

Historical Setting

Someone has said that "The important thing in life is not to win, but to take part; not to triumph, but to struggle." Yet triumph through the experiences of the struggle not only builds character, but develops a type of manhood that is ready to attack every problem of life with enthusiasm.

John Pidding Jones was enthusiastic in attacking the many problems he met up with and it was this gusto that built confidence in his boys to the point that John Lee said at one time, "My father and I can make anything if the need is great enough." From a study in what they did with crude pioneer tools and raw materials, they did build everything that they stood in need of, they also catered to the needs of the people in the surrounding communities.

Our forefather and his children experienced extreme poverty during their early years in Utah. Poverty oftentimes leaves its adverse marks on the people who have to bear it. The sons and daughters of John Pidding Jones overcame the many scars that poverty might have afflicted on them, and they rose to degrees of success but they never became affluent in this world's goods. They were comfortable in their homes and the children grew up not knowing they were poor for everyone was in like circumstances.

One of the problems that had to be solved after settling in Johnsons Springs was the need to prove ownership to the water from the Big Spring. When John Lee Jones took up his homestead, there was a series of small springs along the brow of the bench just east of his home. The water from these springs when gathered together in a ditch amounted to but a small part of the water which came from the big spring. There were two deep washes which were called The Ravine in the bottom of which water sprung up among the rocks at the upper end. The washes joined a short distance below the springs forming a Y. The south fork contained the big spring and this was claimed by the Bell interests. John Lee claimed the water which came from a much smaller spring in the north fork of the Y. These two springs were not more than three rods apart.

A few years after John Lee had filed on the land on which the springs were located, a big flood

came down the ravine which cut the two forks much deeper than ever before. After the flood, the north fork contained the big spring and the water from the south fork was but a small part in comparison. Litigation over the water rights began and continued for several years; feelings rose to a high pitch over the ownership of the water. The courts were not able to settle the problem and establish the right to the water. The two parties were persuaded to settle by arbitration and both agreed upon the same man as the arbitrator. President of Parowan Stake, Uriah T. Jones (no relation) was chosen for the task. Pres. Jones spent many hours on the problem. He listened to both sides as each told its reasons for ownership; he studied the ground and the two washes before and after the flood. When the decision was finally given, John Lee Jones was awarded four-fifths of the water and the Bell interests one-fifth. This proved to be a satisfactory settlement. John Lee used the water four days and Brother Bell had all the water one day. This arrangement lasted until all the springs dried up in the early 1960's and water had to be pumped from wells for use in the homes in the village.

Two reasons have been suggested for the drying up of the springs. One is that the area for miles around had experienced a drought for many years. Underground water which fed the springs became less and less. The second reason is that many wells had been driven in the valley and with electric pumps used to raise the water for irrigation purposes, the water table was lowered so that water would no longer run out of the springs. This seems to be the most logical reason. It may be a combination of both. The springs had never shown signs of drying up even through the drouth years for over a hundred and fifty years or since the early Spanish trail-blazers and traders found them and named them Elkhorn Springs.

The problem of polygamy will be told in the individual stories of the men concerned. It was an unhappy experience for all. The matter of raising the money for the fines was nearly enough to break the company. The men went to the Federal prison with their heads held high, for they firmly believed in the principle, and they could quote

scripture to uphold their point of view. It was the Lord's way and they wanted the blessings that were promised. After experiencing the hardships it was difficult for them to accept the Manifesto. The men met and held long and serious discussions of the problem and it was several years before they could reconcile themselves to the new doctrine.

Something needs to be said about the cooperative spirit that grew between John P. Jones and his sons and their families. When the move to Johnsons Springs in 1870 was made, the family, upon the advice of President Brigham Young, joined into a form of the United Order which consisted of John Pidding Jones who was looked up to as the Patriarchal head, his four sons, John Lee, Sylvester F., Frederick I. and Hyrum. This Company lasted from 1870 to 1892. In October, 1878, Joseph Jones, brother of John P., moved from St. Louis, Mo. to Johnsons Springs with part of his family. Joseph was invited to join the company. His family consisted of Joseph, his 2nd wife, Anna Bryant, his two daughters, Annie and Lucy May Jones, and his stepsons, James S. Bryant and Richard Bryant. Joseph remained in Utah but a few years and then moved back to St. Louis because he was not happy with the opportunities for making a living here. His daughters, Lucy and Annie, and his stepsons, James and Richard, remained and married — Lucy married Hyrum and James married John Lee's oldest daughter, Jane. Annie married Joseph Dalley. In 1879, Frederick I. answered a call to help settle San Juan County where he lived the rest of his life.

Those who remained enjoyed a degree of prosperity. John Lee wrote in his journal that they bought a "Reaping Machine to cut the grain, a threshing machine to thresh it and a mower to cut the grass. This machinery made our labors on the farm more easy and light upon us in our bodily labors." John continued, "Previous to this time I had cut most of our grain with a scythe and cradle. I also used the sickle and hook as they did anciently; truly we now live in a day of great agricultural improvements." And then he wrote, "The Lord did bless us in all we put our hands to do in righteousness."

Under the plan of their United Order, each member was expected to work diligently at his assigned task. For example, John P. and Sylvester F. were excellent blacksmiths and they were to keep the machinery in repair, make the horseshoes and shoe the horses. They also did blacksmithing for other people in the valley, usually for nothing. John Lee was the cobbler and shoemaker and the patternmaker in the foundry. The girls were to milk the cows and, under the direction of their mothers, make the butter and cheese. The boys did the farm work, built the ditches and mended the fences.

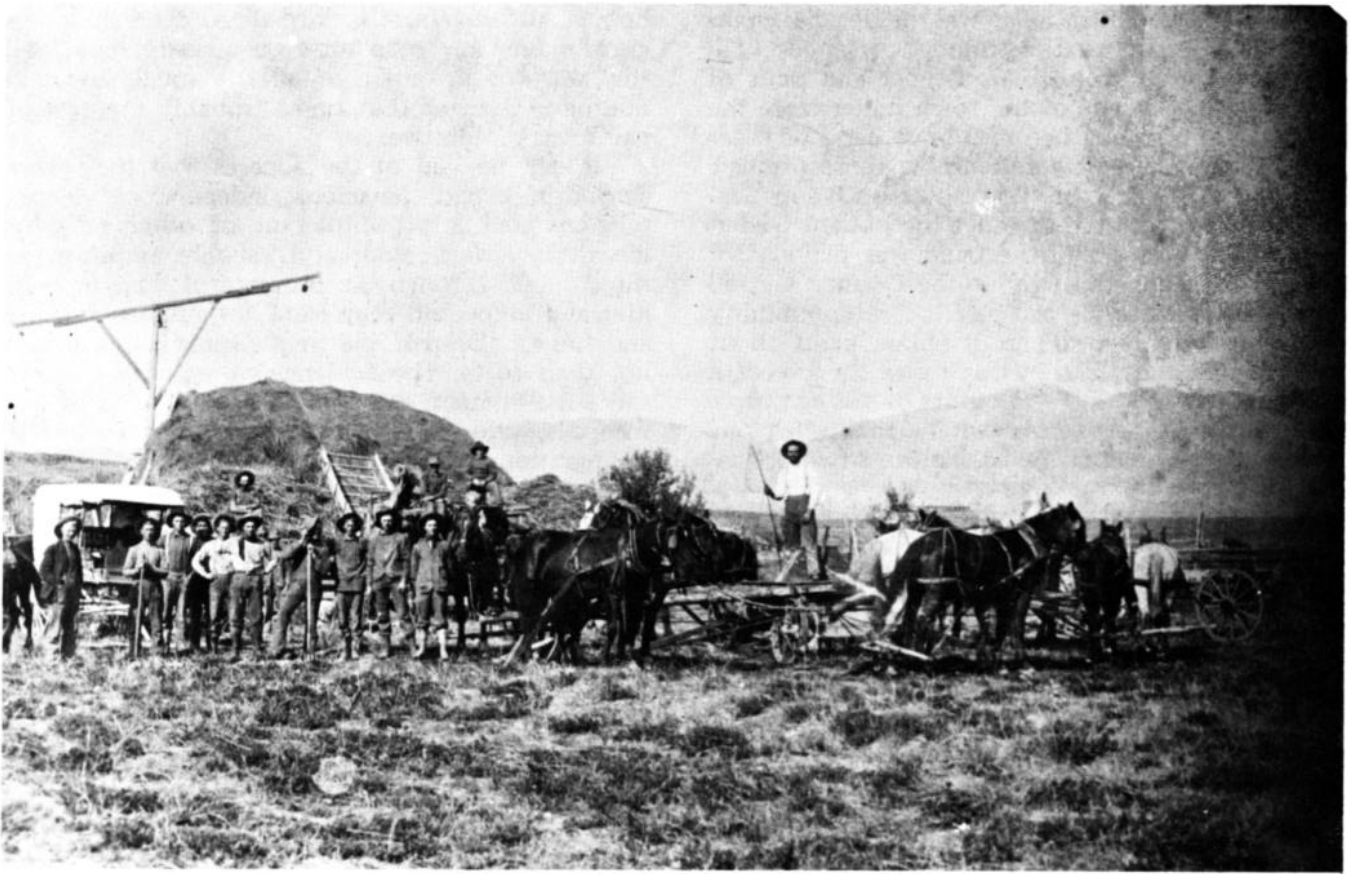
When a big operation like threshing was in order, all were expected to help, for this required a good-sized crew. John P. was the tender or foreman at first. Work began at sunup and ended at sundown with one hour at noon to feed and water the horses and have dinner. Sylvester F. drove the five teams on the horsepower. There were two feeders. One would work for a 50 bushel run then step down and no. 2 would begin his turn. This job was considered the most strenuous because the feeder had to work harder and faster, shaking up the bundles and pushing them into the machine in an even flow. It was the most undesirable because of the dust. There was a band cutter, two to three men on the grain stack, three or four boys on the straw stack, a tally man, a sack holder and two men to bear away the threshed grain and empty the sacks containing one and one-half bushels into bins in the granary. There was also a water-boy. If everything ran smoothly and the grain was of good quality, they could thresh 500 to 700 bushels in a day.

When everything was ready and the bearings all oiled, the tender would shout, "Every man to his post." He would then pull on a belt to start the machine, the horsepower driver would crack his whip and the horses would lean against their collars and the day's work would begin. The pitch of the whine of the plate wheel as it engaged the little pinion on the cylinder would indicate when the machine was up to the proper speed.

Lubricants were scarce. During the earliest days of threshing, the tender would bite off a small piece of mutton-tallow and fill the grease cups on the thresher. When the bearings warmed up, the tallow would melt and lubricate them. Wagon grease came in pound cans and had to come all the way from St. Louis. This was used to lubricate the cogs and bearings on the horsepower. If the bearings were not kept well-oiled, they would soon be rendered useless.

The work of the women at threshing time involved a good deal of preparation. I would like to describe an evening meal served the threshers, for they were something to write about. Supper began with tantalizing odors wafted clear down to the stackyard. The smell of bread fresh out of the oven and cabbage boiled until it was blue whetted the already hungry appetites. Just outside the kitchen door was ample hot water. Bars of home-made soap with wash basins and towels arranged on a long bench so one layer at least of the black, itchy accumulation of dust could be removed from hands and faces.

The table was set in the kitchen or crowded dining room. Great bowls of mashed potatoes whipped up to resemble snow with plenty of brown gravy, platters of roast mutton or beef or fried chicken, hot biscuits with freshly churned



Typical Threshing Scene, About 1900

butter would be ready when the men and boys came in. To top off with there were sliced peaches and cream or rice pudding with raisins baked in milk; or there was plain cake hot from the oven, or apple or raisin pie. The men worked hard and the women knew it would take a lot of food to fill them up.

When everyone was seated, except the women and girls, the head of the house evoked a blessing on the food and gave thanks. Then each one helped himself as the food was passed along. Singularly there was no tea or coffee served for these people observed the Word Of Wisdom. As soon as the meal was over, the men went out to tend their horses and prepare for another day. The women and girls had their chores to do. Dishes had to be washed and the kitchen scrubbed so at four o'clock next morning breakfast could be prepared.

When the first threshing machine was worn out, members of the Joneses formed a new threshing company; and since this story cannot be told in the individual histories, it seems proper to tell about it here, it also illustrates the cooperative spirit of the family. Five farmers purchased a new Red River Special threshing machine. The company consisted of John Lee, Sylvester F., Hyrum, Samuel B. and Charles E. each owning one-fifth of

the company's assets and each furnishing one team, the number needed to operate it. This company performed well for nearly twenty years. A great deal of custom threshing was done at 7 bushels on each 100 bushels threshed. In fact, a second machine was purchased and worn out before the combine took over to do its work in the fields.

A year or two after the death of John Pidding Jones, it became necessary to dissolve the United Order. John Lee being the oldest and in the patriarchal line, assumed the responsibility of dividing up the assets of the company. He allotted a greater share to the married men than the single men received. It was felt by some that the division was unjust and so bad feelings arose. The problem was difficult because there was not much to divide among so many. Time healed hurt feelings and love and cooperation became apparent again. By 1911 a new church was completed and all the descendants of John P. and Margaret who could come, met in a three-day reunion. The church was filled with a friendly, happy group of relatives. The main purpose of the reunion was to stimulate genealogical research.

About this time a desire for a town brass band became apparent. Under the leadership of John Lee and Hyrum a meeting of the heads of families was called and a committee was appointed. William

H. Grimshaw, a man who had had some experience with musical organizations, was made the chairman. Twenty-four used instruments of good quality were ordered from J. W. Pepper and Sons of Chicago. Five leaders of the town underwrote the cost. It was not long before a brass band of eager musicians of all ages were learning to read music and were vigorously blasting notes both sour and sweet. In a few months, under the patient leadership of Will Grimshaw, the band was playing for various functions throughout the County and all members were having a "ball." The community took considerable pride in its brass band about which it was said, "If they don't play the sweetest, they play the loudest." A number of young people had their love of music whetted through the experience they had in the Enoch Brass Band.

The history of Enoch and of the Joneses in particular was one cooperative effort after another. The detail of many of these projects is given in the histories of the men and women in this book.

One characteristic the Joneses did not have was a lack of industry. One thing in criticism can be

said: they used outside paint sparingly. Their homes suffered from lack of it. As their buildings grew older, the town took on a seedy look, and this was characteristic of all the small towns in Southern Utah at that time. Probably the cost of paint was prohibitive.

It can be said of the Joneses that they were stubborn, proud, tenacious, independent, deeply religious and a bit intolerant of other religious ideas. They were resourceful, capable, ambitious in their march through the poverty of their pioneer life; and above all, they were law-abiding, reliable and honest. Despair and helplessness in poverty is not their forte. The evidence we now have shows the same characteristics in the generations of our forefathers during the hundreds of years before the immigration to Utah.

Such a noble heritage has been passed on to the generations of this age. We can be proud to say we are descendents of a line of men and women of such noble character. The editor of this book prays that the sketches herein reported of our people will be a source of inspiration to all of us to live lives worthy of our humble ancestors.