

## **Apron Lore**

A Civil War story  
tells of a young wife,  
pregnant with good news,  
writing to her husband  
in the Union Army:

“Surprise!

It seems my apron ties  
are getting too short.”

And an old-wives-tale  
dismisses threatening  
clouds on wash days:

“If there’s a patch  
of blue in the sky  
as big as an apron, it’s  
safe to hang your wash  
on the line outside.”

Ever multi-tasking,  
my grandmother often  
picked up two corners  
of her apron, making  
a place to gather apples,  
a few veggies from  
the garden or fresh eggs  
from the hen house.

Her apron was good  
as well to wipe away  
my childhood tears,  
clean her glasses,  
take yummy cookies  
straight from the oven,  
or shoo away flies  
on a hot afternoon.

Mother's aprons  
kept her dresses clean  
while she did all sorts  
of household chores.  
But today as I explore  
this ancient apron lore,  
mine are unemployed  
just lying in a drawer.

Ruth Naylor

LeadingAge Poetry

Maple Crest of Mennonite Home Communities of Ohio

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