

"Nellie, ring the bell," cried Mrs. Tubbs when dinner was ready.

The great gong brought the men trooping to the house, hungry as bears for the noonday meal. Ablutions were hastily performed in extra bowls and pans laid out on a long bench by the kitchen door with water dipped from the windmill tank.

I often helped Nellie wait on the table, which groaned with the quantity of food laid from one end to the other--meats, vegetables, jelly, jam, huge mounds of bread and biscuits; honey, pickles, cookies, cake, pie, and usually home made ice cream.

The food melted away like snow under a warm sun, and in no time at all Nellie and I were gathering up the dishes which we washed in the summer kitchen. Mrs. Tubbs, exhausted, would sink into a rocking chair for a few moments of rest before beginning preparations for supper which would be as hearty a meal as dinner had been. I shall never forget the "soft soap" we used on those dishes. It was crudely home made, the consistency of vaseline and about that color. It smelled perfectly awful!

The day after the threshers had moved on, the dish towels, plus the hand towels, sheets and pillow cases hung from seemingly miles of clothes lines. All these articles had to be washed by hand with water brought in from the windmill tank and heated in big boilers on a wood-stove.

Quite often the Tubbs had an influx of guests---all that a lumber wagon would hold---for "over Sunday." The term "week-end" had not then been invented. Mr. and Mrs. Tubbs were both members of a family having eleven children. Most of the twenty-two were married and lived in the county.

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