

Ida Risser

This old house of ours must have seen quite a variety of Thanksgivings. Some joyous and with a groaning table loaded with food and surrounded by big families. Then too, there must have been years when sorrow was a guest at the table and food was not plentiful.

Our house has stood through depressions and lean years. It has had a succession of families living here. The Weidler family built this house in 1813 after living for a number of years in a log cabin in our meadow. When we dug post holes for new fences, after the June flood tore everything out, we found some of

the original foundations.

Different generations of this family lived here for about a hundred years. In following years a number of tenant families lived here. Later still, it was used simply as a summer home. There were many years when it stood empty and desolate.

Oh, it wasn't completely unoccupied. I'm told that at night tramps or bums or whatever you want to call them would find shelter before our fireplace. There was also a time when it was used to strip tobacco. The tobacco was dampened in the house and stripped in the living room, according to a former

occupant. No wonder my husband and father worked so long and hard to sand the floors.

When we decided to move here almost 25 years ago, the house had no electricity, no running water, or central heat. Over the years we have added them one by one. Our six babies grew up strong and healthy in bedrooms that averaged 40 degrees in winter and I survived carrying water from the well to wash diapers for the first child.

And now sitting here in this comfortable, warm, well-lighted room, listening to the electrical appliances click on and off, I can realize we've come a long way and there is much to be thankful for in 1972.

In the Kitchen

SUCCULENT SWISS STEAK

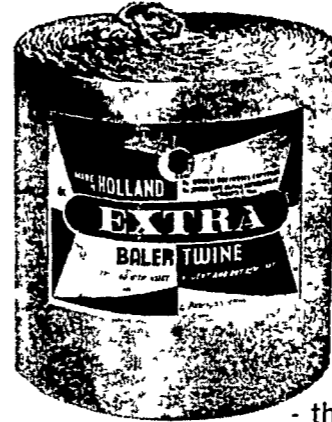
- 2 lbs. round steak (1-inch thick)
- salt
- pepper
- 2 tsps. prepared mustard
- 3 large tomatoes
- 1 large onion

Cut steak into 6 portions. Trim off excess fat from beef and brown fat in a skillet. Discard fried fat and brown the steak in the drippings. Sprinkle beef with salt and pepper. Spread mustard on the meat. Slice and arrange tomatoes and onions over the meat. Cover and simmer about 1 to 1½ hours, until tender, adding a little water if needed.

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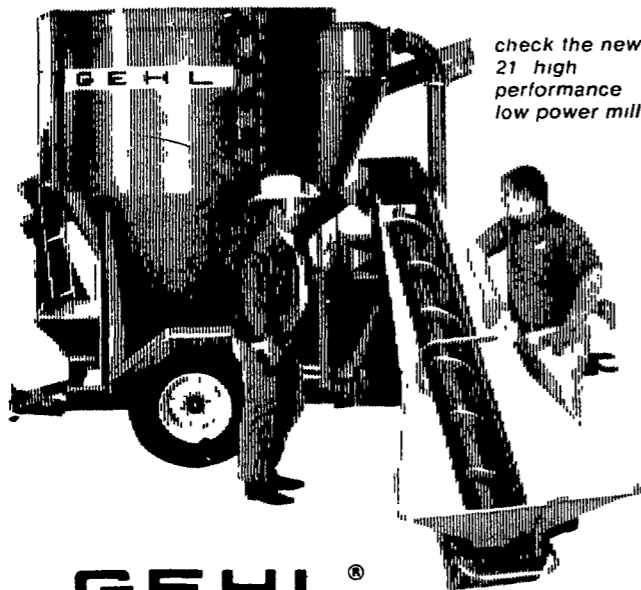
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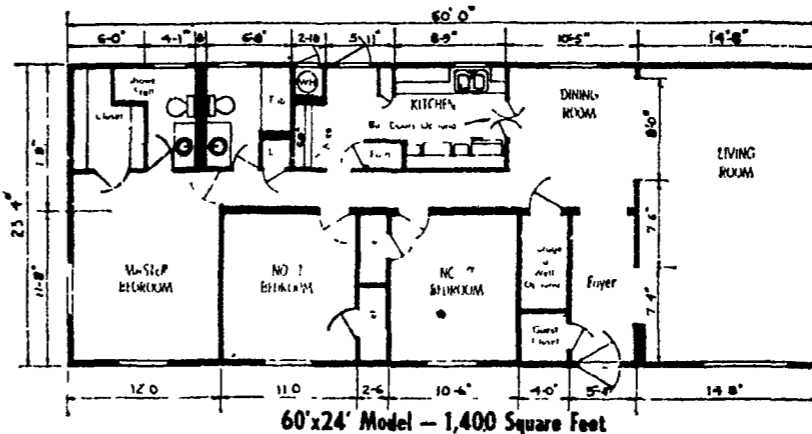
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