

# Pictorial Biography of the Venerable Master Hsu Yun

by Tripitaka Master Hua

## 168. Reaping Rice During a Barren Year and Feeding the People

In 1923, the Master was eighty-four. At that time, several strange events were witnessed: a transformational lotus appeared upon the cremation of Mrs. Li; a pagoda was made by ants for Bhikshu Tao Ming; and Bhikshu Chu Hsing transformed himself and attained birth in the West. The next year, 1924, the Master was eighty-five, and spent time rebuilding various shrines and temples. In 1925, when the Master was eighty-six, he transmitted the Precepts, explained Sutras, and held long meditation sessions. The Master was eighty-seven in the year 1926. In the ensuing few years, large numbers of soldiers plundered Yunnan Province, frightening the people. The rice was ripe, but they did not dare harvest it. The Master, therefore, asked the Army commander not to allow his troops to obstruct the harvest, and the monks were subsequently able to carry it out. Because of the lack of food, one thousand peasants gathered at the monastery to take their meals. At first, rice was eaten, then gruel, then chaff, and finally just water was all that remained. The people appreciated the fact that the monks joined along with them in undergoing the hardships of life.

The gatha says:

At first they all ate rice alike, and then drank thin rice gruel.  
Finally they took just chaff and water, the monks and the peasants eating together.



### 虛雲和尚畫傳

荒年劉福與民食  
癸亥八十四歲時現李氏  
化蓮道明蟻塔具行自  
化生西等異跡甲子八五  
歲修諸塔寺乙丑八六歲  
傳戒誨徒起長六兩寅午  
七歲近年滇境多兵劫民  
畏指熟而不敢收公向官  
請以僧領收勿阻故千人  
聚食始飯健粥糠水等其  
甘苦民德之  
宣化偈曰  
始則同食飯健而飲粥  
終至糠和水僧俗  
共苦嘗