

THE HISTORY OF SHROVE TUESDAY AT EMMANUEL

HISTORY AT EMMANUEL

MRS. HARRIET NETTELL, LONG-TIME MEMBER OF THE PARISH WHO WAS PRESENT AT THE FIRST SHROVE TUESDAY WAFFLE SALE AT EMMANUEL, TOLD THE HISTORY OF THIS EVENT. IN THE SPRING OF 1916, ST. CATHERINE'S GUILD WAS HOLDING IT'S REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING. MISS ANNIE CURTIS, THE PRESIDENT, WAS IN CHARGE OF THE MEETING. DR. BERT FOSTER WAS THE RECTOR AT THAT TIME, AND SINCE LENT WAS CLOSE AT HAND, HE WAS TELLING THE WOMEN OF THE GUILD ABOUT THE PANCAKE SALES THAT WERE HELD IN ENGLAND ON SHROVE TUESDAY. HE SUGGESTED THAT HE WOULD BE PLEASED TO HAVE ST. CATHERINE'S GUILD DO SOMETHING SIMILAR.

THE OLD PARISH HALL, WHICH BEGAN ON THE SITE OF THE CURRENT RECTORY AS THE PARSONAGE AND WAS LATER MOVED TO THE CURRENT SITE OF BUCK HALL, WAS ILL EQUIPPED TO HANDLE ANYTHING ALONG THAT LINE. THERE WAS AN OLD WOOD STOVE IN THE MAKESHIFT KITCHEN OFF THE HALL. ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE GUILD MENTIONED THAT SHE HAD A WAFFLE IRON, WHICH COULD BE USED OVER THE KITCHEN WOOD STOVE. FOR ANYONE WHO HAS NEVER SEEN THE OLD WAFFLE IRONS, THEY WERE MADE OF IRON AND SAT ON A STAND THAT WAS PLACED OVER THE OPEN LID OF THE WOOD STOVE TO HEAT. TWO HANDLES WERE ATTACHED TO THE IRON, WHICH COULD BE TURNED OVER TO ALLOW BOTH SIDES OF THE WAFFLE TO BAKE.

ON SHROVE TUESDAY IN 1916 EIGHT LADIES CAME TOGETHER TO ENJOY A WAFFLE SUPPER FOLLOWED BY A GAME OF CARDS BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF THE LENTEN SEASON. TWENTY-FIVE CENTS PER PERSON WAS CHARGED, THUS MAKING A GRAND TOTAL OF \$2.00, AND THEY WERE VERY PLEASED WITH THEIR EFFORTS. AFTER DR. FOSTER LEFT THE PARISH THE WAFFLE SALE CEASED FOR A YEAR OR TWO UNTIL REV. VERNON HARRIS CAME AND THE SALE WAS RESUMED. THAT YEAR \$6.00 WAS EARNED AND THE OCCASION BECAME AN ANNUAL FUNDRAISER. MEMBERS OF THE PARISH WERE EACH ASKED TO CONTRIBUTE AN ITEM TO DEFRAY THE COST OF THE EVENT, AND AN INVITATION TO THE COMMUNITY TO ATTEND WAS EXTENDED. WITH THE COMING OF ELECTRIC IRONS, A NEW PARISH HALL WITH A WELL-EQUIPPED KITCHEN, MUCH ADVERTISING, AND A LOT OF HARD WORK ON THE PART OF THE MEMBERS OF THE WHOLE PARISH, WE HAVE ARRIVED AT THE REMARKABLE POINT THAT THE WAFFLE SALE IS TODAY.

WHAT IS SHROVE TUESDAY?

BUT WHAT IS SHROVE TUESDAY? THE LAST THREE DAYS BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF LENT IS KNOWN AS SHROVETIDE. THE OLD NAMES FOR THESE DAYS WERE: 1) QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY – SHROVE SUNDAY, THE FIFTIETH DAY BEFORE EASTER; 2) COLLOP MONDAY – SHROVE MONDAY, NAMED AFTER THE TRADITIONAL DISH OF THE DAY; COLLOPS OF BACON SERVED WITH EGGS. IN ADDITION TO PROVIDING LITTLE MEAT, THE COLLOPS WERE ALSO THE SOURCE OF THE FAT FOR THE FOLLOWING DAY'S PANCAKES, AND 3) PANCAKE DAY – SHROVE TUESDAY, THE DAY ON WHICH ALL FATS AND CREAM HAD TO BE USED UP. SHROVE TUESDAY IS ONE OF THE MOVEABLE FEASTS IN THE CHURCH CALENDAR AND IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE DATE ON WHICH EASTER FALLS. SHROVE TUESDAY ALWAYS FALLS 47 DAYS BEFORE EASTER SUNDAY SO THE DATE VARIES FROM YEAR TO YEAR AND FALLS BETWEEN FEBRUARY 3 AND MARCH 9. THE WORD SHROVE IS A PAST TENSE OF THE ENGLISH VERB "SHRIVE", WHICH MEANS TO OBTAIN ABSOLUTION FOR ONE'S SINS BY CONFESSING AND DOING PENANCE. SHROVE TUESDAY GETS ITS NAME FROM THE

SHRIVING (CONFESSING) THAT ENGLISH CHRISTIANS WERE EXPECTED TO DO PRIOR TO RECEIVING ABSOLUTION IMMEDIATELY BEFORE LENT BEGAN.

SHROVE TUESDAY IS A DAY OF CELEBRATION, AS WELL AS PENITENCE, BECAUSE IT'S THE LAST DAY BEFORE LENT. LENT IS A TIME OF ABSTINENCE, OF GIVING THINGS UP. SO SHROVE TUESDAY IS THE LAST CHANCE TO INDULGE YOUR SELF, AND TO USE UP THE FOODS THAT AREN'T ALLOWED IN LENT. IN THE OLD DAYS THERE WERE MANY FOODS THAT OBSERVANT CHRISTIANS WOULD NOT EAT DURING LENT: FOODS SUCH AS MEAT AND FISH, FATS, EGGS, AND DAIRY PRODUCTS. SO THAT NO FOOD WAS WASTED, FAMILIES WOULD HAVE A FEAST ON THE SHRIVING TUESDAY, AND EAT UP ALL THE FOODS THAT WOULDN'T LAST THE FORTY DAYS OF LENT WITHOUT SPOILING. THE NEED TO EAT UP THE FAT GAVE RISE TO THE FRENCH NAME *MARDI GRAS* ("FAT TUESDAY"). PANCAKES BECAME ASSOCIATED WITH SHROVE TUESDAY, AS THEY WERE A DISH THAT COULD USE UP ALL THE EGGS, FATS AND MILK IN THE HOUSE WITH JUST THE ADDITION OF FLOUR.

SHROVETIDE WAS CELEBRATED WITH GAMES, SPORTS, DANCING AND OTHER REVELRIES. THERE WERE FEASTS TO USE UP THE FOOD THAT COULD NOT BE EATEN DURING THE LENTEN FAST. FOOTBALL WAS PLAYED IN THE STREETS AND NICKANAN NIGHT (AS SHROVE MONDAY EVENING WAS CALLED IN CORNWALL) WAS A TIME FOR BOYS TO RUN RIOT IN THE VILLAGES; HIDING GATES, TAKING OFF DOORKNOCKERS, AND MAKING OFF WITH ANYTHING THAT HOUSEHOLDERS HAD FORGOTTEN TO LOCK AWAY. THE ORIGIN OF PANCAKE RACING IS THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN IN OLNEY, 1445. A WOMAN FROM OLNEY HAD LOST TRACK OF THE TIME ON SHROVE TUESDAY, AND WAS BUSY COOKING PANCAKES IN HER KITCHEN. SUDDENLY SHE HEARD THE CHURCH BELL RINGING TO CALL THE FAITHFUL TO CHURCH FOR CONFESSION. THE WOMAN RACED OUT OF HER HOUSE AND RAN ALL THE WAY TO CHURCH STILL HOLDING HER FRYING PAN AND WEARING HER APRON. ON PANCAKE DAY, PANCAKE RACES ARE HELD IN VILLAGES AND TOWNS ACROSS THE UNITED KINGDOM. IN 1634 WILLIAM FENNOR WROTE IN HIS *PALINODIA*: "AND TOSSE THEIR PANCAKES UP FOR FEARE THEY BURNE." THE CONTESTANTS, TRADITIONALLY WOMEN, CARRY A FRYING PAN AND RACE TO THE FINISH LINE TOSSING THE PANCAKES AS THEY GO. AS THE PANCAKES ARE THIN, SKILL IS REQUIRED TO TOSS THEM SUCCESSFULLY WHILE RUNNING. THE WINNER IS THE FIRST TO CROSS THE LINE HAVING TOSSED THE PANCAKE A CERTAIN NUMBER OF TIMES.