

Leftovers

The word "leftover" brings to mind different meanings to different people. In the culinary field, its meaning might be potatoes from dinner creamed for supper, or hash made by a thrifty cook so that good food is not wasted.

However, if we search for another meaning, all sorts of visions come to mind. The modern trend to many Americans today is to move from place to place rather frequently. In time gone by, people were more apt to remain in one community or house for many years.

If we explore one of those long time homes we may find leftovers of a different nature. For example, far back on a seldom seen shelf, we might yet find the pancake griddle and batter pitcher put there just in case they might someday be needed. Beside them is the coffee or spice grinder whose job is long replaced by the product of the supermarket. Some of Grandmas favorite dishes are there also.

A further search of the old house brings us to the attic filled with all kinds of things carried there through the years because they were just too good to throw out, or because of an attack of nostalgia. There is an old chest there under the eaves where we can't stand up. Upon dragging it out, the cover is lifted and carefully packed within are quilts made by loving hands years ago. They were just too nice to use unless, of course, hard times had befallen the family and their use was necessary. Even then, after being faded and tattered, we might find them neatly folded and stored away.

The cellar yet held cocks, jugs, and canning jars of styles no longer used. The cider barrels and vinegar barrels still remain, unless the hoops rusted away or they were so dried that they had fallen apart. The stoneware churn, butter jars and butter bowl and paddle sit on a shelf waiting for a time that they will again serve the community. A time that will never come.

An inventory of the barn and outbuildings make the same revelations as the house. Grandpa's workbench is covered with dust and an accumulation of his tools, made by hand, to be used by hand before these tasks were taken over by power tools.

Bits of harness used on old Bess or Nell are dried and stiff hanging on a wooden peg on the back wall. Parts of a wagon wheel, laid away long ago, just in case they came in handy, survived mostly because the stove pipe on the old box stove had dropped to the floor long ago making the stove useless. Otherwise, these old wood parts would have been burned to keep Grandpa's shop warm. The grass scythe hangs there on the backside of a ceiling beam where it was retired when a later generation got a string trimmer.

Well out of sight hangs an old muzzle loading shotgun along with its powder horn and shot pouch. It was put there long ago, the same as with almost all farms. It has long been silent, but once helped to keep the chickens and other farm animals safe from predators. Long ago the old shotgun could have been taken down by one of the boys of the family and proudly carried to the back woodlot in search of a squirrel or rabbit that Grandma would cook for supper.

We have taken only a very quick tour of the old farm buildings. What have we found? We have found leftovers now called antiques.

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April 2008