

History of
**Greenspring
Farm**

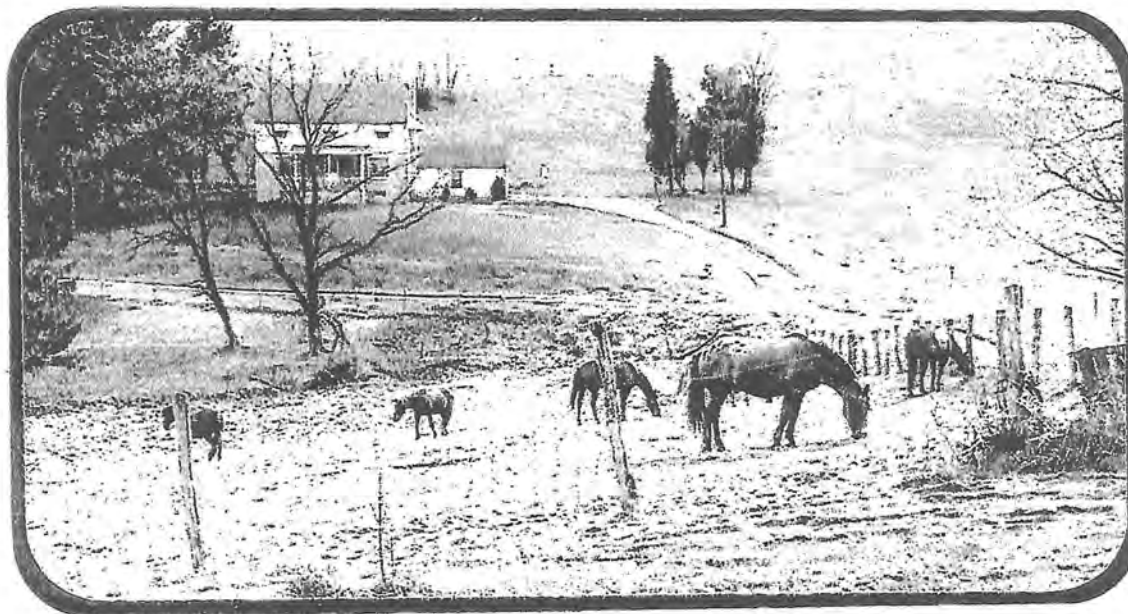
**Jefferson Township,
Washington County, PA**

by
Benjamin and Margaret Strain, Owners

Courtesy of Fort Vance Historical Society

**HISTORY OF GREENSPRING FARM
JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP,
WASHINGTON COUNTY, PA**

by
Benjamin and Margaret Strain, Owners



*Research on the History of Greenspring Farm was started
the winter of 1998 and is written through January 2007*

**CHAIN of OWNERSHIP for
GREENSPRING FARM
Jefferson Township
Washington County, PA**

<u>DATE</u>	<u>CONVEYANCE</u>	<u>PAGE NO.</u>
March 29, 1786	Conveyance to Mary Robeson	2
March 27, 1809	Conveyance by Will to Samuel Robison	4
1832	Conveyance by Will to Samuel, David and Archibald Robinson	4
November 11, 1839	Conveyance by Deed of <i>southern</i> portion to Samuel Robinson	4
July 12, 1841	Conveyance by Deed of <i>southern</i> portion to Robert Stewart	4
September 5, 1853	Conveyance by Deed of <i>northern</i> portion to Robert Stewart, Sr.	4
January 23, 1900	Conveyance by Deed to William H. Johnston	11
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February 5, 1932	Conveyance by Sheriff's Sale to McClelland T. Boles	21
June 8, 1945	Conveyance by Deed to Clyde E. Fox and Charles Fox, Sr.	23
January 11, 1952	Conveyance by Deed to Clyde E. Fox and Violet Fox	23
April 24, 1969	Conveyance by Deed to Mark M. Medice and Lily Medice	33
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History of Greenspring Farm
Jefferson Township, Washington County, PA
Benjamin and Margaret Strain, Owners

*Research on the History of Greenspring Farm was started
the winter of 1998 and is written through January 2007*

On July 30, 1990, Ben and I purchased a 140-acre farm in Jefferson Township, Washington County, PA. The farm was patented as "Green Spring" on March 3, 1789. Green Spring had been a dairy farm and had sat vacant for at least four years. It had been severely vandalized during that time. We rebuilt the facilities and moved our Jersey cows here. We milked cows from July 1990 until March 1997. By November 1999, Ben had changed the facilities so that we could board horses, and it still is a farm for boarding horses today. Ben started to research the History of Greenspring Farm the winter of 1998 and this History is written through January 2007.

A neighbor, Dave Gourley, was instrumental in getting Ben interested in the history of our farm. Dave wrote the history of his farm titled, *Wild Roe and the Stephenson Family*, which farm borders Green Spring. After reading the history written by Dave, Ben started a search to find out the names of those persons that had previously lived on our farm.

Ben spent many hours at the Washington County Courthouse looking up the deeds and wills of people who had once owned Green Spring. He also referred to the title search that was prepared by our attorney, Mark Reithmuller, when we purchased the farm. Ben put together a chain of ownership.

The chain of ownership alone, however, did not personalize the story of the farm. Ben, through talking with many people, was able to learn of a lady, Helen Johnston Wilson, who was born on Green Spring and lived in Washington, PA. Ben spoke by phone with Helen Wilson, then age 93, who was born on the farm on March 8, 1906. Her daughter, Annabelle Reilly, brought Helen to the farm on April 25, 1999, to meet and visit with us. We also invited her long time friends Gaylord and Helen Martin and Kathryn Slasor. More about this day, with pictures, can be found on a later page in this history.

In January 2003, I corresponded with and talked by phone with Bert Fox who had lived on the farm. He sent several pictures taken here on the farm that can be seen on a later page in this history. Bert planned to write down his remembrances of life on the farm and send them to us in time for the Jefferson Township Sesquicentennial Celebration on June 21, 2003. Unfortunately, Bert died very suddenly of a heart attack on February 16, 2003.

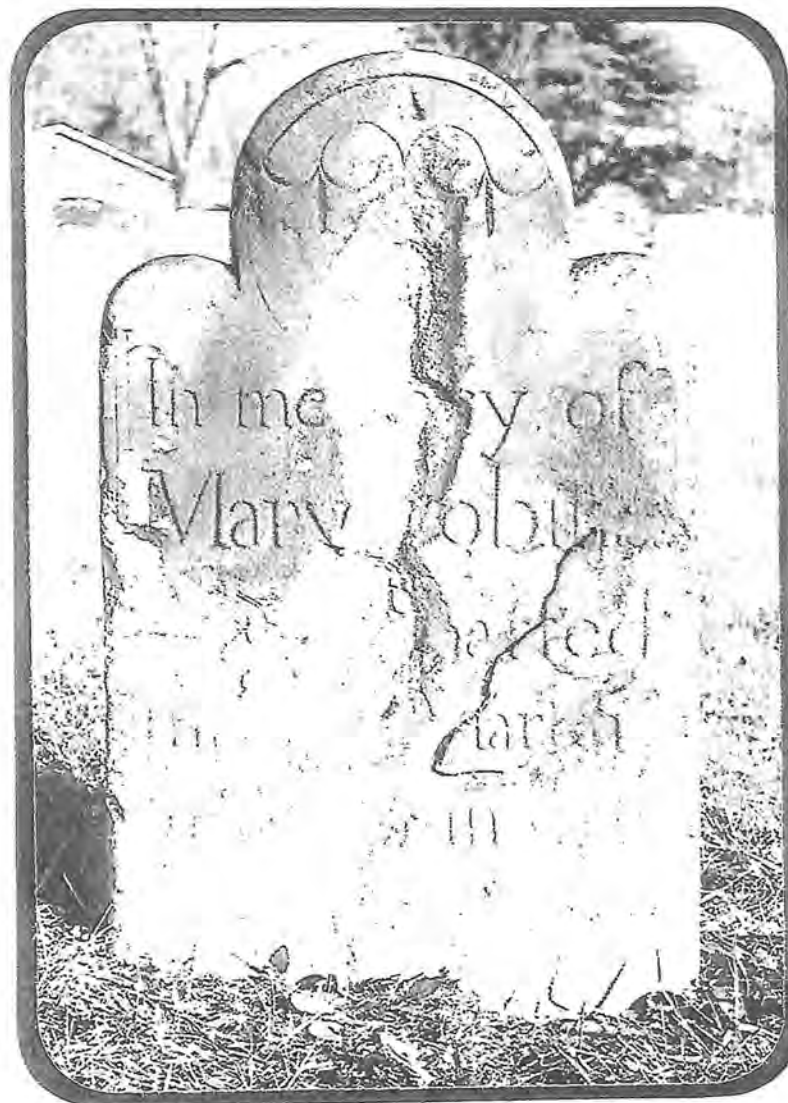
Upon learning of Bert's death, I contacted his sister Doris Fox Fowler and her husband, Gary. Doris remembers her family building the present farmhouse, the house that we now enjoy. Doris and Gary, at our invitation, came all the way from Hoschton, Georgia to attend the Jefferson Township Sesquicentennial Celebration on June 21, 2003. They stopped at the farm and Ben gave them a tour. Doris gave us a picture of the farm that shows the location of the original farmhouse. This picture can be found on a later page in this history.

We also are grateful to Ron Di Orio who gave us a picture of his mother, Dorothy Loretta Riddle, who was born on the farm in 1925. The picture was taken when his mother was probably no more than one-year old sitting on the ground in front of an oak tree in the back yard that still exists today. This picture also is found later in the history.

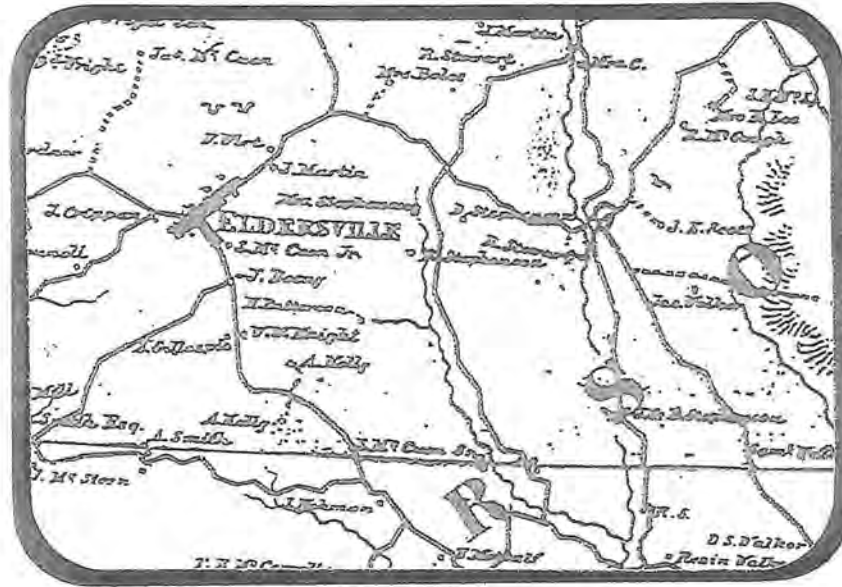
Mary Robison (or Robeson as it was spelled on the Patent Map) was the widow of Samuel Robison, who was killed by the Indians in the spring of 1782. According to Alvin Dinsmore White's *Historical Sketches of Washington County*, page 3, Samuel Robison had gone with his son Samuel, Jr. to his farm a mile east of present Eldersville to plant his potatoes. Indians came upon them while at work there and started to attack them. The white men attempted to escape on horseback, but the older man (Samuel Robison) missed getting on the horse behind his son (Samuel Robison, Jr.) so he was killed on the spot and scalped while the boy got back to the fort (Fort Vance) in safety.

In the *History of the Cross Creek Graveyard*, under inscriptions, page 72, is listed the following: "SAMUEL ROBISON died in 1782. (He was killed by Indians on the farm of Robert Stewart in Jefferson Township (*emphasis added*) in the spring of 1782. An old stone marked "R" was once suppose to mark his grave). In memory of MARY ROBISON, wife of Samuel Robison, who departed this life March 27, 1809, aged 66 years. In memory of SAMUEL ROBISON, JR., who departed this life A.D. 1832, aged 68 years. (He saw his father killed by the Indians while he escaped on horseback to the safety of Vance's Fort.)" We note here that the *History of the Cross Creek Graveyard* was first published in 1894. By this time, Jefferson Township was no longer a part of Cross Creek Township and Robert Stewart was the owner of Green Spring farm, thus the reference to the farm of Robert Stewart in Jefferson Township.

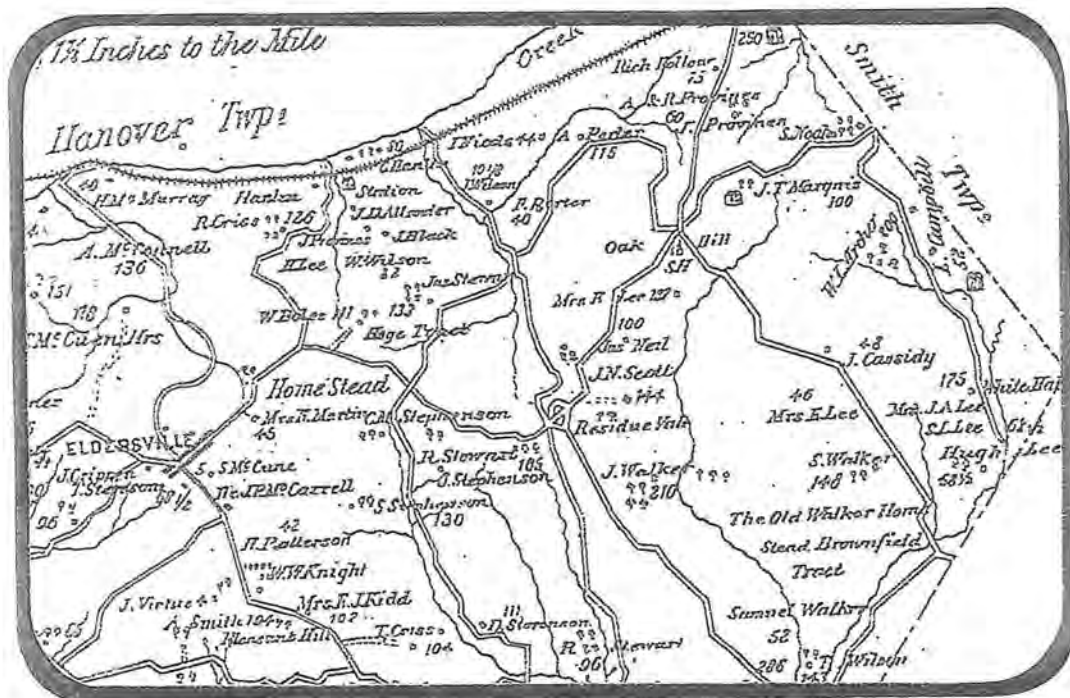
Pictured below is the tombstone of Mary Robison located in the Cross Creek Graveyard.



This 1861 Jefferson Township Map shows R. Stewart to own Green Spring.



This map found in J. A. Caldwell's 1876 Centennial Atlas of Washington County, Pennsylvania shows R. Stewart to be the owner of Green Spring.



Following is a biographical sketch of Robert Stewart as found in Boyd Crumrine's *History of Washington County, Pennsylvania*, the Jefferson Township section (pages 836-842).

It is important to note that this Robert Stewart was the father of the Robert Stewart who lived on Green Spring Farm. There is no supporting evidence found that would indicate that the father Robert Stewart ever lived on Green Spring Farm even though he owned it. The father Robert Stewart owned hundreds of acres in the area including acreage across the road from Green Spring, which was the home farm. The father Robert Stewart willed various farms to each of four surviving children. The father Robert Stewart willed Green Spring Farm to his son Robert Stewart.

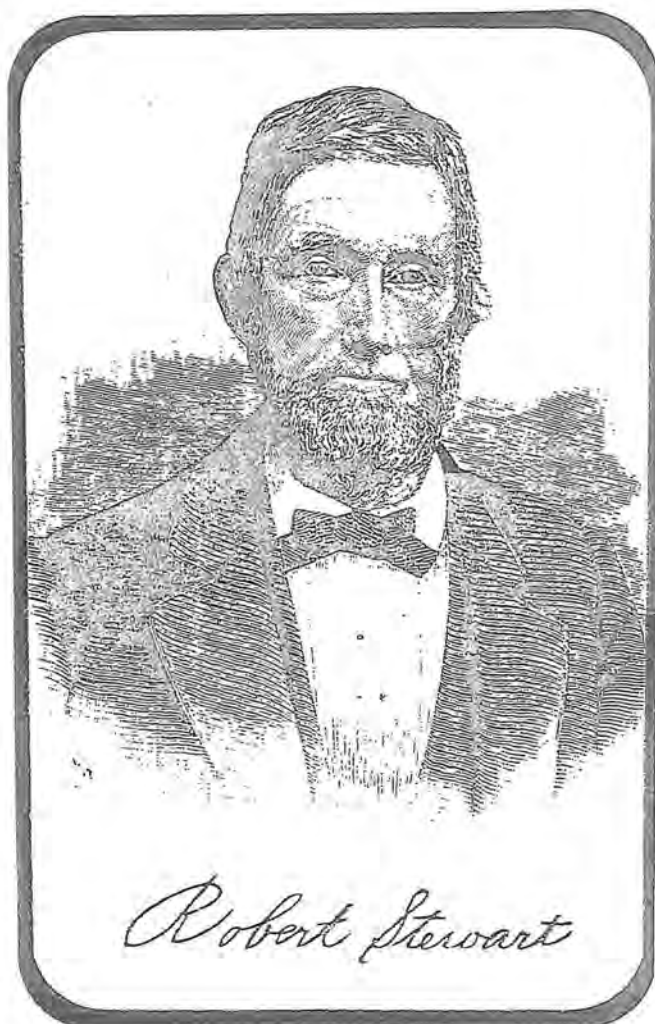
HISTORY OF WASHINGTON COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP (Pages 836-842)

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

ROBERT STEWART (Page 838)

Robert Stewart was born in Ireland in 1795. He was the son of James and Elizabeth (Hemphill) Stewart, who came to America in 1812, and settled in Mount Pleasant township, near the village of Hickory, in Washington County, Pa. They had four sons and two daughters. The sons were John, James, Robert, and Thomas. Robert married Anne McGough. They had six children, - John, married to Tamar McClurg, died Aug. 10, 1881; Eliza J., the widow of David Kidd, of Guernsey County, Ohio; Robert, who has had three wives, Sarah J. Elliott, Eliza Orr, and Rebecca H. Provines; Sarah, who died when a young woman; James, married to Suzanna Andrews; Andrew, who died in infancy. Robert died April 25, 1875. His wife, Anne McGough, died about the year 1858. Robert was a member of the Seceder Church, and a Democrat in politics. He left a handsome fortune, the result of his own labors. Hundreds of acres of the finest agricultural lands are pointed to as testimonials of his industry, progress, and great business capacity. His successful career was the result of his unwavering faith in the ultimate triumph of industry, energy, prudence, and probity.



According to J. H. Beers & Co. *1893 Commemorative Biographical Record of Washington County, Pennsylvania* (page 745), the Stewart family traces their lineage back through the generations to one Lord Stewart, a native of Scotland, who afterward settled in County Tyrone, Ireland. The Robert Stewart who lived on Green Spring, and later was willed the farm by his father, is identified in the last paragraph of this excerpt.

ROBERT STEWART

ROBERT STEWART. Of the prosperous and highly esteemed citizens of Jefferson township, none are more universally esteemed or more widely known than the gentleman whose name introduces this article. The Stewart family trace their lineage back through the generations to one Lord Stewart, a native of Scotland, who afterward settled in County Tyrone, Ireland, at a place known as Foggy Hill.

James Stewart, a descendant of the old Scottish nobleman just mentioned, was married to Elizabeth Hemphill, and with his family sailed from Ireland for America on the ship "Doras." A long and tedious voyage followed, during which the vessel was boarded by a British man-of-war, and all the able-bodied men of the "Doras," as was customary in time of war, were impressed into the navy. Among those who were thus obliged to render unwilling service to the English Government was a son of James Stewart, named Robert, a youth of eighteen years. He was taken on board a British man-of-war, where he remained several months, finally obtaining his release through the efforts of his father, who persuaded a young lady to claim him as her husband. The ruse succeeded, and the young man was liberated, after which he came on to America, and first located in Philadelphia, whence after a year he joined the family in Smith township, Washington Co., Penn., whither they had preceded him. In course of time he moved to Mt. Pleasant township, where his father died. Here he was soon after married to Miss Ann McGough, also a native of Ireland, and though history is silent concerning the identity of the self-sacrificing young lady who freed young Robert from imprisonment, yet romance would fain hope that she and his chosen bride were one. However, there is no foundation for the supposition, and historians are expected to confine their statements to known facts. After marriage Robert and Ann (McGough) Stewart went to Jefferson township, and they reared a family of six children, named John, Elizabeth (Mrs. Kidd), Sarah, Robert, James and Andrew. The father was a Democrat, and a member of the U. P. Church.

Robert Stewart was born May 21, 1824, on the home farm in Jefferson township, this county, where he passed his youth in attending school and assisting with the general farm duties. He married Miss Sarah Jane Elliott, who bore him three children: John Elliott (born March 13, 1853), James (born November 25, 1855), and Robert (born February 26, 1858). The mother died September 25, 1858, and for his second wife Mr. Stewart was married to Miss Eliza Orr, of Irish descent, who died soon afterward, and June 17, 1864, he wedded, for his third wife, Miss Rebecca H., daughter of William Provines, who came from Ireland and settled in Jefferson township, this county. Robert Stewart is a popular and prosperous citizen. In political opinions he has always voted the Democratic ticket, being a counselor and adviser of that party, and in religious faith he gives a hearty support to the U. P. Church, of which his wife is a member.

The tombstones for Robert Stewart and Ann Stewart were found in the old cemetery for the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Burgettstown. This cemetery is located high on top of the hill behind the Presbyterian Church on Keys Road. **These tombstones are for the father and mother of the Robert Stewart who lived on Green Spring.**

Robert Stewart
died
April 25, 1875
Aged 81 years

Ann
Wife of
Robert Stewart
died
Feb. 19, 1859



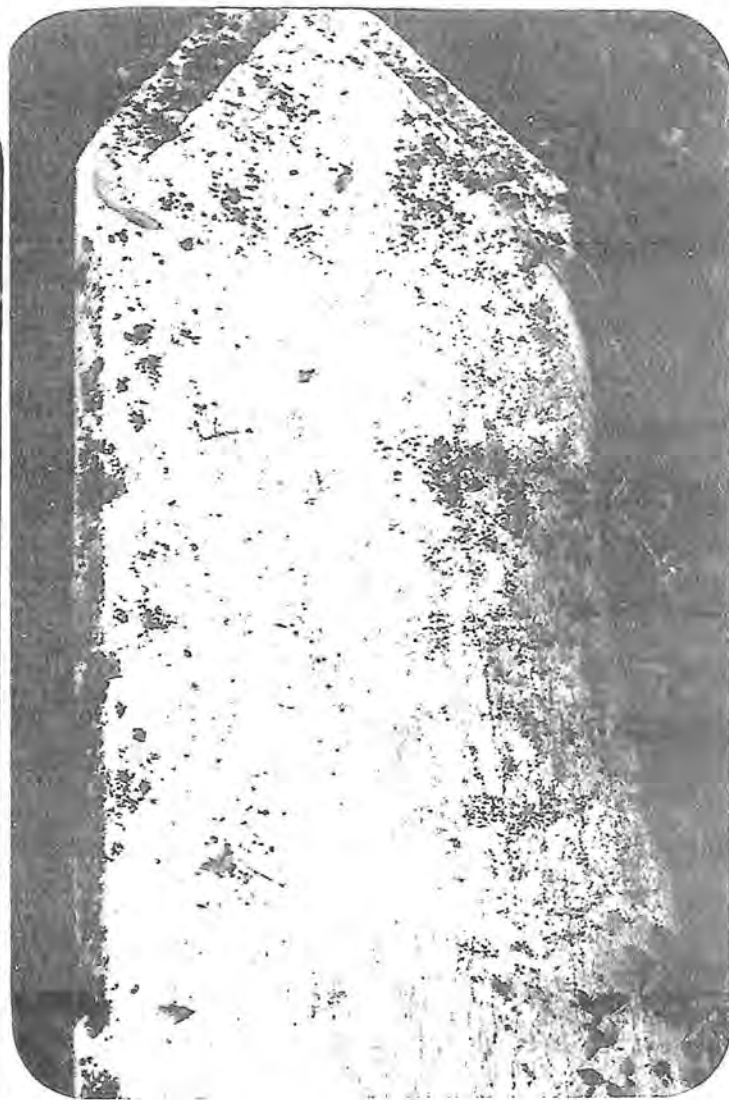
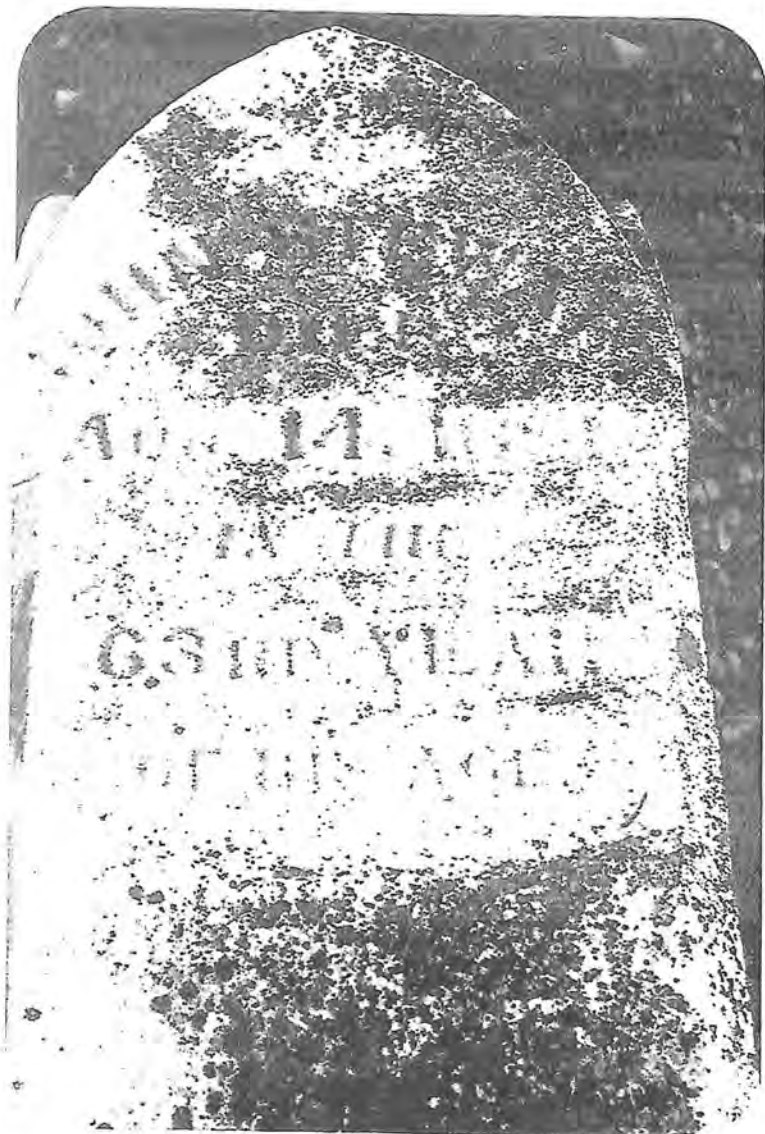
According to Boyd Crumrine's *History of Washington County, Pennsylvania* (page 836), Robert Stewart married Anne McGough, and they had six children: John married Tamar McClurg; Eliza J. married David Kidd; Robert (**this is the son Robert that lived on Green Spring and was later willed the farm**) had three wives: Sarah J. Elliott, Eliza Orr, Rebecca H. Provines; Sarah died at a young age; James married Suzanna Andrews and Andrew died in infancy.

The tombstones for **John Stewart** and **Tamar McClurg Stewart** (brother and sister-in-law of the **Robert Stewart** that lived on **Green Spring**) were found in the Presbyterian Church Cemetery, Keys Road, Burgettstown, PA.

The inscriptions on the tombstones pictured below read as follows:

John Stewart
Died
Aug. 14, 1881
in the
63rd year
of his age

Tamar Stewart
Died
Sept. 21, 1888
Aged
87 years



The tombstone for Sarah, daughter of Robert and Ann Stewart was located at the Presbyterian Church cemetery. According to Boyd Crumrine's *History of Washington County, Pennsylvania* (page 836), Sarah died when a young woman. **Sarah was the sister of the Robert Stewart who lived on Green Spring and later inherited the farm.**

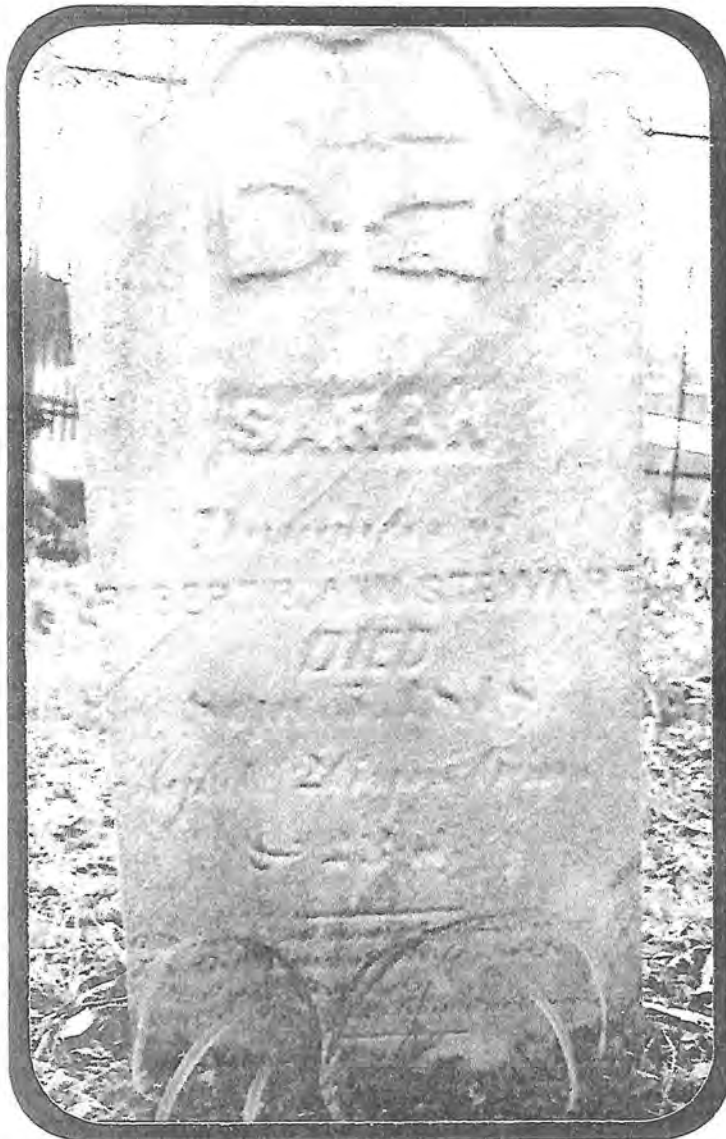
Robert Stewart who lived on Green Spring was married three times. Two of his wives are buried in the Presbyterian Church cemetery. The tombstones for one of the wives; namely, Sarah Jane, was resting upon the tombstone of another wife of Robert, Lizza Jane (which was Eliza Orr).

A tombstone for a third wife of Robert Stewart; namely, Rebecca H. Provines Stewart was not located. **Rebecca was the widow of Robert Stewart. Rebecca, along with Robert's children from his first marriage, sold Green Spring to William H. Johnston on January 23, 1900.**

Sarah
Daughter of
Robert & Ann Stewart
Died
Sept. 5, 1848
Aged 21 years

Sarah Jane
Wife of
Robert Stewart
Died (Date not legible)

Lizza Jane
Wife of
Robert Stewart
Died (Date not legible)



January 23, 1900 conveyance by Deed to William H. Johnston

By Deed dated January 23, 1900, recorded in Deed Book Vol. 232, Page 463 in Washington County, Pennsylvania, Rebecca H. Stewart, widow of Robert Stewart Jr., together with J. Elliott Stewart and Flora A. Stewart, his wife; Robert Stewart; and James Stewart Jr. and Annie M. Stewart, his wife, Grantors, conveyed to William H. Johnston, Grantee, all that certain tract of land situate in Jefferson Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania, containing 170 acres, 63 perches. According to the Deed the Grantors were paid \$8,860.47 for this tract of land.

Pictured below are William Henry Johnston and his wife, owners of Green Spring from January 23, 1900 through April 1, 1920, and an individual picture of William Henry Johnston.



At least one child, a son, was born to William Henry Johnston and his wife. The son, John Simpson Johnston stayed on the farm and married Ella Alverta McClurg, a local woman born and raised in Eldersville. To this marriage, five children, two boys and three girls, were born: Helen Leota Johnston (Wilson); William Arthur Johnston; John Sylvester Johnston; Mary Alice Johnston, crippled all her life, and Grace Onilee Johnston.

Pictured below is a horse-drawn buggy stopped in front of the “buggy shed” on Green Spring with John Simpson Johnston and his wife, Ella Alverta McClurg Johnston, in the buggy seats. Helen Leota (Johnston) Wilson, the daughter of John and Ella Johnston, gave us this picture and information while visiting on April 25, 1999. Helen said that she was born on the farm on March 8, 1906. Her grandfather, William H. Johnston owned the farm, and her father, John Simpson Johnston, took over running the farm.



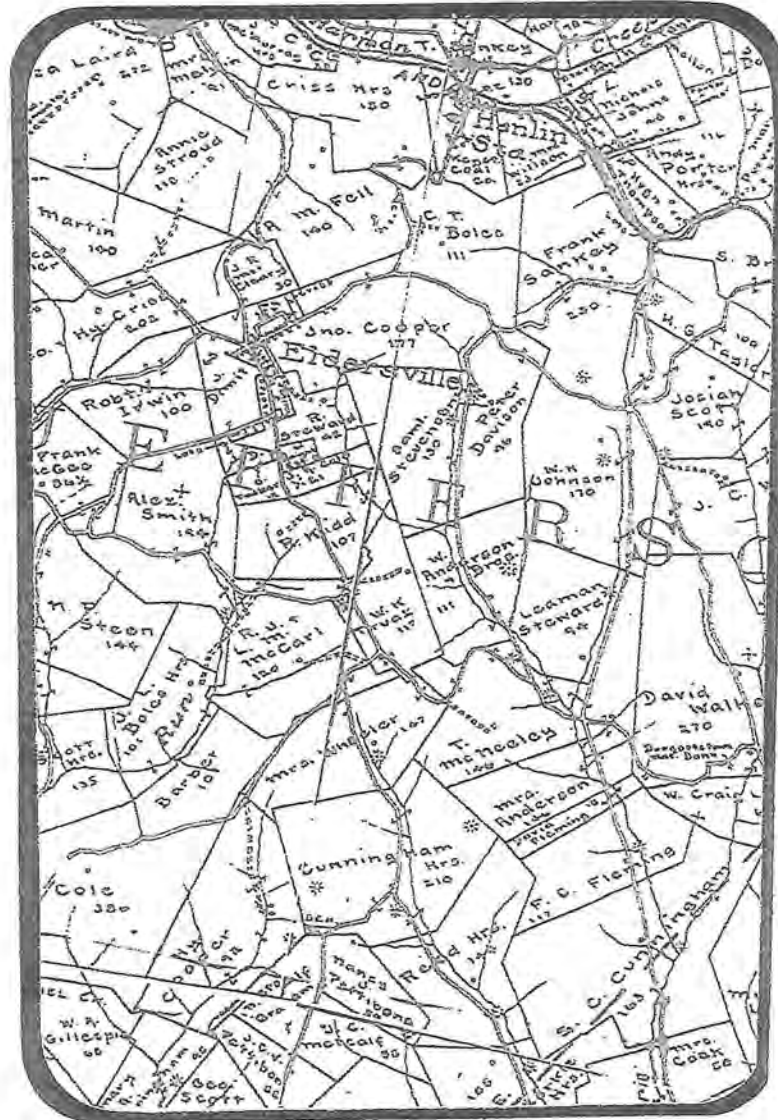
John Simpson Johnston with his wife, Ella Alverta McClurg Johnston around 1910.

Helen Wilson gave us copies of the two pictures below. On the left is Helen holding her baby daughter, Annabelle Johnston (Reilly), born June 5, 1925. On the right is Helen and her mother Ella Alverta McClurg Johnston and grandfather Sylvester (known as “Ves”) McClurg. These pictures were probably taken at the McClurg homestead in Eldersville, PA since the Johnstons sold Green Spring in 1920.



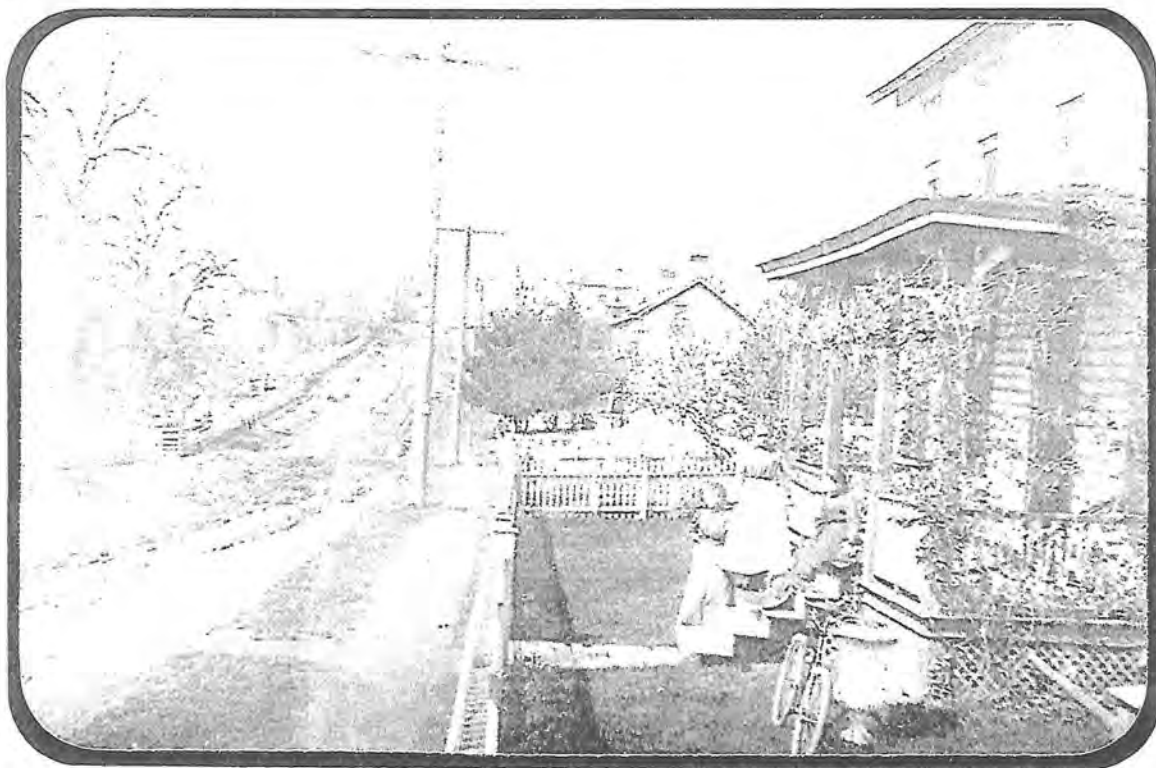
Helen Leota Johnston Wilson talked fondly about life on the farm as she remembered it, and she referred to the intersection of Eldersville Road and Strope Road as "Five Forks". From the below 1911 Jefferson Township Map, it is readily apparent why the intersection was known as Five Forks. There was one road that led to Burgettstown, one road that went to Eldersville, one road that went down over the hill to Hanlin Station, one road to Cross Creek and one road to Rea. Ben assumes that the road to Rea is the road known as Strope Road today, and the road to Cross Creek is the road known as Ridge Road today.

1911 Jefferson Township Map



As Helen Wilson reminisced about her days on the farm, she made a comment that is still puzzling but one that very well may be true. She said that her remembrance of the old farmhouse was that it faced the Eldersville Road. The present farmhouse was built in 1946 by Clyde and Violet Fox and will be discussed later in this history. Helen Wilson said that they moved from the farm in 1920 when her grandfather, William H. Johnston, sold the farm and bought another farm around Buffalo Township. She would have been 14 years old at the time.

Helen said that her Grandfather Sylvester (known as "Ves") McClurg and Grandmother Mary Ann Cunningham McClurg lived in Eldersville. She gave us the picture below that shows the McClurg homestead (first house on the right) where her mother, Ella Alverta McClurg Johnston was raised. This picture is dated December 25, 1907 and shows telegraph poles and lines on the main street. This McClurg homestead is still standing (2006) and is now owned by Bill Barton and his wife.



McClurg homestead on the main street of Eldersville, December 25, 1907

Pictures taken on Sunday, April 25, 1999, are below:



Helen Wilson (left) 93 years old, and her friend Helen Martin (right)-April 25, 1999



Annabelle Reilly (left); Helen Wilson (center); Helen Martin (right)—April 25, 1999

Following is bits and pieces of information that we learned that day. Helen Wilson attended a one-room schoolhouse, the Lee School, which had been across from where Country Inn is now located on the Langeloth-Eldersville Road. Helen's mother, Ella Alverta McClurg Johnston went to the Miller one-room schoolhouse that is now at Meadowcroft.

Helen Wilson had at one time lived on Center Avenue in Burgettstown near the Figley Feed Store. The house sat on the bank across from the store.

Helen attended the Eldersville Methodist Church when she lived on the farm.

When Helen's family moved from the farm, they purchased a farm on Hickory Ridge Road, Hickory, PA. David Smith is the one they knew that had owned the farm before them, and it was called Head Acres. There was approximately 220 acres there and they had cattle. It was at the Crossroads U. P. Church that Helen met her husband. After they moved from the farm on Hickory Ridge Road, they owned the General store at Eighty Four, PA below the railroad, near the feed store (had been owned by Badger Smith). When they were in Eighty Four, PA, Helen went to the Pigeon Creek Presbyterian Church. The cemetery of the Pigeon Creek Church is the burial place of most of her family. William Henry Johnston and his wife had a daughter, Mary, that was crippled all of her life. She is buried at the Pigeon Creek Church Cemetery.

Helen Wilson mentioned knowing the Pettibons: Arthur, Alvin, Sara and Ruth. She mentioned George McNeely and Ruth McNeely who lived above Pettibons. She talked about knowing Lehman Stewart (wife Jesse or Nancy) and daughter Hilda and son Harold. Earl Cunningham and daughter Elizabeth were two other names mentioned by Helen.

Helen Wilson worked at Penney's in Washington for over 50 years.

Gaylord Martin said he could remember when Helen's Dad had a sale here on the farm. Helen Wilson added that the springhouse was located 50 feet away from the old farmhouse and

that as you went out towards the barns there was a buggy shed below the road and a horse barn and a regular barn.

Helen said that she remembered the Riddiles and that John Riddle's widow still lived in Eldersville. It was learned that Mary Riddle (John's widow), Esther Maggs and Helen Martin are the three ladies from this area that went to visit Helen in her home on Jefferson Avenue, Washington, PA a couple of years ago. It was Mary Riddle that told Ben and Peggy that Helen Wilson had been born on this farm in 1906, and gave us Helen's telephone number.

In less than two years after the farm visit, it was learned that Helen L. Wilson passed away on January 10, 2002.

A copy of her obituary as seen in the Washington-Observer is to the right.

Helen L. Wilson

50-year employee
with J.C. Penney Co.



Helen L. Wilson, 95, of Washington, died at 6:20 p.m. Thursday, January 10, 2002, in Allegheny General Hospital,

Pittsburgh.

She was born March 8, 1906, in Eldersville, a daughter of John Simpson and Ella Alverta McClurg Johnston.

Mrs. Wilson was a member of Third United Presbyterian Church.

She was a graduate of Burgettstown High School and Washington Business college.

Mrs. Wilson was employed as a seamstress and clerk at J.C. Penney Co. for 50 years.

On November 5, 1924, she married Stanley C. Wilson, who died August 21, 1980.

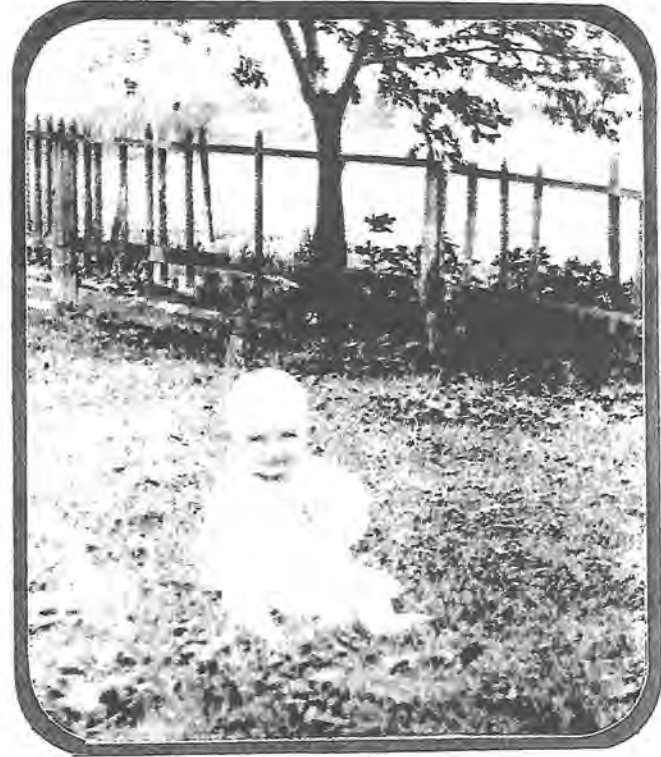
Surviving are three daughters, Annabelle Reilly, Ella Wilson Wilson and Bertie Wilson Sprowls, all of Washington; seven grandchildren, William Lawrence Reilly, John David Reilly, Richard Wayne Wilson, Rebecca Jane Wilson Markley, Jeanne Louise Wilson Moore and Erik John Sprowls; and 17 great-grandchildren.

Deceased are a granddaughter, Paula Ann Reilly Markley; two brothers, William Arthur and John Sylvester Johnston; and two sisters, Mary Alice Johnston and Grace Onilee Johnston.

April 1, 1920 conveyance by Deed to J. P. Riddile

By Deed dated April 1, 1920, recorded in Deed Book Vol. 477, Page 687 in Washington County, Pennsylvania, William H. Johnston and Alice J. Johnston, his wife, of Burgettstown, Washington County, Pennsylvania, Grantors, conveyed to J. P. Riddile of Jefferson Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania, Grantee, all that certain tract of land situate in Jefferson Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania containing 170 acres 63 perches.

Picture of Dorothy Loretta Riddile, from her son, Ron Di Orio. Dorothy Riddile was born in 1925. Ron said that his mother looks to be around a year old on the picture and he believes the picture was taken on the "Riddile" farm, which later was called Greenspring Farm. It appears the oak tree in the background could possibly be the same one that still stands behind the house on what is today known as Greenspring Farm.



According to Ron Di Orio, son of the youngest Riddile daughter, Dorothy, there were nine, six boys and three girls. The boys were Floyd, Lawrence, John, James, William, and Raymond. Floyd, although he went by the name Riddile, was not a Riddile by birth. He was the son of Gertrude Walker by her first marriage, and thus a half brother to all the other Riddile children.

With the change in ownership from Johnstons to Riddiles, Green Spring appropriately became known as the Riddile Farm. Many people in Jefferson Township still refer to it as the Riddile Farm, but with their remembrance of the farm at that time, they also have a story to tell. More than once we have been told about the disappearance of James P. Riddile. There is some dispute as to what the "P" used as his middle initial stood for; one family tradition says "Patterson", another "Patrick". Lacking a birth certificate, no proof is available. But during his life he was known as "Pat" Riddile, which could be a nickname for either. Gaylord Martin recalls that in his prime, Riddile was a tall, muscular, red-headed man. He remembers "Pat" once driving a hay load pulled by two teams of horses to the scales at Eldersville. But at the age of 73, on 23 January 1931, James P. Riddile walked off the farm and was never heard from again. Of course many stories circulated then as to his whereabouts and are still circulating today. According to every newspaper clipping shown to us, J. P. Riddile was never found and all efforts to locate him at the time had proven of no avail. Following are newspaper clippings that have been retyped for clarity and are made a part of this history of Green Spring.

AGED FARMER IS NOT YET FOUND BY AUTHORITIES

J. P. Riddile, 73-Year Old
Farmer of Eldersville
Section, is Traced to
Pittsburgh by Searchers.

COMMUNITY IS STIRRED

J. P. Riddile, 73 year old retired farmer of Jefferson Township, who has been mysteriously missing since last Friday afternoon, when he was seen about 4:30 o'clock walking along the lower road between Langeloth and Burgettstown, had not been located at a late hour last night, nor had any word been received at his home, near Eldersville concerning his whereabouts.

Residents of the northern portion of Washington County, members of the Burgettstown Volunteer Fire Department and county and state authorities have been notified of the disappearance. With the discovery yesterday that Mr. Riddile had taken the evening train from Burgettstown to Pittsburgh, the search shifted to the Allegheny County area, and it is believed that the aged man will be discovered within the next few days.

Mr. Riddile had purchased a ticket on the Pennsylvania Railroad lines from Burgettstown to Pittsburgh Friday afternoon. There he had left his overshoes in the station and taken a taxicab to Langeloth. When last seen he was walking along a lower road from Langeloth back towards Burgettstown.

Check of railroad tickets yesterday showed that Mr. Riddile had used the ticket which he purchased Friday. He had entered at Bertha, according to members of the train crew, paid cash fare to Burgettstown into Pittsburgh. Here all trace of him has been lost.

The disappearance caused quite a bit of excitement in the Jefferson Township district, where Mr. Riddile has been a lifelong resident.

Aged Farmer Missing



This is a photograph of J. P. Riddile, aged 73 years, retired farmer of the Eldersville district, who has been missing from his home for more than two weeks. The photograph was taken a number of years ago, but is a good picture of the missing man. All efforts to locate him have proven of no avail.

SEARCH FOR MISSING FARMER IS CONTINUED

**J. P. Riddile, Aged Jefferson
Township Man, Not Located
Late Yesterday - Seen in
Washington**

Search for J. P. Riddile, aged farmer of near Eldersville, who has been missing since last Friday afternoon, was extended to Washington and the surrounding district yesterday when it was learned that the 73-year old farmer was seen in the city Saturday, walking about the streets, without his overcoat, by a former resident of Burgettstown.

The theory that Mr. Riddile had gone to Pittsburgh, seeking former neighbors who now reside in that city, was found at fault yesterday when it was learned he had not visited the home of his former neighbors and friends.

Mr. Riddile served on the August jury here, and it is now believed that he may have returned to Washington because of contacts made at that time. Descriptions of the aged man have been broadcast and authorities throughout the district are carrying on a diligent search for Mr. Riddile, who is believed to have suffered a slight mental lapse.

ELDERSVILLE MAN MISSING SINCE FRIDAY

**Search Being Made for J. P.
Riddile, Aged 73 Years, Who
Was Last Seen on Road
Near Burgettstown.**

CASHED CHECK AT BANK

Residents of the northern portion of Washington County have been combing the district since Friday night, seeking J. P. Riddile, of near Eldersville, who has been missing since Friday afternoon about 4 o'clock. Mr. Riddile, aged 73 years, is a well known farmer of Jefferson Township.

Friday morning the aged man went to Burgettstown with one of his sons, stopped in the downtown section of Burgettstown, where he spent the morning. In the afternoon he visited a bank, where he is understood to have cashed a check, leaving a portion of the money in his account.

Then he is said to have purchased a railroad ticket to Pittsburgh. He left his overshoes in the railroad station, and walked back to the bank. Next he engaged a taxicab to take him to Langeloth. Leaving the cab, he was seen about 3:30 o'clock by a service station attendant walking along the road towards Eldersville and was last seen about 4 o'clock walking along the lower road headed back towards Burgettstown.

His failure to return home, Friday evening aroused apprehension and a countryside search was instigated, with members of the Burgettstown Volunteer Fire Department assisting.

The mysterious disappearance has caused much excitement in the district. Mr. Riddile is understood to have shown slight mental lapses during the past few months as a result of his years.

**Search for Eldersville
Farmer Continues as No
Trace of Man Is Found**

Search was continued yesterday for J. P. Riddile, 73 year old Jefferson Township farmer, who has not been heard from since leaving his home near Eldersville last Friday.

All reports that Mr. Riddile had been seen in various sections have been found faulty upon investigation, and some fear is entertained that the aged man may have met with an accident.

Mr. Riddile had been apparently in the best of health, and no reason could be given by members of his family for his sudden disappearance other than that of late he had shown signs of slight mental lapses.

**J. P. Riddile Has Now
Been Missing From Home
For More Than Nine Days**

At a late hour last night no word had been received as to whereabouts of J. P. Riddile, aged farmer of near Eldersville, in Jefferson Township, who has been mysteriously missing from his home since Friday a week ago.

Search throughout the northern portion of Washington County has brought no trace of the 73-year old retired farmer, and all efforts to trace down possible clues have proved futile. The disappearance is one of the most mysterious which has occurred in the county recently.

**No Clue Found as to
Whereabouts of Aged
Eldersville Farmer**

A week ago yesterday, J. P. Riddile, retired farmer, of Jefferson Township, whose home is near Eldersville, left his home and has not been seen since nor has any trace of his whereabouts been secured.

Search for him has led to Pittsburgh and into Washington and throughout the surrounding territory, but absolutely no clue has been found which would lead to his discovery. Every effort is being made by his family to find him, a description of him having been broadcast and various agencies and officials been notified to be on the search for him.

It is reported the aged man was subject to light attacks of a mental disorder and it is feared he suffered one of these and wandered away from home. His family is very anxious to learn something of his whereabouts and will welcome any word which may lead to his discovery and return.

Since it was the year 1931 that J. P. Riddile disappeared, it was at a time that the farm was still owned by the Riddiles and they lived in the original old farmhouse. According to Ronald J. Di Orio, grandson of J. P. Riddile and the man who supplied the newspaper clippings reproduced here, the Riddile family continued to live on the farm for a few years after Mr. Riddile's disappearance.

February 5, 1932 conveyance by Sheriff's Sale to McClelland T. Boles

By Deed dated February 5, 1932, and recorded in the Recorder's Office of Washington County, Pennsylvania, in Deed Book Vol. 587, Page 109, J. P. Riddile, per Sheriff's Sale, conveyed all that certain piece or parcel of ground situate in Jefferson Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania to McClelland T. Boles.

This being the height of the Depression, jobs were extremely scarce and the new owner of the farm, McClelland Boles, who purchased the farm in 1932, allowed the Riddile family to remain on the farm, the older Riddile brothers working in various capacities for Boles. However, sometime between 1935 and 1938 the Riddiles moved from the farm to Burgettstown.

Gene Karch of Jefferson Township informed us that McClelland Boles was known as "Doc" and that he was an engineer for Westinghouse. It is believed that he helped develop the Air Brake. Besides this property (Green Spring), he owned Orchard Hills, where he lived. The buildings are no longer there. Doc planted the orchards with his brother Cyrus. Below is a picture of Doc Boles, dated August 7, 1939, that was loaned to us by Arlene Alexander.



Arlene Alexander of Jefferson Township, Eldersville, told us that she is the granddaughter of John Jacob (Jerry) Boles, who was a cousin of McClelland Boles. She said McClelland Boles was killed in front of her grandfather's store, Gourley and Boles, which was

located in Eldersville on the corner where her son, Bobby Alexander has built a house (2003). McClelland Boles was carried into the store, and he didn't die immediately. It was a hit and run accident. The year was 1939. It is believed that he had no children. Below is a picture of the Gourley & Boles store, Eldersville, PA.



Isa Boles (sister-in-law of McClelland Boles) and Helen Boles (daughter of Isa) were the Executrices for McClelland Boles Estate. Helen Boles never married. She taught school. She lived in Washington, PA, and Helen Boles died October 1998.

Tombstones for McClelland Boles and Isa D. Boles were located at the Independence Cemetery in Independence, PA. It was in the year 1939 that McClelland was killed, seven short years after buying "Green Spring". We do not know if McClelland ever lived on the farm. See the following pictures of the tombstones of McClelland T. Boles and Isa Boles:





June 8, 1945 conveyance to Clyde E. Fox and Charles Fox, Sr.

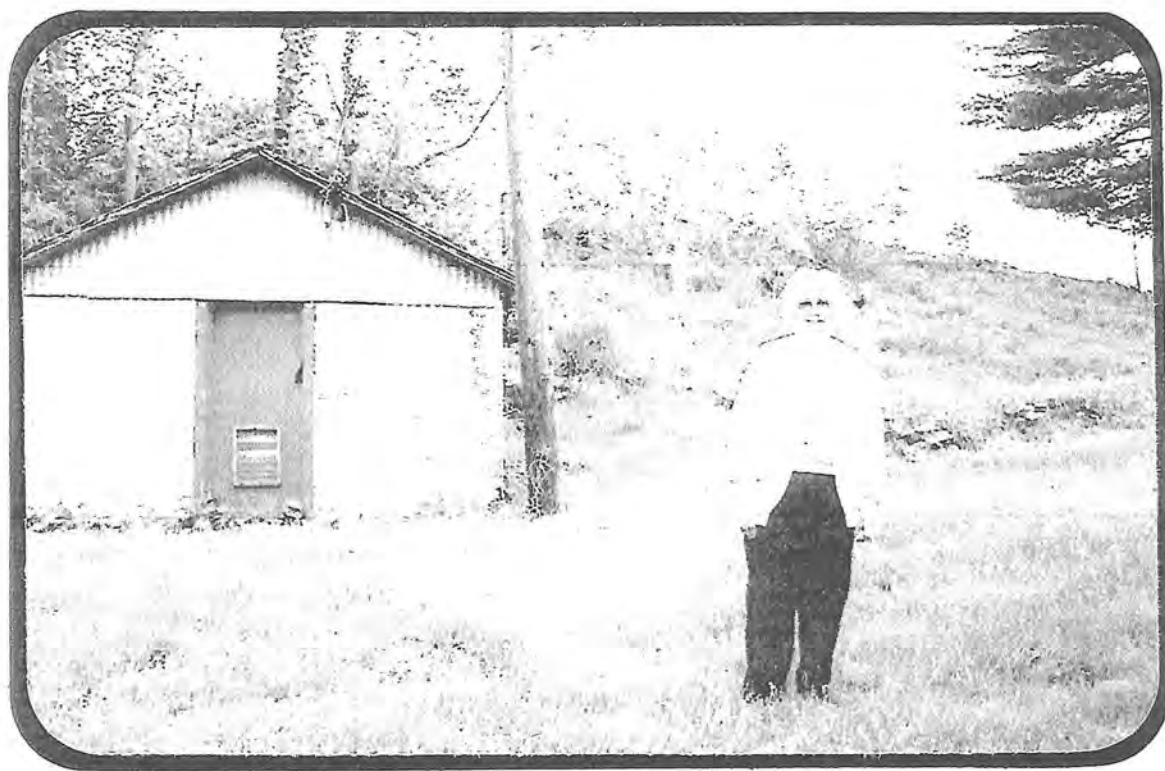
By Deed dated June 8, 1945, and recorded in the Recorder's Office of Washington County, Pennsylvania, in Deed Book Vol. 693, Page 148, Isa Boles and Helen I. Boles, Executrices of the Estate of McClelland T. Boles, Grantors, conveyed to Clyde E. Fox and Charles Fox, Sr., both of Weirton, West Virginia, Grantees all that certain piece or parcel of ground situate in Jefferson Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania, containing 170 acres and 63 perches.

January 11, 1952 conveyance to Clyde E. Fox and Violet Fox

By Deed dated January 11, 1952, and recorded in the Recorder's Office of Washington County, Pennsylvania, in Deed Book Vol. 818, Page 199, Charles Fox, Sr., Widower, and Clyde E. Fox, husband of Violet Fox, Grantors, conveyed to Clyde E. Fox and Violet Fox, his wife, all that certain piece or parcel of ground situate in Jefferson Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania, containing 170 Acres and 63 Perches. This Deed contains an excepting and reserving clause for a parcel of ground containing 0.957 Acres conveyed by Clyde E. Fox and Violet Fox, his wife, to Charles Fox, Sr. by deed dated May 11, 1950, and recorded in the Recorder's Office of Washington County, Pennsylvania in Deed Book Vol. 766, Page 543.

Arlene Alexander of Jefferson Township, Eldersville referred us to Marion Long Rollinitis who she said had lived in the old farmhouse at one time. Ben contacted Marion Long Rollinitis and invited her and her friend, John Popp, to come to the farm for a visit. Marion said that she and her sister, Martha Long Cowden, lived in the old farmhouse. Marion and Martha's mother was a Long. She was the sister of Clyde (E. for Elsie) Fox who ended up owning the farm. Mrs. Long (mother of Marion and Martha) was the daughter of Charles Fox. There was a son of Charles Fox, also named Charles, who lived in Houston, Texas.

The picture below is of Marion Long Rollinitis standing approximately 50 feet from the springhouse (confirming what Helen Wilson said) at the place where she believes the old farmhouse had been. This picture of Marion was taken May 14, 1999. She is standing closer to the springhouse than the location of the farmhouse that is indicated by the picture on page 32.



The picture below shows the location of the old farmhouse in relationship to the springhouse (see part of springhouse on the left).



From the obituary included herewith, it is learned that Marian E. Rollinitis passed away on February 28, 2005 at the age of 77. She was the daughter of Thomas and Helen Jeanette (Nettie) Fox Young. Marion has a daughter nearby, Eileen Rollinitis of Cross Creek. Also, Marian has a sister Martha J. Cowden of Hickory. Both Eileen and Martha would be possible sources of further knowledge about the years that Marian and Martha lived on Green Spring.

Marian E. Rollinitis

*'Angel Lady' was
Langeloth homemaker*

Marian E. Rollinitis, 77, of Langeloth, died Monday, February 28, 2005, in Weirton (W.Va.) Medical Center.

She was born September 13, 1927, a daughter of Thomas and Helen Jeanette (Nettie) Fox Young.

Mrs. Rollinitis was a homemaker and a member of Cross Creek Presbyterian Church.

She was known as "the Angel Lady," enjoyed making crafts and square dancing with the Buttons and Bows Dance Group.

Her husband, Leroy C. Rollinitis, died September 10, 1992.

She made her home with John Popp.

Surviving are three daughters, Lois J. (Chuck) Nimal of McDonald, Donna L. (James) Sanders of Georgia and Eileen Denise Rollinitis of Cross Creek; a brother, Charles S. Long of California state; a sister, Martha J. Cowden of Washington; 11 grandchildren, Charles Jr., Bill, Jason and Jaime Lynne Nimal, Bruce Jr., Chad and Brad Workmaster, Leroy Daniels, Michelle and Timmy Cheplic and Alea Rollinitis; and nine great-grandchildren.

A grandchild is deceased.

Friends will be received from noon to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m. Wednesday in Thomas-Little Funeral Service Inc., 314 West Lincoln Avenue, McDonald, where services will be held at 1 p.m. Thursday, March 3, with the Rev. Greg Graybill officiating. Interment will follow in Mt. Prospect Cemetery, Hickory.

It was Marion Rollinitis' sister, Martha Long Cowden, of Hickory, PA that informed Ben that Elsie (Clyde) and Violet Fox had a son Bert Fox living in New Albany, Ohio. Martha thought that Bert would be better able to answer some of the questions that we had.

On January 22, 1999, Peggy contacted Bert Fox, son of Elsie (Clyde) and Violet Fox. Bert said that his father built the present house (the house where Ben and I presently live) in approximately 1946. He also said that the old house was located between the present house and a concrete slab in the side yard directly in front of the huge oak tree. The concrete slab to which he referred is no longer in the yard. Bert said that his father poured the slab for placing a grill. His father also built the springhouse, and he helped his father to build the water reservoir inside the springhouse. According to Bert, the building that we call the machine shop, was there when they moved onto the farm in 1945. They used the first floor for a machine shop and Bert raised chickens on the second floor. There is a drive thru the grainery in front of the shop that was built by Elsie and Bert Fox out of oak.

Bert recalls that the Amish erected the wood stave silo that had been outside the small bank barn. The cut stones at the sidewalk by the then milk house (now a tack room) were from the foundation of the old farmhouse. At one time, a row of these cut stones were in front of the mow door of the little barn.

Elsie Fox worked in the mill and milked cows. They sold the milk cows in 1956 when bulk milk tanks were first required. Thereafter, they raised beef cattle. Elsie Fox was building a house at the entrance of the upper field, the foundation was erected and a steel beam was in place when he suddenly died the next week. This was in 1964.

A small piece of ground at the new house location was deeded out of the property and the rest sold to Mark Medice on a contract to be paid for in five years. When Elsie Fox died, the property was deeded back to the farm, and Violet Fox moved to Columbus, Ohio where her children lived. Bert was 18 at the time and enrolled in Ohio State University. After the property was paid for in 1969, it was deeded to Mark Medice.

Bert Fox sent about seven pictures that were taken at the time he and his family lived on the farm. From his description of each picture, it was easy to locate exactly where the picture had been taken. He said that his sister, Doris, who lives in Georgia may have more pictures.

The first two pictures are of particular significance since in the background can be seen the remains of the old house. We used a magnifying glass to determine that stairs can be seen to the left of the window. This could very well indicate that the front of the house faced Eldersville Road, like Helen Wilson said. It appears from the photo, even though the house was being torn down, that you went in the front door and up stairs to the second floor. Marion Rollinitis said that it was a typical two-story old frame farmhouse.

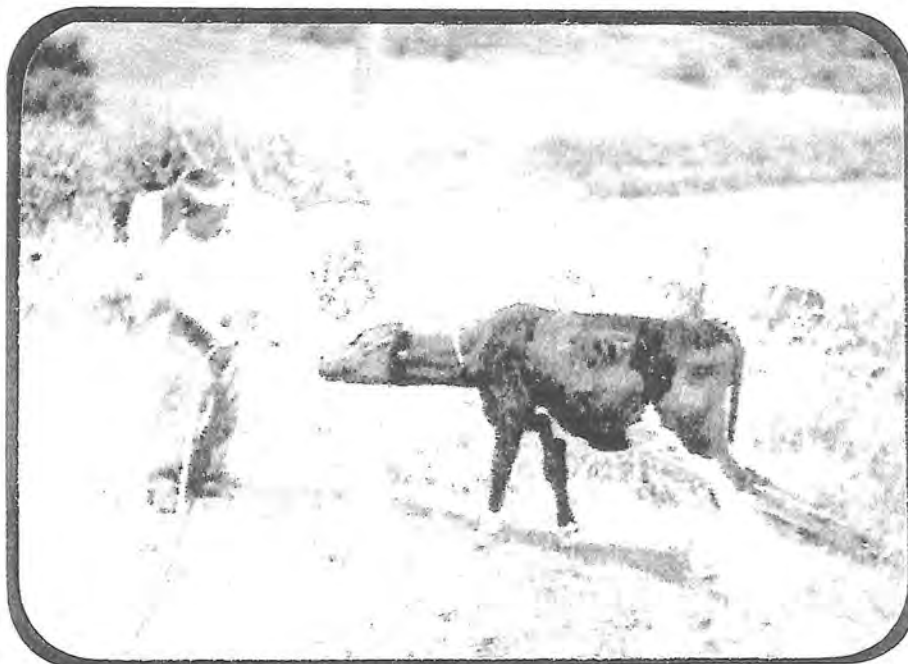


Bert Fox about five years old (1950-1951)

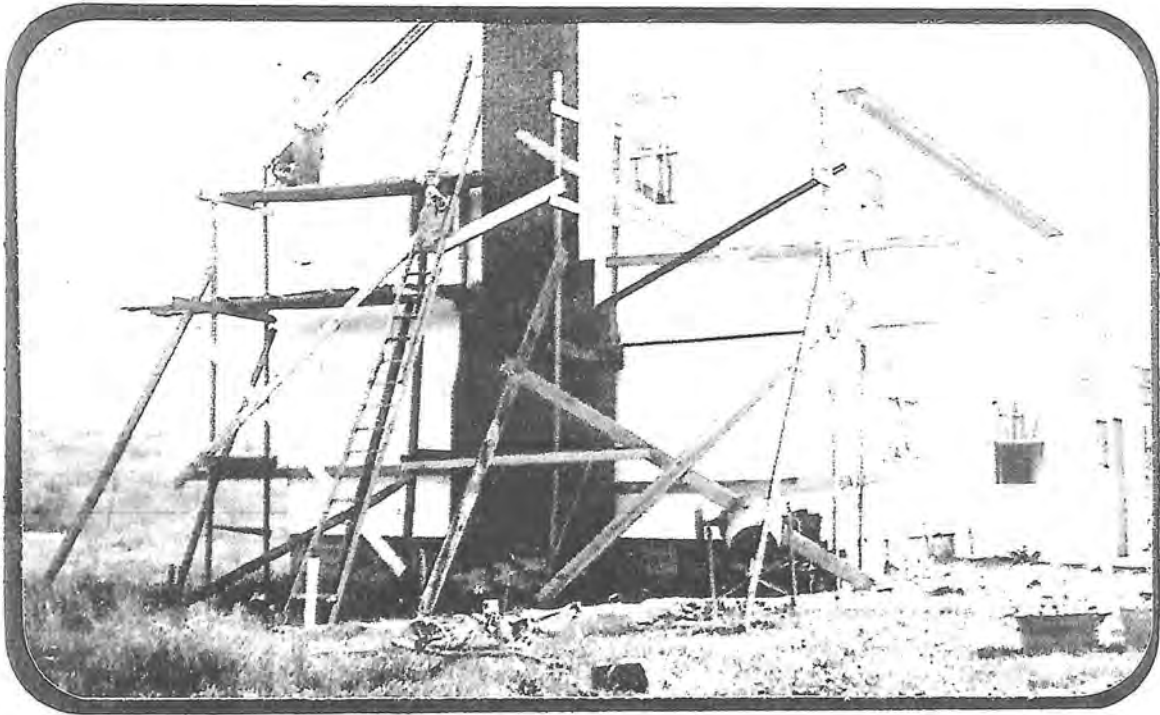


Bert Fox with sister Doris and their pups

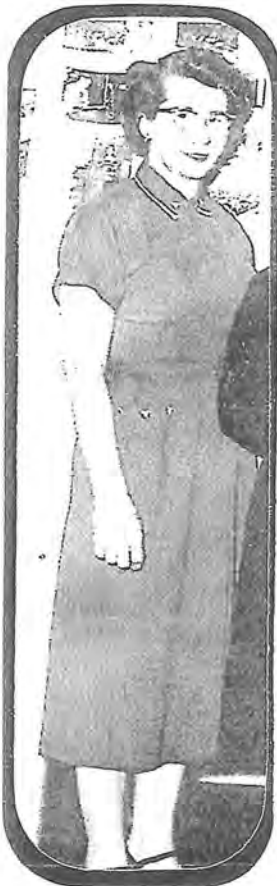
Among other pictures that Bert Fox sent is a picture of Bert, probably around 5 years old, giving the calf a drink from a garden hose along the driveway.



This is a picture of Bert's mother, Violet Fox, up on scaffolding helping to build the present house. This picture was probably taken around 1946. Note that there is a small child on the ladder, probably Bert helping his mother.



On the left is a picture of Violet Fox dated October 20, 1957 and taken at the Eldersville United Methodist Church.



On the right is a picture of Bert's grandmother coming up the two steps into the kitchen of the house. This picture was taken in the late 1950's or early 1960's. Bert said the house was built with a separate kitchen and dining room. The wall was removed 1958.



The following two pictures show the main road to Eldersville during the blizzard of 1950. The children are Bert and his sister Doris plus four of their cousins.



Bert Fox tells the story that his dad, Elsie Fox, worked at Weirton Steel and was at work when the blizzard hit in 1950. His mother, Violet Fox, was left at the farm with Bert and his sister, Doris. His Dad walked from Weirton to the farm to get home. It took him two and a half days to walk up Route 22 and back across Route 18 through Burgettstown and home. He brought food with him from a small gas station about one-half mile from the farm. This probably would have been the gas station at the time on the Mirich acres.

The cousins of Bert and Doris Fox in the picture of the blizzard of 1950 were probably the children of Rose Fox Hanlin. Rose was the sister of Elsie Fox. Rose and her husband, Clyde R. Hanlin lived in the red brick house at the end of the farm lane where it met the Eldersville Road. The acre on which the Hanlin house was built had been part of the original farm. It was surveyed and deeded off the original tract of land. Below is a picture of Rose Hanlin's house during the blizzard of 1950.



Roselene M. Hanlin passed away on February 16, 2001. Although Ben had talked with her by phone, we never met her. Bert and his wife came back for the funeral and stopped at the farm but we were not home that day.

Roselene M. Hanlin

Formerly of Burgettstown

Roselene M. Hanlin, 83, of Wintersville, Ohio, formerly of Burgettstown, died Friday, February 16, 2001, in Trinity West Hospital, Steubenville, Ohio.

She was born February 5, 1918, in Bellaire, Ohio, a daughter of Charles and Bessie Anderson Fox.

Mrs. Hanlin was a member of Wintersville United Methodist Church.

Her husband, Clyde R. Hanlin, died in 1981.

Surviving are three sons, Gary Hanlin of East Springfield, Ohio, Edwin Hanlin of Glendale, W. Va., and James Hanlin of Cary, N.C.; and six grandchildren.

Seven brothers and sisters are deceased.

Bert said in his letter that their house was hit by a tornado on Easter Sunday in 1952. His mother, Violet, and sister, Doris, and him were in the house and hid in the basement. His father, Elsie, was working out by the barn and did not make it back to the house in time to hide with them. Elsie crouched down in a ditch along the drive way and the tornado passed over him. The tornado took the end of the house off towards the barn and whipped out most of their possessions from the house. No one was injured but it took several months to repair the house and gather up their possessions. They picked a lot of clothes out of trees.

I wrote to Bert and asked if he would attend the Jefferson Township Sesquicentennial to be held on June 21, 2003. I also asked if he would write down some of his memories from living on the farm and bring whatever additional pictures he could find. I received an email back from him that he would plan to come and he had started to write down some of his memories.

Several weeks went by and we had not heard from Bert. Then an email came on my computer from his wife. Bert had passed away suddenly of a massive heart attack on February 16, 2003. His wife sent us his obituary and picture below. She also gave us an email address for Bert's sister, Doris Fox Fowler.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Bertram E. "Dusty" Fox

DATE OF BIRTH
 July 26, 1946
 Steubenville, Ohio

DATE OF DEATH
 February 16, 2003
 Westerville, Ohio

SERVICES
 Wednesday, February 19, 2003 at 10:00 AM
 Schoedinger Northeast Chapel

OFFICIATING
 Pastor Dwight Hedrick

PLACE OF INTERMENT
 Maplewood Cemetery
 New Albany, Ohio

ARRANGEMENTS BY
 Schoedinger Northeast Chapel
 1051 East Johnstown Road
 Gahanna, Ohio 43230



FOX

Bertram E. "Dusty" Fox, age 56, of New Albany, died suddenly Sunday, February 16, 2003 at St. Ann's Hospital. Operations Manager for Ayya, Veteran U.S. Army. Survived by wife of 35 years, Cynthia Fox; son, Matt Fox of Columbus; daughter, Dana Morlan and Mark Toprani of Galena; grandson, Luke Morlan; sister, Doris (Gary) Fowler; father-in-law and mother-in-law, Bill and Jean Blackburn; brother-in-law, Bill (Jody) Blackburn; sister-in-law, Sharon (Steve) Cremean; nieces and nephews. The family will receive friends 2-4 and 6-8 p.m. Tuesday at the SCHOEDINGER NORTHEAST CHAPEL, 1051 East Johnstown Road (1/2 mile East of Hamilton Road), where the Funeral Service will be held 10 a.m. Wednesday February 19, 2003, with Pastor Dwight Hedrick officiating. Interment at Maplewood Cemetery. Contributions may be made to the American Heart Assn., P.O. Box 182039, Columbus, OH 43218-2039 in his memory. Visit www.schoedinger.com to extend condolences.

I contacted Doris Fox Fowler in Hoschton, GA by email and extended an invitation for her and her husband Gary, who was also from Jefferson Township, to come to the Jefferson Township Sesquicentennial Celebration to be held June 21, 2003. Doris said that it sounded like the perfect time to visit Green Spring Farm and reminisce about the past. It had been many, many years since Gary and Doris had returned to this area. The Celebration was in the former Eldersville Grade School and this in itself brought back memories for both Doris and Gary. In some cases it took a second glance, but they were soon recognizing many of their classmates. Below is their picture taken at the Celebration in a former Grade School Class Room:



Gary Fowler; Doris Fox Fowler and Peggy Strain

Doris brought with her the oldest picture she could find of the farm. The excitement was that this picture shows the old farmhouse. I think the house is in the process of being torn down and we are only seeing the first floor. This picture has helped to determine the exact location of the “old” house.

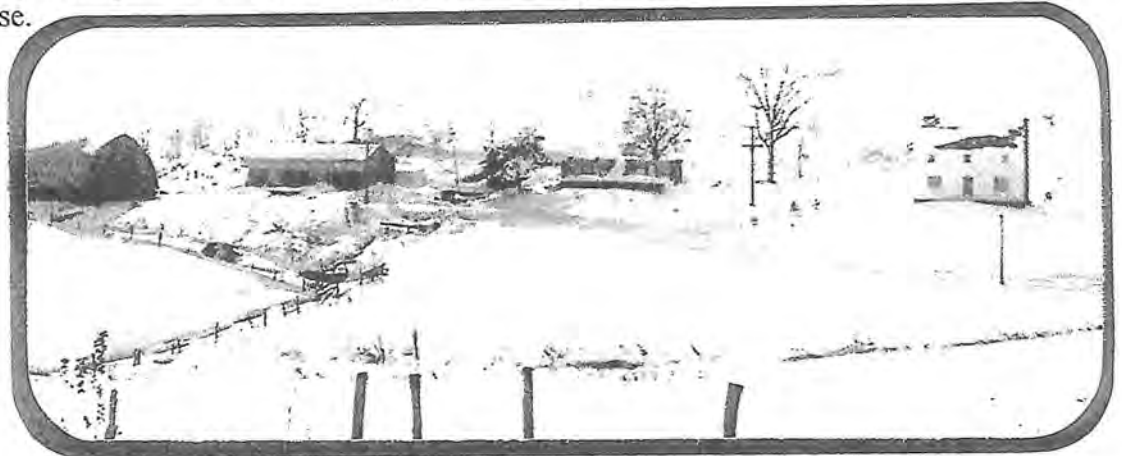


Photo of Green Spring Farm given to Ben and Peggy Strain by Doris Fox Fowler

Ben spent some time studying the old picture of the farm. Some of the differences he noted that were missing from the picture are as follows: No pine and cedar trees; no garage on the side of the house; no front porch on the house; no spring house; no drive thru corn crib; no milk house on the bank barn; and no lean to on the bank barn. The oak tree is much smaller. There appears to be a small pond across the lane from the spring. There is no fence along the lane.

Doris and Gary Fowler spent several hours visiting with Ben at Green Spring Farm that day. The more they walked and talked Doris and Gary conjured up fond memories.

According to Doris, daughter of Elsie and Violet Fox, there was an "older barn" beyond the site of the new barn, farther away from the house. Doris further states: "When we moved to the farm it was in a very poor condition, and we children were forbidden from going in to it as my father was afraid that some part of it might fall on us. I would often go out around the barn looking as it had a slate roof and I loved to get the pieces of slate to write on."

Also Doris stated that the orchard was planted by her father, Elsie Fox and her grandfather, Charles, and was cared for by her father until such time as the farm was sold to Mark Medice. Doris also recalled that there had been 500 apple trees and about as many peach trees planted with the idea that Elsie and his father could have a working orchard. The orchard had not matured to a point where it would be profitable when the farm was sold to Mark Medice

April 24, 1969 conveyance by Deed to Mark M. Medice and Lily Medice

By Deed dated April 24, 1969, and recorded in Deed Book Vol. 1297, Page 333, in the Recorder's Office in Washington County, Pennsylvania, Violet Fox, Widow, of Columbus, Ohio, Grantor, conveyed to Mark M. Medice and Lily Medice, his wife, of Jefferson Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania all that certain piece or parcel of ground situate in Jefferson Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania containing 170 acres and 63 perches.

We have been unable to locate any pictures or history information during the time that the Medices lived on the farm. We have been told that Mark Medice had the orchard at "Orchard Hills" at the upper end of Hanlin Station Road.

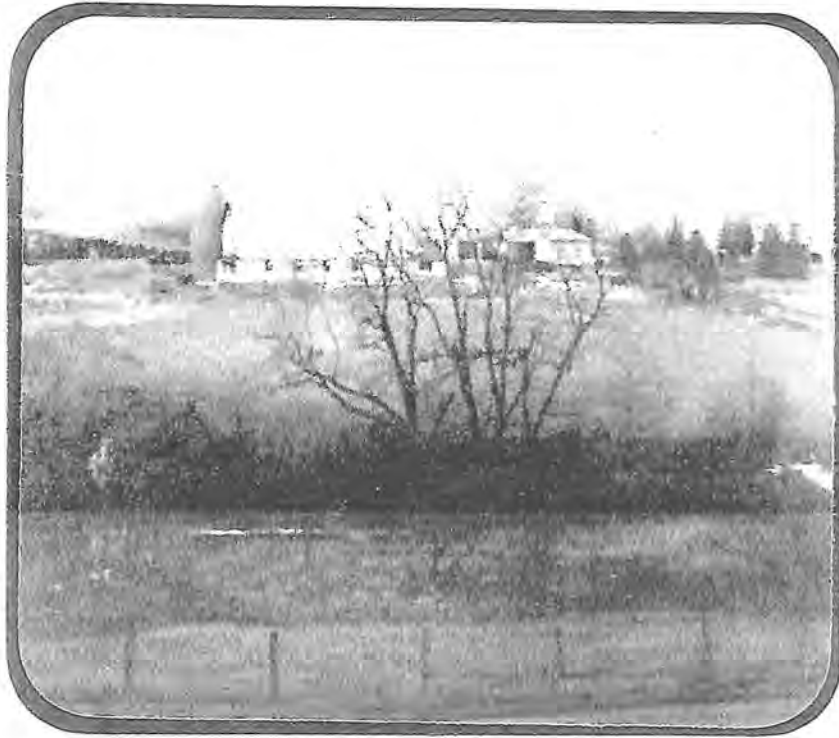
July 9, 1974 Agreement between Mark M. Medice and Lily Medice and William Beadling and Delores Beadling and A. Thomas Sessi and Darlene Sessi

By Agreement dated July 9, 1974, and recorded in Deed Book Vol. 1529, Page 164, between Mark M. Medice and Lily Medice, his wife, and William Beadling and Delores Beadling, his wife, of Hanover Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania, and A. Thomas Sessi and Darlene Sessi, his wife, of Weirton, West Virginia, they agreed to sell and convey on or before November 9, 1974, all that certain tract of land known as Tract I containing 170 acres and 63 perches, but excepting and reserving more than 30 acres from this conveyance.

June 11, 1975 conveyance by Deed to Windswept Farms, a Partnership

By Deed dated June 11, 1975, and recorded in Deed Book Vol. 1600, Page 310, Mark M. Medice and Lily Medice, his wife, conveyed to Windswept Farms, a Partnership of Washington County, Pennsylvania, all that certain tract of land containing 138.86 acres, more or less. With this conveyance, the farm became known as "Windswept Farm".

A neighbor, Gin Scopel, gave us the picture below that she took in March 1977 from her front porch on Strobe Road. At that time, Windswept Farm was a dairy farm, and her son, Jay, was working on the farm for Dan Beadling, son of William and Delores Beadling.



At the time the picture was taken, the barn had not yet been built. The farm was purchased in 1975 and the picture was taken in 1977, so we are not certain when the big barn was built. Looking at the small barn on the picture, there is a red wooden stave silo outside the barn. This silo was not there when we purchased the farm in 1990 although stone work in the ground in that area is still there.

The “lean-to” along the backside of the smaller barn is not on the picture. To the right of the small barn is an attached building that was used as the milk room before the big barn was built.

The drive thru corncrib and granary and also the shop building can be seen on the picture and are still there today (2007). The springhouse is hidden behind the corncrib. The house can barely be seen but it is on the far right on the picture behind some very tall evergreen trees.

A row of tall trees can be seen on top of the hill on the right side of the picture. This is evidence of the many apple trees that once were in the orchard. The orchard was well past its prime when Ben and I purchased the farm, so Ben had the trees removed. There were many empty apple crates found stored above the machine shop. There was also equipment for picking, grading and sorting apples and for making apple cider.

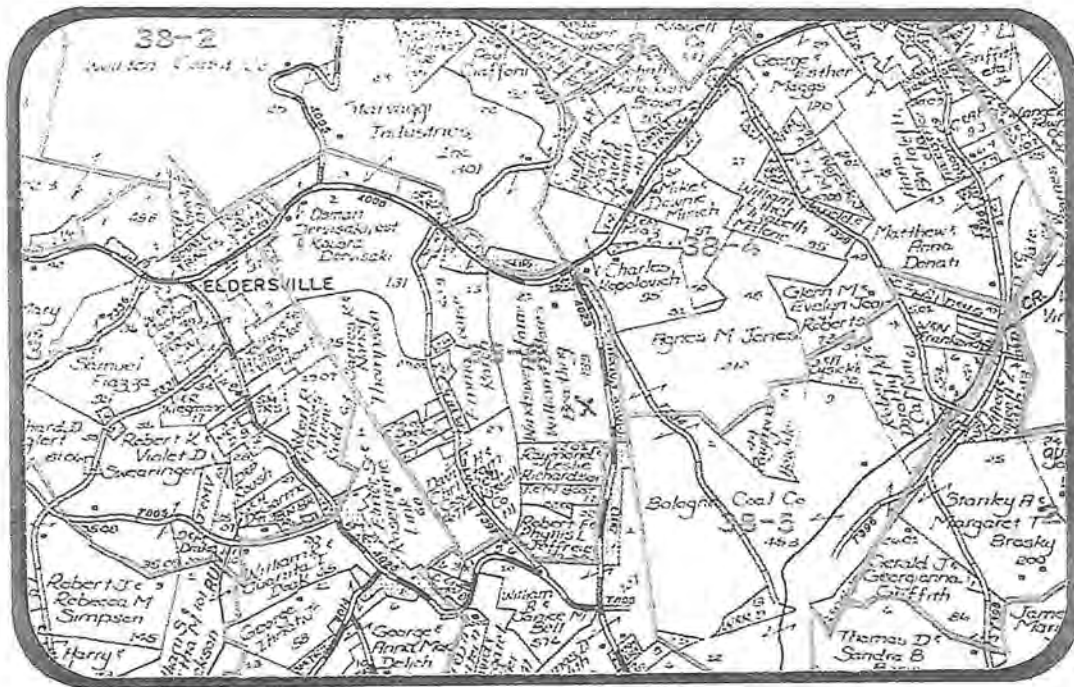
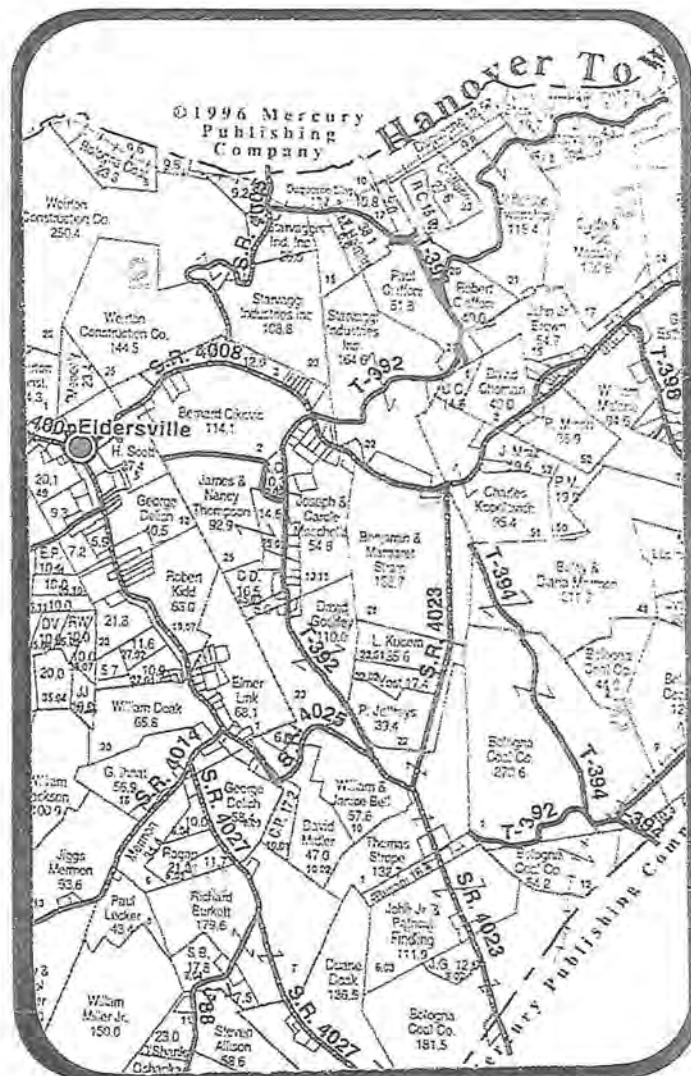


Photo enlargement of a 1989 Plat Book Map showing Windswept Farm

Photo enlargement of a 1996 Plat Book Map showing ownership of 138.7 acres by Benjamin & Margaret Strain



July 30, 1990 conveyance by Deed to Benjamin R. and Margaret H. Strain

By Deed dated July 30, 1990, recorded in Deed Book Vol. 2417, Page 512, in Washington County, Pennsylvania, Windswept Farms, a Pennsylvania Partnership by A. Thomas Sessi as Partner and along with Delores P. Beadling, Executors of the Estate of Josephine S. Sessi, deceased, Partner and William Beadling, Partner, and Darlene J. Sessi, wife of A. Thomas Sessi, all of Burgettstown, Washington County, PA 15021, Grantors, conveyed to Benjamin R. Strain and Margaret H. Strain, husband and wife, of McDonald, PA 15057, Grantees, all that certain parcel of land situate in Jefferson Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania, containing 138.86 acres, more or less.

The history from this point on will be more personal as we explain our style of life on Green Spring Farm. The previous owners had called the farm Windswept Farm, and we used this name for sometime, but we eventually decided to go back to its patent name of Green Spring Farm.

Although the conveyance to us was not until July 30, 1990; we were permitted to come on the property the middle of May to make hay and to clean up the farm and get the big barn ready for milking the cows. No one had lived on the farm for four or five years so it was not a problem for us to start ahead of time to get electricity reconnected, a new gas line put to the house, new plumbing in the basement of the house, and to get water to the house.

One of the main attractions to this particular farm for Ben was the fact that there were so many buildings on the farm. He was busy making plans for what all he would do with the buildings. Pictured below are the four main buildings that were there when we purchased the farm. Starting on the far left is the building that we referred to as the "big" barn or the "cow" barn. To the right side of the big barn is a silo. Next to the big barn is a bank barn that we labeled the "small" barn or "calf" barn. The machine shop is diagonally across from the small barn, and in front of the machine shop and on the same side of the lane as the small barn is a corncrib and granary.



The next picture will give you some idea as to how far the four buildings are from the house. From this picture you can see that there is a porch on the front of the house and an attached two-car garage to the right. Note that the lane has been plowed on this winter day to show the farm lane coming to a Y to the right of the house so that you can drive up to the house (and actually around the back of the house) or drive in front of the house to go to the barns. The fenced in area on the left side of the house was used for pasture. Hay fields were up behind the house.



First of all, a lot of clean up was necessary at the house before it was livable. Many bags of trash were taken out of the house as it had been badly vandalized while it sat empty. There was broken glass everywhere from the windows, chandelier, light bulbs, etc. Almost all of the windows needed new glass. A great find was sheets of window glass stored in the big barn. A friend of ours and owner of a remodeling company replaced all of the window glass with the glass from the barn with the exception of the two big sliding windows (one in the living room and one in the dining room). Those two windows had to have special size glass cut. Although the window glass was replaced, none of the window frames or sills was replaced. As mentioned earlier in this history, the house probably was built around 1946 by the Fox family.

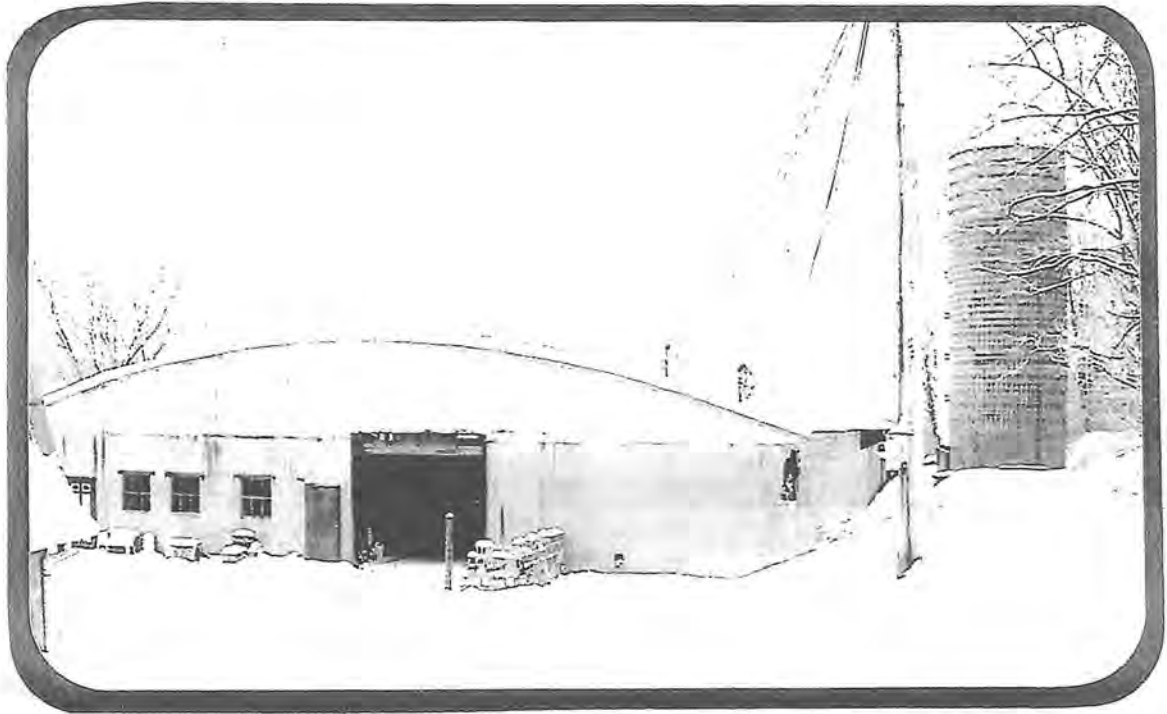
There was evidence by a lot of firebricks near the fireplace in the living room that a wood stove had been there. We got rid of the firebricks as well as old moldy carpeting that had been in the living room, front entrance hall and up the stairs to the second floor.

The house itself had several unique features that we really liked. There are inch thick genuine marble slabs laid for the floor in the living room, front entrance hall and back entrance hall. It is multi-colored with gray grouting between the marble slabs.

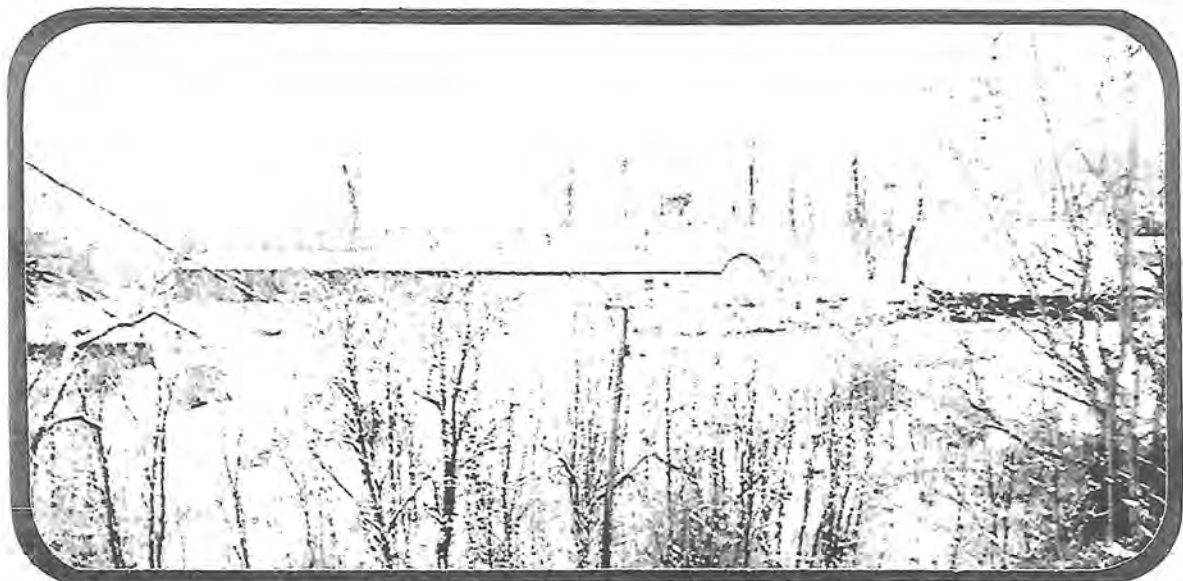
Another feature is the real knotty pine wood tongue and groove paneling in the living room, the stairs going to the second floor, and three of the four bedrooms. The rooms are all large, especially the living room, which is the length of the house front to back. On the first floor, there is a kitchen, dining room, living room, powder room and back entrance room. On the second floor, there are four bedrooms and a bathroom. There are pull-down stairs for access to storage in the attic. You can stand up and walk through the center of the attic.

The first building to get ready for the cows was the big barn. Looking at the front view, you can see part of a door to the far left and then three windows. The door opens into what had been the milk room. The mammoth stainless bulk tank was still there. However, the milking system was completely gone. This was not a problem because we moved our system from South Fayette and had it installed. Another door inside the milk room opened into the milking parlor. The pipeline had to be installed so milk would flow from the cow into the pipeline into the jar in the milk room and then into the bulk tank.

The big open door is for moving equipment in and out of the barn as well as cows, etc. To the right of the big barn is the silo. Corn silage was put into the silo and fed to the cows. Down the center of the barn was a feed bunk connected to the silo by conveyors.



The picture below was taken from the front porch of Gin Scopel's home on Strope Road. It will give you an idea of the length of the big barn. It measures 75 ft by 220 ft. which is quite large for a barn. This picture was taken in March of 1992.



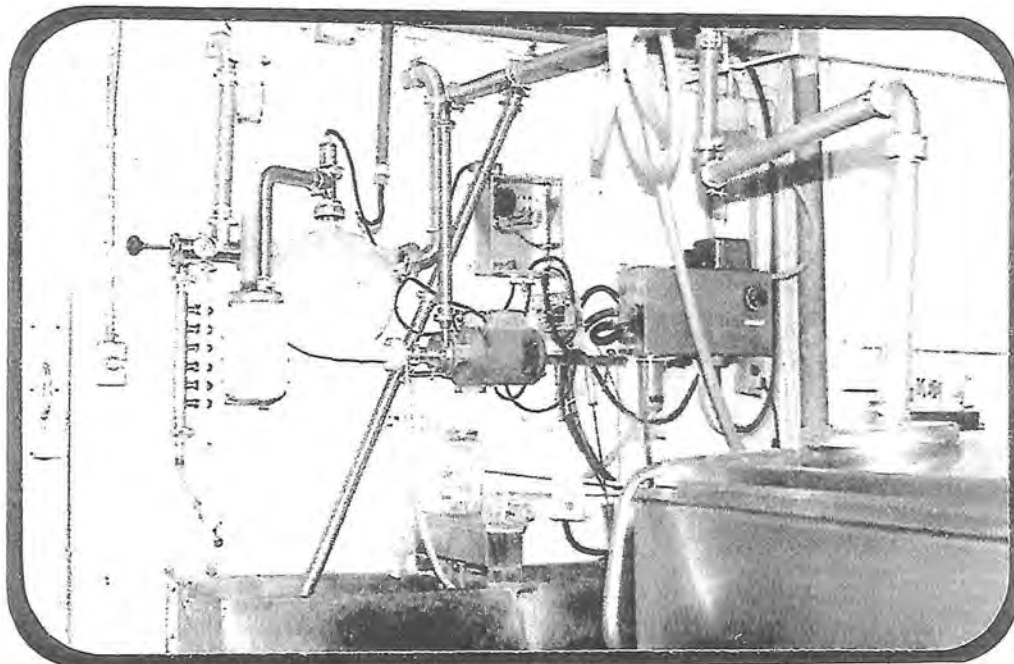
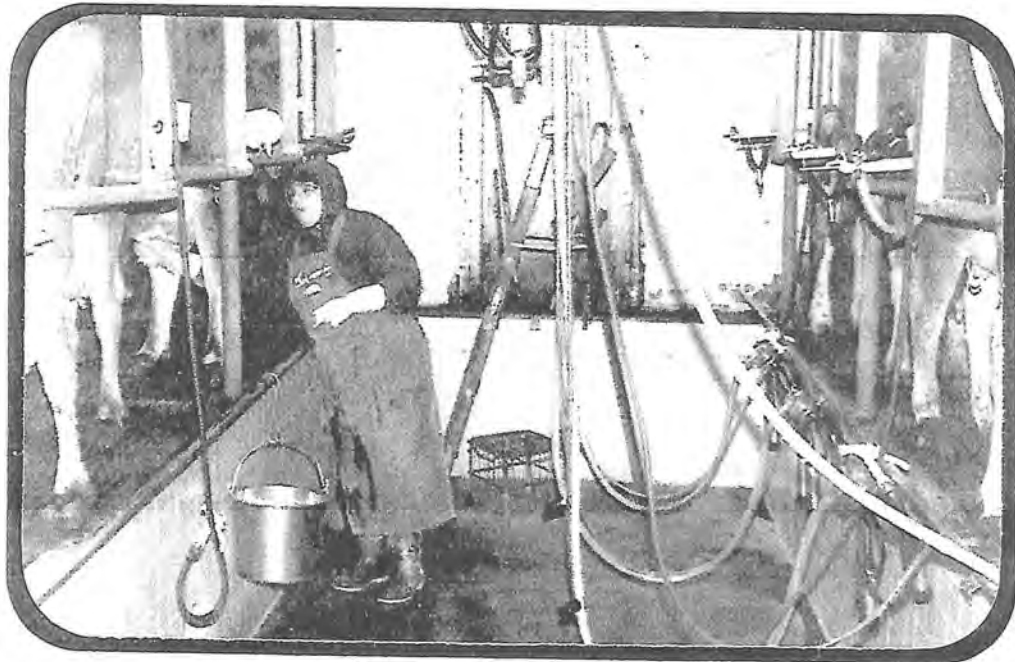
After milking the cows in the morning at South Fayette, our 18 Jersey milking cows were moved the afternoon of July 28, 1990, in time for the evening milking at Burgettstown. This was not an easy transition. Our cows were used to a stanchion barn, and now they had to learn how to be milked in a milking parlor.

Yes, I milked cows, too. Here I am standing in the pit washing the udder of a Jersey cow. Standing next to me is Scot Robertson, a high school student, who helped us. Although I eventually learned to milk the cows by myself, in the beginning I had either Scot or Ben to help me. Ben trained me to milk the cows so that he could be cleaning the manure off the floor in the big barn with the skid loader while I was milking and the cows were in the holding pen. This arrangement also gave him the time to make sure the feed bins in the parlor were working properly and the silage trough could be filled.

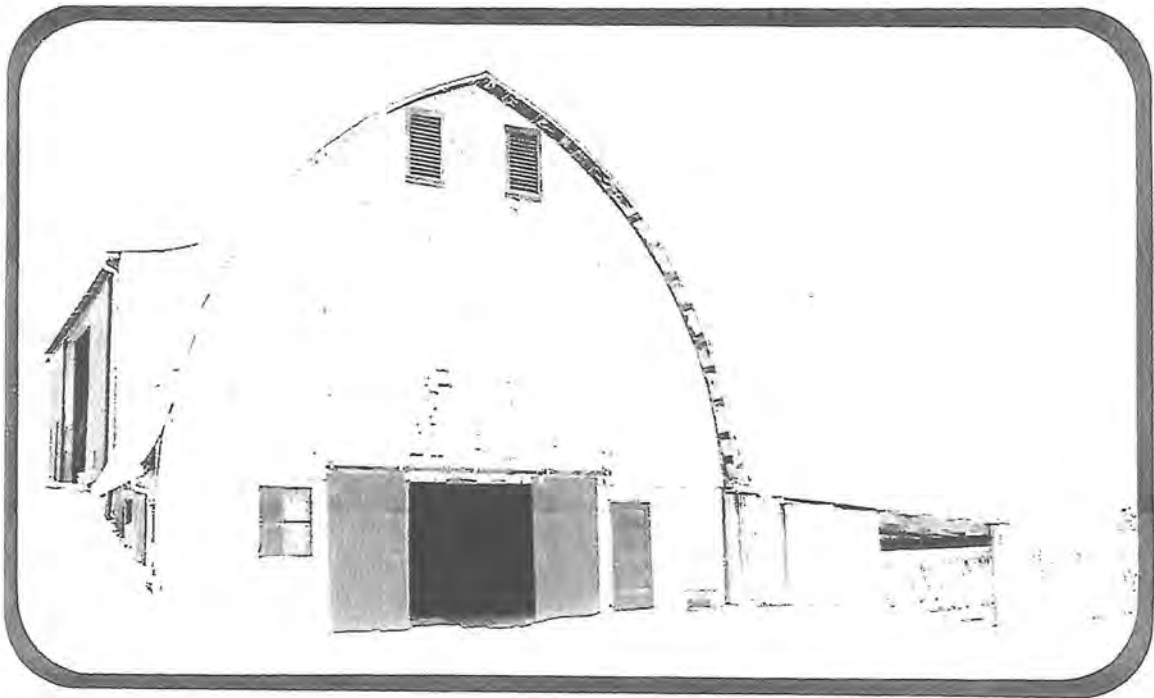
The milking parlor was a Herringbone Four. Eight cows could be milked in the parlor, four on a side at one time.



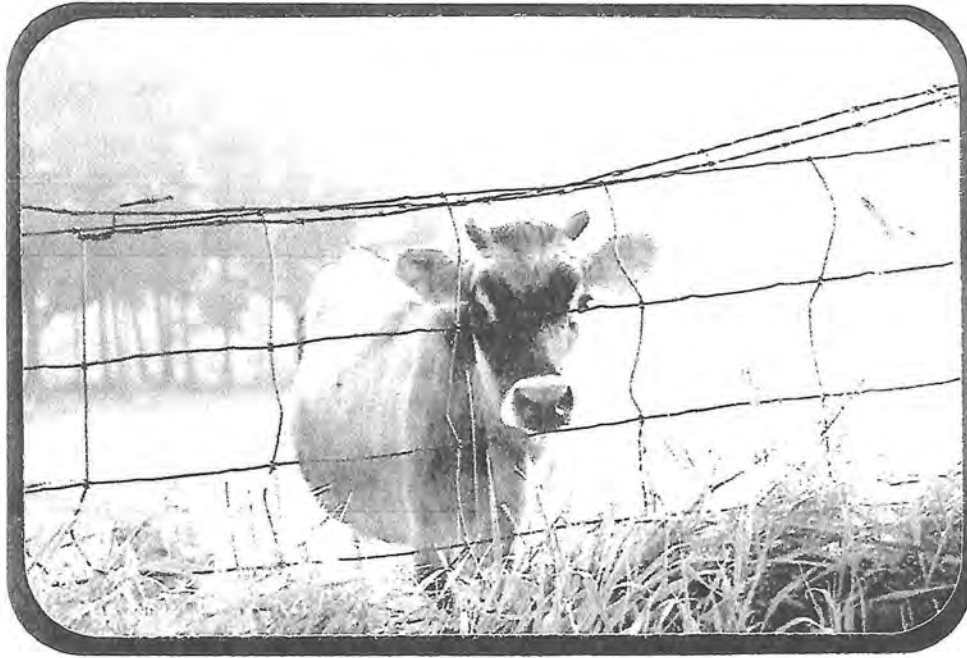
We milked cows from July 1990 through March 1997. The two pictures below were taken the last day the cows were milked on Green Spring Farm. Milking the cows is Clarejean Haury, a well-known minister of the Hillcrest U.P. Church in Burgettstown, PA. Clarejean was a great help to us in milking the cows early in the morning. I would start the milking but Clarejean would relieve me so that I could go back to the house and get ready for work. I worked for lawyers in Weirton, West Virginia when we were milking the cows.



A cow is milked seven of the nine months of her pregnancy. Approximately two months before she calves, she is not milked. We needed pens for the calves in different stages of growth. Although the small barn had been used for calves prior to our ownership, there were many renovations that needed to take place. Ben changed and rebuilt the calf pens. From the picture below, you see the main entrance to the bank barn. On the left are the open doors into the hayloft. On the right is a gate that opens into the lean-to shelter and the path into the pasture. The bottom picture shows the building that we originally used for a chicken coop. It had been the original milk house on the farm. In recent years, we used it as a tack room.



Cows and calves take on personalities of their own. We not only knew our herd well but we had names for every one of them. Pictured below was one of our favorites, a Jersey calf that we named “Amber.” This picture was taken in October of 1990, three months after moving to the farm. She grew to be a good milker. She has the typical Jersey look.



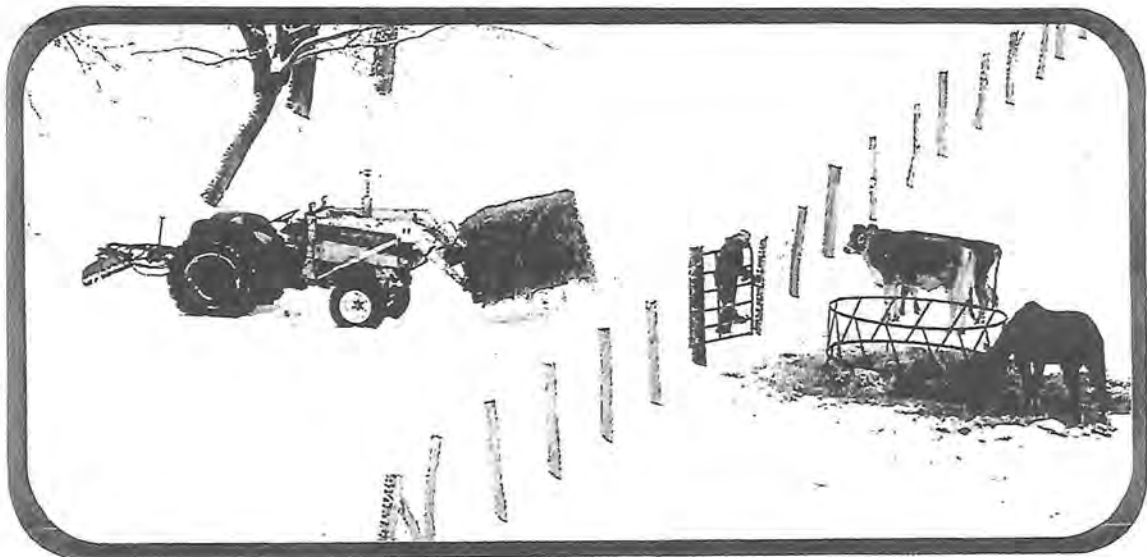
The picture below shows the inside of the calf barn. That is “Butch” peering out of his pen at the camera. We kept our bull calves and raised them for beef.



The farm had lots of water. The water supply was from a spring. Pictured below is the springhouse. Inside the springhouse, there was a holding tank that held 2,000 gallons. There was enough water for the house as well as the barns. The spring never went dry on us. It ran summer and winter, and the water had a good taste. When city water came across the property, we had a line put in to the house. However, we only used the water to water the garden. If the spring ever went dry, we could convert to the city water.



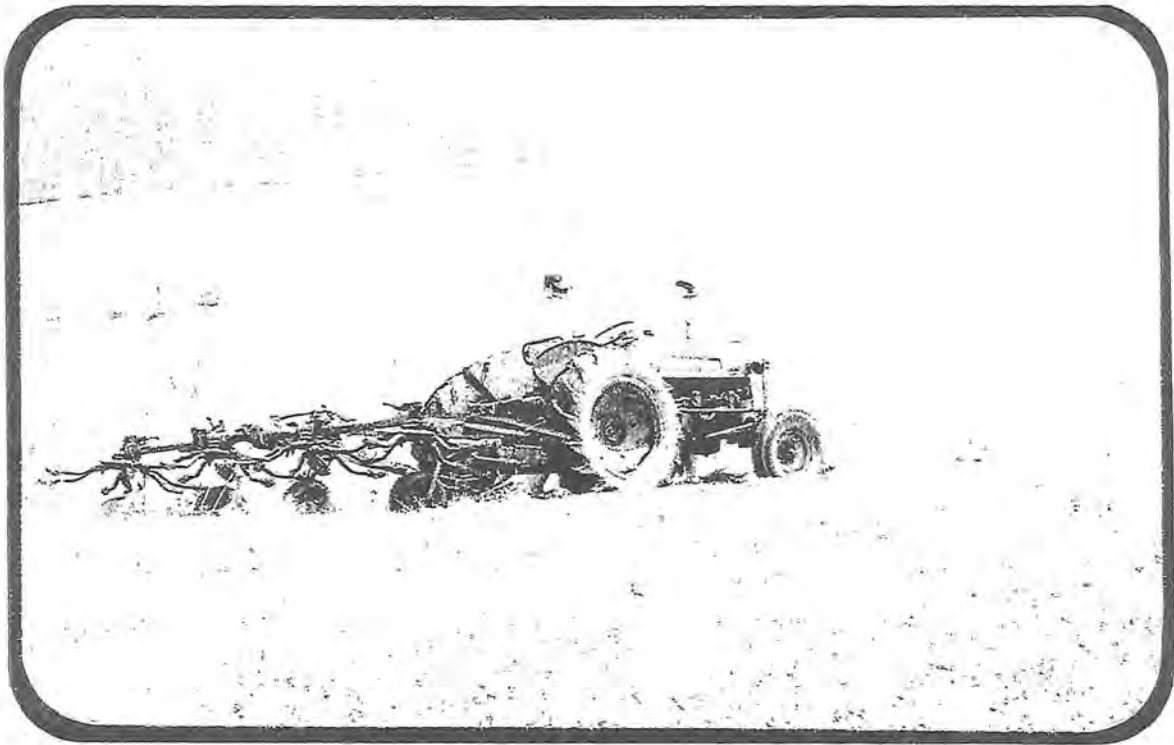
Ben is opening the gate to the pasture in order to feed the round bale positioned on the forks of the tractor to the cows. Two cows and a horse anxiously await the hay.



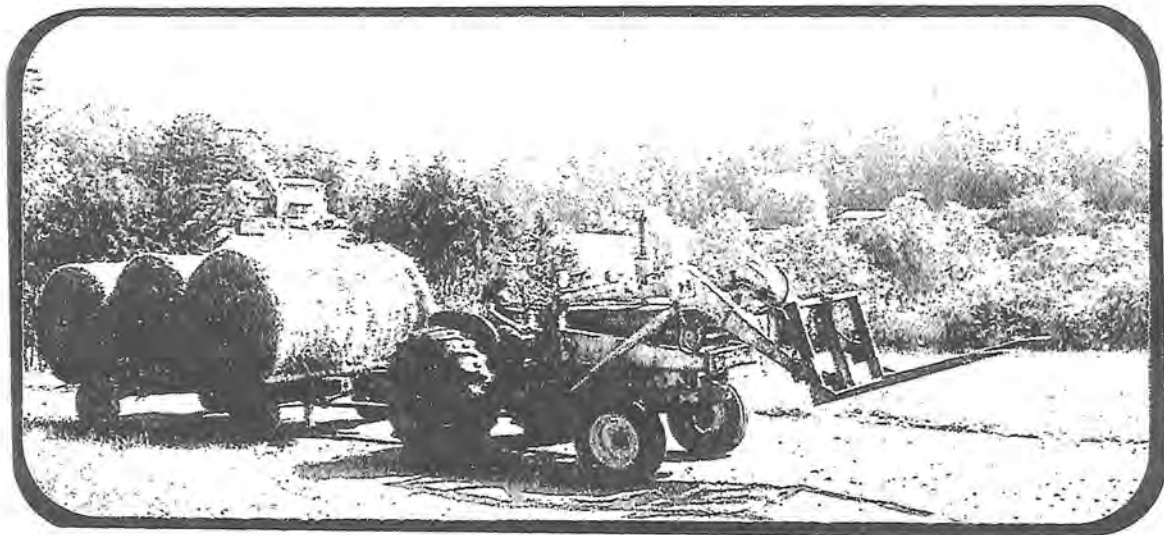
During the years that we milked the cows, we grew corn. The hay fields and cornfields were on top of the hill behind the house near the power tower. Some years the corn grew nine feet tall as the fields were rich with manure and had been limed. Pictured below is the process of making corn silage. The corn and stalks were cut and funneled through a blower that threw the fresh corn silage into the wagon. The wagon was unloaded at the silo. Corn silage had a unique smell all its own. You knew the minute you went out the back door of the house that silage was being made-that is how strong the odor was. It was a pleasant smell, somewhat a sweet smell. The cows milked well on the corn silage.



The saying is true, "You only make hay when the shine shines." It does not matter how hot the day may be, if the hay is ready, you bale the hay in the sweltering heat. Matt Cooper is tedding the hay to get it ready for baling in the picture below.



Pictured here is Ben on the tractor hauling six freshly made round bales to the barn.



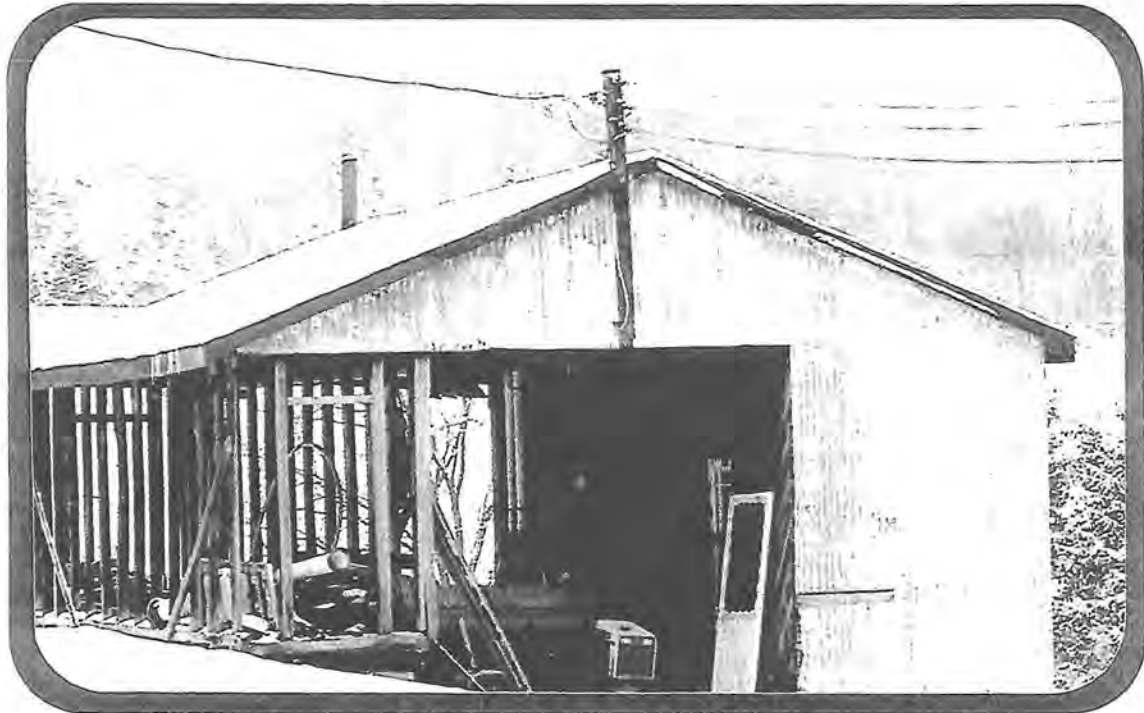
A place to work on machinery is always necessary on a farm. The machine shop pictured below came in handy for repairs year round. The first opening on the right was wide enough for pulling in a tractor. Usually winter was the time for major overhauling of tractors and other farm equipment. Note that there is a second story to the machine shop. We used it for storage. The previous owners did not clean out the machine shop before moving off the farm-that made for days of routing through things and finding many interesting items.



Ben takes a much needed break from fixing farm equipment.



We used the corncrib and granary for storage, but it apparently had been a very useful building to previous owners. The open slotted section no doubt was where corn had been stored. The closed part of the building was divided into two sections. The one section was the granary and the other section was for storage. The building was constructed so that you could drive the tractor thru the center.

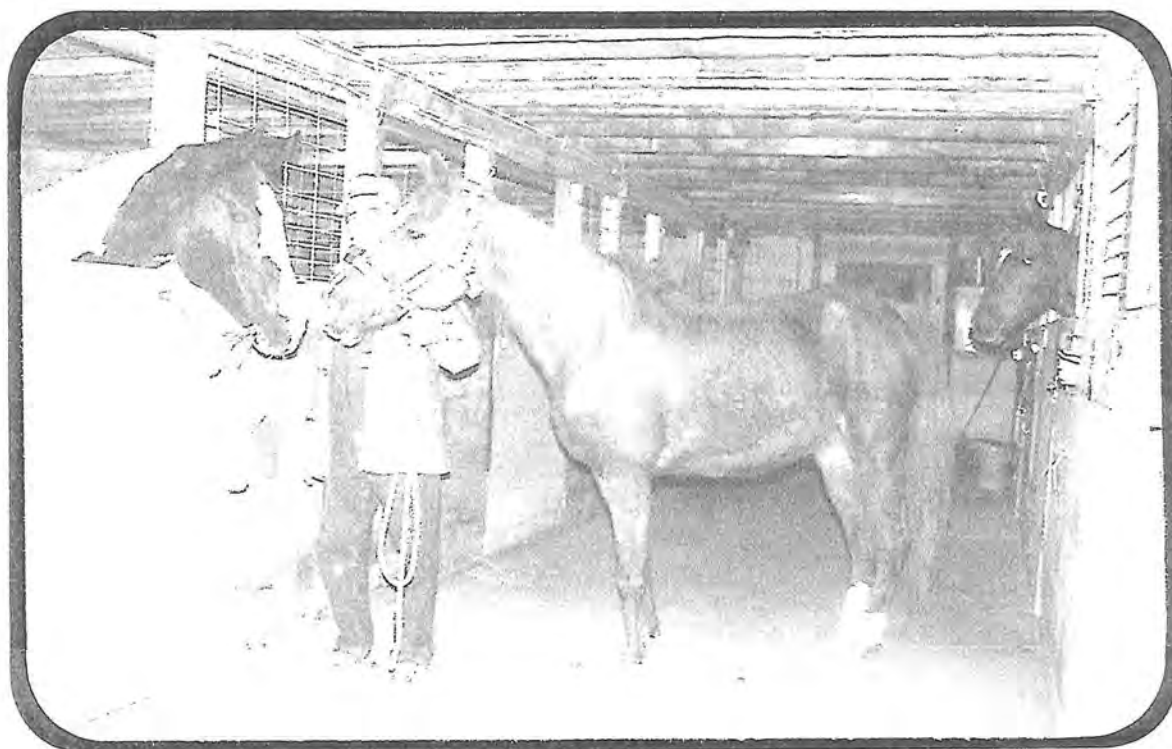


The decision to go out of the milking business was made in January 1997. Looking at the farm records for the year 1996 was proof enough that there had to be a better way of making money on the farm. We were tired of the endless amount of physical work with no profit. We made the decision to sell the cows while we still could afford to pay off our creditors and have some money left. The feed bill for the grain was the biggest bill that we had. We were buying feed from Diamond Milling Company in Rochester, PA.

The cows were sold the middle of March 1997. Don Fuchs of Weavertown Farms in Hickory, PA bought most of the adult cows. However, he did not have the cows very long before having an auction at his farm and selling the cows. Most of the cows were shipped to a place in Texas.

Slowly the equipment related to dairying was sold. The Herringbone milking stalls were sold, etc.

We made the decision to change our facilities into a place for boarding horses. A lot of renovation needed to take place before this would be a possibility. Ben built horse stalls where the calf pens had been. The first two horses to be boarded at our place were in November 1999. Below is a picture of the original calf barn changed into a horse barn. Ben is holding "Chuck". You can see that stalls have been built on both sides of the barn. The second picture shows "Summer" nose to nose with "Chuck" and "Rusty" watching.



The oldest horse that we have on the farm is “Zeke.” Zeke is not a horse being boarded here. He is our horse and came soon after we moved to the farm in 1990. He had been up at Rolling Hills Farm in Bridgeville where both of our sons worked.

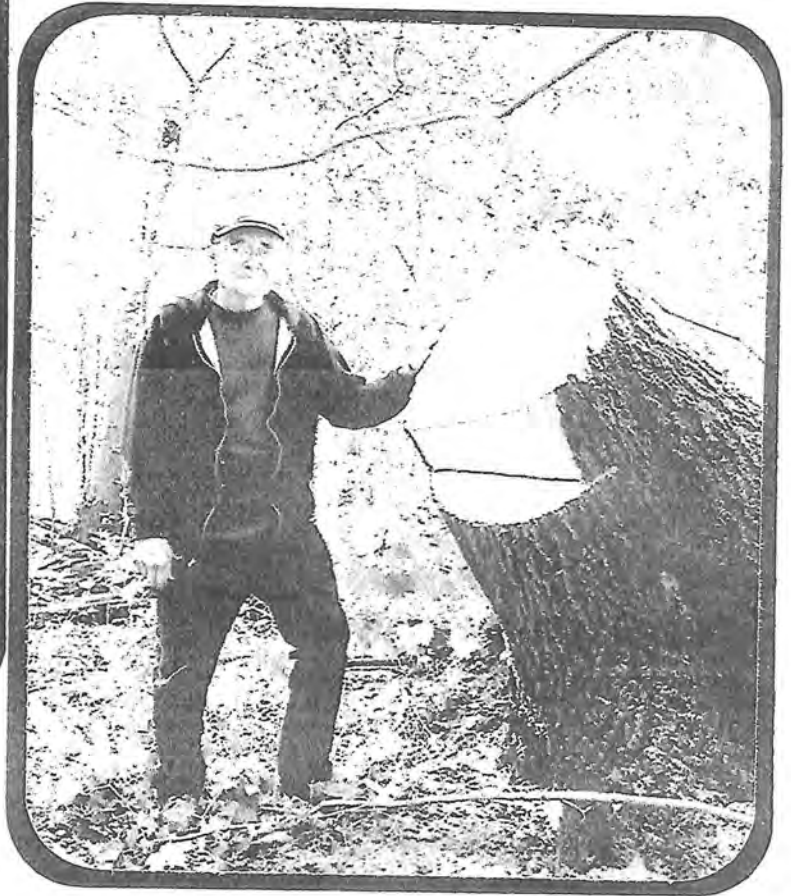


This is “Phantom” and he is a horse being boarded here by Sammi Milavec

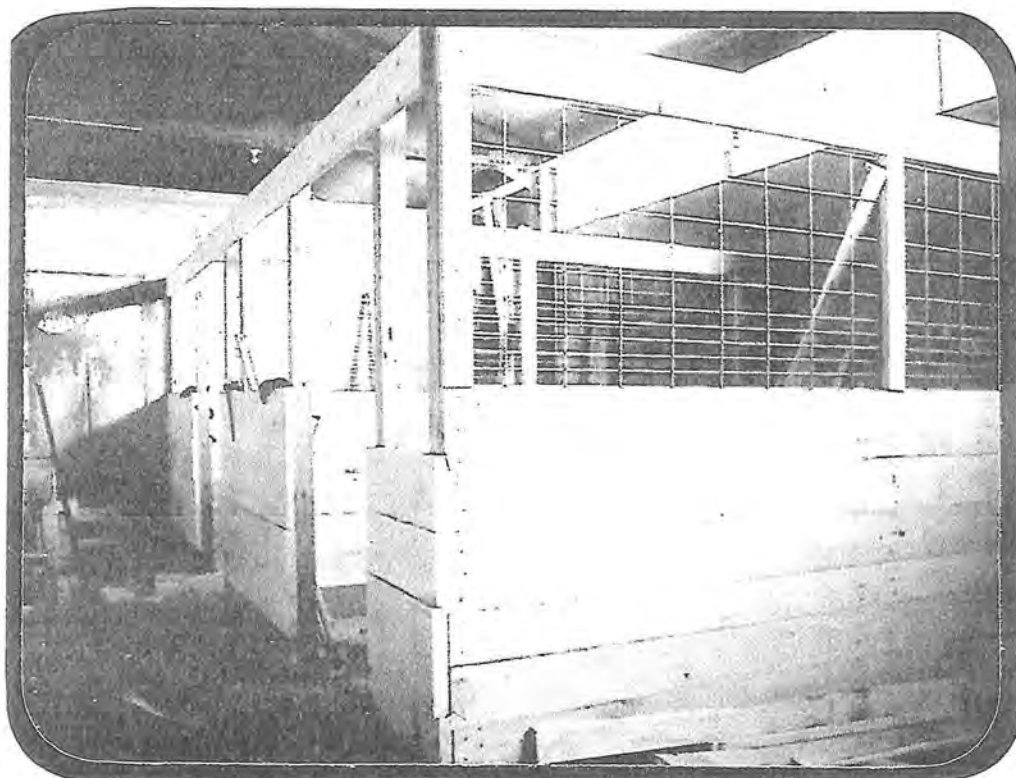


With boarding horses there was time and money to do some of the badly needed maintenance around the farm. In 2002, the entire roof was replaced on the big barn.

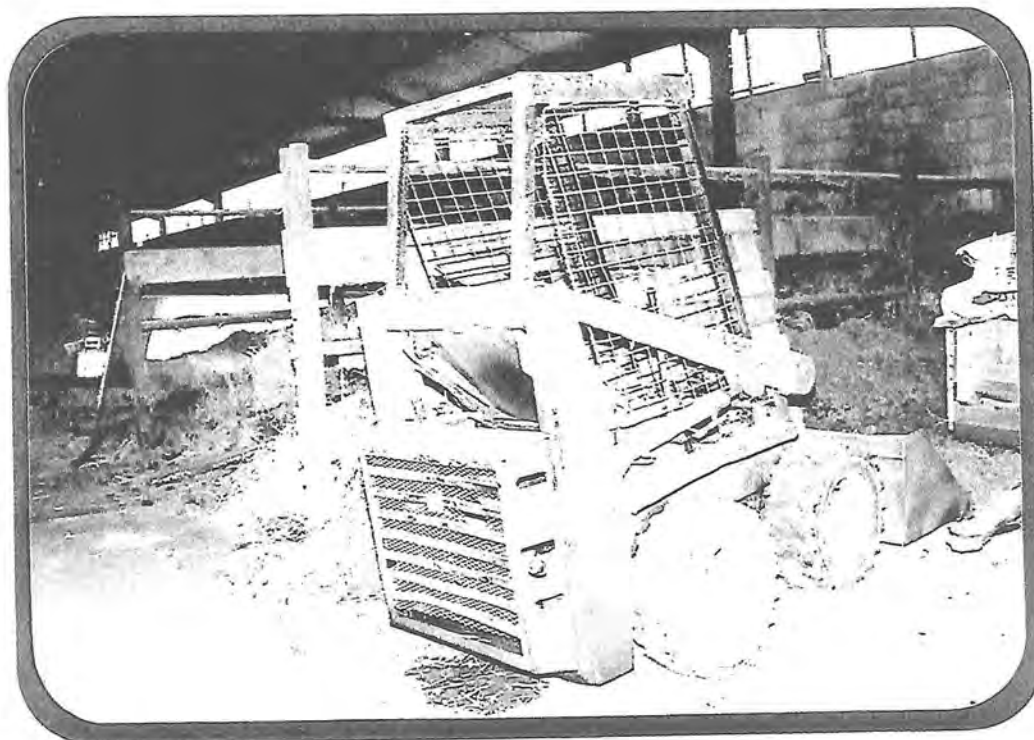
Several big trees had fallen down in the back woods. The pictures below show the size of one of the trees. Ben stands by one of the trees that were cut up. The bottom picture shows some of the lumber from the sawed up trees.



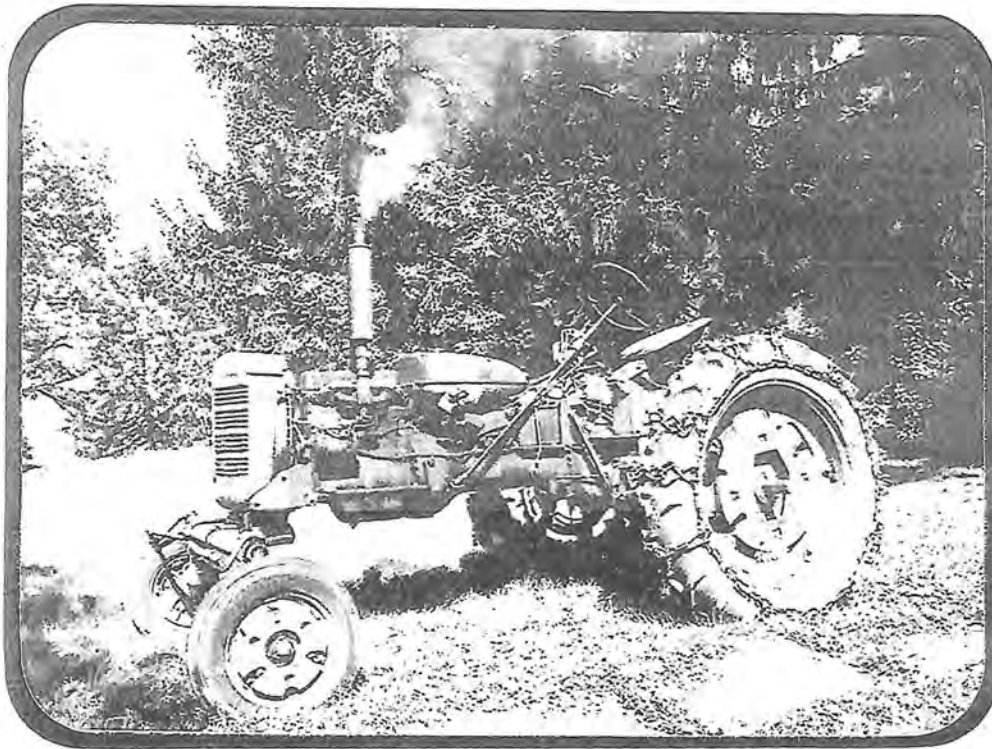
From some of the lumber Ben was able to construct new stalls for horses in the big barn. Below is a picture of the horse stalls under construction.



Below is a picture of our John Deere Skid Loader. This piece of equipment is used for loading manure into the manure spreader. It is a necessary piece of equipment.



Ben was able to get this relic of a tractor started. He rode it up to the house to show me that "Old Smokey" was running.



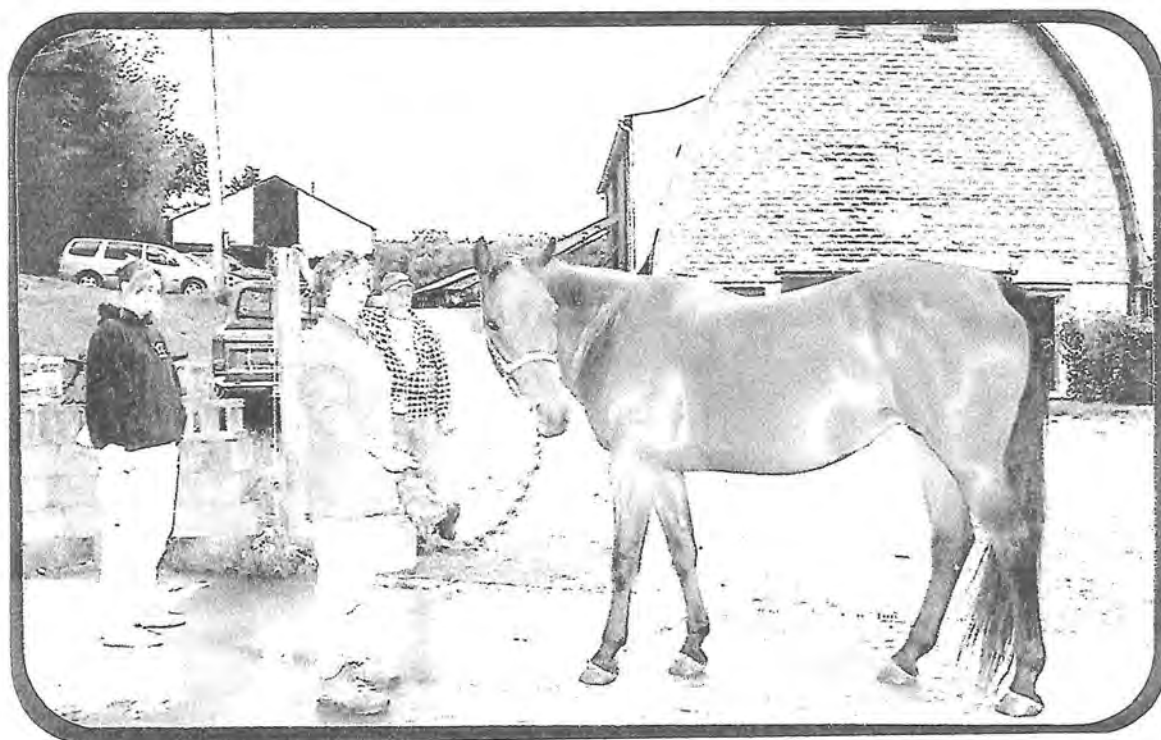
This is our faithful One Ninety Allis Chalmers tractor that we purchased used soon after we moved to the farm. It has served us well over its many years of use.



On July 4, 2006 we had a colt, Danzar, born on the farm. His mother is Freedom, and the night she gave birth, there was an all night pizza party in the barn. Danzar's proud owner, Mary Margaret Naill, holds him and has her arm around our granddaughter Cortni.



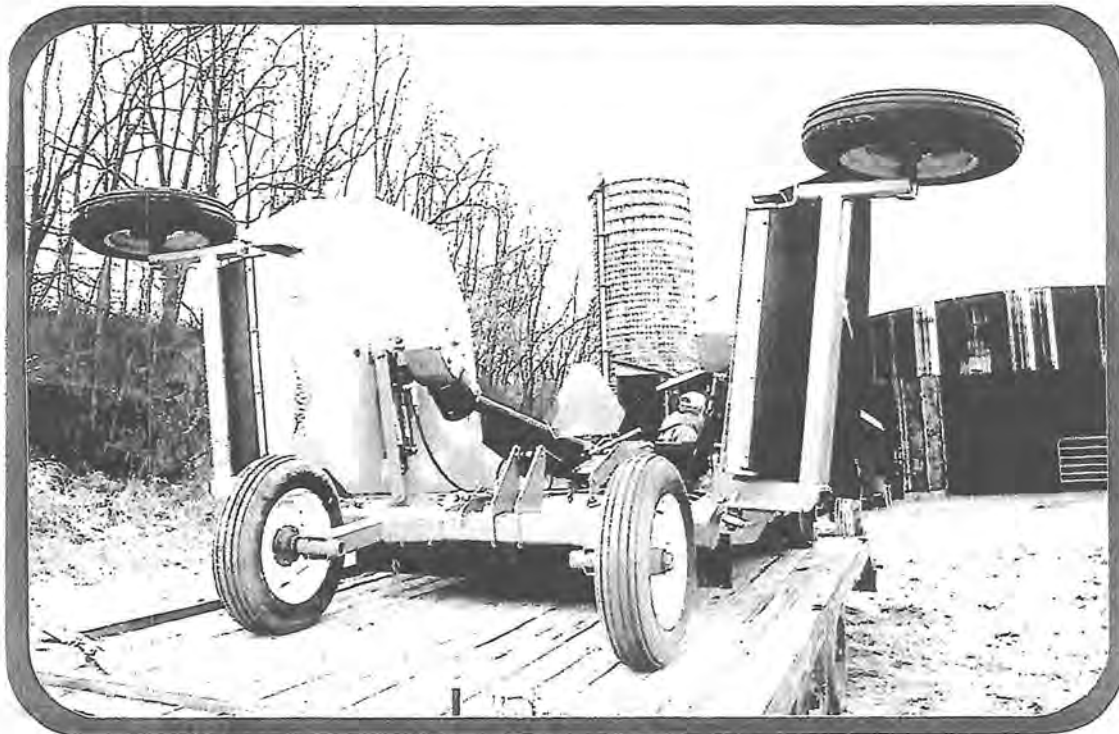
Rose Milavec has just finished bathing her horse "Roxy." Rose's husband Larry is in the back and Nancy Naill is on the left.



We purchased a nearly new Gravelly tractor.



In 2007 we purchased a new Bat Wing Mower. The neighbor Pete Mirich went together with us to purchase the mower.



In conclusion, we share our personal family history. We have three children, two boys and a girl: David, Robert and Elizabeth.

David did not move to the farm in 1990 with us. He graduated from South Fayette High School in McDonald, PA in 1989. He was working at Rolling Hills Ranch in Bridgeville at the time and did not want to travel the 25 miles each way to go to work. He got an apartment. He went to Dean Institute of Technology night school and graduated in 1998 with an Associate Degree in Electric Technology. He married Lisa Wilmus and on January 21, 2001, they moved into the farm on Reissing Road, Cecil Township, McDonald, PA that had been David Grandfather's, David Strain. Dave and Lisa have a daughter Kira.

Robert graduated from Burgettstown High School in 1991. He went to Pittsburgh Technical Institute and graduated January 22, 1993 with a Degree in Computer Aided Drafting. He moved off the farm and got his own place. He married Kelli Gregus and they have three children: Mathew, Cortni and Tiffani. They are buying a home in Buffalo Township, Washington, PA.

Elizabeth graduated from Burgettstown High School in 1994. She graduated from California University of Pennsylvania in 1998. She moved to Dallas, Texas and found a job there. On October 9, 2004 she married Chris Harris in Texas. Beth was teaching kindergarten children in McKinney, TX. Beth and Chris have moved to Cincinnati, OH where Chris has a job with KAO Brands and Beth is teaching Preschool children.

Ben's father, David Strain, has lived with us for the past seven and a half years. He is 93 now and will turn 94 in October. He suffers with Alzheimer's and requires full time care. I retired at the end of 2002 from Langeloth Metallurgical Company to be at home full time taking care of him. By me being in the house with him, Ben is able to go outside to do the farm work.

