

History Question of the Month

Vast progress has been made in recent years in regards to care for people with various forms of dementia. How were these diseases, look at and treated, in the early days of our community?

Answer

According to the 1910 U S Census, Casper and Catherine Grimm immigrated to the USA from Germany in 1891. They lived in Illinois before coming to Utah in 1901, where they bought a home in Salt Lake City. About 1906-1907, they purchased a small farm in Butler, located on 27th East. The following story was related many times by the children of A. R. Green:

There was an old couple who lived on the road the children travelled to attend school. The boys in the area would taunt and tease this old couple as they went to and from school each day. To make matters even worse, the boys told the girls to be really careful when they walked in front of this couple's house because they were crazy and they would do terrible things to them. The boys had the girls so frightened that they were afraid to walk along the road. The girls decided that they would cut through the fields to bypass this couple's home. The problem was, there was a big bull in one of the fields and the boys told them they had to be really careful when going by it. They were not to wear red or do anything, like run or scream, or the bull would charge them. They also had to cross both the Big Willow Irrigation and the Brown and Sanford Ditches. They were afraid of the bull and falling into the ditches but they were even more afraid of walking in front of this old couple's home. So the girls chose to cut through the fields.

When Mr. Green learned from his daughters what had been going on and that one of the boys involved, was his own son, he was not happy. He had his children dress in their "Sunday Best." He then took them to visit this couple. He wanted his girls to know that they had nothing to fear from this old couple and for his son to apologize for his actions.

A couple of years later, Casper Grimm died on December 9, 1924. His wife's health was such that she wasn't even able to provide the information for her husband's death certificate or take care of herself. Arrangements were made for her at the Salt Lake County Infirmary. The Salt Lake County Infirmary Hospital served the medical needs of the general public as well as the poor and the mentally ill. She was there for two years before being transferred to the Utah State Hospital in Provo, Utah. She lived there for 10 years. She died April 20, 1936. Today, we would have known that she suffered from Alzheimer's Disease. At the time of her death, the only thing that was known about her was that she was a widow. She was buried in Provo, Utah.