

My father was one of those men that worried about leaving one ear of corn in the cornfield I think he would lay awake at night wondering if he had done everything possible to assure that the corn settling in the corncrib for the Winter was the highest supply possible

Now this may not sound like much of a big thing, but there was the year that the cornfield was just too wet to get the darnblasted cornpicker into the field.

The result was that my father devised his wonderful plan called "the family that picks corn together, stays together". It went over like a lead balloon, but nobody had the courage to do more than mutter quietly under their breath

Now instead of quiet evenings around the farm, we kids would have to rush home after school, quick do all the barn work, gobble down supper, and report behind the barn

There Father would be, usually waiting, and making dire threats about what would happen if so much corn didn't get picked before dark In the wagon hitched to the tractor we would scramble, and off it would be to the corn patch

We were each assigned two rows to do, with the wagon parked along side of the corn Being the smallest. (my younger sister was usually exempt from the work), I was assigned the two rows closest to the wagon But that also meant that I had to move the tractor up the rows every now and then, and pick up the corn that had missed the wagon, not to mention watch for the wild pitches and dive bomb throws my brother and

father would let fly every now and then to make sure I was awake.

And on we would work until the welcome dark would release us from the weary tasks.

I never knew that the old corn rows could be so long, and so filled with corn And you had to be careful not too miss any ears for Father had a sharp eye that could pick-out an overlooked ear at 20 paces

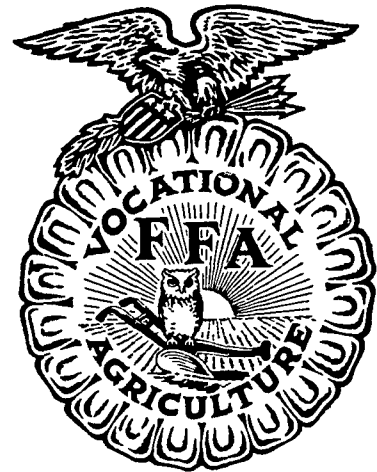
Saturday became a real day to dread because long before you even thought about crawling out of bed, you heard the old putt-putt of the tractor starting up, along with Father's famous "rise and shine" whistle. By the time he had the rig hitched up, he expected his children to report for duty, and we were there. One didn't lounge around when Daddy called

Back out to the cornfield we'd trek, with the boredom relieved by the radio taken along. And if he was in an exceptionally good mood, (in other words, if you seemed to be working quite diligently), you could sometimes persuade Father to tell war stories, or "when I was young" stories, or "do you remember" stories Really, we'd listen to anything to pass the time And when the conservation was flowing fast and smooth, time didn't seem to take near so long

Finally, the evening came when the last row was finished and the whole field had been conquered by our band of three marauding corn pickers. What a beautiful sight.

Father must have thought we did okay, because we were all treated to an ice cream sundae at the local dairy in celebration.

And life was simpler then, because Daddy could sleep--the corn was in the crib.



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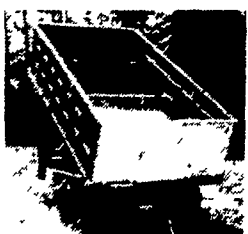
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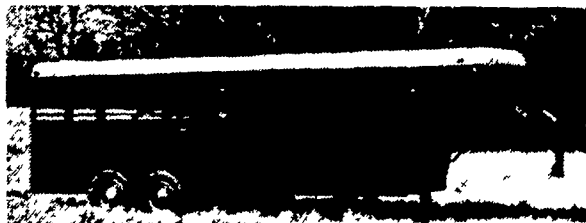
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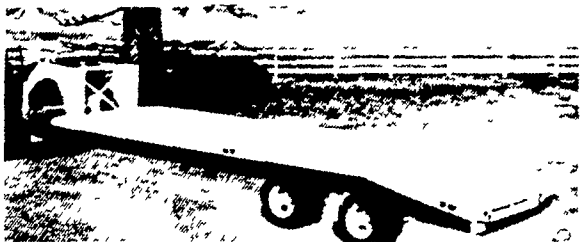
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