact which has saved the life of the broad-shouldered warden several times—once in particular when he felt himself seconds from eternity.

That was in 1937 when Roy Nash, a reckless young prisoner, made his gun-point threat in the prison office: "You're going to drive me through those gates in your car or I'll blow your brains out."

"I've been living on borrowed time ever since," Warden Harris says. "That's why I enjoy life to the fullest."

He recalls the Nash incident vividly.



The 24-year-old inmate came into the office, sat in a corner and told Mr. Harris, a deputy warden only a few months then, that he had a knife he would like to give him. With that, Nash opened the zipper of his jacket and drew out a revolver.

After Nash had said, "You are going to take the keys out of your pocket and drive me through the gates," the warden said he felt both angered and sickened. Then he answered the man:

"You know that is all silliness because any person who has any brains at all wouldn't start working them to get out of prison that way. Even if you did shoot me you wouldn't get through that door alive. The turnkey would kill you the moment you tried to pass."

The warden recalls Nash went white and appeared baffled. Then he said, "I mean business. You get those keys out before I shoot up your guts."

Slowly but determinedly, the warden moved from his chair and muttered to Nash at the same time: "I'm going to get that gun before you do hurt somebody." Nash darted out the door, ran to the steel-fence gate and was over in a jiffy.

Mr. Harris said he dashed for the turnkey's pistol and fired three shots after the man, who by this time had scaled the outer fence and fled, "Here's one fellow who's not going to get out of prison," was the thought that passed through his mind as he fired after the man.

Later Nash was recaptured at Atlanta, Ga., and returned to the prison. He told the warden the bullets had come so close he could hear them whistle within...[missing portion].

The newspaper article went on to tell some of Warden Harris' accomplishments: bishop, MIA superintendent, president of Carpenter's Union, Sugar House Rotary Club, sergeant at arms for 1961 Utah State Legislature, agriculture agent for Utah-Idaho Sugar Company, contractor with his Uncle Frank Harris, and later, owner of his own construction company specializing in bridge building. He did timber framing in mines at Mammoth and was also appointed mechanical foreman on the Strawberry tun-

nel project. As a young man, John studied architecture and draftsmanship, and engineering, never dreaming of having a career in penology.



Provo Police Chief John E. Harris

Mr. Harris' helping hand to under-privileged boys was praised as an outstanding achievement.

The article goes on to tell how in 1933, Mayor A.O. Smoot appointed John E. Harris as Provo's chief of police:

...Underprivileged and "mean" boys probably never had a finer friend than Chief Harris.

He organized an "Our Gang" (that was their adopted name) to help curb crime, improve traffic conditions and assist law officers generally. "They were an important group of boys in that town," the warden recalls.

He took great pride in them, made them feel like somebody. They watched for shoplifters, car prowlers and traffic violators. In return they had special passes to the theaters and free bleacher seats at ball games.

"Although some had been in serious



trouble, they were voted into the club, and not one went to the industrial school or prison," the warden says.

"One boy, about 6'4" tall and having an inferiority complex, really got into serious trouble and his life looked well on its way down, the warden remembers.

The boy liked the wireless and television work but because his parents were poor and his father was out of work, he was desperate for experimental equipment. So, one Saturday night, the lad stole a battery from an ADT burglary alarm box. He previously had been arrested on shoplifting and tool theft charges.

When the battery was detached from its moorings, the alarm went off and the boy was caught red-handed. "The ADT people were insistent the boy be jailed, their equipment must stand no tampering," Mr. Harris recalled. But at last he prevailed with the officials, and the boy was put on his honor under Chief Harris' custody with a new battery purchased for the alarm firm.

During the war, Mr. Harris said he received a letter from the boy who was then in the Pacific. The boy asked Chief Harris if that police record stood against him, because he wanted to take an important radar test. The youth was overjoyed to learn his record was clear. Today, Warden Harris says, that gangly youth is now president of a big broadcasting company in the southwest.

But the warden isn't always optimistic about those in his care—only most of the time. "There are some men who will always remain in prison," he says.

He said he is a close friend of Warden Roy Best of the Canon City, Colorado Prison where the sensational escape of 12 men occurred on Dec. 30, 1947. The escapees, armed and under cover of a snowfall, beat four guards and forced their way into the homes of terrorized citizens.

The story is being told on the screen in the picture, "Canon City" this week in Salt Lake City.

"Those men were desperate, hardened criminals. I talked with Warden Best the next day. I took a woman prisoner there. (Utah women prisoners are kept in Canon City.) Warden Best looked as if he had been

under a terrific strain."

It was when he recalled that visit with Warden Best that Mr. Harris showed the iron fist beneath the velvet glove....

[Harris said,] "...A number of prisoners right here (at the Utah prison) will never be released because they had never been considered good risks for society.

"And there are some who always are plotting escape. They figure 'if my chances are one in 100 that I can make it without being shot, I'll take that chance if the means are provided.'

"It is not unusual to find someone has made a rope or torn up a blanket and braided it into a rope. It's even been done with underclothing. But the makeshift ropes and ladders are usually found," the warden says. He adds that, "the great majority of the men are endeavoring to work out their debt to society."

The warden's footsteps turned to the Utah prison with what he thought was a joking remark made by District Attorney Calvin Rawlings of Provo.

"There's a position of deputy warden open at the state prison," Mr. Rawlings told Police Chief Harris on the street one day. "Why don't you apply for it?"

"Well, you've sent a lot of others to prison, maybe I should take my chances," Mr. Harris said he quipped back. Then he found there were 24 another applications for the job. The late Owen Nebeker was warden then.

But behind Mr. Harris—almost unknown to him—stood not only the endorsement of the Utah County Democratic Committee but the county Republican chairman and five GOP committee members. That was in September 1937, and Mr. Harris got the job.

Dozens of letters poured in Warren Nebeker's office complimenting him on the selection of Mr. Harris. But Mr. Harris never knew of these until he found them in the prison files after Warden Nebeker's death in April 1940.

Warden Harris lives in private quarters at the prison. Men come and go; they bring their problems to him. He helps, guides, but most of all, he glories in the moments of farewell when he smiles broadly and puts out his big hand to a man being



released. That's when he says: "Good luck—I know you'll make good."

The following is condensed from the illustrious Harris's, by Afton Harris Felt, daughter of Warden Harris.

Tall (6'1"), strong, blond-haired, and with carved features, John E. Harris was a handsome man. [Provo resident Cal Bee wrote in a "Letter to the Editor" of the *Provo Daily Herald* the following: "John Harris had a wonderful personality. He said that he had never met a tough guy in all his life."] John's patriarchal blessing said he would have the power to rebuke evil. This was evidenced throughout his life.

While Chief of Police in Provo for two years, John saw a need of the young boys. It was the Depression and there were no jobs and money was scarce. So many young boys were picked up on different counts. John felt they needed more than punishment, and followed the council of the Lord in the Doctrine and Covenants, "Reprove betimes [right away] with sharpness [clarity] and then show forth love, so he won't deem thee his enemy."

He organized a club for these boys that were in trouble. They called it "Our Gang." They had meetings, activities, and opportunities, some for the first time in their lives.

When the carnival came to town he went to Mr. Eldred, the owner, and told him what he was doing and volunteered the boys' help in exchange for tickets for the rides.

One time there was a boy who was sluffing more school than he was attending. One day as John was walking up the steps to Provo High School, he was behind this boy and noticed the holes worn through in his pants and his shoes falling apart. He invited the boy to go with him into town. They went to Levin's where John signed a note for some clothes and pledged to pay the bill if the boy didn't. The boy started to attend school, for now he was dressed like the others and wasn't embarrassed. Another time he signed for a boy to get a much-needed suit, and many times he was stuck with the bill, but just as often the boy paid for it himself.

After John's passing, his daughter Afton had a well-known Provo man tell her that he was one of Chief Harris' boys and said, "There are many of the leaders in Provo today because Chief Harris cared and took time to find ways to help us." (Felt 13)

An incident that happened to Warden Harris involved a man on Death Row, tightest security section. One day after exercise time, the prisoner refused to return to his cell. He had found a heavy lock. Swinging it in menacing arcs, threatened anyone who approached. The guards called the warden.

"Don't come near!" the man yelled. "I'll smash your teeth out! Stand back!" But John continued to approach the man, talking calmly. "You don't want to hurt anyone. Now, put that lock down!" They were now face to face, two feet apart. As the arm and the lock started their downward swing, John ducked under it, seized the arm, and flipped the man over his shoulder. The warden knelt, cradled the man in his arms, apologized for being so rough, and helped him into his cell.

On an occasion when John's son-in-law, Paul Felt, was with the warden in Wyoming, a man rushed out of a café shouting, "Warden, Warden!" throwing his arms around him in a bear hug. "Thanks for giving me a chance, Warden. I'm going straight, and have a fine family now."

John E. Harris was first appointed Deputy Warden at the Utah State Prison. This meant the family leaving their comfortable central heated home in Provo and moving into a home above the prison, on what was commonly called Prison Row." There were five homes exactly alike where the deputy and some of the guards and their families lived. The heating was by two coal stoves, one in the kitchen and one in the living room. It was a change for John's wife Ellen to cook on the coal range after having an electric one in her former home; even the water for baths was heated by this stove. The upstairs bedroom had no heat and the children were piled high with blankets to keep warm.

They were so happy and so grateful for



this job. At a time when there were so many out of work, they looked on it as a great blessing. The work was very demanding and left John very little freedom. If they merely took a walk to the shopping center of Sugar House some four blocks away, it was necessary for Deputy John to call and report to the warden how long he would be gone, and also to report upon his return.

During these prison days, every night at the Harris home was a family home evening. The family enjoyed many pleasant hours together. Monday evenings they hurried home to get the dinner cleaned up so they could all sit around the radio and listen to "Lux Radio Theater." Chinese checkers were becoming popular and it was a real achievement if one could beat John. He would often sit on the floor and rub Ellen's feet while one of the girls brushed her hair. This was a happy, contented family, who enjoyed spending time together.

The Harrises spared the rod. John's method of chastisement was more effective. He simply tapped his finger on the table and glared at the offender. It worked like magic. His "look of steel" from his clear blue eyes and the tap-tap-tapping of his fingers on the table were all the children needed as a reprimand. His daughter Afton said, "We children were never spanked or yelled at. Our father just tapped his fingers."

Two years later, the warden died and John was appointed warden. The family then moved into a spacious apartment over the prison. Each member or visitor was required to have the heavy gate unlocked and opened before entering or leaving. The new warden, John E. Harris, made the grounds sparkle with brilliant flowers, laid out in the form of stars, crescents, and other configurations. Along all the chain link fences, he planted roses that his men kept watered.

Generally speaking, the inmates respected John's two lovely teenagers. They always

addressed them as "Miss Lola," and "Miss Afton." One of the cooks tried to kiss Lola and received a good rebuff; this situation never developed again.

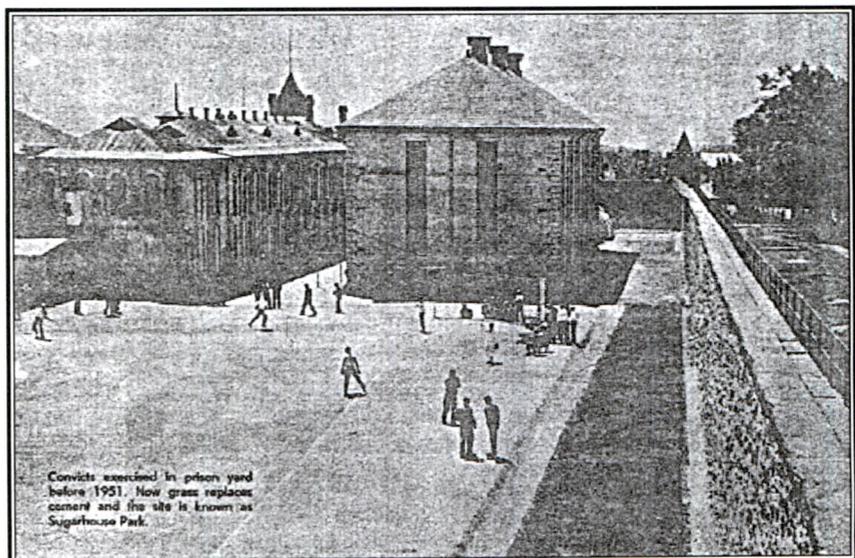
Ellen Harris was appointed Matron to the women prisoners. Since there were no facilities at the Utah State Prison, Ellen traveled with them to Canyon City Prison in Colorado. (Felt 14-16, 19)

Afton Harris Felt tells what it was like in her teen-age years to live in the prison when her father served as warden:

In 1939 Father was appointed warden of the prison. We moved to the warden's home, which was on the second floor of the administration building. This meant we would have to go in and out of locked gates. They were opened by a guard each time we came in or went out.

We had an inmate cook and an inmate houseboy. Mother would not take all the help she could have; she said she wanted her girls to know how to do something. Sometimes she got so tired of having inmate help around that she would decide to do the work and cooking herself. We would all help with the work. After a few board meetings with big dinners to cook and serve, she would welcome back the inmate help. We were always glad to have them return.

I went to East High School. It was so far



Scene from the window of the Harris dining room. Convicts exercised in prison yard before 1951. Now grass replaces cement and the site is known as Sugarhouse Park.



John E. and Ellen Harris Family, December 1942

Back row, Right to Left: Russ and Lola Harris Holley, John Robert and Afton Harris, Leonard and Beth Kay Harris. Middle row: LaVerne Harris Paulson, John E. and Ellen Harris, Mary Harris Olson holding Mary Ann Olson. Front row: Karenina Paulson, Jean Douglas Paulson, and Gary Lee Olson. (Courtesy Afton Harris Felt)

away from home I rode on the city bus. They sold us tickets for about 4 cents each.

Dad was very much aware that he had two teenage daughters and wouldn't let us wear bobby socks on the prison grounds. I wore knee socks (thick silk hose) to and from school but would quickly change into the short bobby socks before the bell rang. Pants were never worn, except in the form of a snowsuit.

Mother, Lola, Robert and I attended church at the Edgehill Ward. Dad was at the prison, and he seldom went with us. We had a fun group of young people in the ward and each Sunday evening we went to one of our homes and had something to eat and play games. My life centered around church and school activities. In the MIA we put on a play, dances, and a hayride. We were a close group and shared many happy times.

Sometimes Afton's dates had trouble finding her residence. Her husband, Paul Felt, tells of his first formal date with Afton:

In addition to developing and cultivating a warmer friendship with Afton at the matinee dances, I also had occasion to meet

her when we had a student body activity out at the Saltair. Afton was there with another date. But somewhere during that first junior school year at BYU [Paul was student body president], I made a date with her whereupon she gave me her address in Salt Lake City. At the time she was attending classes as a freshman and living in the Knight Magnum Hall. With the information she gave me regarding her residence she spelled out for me the fact that the address of her home was 1400 East 2100 South, Salt Lake City. My home was also in Salt Lake. On weekends I was able to use my father's Model A Ford, which was a single seat coupe with a back rumble seat. Driving that was always a great privilege.

As I drove east on 2100 South looking for 1400 East, the only thing I could find with that address was the Utah State Prison. When I couldn't find the residence I thought perhaps Afton had either "stood me up," or had forgotten the date and time. I did drive into the State Prison yard and there standing at a great chain link fence was a prison guard. I inquired of him



where 1400 East 2100 South was. He then asked me my name to which I responded and he said he was expecting me!

On further inquiry I learned that Afton's father was the warden of the State Prison and her parents and some of the unmarried children lived in the warden's residence. On occasion I facetiously have referred to the fact that I met my wife in prison and courted her while she was in prison!

The first Alcoholics Anonymous chapter in Utah was formed at the prison. Church services of various faiths were conducted each Sunday. The warden helped many men at the prison to develop skills so they could handle jobs when they got outside.

John developed the new prison at the Point of the Mountain, establishing modern irrigation systems, outbuildings for the animals, and laying out farms. He was never to live there. The state administration changed from Democrat to Republican, and the "spoils of office" system called for a Republican war-

den, regardless of the capabilities of the incumbent. And John Harris was a 200 % Democrat. He left the office just one year short of the time necessary to obtain a pension.

The years at the prison were good and happy years. Nevertheless, it may have been best for the Harrises just the way it happened. Tension is an hourly matter in a prison and this had taken its toll on Warden John E. Harris. There were confrontations with prisoners, trouble with guards, physical encounters, even shootouts with escaping prisoners. Although John was well liked (subsequent wardens and governors had to call him back to quell disturbances), nonetheless he was dealing daily with men who refused to abide by the rules of society.

John was in a poor state of health at the end of his long term, and luckily his daughter Mary and her husband Bob Olsen were on hand to take the Harrises (at last free of prison) on an automobile tour across the continent. (Felt 17)

Visit behind bars a lesson in compassion

Spectrum Newspaper
Thursday, September 3, 1987
by Jean R. Paulson

All this business about building a state prison in Gunnison agitated my beartrap memory about a certain period in my life. I recall vividly the years when I spent time in the Utah State Prison.

No judge sent me there, and I was able to get in and out at will. Still, I was behind bars, caged in by locks, the same as the others. The warden and his family, the deputy wardens and the guards also were in a sense prisoners.

Spending vacation

It happened like this: My wife, LaVerne, is a daughter of the late John E. Harris, who was warden at the time the prison was situated in the Sugarhouse area of Salt Lake City, on 21 South. Today, a beautiful park stands at the site where the ugly old prison loomed like a fortress back of a high mesh fence.

During the time my father-in-law was warden, I was editing daily newspapers in California, and when vacation time came my wife and I and our children would drive to Utah to visit with our friends and relatives. We were guests in the warden's apartment, sharing it with John, his wife, Ellen, and the three younger children, Lola, Afton and Robert.

It didn't take me long to discover that every prisoner was innocent, and should be freed at once. In microseconds after our arrival, the prison telegraph would relay the message that I was there, and many of the inmates would think they had found another pigeon. For some reason, they thought that they could influence me, that I would and could influence the warden, and he in turn would influence the Board of Pardons. "Tell 'em to set me free."

Inmates would sidle up to me in an artfully casual way, and

start right out, no preliminaries: "I'm innocent, and I can prove it." or "I was framed. They got the wrong man."

One of these men stood out from the crowd. His name was John Sawyer, a small man in his late 40s, with disarming frank blue eyes.

His first words to me were, "I never violate a confidence." for me, he might as well have worn a sign saying, "I'm a con man, don't trust me." (One of the most frustrating business transactions I ever experienced involved a man who was supposed to fix my generator. His first words were, "I believe in doing an honest day's work for a fair wage." It took me three months to get out of his clutches.)

Bad checks

John Sawyer was a plumber, a capable one, and did a lot of work on the rusty pipes of the old prison and on the new prison site at Bluffdale, then under construction.

Because of his good record he got on a work detail outside of the prison. He walked off the job and out of the state, pausing only long enough to write a few fraudulent checks to get travel money. He left a zigzag trail of bad checks that led deep into the heart of Texas, where he put his pen and his I'm so honest blue eyes to work. He even had the gall to vicimize his best friend, the Catholic priest at the prison.

Caught and back in Utah, he was taken before a judge, one who knew him well. The judge shook his head, a despairing look on his face. "John, how am I ever going to get you to quit writing bogus checks?" Sawyer held his hands out, "Just cut these off at the wrists, Judge, that's the only way you'll get it done."

When the Harrises first went to the prison, their youngest son, Robert, was just at kindergarten age. Robert said later that for the first few days he was afraid to leave the warden's apartment.



The first day he ventured into the office below, and into the yard, he asked an inmate what he was in for.

"You see that light at the intersection in Sugarhouse?"

"Yes."

"Well, I was driving a car up 21st South, the light changed, and I drove through the red light. That's what I'm in for." (He was a murderer.)

Overcame fear

Robert himself was a character. When he overcame his fear of the inmates, he became a bit cocky about being the son of the warden. He liked to fish, and was forever digging worms. On one occasion, he confronted a one-armed man who had an unusual prison experience.

This man, a Chicano, had come to the end of his term, but didn't know where to go, what to do. He had been regimented so long that he was dependent, afraid of the world. So the warden gave him a minor job handling the garbage, allowing him to stay at his long-time home—the prison.

Robert, in a commanding tone for one so young, ordered that man to help him dig worms. The man refused. "You one-armed Mexican s.o.b. I'll have my dad put you in solitary."

The man grabbed Robert around the waist and threw him into a shallow pond.

Running to his father, Robert screamed out the story. "Put him in solitary!" John sent for the garbage handler, asking his version of the incident.

"Throw him back in," the warden said. But Robert, wet and muddy, saw the way the wind was blowing and escaped.

John Harris was a compassionate man, willing to go the extra mile to rehabilitate prisoners. Before he arrived, the rate of recidivism was close to 80 percent. The prison gates became a

revolving door for felons. Out, then right back in. By working with the men, Harris reversed the trend. He gained experience rehabilitating people when he was Provo police chief, organizing misbehaving young men so that they made positive contributions to the community. It became an honor to be a member of Provo's "Our Gang."

Violent interludes

But there were plenty of violent interludes at the prison. One time, a prisoner had a gun, held it on the warden in the office, and said, "You go with me in that Buick there, or I'll splatter your guts all over the yard."

Harris replied, "No, I won't go. You're shaking so bad you couldn't shoot straight anyway." The man ran, and did escape, and as he got to the fence the warden scrambled to the turnkey's desk, pulled out the turnkey's gun and fired two shots at the escaping man. Both missed. Now, I had seen John Harris shooting at targets and at game and he was bullseye accurate. I've always suspected that he just couldn't bring himself to kill a fellow man.

The warden was tough, though, and seemingly fearless. On one occasion the prisoners in cell block No. 1 had jimmied the locks and were all out in the main corridor.

State police were called to help quell the cursing, rampaging inmates. John Harris walked into the corridor alone, grabbed one prisoner and threw him over his shoulder. The man landed hard on the cement floor. Grabbing him by the feet, the warden dragged him past all the other prisoners and threw him in a cell.

"All right," he said, "which one of you monkeys is next?" They could have overpowered him, but they all walked back into their cells.

One of the odd incidents concerned the "forgotten man." A Korean immigrant who had been saving his money so he could bring his wife to America, became involved in a quarrel over water rights, took his savings, bought a gun with it and killed his adversary.

He spent the next 40 years of his life in the prison, but somehow was not accounted for in roll calls. His term came to an end and neither he nor prison officials were aware of it. When Harris arrived, the mistake was uncovered, he became a houseboy for the warden's family, and was finally freed. "He couldn't read or write," Robert recounted. "Mother was so worried about him."

Later, she became even more worried about her husband. Because of a change in Utah's political climate, a new governor had been voted in, one whose politics were exactly opposite of those of the warden. Typically, as soon as he took office, he made new appointments in the upper echelon state jobs, including that of prison warden.

Reluctant to go

John Harris hated to leave, and the prisoners hated to see him leave. After all, he had been the warden who had made a bonfire of their old-style striped prison clothes and had rehabilitated so many of them. John also was reluctant to go because he had designed and partially built the facilities at the new prison. But politics ruled that he should go.

It wasn't so easy for the new warden. There were riots and near-riots, intrapriser fights and stabbings. Every month or so, state police would hurry to Provo to pick up John Harris and take him back to the new prison. He would walk in among the rampaging inmates, unarmed, of course, and would calm them.

The inmates would ask for him in a noisy way. They would scrape their tin cups across the bars, cursing and screaming, producing an ear-shattering racket. "We want Warden Harris!" But the pressure was too much for Mrs. Harris. "If you go back there one more time, I won't be here when you get home."

A measure of the nihilism that swept the new prison and gave fits to the new warden came when it was discovered that some prisoners and guards were conspiring in a theft ring. Some of the guards would let certain inmates out at night so they could steal radio and TV sets, jewelry and silver from homes in Riverton, Sandy and other nearby places. They were finally caught and punished.

Never again

One of the fearful incidents occurred at the old prison after Harris had gone. On the eve of the move to bluffdale, the inmates exploded. All their pent-up frustrations and angers against society (and themselves) came to a rolling boil. They smashed sinks, toilets, windows, walls—any thing breakable. The floors were ankle deep in wreckage; the air choked with grit and dust. The noise was awesome.

Perhaps it will never happen again. Let us hope not. But considering what has happened, the people of Iron County may not be all that unfortunate in having lost out to Gunnison in the prison-site contest.

Regardless, whoever works at the new prison will be behind bars just as I as when I visited my in-laws years ago. Was it Emerson who said that if you have a rope around someone's neck you have the other end around your own?

Article from Spectrum Newspaper

Thursday, September 3, 1987



FAMILY LIFE

Advice on Raising Children

From Teachings of Presidents of the Church—Joseph F. Smith, *course of study for Priesthood and Relief Society, 2000-2001* (pages 249-254):

Our children are like we are; we couldn't be driven; we can't be driven now. We are like some other animals that we know of in the world. You can coax them; you can lead them, by holding out inducements to them, and by speaking kindly to them, but you can't drive them; they won't be driven. We won't be driven. Men are not in the habit of being driven; they are not made that way...

You can't force your boys, nor your girls into heaven. You may force them to hell, by using harsh means in the efforts to make them good, when you yourselves are not as good as you should be. The man that will be angry at his boy, and try to correct him while he is in anger, is in the greatest fault; he is more to be pitied and more to be condemned than the child who has done wrong. You can only correct your children by love, in kindness, by love unfeigned [not pretended], by persuasion, and reason.

Fathers, if you wish your children to be taught in the principles of the gospel, if you wish them to love the truth and understand it, if you wish them to be obedient to and united with you, love them! And prove to them that you do love them by your every word or act to them. For your own sake, for the love that should exist between you and your—boys however wayward they might be, or one or the other might be, when you speak or talk to them, do it not in anger, do it not harshly, in a condemning spirit. Speak to them kindly; get them down and weep with them if necessary and get them to shed tears with you if possible. Soften their hearts; get them to feel tenderly toward you. Use no lash and no violence, but...approach them with reason, with persuasion and love unfeigned.

May the fathers in Israel live as they should live; treat their wives as they should treat them; make their homes as comfort-

able as they possibly can; lighten the burden upon their companions as much as possible, set a proper example before their children; teach them to meet with them in prayer, morning and night, and whenever they sit down to partake of food, to acknowledge the mercy of God in giving them the food that they eat and the raiment that they wear, and acknowledge the hand of God in all things.

Let us conquer ourselves, and then go on to conquer all the evil that we see around us, as far as we possibly can. And we will do it without using violence; we will do it without interfering with the agency of men or of women. We will do it by persuasion, by long-suffering, by patience, and by forgiveness and love unfeigned, by which we will win the hearts, the affections and the souls of the children of men to the truth as God has revealed it to us.

Parents...should love and respect each other, and treat each other with respectful decorum and kindly regard, all the time. The husband should treat his wife with the utmost courtesy and respect. The husband should never insult her; he should never speak slightly of her, but should always hold her in the highest esteem in the home, in the presence of their children...the wife, also should treat the husband with the greatest respect and courtesy. Her words to him should not be keen and cutting and sarcastic. She should not pass slurs or insinuations at him. She should not nag him. She should not try to arouse his anger or make things unpleasant about the home. The wife should be a joy to her husband, and she should live and conduct herself at home so the home will be the most joyous, the most blessed placed on earth to her husband. This should be the condition of the husband, wife, the father and the mother, within the sacred precinct of that holy place, the home.

Then it will be easy for the parents to instill into the hearts of their children not only love for their fathers and their mothers, not only respect and courtesy towards their parents, but love and courtesy and defer-



ence between the children at home. The little brothers will respect their little sisters. The little boys will respect one another. The little girls will respect one another and the girls and boys will respect one another, and treat one another with that love, that deference and respect that should be observed in the home on the part of the little children. Then...the foundation of a correct education has been laid in the heart and mind of the child at home.

Think what it means to hold keys of authority which—if exercised in wisdom and in righteousness, are bound to be respected by the Father, the son, and the Holy Ghost! Do you honor this Priesthood? ...Would you, as an elder in the Church of Jesus Christ, dishonor your wife or your children? Would you desert the mother of your children, the wife of your bosom, the gift of God to you, which is more precious than life itself? For without the woman the man is not perfect in the Lord, no more than the woman is perfect without the man.

I can not understand how a man can be unkind to any woman, much less to the wife of his bosom, and the mother of his children, and I am told that there are those who are absolutely brutal, but they are unworthy the name of men.

When I think of our mothers, the mothers of our children, and realize that under the inspiration of the Gospel they live virtuous, pure, honorable lives, true to their husbands, true to their children, true to their convictions of the Gospel, oh, how my soul goes out in pure love for them, how noble and how God-given, how choice, how desirable and how indispensable they are to the accomplishment of God's purposes and the fulfillment of his decrees! My brethren, can you mistreat your wives, the mothers of your children? Can you help trying to make their lives as comfortable and happy as possible, lightening their burdens to the utmost of their ability, making life pleasant for them and for their children in the homes? How can you help it? How can anyone help feeling an intense interest in the mother of his children, and also in his children? If we pos-

sess the Spirit of God, we cannot do otherwise. It is only when men depart from the right spirit, when they digress from their duty, that they will neglect or dishonor any soul that it committed to their care. They are bound to honor their wives and children.... Men who are constantly involved in the labors of life,...may not enjoy as many comforts with their families as they would like, but if they have the Spirit of the Lord with them in the performance of their temporal duties, they will never neglect the mothers of their children, nor their children.

[God] has made us in his own...likeness,...and we must become more and, more like him—more like him in love, in charity, in forgiveness, in patience, long-suffering, and forbearance, in purity of thought and action, intelligence, and in all respects, that we may be worthy of exaltation in his presence.

On one occasion President Smith said:

I witnessed a little circumstance in our meeting this afternoon in the aisle; a little child was sitting by its mother on a seat. Somebody came along and took the little child off its seat, and occupied the seat himself, leaving the child to stand. I want to say to you, my brethren and sister, that that act sent a pang to my heart. I would not, for anything...grieve the heart of a little child in the house of God, lest an impression should be left upon its mind that would make the house of worship a distasteful place, and would prefer not to come within its walls, than to come and be offended.

President Joseph F. Smith was a tender and gentle man who expressed sorrow at any unkindness. He understood that anger would beget anger. His own life was an honest expression of compassion and patience, warmth and understanding. He was the father of 45 children.

President Smith often counseled his brothers and sisters to treat each other with the greatest kindness. Anger or behavior that demeaned another person was unthinkable to him. Husbands and wives were to hold one another in the highest esteem and teach their children by example to respect family members and all other people.



JOHN HAFEN—UTAH'S PREMIER ARTIST

"Utah's Greatest Artist," is the title given to John Hafen by Alice Merrill Hone, an early Utah art activist, "He, of all the early Utah artists best communicated the poetic essence of nature."

(<http://www.shs.nebo.edu/museum/swap/piuhafen.html>)

His son, **Joseph Hafen** married Martha Ann Smith Harris' granddaughter, **Mary Harris**. In the 1950s, while mining uranium in the La Sal Mountains near Moab, Utah, Joseph Hafen told the following story to his nephew-in-law, David J. Harris:

The President of the Church, Wilford Woodruff, was a close friend of John Hafen. (An unsigned portrait of Wilford Woodruff may have been painted by John.) One wintry day, President Woodruff was traveling from southern Utah to his home in Salt Lake City. He hurried to beat the approaching storm, when the Spirit whispered, "Go see your friend John Hafen." President Woodruff turned around and headed back south to Springville, Utah. When he arrived at the Hafens, John said he was not having success selling his paintings. Consequently, there would be no Christmas for his family that year. Brother Wilford then took measures to provide Christmas for the family of 12. Next he sent John Hafen and four other men to Paris to study art. These men returned home and painted the murals on the walls inside the Salt Lake Temple.

From the October 1988 *Ensign*:

John Hafen is the best known of the art missionaries today, though at the time he struggled to support his wife and 10 children. Today, of all the art produced by these painters, John Hafen's works remain in the greatest demand. (Florence 35)

John Hafen painted his daughter, Delia Hafen, in *Girl Among the Hollyhocks*. This was featured in the brochure given to 300,000 people who attended "Light of the World" presented at Church Conference Center during the Salt Lake 2002 Winter Olympics.
(Courtesy of Museum of Church History and Art)



Girl Among the Hollyhocks
By John Hafen

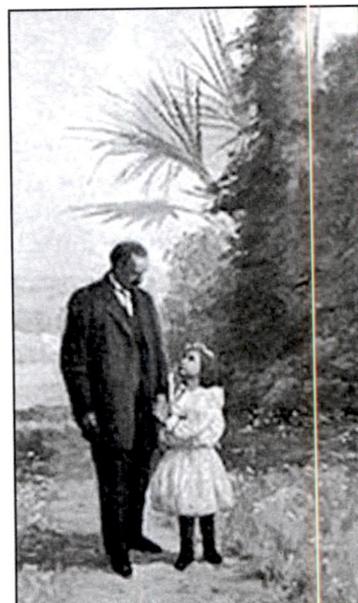


O MY FATHER

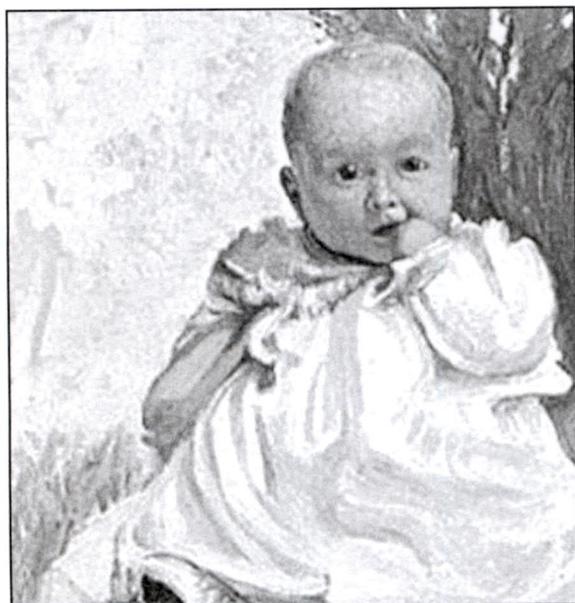
Illustrated by John Hafen
(Courtesy "O My Father," Ensign, August 1976)



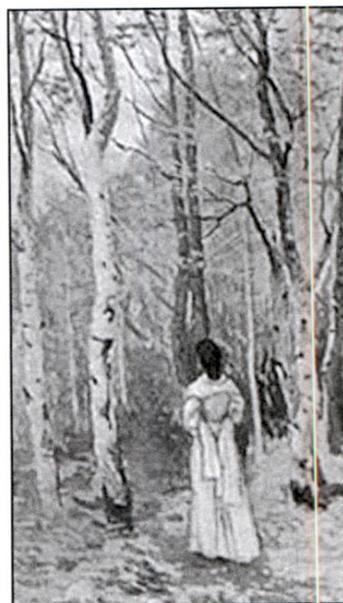
O my Father, thou that dwellest in the high and glorious place. When shall I regain thy presence, and again behold thy face?



In thy holy habitation, did my spirit once reside? In my first primeval childhood, was I nurtured near thy side?



For a wise and glorious purpose thou hast placed me here on earth, and withheld the recollection of my former friends and birth.



Yet oft-times a secret something whispered, "You're a stranger here;" And I felt that I had wandered from a more exalted sphere.



*I had learned to call thee
Father, through thy Spirit
from on high. But until the
key of knowledge was
restored, I knew not why.*



*In the heavens are parents single?
No; the thought makes reason stare!
Truth is reason, truth eternal tells me
I've a mother there.*



*When I leave this frail
existence, when I lay this
mortal by, Father, Mother,
may I meet you in your
royal courts on high?*



*Then, at length, when
I've completed all you sent
me forth to do, With your
mutual approbation let me
come and dwell with you.*



**CHILDREN OF
WILLIAM JASPER AND MARTHA ANN SMITH HARRIS**

1- William Jasper Harris Jr.	4 August 1859	Jessie Lena Freckleton
2- Joseph Albert Harris	19 August 1861	Joanna Patten
3- Hyrum Smith Harris	15 August 1863	Delia Twede
4- Mary Emily Harris	23 October 1865	Walter Sutton Corbett
5- Franklin Hill Harris	11 September 1867	Josephine Parkes Robinson
6- Lucy Smith Harris	10 March 1870	Jonathan Simmons
7- John Fielding Harris	28 June 1872	Lydia Ann Boyle Evelyn Betsy Harding Christiansen
8- Mercy Ann Harris	30 March 1874	John Thomas Dennis
9- Zina Christeen Harris	13 May 1876	George Thomas Furner John Thomas Dennis Irving L. Pratt
10- Martha Artimissa Harris	27 June 1879	Harry Walter Startup Sr.
11- Sarah Lovina Harris	8 December 1882	Roy Passey

DISCOVERY

His light illuminates our path.

*Who but you can write your story
You must find your path
Feed the dreams that breathe inside you,
True to the light you have.*

*(Courtesy Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-day Saints, "Light of the
World" program, 2002 Olympics)*