HENRY EDWIN HANCEY
Written by Granddaughter Virginia Hancey Lee, 19 Feb. 1984

Henry Edwin Hancey’s birth place was a small log cabin located in the pioneer settlement of Hyde Park, Cache County, Utah. He was born 19 Feb. 1864, the 5th of 11 children born to James and Rachel Seamons Hancey.

When Edwin Henry was one year of age, his father married Louisa Purser, his 2nd wife. Henry’s mother, Rachel, a brave woman of great courage and spirit managed to keep her family together during these trying times of pioneering, poverty and polygamy. Oft times she would remind her children that it means much to be born into a family of pure blood, a good name and high ideals. She would sometimes add “it means much to be well born and to show great respect for your parents.” Henry would always remember this motherly wisdom, using it as a guide to follow in his future life. Henry was a rangy lad of 15 when his father married Annie Marie Christopherson, his 3rd wife. Rachel’s children soon grew to love and respect Annie Marie and affectionately called her Aunt Mary.

It was necessary for Rachel’s sons to find any kind of employment to help provide for the needs of their family. They were still living in the 2 room log house which became more crowded as the children were growing up. Rachel and her daughters would occupy the small bedroom while the boys would sleep on the dirt floor in the kitchen. Henry was to recall how uncomfortable they would be at night. These long legged boys were without sufficient covers to keep them warm. When they stretched out full length their feet would be exposed and cold, especially in the severe winter months.

Their father, James, having received valuable training in the skills of gardening and fruit farming passed this information on to his sons, especially Henry and his brothers Horace and James. They helped their mother to cultivate and plant a large vegetable garden, a welcome source of fresh food. Much of the produce would be stored in cellars for winter use. Through this experience Henry would become a successful and prosperous farmer.

When Henry was 16 he and his brother Horace went to Montana, a wild and unsettled area, far from home, to work on the construction of a railroad line. Here these young men were introduced to a rough element of hardened working men, many with undesirable habits and slothful ways. By working hard, minding their own business, and avoiding the company of these men as much as possible, Henry and Horace were able to keep their jobs. They saved most of their wages to send home to their mother. They would also gain the respect of many of their co-workers and their supervisors. Their work was accomplished under severe conditions, usually working during the winter months when the ground was frozen, making it easier to do the grading with horse, wagon, and scrapers. Snow and wind would hamper their working day and caused them to freeze at nights as they were camping out in boarded-up tents and make-shift barracks. Sometimes they would spend all day digging out of snow drifts.

With the blessings and protection of the Lord, they were able to return home at the completion of this project unharmed grown-up men from this experience. It was necessary for these young men to provide for themselves at an early age. Henry said when he was 10 years of age he earned enough money to buy himself a pair of shoes, sorely needed.

Henry was baptized a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints 7 July 1872, at 8 years of age. No record of Aaronic Priesthood activities was available. However, he
was ordained an Elder 7 Oct. 1883, ordained a 70 7 Jan. 1884, and a High Priest 4 June 1905 by W. W. Merrill. He was sealed to his parents in the Logan LDS Temple on 20 Sep. 1909.

On 11 Oct. 1883, Henry took his sweetheart Nellie Maria Hyde to Salt Lake City, Utah where they were married and sealed for time and all eternity in the Endowment House. Traveling by horse-drawn wagon or buggy would require several days to make the trip, there and back. They probably stayed with relatives while in the city. Henry was 19 and Nellie 22 years of age. Nellie was to tell about them walking to the Endowment House, a matter of a few blocks. Henry, with his long stride, stepped out ahead of her, joining some other people. She was hard put to keep up with him. She said “It was like that for the rest of her life.”

Nellie Maria was the only child born to Sarah Hamlin Pratt and William Hyde, early settlers of Hyde Park. William practiced polygamy, married 5 wives who bore him 32 children. Nellie and her mother were left to pretty much support themselves as her father, Cache Stake Pres. For an area that extended from the south end of Cache Valley north to Cardston, Alberta, Canada, was seldom home. Although Nellie had many half brothers and sisters, she spent most of her time playing with Abbie, Charles & Rosel, children of William’s wife Abigail, a cousin to his wife Sarah. Mother Sarah lived with Henry and Nellie for the last 13 years of her life. Henry would tell his children of the love he had for her. He would mention the great respect he felt for her courteous and hospitable ways when he visited in her home. Later when she came to live in his home, they would enjoy her company as the family gathered together in the evening to read, play games or have programs.

After Henry and Nellie were married, they lived in a log house his father James had built for his wife “Aunt Mary.” This house was located on a large piece of property which Henry later owned. He either bought it or it was given to him by his father, James.

I don’t know how Grandpa acquired his farm land. When the pioneers first settled in Cache Valley, land was allocated to them by the Government. They were permitted to take as much as they could properly cultivate, care for, and improve. Crops raised were mainly grains, potatoes, corn and other vegetables, especially those suitable for storing through the winter months, as there weren’t any fresh fruits or vegetables available. The townspeople could hardly wait for spring to break in order to gather fresh watercress that grew in abundance around the springs and streams. They considered this a tonic and a life saver until their garden crops would be harvested.

As there was such an abundance of lush forage (wild grass) growing on the valley floor, the cattle and horses would be taken to specific areas to be fed. The men would take turns acting as herdsmen, guarding the animals from Indian raids, and mixing in with the wrong herds. It would be quite a few years before alfalfa (Lucerne) would be cultivated. This wild grass would also be cut and dried and stacked for winter feed.

The dividing of the land is another mystery, unless they drew it by lots. Some may have specified their preference for certain locations. About the only requirement was their signature, in good faith, that they would improve the land entrusted to them. Later on, these transactions would be recorded in the County Court house. I think Grandpa Henry, by working hard, would enjoy a bountiful harvest each year, enabling him to purchase another piece of land, enlarging his holdings, as the years progressed. Before too many years passed, Henry’s 3 sons and his half brothers, Aunt Mary’s sons, would be hired to work in the many fields, during the planting and harvest seasons. Henry was a good planner. He loved farming. When his sons chided him for working so hard, he would say, “I want to be competent in my work, not a top-soil quality.” His
soul forged in the fields with the manure, dirt, cold, wind, heat and flies. He was brought up on discipline, having to do his work no matter what the conditions. A farmer at heart, he could be described as a skilled craftsman in his field. He said there was something about working with your arms, legs and back, tilling the soil and making it productive that gave one a sense of strength, character and faith. He once said, “learning by faith is no task for a lazy man.” The bond that came from working so close to nature gave him a special insight into life. He learned how to take the good with the bad, drought, famine, and drop in prices. He was a sensitive common dirt farmer. He understood much about the changing seasons and weather conditions—when to plant and when to harvest that which had been planted. Like his father before him, his garden crops, small fruit and apple orchards were planted with great care in straight even rows, never a weed in sight. His eyes would dance with satisfaction as he viewed his well-kept acres. He had large strong hands that could wield a shovel or an ax with ease, yet he planted small tender bedding plants with gentle care. His hands would know themselves around the wood handle of a shovel as gentle as if playing a violin.

Once he said to me, “outside my window I can hear the early wind as it blows and sweeps the earth with freshness; this I consider my heritage. The earth is blessed and so am I for I can partake and I can give. As the earth blesses me, I can feel it refresh and awaken my soul.” This was Henry’s way to commune with God and thank Him for the blessings of the good earth. All the farming that Grandpa engaged in was done with the help of oxen, horses, wagons and simple farm tools. They were just starting to manufacture tractors and modern farm machinery when he retired.

After much planning and great effort, the farmers of this area were able to divert water from the Logan River into canals for the purpose of irrigating their crops and pastures; thus ending worry of drought and crop failure. Henry’s father, James, was the main one in making a spill gate at the mouth of Logan Canyon that would control the amount of water running north through the canal to Hyde Park and beyond. Eventually 3 canals were constructed to bring water to the thirsty land in the northern part of the valley. This permitted the farmers to cultivate more acreage. As these hardy pioneers worked to improve conditions, they, like the poet, could say “what is to come we know not, but we know that what has been is good.”

At one time Grandpa had 6 of Aunt Mary’s sons working for him. He appreciated them for their desire to do their work well. They too, had inherited the farming skills from father, James. A good relationship existed in whatever the task was. Henry paid them fair wages, and on time, which was always his policy. At times when they were extra busy or trying to get a crop in before a storm, Henry would hire the neighbor boys. They were happy to work for “Henry Hancey.” His philosophy was “right is right.” He kept his word and never took advantage of anyone. LaMonte Harris, when he was 90 years of age said that as a young boy he had worked for Henry Hancey on many occasions for 50 cents a day. This was a lifesaver for his widowed mother’s large family.

Henry had great trust in his fellowmen. An example: One summer day 3 well-dressed men (city slickers he later learned, to his sorrow) approached him with a fabulous line about investing some money in the Elk Coal Co. They promised he would become wealthy without working so hard for his living. He must have been “bone weary” that day because without doubting their rord or checking their credentials, accepting their smooth talk he invested $2,000 of his hard-earned cash (savings) in this so called company. Learning that 2 of his reliable townsmen had also invested in this scheme, he felt secure in what he had done. Of course these
crafty men left Hyde Park full of promises of a rosy future for 3 trusting farmers and were never heard from again. It was as if they had vanished into thin air. “Swinging in the wind on a hanging tree, was too good for these crooks.” It took a long time for Henry to cease fretting over this swindle, but he never became bitter. He blamed himself for being such an easy touch.

One harvest time, Henry allowed some of his granddaughters to pick up the potatoes after he had plowed them out of the ground. It really wasn’t hard work, they thought it was fun to listen to the men folks tease them and make silly wisecracks. Grandma Nellie was furious with Henry, maintaining the “the girl’s place was helping their mother in the home. Besides they are taking a chance on ruining their health as field hands.” Poor Grandpa was to say “I’m always getting in hot water with Nellie.”

If Henry and Nellie did live in the one room log house when they were newlyweds, they soon had a 3 room structure built on the same property, living in this house until the first 6 children were born and getting to be quite grown up. Henry then sold this house to his neighbor, George Balls, who had it moved to his own property, a block south. Henry’s brother, Jess, a building contractor, with the help of their brothers James and Alma John built him a large 2 story, white frame, dream house. Indoor plumbing with hot and cold running water, large spacious rooms, with plenty of bedrooms and closet space upstairs for their sons and daughters. He was to keep this house freshly painted; with the surrounding lawns and gardens neat and attractive. It was a showplace in the community for many years. It would break his heart if he could see how the present owners have mistreated it.

He was not a proud man. He even acknowledged that he wasn’t always right. At the core, down deep in his heart he was very spiritual. He appreciated his blessings. He once said, “there are a lot of things I do not know, but I know that in my problems and solving some of them I have come to know God.” Whenever he was called on to speak in church, he spoke from the heart, encouraging the saints to hold fast to their faith and to help one another. Rather than chastise them or preach “hell fire and damnation” he would use stories and “folksy, down to earth talk” to appeal to them.

He was always concerned for the common man, those who were down on their luck, or in poor circumstances. He had a younger brother, with a large family, who sometime needed assistance. When Grandpa felt they were low on supplies, he would load up the buckboard wagon with articles of food, clothing and coal and drop them off at his brother’s house. When Grandma Nellie would scold him for working so hard just to give it all away, he would reply “I can’t stand to be comfortable if I know that family is cold and hungry.” When he would return from one these trips, Grandma would fret for fear he hadn’t taken enough, wanting to send him back with more.

At Christmas he loved to play Santa Claus with practical, wholesome gifts of sacks of flour, potatoes, apples, coal, even blankets, warm stockings, scarfs, caps, and mittens. He usually delivered these gifts to the widows and needy of the ward after dark when he wouldn’t be seen by the neighbors. His grandchildren came to expect him to call by, either on Christmas or New Years, with goodies and a token or remembrance of love. At harvest time, when the fruit and vegetables were at their peak of goodness, he would gather them by the basketful, taking them, washed and cleaned, to his relatives and those who didn’t have a garden.

Henry and Nellie were parents of 10 children. Those who lived to maturity were: Jenny Mae married to John W. Matkin, Henry Edwin, Jr. Married to Sarah Vera Waite Nellie Menetta married to Samuel Lundberg Grover Pratt married to Ardella Munk
Berty Wilbur married to Leah Christensen  Lila Fay married to Martin Roskelley
Eugene Claire married to Harold Miles

Three children died in infancy. They were: Charles Hyde died at 2 years, Florence-stillborn, Hazel -lived only 5 months.

Henry was kind and sympathetic with his children and grandchildren, most of them living in Hyde Park, Logan and Smithfield where he could see them often. Whenever they were ill or upset in the night, he would be called on to care and comfort them. When his 3 sons were married, he helped them to purchase homes, also provided a team of horses and a wagon and some land to cultivate. He said he had sufficient land for all to work and make a living from. Sometimes his sons didn’t appreciate his drive and rigorous outline. I know he was disappointed when they didn’t respond more enthusiastically to his plans.

Whenever I think of Grandpa Henry, which is often, I stand in admiration for the many fine qualities he possessed. To me, he was fine, gentle and well mannered, never pushy or arrogant; a man of great principles, observing the need for things to be done and then doing them. He had none of that lame feeling of waiting for someone to push him to action. He was considerate of his wife, Nellie, patient with his daughters, and generous with his sons. He put great effort into making their home attractive and comfortable. Winter of summer he was up at the break of dawn. He would make a fire in the kitchen range, throw some potatoes and onions in the oven to bake for breakfast later. Then he would go out to the barn to care for his farm animals and see to the morning chores. Returning to the house, Nellie would have a hearty breakfast prepared, the potatoes and onions baked just right, delicious with eggs, bacon, home made bread toast and cups of scalding hot coffee. This routine seldom varied. By 11 a.m. he had accomplished a large amount of farm work and liked an early dinner, with a short nap after, to get him through another round of work that would keep him busy until after the evening chores were finished.

I know Grandpa would have been happier if his wife, Nellie had agreed to attend church and social events with him, If he went, he was alone. I can’t understand Grandma in this regard; any other woman would be so proud to have been his partner. He was a handsome man, much the “Gregory Peck” type. He stood 6 feet tall, broad erect shoulders, lean yet tough. He moved with ease and a sprightly step. He would have been popular on the dance floor. Even at the time of his death at 74 years of age, he wasn’t an old man, stooped and infirm as some men became. His beautiful dark hair never thinned or turned grey. His black eyes were warm and tender in their appeal, yet alert and observant to everything. His appearance was always neat and clean, even in bib overalls and a work shirt, wearing a straw hat in summer to protect him from the hot sun as he was out of doors most of the time.

On Sunday when attending church, or special functions, he was a charmer. Today we would call it “charisma.” In his dark suit (Sunday Best) fresh white shirt, and a subdued tie, everyone knew when Henry E. Hancey was present. He never aspired to the front row in church or having a position of importance, which required him to take a place with the brethren on the stand. However, when he had an assignment to fulfill, he did it with dispatch, and the audience sat up and listened.

Henry and Grandma Nellie enjoyed a friendly relationship with Abbie and Mathias Cowley. Nellie and Abbie being half-sisters, were practically raised in the same home and had much in common. The Cowley’s visited in Hyde Park on many occasions, usually staying for several days. Henry had deep respect for Matthias, for his dedication to the church and was
extremely proud that he was one of the Twelve Apostles of the Church. He took his counsel and advice. 7 Dec. 1917, Uncle Matt, as they lovingly called him, presented Henry with a book entitled “The Life of John Taylor” written by B. H. Roberts. On the fly leaf of the book, Matthias had written “To Elder Henry E. Hancey with the love and esteem of Matthias Cowley. “I have this book in my possession and value it highly as it reminds me of these 2 wonderful friends.

For several years the Cowley children would spend their summers in Hyde Park. Aunt Abbie would ship them out the day school was recessed, and they didn’t return home until the day school started in the fall. Sometimes their visits would wear a bit thin. For Grandma Nellie, Aunt Hattie and Phebe Hyde, problems of discipline and responsibility would become rather touchy. These children, free from the confines of city life and their parents, would run through the yards of Grandpa’s well groomed gardens like young animals, helping themselves to anything that was available, no inhibitions whatever. When young Matthew Cowley was called to be an Apostle, Henry was heard to say “to think how cross I would become when he would shake too many apples on the ground, trying to find the perfect one, or pull up the new peas by the vine, little did I know I was helping to raise an Apostle of the Lord.”

Imagine how Henry and Uncle Matt would enjoy attending General Conference in April 1983. To see the beautiful well kept temple grounds, to listen to the music of the Mormon Choir and the Tabernacle organ, to mingle with the brethren and meditate over the inspiring sermons would thrill their sensitive souls. Henry enjoyed good music. He had many beautiful recordings which he would play almost daily on a fine Edison Phonograph.

Another form of pleasure and relaxation was his enjoyment of the game of baseball. His son Henry E. Jr. The long ball hitter, his son-in-law Martin Roskelley, Arthur Seamons right fielder and Wallace Waite short stop, all from Hyde Park, were main stringers on a semi professional baseball team in Smithfield. Every home game Grandpa would take his car full of relatives (fans of the home team) to cheer the local team to victory.

Nearly every Saturday afternoon, he drove to Logan to do some shopping for Grandma Nellie, sometimes taking fresh vegetables to relatives along the way. We were usually invited to tag along, something we never declined. One day as Henry was driving slowly along Main Street in Logan, looking for a parking place, my younger sister Luana, who was in the back seat, supposedly, opened the side door of the car and fell out onto the paved street. Without stopping to check for injuries, she jumped up and started to run after the car, screaming at the top of her voice “don’t go leave me.” This was a main topic of conversation for days. Of course Grandpa was thankful she wasn’t injured. He made sure the car doors were locked after that close call.

Whenever he took Grandma Nellie for a ride in their car, usually up to Smithfield to visit their daughters Aunt Lila and Aunt Claire, or to Logan to visit with daughter Nell, Grandma would insist that she sit in the back seat alone, with the blinds on the side windows down, saying “someone might see me.” His patience was taxed considerably as she made sure he didn’t break any speed limits.

He was a kind and caring man. We felt a little easier knowing of his goodness and concern for us. One Saturday afternoon he stopped at our house to ask if anyone there would accompany him on a short visit to see Aunt Mary Hancey, his father’s 3rd wife. She was dying of cancer, and had been seriously ill all summer. Mother volunteered that I go. I shall never forget his tenderness, his acts of compassion toward Aunt Mary and her daughters Lillian and Leda who were watching vigilanty over her, their dear mother. As we sat there together, one elderly
grandfather, one young girl, holding back his tears he tried to reassure me that everything would be all right. His black eyes crinkled all around, gazed beyond where we were. He tried to give me my heritage—"I listened. I shall never forget that day, the love that welled up in my throat for that dear man."

From his early years on through his life, Henry was civic minded, thinking up ways to improve his community. Each spring when the roads in Hyde Park would become mud holes, and deep ruts, almost impassable, Henry and his sons with their wagons and teams, encouraging others to join them, would haul gravel from the east bench for days on end to make a road bed. It would take years of hauling and effort to build up decent roads firm enough to navigate. The young boys of the town would refer to this gravel strip down the center of the side roads as the bicycle trail. Even then, woe to those who ventured off the trail. Their horses would sink in mud to their bellies, the wagons mire in to the hub caps of the wheels, usually needing assistance to be polled onto higher ground.

From 1928 to 1932, Henry was Mayor of Hyde Park serving 2 terms. During this time he encouraged his fellow citizens to clean up and beautify their homes and yards. He insisted that much needed improvements be made at the cemetery, east of town. By him leading out, weeds, trash, and dead trees were removed, new roads constructed, water made available, and the ground leveled down with plans for planting lawns in the future. Having observed how attractive the Smithfield cemetery was with planting of beautiful pine trees of several varieties, and lilac bushes usually in bloom at Memorial Day, he suggested to the town board members that they do the same. Having full faith in his idea, they agreed to start this project which would require considerable hard work. L. R. A. Perkes, John Kirby, George Ashcroft Jr. And Herbert Seamons were his faithful board members.

They went to work with a will, removing sagging barbed wire fences, straightened fence posts and added new gates at the entrance to the cemetery. They purchased and planted a hundred Norwegian Pine and Blue Spruce Trees, spaced out on the boundaries of the area involved. They also planted healthy peony bushes between the trees and lilac bushes at strategic spots. Henry was pleased with this project, and he spent considerable time watering and caring for these young plants. After a hard day of farm work, he would go with buckets and shovels to the cemetery where it was necessary to carry water from the only hydrant there at the time. He was determined that not one tree would dry up and die. Today they stand a monument to the efforts of many people, making the cemetery a place of peace and rest.

When the trees were planted and cemetery looking more respectable, Grandpa took his daughter Jennie up there to see what had been accomplished. She was very ill with an incurable disease. When Jenny saw this great improvement, she broke down and cried. She told her father “now I won’t feel so bad when they lay me to rest in this spot you have made so beautiful” We the grandchildren would always refer to them as Grandpa’s trees. In the spring of 1983, when several of the trees were uprooted or broken off at the middle in a terrible wind storm, we mourned their loss as we would a very dear friend.

During his term of office, one mile of cement side walks was installed in much used areas, the first to be laid in town. Foot bridges of steel and concrete were constructed over the canal on practically every street. Replacing old wooden water pipes with modern ones was a big step forward. There was always grading and graveling of roads. After much discussion with the county commissioners, the Town Board Members convinced them of the great need to have the road surfaced from the state road east into Hyde Park. The young boys delighted in using it as a
race track, riding their horses back and forth.

During World War I, Henry was called to chairman the War Bond effort-raising money to support the government of the United States when they declared war on Germany. Henry was successful in this drive by talking before groups at rallies, calling at every home in town, even asking permission to speak in church to remind people in attendance of their duties in protecting this promised land of America. He recalled his father’s love of this country. For years he had subscribed to the Salt Lake Tribune newspaper. He kept up on all facets of the news, especially politics, national and local affairs. He was concerned that every eligible voter cast their vote at the polls on election day. He would assist them if they needed a ride. He always stayed close by to see that everything ran smoothly, to make sure no rowdies or loud mouths caused a scene. With his understanding of the workings of government, the need for fair play, honesty, and the frailties of mankind, he would have been a great statesman, similar to Robert Taft or Everett Dirkson—oops, but they were Republicans. When it came to debating crucial issues they were great statesmen, none the less. I don’t believe he would have been too happy with welfare as it operates today (1984) or food stamps, medicare, the whole bit. Abortion, divorce, couples living together not married, child abuse, neglect and disrespect of parents and the elderly would deeply disturb him. His theory was work and save, work and live within your means, work and care for your own, help those who meet with misfortune, or are ill-users by others.

Henry was as honest as the day is long. He never took advantage of anyone. As an example: returning from Logan one day in his horse-drawn wagon, he discovered, as he was checking over his purchases, that someone had over paid him 30 cents. He was determined to make the long trip back to Logan to try to find the merchant whose money wouldn’t balance. It was only after the family put up a howl of protest that he agreed he could settle with the injured party the next time he went shopping.

As the population increased, Henry along with other community leaders, saw the need for improved transportation through Cache Valley. The horse and buggy was too slow and automobiles were still on the drawing board. They formed a company called the Utah-Idaho Central Railroad, or the UIC. Electricity operated the railroad cars and they would run on tracks. The first line went from Providence through Logan up around the Agricultural College, out to Hyde Park by way of North Logan, ending up at Smithfield. Later they would re-route the line going directly through the fields north of Logan, by-passing North Logan, with just a whistle stopo along the street where Frank Lee operated a general store and the railroad station. They would proceed north to Smithfield with stops at Richmond, Lewiston, and on north to Preston, Idaho. Soon they extended the railroad lines south to Hyrum, Wellsville, Mendon and around the west mountain over into Box Elder County stopping at Brigham City and joining the Bamberger line in Ogden.

Henry and his sons worked on this project using their horses, wagons and graders such as they were to build the roadbed for the railroad track. Instead of taking wages, they put their money back into the company for operating expenses. For years this railroad furnished transportation to hundreds of students who would attend school at North Cache or South Cache, the Brigham Young College and the Utah State Agricultural College at Logan.

Soon after Dr. D. C. Budge started practicing medicine in Logan, Henry was to meet him through Aunt Mary Hancey who would assist the Doctor when he was called to deliver a baby in Hyde Park. Aunt Mary was to become an expert mid-wife, and Henry, and Dr. D. C. Became fast friends. It wasn’t long until Dr. D. C.’s brothers T. B. Budge, E. S. Budge, O. H. Budge and
S. M. Budge started practicing in Logan along with their brother-in-law J. W. Hayward and a Dr. Eliason. They asked Henry to assist them in promoting the building of the Budge Memorial Hospital, an institution that was to serve the valley for many years. Here they also trained young women to become expert nurses. Henry accepted this request with enthusiasm and was successful in raising considerable amounts of money. He also donated generously from his own resources. For years he was on the Hospital Board, active in much of their decision making.

One time he made these comments. “Histories of communities tell of pioneer suffering, determination and accomplishment. Their endurance, patience and faith are a blessing to future generations. They worked and prayed for the well being of the dear ones, their church and community. They needed to tie their lives to the uncertainties of little rituals and firm guideposts. In their efforts they went from strength to strength as they made this beautiful valley a wholesome and delightful place to call home.”

It was surprising to note how much the Hancey men wrote alike, beautiful penmanship, neat and clear. Grandpa, his sons, and brothers, they all wrote in a very similar style. The entries in Grandpa’s genealogy records are recorded with care, as if he wanted to make certain every one could understand every name, place and date.

After much deliberation and some soul searching, no doubt, Grandpa Henry decided to retire from active farming, dividing the responsibility and the land with his 3 sons, Henry Jr., Grover, and Wilbur. He would keep an eye on events, giving advice and counsel if requested. He would devote his time to his yard and gardens. The radio had been invented and in use for sometime. He enjoyed getting the news “hot off the airways.” He also listened to Will Rogers, Bing Crosby and Glenn Miller’s band; these were his favorites for entertainment.

On Sunday morning 1 May 1938, his son Henry E. Jr.’s birthday, Henry E. Sr. Attended fast and testimony meeting in his ward in Hyde Park. During that hour of worship, he rose to his feet and gave a testimony of the truthfulness of the Gospel of Christ, expressing thanks for the many blessings enjoyed by his family and members of the ward. He said he was grateful for the service he had been able to render in a full and happy life time. After the meeting was dismissed and he had started home, a severe pain struck him, bringing him to his knees. He had had a heart seizure. Some young Elders assisted him to his home and called his doctor to attend him. Henry lingered through the night suffering in pain and discomfort. The doctors seemed helpless to give him relief. We knew he was dying, yet I wanted to cry out in the words of Dylan Thomas “Do not go gentle into that dark right, Rage-rage against the dying of the light”.

The following morning our dear grandfather departed this life, 2 May 1938. He was 74 years of age. Through his death his family came to realize that Grandpa Henry was our bulwark, the patriarch of his family. “He was our pride, our heritage.” All that he asked of us was to carry on the traditions of many generations of loved ones, who had sacrificed for their church and pioneered this great western land of America, a free land in which to worship as we please and fulfill our destiny. May we who knew him pass on to those who will come after us this great heritage of love, service above self and nurturing he gave so freely. It would please him to know that we, his descendants, have remained true and loyal to the trust left us by our noble ancestors.

Henry Edwin Hancey Sr. Was buried in the Hyde Park Cemetery 4 May 1938, a place that has become more beautiful each passing year, surrounded by those stately trees, fully grown now, giving assurance to all that they will protect this quiet spot where loved ones come on Memorial Day, when the miracle of nature is unfolding, and the earth is renewed in the warmth of yet another springtime. They come to refresh their memories of their departed dead and to renew
their faith in the future, that one day they may join their loved ones in the hallowed ground.

Typed into the Computer by Kathleen Jardine Woolf 16 Oct 2002 Idaho Falls, Idaho
All information is from the book published by the Hancey family. JAMES HANCEY AND HIS FAMILY.
The ones that wrote about this man surely knew him very well. It is great to read a history that has been done by loved ones.