

*Ernest Co. Archives
from Sylvia*

Life on the world-war II era rural Utah farm was relatively primitive by today's standards. However, problems were successfully addressed with pioneer ingenuity and work. During the conflict, Seeley's Sunny Cove fruit farm 5 miles west of Huntington on highway 10 was a typical example. The farm had a rock-walled produce/fruit-cellar dug into the hillside with a pole/willow/earthen-roof, inside and outside doors kept heat out. A deep sawdust pit on the cellar's west side was used to keep river ice frozen for use in late spring and early summer. A burlap covered cooler, evaporatively cooled by continuous gravity-drench ditch water, was used to cool milk, cream, cheese, and the weekly beef-trust cuts of meat. One room of a small log grainery was lined with sheet metal to hold wheat and another room served as a workbench/forge/tool-room. A 6 foot waterwheel, used to charge batteries for cars and radios, was powered by water from the ditch that ran around the hillside behind and above the barnyard. These buildings and accouterments were on the periphery of a corral for animals. But, the focal point of the farmyard was the pole barn.

A barn was not only the center of the corral, manger, and sheds for animal shelter, but was a play center for farm children and their friends. Soft piles of hay provided a forgiving cushion for falls from "Tarzan" and trapeze swings and long high pole beams for the daring to walk. The smooth feel of pine poles, the fuzzy-sharp braided feel of hemp rope, the cool feel of barn bolts and washers on a hot day, and the bounciness of piled alfalfa were lessons in touch. The green of alfalfa, the rich brown of aged wood, the blue of the sky, and translucent laciness of splashing water cascading down the hill enlarged seeing. The song of sparrows, finches, and orioles over the splash of water of the ditch, waterfall, and waterwheel, the creaks of wood on wood and rope on wood, and the sounds of farm animals filled one's hearing. The enfolding smell of newly harvested hay, of junipers after a rain, and of crisp mountain sage-brushed air gave added, spicier dimensions to young lives. Candy was always sweeter, cherries were always juicier, green apples were always tangier, and time was always enjoyed in more of its dimensions when one was in the barn.

The barn, used to store alfalfa hay, was 48' long, 24' wide, and 36' high. Drannan and Leith Seeley obtained timbers from the canyon and erected the barn about 1940. Knowledge of physics and geometry enabled two men to build the barn to the square and

then erect the rafters and ridge-poles for the roof. A moveable 50' pole tripod was erected with a chain and lag-bolt binding at the top to which a chained 2-pulley-rope compound leverage system was attached. A horse provided lifting power. A 1" rope running through the pulleys provided vertical lifting and support for poles and lifting of rafters. The south side of the barn was erected first with five 10-12" by 30' posts placed 10.5' apart and 6' deep in the ground. Eye poles, spliced with a 10' pole at the center post, were placed in 5" insets at the north/top of the vertical poles. The eye poles projected 6' out on the east side of the barn for hay-fork clearance. Another set of poles was attached to the top of the vertical poles to provide a square angle for the rafter ends. The north side was erected with three vertical posts on 21' centers with a similar eve and bracing structure. The braces on the north, however, were only 8' long to provide large openings for rolling wagon-loads of hay into the barn. Once the barn was completed to the square the rafter systems were assembled on the ground. A rafter system was composed of two rafter poles having horizontal cuts on their bottom ends and with vertical-cut top ends held apart with a horizontal brace just far enough below the top to serve as the base of a notch for the ridge-pole. The system was stabilized with a lower brace that was removed later. Rafter systems were lifted one by one to their location on the eve poles. The first placed rafter was stabilized and squared with two diagonal pole braces on the north and south sides. Then additional rafters were placed over the diagonal braces one by one. After six to eight rafter systems were placed, a ridge-pole was lifted over them, placed in the top notch and secured with long nails. After the rafters were in place, horizontal poles were placed over the eaves and at 3' centers to the top on each side. They were covered with 1" X 10" X 14' boards from the ridge to the eaves. A double rail, suspended from the ridgepoles by bolts anchored to horseshoes, carried a traveler that traversed the rail from one end of the barn to the other. A hayfork mechanically joined the traveler when loaded with hay and pulled up by horse-power. The joining triggered the traveler to traverse the rail and the hay was dumped with a pull-rope. The Jackson fork arrangement proved to be rather slow and a faster "V" rope method was adopted. A V-shaped rope was placed across the wagon before hay was loaded. When the wagon was loaded and pulled to the side of the barn, two guide ropes were tied to the open ends of the V and to the opposite side of the barn. A longer rope

was attached to the pointed end of the V and over the hay to the opposite side of the barn and a horse pulling the rope rolled the load off the wagon and into the barn. Hay could be pulled to the ridge of the barn in this fashion.

Schuyler Seeley, March 2005

Sylvia,
This was written
by Schuyler - by the
to Long Elmer Brown +
I'll show him what
it - the dirt bar a
Pistons + wire added to it
+ changed it some -
Lexie