



their faces, hands & arms

house for "dinner". Before they washed, they looked like chimney sweeps, covered with the dust from the grain. Many of them tied kerchiefs of "rags" around their necks to keep the dust from getting under their shirts.

#### Filling Silo

Filling the silo with the corn shredders was another communal effort of the neighboring farmers, but one that didn't require as many men to accomplish. The metal "snout" into the top of the silo would be set up and attached to the shredder run by a (tractor ??), or steam engine?? for power. The corn cobs would be stripped from the stalks while standing in the field, and then the stalks would be shredded for silage and fed to the cows daily during the winter months when they couldn't graze in the woods. The fermented silage had a distinctive, pungent smell that permeated the yard.

#### Pea harvesting.

Peas needed to be harvested at exactly the correct time to insure a fine sweet, tender quality of pea. The pea crop would be cut with a \_\_\_\_\_, picked up with forks by hand labor and loaded into a hay rack to be taken to the pea vinery a mile away from our farm. There the peas were separated from the husks, and then transported into the canning factory in Sun Prairie where they were canned. During that period, we always had fresh peas to eat for a couple of weeks. Cooking peas became a specialized effort in our household as our dad dictated the length of time for cooking them. He raved and ranted if they were overcooked, accusing our mother or us kids of spoiling the peas as he would reiterate that they really only needed to be brought to a boil, and served immediately. Of course, the raw peas needed to be <sup>brought to a boil</sup> ~~soaked~~ in soda first to remove the bitterness, and then reheated with butter. It seemed the peas were never quite right, but he would direct their cooking as long as we had fresh peas. Our brother Cy has carried on that tradition as he is as persnikety about cooking peas as was our Dad.

Butchering done on the farm was also a community effort with neighbors assisting each other in slaughtering the animals before taking those parts of the carcass to the butcher that needed to be cut into bacon and quarters for roasts etc.

Wood-cutting for the wood stove and furnace was usually done with the help of neighbors as well, and reciprocated. First, the trees were cut down, branches and twigs removed, the trunk cut into logs, and then split for firewood and kindling, all done by hand, and back-breaking effort, as was most farm work before automation.