

## LEVI MORTENSEN'S HISTORY

By June Hudson

Levi was the second son of Niels Mortensen, and his dad died when he was 15. He went into the creamery business, worked with his Uncle George, and supported his mother and all the kids. He gave her all the money he ever made to help take care of the kids. I think he felt more like a father and a protector. All his life their welfare was upmost in his life, even when he was 80 years old. He really was a father substitute when his dad died leaving such a young family. At different times in their lives, almost all of them lived with him for some time, except for Cordie. Cordie and he both opened their homes to the rest of the children who found a home away from home. It was the same with Uncle Len and Aunt Joan too. Levi and Leonard were close together like two peas in a pod. They worked side by side always, never argued. I never remember my father arguing or disagreeing, or getting angry. He certainly never got angry at me or any of his children. Thelma talks about the docile Danes. I think it is in their family not to fight. Our families don't fight; it's not in us and we are loyal to each other. That was another thing my dad always felt, the loyalty to his family. That is another thing that is taught to the family. He was a wonderful person.

When he and his brother Leonard started this creamery business in Salt Lake, they were so successful at it that when they would go to the creamery meetings, the other presidents and managers in creameries in Salt Lake would say, "Hell, you can't compete with Leonard and Lee because they do their own work." They wouldn't hire anybody unless they had to. If you want to know how Dad got into the creamery business rather than becoming a farmer, I think it was because when he was young working in the fields with his dad, with Arthur, Dad says that he always had summer colds, and I believe it must be because he had hay fever. Surely Art, my brother and I have hay fever. Leonard was allergic to many many things. I think that is a physical weakness. Dad's constant colds every summer had to be hay fever because people just don't get colds every summer. He was tired because hay fever makes you this way. He was laying down on the ditch bank, his father on the other side of the ditch bank visiting with a passerby. The passerby says, "I see Arthur out there, doesn't Levi ever help you?" Grandpa says, "Hell no, he's so lazy he never can be a farm boy because he's just too lazy." Dad vowed to himself that he would never work the land, and as far as I know he never did. After he got married, I only remember him once watering the lawn. He never weeded or mowed or anything, Mother always did that. He remained a creamery man. He worked long and hard, sometimes eighteen hours a day. He and Uncle Len were not afraid of hard work. They made a successful creamery. They were just a wonderful family.

## **Aunt Thelma Linck**

Could I say just a word about Uncle Lee? Soon after they got started in the creamery business, when they got the creamery going in Salt Lake, they didn't have much financing. It was a struggle to get going. Lee soon got a new car. It was a Chalmers car. I think it was the prettiest car; I think the lines of that car could pass for a car today. They were very proud of it. And, of course, they let me drive it. I remember I backed it out of the garage and tinked the fender. I was just sick and didn't know what to do, but I had to go in and tell him. He came and put it back in the garage and said "Now, back it out. Now is no time to quit." That's the way he was with everything. He was just super good to me. After we were married, they were so interested in how we were getting along. Bill and I had financial struggles. At the time I thought we were having kind of a hard life. As I look back now, we didn't have a hard life. We had a real good life. Our marriage was really happy. I have so many pleasant memories and I miss him so much now.

