

Provided by Marilyn (Gilmore) Bell, (1648 33:13)

I don't know when Mom wrote this story but it is what she got from Grandma herself.

Settler's Bread

By Winona Porter

My grandparents [John Henry Condit and Francis Parks Condit] had set up their new household in a small town in Iowa. Their livelihood was derived from my grandfather's job as a pharmacist. My two uncles, Ervin and Bert, were 8 and 5 years old, when Grandma developed a mysterious respiratory disease. Not only did it affect her breathing but there was swelling of the membranes of her throat and mouth.

To complicate matters my mother [Millie J. Condit] had given notice that within a few months she would join [be born] the family. My frightened grandfather had exhausted all of the medical resources available to him. When a doctor in Scotland replied to his pleas for help. He diagnosed Grandma's malady and advised him to take her at once to a moist sea level locality.

They joined a wagon train that was assembling at Council Bluffs, Iowa, and set out for the Pacific Ocean. At the little settlement of Malta, Idaho, my mother interrupted the journey, and the wagon train proceeded without the weary Condit family. By the time Grandma was able to travel again, Grandpa had been joined by a few families and they set out for the Pacific Northwest. They settled near the non-existent town of Marysville on the banks of a river. The trail they had hacked and dug through the wilderness had torn their wagons to pieces. With plenty of material, they built shelters but their first concern was a dugout canoe in which they could bring supplies from a larger settlement.

This worked well. It was easy going down the river, but if there was a heavy rain it sometimes took days to get back up to the settlement. The weather had been good and the group was low on several provisions so as was the procedure a group of men were sent to the "Big City" to buy the provisions for the next few months.

They had been gone for only a day when a tremendous storm hit the entire area that lasted several days. The settlers knew that their purchasing committee could not possibly leave Seattle until the storm had stopped, and even then it would take them much longer to return than had been expected when they left.

The group that was left behind became very concerned over their lack of necessities, and as the households started to run out of provisions, there was another meeting held. Many of the homes were out of flour and the basic commodities to feed their families. One of the gentlemen rose to the occasion and assured everyone that at his house there was plenty of flour for everyone until the travellers returned.

When he returned home that night he informed his wife of the situation their friends and neighbors were in. He told her that he had told them to come and share their flour until the group could return.

She was shocked and angry that he had offered to share her precious flour with the others. She didn't think about the friendship others had offered her when she had been ill, and when the baby

had died. She didn't think of the work other men had done on their home when their house was the first to be completed because she was still ill from having had her baby. She only thought that they were all poor planners or they would have had enough as she did. They would not take the flour she had bought for herself and her husband!! Just see them!!

After the tired husband had gone to sleep, she got up and spent all night baking all of her flour into bread.

The next morning when the relieved and hungry settlers came to her to borrow flour for their hungry families, she truthfully told everyone that she had not a bit of flour in her house. This poor, selfish, and luckless woman had not bargained with the weather and humidity in the northwest, for within two days all of her lovely bread had begun to mold and, alas, she had no bread either.

When her astonished husband asked her what she could possibly have been thinking of, she responded, "I knew people'd come a borryin'."