

THE HISTORY OF THE GLEANING AND STORING OF WHEAT AND THE SUNDAY EGGS

OF EARLY PIONEER DAYS OF IRON COUNTY

Prepared by Ella Chatterly Thorley and read by her grand-daughter Florence Thorley at the Relief Society Centennial Program, held in Cedar City Third Ward the evening of March 17, 1942.

In the year of 1876, Brigham Young, realizing the importance of an adequate food supply for his isolated people in Utah, instituted the grain saving movement. The crops had been threatened and even destroyed from time to time by the grasshoppers and other insects. It seemed that the people should prepare for emergency as there was constant fear of famine among the people.

The mission of saving and storing the grain was given especially to the sturdy pioneer women who made up the body of the Relief Society with Sister Emmeline B. Wells to direct the project. And from the time the movement was inaugurated in 1876 until the world war, nearly fifty years later, the organization had on hand constantly a large supply of wheat and a substantial wheat fund. The women who didn't have wheat could pay cash. They sometimes secured this money by making quilts and selling them.

At harvest time the women would go into the fields and glean wheat heads, would use sticks to thrash the wheat out, and gave the grain to the Relief Society.

In 1880, when the church celebrated its Jubilee, the Relief Society by way of special offering, gave the farmers for seed all the wheat they had stored in graineries. On other occasions where there had been crop failures the Relief Society gave seed from their store. For the next years crop they charged one peck on the bushel for the loan of it. The wheat was stored in bins provided in some instances by the Bishops and in others by the women themselves. Then later graineries were built.

On various occasions when great disasters have occurred the Relief Society contributed wheat and flour. A notable example of this was when when the contribution of a carload of flour was sent to San Francisco at the time of the earthquake and fire in 1906.

During the world war instructions were received from the heads of the Church to dispose of all the wheat the Relief Society sisters had stored. This they did. The grain was sold at a good price and the money was forwarded to the presiding Bishops office. The First Ward sold 43,000 pounds netting them \$967.50. The Second Ward has \$318.47 and the Third Ward 418.47. The interest on this money was used in the local wards for child-welfare and needful maternity cases. The Relief Society made up maternity bundles to be used for those unable to get them for themselves and they were kept in the Iron County Hospital. They proved a blessing to many and were a great help to the doctors.

The Sunday eggs were contributed also, to the organization, by the people and were then taken to the Co-op store and were exchanged for thread, quilt linings, and materials the ladies were in need of in their work. Money was scarce and hard to get.

Gleaning was done by many and the wheat used for various things. Some for chicken feed, some gleaned to get the straw for making hats. Bishop Henry Lunt encouraged the sisters to make straw hats and the farmers were willing to raise rye as rye straw was best for hats.

Ed Hope was a freighter from California who would come up with store goods and would exchange for grain. He told the younger folks he would bring dress goods next trip so of course the girls were all anxious to get a new dress. Christina Mackelprang Chatterly, Rachel Simkins Jones, Tillie Heyborne Macfarlane and Polly Corry Corlett went out gleaning. Christina's brother William thrashed her gleaning with a stick and fanned it through the fanning mill. When cleaned she had five bushel and a half. She traded five bushel to Ed Hope and in return she got hickery for two shirts for her father, calico to make her mother and herself a dress, and lace for the two small girls a Sunday dress, and the blanace in tea for her mother. Mr. Hope gave her two spools of thread to do her sewing with which was rare in those days. The other half bushel wnet to the tinner to get her father a tin cup to drink from. She got two cups, a quart and a pint size.

TO OUR PIONEERS

They left their homes and friends and kindred
And traveled ore trackless desert land,
And here they battled with untamed nature.
The alone can tell of their trñals and privations.
But noble and brave and dauntless,
Found restfull parks with velvet carpets.
Lovely flowers of every hue, this the product of their labor,
This their gift to me and you.
We are greatful for their riches from the brave and strong pioneers.
As they built, so we are building for the prosperous future years.
God bless our Pioneers.

Composed by Lilla C. Thorley.