

to work the cream dasher, but somehow I lacked the knack to bring the butter to a head. Mrs. Tubbs would smile and finish the job. When the big yellow mass was lifted out of the churn to be salted and worked over and over with a paddle in the wooden butter bowl, we all took a drink of the cool sweet fresh buttermilk before it was taken to the pig pen. To this day, no butter milk tastes as wonderful as that did.

The great excitement came with the arrival of the threshers in the fall. Some man or some company owned and operated the huge threshing machine, but neighboring farmers formed a gang to accompany it, going from farm to farm to help each other.

When word was received ahead that the crew might be expected, the farm house was turned into a veritable beehive of activity. Spicy odors filled the air as cakes were pulled out of the oven and bread shoved in. Apples were pared, raisins seeded, pickles and jams brought up from the cellar. Beds had to be prepared for men who lived too far away to go home at night. Sometimes it was only a pack of straw or hay covered with a blanket--but by night the weary workers were tired enough to be glad of any place to lay their heads.

When the shrill whistle announced that the threshing machine was turning down the lane towards the lower field, all the neighborhood children came running to share in the fun and the excitement. Willing hands carried water --sometimes cider-- to the thirsty men in the fields. Interested eyes watched the stalks fed into the hungry maw of the thresher which separated the grain from the straw. The machine panted and shook as the men carried the shocks and pitched. Everybody sneezed with the dust.