

put on strings. Some of the neighbors bought wrapping twine from the store, but my mother would take the tow that was left when she spun her flax for our summer clothing, re-card it and spin it into nice strong twine for that purpose. I remember well that a great wooden bowl was placed on the table and the quarters thrown into it as they were prepared. Around this bowl two or three of us were gathered, with our needles and strings, to string the apples. These strings of apples were hung on racks on either side of the fireplace and on the edge of the mantel-shelf; they were also suspended from the chamber floor joist on the sunny side of the house outdoors, and in every place where they could be dried. The first improvement came in using scaffold boards to spread them on. We got out some logs in the winter and took them to the saw-mill, had them cut on shenes, and used the boards to build and cover the scaffolding. Everything was extemporized for use—even the more flat roofs of houses, sheds, barns, etc.—wherever the fruit could get the sun. But if there should come on a few days of wet weather, there was trouble and loss. We had to go back to the use of strings. Racks were made of strips of lath and put over the stove, under it and all around. From this the transition was easy to a small room set apart for the purpose. A stove was placed in it and racks covered with apples placed above, below and on all sides. But there was the danger of having a hot fire maintained in the house, and several buildings were burned. To avoid this trouble a small house was put up away from the farm buildings, and a stove placed in it, and it was christened a "dry-house."

While all of these improvements were being made in the art of drying the fruit the spirit of invention was advancing in other lines as well. Some ingenious person conceived the idea of paring the apples with a machine. We could not see how it could be done, but he accomplished the task. It was in this manner: A fork with two prongs was forged in one end of a small rod of iron, and the other end was bent into a crank. Two upright standards were placed at one end of a board $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 feet long, and this was fastened to the top of them by means of staples driven in, thus forming the bearings on which it was to turn. To use this machine the operator would place the free end of the board on a chair or bench, then, sitting on it, he would turn the crank with his right hand, holding the knife in his left. The knife was made of a thin piece of steel, bent at the ends and driven into a piece of wood, being raised just enough to represent the thickness of the paring. With this a good, spry young man could pare a bushel of good-sized smooth apples in an hour. These were the glorious days of "paring bees." The lucky young man who owned one of these machines was sure of an invitation to all of the bees in the neighborhood; more than that, he was sure of two of the smartest girls to slice his apples, and a big piece of pumpkin pie at 10 o'clock, and in some instances, a half hour's frolic. But the restless Yankee spirit could not stop at this. His inventive genius, so thoroughly aroused, and starting out under such favorable auspices in the great fruit belt of western New York, has never slumbered. There soon appeared a paring machine with large and small wooden wheels and a belt, so that increased speed could be given to the motion of the apple, and this was followed by the first cast iron geared machines.

Some time in 1857, I think it was, one Mr. Mason brought out a little portable dry house. I say "dry house," for we had not yet risen to the dignity of the name "evaporator." Mason's dry house met the wants of the small producer better than anything else ever given to the public, and thousands of them are still in use, giving good satisfaction. The building was 4 feet 6 inches by 7 feet on the ground and 7 feet high to the eaves. The heater was a sheet iron cylinder about 6 feet long, with cast iron heads, in one of which was a door and draft, while the other was solid. The door was flush with one end of the building, so that the wood was put in from the outside. The stovepipe came out on each side near the back end, and returned to the front, where it was joined into one and came out just above the door. This accommodated 10 or 12 trays, 3 feet by 4 feet, and would dry as many bushels in a day. Its capacity is increased by building larger and increasing the diameter and length of the cylinder heater. All of the principles of the tower and hot air draft were and are used in this, as it depends for success on free admittance of air at the bottom, and good ventilation at the top. The patent has expired long ago, and any person can use it freely. With wooden slats for trays, the