

**HISTORY OF THE UNITED
CO-OPERATIVE BAKING
SOCIETY LTD. A FIFTY
YEARS' RECORD, 1869-1919**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649752591

History of the United Co-Operative Baking Society Ltd. A Fifty Years' Record, 1869-1919 by
William Reid

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

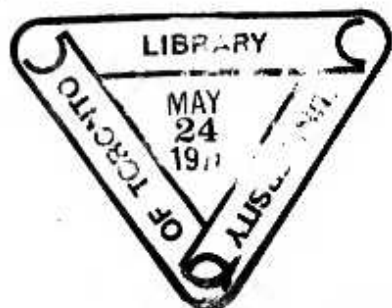
Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

WILLIAM REID

**HISTORY OF THE UNITED
CO-OPERATIVE BAKING
SOCIETY LTD. A FIFTY
YEARS' RECORD, 1869-1919**



HD
19057
G. 1. 637

PREFACE.

THE chief advantage of prefaces is the opportunities they give authors for making apologies and for returning thanks. In the present instance the hurry with which the book has had to be written did not allow time enough to do many things which the writer would have liked to do. He would have liked to linger with the old-time enthusiasts who laid the foundations of the Society, to have made himself as familiar as possible with the times in which they lived and with the thoughts in their minds, so that he might be able to present to his readers a picture of their times as they saw them, and of their difficulties as they had to encounter them. For this there was no time, and so he has had to content himself with telling a plain, unvarnished tale of difficulties met and overcome, of a faith which refused to be dismayed, and of a triumph which is visible to all.

Unfortunately, there is no one alive to-day who had any active part in the inception of the Society. This increased the difficulty of presenting a true picture of the beginnings of the Society, but some help in this direction was got from the "Year Book," which had been written by Mr Lochrie in 1896. The writer is also very much indebted to Mr David

Brown, of the office staff of the Society, who prepared synopses of the various minutes of the Society. These synopses, by indicating the salient points in the minutes, greatly lightened the labour of selection; but, in addition, every minute has been carefully read at least once, and many of them much oftener, so that complete accuracy might be secured.

Great assistance in dealing with the history of the last thirty years has also been given by Mr James H. Forsyth, cashier of the Society, whose knowledge of the transactions of that period is unparalleled.

W. R.

CONTENTS.

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	SCOTLAND IN THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES - - - - -	1
II.	THE DAWN OF CO-OPERATION - - - - -	7
III.	THE FIRST YEAR - - - - -	17
IV.	ST JAMES STREET BAKERY - - - - -	29
V.	THE BRANCH CONTROVERSY - - - - -	43
VI.	ST JAMES STREET: DEVELOPMENTS - - - - -	56
VII.	ST JAMES STREET: CONGESTION - - - - -	69
VIII.	M'NEIL STREET - - - - -	82
IX.	M'NEIL STREET: RAPID DEVELOPMENTS - - - - -	97
X.	FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS - - - - -	110
XI.	FURTHER EXTENSIONS - - - - -	123
XII.	CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT - - - - -	144
XIII.	CLYDEHANK BRANCH - - - - -	158
XIV.	BELFAST BRANCH - - - - -	166
XV.	A NEW PRESIDENT - - - - -	184
XVI.	FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH - - - - -	197
XVII.	PROGRESS CONTINUES STEADY - - - - -	210
XVIII.	BAKING UNDER WAR CONDITIONS - - - - -	224
XIX.	BREAD BAKING UNDER CONTROL - - - - -	238
XX.	EDUCATIONAL WORK - - - - -	253
XXI.	MEN WHO WROUGHT: STATISTICS - - - - -	262
		273

ILLUSTRATIONS.

CENTRAL PREMISES	<i>Frontispiece</i>
COBURG STREET AND ST JAMES STREET PREMISES	<i>Facing page 16</i>
M'NEIL STREET PREMISES	" 17
M'NEIL STREET PREMISES	" 32
CLYDEBANK BAKERY	" 33
PAST PRESIDENTS (1)	" 64
PAST PRESIDENTS (2)	" 65
PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY	" 80
AUDITORS	" 81
DIRECTORS (1)	" 112
DIRECTORS (2)	" 113
BELFAST ADVISORY COMMITTEE	" 128
MANAGER AND CASHIER	" 128
EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEE	" 160
PRIZE SILVER BAND	" 161
BELFAST BAKERY	" 178
ST MUNGO HALLS	" 177
DEPARTMENTAL MANAGERS (1)-	" 208
DEPARTMENTAL MANAGERS (2)-	" 209
DEPUTATIONS TO ENGLAND (1)-	" 224
DEPUTATIONS TO ENGLAND (2)-	" 225
ROLL OF HONOUR	" 277

CHAPTER I.

SCOTLAND IN THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES.

GENERAL SOCIAL CONDITIONS—EARLY FARMING METHODS—POVERTY OF THE PEOPLE—MINERS AS SERFS—"THE SOUTH SEA BUBBLE"—IMPROVING CONDITIONS: THE ACT OF UNION AND ITS EFFECTS—THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION—THE FACTORY SYSTEM: ITS EFFECT ON THE STATUS OF MEN.

THE conditions under which the people of Scotland lived during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were rude and uncouth, and, when judged by modern standards, could scarcely be described as other than appalling. In the few towns of any size, stone buildings were the rule; but in the rural districts the majority of the people lived in huts, the walls of which were built of sods and stones, and which were roofed with wattles and thatched with rushes. These huts were windowless save for a hole in the wall which admitted some air but very little light during the summer, and which was stuffed with rags and rushes during winter in order to keep out the snell North wind. The floor was but earth, hardened with the trampling of countless feet; and fireplace or chimney there was none, unless a few stones set in the middle of the floor or against one of the gables can be called a fireplacc, and a hole in the roof, through which the smoke found its way after it had explored every nook and cranny of the house, a chimney.

Famine was an almost annual visitor. The majority of the people lived by agriculture, but the land was cold and undrained, and the methods of tilling were ineffective. The motive power was sometimes provided by oxen, but often the people harnessed themselves to the primitive implements. The result was that the grain grown was poor in quality and scanty in quantity, while often it failed to ripen because of the wetness of the [soil, and because, also, of lateness in sowing. The cattle were poor and underfed. Roots for feeding purposes were unknown until

near the end of the period; there was no grain to spare, and little straw or hay for winter feeding, so that the poor brutes had to forage for themselves as best they could.

In the hall of the laird the position was a little better, but few of the lairds of that day could aspire to the standard of living of a moderately well-to-do farmer of to-day. Of food there was always enough in the hall, but it was coarse and unsavoury. Throughout the winter fresh meat was unknown. The cattle were killed in the autumn; the meat was stored in brine barrels, and this brine-soaked meat, or swine flesh preserved in the same manner, was the only meat which found a place on the table of the laird during the winter months, except on the few occasions of great importance when one or two fowls were killed.

The farming class, if it be not a misnomer to call them farmers, usually lived in groups of such huts as are described above, and tilled their land more or less in common. The system chiefly in vogue was the "run rig" system, under which exchange of ground took place every year. The more important of their crude implements were also held in common, and as these could only be used by one person at a time—as, also, it was often well on in the spring before any thought of tillage occurred to them or the condition of their water-logged soil would permit of it, and as much time was often lost in deciding the rotation in the use of the implements—the return in the good years was only just sufficient for their wants. As the bad years were generally twice as numerous as the good years, the conditions of the rural workers were generally most miserable. Ill-treated Nature, receiving no encouragement from man save the "tickling of her face with a stick," refused to give of her bounty, and the people who depended on her for life suffered accordingly.

A condition of continual hunger was the lot of the labourers who had no land to till. They were often forced to depend for food on the roots and berries they could gather in the woods; the scraps which went to feed the laird's pigs were luxuries which only came their way at long intervals. Work was intermittent; it was poorly paid, for money was even scarcer than food. The only landless men who had what might be termed a decent living wage for the period were the miners. They received about a shilling a day; but, in return, they sold themselves into