



KIDS ON THE FARM

Children were an important part of the family work force. Farms didn't have electricity or gas engines to run machinery. Power came from animals, wind, water, and people's hands. Children did many things by hand to help take care of the farm. The children would get up early so they could do their daily chores and help their parents with the farm work.

The boys helped their father work in the barn and fields. Every cow was milked two times every day-morning and evening. The cows, hogs, horses, and sheep had to be fed. Manure was cleaned out and fresh straw spread in the stalls. When the cows were not being milked, they stayed in the pasture and ate grass.

The girls helped their mother prepare breakfast for the family. They started the fire in the woodstove and got water from the pump. They fed the chickens and gathered eggs from the hen house. Then they helped cook breakfast. Breakfast was a big meal with bread, eggs, bacon, ham, fruit, milk, and coffee. Many times they ate leftovers from last night's supper for breakfast the next day. Water was heated on the stove and the dishes were washed before the children left for school. Sometimes, if there was lots of work to do, the children would not go to school at all.

Most of the children in the area went to school at St. Peter's on Schaumburg Road. When the children got to school they "made their manners" by bowing or curtsying to the teacher and greeting them politely. Students worked very hard in school. They learned reading, writing, and arithmetic. Classes were taught in German, although a brief amount of time was set aside to learn English. They also learned history and singing.

When the children got home from school there were more chores to be done. The garden needed to be weeded, watered, hoed, and cared for. All the cows had to be milked again. There was wood to chop and water to haul. Sometimes they had to churn butter or wash clothes. The girls had to help set the table and fix the supper. After all that was done, it was time to study, and go to bed. Everyone went to bed early since they all got up very early in the morning.