HOW IT, ALL STARTED

As described in the Foreword, there have been five previous histories, each covered a different period.

In searching the records, a rather complete history covering the years from 1915 to 1930 was discovered. This original piece of work was done by the AACC History Committee appointed by then President Leslie Olson. The committee was composed of R. Wallace Mitchell, chairman, R. J. Clark, S. J. Lanellin, S. J. Leclerc and L. R. Olsen.

This committee did a masterful job of retrieving information and compiling it into a published booklet. Portions of the report are included for the readers' benefit.

When one examines the period from 1915 to 1930, as recorded by this History Committee, one gets the feel of a true pioneering spirit that existed back then and still exists to this day.

The "Introduction" on page 1 of Mitchell’s committee report sounds the theme that became prevalent down through the years -- "Pioneering". We quote from Mitchell’s committee report:

INTRODUCTION

"In the years immediately preceding the organization of the American Association of Cereal Chemists the conditions that prevailed in the industry were those of individual mills operating as such in contrast to the conditions that came to exist in the period after the great war, namely, great combinations and strong corporations. But even at that time there were some progressive millers and mill owners who were installing laboratories and chemists to aid them in their work. A few of the Northwest's spring wheat millers had installed laboratories as had also some of the leading mills of the Southwest.

"The actual responsibility for the conception of a chemists' organization cannot be ascribed to any particular individual or group of individuals. About 1914 two groups, one in central Kansas and the other in Kansas City, were discussing this idea. By 1914 there probably were about twenty mills in the Southwest that employed chemists and had laboratories of one sort or another. The chemists employed were, at that time, young men, most of them taking their first position in the laboratory directly upon leaving college. It was only natural that these young men, being in the same line of work, should meet and talk with one another from time to time. It was in these informal meetings that the idea was first evolved that an association for cereal chemists would be a very good thing. A meeting of these men was held in Wichita to form an organization to aid in solving the common problems of the individuals. This is believed to be the first called meeting that was ever held among any industrial cereal chemists in the southwest. At this meeting and by subsequent correspondence, the foundations were laid for a meeting to be held on May 8, 1915, for the purpose of organizing an association of cereal chemists."
"These plans materialized and on May 8, 1915, eleven chemists met in Kansas City, Mo. and founded the American Association of Cereal Chemists.

"Previously, in 1910 there had been organized a society known as the 'American Society of Milling and Baking Technology.' A large portion of the membership of this Society was recruited from the membership of the Association of Official Agricultural Chemists.

"The first meeting of the A.S.M.B.T. was held in Washington, D.C. November 8, 1919, and was in response to a general invitation to 'all persons interested in wheat and flour testing.' It had been recognized for years that the methods used by chemists and technologists to test wheat and flour were not at all uniform and that the results obtained were not comparable as between different laboratories or different operators. To eliminate this confusion and to bring about greater uniformity of methods and results, the A.S.M.B.T. was organized from among the members of the A.O.A.C. who were more especially interested in milling and baking problems.

"The meetings were always held in Washington at the time of the annual meetings of the A.O.A.C. Membership grew slowly and included commercial laboratories and national, state and Canadian agricultural institutions. Mill owners and flour brokers in the east were attracted to its meetings to observe matters under discussion.

"The method of experimental baking tests as used by Saunders prescribed 100 grams of flour, and the Corby method of mixing specified 100 cuts with flexible spatula. Saunders had a very cleverly constructed glass-top table for handling his doughs without change of temperature. No printed journal was ever issued by the A.S.M.B.T., but mimeographed copies of the proceedings were mailed to each member.

"It was indeed fortunate that the two societies found it desirable to unite. Each had served to develop ideas and a plan of organization suited to its membership and in so doing it gained the interest and support of many individuals. When the time came to unite, each society had enlisted the genuine interest of its members and that interest was strong enough to hold them in the larger organization where many more lines of endeavor must necessarily be cultivated in order to provide expression for the more varied interests of the diverse element of membership.

THE REASON

"On the 8th day of May, 1915, in Kansas City, Mo., a few chemists that were interested in cereal work met to form an organization for the advancement of the science as applied to cereal analysis. They were all operators in laboratories in which the work was principally the control of flour milling operations.

"In the course of their experience, each one had been faced with the question: "Why can't you chemists agree on your reports?" It must be acknowledged that there are grounds for such queries, and that, though they are explainable to the satisfaction of the chemist, it does not eliminate the fact that it lowers the value of a chemical analysis in the eyes of the baker, jobber or miller.

"Each member present was there because he felt the need of associating with other chemists interested in the same lines of work, with whom he could exchange ideas and discuss the various methods as practiced by others.

"All realized that, if by means of discussion and investigation the best practicable method of procedure for each determination could be established, then standard methods could be outlined, and with that done, uniformity of results would follow.
"This, then, is the object of the association which has taken onto itself the title of 'The American Association of Cereal Chemists.' To carefully consider methods of procedure and practice in cereal analysis by means of research and open discussion, and to draw conclusions which are representative of the convictions of the operators who are members. It is the desire to adopt methods which are as free of any scientific objections as possible, but at the same time lend themselves to the best advantage under the conditions that exist in the ordinary 'control' or 'commercial' laboratory. It is realized that there are many objections to be met each time that a standard method is adopted. There will be special reasons why certain points in any method should be done slightly differently by different operators. All points that have a bearing on the results gotten by any method must be carefully considered and then the method that is the most scientifically exact and at the same time practicable, selected as the standard.

"Every earnest chemist who is seeking to give his employer value received will see in this movement an opportunity to increase his efficiency by joining with the members and giving and receiving in the efforts to achieve more uniform results. Flour and cereal chemistry has in the past never seen any concerted efforts put forth for its benefit and now when the start has been made it would be a great boon to all if the interested ones would come forward and join in the united membership in the interest of a worthy cause.

"It is the earnest desire that millers and mill owners will understand the object of this organization. Standards is a word that has recently come into bad repute with many millers. We hope that such persons will not let the word deter them from reading the purpose and the ends to be accomplished by our body.

"There is no intention of comparing milling methods or telling others the little things about our particular mill that puts it ahead of the other fellow. We will leave that to the millers themselves. The fact is that there are in almost all cases several ways to get the analytical data that makes the laboratory valuable. Because of the different methods there is a greater liability of apparent discrepancies in the work of different operators working under different conditions. Then again there is a grievous lack of system in the manner of reporting the data. For instance, three laboratories might get the same loaf volume, and yet their reports would be utterly dissimilar, due to the fact that one reported in percentage, the second in cubic inches, and the third in cubic centimeters. Uniformity in this matter will only come through some such agency as our organization proposes to be.

"Another thing: We wish to assure the mill owners that there is nothing of the character of a 'union' in this movement. This is a movement for the good of the profession in that it will increase the efficiency of the individual and in so doing, increase his value to the employer. A wage scale is the last thing that the ambitious operator would care to have to contend with.

"The call for the first annual convention of the A.A.C.C. to be held in Kansas City on May 8, 1915, was signed by Mr. H. E. Weaver and Mr. C. J. Patterson. In answer to this call eleven milling chemists responded. They were: H. E. Weaver, Larabee Flour Mills Company, Hutchinson, Kansas; E. G. Wahlin, Oklahoma Laboratories, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; A. R. Sasse, Southwestern Milling Company, Kansas City, Kansas; J. M. Hogan, Kansas Flour Mills Company, Kansas City, Kansas; C. J. Patterson, Ismert-Hincke Milling Company, Kansas City, Kansas; C. G. Buck, Ismert-Hincke Milling Company, Kansas City, Kansas; P. M. Patterson, Wm. Kelly Milling Company, Monarch Milling Company and Hutchinson Milling Company, Hutchinson, Kansas; R. A. Lusk, Rea-Patterson Milling Company, Coffeyville, Kansas; R. Wallace Mitchell, Kansas Milling Company, Wichita, Kansas, A. A. Jones, El Reno Mill & Elevator Company,
Canadian Milling Company, El Reno, Oklahoma; and A. W. Estabrook, Estabrook Laboratories, Kansas City, Missouri.

"Besides effecting the organization of this society, these charter members evidenced the soundness of their ideas by writing into the constitution the aims, purposes, and ideals which continued to remain a true expression of the society through the years to follow."

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE AACC WAS WRITTEN AND, AFTER MUCH HEATED DISCUSSION, WAS ADOPTED ON MAY THE 8TH, 1915, AT THE COATES HOUSE IN KANSAS CITY, Mo.

AT THIS POINT IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT IN THE RECORDS OF MEETINGS ON THE FOLLOWING FEBRUARY 4 AND 5, A MEETING WAS HELD OF THE KANSAS ROUND TABLE CLUB IN WICHITA, KS. THAT WAS CHAIRMED BY NEWLY-ELECTED HARRY WEAVER. IN ITS BEGINNING YEARS, AACC, INCIDENTALLY, WAS RESTRICTED TO MALE MEMBERS ONLY.

THE NEWLY ORGANIZED GROUP OF CHEMISTS, NOW FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF CEREAL CHEMISTS, CONTINUED TO GROW, ALTHOUGH MANY MEMBERS ENTERED THE ARMED SERVICES OF WORLD WAR I.

BY 1919 THE WAR WAS OVER AND SOME CHEMISTS WERE RETURNING TO PICK UP THEIR WORK WHERE THEY HAD LEFT OFF. DURING THE MEETING AT THE BALTIMORE HOTEL IN KANSAS CITY, A PROPOSITION WAS PRESENTED BY DR. S. J. LECLERC FROM THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF MILLING AND BAKING TECHNOLOGY (ASMBT) TO MERGE WITH THE AACC. DR. B. R. JACOBS PRESENTED THE MATTER OF MERGING THE TWO SOCIETIES IN SOME DETAIL. A MOTION WAS MADE TO MERGE, BUT IT FAILED TO PASS. HOWEVER, A COMMITTEE WAS APPOINTED TO STUDY THE MATTER AND BRING FORTH A RESOLUTION. THIS RESOLUTION STATED THAT EACH GROUP WOULD STUDY THE MATTER AND CONSIDER A MERGER SOMETIME IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

THE AACC CONTINUED TO EXPAND AND GROW IN VARIOUS QUALITY EVALUATION AREAS. A TECHNICAL BULLETIN WAS NOW BEING PUBLISHED AND SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIPS WERE CREATED. DUES WERE RAISED FROM $5 TO $10 IN 1920.

THE YEAR 1922 WAS A BANNER ONE IN SOME RESPECTS. A CHANGE IN THE CONSTITUTION ALLOWED WOMEN TO BECOME FULL-FLEDGED MEMBERS. FOR THE RECORD, MISS Z. Z. TITUS OF PAGE FLOUR MILLS IN TOPEKA WAS THE FIRST FEMALE ACTIVE MEMBER OF AACC.

STILL ANOTHER NOTABLE EVENT TOOK PLACE. WE QUOTE FROM MITCHELL’S COMMITTEE RECORDS:

"Among the highlights of the convention was the fact that the Inter-Allied Association’s Committee met during this period and reported in detail. Also it is noted that we gained recognition of the Millers National Federation which delegated Mr. Chas. Roos, president, to attend and address our meeting. We were
also addressed by a representative of the Operative Millers and it began to appear that the Association was not only a permanent one, but that it was receiving favorable recognition from those other associations engaged in like or similar work. It was at this convention that the membership voted favorably on the amalgamation with the A.S.M.B.T. which had been proposed three years previously by that association. President Lawellin was instructed to consider with Dr. C. H. Bailey, president of the A.S.M.B.T. the problems involved in consolidating the two organizations. Theirs was the responsibility of formulating a plan which should be presented to the executive committees of both societies. Should the executive committee vote its approval, then President Lawellin had the authority to complete the amalgamation.

"The plan of holding the annual convention at the same place and time as that of the Association of Operative Millers proved to be a happy one. A new spirit of good will and harmony developed through the contacts effected at the meeting and the bars of misunderstanding were appreciably reduced.

"The work for the coming year was of two decided trends. One was the fostering of research work and the other pointed to an effort to obtain wider publicity.

"Immediately following the convention, President Lawellin gave his attention to the problem of concluding a satisfactory agreement with the A.S.M.B.T. Dr. C. H. Bailey of the A.S.M.B.T. indicated a generous spirit of cooperation and the discussions terminated in a plan which received the approval of the executive committees of both societies.

"On March 28, 1923, Dr. C. H. Bailey and Mr. S. J. Lawellin met in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and signed the final agreement of amalgamation. The provisions of the agreement were to be effective as of January 1, 1923, but each organization was to function independently until the following annual convention."

This union was designated as the "amalgamation", evidently a carry-over from laboratory terminology. The name of the group was to remain the American Association of Cereal Chemists. Many members of the ASMBT were also members of the AACC. The "amalgamation" added about thirty new members to the AACC rolls, which now numbered slightly over 80. The treasury had grown to $2,572.55.

By 1925 the Association had expanded to 244 members with 190 subscriptions to Cereal Chemistry, the Association's newly formed technical bulletin.

In June, 1926, Association President Rowland J. Clark made eight recommendations to the convention held in Denver. The second recommendation was that local cereal clubs be granted individual charters and be called sections, providing that at least 75% of the membership also were Association members.

The recommendations were adopted by the convention. Within a few weeks, several clubs applied for charters. The Minneapolis group was granted Charter No. 1. The Kansas Round Table Club was awarded Charter No. 2 and was named the Pioneer Section.
THESE NEWLY-APPROVED SECTIONS IMMEDIATELY BECAME FUNCTIONAL AND ACTIVE. ON OCTOBER 30, 1926, THE PIONEER, KANSAS CITY AND NEBRASKA SECTIONS SPONSORED A JOINT MEETING IN KANSAS CITY.

THE PRESENT HISTORICAL COMMITTEE NOW TURNS TO OTHER NOTED AACC HISTORIANS FOR INFORMATION FROM 1930 ON.

TO MAINTAIN THE SENSE OF PIONEERING DEDICATION TO LEARNING MORE ABOUT CEREAL CHEMISTRY, ESPECIALLY AS IT APPLIED TO WHEAT AND FLOUR, WE WOULD LIKE TO QUOTE DIRECTLY FROM CLAUDE F. DAVIS, CHAIRMAN OF THE PIONEER SECTION IN 1930 AND 1931. THE AUTHORS RECOGNIZE CERTAIN REDUNDANCIES BUT FEEL SOMETHING MAY BE LOST IN TRANSLATIONS, SO WE EXERT


"THE FIRST FORMAL STEP WAS THE FORMATION OF THE CHEMISTS ROUND TABLE CLUB OF THE KANSAS MILLERS' CLUB IN 1922. ITS PURPOSE WAS TO BRING CHEMISTS OF THE SOUTHWEST INTO CLOSER COOPERATION AND FOR THE MUTUAL BENEFITS TO BE GAINED THROUGH FREQUENT MEETINGS FOR DISCUSSIONS OF CEREAL PROBLEMS.

"THE FIRST OFFICERS WERE A. A. JONES OF LARABEE FLOUR MILLS CO., HUTCHINSON, AS CHAIRMAN AND JOHN HESS, CHEMIST, THE WILLIAM KELLY MILLING CO., HUTCHINSON, AS SECRETARY. THIS ORGANIZATION WAS UNIQUE IN THAT IT HAD ONLY TWO OFFICERS, NO DUES, NO ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS OTHER THAN TO ATTEND THE MEETINGS, DISPLAY INTEREST, AND TO MAKE A REQUEST FOR MEMBERSHIP. A ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION WAS THE ESSENCE OF THE ACTIVITIES.

"IN JULY, 1924, THE ROUND TABLE CLUB INAUGURATED A SYSTEM OF MONTHLY CHECK SAMPLES, WHICH CREATED MORE RESPECT FOR THE CEREAL CHEMISTS WITHIN ITS REACH THAN ANY OF THE OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE GROUP. THIS CHECKING OF RESULTS WAS CARRIED OUT ON A FLOUR SAMPLE SEALED IN METAL CANS AND MAILED TO EACH MEMBER. THE RESULTS OF THIS CHECKING ON THE SAME SAMPLE PUT THE ABILITY OF THE VARIOUS CHEMISTS TO CONCUR CLOSELY WITH EACH OTHER ON A FACT BASIS. COMMITTEES AND OTHER VOLUNTEER WORKERS THEN SET TO WORK TO FERRET OUT THE REAL REASONS FOR POOR CHECKING. AS A RESULT, THE ABILITY OF THE GROUP TO MAKE THEIR RESULTS CHECK WAS
GREATLY IMPROVED AND MILL MANAGERS AND FLOUR BUYERS CAME TO KNOW WHAT LIMITATIONS TO EXPECT FROM GOOD ANALYTICAL WORK.

"THE BAKING TEST COMMITTEE OF THIS CLUB WAS VERY ACTIVE IN AN EFFORT TO STANDARDIZE AND IMPROVE THE BAKING TESTS AND MAKE THEM MORE PRACTICAL IN DETERMINING FLOUR QUALITY. THE FIRST COLLABORATIVE WORK WAS TO BRING TO THE MEETINGS EXPERIMENTAL LOAVES OF BREAD AND TO ATTEMPT A UNIFORM METHOD OF SCORING. THEY DISCOVERED THAT THERE WERE VARIOUS SIZE PANS, WEIGHT OF LOAVES, METHODS OF MIXING AND HANDLING THE DOUGHS AND, CONSEQUENTLY, A WIDE VARIATION IN THE QUALITY OF BREAD WHICH WAS PRESENTED FOR SCORING.

"AFTER MUCH EFFORT, THE MEMBERS WERE REWARDED BY SEEING REAL IMPROVEMENT IN THE BREAD PRESENTED FOR SCORING AT THE REGULAR MEETINGS. WHEN CONSIDERATION IS GIVEN TO THE TYPE OF EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES WHICH THESE MEMBERS PROPOSED FOR STANDARDIZING SUCH A TEST, SOME VALUABLE CONCLUSIONS WERE MADE REGARDING THE BAKING TEST, SUCH AS: 1. BAKING IS THE MOST IMPORTANT TEST TO BE APPLIED TO FLOUR. 2. THE OBJECT FOR BAKING IS (A) TO ESTABLISH THROUGH RESEARCH THE QUALITY OF A FLOUR OR ESTABLISH A STANDARD ON NEW CROPS, (B) TO MAINTAIN THROUGH CONTROL THE UNIFORMITY OF A FLOUR. 3. A FORMULA AND PAN SIZE WERE RECOMMENDED.


"AS A DIVISION OF THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION, THE PIONEER SECTION HAS CARRIED ON ITS ACTIVITIES SOMEWHAT IN THE SAME MANNER AS BEFORE THE CHARTER WAS GRANTED. THE QUARTERLY MEETINGS WERE HELD ALTERNATELY AT WICHITA, NEWTON AND HUTCHINSON, EXCEPT THE EARLY SPRING MEETINGS, WHICH WERE CONDUCTED AT THE MILLING DEPARTMENT OF KANSAS STATE COLLEGE, MANHATTAN, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE KANSAS CITY SECTION.
"This early spring meeting was, perhaps, the most important because the members were brought into close contact with the extensive research work of the college’s milling department and were able to obtain first hand the new ideas which center around the cereal chemist’s problems. Occasionally, the meeting place was changed to other points in Kansas.

"The check sample activities were extensive and the cooperators were scattered throughout Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, and other states, the sentiment being that this was the most valuable function of the organization.

"A statistical analysis revealed considerable improvement was made. It was noted that the poorest checking was done in the three months when the major portion of the wheat crop was moved. One member became responsible for keeping a set of charts carrying an analysis of the check sample results. These charts were presented at meetings and suggestions for improvements were always in order. To insure a working fund for this and other activities, a charge of two dollars per year was levied.

"The majority of the Section’s members were mill laboratory workers and, according to custom or necessity, built up a burdensome system of routine mill control work along with routine analyses.

"In the true pioneer spirit, J. L. Spaulding of Larabee Flour Mills Co., Wellington, and E. O. Klopfstein of Red Star Milling Co., with others, investigated the weighing of flour ash directly upon the pan of the balance. This departure from the regular method of weighing ash was so radical that the members of the Section were doubtful and slow to accept the method but eventually adopted it.

"Abstracts of papers read at local meetings, reports on questionnaires and data of interest were copied and mailed to members. Invaluable work was done on standardizing the baking test.

"It is realized that work done by the local section has duplicated research done by the national body but good work bears repeating because, first, new chemists are constantly entering the field and, second, all chemists are human and the work may have been forgotten.

"The Pioneer Section stood ready at all times to cooperate to the fullest extent to promote any projects for the advancement of science in the cereal industries."