

## THE HADLEY CONNECTION

Ken and Patricia Hadley

My father, Silas A. Bushman, was a teacher. During the Depression, positions were scarce and teachers were not often paid in cash—only in vouchers, which were not always honored for the full amount. It was with pleasure, then, that he accepted a position with the government to teach young men in the Civilian Conservation Corps who needed to finish high school. He would receive regular paychecks to take care of his family of six.

After serving one year in Paradise Valley, Nevada, we were transferred to Leeds, Utah, where the larger CCC camp needed a math teacher. I was 3 years old when we came to Leeds, and there were no rental houses at first so we shared the home of a kind widow lady. After a few months, the family that were renting the Tithing House moved out, and we were able to rent and move into that two-room building. This is where my childhood memories really began.

There was little plumbing in the house—just a water tap in the kitchen wall, where we filled buckets of water for all our cooking and bathing needs. We had an outhouse in the back, and we all took turns bathing in a round metal tub, with water heated on the stove. My father built a sleeping porch on the back, so that my one brother could have a little privacy. My parents, my sisters and I all slept in the back room (or bedroom).

Because they were so often moving, my parents had never bought a home, but this little house—on its own property—seemed like “our home.” No one in Leeds had a very big house during the Depression, and we were comfortable in our tiny stone building surrounded by a handsome stone wall. Our house walls were 18 inches thick, and we felt protected from the winter cold and the summer sun.

At first, my siblings were all in school, so they walked the half mile to the two-room school building which had been brought into Leeds from Silver Reef when the mining stopped in that town. There were four grades in each room, so teachers had to be flexible and prepared in four different curricula to teach there.

Across the alley from the Tithing House, there was one girl, Geraldine, who was not yet in school, and we became best friends. We liked to build doll houses with bits of colored glass under the bushes by the wall. Our dolls were made from hollyhocks. We also liked to walk from our back yard up a small hill, where we could overlook the whole town and feel quite important. Often, we could see the students being released from school and watch them walk all the way home. In later years, we each had our turn to take that walk to and from the two-room school.

Our life in the Leeds Tithing House may have had its problems, but I was not aware of anything very difficult. To me, both at the time and in my memories, it was an idyllic life, and I was distressed when Dad announced that we would be transferred. Although we lived there less than four years, Leeds remained my “home town” in my thoughts.

As we were growing up, if we ever went to Arizona or California, we always stopped in Leeds to see our home and visit friends. Years later, we learned that someone had bought the house from the church. Even though no one moved into the house, we could see signs of visits. A large garage appeared at the back of the property and later a ramp was built from the driveway to the front door. Still, the yard was not taken care of and there was seldom anyone around.

We got the name of the owner, Joseph Beesley, and asked if he would like to sell the property. The answer was a resounding "no." Although Mr. Beesley hoped to retire there, we learned his wife's illness made it difficult to move from their comfortable house up north. After both parents passed away, we were finally able to buy the home from their children.

At some point, plumbing had been installed in the home. During one of the long periods when no one was on the property, a pipe broke and it wasn't known until a neighbor noticed water seeping from the house. They got the city water turned off, but much damage was done to the interior. When Ken examined the building, he found that the exterior walls were still in excellent condition, and we appreciated the fine craftsmanship of those early builders.

Inside, however, we could see that most of the walls would have to be gutted, and the small bathroom and some kitchen fixtures were ruined. Mr. Beesley had lowered the ceiling, moved the main wall and added kitchen appliances to suit the needs of his family, so it could have been quite a livable home. In the process of removing the damaged interior, we talked about how much of it we should save. With traffic patterns on the pine floor, we could see where the main wall had been, and as the ceiling was crumbling, Ken could tell that it had been 11-foot high at one time.

Ken and I decided that we would prefer to restore the building to its first layout, and that we wanted to allow others to come and visit the property, and perhaps even stay overnight, so we would make our living quarters in the large garage. We decided the Tithing House should become a small museum of earlier times—but we would keep the plumbing!

In the first year, we put on a new roof, and Ken tore out all the walls inside. We brought a small trailer onto the property so we had a place to eat and sleep while he worked on the building. Since we have another home 300 miles up north in Farmington, we could not work full time on the Tithing House, which has made it a slow process. Next, Ken rebuilt the interior, restoring the main wall to its original location and raising the ceiling. He reconfigured the small bathroom and will allow kitchen appliances in the front room, but they will be hidden by old-time furniture and crates.

We decided that the front room will represent the original use of the Tithing House, and the bedroom will be designed to represent the families who rented the house in the 1930s and '40s. New flooring was needed, so we bought maple floor boards for the bedroom and wider pine boards for the "office." Glass bricks were made part of the bathroom upper wall, and lace curtains will be used in the bedroom.

During our building process, we have had many visitors, who encouraged our work and enjoyed learning about tithing houses. At one time, we met the Fullers, whose parents, Stanley and Sadie, lived in this very house before the Bushman family moved in! Several others of that family have since come and they are happy that the home is being restored. We have been given some pages from Sadie Fuller's journal, in which she talks about moving into the Tithing House:

"The first thing I did was to spend one entire day pulling nails out of the woodwork (where previous renters had hung clothes), and filling the holes with putty. Then Stanley patched the plaster spots and calcimined (sic) the walls a light ivory color. I painted the woodwork a soft light green. It took me a full day to clean the stove, scrubbing grease and scouring the chrome bright."

We felt closely connected to the Fullers after reading about their work on the Tithing House, and we appreciate Sadie for keeping a record. I was especially happy that I had just purchased the paint for the bedroom—a soft light green.