

steaks were then held over the furnace's red hot coals and, boy, they were charcoaled and juicy when done! Also, whole potatoes were placed on the coals to cook.

### The Record Keeping

Pop kept ledgers with all the labor workers' salaries in neat columns and entries of all the utility bills. He would sit at his desk for hours at a time, especially when writing letters to his relatives in Italy or another country. He always used a long, straight pen with a steel tip that was dipped into the ink bottle.

I always admired his writing because he had the best and most beautiful penmanship. When he would make a mistake, he would wet an eraser on top of a pencil, dab the error, and slowly erase it out and then scrape it with his penknife to a smooth finish. You would never know there was a mistake.

### The Housekeeping

Ma always got on her hands and knees to polish all the oak floors in the house. She first applied Johnson's Wax, let the wax dry, and again she was on her knees with a soft cloth and swirled her arm around to polish the floor. After a room or two were done, either lace or dotted Swiss organdy curtains were hung on the windows. The curtains were stretched on a wood frame that had thin nails all around its perimeter so that no ironing had to be done. Only the ruffles had to be ironed.

Ma stripped the bedclothes often and washed them. In between washings, she would hang the sheets and blankets out the windows to catch a breath of the clean, fresh air. And, of course, the wool mop was always used to dust the floors and then shaken out the windows. All the dust would fly around.

The clothesline (with pulleys at each end) was attached to the corner of the house and extended to a steel pole opposite the garage shed. The line started lower at the corner of the house and went higher to the steel pole. Ma didn't have to cross the lawn to hang the wet clothes because she was tall enough to just stand and the pulleys did the rest. She taught me how to hang clothes. Yes, there was a method. Towels with towels; sheets with sheets; towels, shirts, and panties all in a row held with wooden slip-on clothespins. There was no shame in having a clothesline when I grew up. Clothes hanging is a work of art, and it takes on a life of its own.