

Shirts shudder, pants dance, towels flap and snap. It is the broad, white sheet, as it whips in the wind, that is the king of the line. Clothes were always hung out during the winter months if the sun was shining, but believe me, the longjohns and pants were stiff as boards and they swung back and forth. After they were taken from the lines, the clothes were hung over chairs to thaw out. I remember asking Ma what all the long 3- to 4-inch wide strips hanging on the line were. Well, girls, when you became a lady, you found out quickly!

The Canning Crew

Ma did a lot of canning. She would buy tomatoes in baskets or bushels, let the tomatoes ripen a day or two, and then the family would help her wash and cut the tomatoes to be put on the stove to cook. This process took most of the day. Then the tomato sauce was put through a machine to which Pop attached an electric motor to crush and remove the skins to make the sauce. Again the sauce was back on the stove to simmer for awhile and then placed in quart jars with a rubber ring and cap to seal the jars. After several days, the jars were placed on their storage shelf.

Peppers were also done using the same process, except the peppers were fried and salt was added while frying. Then the peppers were placed in jars.

Pickled cauliflower was a big canning item which had a mixture of cauliflower, carrots, celery, and sliced onions. These were cut up in small pieces and all boiled together in white vinegar and then jarred. Ma bought large cauliflower for 25 cents a head. I remember going with her to the A&P one night when cauliflower was on sale. Ma filled the shopping cart to the top and people asked her what she was going to do with them.

I can see Ma making roasted red peppers. She would put them over the flame until the skins turned slightly black. Then she would let them cool a bit, skin them, cut them up, and season them with salt and garlic. When the family had their sandwiches, the peppers were placed on different types of ham, especially Italian prosciutti. Pop would buy the whole dried leg and slowly remove the tough skin, and with his homemade steel knife, cut thin slices.

The Peddlers

Pop was a great one to get his big bargains. The Banana Man came around every week and the basket was always full when he came to the door. Bananas were cheap, maybe 25 cents