

CHAPTER II THE ORDER

During the years while his father was manager of the co-op store, Clem assisted in the store after school and on Saturdays. The store was located on the ground floor of the opera house, doing a lively business in general merchandising. Saturday was the big day of the week and the store stayed open late to accommodate customers who came in to town from the outlying settlement to purchase supplies and to enjoy some reprieve from the drudgery and isolation of farm life.

It was on just such a busy Saturday afternoon that a very unexpected thing happened, which caught the settlers unawares and unprepared.. It was the custom for one large barrel of Whiskey to be shipped. each year from Salt Lake City to the co-op store to be "dispensed prudently and with discretion in small portions for medicinal purposes." The saints knew well the long-standing position of the Church as to the use of strong drink of any kind, and it was assumed that it would not be used. as a beverage. Nevertheless, was still considered. an appropriate, if not officially sanctioned, frontier safeguard to have some on hand in the household for emergencies.

And so it was on that particular Saturday afternoon, a month before anyone expected it, that the dray-man unloaded the annual barrel. Ordinarily word was sent out in advance so that the settlers could be there with a container to purchase their allotted portion when the bung was tapped. and before it was all gone.

Clem signed. the dray bill and he and Tom Blackburn helped. the drayman get it into the cellar. But, the whole operation had been observed by some of customers in the store. The curiosity of one man from the North String settlement couldn't be restrained and a few questions soon drew out an admission from the clerks that there were "spirits in the barrel."