



**Dad Manning the Oat Binder**

## THRESHING THE HARVEST

Looming monstrous in the barnyard,  
Silently waiting is a threshing machine.  
Local farmers own it to harvest their crops,  
Working together, each farm in its turn.

Today it's our turn and we expectantly watch  
These farmers arrive and hitch up the wagons.  
Then off to the grainfield they methodically plod  
To pick up the bundles from shocks stacked in the field.

Connected by belting, the tractor is started.  
With clanking and whirring, the thresher is ready.  
Awaiting the wagons that soon will arrive,  
Each man takes his post-for the day to go smoothly.

The bundles are tossed in the 'feeder', then fed to the 'header',  
Where shaking and sieving split grains from the straw.  
Then emptied in wagons, for storing in granary,  
'Twill be food for the winter and flour for baking.

Out by the barn, the straw stack grows higher,  
The blower pipe spews clouds of straw, chaff flies over all.  
Their pitchforks in hand, the men stack the straw firmly,  
'Twill be used as bedding for livestock this winter.

Dorothy Adair Gonick

There's a no-nonsense rule, 'No children nearby!'  
We're kept busy with helping the cooks in the kitchen.  
Yet eager to watch the work in the barnyard,  
The magic of watching that straw stack reach skyward.

The hot, sunny day prompts calls for fresh water-  
And we eagerly fill a pail from our well.  
So two with the pail and others with cups  
We make our way down, and are met with a cheer.

Our eyes full of wonder and ears filled with noise,  
Soon find ourselves covered with prickly wheat chaff.  
The thirsty men thank us and wave us along,  
Back to the kitchen, singing happy songs.

A few more loads and the sun hangs high.  
Time for a break and a well-earned rest.  
Feed and water the horses and lead them to shade.  
They'll be refreshed to finish later today.

Sweaty and tired the men trudge from the barn,  
Wash in basins of water warmed from the sun.  
Hang towels on the fence; pump a drink from the well.  
They're ready for dinner and a rest in the shade.

