



EMIGRANT TRAILS HALL OF FAME

OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION



Biography

LeRoy Reuben Hafen

- Born 1893, Bunkerville, Nevada
- Died: 1985, Palm Desert, California

Ann Woodbury Hafen

- Born: 1893, Salt Lake City, Utah
- Died: 1970, Provo, Utah

Married: 1915, St. George, Utah

Achievements

- Renowned Western historians
- Authors and editors of classic works on the exploration and settlement of the West

Photo courtesy of L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University

LeRoy and Ann Hafen

LeRoy and Ann Hafen were renowned Western historians whose careers spanned a period of more than fifty years. They wrote, coauthored, and edited numerous books on the exploration and settlement of the West. They received significant recognition for meticulous research and for their discovery of rare diaries, journals, letters, and other primary source materials. Many of their books became definitive works on their respective subjects.

From 1924 to 1954 LeRoy served as the Colorado State Historian. During those years he was also the editor of *Colorado Magazine*, served as director of the Colorado State Museum, erected historical markers, taught at the University of Denver and wrote numerous books and articles. In 1954 he left Colorado to join the faculty at Brigham Young University (BYU), where he was a professor of history until 1971. He was active in the work of the American Pioneer Trails Association and was one of the founders of the Western History Association.

The Hafens met during high school in St. George, Utah and were married in 1915 while students at BYU. LeRoy received a master's degree from the University of Utah and his PhD from the University of California, Berkeley under the tutelage of Herbert Bolton. In addition to collaborating with her husband in writing and editing twenty books, Ann published six books and more than eighty poems and story collections.

LeRoy served as editor of several major documentary series on the West. With Ann he edited *The Far West and Rockies Historical Series 1820-1875* (15 vols., 1954-1961). He also served as editor of and prepared the lengthy introduction to *The Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West: Biographical Sketches of the Participants by Scholars of the Subject* (10 vols., 1965-1972). The Hafens also collaborated on *Colorado: A Story of the State and its People* (1953 and 1957) and *Handcarts to Zion: The Story of a Unique Western Migration, 1856-1860* (1960 and numerous reprints).

They donated an extensive collection of books and Americana to BYU which is itemized in detail in *LeRoy R. and Ann W. Hafen: their writings and their notable collection of Americana given to Brigham Young University Library* (1962). A detailed account of their work and life together is contained in *The Joyous Journey of LeRoy R. and Ann W. Hafen: An Autobiography* (1973).