

**No Dearth of Milkmaids:**  
**Representations of Women in Dairying in**  
***The Farmer's Advocate, 1867-1897***

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Women in 19<sup>th</sup> century, Ontario dairying have been historically represented as losing their place in the milk house. According to Marjorie Griffin Cohen, by the late 1880's it was men whom business, science and government addressed in their promotion of the new agriculture.<sup>1</sup> Cohen states that commercialisation of dairying led to the exclusion of women, since making money did not become the female sex. Once farming was replaced as a subsistence form of work to become potentially profit-making women were displaced as primary producers when industries formerly under their control became a focus of the farm unit.<sup>2</sup> Cohen also states clearly in her research that economic and social factors removed women from dairying as the primary milkers. Is this defeminization of dairying in Ontario paralleled by a similar discourse in a contemporary agricultural journal? Research of a thirty-year period indicates that by looking at the images and representations of women in *The Farmer's Advocate* there was no dearth of milkmaids from 1867 to 1897, as well, no evidence suggests a defeminization of dairying.

The following discussion reports on a study of the representation of women in agriculture. *The Farmer's Advocate* illustrates the images and attitudes projected towards women in dairying during this time period from a male perspective. Cohen asserts that a woman's role in dairying did diminish by the end of the nineteenth century; however, is this change evident in *The Farmer's Advocate*? Did farmwomen's active role in dairying, such as milking and butter making, diminish from Confederation until the turn

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<sup>1</sup> Marjorie Griffin Cohen, *Women's Work: Markets and Economic Development in Nineteenth century Ontario*. Toronto: University Press, 1988, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Marjorie Griffin Cohen, *Women's Work: Markets and Economic Development in Nineteenth century Ontario*. Toronto: University Press, 1988, p. 8.

of the century according to the pages of this agricultural journal? For the purpose of this paper, the terms: farmwomen, farmwives, milkwomen, dairywomen, milkmaids and dairymaids, will all be used interchangeably since the gendered work any or all of these women performed relating to dairying meant that any of these designations could be used to describe them. Within articles found in *The Farmer's Advocate* from 1867 to 1897 any or all of these terms are employed to describe females working in the dairy industry either for home or market production.

Through the examination of *The Farmer's Advocate* it appears that it was not women's roles that altered but rather the perception towards women and the images projected of them in their traditional agricultural gender roles. From the perspective of the journal, a dialogue where women were less capable than men at completing farm work did exist but women were not removed from their traditional gender roles through the onset of capitalism or the introduction of science and technology in agriculture. According to the discussion in *The Farmer's Advocate* from 1867 to 1897, women continued to milk and make butter continuously. Consistency throughout this period is demonstrated in the pages of the journal. Alteration is noticeable only in the ways in which women's dairy work was perceived and not in any shift or termination of chores for milkmaids and farmer's wives.

Four themes will be discussed in light of articles printed in *The Farmer's Advocate*, in the context of research on women's history in dairying. The journal indicates four representations of women from 1867 to 1897. The first representation is of women persisting in their traditional gender roles as milkers and butter makers. Secondly, the journal represents women, as being capable of adopting new techniques

and technologies to produce a profitable product, be it either fluid milk or butter. The third representation within the journal is that of the negative impact of gender on women's dairying work. The fourth is a representation of women as capable of reacting to the scientific approach to farming in general, with the unsuitability of empirical knowledge being key.

The main discussion concerning women in agriculture has revolved around economic activity of women or the social division between masculine and feminine work resulting from the introduction of capitalism into the family-farm economy. Three schools of thought have been emphasized: the notion of separate spheres where men and women work apart for independent goals; the gendered specificity of farm work where men and women may work at different tasks but with a mutual goal; and, running through both of these theories, the idea that there occurred a defeminization, or removal of women from their traditional gender role, in dairying. Researchers have incorporated agricultural journals into their research to support these interpretations.<sup>3</sup> The strength of the approach taken here, where articles found in the male-gendered section of an agricultural journal are used, is that the no historians have systematically researched a single agricultural journal to discuss the images and representations of women. None have looked at these images as projected in the male-oriented section of a paper. Therefore there is little to compare this study with.

Historically, gender specific work was a reality on nineteenth century Ontario farms. Women held certain responsibilities and men held other roles. The separate sphere ideology, which is so pervasive in women's agricultural history, and among historians, does not extend into this paper as projected from the pages of *The Farmer's*

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*Advocate*. "The changes in women's labour associated with capitalist industrialization occurred primarily because the home was separated from the workplace. As industry moved out of the household, the home was no longer a place of production and the family's function as a productive unit disappeared."<sup>4</sup> This relates especially to dairywomen in Cohen's book since she argues that women were removed from dairying due to separate spheres. Marjorie Griffin Cohen states that,

Milking was the first type of female dairy labour to be more regularly performed by men. When the family farm had one or two cows milking was usually women's work. As long as any aspect of production involved the farmhouse, it remained within the female domain, but outdoor dairy activity gradually became the preserve of men."<sup>5</sup>

This notion of separate spheres is noticeable in *The Farmer's Advocate* but only since the paper is divided into two sections with very different emphases, one for males and one for females. The complete separation of home and workplace, as Cohen suggests, is not clearly emphasized in the periodical.

Anne Moore notes in her article that comments in the nineteenth-century agricultural press generally acknowledged that all duties related to the dairy were women's domain until the larger size of dairy herds resulted in men becoming increasingly responsible for barn-related chores, including feeding and milking.<sup>6</sup> Martine Tremblay, in her article, *La division sexuelle du travail et le modernization de l'agriculture à travers la presse agricole*, is a useful model for this study. Tremblay sheds light on women's agriculture in the nineteenth century, yet states that it is not easy since women left almost no records. She used the Lower Canadian agricultural

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<sup>4</sup> Cohen, *Women's Work*, p. 17.

<sup>5</sup> Cohen, *Women's Work*, p. 107.

<sup>6</sup> Anne Moore, *The Effects of Social and Economic Changes on Rural Farm Women in Ontario: 1870-1911*. Master's Thesis: Nipissing University, 1993, p. 63.

newspaper *la Gazette des campagnes*, as the primary source for her article.<sup>7</sup> Her findings are that in the end of the nineteenth century, according to descriptions in agricultural journals, women's participation in agriculture was reduced.<sup>8</sup> Her work, however, is directed at a French-language journal and does not touch on Ontario agriculture. Tremblay notes that industrialization and specialization played a major role in the removal of women from agriculture.<sup>9</sup> Although she also uses one agricultural journal as her primary source she does not bring up the concept that women might have been represented differently in other journals. No scholarship has been completed with a discussion that perhaps women were perceived to maintain their traditional gender roles. The newspaper as a primary historical source is indispensable for this research. There exist certain challenges when using newspapers. A newspaper reflects an idea of social reality.<sup>10</sup> It is difficult to understand the reasons why certain articles were or were not published or what the editor or authors hoped to achieve in printing certain texts. Newspapers cannot be taken as a mirror of life at any given point in time. The attitudes and images projected through their pages may or may not suggest what life may have been like for some and cannot ascertain what life was like for all. Keeping these limitations in mind, the agricultural paper studied here can add to the understanding of social projections in this type of media. This kind of text offers a way to examine the representation of women in a male-gendered publication.

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<sup>7</sup> Martine Tremblay, "La division sexuelle du travail et le modernization de l'agriculture a travers la presse agricole, 1840-1900. *Revue d'histoire de l'amerique francaise*. Vol., 47, no. 2, automne, 1993.

<sup>8</sup> Martine Tremblay, "La division sexuelle du travail et le modernization de l'agriculture a travers la presse agricole, 1840-1900. *Revue d'histoire de l'amerique francaise*. Vol., 47, no. 2, automne, 1993, p. 221.

<sup>9</sup> Tremblay, *la Division sexuelle*, p. 222.

<sup>10</sup> Glenn R. Wilkinson, "At the Coal-Face of History: Personal Reflections on Using Newspapers as a Source." *Studies in Newspaper and Periodical History, 1995 Annual*. Greenwood Publishing: 1997, p. 213.

Only one short piece has been written specifically on *The Farmer's Advocate*.<sup>11</sup> The only reference to the journal is a paragraph in length with little description or elaboration. As well, only one four-page article has been written on the editor himself and it focuses on his tragic death rather than his journal.<sup>12</sup> Due to this, information is difficult to uncover regarding the periodical. What is known is that the editor, William Weld, was a man with 23 years of practical farming experience. His wish was to provide farmers with a paper that advanced their industry as well as,

An agricultural paper that will give a fair and reliable representation of requirements, position and progress, and that will afford a space in its columns for communications from farmers and to expose the many and various plans that are practiced to lead farmers astray.<sup>13</sup>

It is this statement above that is helpful for the research strategy of this paper, to look at the representations of women in *The Farmer's Advocate*. William Weld's office in London, Ontario was run by him until the time of his death in 1891, when his nephew took over and continued its publication. With this change in management there was no noticeable change in the periodical. While he was alive, Weld felt that a farmer could increase profits with a subscription to *The Farmer's Advocate*. There was an assumption here that farmers wished to farm for commercial purposes rather than just for subsistence. In 1871, an article explained that,

We presume that not one third of the farmers in Canada ever see an agricultural paper, even when borrowed, therefore the majority of them have to follow the example of those that take them, but they do not attempt a move until years of practical experience in their own vicinity show that the dairymen are making money.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> This brief reference is in, *The Dictionary of Canadian Biography: 1890's Edition*, pp. 1093-1094.

<sup>12</sup> John Bogue, "The Fighting Farmer: William Weld." *Western Ontario Historical Notes*. Vol., 3, 1945, pp. 33-36.

<sup>13</sup> "The Farmer's Advocate" [sic]. *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. II, no. 7, July 1867, p. 65.

<sup>14</sup> "The Dairy Business", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. VI, no. 4, April 1871, p. 49.

It was Weld's hope that this lag would be overcome by the distribution of information in his paper. If farmers would persevere then they would ultimately succeed.<sup>15</sup>

When the paper began its separate section on dairying, it specified that the columns were always open for the proper discussion of matters bearing upon dairying. Women also used *The Farmer's Advocate* as a forum to voice their own opinions and perhaps to gain acknowledgement of their role in farming. Not only was the Home Magazine section of the paper used by women, also the Dairy section and Dairy Notes sections of the paper often contained correspondence or articles written by women. One woman wrote on June 15<sup>th</sup>, 1897 an article called "A Friend to Farmer's Wives."<sup>16</sup> In the article she made clear her feelings on how she felt her voice had been heard in the number of times she had written in to the paper. *The Farmer's Advocate* wrote about women in agriculture and dairying in particular.

For the research purposes of this study, *The Farmer's Advocate* stimulated interest since it was published at regular intervals, is accessible and almost entirely archived. *The Farmer's Advocate* began as a four page, monthly publication and by 1897 had evolved into a twice-monthly periodical with 25 pages on average. Although it began with a local circulation, by 1877 its circulation ran from the American border in the South to Montreal in the East. By 1897 the journal was reaching up to 5000 farm families and area stores across the distribution region. This circulation included stores that distributed the journal as well as groups and individuals who had it delivered on a monthly basis. Monthly, nearly 5000 copies were delivered (there is no information as to

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<sup>15</sup> Persevere and Succeed was the motto of the paper printed on the front page, below the title of every issue.

<sup>16</sup> Here, she was referring to *The Farmer's Advocate* as a woman's friend.

how many were actually received or bought from stores where they were delivered).<sup>17</sup>

The audience of the paper consisted of farmers, their wives and children or anyone interested in agriculture. The writers for the paper varied and throughout the time period few authors' received credit for their writing. Towards the end of this period science-oriented articles were often attributed to "experts" or professors. Correspondence with the editor was always included in the journal as well as commentaries, stories and advice from fellow farmers.

*The Farmer's Advocate* consisted mainly of text with few pictures or drawings. By late 1870's advertisements began to appear with some drawings. Occasionally a picture of new dairy technology was included, usually as a sketch, but women were never pictured using the implements. Throughout the period discussed there appeared only one picture of a woman involved in dairying in the pages of the journal.<sup>18</sup> From 1867 to 1897 the lack of women pictured in the journal remained consistent within the male gendered section of the journal.

There existed a clear division of the journal into two separate sections, one for men and one for women. For the purposes of this research paper the focus will be on the female role in dairying discussed in the male section of *The Farmer's Advocate*. This is important since in most feminist or historical studies of this type the research emphasis has been on the female-gendered section of the journal.

Since most often women's history discusses how women talk about women, it was the intention here to discuss instead, the representation of women in an increasingly male-dominated sphere. All articles that discussed women's involvement in milking,

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<sup>17</sup> *The Farmer's Advocate*, December 17, 1897, p. 1.

<sup>18</sup> This picture appeared in Vol. No., June 1877, p. 6. The woman and a man were pictured placing rounds of cheese on a shelf in a cheese factory in Upper Canada.

butter making or cheese production were selected for analysis. Additionally, any pertinent information relating directly to women in the dairy industry (even if it was in the form of a poem or other such sources) were included if it was found in the male section of *The Farmer's Advocate*.

The method used to determine which articles, letters of correspondence and other pertinent information would be included in the research for this paper is based on key words or phrases in the title or identifier of the piece in *The Farmer's Advocate* and second in the content of the article. By 1875 an index was included with the journal and a new division was notably present. Keywords were kept simple and relevant to the topic and the index in the archived material of *The Farmer's Advocate* facilitated article selection.

Keywords that related to 'dairy,' for example, could have this root alone or be in combination with another word, such as: 'dairying' or 'dairymen'. Milk and its associated terms such as: 'milking', 'milker', 'milch' and 'milkmaids', were all researched to identify articles with appropriate subject material for this study. The word 'butter' as a keyword, necessarily drew the aspects of 'churning' and 'the creamery' since these are related tasks to butter making. Finally, 'woman' was an important word since there were articles for women that pertained to milking and all of the related duties. Often there were articles for women alone regarding milking or milk that did not contain the identifying word in the title. Variations on the keyword 'woman' included: 'girl', 'ladies', 'lady', 'women', as well as 'farmer's wife', 'wives' and 'daughters.'

The time frame this paper explores, from 1867 to 1897, was chosen since this thirty-year period begins with Confederation and ends nearly at the turn of the century.

Numerous technological advancements were introduced into farming and dairy farming in particular which may have influenced the removal of women from the dairy industry.<sup>19</sup> Ending with 1897 made for a thirty-year period. Every second year, starting with 1867, was examined.<sup>20</sup> Reprinting similar or duplicate articles from month to month and even from year to year was evident within the pages of *The Farmer's Advocate* and for the length of this research paper certain parameters had to be set. The goal was to determine if a change in representations of women's role in dairying or a consistency in the images produced in the journal was evident in the 30 years of publication.<sup>21</sup>

Milking, butter and cheese making are all related to dairying. It is important to note why cheese making does not figure prominently in this paper, even though women traditionally completed this task. Cheese making traditionally was a woman's chore. In Canada West, however, (later Ontario) cheese factories became dominant by mid-century with few home dairies producing their own cheese for market. Rather, most sent out their milk to factories for manufacturing. Therefore cheese making as a woman's duty was already essentially removed from the daily workload of the late nineteenth century dairywoman before the start of the time period discussed in this paper. According to Cohen in her article entitled "The Decline of Women in Canadian Dairying", she states that,

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<sup>19</sup> Bengt Ankarloo, "Agriculture and Women's Work: Directions of Change in the West, 1700-1900," p. 1. Maintains that a general 'direction of change' from 1700-1900 was towards a more pronounced preference for males in the agrarian labour force.

<sup>20</sup> The periodical only began publication with minimal issues in 1866. due to this the first entire year of publication, 1867, was the starting point for research in this paper.

<sup>21</sup> The only exception notable is that the publication year of 1872 has been included since no records of either 1873 or 1874 were available for inclusion in this study.

Before the first cheese factories were established in Canada, farmwomen performed most of the actual dairy work and were responsible for most dairy production in Canada.<sup>22</sup>

An excerpt from *The Farmer's Advocate* from January 1875 discusses "Capital and Labor in Cheese Making." The article indicates that not only the male head of the household must be vigilant in ensuring milk cleanliness but that the whole family was involved in supplying clean milk to the cheese factory for manufacture. The article stated that,

As farmers and their families in dairy districts come to see the profits arising from dairying and particularly the increase in the fertility of their farms that is sure to take place, they will come to look with complacency upon the fact that their part of the labor in furnishing the milk (to cheese factories), must be performed promptly and without fail.<sup>23</sup>

Already farmers were merely supplying the milk and not manufacturing cheese in their home dairies. An article from *The Farmer's Advocate* dating to February 1871 discusses the 'science' of cheese making. Within milking and butter making 'scientific' knowledge was not included on the pages of *The Farmer's Advocate* for some years to come while women's empirical knowledge in these areas was highly sought. Doctor L.L. Wight wrote,

No cheese factory has yet been constructed on principles best adapted to secure the desired results- the greatest convenience of labor and the best quality of cheese. This is not strange, because the manufacture of cheese by the modern system dates back less than a dozen years and yet the great and constantly increasing importance of the business renders the subject worthy of close thought and consideration.<sup>24</sup>

Since cheese making was profitable early on for domestic consumption and also to send to England, it became part of a factory system. Another article in *The Farmer's*

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<sup>22</sup> Marjorie Griffin Cohen, "The Decline of Women in Canadian Dairying," *Social History*, 17 (1984), p. 309.

<sup>23</sup> "Capital and Labour in Cheese Making," *The Farmer's Advocate* (January 1875), p. 9.

<sup>24</sup> "Science of Cheese Making," *The Farmer's Advocate*, (February 1871), p. 3.

*Advocate* from July 1879 shows a wood cut of a woman working at a cheese factory.<sup>25</sup>

The representation of the woman working in the cheese factory indicates that women may have been employed there, despite their removal from the home production side of cheese making. This could suggest that although this profitable practice was removed from the woman's sphere for the home dairy, her empirical knowledge was still required alongside the new scientific knowledge to ensure proper and effective manufacture of cheese.

In light of the representations of women in *The Farmer's Advocate*, women's roles in dairying, at least in the pages of the journal, were not altered. It is impossible to say to what extent this image of dairywomen in the journal reflected reality. What can be concluded is that throughout this period, this agricultural paper represented dairying as a female-gendered task, and that dairywomen did consistently milk and make butter.

While there were articles in *The Farmer's Advocate* between 1867 and 1897 that were written explicitly either for, by or about women in butter making, other articles implied that women were the primary and dominant butter makers at this time. In 1869 an article in the 'dairy' section of *The Farmer's Advocate* detailed in recipe form how to make annatto for colouring cheese. The article, with no author named, seemed to be written by a woman for a female audience and stated that the 'best butter makers' all used a similar method to the one detailed in the article. Much of the information was presented in 'scientific' form, but was of a purely practical nature. The author wrote,

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<sup>25</sup> Picture: "Work in a Modern Factory." *The Farmer's Advocate* (July 1879). p. 11.

The temperature at which the cream is to be churned should be like that at which the cream has been raised from the milk; it should not be allowed to exceed 64 degrees.<sup>26</sup>

Here the practical advice was stated first, with the scientific idea of specific temperature included almost as an afterthought. As demonstrated above, women were certainly still presented as the dominant churners and butter makers at the time of this article. This inclusion of articles where women wrote authoritatively, suggests that another perception of women's roles did exist and women were continually regarded as having dominion in milking and butter making. Although no author was named, often the gender of the writer was revealed. This may perhaps indicate *The Farmer's Advocate's* reluctance to promote women as 'experts' when contributing 'scientific' rather than simply practicable counsel, although that is not always the case.

Marjorie Griffin Cohen argues that women were removed from milking as one of the first changes in agriculture. According to findings from *The Farmer's Advocate* the periodical provides evidence that there occurred a perception of agricultural change through the representations of dairying women in 19<sup>th</sup> century Ontario. Certainly, larger farms with numerous cows could not be maintained nor make profits since women held other household responsibilities. With the introduction of year round milking and the intensification of feeding with improved feed, the representations of females in the journal, suggest that men did take over the increased workload from overburdened dairywomen. Since women were simultaneously responsible for all chores linked to the farm household, however, that meant that if the herd size was manageable and the amount of milk could be processed at home, then all dairy-associated duties remained within the female chore-domain. This representation of women as persistent in their

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<sup>26</sup> "Hints for the Dairy", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. III (1869) p. 165.

dairy chores is demonstrated in the pages of *The Farmer's Advocate* throughout the period discussed. Not always is there explicit mention of women milking the cows. Cohen does state that, "although there is infrequent reference to the gender of dairy workers in early records, such records as exist indicate that women as dairy workers were so usual as not to merit specific mention."<sup>27</sup> This is assuredly the case with *The Farmer's Advocate*, since often women are the desired audience of an article or are called upon for advice pertaining to milking technique or method. Cohen also mentioned that in 1861 James Croil refers to the dairy as the province of women.<sup>28</sup> Numerous changes occurred over the course of 30 years, on the subject of how women are discussed within *The Farmer's Advocate*, however, women the image projected was still that of women as the primary milkers.

Conversely, the journal does, at times, represent that women are not milking as frequently. This representation comes in an article decrying the "Dearth or Milkmaids" prevalent in the land. The article stated that women were called upon to milk, and fewer and fewer were qualified since they had been more occupied with practicing the piano than milking the cows. The inclusion of this article does not necessarily mean that milkmaids did not exist or that they were incapable, rather perhaps that more experienced dairymaids were required. The image of the lacking milkmaid in *The Farmer's Advocate* could denote that neither man or machines had taken women's place as the primary milker and it therefore seems that this article is part of the altering perception that women were unfit for dairying with the introduction of either capitalism or science and technology. Either women were uninterested in milking or had been removed from this

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<sup>27</sup> Cohen, *Women's Work*, p. 95.

<sup>28</sup> Cohen, *Women's Work*, p. 95.

role. The publishing of this article though, as a part of the ongoing discussion of the changing perceptions of women in dairying, points to the fact that women were still wanted and or required for milking purposes.

Another article dating from the same year would seem to discredit the fact that there existed a dearth of milkmaids. "Woman's Dress on the Farm" as the subject in *The Farmer's Advocate* advocates that farm wives always look tidy and attire themselves properly for all of their daily tasks; that was the minimum necessary requirement to produce good work on the farm. The article listed daily chores that required work clothing as, "nothing gives one such an untidy, slovenly appearance as spotted, dusty velvet or threadbare silk trimmings on a basque in which you milk, churn, bake, etc."<sup>29</sup> With instructions upon how to dress while milking clearly printed on the page as late as 1897, it seems fair that *The Farmer's Advocate* felt that women were still including milking as a part of their daily household duties on the farm.

By 1875 *The Farmer's Advocate* had a separate section called 'The Home Magazine' that purported to represent women's interests, a female-gendered and separate sphere within the paper itself.<sup>30</sup> This section of the journal discussed fashion and recipes, and how to raise children with the proper moral upbringing, among many other topics. It was apparently within the confines of this section of the paper that farm wives and the female farming population were to communicate. It seems surprising then that the male-gendered section of the paper continued to print material of interest to dairywomen and butter makers. In the April 1875 issue, however, there appeared two articles outside of

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<sup>29</sup> "Woman's Dress on the Farm", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XXXI, no. 5 (May 1, 1897) p. 208.

<sup>30</sup> A female gendered section had always been included in *The Farmer's Advocate*, entitled 'Minnie May's' section, but never had an entirely separate division been made with its own title of 'Home Magazine'.

the women's Home Magazine section that clearly were meant for women's eyes;<sup>31</sup> suggesting that the discussion of women being removed by science and technology was paralleled by a concurrent discussion, where women were represented as continually being involved in dairying practices. Both articles are explicitly directed to the farmer's wife and are printed in recipe format. Hints and advice as well as interesting information about the market price of Devonshire cream and butter preserved in brine seemed to be of importance enough to merit printing in the male-gendered 'Dairy' section of *The Farmer's Advocate*. These were both in recipe form but it appears that the profitability angle would also have been of great interest to farmers and perhaps explains the placement of these recipes.

In an article entitled "Advice to Wives," women were encouraged not to disparage their men for being silent during the dinner hour. Even though women did much of the dairying work and were possibly tired or irritable at the end of the day, the paper stated that, "it is a great loss if a man is silent among his wife and children. The husband and wife live so much of the time in a different world that a free intercourse can be a great help and pleasure to each of them."<sup>32</sup> The editor and writers of *The Farmer's Advocate* may have realized that 'separate spheres,' did exist within farm families and sought to alleviate any confusion of how to come together at the end of a long workday. There is no mention that the separate workspace was to achieve independent goals. Instead both male and females here were working towards a productive farm and were engaged in manual labour for a common product- milk or butter. The woman was, of course, related to the home or farmhouse but in an article called "The Way to Look at It",

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<sup>31</sup> The two articles are: "Devonshire Cream" and "Brine for Preserving Butter", vol. IX, no. 4 (April 1875) p. 67.

<sup>32</sup> "Advice to Wives", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XVIII, no. 8 (August 1883) p. 252.

a woman's role was glorified as being not only hard work, but also one from, which, "may issue from it to bless society and strengthen the nation."<sup>33</sup> Since this included milking and butter making chores, the representation is that a well-managed farm would be the outcome of hard work and perseverance on the part of both women and men.

Home creameries were not abandoned and still appeared to be dominant in 1891 when an article titled, "Mechanical Aids in Dairying," was printed in *The Farmer's Advocate*. Although the name suggested technological mechanization for butter making, what it advertised was a form of butter stamp for the home dairy and creamery. The text of the article made clear who would be using the device, stating that,

After the butter is worked free of water and buttermilk, and salted ready for market, the 'Carver' mould is used on the mass something after the manner of the housewife in cutting out cakes from the rolled dough on a bake board.<sup>34</sup>

Butter makers were women and, "whereby labor is lightened economically and dairy products turned out in more attractive style", the sales pitch, in article form, obviously aimed at those who would use it. The 'Carver' company demonstrates and "presents cuts of two butter printers for use in private dairies or creameries."<sup>35</sup> At this point women were still making butter and placing their product on the market. Although the concurrent dialogue insisted that women be removed from dairying due to profit losses on inferior quality of butter this text suggests that advice was either unread, or unheeded.

As late as 1897 *The Farmer's Advocate* described what a woman's daily chores should be. An article by a, Mrs. Evergreen, chastised men for continually ignoring the work wives and daughters completed in a day. Mrs. Evergreen writes that, "the girls probably have milked the cows, fed the calves, churned and sold the butter, raised the

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<sup>33</sup> "The Way to Look at It", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XVIII, no. 8 (August 1883) p. 253.

<sup>34</sup> "Carver Butter Moulds", *The Farmer's Advocate* (July 1891) p. 186.

<sup>35</sup> "Carver Butter Moulds", *The Farmer's Advocate* (July 1891) p. 186.

poultry, planted, hoed and picked up potatoes, looked after the vegetable garden and helped pick fruit.”<sup>36</sup> Within this article women are not represented as working solely in the household, and the term “separate” is used in *The Farmer’s Advocate* to refer to sex-specific farm tasks. It seems that *The Farmer’s Advocate* wrote consistently throughout this time period that women were contributing to farming in general and dairying in particular, and in a way that required recognition.

Scholars have concluded that, when capitalism entered the dairy market that women were removed if there were money to be made. When technology or science entered the picture then women were deemed incapable of handling this type of information and the defeminization of agriculture began. In contrast, *The Farmer’s Advocate* does not suggest that dairywomen stopped their traditional gender chores due to the onslaught of science or technology. Instead, women depicted in the paper, continued to churn butter and even work with alterations and a gradual shift occurring around them. What changed was the image of women’s role in butter making in *The Farmer’s Advocate*. Although the empirical knowledge of female butter-makers was sought, there occurred a shift in the representations of women in the agricultural journal. Throughout, though, women were represented as ever-present in the dairy.

Another image projected by *The Farmer’s Advocate*, suggests women were capable of producing a profit-making, dairy product, if afforded the opportunity. There are different representations of women in the journal concerning their profit-making abilities, however, the main representation of women suggests that throughout this period the journal projected that dairying was women’s work and that they were extensively

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<sup>36</sup> “Mrs. Evergreen Talks to the Men”, *Farmer’s Advocate*, vol. XXXI, no. 7 (July 1897) p. 303.

involved. Also, that due to women's very nature, they were better suited to dairy work. This naturalization is apparent in the ways in which both women and men were discussed concerning milking techniques and procedures. Women are characterized as gentle with the cows and that men must be taught to milk like women in order to succeed and thereby make money. Also, that women are more capable of keeping the buttery and the dairy clean, while men are not naturally equipped to do so.

The content of *The Farmer's Advocate* suggests that women were often discussed and recognized as offering a valuable contribution to the family farm. In Chapter Five of *Canadian Women: A History*, there is the assertion that,

Many farmers acknowledged the workwomen did; in rural areas it was well known that bachelors were less successful at farming than were married men because the work done by wives and children remained essential. In the early 1860's the Agricultural Association of Upper Canada stated explicitly that 'a good wife' was 'indispensable' to a farmer.<sup>37</sup>

With the establishment of *The Farmer's Advocate*, however, it appeared that women were to be left out of the discussion of agriculture entirely. In 1867 the first minutes of the Dairymen's Convention were published in the paper. No women members were invited or included and the discussion centred on the new factories in cheese making and introductory technology in farming. Despite this absence of women within the discussion, the representations of women in *The Farmer's Advocate* suggest that women's roles were not altered according to the pages of the journal.

The discussion surrounding science in milking covered in *The Farmer's Advocate* addressed men in 1871. Five similar articles directed at an audience of men, guided males in the 'proper' way to hand-milk cows. Historically, milking was a female chore

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<sup>37</sup> Prentice, Bourne, Brandt, Light, Mitchinson and Black. *Canadian Women: A History*. Toronto, Jarcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1988, p. 121.

and persisted as such until the end of the period discussed here, according to accounts in *The Farmer's Advocate*. Even with milkmaids remaining as the primary milkers, *The Farmer's Advocate* offered helpful hints to men who wished to improve their skills. Never, from 1867 to 1897 was there published a word or an article offering hints to female milkers on technical or methodological improvements.

In December of 1871, further testimony to women's butter making skills was printed. This article calls upon farmwives for their advice about what happens to cream as butter is being made. No scientific or mechanized advice is sought; the dairywomen are here viewed as the experts. The article states that,

But what housekeeper does not know that sometimes her buttermilk is as yellow as cream and makes her cakes and biscuits rich without lard, if she uses it to wet the flour? This matter needs some careful attention and if farmers and their wives will find out the facts this paper will gladly print them.<sup>38</sup>

*The Farmer's Advocate* seemed to be offering incentive to dairywomen to empirically observe the process that produced butter of a certain colour. The paper would not have called on farmwives to do so if butter making was not one of their primary chores. There did not appear an answer to this question from any farmer's or their wives, although butter in buttermilk was discussed in the journal on various other occasions.

It is important to note that the inference to science here was in the 'method' applied and not the technology. Therefore, these articles with advice to men on how to milk offered a scientific approach to the methods. A constant theme in the columns for male milkers was gentility. Cows were female and deserved gentle and respectful

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<sup>38</sup> "Butter is Left in Buttermilk", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. VI, no. 12 (December 1871) p. 188.

treatment, just like any other female. The first of these articles told a male what he should do to achieve the desired results:

Many an otherwise excellent milker [referring here to the milk cow] is spoiled for life by harsh treatment. It is better to govern by gentleness and kind treatment than by harsh means and fear of the master.<sup>39</sup>

This quote represents the male as being somewhat rough with the cows. The quote implies by its silence, that women milkers are more gentle. The inference is that if the advice were followed then the cow's production would rise. Milking, however, was not represented as the natural domain of men. *The Farmer's Advocate* may have printed information for male milkers since gentility was required in their technique and therefore made these helpful hints available on differing occasions. Following this first introduction of milking to males another more specific article followed in 1875. Despite the instructions presented in 1871, *The Farmer's Advocate* does not seem to exude the confidence that men yet know how to milk and offered details instead.

Let the milker now grasp the teats with his whole hand and by a firm and rapid but steady pressure, crowd the milk out by closing the fingers next to the udder a little in advance of those below, being careful not to hurt the cow by pinching her teat between the ends of his fingers and his hand, or by pressing his fingernails into the teat as his hand closes.<sup>40</sup>

As early as 1872 *The Farmer's Advocate* printed an article featuring women as milkers. "In those parts of the country where women are solely employed to milk, we frequently find one or two tuneful lassies singing at their work."<sup>41</sup> This inferred that women were not the only people who milked, children also attended to the cows as well as husbands if times were not overly busy. Women were more tender with the cows and

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<sup>39</sup> "Breaking Heifers to Milk", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. VI, no. 8 (August 1871) p. 116.

<sup>40</sup> "How to Milk", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. X, no. 9 (September 1875) p. 171.

<sup>41</sup> "Milking in Silence", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. VII, no. 1 (Jan. 1872) p. 43.

since they themselves experienced lactating, the affinity between cows and farmwives was considered to be strong. The temperament of the milker influenced how much milk was taken at any given milking and could affect the entire process. Once men did begin the chore of milking, due to higher production, the paper focuses its energies on describing how to milk and the gentlest method of milking. Naturally, or so it was discussed in *The Farmer's Advocate*, women were better suited for the job.

The first article pertaining to this profitability appeared in 1872, entitled simply; "Milk, Butter and Cheese- Comparative Profits." Both the farmer and his wife were mentioned as working in this area (with specific sex-roles) although the more intense work of churning and butter making was clearly characterized as a female gendered chore. At this point it appears that butter making was quite expensive to endeavour but was still undertaken by the female work force on the farm. With this higher overhead there is little wonder that women in later articles printed by *The Farmer's Advocate* were blamed for not being as profitable in butter making as cheese making. This article explains that,

Indeed the expense of making butter is double that of making cheese. The price for manufacturing cheese at our factories is 2 1/2 cents per pound; while the price for making butter is 5 cents per pound.<sup>42</sup>

Profit increases were stated as 'fact' in *The Farmer's Advocate* later in 1872. for,

In spite of the enormous (butter) production it has thrown upon the market, seems to have built up a demand faster than can be supplied. Formerly this country exported butter, but of late it is all consumed at home, and the price is higher than in London.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> "Milk, Butter and Cheese- Comparative Profits", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. VII, no. 9 (August 1872) p. 117.

<sup>43</sup> "Butter Making", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. VII, no. 10 (October 1872) p. 135.

Home production by milkmaids with smaller and higher producing herds accounted for the increase. At this point women may have reached their manufacturing limit for home production since afterwards the discussion in *The Farmer's Advocate* revolves around women butter makers producing an inferior product.

This “natural” knowledge of milking went hand in hand with a woman’s knowledge that she gained over years of practice and observation. A woman is quoted as ‘knowledgeable’ in July 1875, in an article entitled “How to Make the Dairy Pay.”<sup>44</sup> There is no description as to how she gained her knowledge but her vast exposure to different types of cows over the course of many years causes her to note that, “there is as much difference in cows as in other folks.”<sup>45</sup> She says that dairying is not a paying business. Generally, the prime cause of profit and losses is the quality of the cow. *The Farmer's Advocate* may have used Mrs. Partington’s advice in their paper since it was women who knew the most about cows from milking them. Her ‘expert’ status as a milker made her a valuable source of information for others.

In 1879 women were still sought to milk cows and make butter since they were the most adept at these chores. While farmwives attended to these chores on the family farm, other females were hired at times, to complete the same tasks or additional dairy related tasks. *The Farmer's Advocate* wrote that, “in Central New York women can be hired to come upon the farm morning and evening and help do the milking.”<sup>46</sup> The article suggests that men are not as capable of milking and with more women working for their husbands on higher milk yielding farms that these women are less likely to come and milk on other farms- a dearth of milkmaids, in other words is suggested. “First class

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<sup>44</sup> “To Make the Dairy Pay”, *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. X, no. 7 (July 1875) p. 130.

<sup>45</sup> “To Make the Dairy Pay”, *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. X, no. 7 (July 1875) p. 130.

<sup>46</sup> “The New Milking Machine”, *The Farmer's Advocate* (October 1879) p. 223.

milkers are never plenty even in the dairy regions and immense losses are annually sustained in the aggregate on account of the inferior manner in which cows are milked.”<sup>47</sup> Here the inference is that men are completing the work of milking and the best results are not being achieved. For this reason alone the article advertises a new milking machine where fewer hands will be required and,

That if cows could be properly milked by machine the dairymen would be comparatively independent of hand-milkers, while the work could be done with more regularity and uniformity, and with less abuse to the stock.<sup>48</sup>

This type of article would be of little use to an experienced milker. In later years, *The Farmer's Advocate* continued educating men in the technique and methods of milking properly. Again in 1883 a similar type of article suggested that dairymen be gentle with their cows if they wanted milk to come easily and in higher quantities. This article, by an apparently notable dairyman, attested to the fact that kindness to cows was necessary for profits to be achieved and that any farmer was capable of it.<sup>49</sup> 1887 and 1893 saw the publication of similar columns telling males that if they wanted to be productive in milking, the treatment of their cows was the most important factor. This repeated assertion that male milkers were not as adept at getting cows to produce vast quantities of milk by hand-milking, may be one of the myriad of reasons why *The Farmer's Advocate* continued to represent women in their traditional gender role as milkers until the end of the period under examination.

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<sup>47</sup> “The New Milking Machine”, *The Farmer's Advocate* (October 1879) p. 223.

<sup>48</sup> “The New Milking Machine”, *The Farmer's Advocate* (October 1879) p. 223.

<sup>49</sup> The article, a prize essay, was written by John McClure entitled: “The Treatment of Milch Cows”. *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XVIII, no. 6 (June 1883) p. 171. The author also advocated heat, pure air, light and cleanliness for the cows but stressed that kindness and gentility with the cows was of the utmost importance.

Conversely, in June 1877, an article in *The Farmer's Advocate* discussed shifting perceptions of women's roles in dairying. It stated that females were capable of farming, since they completed all of the dairy work, but that independent farming on the part of a female was impossible. The example was given of a 'persistent' woman who tried to farm by herself after her husband's death but only made a success of it once she heeded the advice of her father and acquired the help of a foreman. It is made clear that she could think, but not for herself if she wished the farm to become profitable.<sup>50</sup>

Women not only knew which cows should be kept but also how many they could handle. In 1877 a farmer was quoted as saying that he, "would keep more cows, for it pays me better than anything else, but my wife and family do not like it."<sup>51</sup> The farmer placed the blame for profit or loss on the fact that his help, namely his wife and family, were too overburdened with work to milk additional cows. Emphasizing once again that women were the primary milkers on most farms. By this point profit was beginning to play a role in the discussion of women's gender specific chores.

Not just in articles alone, but also in poems, women were reinforced as the gender that most often milked the cows. In verse the drudgery of milking and rising early to attend the cows is replaced with a romanticized picture of seeing dewy morning flowers and hearing the birdsong at an early hour. The poem "The Farmer's Wife" is reprinted in 1877, 1883 and 1895,<sup>52</sup> which seemingly attests to its popularity with the readers as well as its inclusion of the projected image for farmwomen in the journal.

With the increase in production more hands were required than women had to offer and consequently men completed female-gendered chores with alarmingly negative

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<sup>50</sup> "Trade for Women", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XI, no. 6 (June 1877) p. 140.

<sup>51</sup> "Hints to Dairymen", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XII, no. 5, (May 1877).

<sup>52</sup> First published "The Farmer's Wife", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XI, no. 6 (June 1877) p. 139.

results. *The Farmer's Advocate* noted this and saw fit to publish a full page advertisement where not only could money be made but men would no longer have to milk. Since "the drudgery and worry of hand-milking, in any considerable dairy of cows can only be appreciated by those who are engaged in dairying,"<sup>53</sup> women alone would be capable of understanding this and would undoubtedly, at least so it seems from this statement in the journal, that they too would want technology. Not for the same reasons as their husbands- for profit- but for the easing of the burden of chores related to farmwomen's duties in dairying. The perception here was that women continued to milk but needed additional help.

Scholars have concluded that herd improvements, better feeding, better breeding and year round milking, all combined to increase milk production between 1867 and 1897 in Ontario. With this increase dairy farmer's saw that profit could be made from an enterprise which previously had been too labour intensive to consider. According to articles printed in the journal, the profitability of dairying, namely fluid milk and butter making, which both remained on the family farm, as opposed to cheese manufacturing, became the emphasis in the dairy section of *The Farmer's Advocate*.

1883 was a year with many articles about butter and butter making. In July, an article called, "Good Butter Demands Work and Thought," clearly told men that if they were to be involved with scientific butter making, then the 'common sense' employed by their wives also would be useful. Since cleanliness was the domain of females and butter making required strict hygiene to produce superior results, the skimmer, churn, milk cans

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<sup>53</sup> "The New Milking Machine". *The Farmer's Advocate* (October 1879) p. 223.

and other implements used in the process could not be left dirty or hastily cleaned.<sup>54</sup> The magazine suggested that,

The use of such implements don't make gilt-edged butter. There is a like difference between cleanliness and filth running through all the manipulations of butter making, that requires extra steps on the part of cleanliness, but after all it pays.<sup>55</sup>

Profit, it appears, is what would induce men to attempt butter making, a task otherwise distinctly within the female gendered role of farm work. The tone of the article maintained the dominant idea that men were not necessarily capable of producing butter, since they left, "churns that smelled more like swill barrels than like vessels in a clean dairy, because it was easier to let them go than to cleanse them."<sup>56</sup> Technological advancements in dairying were talked about here and even though women were mentioned as being better at producing butter the underlying thought seems to be that if men would maintain certain levels of sanitation then they could achieve higher levels of productivity. The dialogue of science and technology with profit combined to eventuate this shift in perceptions away from the women as primary butter makers.

Later in the same year, another woman wrote to offer advice to those hoping to learn from her knowledge. "Butter Making as Told by a Woman" was written by Mrs. S.H.R. It is unclear what her background in butter making was, as she does not share this with her readers, her qualifications, as a farmwife seem to serve well enough. Her investigations reveal that placing milk in deep cans as opposed to shallow dishes makes

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<sup>54</sup> L.B. Arnold. "Good Butter Demands Work and Thought". *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. VIII, no. 7 (July 1883) p. 201.

<sup>55</sup> L.B. Arnold. "Good Butter Demands Work and Thought". *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. VIII, no. 7 (July 1883) p. 201.

<sup>56</sup> L.B. Arnold. "Good Butter Demands Work and Thought". *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. VIII, no. 7 (July 1883) p. 201.

cream rise more quickly and allows for easy skimming. Mrs. S.H.R tells readers how she prepares for skimming and churning:

When I get ready- that is, after the breakfast things are out of the way, and I have aired the house of all smells of cooking- I open the cans and dip the cream into crocks to set away until it is time to ripen for churning. The skim milk is fed to calves or pigs from the same pails.<sup>57</sup>

The kitchen would have to be aired, if milk were to set out, since milk takes on the smell of whatever it is exposed to. Surely, other farmers' wives would also understand this method of skimming and preparation for churning. This may not be the case though, since Mrs. S.H.R offered new suggestions on using deeper cans and doing away with the cumbersome and less effective, large, shallow dishes. Her method made this chore more manageable and is perhaps the reason why it was printed in the paper. This representation in the journal runs contrary to the competing images of women, such as the perception that women could not grasp methodological enhancements.

Women seemed to be the 'experts' at butter making in *The Farmer's Advocate* since it is they who wrote in and offer suggestions for improvement and had these correspondences printed. Men also wrote in to *The Farmer's Advocate* but not necessarily to discuss butter making. Since this was the sole province of women and their text was published it would appear that they had the most knowledge in this field.

By 1891 this representation of dairywomen as the doers and not the authorities on milking and butter making, had progressed to a more disparate state than what the perception was in 1867 in *Farmer's Advocate*. An article titled, "Cost of Ignorance" told farmers that there was no excuse for ignorance on the part of the dairyman. Here

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<sup>57</sup> Mrs. S.H.R., "Butter Making as Told by a Woman", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XVIII, no. 10 (October 1883) p. 307.

farmwives were targeted since; “In no business perhaps does ignorance have to be paid for more promptly than in dairying.”<sup>58</sup> *The Farmer's Advocate* advocated that farmers, predominantly men, “read the paper and inform whoever is doing the milking and churning of the ways to improve with ‘scientific’ standards”, or else there would be profit loss for the farmer.<sup>59</sup> Here the approach was more indirect yet even more effective and alienating for the perception of women in this role. Neither women nor the gender of milkers or butter makers was mentioned, yet anyone reading this commentary could realize that women and girls accomplished all chores related to dairying. With the state of dairy science a warning to all farmers was clarified: “It is inexcusable for any one to go blindly about his work, when he, by a little reading and study, can be as fully informed on every dairy subject as the most expert.”<sup>60</sup> The cost of ignorance on the part of the farmer meant money lost and was mirrored in the methods his wife utilized to perform her dairying chores. No farmer wished to be called ignorant. More importantly he wanted to make money. If having his wife do shoddy work and refusing to embrace new ideas and technology meant he was characterized as foolish or ignorant by anyone then perhaps science should be welcomed onto the family farm and most importantly, into the dairy. That was perhaps the purpose of the article and the perception *The Farmer's Advocate* most likely wanted to promote. This ideology did nothing, however, to remove women from butter making chores until well after 1897.

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<sup>58</sup> “Cost of Ignorance”, *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XXV, no. 3 (March 1891) p. 93.

<sup>59</sup> “Cost of Ignorance”, *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XXV, no. 3 (March 1891) p. 93.

<sup>60</sup> “Cost of Ignorance”, *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XXV, no. 3 (March 1891) p. 93.

*The Farmer's Advocate* offers another representation of women throughout this period, one which, projects awareness of the impact of gender on women's farm work and dairying. Articles represent women as being paid less due to their gender alone, as well as, being denied labour-saving devices, while men buy them for themselves (since it was the men who controlled the finances). The journal offers a representation of dairying where more profit could be made if women were only given the proper tools and the opportunity to exploit the new science and technology.

Clearly, science gradually became a focus of *The Farmer's Advocate*. Not only in butter making was it prevalent but also in all aspects of work that touched farmwomen's daily lives. Milkmaids and dairywomen maintained their traditional gender roles in dairying, whether they wanted to or not, but were removed over time from the discussion surrounding their chores. Technology emerged as a topic for debate as early as 1867 with an article entitled, "For the Ladies". The audience for the article was a female one, as it advocated that more leisure time was required for the farmwife if the next generation were to prosper. Women needed to do less farm work and concentrate on educating themselves so as to educate their children. At the outset this piece states that. "Science, Art and Industry are of great antiquity...Improvements have been constantly made, and discoveries continually developed for the good of mankind."<sup>61</sup> It points out that farmwomen had not been the beneficiaries of these technological advancements.

Your father, husband or brother most probably, in their labor, are using some machine, such as the reaping, thrashing, or sawing machine, the cultivator, feed-cutter or seed drill, but have they duly considered your position, when they come home from their labor, they can sit down quietly during the evening. read the

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<sup>61</sup> "For the Ladies", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. 2. p. 63.

news, or smoke their pipes; if they look from their papers they may see their wives, mothers, sisters, or daughters still toiling.<sup>62</sup>

The writer of these paragraphs saw, even if farm husbands did not, that the representation of farmwives as overworked and under appreciated was apt in regards to lack of technology. Here science and technology was promoted for the good of women, while later it became apparent the discourse pertained to removal of women from traditional gender roles in dairying.

By 1871, *The Farmer's Advocate*, noted the depreciation of labour due to gender alone. Although the topic was gardening as women's work, an article made a point of saying that "...a woman who works at making pants receives fifty cents per day, not on account of the amount or quality of work, but because she is a woman...the difference in price grows out of the difference in sex."<sup>63</sup> Work also had lesser value if a woman did it. This analysis could be extended to dairy practices where, once profit making became a factor, the perception of women's gendered roles, i.e., in milking and butter making, became less valued. The purpose of the article was to relate that women working at sewing could be making more money for the farm in four months of gardening than in eight months of mending and stitching. What comes through clearly though, is representation that women could perform equal work and would still receive lesser remuneration. With all of the work women were accomplishing, the paper wrote in 1875 that although the farming way of life was a healthy one, farmers and their wives might wear themselves out by exhaustive labour.<sup>64</sup> By not just mentioning farmers alone, but

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<sup>62</sup> "For the Ladies", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. 2, p. 63.

<sup>63</sup> "Gardening as Woman's Work", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. VI, no. 6 (June 1871) p. 80.

<sup>64</sup> "The Health of Farmers", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. X, no. 7 (July 1875) p. 129.

by including farmwives as well, the paper implies that women were contributing to the farm, albeit in specific gender roles, working towards agricultural or in this case, milk production and productivity.

Starting in 1871, *The Farmer's Advocate* printed an article called "Good Cow" that sung the praises of a lady farmer. The dairywoman's name was not mentioned nor was the name of her farm. The idea of the article seems more to give credit to the cow than to the owner or milker. By leaving the woman anonymous and instead stating that the cow was superior in all ways somewhat diminished the fact that a female reared, milked and made butter from this prize winning cow. The article stated that,

According to the *Madison Courier*, a lady of that city is the owner of the banner cow of the U.S., which is proved by her achievements in the milk and butter lines. The record of 14 consecutive days foots up to 96 gallons and upwards of milk, from which were made 32  $\frac{3}{4}$  pounds of excellent butter.<sup>65</sup>

Within this notice the woman as a dairywoman was silenced since "she" within the text is referring to the cows achievements in the 'milk and butter lines'. Regardless, this article still went to print. Whether it was to praise the cow or the breeder, the representation is that a female milked a cow consistently for two weeks with a milk yield higher than ever before seen. This demonstrates a perception that women were certainly making butter in the early years of *The Farmer's Advocate's* publication and were somewhat limitedly acknowledged for their achievements.

By 1872, the lesser quality of butter manufactured became a central theme for *The Farmer's Advocate*. At this time, the journal represented the butter making enterprise as potentially profitable and thereby advocated that milkmaids required improved facilities to produce better butter (rather than that of inferior quality) and not more butter. With

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<sup>65</sup> "Good Cow", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. VI, no. 12 (December 1871) p. 188.

the increase in milk production, and the subsequent hike in profits, butter manufacturing also rises and the quality of butter diminishes due to inadequate facilities or expansion of activities on the family farm. Farmwives apparently were expected to continue their 'unprecedented' production due to the appeal of potential revenue. This article cites that,

Then our housewives and dairymaids have not the advantage of having milk houses with a temperature at all times equal, having in them a spring of cool, clean water, as other places have.<sup>66</sup>

Little advice was offered here on how to remedy the problem of inferior butter except to improve working conditions for women, without offering information on how this could be achieved. Scholars indicate that this improvement did not occur for most milkmaids and many persisted until well past the turn of the century using antiquated technology and methods mainly due to the patriarchal control exerted over their traditional gender roles by their farmer husbands.

In October of 1877, there was a reprint of an earlier poem entitled "The Farmer's Wife". With this publication there were two extra verses and churning appeared to be a far heavier chore for the wife despite its later publication and the dialogue surrounding women's supposed gradual exit from traditional gender roles. With this emphasis on butter making and churning as such a time-consuming chore the discussion around whether women were gradually shifting away from churning does not appear to be present in this representation in *The Farmer's Advocate*. In the lines of this poem, the wife is worn out by all of her chores but churning appears to take up the most of her time, so much in fact that she does not have time to enjoy the beauty around her on the farm.

Oh Glorious colors the clouds are turning,  
If she would but look over hills and trees;

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<sup>66</sup> "The Butter Question", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. VII, no. 12 (December 1872) p. 178.

But here are the dishes, and here is the churning  
Those things always must yield to these.

And after the sweeping and churning and baking,  
And dinner dishes are all put by,  
She sits and sews, though her head is aching,  
Till time for supper and "chores" draws nigh.

Her husband comes from the field of labor;  
He gives no praise to his weary wife;  
She's done no more than has her neighbor;  
'Tis the lot of all in country life.

And I think the sweetest joys of heaven,  
The rarest bliss of eternal life,  
And the fairest crown of all will be given  
Unto the way-worn farmer's wife.<sup>67</sup>

Not only does the farmer's wife have churning to finish, lunch to make and darning to complete, she also has to milk in the afternoon (referred to here as "chores") as well as make supper for everyone. While this poem speaks well of the farmer's wife, she is clearly overworked and undervalued, with her reward coming in the form of eternal life in heaven for being profitable on earth. The consistent examples of women's persistent role in milking and butter making seem to counter the representation of science and technology as well as profit making articles printed in *The Farmer's Advocate*, as denoting the defeminization of dairying.

In 1882, the increased fluid milk production of cows was indicated in a letter written by a man looking to process more milk, since his wife and additional milkmaid were overrun with work. The correspondent asked *The Farmer's Advocate* for the name of a manufacturer who sold dog powered churns. One was required that could "churn for ten to twelve cows, and the name and address of any manufactured would make me very

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<sup>67</sup> "The Farmer's Wife". *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XI, no. 10, p. 244.

much obliged.”<sup>68</sup> Ten years after the initial reporting of increased dairy profits no alternative means of production had been offered in the pages of *The Farmer's Advocate*. A dairy of ten to twelve cows would produce enough milk and cream to be too much for one or even two women to handle since all of the cream required hand skimming and churning which was an arduous task. *The Farmer's Advocate* did not have the name of a manufacturer of a dog-powered churn but stated that, “we do not know the name of any manufacturer of such a churn. It would be well if manufacturers would use our advertising column.”<sup>69</sup>

In 1885, an entire page was devoted to “Wife Killing Arrangements”, listing all of the chores farmwives and dairywomen were required to do and how this was not conducive to a happy farm life or wife. The advice goes out to husbands who purchased products for betterment in the barn and field but never for the house or dairy. It is printed that, “there is a great neglect on the part of husbands to offer time and labour saving devices to the wife.”<sup>70</sup> Most notable in this selection is the emphasis on the amount of hard work and drudgery involved in using the dash-churn for farm wives. The article stated that this type of churn was still widely used,

Partly from its simple structure and low cost, but chiefly from the force of custom, it continues in use, a terror to dairy maids and half-grown girls, and, very likely, will be handed down to future generations.<sup>71</sup>

This, the most gruelling work of the dairy, continued to be performed by females on family farms and in small-scale production; despite the growing perception that women

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<sup>68</sup> Correspondence. *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XVIII, no. 4, (April 1883), p. 166.

<sup>69</sup> Response to Correspondence, *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XVIII, no. 4 (April 1883).

<sup>70</sup> Professor L.A. Arnold, “Wife-Killing Arrangements”, *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XIX, no. 6 (June 1885) p. 165.

<sup>71</sup> Professor L.A. Arnold, “Wife-Killing Arrangements”, *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XIX, no. 6 (June 1885) p. 165.

were no longer 'experts' in this area. Within this same article it is established that, "the churning is the hardest part of the work in the dairy and whenever it can be, this task ought to be shifted to some other power than the direct use of the human hand."<sup>72</sup> Due to the reasons listed in the article itself, farmwives and dairymaids persisted in,

The large amount of needless work from setting milk in a multiplicity of small vessels, causing a waste of time and labor in filling, skimming, emptying, washing and handling so many dishes, three quarters of which might be avoided.<sup>73</sup>

These tasks associated with dairying and butter making, along with the work of churning were not advocated as advancing farm practices. This article revealed two separate discussions relating to the images of dairywomen in *The Farmer's Advocate*. Firstly, that farmwives should not be doing such hard labour without technology and, secondly, that science had become a part of farming and especially dairying, commencing the gradual shift in perceptions as demonstrated towards women's traditional gender roles in *The Farmer's Advocate*.

May 1885 offered a different view of women at churning. There was no advice offered, instead a poem about a young girl at the churn presents an image of the female completing her sex-specific chore, with the male dominating her even within her own area of expertise. Not only is the poem about making butter it also dishes out some practical life lessons to all who will read it.

A little maid in the morning sun  
Stood merrily singing and churning-  
"Oh! How I wish this butter was done  
Then off to the fields I'd be turning!"  
So she hurried the dasher up and down,

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<sup>72</sup> Professor L.A. Arnold. "Wife-Killing Arrangements". *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XIX, no. 6 (June 1885) p. 165.

<sup>73</sup> Professor L.A. Arnold. "Wife-Killing Arrangements". *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XIX, no. 6 (June 1885) p. 165.

Till the farmer called with half-made frown,  
"Churn slowly!"

"Don't ply the churn so fast, my dear,  
It is not good for the butter,  
And will make your arms ache, too, I fear,  
And put you all in a flutter-  
For this is a rule wherever we turn,  
Don't be in haste, whenever you churn-  
Churn slowly!

"If you want your butter to come nice and sweet.  
Don't churn with a nervous jerking,  
But ply the dasher slowly and neat-  
You'll hardly know that your [sic] working;  
And when the butter has come you'll say,  
'Yes, this is surely the better way'-  
Churn slowly!

Now, all you folks, do you think that you  
A lesson can find in butter?  
Don't be in haste, whatever you do,  
Or get yourself in a flutter;  
And while you stand at life's great churn,  
Let the farmer's words to you return,-  
Churn slowly!<sup>74</sup>

From this publishing of this poem it may be ascertained that the journal perceived of churning as a continued female chore, despite the farmer telling the girl how to do her work. Notably, the girl used a dasher, the most rudimentary of churns, to complete her work. By this time hundreds of patents were advertised in *The Farmer's Advocate* for butter churns. Here the simplest mode of production is used and the best results are desired. As well as running contrary to the discussion in the text of *The Farmer's Advocate* for technological advancements in the dairy, this poem reinforces the projected image of the female as the predominant butter maker.

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<sup>74</sup>"Churn Slowly", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XIX, no. 5 (May 1885) p. 146.

A Mr. Moyer published a prize essay about "Women in the Dairy" in August 1885. Mr. Moyer made it clear that the continued success of dairying required the participation of women. He makes no judgment as to whether women are better milkers than men, but begins by saying that "...the dairy in our country has been so far principally managed and the work done by women..."<sup>75</sup> The author seemed pleased with the arrangement and clearly noted that there was a change occurring. He found that machinery took away a great deal of men's labour on the farm but that women's work remained the same. Due to this fact he suggested that men take over milking, despite less adaptation to the work, and leave women for other tasks. He further stressed that, "the success of our dairy industry depends on the interest our women take in the business and this interest can only be reasonably expected when we allow them as much remuneration as men in doing the same work."<sup>76</sup> It is unclear if Mr. Moyer was advancing a strike of dairymaids and farmwives from milking so they could receive adequate remuneration, however, what is clear is that women were represented in the journal as being responsible for milking and that the management of milking by women had been sustained and consistent, despite the ongoing discussion of profit and science and technology.

That same year a prize essay was printed telling of the fall in butter prices. Apparently, Canadian butter was of such poor quality at this time that exported products were sold as 'hog grease'. Mr. M. Moyer wrote in his essay that:

There is a feeling prevalent that because Canadian butter stands so low in the market, owing to its poor quality, the women, who principally made it, are to blame. The poor woman does her best; but it is no more possible to make good butter under such circumstances than it is to grow roses in a snow bank. Give the woman a chance and they will make good account of themselves.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> "Women in the Dairy", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XIX, no. 8 (August 1885) p. 235.

<sup>76</sup> "Women in the Dairy", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XIX, no. 8 (August 1885) p. 235.

<sup>77</sup> Prize Essay, "Women in the Dairy", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XIX, no. 8, p. 235.

Mr. Moyer apparently felt that women required better facilities and should not have butter making removed from their domain since it is they who possess all of the practical and empirical knowledge. He wrote in favour of females running creameries since their levels of cleanliness were far higher than those of men. This piece stated that women were not lacking knowledge, but proper conditions under which to produce a superior product. This fall in export and domestic prices did precipitate a gradual shift since creameries do start to appear more frequently afterwards. According to the representation of women in *The Farmer's Advocate*, women remained as the primary butter makers despite this rise in commercial creameries.

November 1885's article, "The Creamery as we Find It", is telling in that the price of butter has dropped dramatically along with the demand. The earlier articles seeking ways to improve butter quality due to overworked dairymaids clearly were inadequate or went unheeded. Whereas previously men had been blamed in *The Farmer's Advocate* for forcing women to work in less than adequate circumstances this piece lays the blame of a poor butter market on the butter makers- the farmwives or milkmaids. With higher prices women required better facilities, with lower prices women were blamed for producing an inferior product. The idea that the technology supported in *The Farmer's Advocate* was not adhered to by farmers was not addressed here. Rather, the author wrote that, "because our butter market was spoiled through poor butter makers, those who make good butter will also have to take less."<sup>78</sup> With butter prices at an all-time low and fluid milk yields still high, the manufacture of butter did not cease and therefore farmwives

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<sup>78</sup> "The Creamery as we Find It", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XX, no. 10 (November 1885) p. 334.

continued to churn. This time with even less hope of getting additional help or a crank rather than a dasher churn, to lessen the difficult and time-consuming chores.

According to representations of women in the journal, females continued to milk, skim and churn, even though the dialogue surrounding their chores no longer included their gender. By 1887, “revolutionary” changes in butter making made their way onto the printed page, pushing aside previous accounts of this same subject matter, at least if communicated by the female gender. An example of this replacement of women in the discussion notes that, “revolutionary changes have recently been made in dairy practice, owing partly to the advancement of science and partly to a natural desire for change on the part of the consumers of butter.”<sup>79</sup> This ‘natural’ shift was described as one where the discerning taste of the consumer was believed to be far superior to that of the farmer and his wife. The farmwife being the butter maker was advised to, “...combine the wholesome with the luxurious, when manufacturing.”<sup>80</sup> Here the image of the woman as the butter maker is persistent. According to *The Farmer’s Advocate*, it was the dairymaid who still prepared the butter but her skill was called into question with the onset of scientific knowledge. Any previous publishings in *The Farmer’s Advocate* appeared to have been omitted or entirely forgotten by the time this article found its way into print. Dairywomen no longer discussed, but were discussed, did not offer advice, rather, were advised to take it. Their work remained the same and the tools do not change. At appropriate times women’s butter making methods had been adjusted, as printed the in *The Farmer’s Advocate*. Still, the altered representation of dairymaids in

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<sup>79</sup> “Butter Making”, *The Farmer’s Advocate*, vol. XXI, no. 6 (June 1887) p. 165.

<sup>80</sup> “Butter Making”, *The Farmer’s Advocate*, vol. XXI, no. 6 (June 1887) p. 165.

*The Farmer's Advocate* puts forward that they were gradually more alienated from their traditional gender role of butter making on the pages of the journal.

In 1893 Ella Wheeler Wilcox wrote for *The Farmer's Advocate* an article entitled; "Overwork."<sup>81</sup> A poem was included wherein the wife rose early in the morning and the dewdrops were depicted as wet and beautiful. The farmer's wife in the poem did not have the time to admire the scenery though. Instead she was worked and overworked and missed out on all of the pleasures of life. The last line of the poem sums all, and states that, "'tis the lot of all in country life."<sup>82</sup> In her attached discussion of the poem, Ella noted that the wife cooked, washed, made and mended for a young family, attended to a lot of cows and managed a garden. Clearly, even in 1893, milking was still considered enough of a woman's chore to be associated with the housework and represented as women's work in this poem.

Finally, *The Farmer's Advocate* represented women as being capable of changing with the times. During the period under discussion, the paper begins to advocate a scientific approach to dairying, and farming in general, arguing that the old empirical ways are no longer suitable. This is reflected in the fact that in the 1860s and 1870s, dairymaids who share their empirical knowledge write the bulk of the articles, relating to dairying. After the mid-1880s, male "experts," promoting scientific dairying, write the bulk of the articles. Women are not totally excluded, however, and they are mentioned as proponent to this new approach. This shift does apply to agriculture in general, but

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<sup>81</sup> Ella Wheeler Walker. "Overwork", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XXVII, no. 5(May 15, 1893) p. 194.

<sup>82</sup> Ella Wheeler Walker. "Overwork", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XXVII, no. 5(May 15, 1893) p. 194.

within the journal women are still occasionally presented as the “experts.” Despite this, they are increasingly confined to the realm of execution and not to decision.

It is quite easily ascertained simply by the smell of milk what a cow has digested to produce the milk. For example, if a cow eats onions there will be hint of onion smell, likewise for turnips. Historically, in Canada, farmers fed their cows on turnips since it was cheap winter-feed.<sup>83</sup> With year round milking, turnips were no longer a viable option as winter feed, due to the odour residue in fluid milk and even in butter. One article from *The Farmer's Advocate* suggested that certain farmers continued to feed their herds turnips despite the foul smell and hoped their wives, who milked and made the butter, would not notice the aroma. From the tone of this article published in December 1872 (at the time, well into winter feeding) it is evident that farm wives had quality control over the milk that was produced and then manufactured for home consumption or market trading. This representation of women as having control over the process of making butter maintains that despite the idea put forward by the paper, the overall perception dominant is that women persisted in their traditional gender roles in dairying. This is reinforced since,

Everything a cow eats affects her milk directly. We have great faith in cabbages as producing an abundance of rich milk, but unfortunately the lady who presides over our household has keen senses and detects in the milk the least flavor of cabbage or turnip. Women are apt to ask the sly question: ‘What are you feeding your cows on now?’<sup>84</sup>

Often *The Farmer's Advocate* would print text from other agricultural magazines. One such text came from a man who read interesting information in the *Country*

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<sup>83</sup> “Best Feed to Milch Cows”, *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. VII, no. 12 (December 1872) p. 184.

<sup>84</sup> “Best Feed to Milch Cows”, *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. VII, no. 12 (December 1872) p. 184.

*Gentleman*.<sup>85</sup> The man wrote that, “a writer in the *Country Gentleman* makes a strong point on the salting of the butter and the vessel used in packing. The lady writes:...”<sup>86</sup> What the farmwife writes in the article is helpful information for anyone wishing to preserve their butter. What is more striking is the fact that even at the end of the 1870’s women were still called upon as ‘experts’ in butter making, despite scientific advancements in the field. Another two columns of text on salting and preserving are printed in *The Farmer’s Advocate* all based on this woman’s advice. Again, her name was not mentioned nor her employment, although it is assumed that she was an authority on the subject, being a farmer’s wife involved with butter making and preserving as a daily chore. It seemed expected through this type of dialogue in *The Farmer’s Advocate* that farm wives held not only knowledge of butter preservation but also that they would be capable of articulating it to the public in a forum such as *The Farmer’s Advocate*.

An example of an article that demonstrated a woman in a ‘scientific’ sphere, was called “Scientific Butter Making”. It makes sense that women would be employed in a creamery, if money was to be made, since gender roles dictated that women traditionally completed churning and butter making on the farm. Therefore it is reasonable that butter making facilities would employ those with experience and knowledge. The discussion of “Perdita” suggests that this was the image of women the journal projected,

The milk stands 36 hours before it is skimmed and after that of the evening has been received our superintendent, like a good clerk, fills out her returns for the day. She has printed blanks, which gives the names of the cows as they stand in the stable.... The crank that causes the revolutions is attended by an assistant, while Perdita (the superintendent) herself supervises, dredging in the salt and taking care that the work is not overdone.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> *The Country Gentleman* was an agricultural journal that ran concurrently with *The Farmer’s Advocate*, but had an American circulation.

<sup>86</sup> “Keeping Butter in Summer”, *The Farmer’s Advocate*, vol. XIII, no. 7 (July 1879) p. 151.

<sup>87</sup> “Scientific Butter Making”, *The Farmer’s Advocate*, vol. XIV, no. 2 (February 1879) p. 29.

“Perdita” performed her duty ‘like a good clerk’, and aside from the condescending tone of this article, the female was in charge of the butter making process. She appeared experienced and capable, entirely worthy of offering information to the subscribers of *The Farmer’s Advocate*.

In January 1883, correspondence from L.P. Andover was printed in *The Farmer’s Advocate*. He asks the following question:

Sir, in this province many are recommending deep cans for setting milk in for the cream to rise. Many persons that have used them say the cream will all rise in 12 hours, make about 1/3 more butter, a better article, and leave the milk sweeter for calves or pigs than by the old method of shallow pans. I should be much pleased to hear your opinion.<sup>88</sup>

The response given was this: “The deep cans you describe are much superior to the old fashioned dishes and are much appreciated by those women who use them.”<sup>89</sup> This more productive way of skimming cream to make butter was tested by women and found to be less labour intensive and to produce more desirable sweet, rather than sour, cream. A man from *The Farmer’s Advocate* answered Andover’s question, but the source of the information came from women, whose familiarity with the new method was hands-on. Introductions of new equipment or methods did not remove women from their traditional gender role as butter makers; instead they were consulted regarding questions about new processes. Gradually the infiltration of science and technology altered the projected image of dairywomen in *The Farmer’s Advocate*.

Just one month later, in *The Farmer’s Advocate*, an entirely different type of article was printed belittling empirical knowledge in butter making. Professor Veekker

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<sup>88</sup> L.P. Andover, “Correspondence”, *The Farmer’s Advocate*, vol. XVIII, no. 1 (January 1883) p. 17.

<sup>89</sup> L.P. Andover, “Correspondence”, *The Farmer’s Advocate*, vol. XVIII, no. 1 (January 1883) p. 17.

wrote the piece entitled, "Betterments in the Dairy", declaring that, "the system of sour cream butter is radically wrong and the sooner that the casein is taken out of the cream or butter the better the flavor." *The Farmer's Advocate* added "it is time for us less distinguished persons to adopt new methods."<sup>90</sup> This was written without noting that the month before a response to a correspondence question (above) was written stating that women were using a mew method allowing faster times for rising cream and utilizing sweet and not sour cream. It is possible that dairywomen already realized the importance of this process without the help of 'scientific' advice, however, this is not the image that was projected here. *The Farmer's Advocate's* assertion that farmers and their wives were making butter with antiquated methods indicated that although farmwives still readied the product, 'experts' with a different type of knowledge were being cited.

In February 1883 the beginning of the shift away from knowledge towards "scientific ideas" was represented in the journal. Women were not yet removed from the discussion although it had been previously written that science would aid in butter making. For instance, an author asks,

Now, whence is the remedy? It can only come from two sources, education and the employment of improved apparatus, so that a uniform high grade of butter can be made at home.<sup>91</sup>

With women as the home butter makers and profits still to be made from butter the improvement of quality was keenly discussed at this time. It is unclear whether women were to be the beneficiaries of education or if they were simply to increase productivity with better apparatus.

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<sup>90</sup> Professor Veekker, "Betterments in the Dairy", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XVIII, no. 2 (February 1883) p. 46.

<sup>91</sup> "Betterments in the Dairy", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XVIII, no. 2 (February 1883) p. 46.

In June 1883 another woman wrote in to offer her advice on the colour of butter to all those who will listen. She opined on the 'best color of butter' and offered these suggestions to the reading public to improve butter colour,

A pailful of corn meal mush to the cows, fed warm once a day, as long as the corn in yellow will not only increase milk and butter production but will add a yellow, creamy colour to the butter.<sup>92</sup>

*The Farmer's Advocate* printed this advice to help readers. If the shade of butter were in question then the individual with knowledge on this subject would be the one to supply the answer. In this case *The Farmer's Advocate* printed the advice from a female with years of experience through trial and error. By printing this, the journal's representation of women as being removed from dairying is diminished and the alternate discussion in the paper that presented women as being continuously involved is asserted. *The Farmer's Advocate* advocated advancement in agriculture and for butter making this came from the knowledge and know-how of the female gender. Science and technology articles ran concurrently with the above-mentioned articles, despite their apparent conflict with them.

Further to this, *The Farmer's Advocate* shifted its focus away from women in the dairy and included more features on science in the dairy industry and how this could be beneficial to farmers. Empirical knowledge and butter making's dependence on this use of knowledge was diminished in the representation of "Preserving Butter" in September 1885.<sup>93</sup> Prior to this, any information related to butter preservation was written by a dairymaid. Her empirical know-how was most likely included to aid others and promote superior farming practices. The lengthy 1885 article banished practicality and instead

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<sup>92</sup> "Best Colour for Butter". *The Farmer's Advocate* (June 1883), p. 246.

<sup>93</sup> "Preserving Butter". *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XIX, no. 9 (September 1885) p. 267.

promoted testing under controlled conditions for alterations in atmosphere, to ensure quality control. The chemical makeup of butter was integrated into the text, for example; “It is the nitrogenous matter in the butter milk, and possibly, also, to some extent, that albuminous envelope of the fat globules, that causes the decomposition.”<sup>94</sup> It seems unclear who was to use this learning. All other butter making articles including those previously authored by dairymaids were printed in this main section of *The Farmer’s Advocate*. Dairymaids wrote and responded in this same section while discussion of butter making methods and techniques continued. A noticeable shift in perceptions of women’s role in dairying due to the introduction of science and technology into Canadian farming is apparent. The way butter was made and who made it does not alter at this point, or at any point between 1867 to 1897, however, the change in attitude towards women in this role is perceptible. New methods were continually added to newspaper contents and discussions on churn types also abounded. The material printed in *The Farmer’s Advocate* in subsequent editions promoted a different image of women due to the introduction of science.

An article placed in April 1887’s edition of *The Farmer’s Advocate* may have brought some hope to wearied dairymaids even though they were not explicitly included in the article. A hand separator<sup>95</sup> by De Laval (a famous Swedish inventor of dairy implements and equipment) figured prominently in the ‘dairy’ section of the agricultural journal. The investigators claimed that,

With the capacity mentioned, a farmer who has 10 cows giving an average of 16 pounds of milk each, per day, will separate the milk in one hour; or half an hour

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<sup>94</sup> “Preserving Butter”, *The Farmer’s Advocate*, vol. XIX, no. 9 (September 1885) p. 267.

<sup>95</sup> A hand separator consisted of a centrifugal machine that used gravity to separate cream from milk. This model was turned by hand to work the centrifuge.

in the morning and half an hour at the evening's milking. The hand separator is specially adapted to the farmer's own use when he makes his own butter.<sup>96</sup>

"He", or the farmer, was the intended audience for this article. This representation of men as holding the purse strings suggests an image of women as dependent upon their husbands. If farmwives had the means to purchase labour saving devices for their chores then it would have been an easy sell for De Laval. The mention that "the machine can be turned by any person of ordinary strength" indicated that women and children were doing these chores and could adapt easily to its use, as they were the primary users of the product. Science for the aid of female-gendered chores was evidenced, while no mention of a decline in women's involvement in this type of production was mentioned, merely the altering perception and attitudes.

"Old and New Ideas" was the heading of another condemnation of women in butter making printed by *The Farmer's Advocate*. Methodological flaws were pointed out and the stubborn female resistance to technology was highlighted in this anti-feminine-butter-maker critique. As so commonly in the past, a dairywoman wrote to *The Farmer's Advocate* to ask why her butter was going off flavour so quickly. She described her method of setting out the milk and was asked several questions. She responded in kind and was met with this response from *The Farmer's Advocate*:

"I work it over and over again to get it out."

"What? Work it!"

"Yes, I do; I never dared wash butter. Mother never did, and she said it injured butter to wash it."

There it was again; no faith in an idea, or an apparatus unless it came over in the Mayflower.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> "Separating Cream from Milk by Hand-Power", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XXII, no. 4 (April 1887) p. 107.

<sup>97</sup> "Old and New Ideas", *The Farmer's Advocate*, vol. XXIII, no. 12 (December 1889) p. 382.

The last line of the critique notes that “she washes butter now”, perhaps to prove to readers that even a dairywoman with years of experience could be helped through the application of scientific methods. The tone in the article is one of condescension and reproof, directed at farmwives and dairywomen who formerly offered up sound advice worthy of print in this same agricultural journal.

In 1897 a commentary written by a woman was published in the ‘dairy’ section of *The Farmer’s Advocate*. An example was made of one woman who increased her profits with the ‘required’ technology and thus dispelled the notion that farmwives and dairymaids were incapable of making superior butter. The female author asserted that, “this is a day of specialists” that required training for women as well the necessary technology to produce profit-making butter.<sup>98</sup> In this article, *The Farmer’s Advocate* included a piece that represents women as capable of handling dairy technologies. Here a woman advocates science and technology for other women and in so doing seems to hope to improve the way in which women work on the farm. Women at this point continued to be the main milkers, skimmers, churners and butter makers as evidenced in the conflicting discussions of women’s roles in dairying, within the pages of *The Farmer’s Advocate*. Dairymaids worked ceaselessly with outdated equipment and farmwives continued to toil in less than ideal conditions. An introduction was made that,

Many farmer’s sons have taken advantage of this branch of education...but farmer’s daughters- the very ones who most need and would most materially profit by such a course of training- have yet to learn what an advantage a few weeks practical instruction would be to them. It is a fact that the more we adhere to the good (?) old ways of our mothers the more conceited we become.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Laura Rose. “The Dairy School from a Woman’s Standpoint”, *The Farmer’s Advocate* (March 15, 1897) p. 137.

<sup>99</sup> Laura Rose. “The Dairy School from a Woman’s Standpoint”, *The Farmer’s Advocate* (March 15, 1897) p. 137.

The theme of profitability in butter making again arose in this article, as it was asserted that,

Many farmers say, "My wife or my daughter makes as good as butter as I want to eat." Granted: but do they make it bring the highest profit, for there are many ways, by which, through ignorance, a loss may be incurred.<sup>100</sup>

Reinforcement was given, ambiguously to the farmer or his wife or daughter, that:

"Besides the higher price, better quality and greater quantity of her butter she finds the work in connection with it vastly easier." The purpose of the article seems to be to induce farmers to allow their daughters to attend dairy-school and consequently, despite her daily chores not being attended to, achieve higher profitability from the dairy. This article has seemingly disparate views running through it; nonetheless, the focus was profit, either for the school itself through enrolment or for the farmer in higher quality and production of butter. Still, representations of women's knowledge were shifted from 'natural' to learned. This article projects that the author believes that women should attend dairy school. The idea is that women are useful in increasing profit, but not without the aid of science and technology and education. In contrast, studies indicate that women still continued to milk, churn and make butter without the aid of this type of education in economics, science or technology.

Mr. Moyer's worry about women being removed from butter making seems unfounded, for by 1897, the journal printed Mrs. J. Aikenhead's dairying advice. Women may have been involved in dairying to a lesser degree by this time, but *The Farmer's Advocate* clearly still represented women's knowledge as valuable, and continuously published advice offered by women in the butter making industry. Mrs. Aikenhead noted

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<sup>100</sup>Laura Rose. "The Dairy School from a Woman's Standpoint". *The Farmer's Advocate* (March 15, 1897) p. 137.

that she had done away with the dasher churn and had moved on to a rocker churn that required less energy. Not all of her methods were new however, as is evidenced in this quote, “have not got a butter worker yet, but do the best we can with the old bowl and spoon.”<sup>101</sup> Technology had not yet infiltrated this butter maker’s world although some mechanical improvements were written into her text. The author was female; her type of knowledge was empirical and still talked about as being required and printed in *The Farmer’s Advocate* throughout the thirty-year period discussed.

In May of 1897, the last year in this study, a woman recommended technological advancements if she were to continue doing her traditional chores. She alluded to the idea that most farmers were unwilling to pay for proper facilities even though they desired higher productivity and quality. She notes that it did not make financial sense to expend money if there was no guarantee of profit. Unless profit making could be proven then technology was not brought onto the family farm or into the dairy. She described in her article the conditions under which milk is set out for skimming, a condition not dissimilar to those that existed thirty years previous, as such,

The wonder is there can be any good butter made when so many farmers’ wives are obliged to set their milk in musty, dusty, unventilated holes under rickety kitchen floors in summer time and on pantry shelves in winter where it freezes at night and thaws during the day time, all the time absorbing the flavors of cooking, etc.<sup>102</sup>

Throughout this thirty-year period, *The Farmer’s Advocate* was advancing the prevalence of science and technology while also reflecting perceptions relating to representations of women in dairying. This analysis of the representations of women in 19<sup>th</sup> century, Ontario dairying, as projected in the journal, indicates that four dominant

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<sup>101</sup> Mrs. J. Aikenhead. *The Farmer’s Advocate* (May 14, 1897) p. 240.

<sup>102</sup> “Disadvantages of the Farmer’s Wife”, *The Farmer’s Advocate* (May 1, 1897) p. 210.

themes are present from 1867 to 1897. By looking at the images of women in the male-gendered section of the paper, it appears that there was no dearth of milkmaids from 1867 to 1897 on the pages of this newspaper. In fact, women figured prominently in this agricultural journal. Women were talked about as the dominant milkers and butter makers, suggesting the perpetuation of their traditional gender roles. Women were also represented as: capable of producing a profitable dairy product; as negatively impacted by gender on their work, as well as; capable of responding to changes in science and technology.

Certain themes are emphasised in this research paper, in light of the representations of women in the journal. *The Farmer's Advocate* offers a gendered view of dairying as women's work, where by nature, men are not as capable in the dairy. The journal also has an un-gendered view of science and technology. Women are represented as capable of learning to use scientific techniques as well as, technology, just as men are capable in their field of work. The journal also discussed the way gender affected the work of women. Dairywomen were paid less since they were female and were not given equal access to training or tools. Throughout this period women are represented as belonging in the dairy; that women are key to the success of the dairy; that dairying should be for profit. This places women within the economic sphere, alongside men. Profit making in dairying, science and technology in dairying as well as the continuation of women as milkers and butter makers were all discussed in light of articles printed in *The Farmer's Advocate* from 1867 to 1897. The development of these themes drew out further sub-themes. Continuity from 1867 to 1897 is clear since the representation of women in their traditional gender roles persisted. The dominance of men over women,

despite the continual dominion of women in their traditional gender roles of milking and butter making, is demonstrated in the discussion surrounding women in these roles. Also, the promotion of the dairy business as a profit making enterprise was undertaken by men alone; with women left out of any formalized talks regarding legislation or mechanization. This ongoing theme is prevalent through the science and technology discussion in *The Farmer's Advocate*.

A pertinent question to be examined is why agricultural journals of this time period would construct their 'reality' towards women in dairying in this manner. Also, are the accounts given regarding the attitudes and perceptions toward female-gendered farm work reflective or reflexive? Since the newspaper as a primary source does present challenges in answering these questions, it would be necessary to compare previous findings regarding social and economic alterations in the perception of women in agriculture. This type of representative analysis compared with the analysis of Cohen would combine to offer new findings on women in dairying. An example of a pertinent question for this topic would be; what is the difference or similarity between reality and the images presented of women in the agricultural journal? The defeminization of agriculture, as portrayed by Cohen, is not represented in the images presented in the pages of *The Farmer's Advocates* at the time when the greatest changes are said to have happened.

Further avenues of discussion for women and their relationship to technology in society correlate with the idea of gendered work and would add to this discussion of women in agriculture and especially dairy work. Other agricultural journals could be researched to determine if the ways in which women are talked about in this newspaper

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