

prepared for if the men were good enough to leave their farm work to help another nothing was too good for them. Huge kettles of potatoes and vegetables were prepared, roasts of meat made tender, loaves of homemade bread and buns, cakes, pies, tarts and cookies were provided. The good natured men devoured it all and there were often "races" to see who could eat the most pieces of pie.

The women always helped at whatever they could. They put away the syrup in the spring, they packed away the meat, they made butter and stored it in crocks. During the winter they made quilts, they knit socks, they made feather pillows and feather ticks from the feathers of the geese or ducks. When garments were worn past being presentable they were torn into strips, the strips sewn together and were made into rag carpet or braided and made into rugs.

Like the men folk the women had seasonal tasks too. Spring called for the making of soap. Every home had a small building called an "ash house" in which was stored the winter's accumulation of hard wood ashes. In the spring a leach was set up which consisted of a barrel set on a flat stone. The barrel was filled with ashes then water was poured on the ashes. When the brown liquid dripped through it was collected in a receptacle, this lye was mixed with scraps of fat or old drippings and boiled over a fire out doors until soap was produced. Enough of this soft soap was usually made and stored to last most of the season.

When house-cleaning started there was really commotion for nothing was left unturned. Rag carpets had to be lifted (tacks removed) - they were hung over the clothes line and the dust beaten out of them. Before they were replaced fresh straw was spread over the floor or newspapers. This was for warmth as floor boards were not always free of cracks. Straw ticks or corn husk ticks were hauled out and emptied and re-filled with fresh clean material. When a newly filled straw tick was placed on a bed and the feather tick on top a set of steps was often required to climb into the bed. The corn husks made a rattle but was softened by feathers. Once a "nest" was made in this sort of bed and the occupant was covered with homemade quilts and blankets he was almost assured of a good night's sleep. The long lace curtains had to be carefully washed, stretched and dried before hanging to the sparkling windows.

Washing was done in a wooden tub and each garment was scrubbed on a board using plenty of the homemade soap. The ironing was a tedious job especially in summer considering the yards of goods included in the dresses and petticoats of the women. The irons were heated on a wood fire. Usually there were 3 irons - one was in use while the other were heating.

Most houses had a hop vine near by. This vine was necessary to the housewife when she baked