

OSA JAMES GRANT

Osa James Grant was born July 10, 1896 in Amity, Clark Co. Arkansas. He was the second of 10 children born to William Alexander Grant and Nora Belle Chancellor Grant. When married, Nora Belle was only 15 years old and “W A,” as he was often called, was 19. Their children are:

<u>Child</u>	<u>Birthdate</u>	<u>Married to:</u>
Oma Lee	27 Jan. 1894	Oscar Gunter
Osa James	10 July 1896	Elsie Louise Sutton
Henry Otis	1898	Dellie Leathers
William Claude	11 Sept. 1903	Eunice Dockery
Cecil Alexander	16 Feb. 1906	Anna Mae Batele
Ewell	1908	(died about age 2)
Gladys Leona	1 Aug. 1910	Howard T. Barry
Delphine	27 July 1914	(not married)
Helen Louise	10 Oct. 1918	Thomas Platt
Willie Mae	2 Sept. 1921	Edgar Lynwood Betts

(Gladys, Willie Mae and Helen were still alive and living in Texas at the time this was recorded in September 1985)

Not too much is known of his boyhood. They moved from Arkansas to Oklahoma then to Texas. Osa’s father was a farmer and Osa worked on his dad’s farm as well as other people’s farms in his youth. He picked a lot of cotton. Everyone said he was always a hard worker.

Though he only finished part of grade school, he was a “self-taught” man. He could repair almost anything that needed to be fixed – cars, machinery, electrical problems of most every kind and even radio and televisions. In his later years he even had a watch repair and jewelry shop. With no training he could repair watches.

He was an especially patriotic man. He even stood at attention when the Star Spangled Banner was played on the radio. Some of his children and grandchildren never hear the “Star Spangled” played without thinking about him. Nor would he allow his children to play with or desecrate a flag in any way. He loved his country and what it stood for. He did everything in his power to get into the army during World War I. It was not easy and took several attempts of drinking all the water he could hold and anything else he ever heard of to reach the required weight of 121 pounds. It is believed that he said the last man finally passed him, though he was a little short. He was proud to serve his country and wanted to go overseas, but the war ended before he was sent.

Osa was stationed at Fort Douglas in Salt Lake City for a while. He and some friends were supposed to meet some girls on 5th E. and 7th S. The girls didn't come, but some other girls came out from the church and walked over to the soldiers. They started a conversation with them that ended up with an invitation to the boys to join them and many others at the mutual dance. Though he did not dance, he enjoyed being part of the group and returned a few times. It was at one of the socials that he met Elsie Sutton. It was not love at first sight, but a friendship that they both remembered. They corresponded by letter a few times after he went home at the end of the war.

He returned to Salt Lake in 1921. The friendship was renewed and after a short engagement they were married in Elsie's family home (938 Yale Ave.) in Salt Lake City, Utah on October 1, 1921. They lived in the Salt Lake area where their first four children were born. At this same time Osa's younger sisters were born, so he never was really raised with them.

With much sadness and tears from all of the Sutton Family (including Elsie), they left in 1928 in a Dodge car to go to Texas. On the way, someone was always sick. In those days Texas seemed like the end of the world. They arrived in Claude, Texas late one night after his family had all gone to bed. The family all came out to the car in their night clothes to meet the daughter-in-law and four grandchildren that they had never seen.

Depression years were starting and jobs were hard to find. They went to Amarillo, Texas for about a year and then moved to Borger where most of the Grant family had moved. Osa worked in a carbon company there for seven years. Their youngest daughter Elsie Lou was born in Borger. Those eight years in Texas were the only ones spent with his family after he grew up. His mother died in 1935 in Osa and Elsie's house, leaving a 13 year old daughter (Willie Mae) as her youngest child.

Osa's family was always good to him and his family, and they had also made many friends in Texas. That made it hard to leave to come to California in 1936. Elsie had almost died the year before with pneumonia and the doctor said she could not stand another Texas winter. Friends and family gathered at the car with the trailer that carried every earthly belonging of Osa and Elsie and their five children. There were many tears.

Osa had taken a correspondent course on diesel engines and was going to complete the course in California. When they arrived in Los Angeles, however, they found that they had been taken in by a fraud and there was no factory there to complete the course. His favorite brother, Claude, and his wife Eunice came also, but when the diesel school did not materialize, they went back to Texas.

Jobs were hard to find and money was scarce. Having five children made it very difficult to find a house to rent. They stayed in a little court in Wilmington until they found a house at 2045 Pine Ave. in Long Beach, California. Although it had only one bedroom and was not very new, it seemed like heaven just to have a place to feel a little bit settled. It ended up being their own home when they later bought it. They lived in it until all of their children were married.

Osa worked for Ford Motor Company for a while until they went on strike. Then, although it was not a glamorous job, and it was very hard for him to do because he was such a small man and the cans were so heavy (especially in the rain), he worked for the City Sanitization Department, emptying trash cans. He made \$135.00 a month, and was glad to have it.

The job that he really liked came later at the Navy Shipyard in the instrument department. Many times he came home with a feeling of pride when they could not get a part and he would make one himself. He was really crushed at the end of the war when they had to let the older men go to give the jobs to the young men coming home from the war. He got an excellent recommendation from the company and his fellow workers were sad to see him go. With the \$1000 retirement pay that he received, he started a jewelry store and watch repair. He was very proud of it and had great dreams, but it did not turn out to be very profitable. He had to give it up. His last job was in Real Estate.

One of his special joys in life was being Commander of the American Legion Post.

Perhaps his greatest joy was his 17 grandchildren. He loved them dearly and they all have fond memories of him. He would have loved seeing all his great grandchildren.

He loved the outdoors. When he was young he would put some biscuits in his pocket and go out in the woods. Several times he and Elsie took their older grandchildren to Sequoia. One of his camping slogans was "Don't run downhill!" The kids will always remember the camping and other things he taught them such as "Always leave your campsite cleaner than you found it."

Osa had two devastating illnesses. In 1957 he had a serious heart attack and was in the hospital for 81 days. The limitations left from his illness were hard on him. He liked to be doing things. In 1962 one day, he was so happy because they were going to go to Utah and he was going to drive. Unfortunately, his plans were changed. His wife, Elsie, did not know that he had come in the house. She was working in the kitchen when she felt what seemed like hands on her shoulders leading her into the living room where she found

Osa pleading with his eyes and trying to talk, but he could not move. He had had a stroke. She knows that it was the spirit of the Lord guiding her to him.

He was in the hospital for quite a long time and fought really hard to learn to walk and talk and write again. When they were trying to get him to write, he wrote some things and then put a bunch of commas in the corner. He told the nurse he wanted a good grade, so she could put some of those commas in the right place in case he had forgotten them.

He kept asking the nurse when he could go home. She said, “Oh, when you can say hippopotamus!” He worked so hard and finally could say “hip-po-pot-a-mus!” He was disappointed when they wouldn’t let him go home. Other than “loosing” words when he was talking sometimes, he did learn to talk again and was able to do most everything.

In December of 1968 Osa became ill and was hospitalized again. It was during a flu epidemic and the hospitals were full. Consequently, they released him too soon. He was having trouble breathing and the oxygen was not getting to his brain. He became disoriented. He was having such difficulty breathing that his family thought he was dying. They thought they should get him where he could get oxygen. They called an ambulance and had him taken to a convalescent home. Soon after he was there he sort of came out of his “spell” and he was angry with them for putting him there. After a few days he got a new doctor. Osa told the doctor he thought he could get well faster in the hospital. He went back to the hospital and also had his medication changed. He felt much better and his mind became clear. He was so happy. The doctor said he could probably go home on Saturday. He could hardly wait. During the night on Friday, however, he had heart failure and early in the morning on January 18, 1969, his daughter Elsie received a phone call from the hospital saying he had quietly passed away in the night. He was buried at Green Hills Cemetery in San Pedro, California. (Now – 2012 – the “city” Green Hills Cemetery is in is considered Palos Verdes.

Typed by Cheryl Adams Ferguson –oldest granddaughter of Osa James Grant and Elsie Louise Sutton– from a document apparently typed in 1985 but no name was attached. She says: I don’t know who took the notes or who typed them. There was a lot more to my Grandfather than this indicates, but I am grateful for this outline of his life.

ADDITIONS by Cheryl in 2013 –

Some of the Suttons called my grandfather “Grant” rather than Osa. I do not recall what others referred to him as he was always “Grandpa” to us and in our family gatherings “Grandpa” or “Dad.” In the south it was typical for people to go by their initials and his brother Henry Otis changed his two names around to avoid being H. O. G.