

## Milking Old Red

I milked her each night  
head nestled in her warm flank  
savoring her smell

Old Red chewed her cud  
surely glad to be relieved  
her swollen bag eased

squeezing teats top-down  
Tom meowing for a fresh squirt  
then I took a turn

drafty barn door slats  
slowed Missouri's winter wind  
cow's warmth dulled its bite

my daily chore done  
lugged heavy bucket homeward  
wider world called me

Setting: Family farm near Knoxville Missouri, 1951-1955

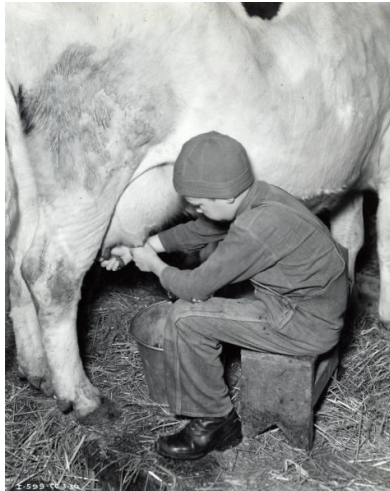


Photo source: [wisconsinhistory.org](http://wisconsinhistory.org)

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