

Young was firm and decided; he put on a smile when among the people, and said this was the place God had pointed out for the gathering place of the Saints, and it would be blessed and become one of the most productive places in the world. In this way he encouraged the people, and he was sustained by men who felt that God had inspired him to lead us here.

President Young went back to Winter Quarters the first season, and in 1848, returned with his family. John Smith, my honored father, who was subsequently Patriarch of the whole Church, and who had been President of the Stake in Nauvoo, presided during the absence of President Young. I think that, for a man of his age and health, it was, in many respects, a very unpleasant position to be placed in, for all the murmuring, complaining, faultfinding, distress, hunger, annoyances, fears, and doubts of the whole people were poured into his ear. But God inspired him, although a feeble man, to keep up their spirits, and to sustain the work that was entrusted to him until the arrival of the President next season.

In three years—1850, the idea of a man issuing rations to his family to keep them from starving had passed away; but the grasshopper war of 1856 inflicted upon us so great a scarcity, that issuing rations had to be resorted to again. Through all these circumstances no one was permitted to suffer, though all had to be pinched. I shall not attempt to give a detailed account of all the circumstances connected with our position in those trying times. But when our brethren arrive here by railroad and see a country smiling with plenty, I think they can hardly appreciate how it looked when we came.

When I first sat down on this ground, in 1847, I was dressed in buckskin, having torn most of my

clothes to pieces. I had rawhide soles on my feet, and had a piece of hard bread and a piece of dried antelope meat to eat. I lay down, took my pistol in my hand, and held on to my horse by a lariat while eating my meat and biscuit, for fear the Indians might take a notion to my hair, of which I was always very choice. I took that meal near where our City Hall now stands. There has been quite an improvement since then.

The first year of our settlement here the crops were greatly injured by crickets, and many of the people gave up all hope, and it seemed as if actual starvation was inevitable for the whole colony. God sent gulls from the Lake, and they came and devoured the crickets. It seemed as if they were heavenly messengers sent to stay the famine. They would eat until they were filled, and would then disgorge; and so they continued eating and vomiting until the fields were cleared, and the colony saved: Praise the Lord! During the time of scarcity, when there was a short allowance of bread, the people were remarkably healthy, more so than they were afterwards when food became more plentiful.

In 1847, it was the counsel for every person leaving the Missouri River to be provided with three hundred and sixty-five pounds of breadstuff; many, however, came with less. The next season they were to bring three hundred pounds, the season after two hundred and fifty pounds; but in 1850, the people came with just enough to serve them during their journey across the Plains. In 1849, President Young founded the P. E. Fund. We had covenanted while in Conference in the Temple at Nauvoo, that we would never quit our exertions to the extent of our influence and property, until every man, woman and child of the Latter-