

# DROUGHT AND HARVEST

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Many years ago my father was the Methodist minister appointed to Rainbow, a little town in the Victorian Mallee.

We shared the onset of drought with the people of Rainbow.

The Senior Circuit Stewart approached father with the news that he could not pay him his quarterly stipend because there was absolutely no money in the Circuit coffers. He did suggest that perhaps he could raise some money against his own personal life insurance policy to tide us over. Of course father, having survived droughts in his former life as a Mallee farmer's son, said "No, we will see this out with our people". But once the rain had come and this drought was over, the next year

one of the church's celebrations, the Harvest Festival, was held.

The trestle table was brought out of its hiding place under the stage in Sunday School Hall and was draped with precious white tablecloths. Pride of place was taken by a loaf of bread and a crystal jug of water.

On one such occasion, the little girl at the Parsonage was sent to the bakery (which was open on a Saturday afternoon) to collect a 'high tin quarter of bread' for the table. My journey back to the church was enlivened by plucking a few mouthfuls of this lovely bread!

Rainbow had a Bush Nursing Hospital and the goodies were taken there when the celebration was over.

## *Reflection:*

*We sang heartily at Harvest Festival Services:*

*We thank Thee, O Father,  
For all things bring and good,  
The seed-time and the harvest,  
Our life, our health, our food;*

*Accept the gifts we offer  
For all Thy love imparts,  
And, what Thou most desirest,  
Our humble, thankful hearts*

*MHB963*