

# **The Bread Poultice**

**Collector:**                      **Gertie Fowler**

**Contributor:**                **Ella Ryland**

**Gertie Fowler:**

How are you today?

**Ella Ryland:**

Oh, not too bad.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Okay, I came today now to ask you if you would share with me today some old fashioned remedies that ah your grandmother had shared with you. Do you have any that you would like to share with me?

**Ella Ryland:**

Yes, I'm going to tell you this one about my Uncle, ah... he was up around the shore duck huntin' and ah....he fired at a company of ducks and he ah...the shot...the gun before he went to get the chance for to fire at the birds, his gun went off and all the ah...shot went in his foot.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Okay.

**Ella Ryland:**

So he came home and he phoned over for Grandmother.

**Gertie Fowler:**

He called over, they never had any phones did they?

**Ella Ryland:**

No, I think someone came over after her and she went over and she looked at this foot. She said "I think what I'm going to do, is ah... put a bread poultice on".

**Gertie Fowler:**

So what is a bread poultice?

**Ella Ryland:**

Well, she went and cut off a bun of bread.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Okay.

**Ella Ryland:**

And she put the bread in soak, in water, and then she squeezed the water out of the bread; got all the water out of the bread and then she put it on a piece of flour sack. What they use to have one time, they use to wash out the flour sacks after they had a sack of flour, a hundred pound sack of flour, and when the flour was gone out of the sack they'd wash it out and they use to keep it for bandages. For if anyone cut their selves or something that they could put a poultice on.

**Gertie Fowler:**

That's all they had....

**Ella Ryland:**

Yes. Yes.

**Gertie Fowler:**

That's all they had to use back then was it?

**Ella Ryland:**

Yes, Yes. And ah she cut the bag down in two and she put the bun of bread, the poultice right on the cloth and then she ah...put a little bit of olive oil or some kind of grease on the poultice and then she wacked it right on his foot.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Okay, so how long would that be before it got better?

**Ella Ryland:**

Well....oh...she was going back and forth dressing it every day, probably when she started first, she use to dress it twice a day.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Yeah.

**Ella Ryland:**

But after it started to get better, she use to dress it once a day.

**Gertie Fowler:**

So how long was he now before he started walking on that foot again.

**Ella Ryland:**

Oh...it was a long while my dear.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Yes, maid.

**Ella Ryland:**

A long while. Yeah and before the story now ....er ah before that, when she'd take off the bandages, when she'd go to change the bandages, when she'd take them off. The bandages would be full of ah.....shot.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Yes, maid.

**Ella Ryland:**

That was in the cartridges, like hey. The shot....there's a whole lot of shot in his leg..in his foot, hey. And I ah....I'm sure that I ever heard her say that Uncle Ralph is gone down to the grave with the shot in his....

**Gertie Fowler:**

Yes, maid.

**Ella Ryland:**

...with the shot in his feet, or in that foot hey. But I mean ah....his ....he could walk....oh he could walk. He could walk again and his foot got better but the nurse that was up there was Miss Hewitt and she came down one day to visit him.

And when she ....as it happened grandmother was over there right at the time so ah....she took the dressing off and showed her and she said ah...."my dear, I'm not going to bother with that", she said, "you keep on doing what you're doing and" she said, "you're doing an excellent job and she said his foot will get better". And sure enough the bread poultice cured Uncle Ralph's foot.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Yes. So ah....is that all you have to tell me about today.

**Ella Ryland:**

That's all I got to tell you about the.....no... not about the bread poultices because I remember one time ah.....a woman had a bad shoulder.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Yeah.

**Ella Ryland:**

It was like an "apse" came on her shoulder and grandmother use to .....that's what grandmother use to put on that and her....it got better. But like an apse or a boil they use to call it then hey.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Yeah.

**Ella Ryland:**

She use to keep bread poultice on it and dress it. But now probably you'd be dressin' it for a couple of weeks before it would get better hey. But it use to get better.

**Gertie Fowler:**

There was no hospital then or anything then to go to....

**Ella Ryland:**

Yes, 'twas hospitals maid, but the old remedy they ah..

**Gertie Fowler:**

Yeah.

**Ella Ryland:**

They were doing so good with the old remedy, they didn't bother about going to the hospital, hey.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Yeah.

**Ella Ryland:**

Because if a place would come on your arm or on your neck or ...and it was red and like it rose a bit well then that's what grandmother use to tell them to do, put a bread poultice on it and then that'd break.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Oh, okay.

**Ella Ryland:**

You know, after a couple of times putting a bread poultice on it, then what they called a cord, like they used to call it a cord use to come out on the bread poultice.

**Gertie Fowler:**

So the bread wasn't only for putting on the table and for breakfast....

**Ella Ryland:**

No my dear. No my dear. There was some wonderful stuff done with bread....with bread poultice.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Yeah.

**Ella Ryland:**

Yes, my maid. Some cures, I'd tell you that.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Yeah.

**Ella Ryland:**

'Cause I knows for sure about grandmothers cures, what she use to do with bread. That would be the first thing she'd do with someone if they'd get a sore finger or first thing she'd go for was ah....bread poultice.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Okay.

**Ella Ryland:**

And I remember one time, now this wasn't a bread poultice but this was turkumtine, they use to take out of a stick of wood and I fell down and cut the ....and cut my hand with the splittin' knives. I was running down the stage with the splittin' knife in me hand and he fell and I fell on top of the ....and me hand went right on top of the splittin' knife.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Oh. Okay.

**Ella Ryland:**

And she ah....she brought me up to the house and washed it. Washed it in cold water and someone went out behind the house where they had the wood pile too. They use to have wood piles then and got a whole lot of turpentine and she come in and she put the turkumtine right over the cut on my hand and squeezed it together and done it up with a piece of rag. And that's how she cured my hand. I never had to go to the hospital.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Never had a scar.

**Ella Ryland:**

Never had a... the scar is still on my hand.

**Gertie Fowler:**

But it's a nice .... nice clean one hey.

**Ella Ryland:**

Yeah. Yes. And that's what cured my hand. Turkumtine that they got out of the wood that they had stuck up out behind the ...you know, that they use to burn hey. So I mean all them remedies was ah.....

**Gertie Fowler:**

Sure. Yeah.

**Ella Ryland:**

....used, you know.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Used the bread for and that.

**Ella Ryland;**

Yes.

**Gertie Fowler:**

Well Ella, I'd like to thank you for taking your time out today to share your memories with me.

**Ella Ryland:**

Oh your ah....your very welcome Gertie.