



Those driving north on Highway 222 where it crosses the Pequea Creek just north of Refton, often select this farm — Penn Del — as one of the outstanding in the community. It's the farm of Raymond F. Witmer, named Friday night as Lan-

caster County's Outstanding Young Farmer, by the Lancaster Junior Chamber of Commerce. At the extreme left center is the new Pequea Creek bridge (Lancaster Farming Staff Photo).

## Raymond Witmer Named Lancaster County's Outstanding Young Farmer

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time. Pastures are clipped, then irrigated, with a Chrysler industrial V-8 engine pulling water from Pequea Creek. No dam was constructed, as the flow during the summer months was sufficient to meet his needs. Skinner Sprinkler nozzle poured 800 to 900 gallons of water per minute on grasses and alfalfa.

Each time a plot was irrigated, fertilizer was applied in the course of a season, 1200 lbs might be applied per acre, usually around 300 lbs preceding each application of water. Pumps run five to eight hours on a setting, and two men can easily change locations of the lightweight, durable aluminum pipe.

### Grass Stands Ten Days

After irrigation, Mr. Witmer lets the grass grow ten days before he clips it for cattle, thus preventing diarrhea or "washing."

Here is an excellent example of a farm producing what its livestock will consume, ignoring corn, and livestock consuming what the farm produces.

Assisting Mr. Witmer in this practical, down-to-earth operation is Elwin Smoker. Soon there will be more help, as you're apt to find son Peter, three-years-and-a-half, trailing his father's footsteps. Then there's Mark, one year old, who will probably

follow the same pattern.

Not only is Mr. Witmer's side of the family backed by a long history of dairying. The same applies to Mrs. Witmer—Louise—the daughter of Peter Zeitler, who operates a 700-acre farm with 100 milking cows, a total of 250 head, near Newark, Del. Breed? "Guernseys of course," Mrs. Witmer told.

In 1955 Mr. Witmer's herd produced an average of 500 lbs of fat, 10,600 lbs of milk. He has increased yearly average production in his herd by 2,187 lbs of milk, 109 lbs butterfat in three years. This year that figure may be upped by 400 lbs of milk, 35 lbs butterfat.

### Heads Guernsey Club

In less than four years, Mr. Witmer has built into Penn Del an outstanding record. But his activities go beyond the limits of the farm. He's president of the Lancaster County Guernsey Club, a director in the Dairy Herd Improvement Association, and an elder in First Presbyterian Church, Strasburg.

For five years he was leader of the Lancaster County 4-H Guernsey Calf Club, for three years secretary of the Lancaster County Guernsey Breeders association before being named president.

Mrs. Witmer too is active in social work, a member of the

Presbyterian Women's Association at Strasburg, and the Lancaster County Agricultural Extension Association. But her primary interest is the attractive, aged and well-kept 11-room house and those two young sons.

### Uses Hay Drying

Looking over his record, and the complicated questionnaire he had to complete for his award, it's easy to see why he was named. He dries his hay by heat, using an oil burner with a 36-inch fan. "This is a portable model which I rent," Mr. Witmer told, since an investment in hay drying equipment would be sizeable.

Much has happened in those years since he graduated in 1942. In 1938, he started his first vocational agriculture project, the Four-H dairy calf club. Home improvement has been a primary project. Two years ago he tore out the inside of his barn and, starting from scratch, remodeled it into one of the outstanding examples of first-class dairying.

His farm has been countour-stripped since 1939; and he has used zero pasture. For a while, rye was used for early and late pasture, before and after ladino-brome combination was at its peak.

Mr. Witmer keeps records on all his cows—production records, feed cost records. Soil testing, constant fertilization, all keep pastures in top-notch shape.

He was selected from a group that included Stanley E. Kreider, Drumore, Roy H. Book, R1, Ronks, J. Everet Kreider and Robert C. Groff of Quarryville, competing for this year's title.

Members of the committee who weighed each individual's questionnaire and actual operations, were A. G. Bucher, Lancaster County National Bank; Levi H. Brubaker, president of the Lancaster Poultry Exchange, and Amos Funk, prominent Millersville farmer.

### Receipts, Expenses up

M. M. Smith, Lancaster county agricultural agent, told the banquet at the Stevens House in Lancaster, that "Today it is more difficult than ever before to become an outstanding farmer." Since 1940, farm receipts have gained 261 per cent, but farm expenses have gone up 266 per cent, and the farmer is caught in the squeeze.

"If anyone could come up with the answer to this," Mr. Smith added, "we could use him in Washington."

The Witmers received a plaque, and, should he win the State contest, he and his wife will be guests of the United States Junior Chamber of Commerce for a national awards dinner next month. Naming the four top farmers in the nation will be the American Petroleum Institute and the U.S. Jaycees. Local merchants provided gifts for the Witmers, and should he

## Solanco Sweeps Penn Manor in FFA Prelims

Athletic teams of the Solanco Ground Hog Chapter of Future Farmers of America next week, take on Cocalco Union after making a clean sweep of Penn Manor's FFA Tuesday night in the preliminary Lancaster County Future Farmers of America Tournament playoffs. County teams are preparing for the state tournament during the annual convention.

Coaches Luther D. Peck and Jackson H. Owen advise the Ground Hogs topped Penn Manor in two volley ball games, by the score of 15 to 3 in one, and when substitutes were put into action, by 15 to 13 in the second. Solanco Ground Hogs won the three-game ping pong prelim, 21 to 14, 21 to 15 and 21 to 14.

The story was the same in basketball, when the Ground Hogs overcame an early deficit and won 48 to 37, with Calvin Keene, guard, scoring 17 points, Richard Hastings, forward, and Stanley Moore, guard, scoring nine points each.

### Say It!

New Coxswain — I'm cox'n of this boat, and what I say goes. Motor Boat Engineer — Then would you mind saying "engine" a few times?

not win the state finals, he will receive a weekend trip to the Junior Chamber of Commerce national convention.

Penn Del is losing 36 acres to the new highway 222 and Pequea Creek bridge. His yard will be trimmed a bit, some of the neat buildings will be more near the highway, yet the brick Witmer home and the frame tenant home will still remain outstanding, well painted, well kept, practical, attractive, and homey.

## Remodded Dairy Barns on Tour

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stalls in remodded barn, push-type gutter cleaner in L-shaped barn, separate calf barn;

### New Barn, Milk House

Afternoon stops and features included. David D. Sharp Farm, on St. Mary's (Warwick)-Bulltown Road, pipe line milker in stanchion barn emptying directly into bulk tank, tie 18 cows at one time, loafing shed; Tkaczuk Bros. Farm, just north of Turnpike service station, remodded barn for 50 stalls, six rows of cattle, hydraulic barn cleaner, chain ties and stanchions;

Elmer B. Stoltzfus Farm, west of Loags Corner, new barn with 40 chain ties, raised feed alleys, new milk house, and the final stop, the Donald Cassel Farm near the intersection of Routes 82 and 322, glass-lined silo, barn remodded into loafing area, milking parlor, silo unloader that unloads from the bottom into a chain driven feed bunk.

### Where?

Girl—Did anyone ever tell you how wonderful you are?  
 Gob—Don't believe they did.  
 Girl—Then where'd you get the idea?

### No Need to Worry

"Say mistress, is this veal or pork?"  
 "Can't you taste the difference?"  
 "No I can't."  
 "Well, then, why worry what it is?"

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## Silage Pays at Penn Del



Elwin Smoker here shovels grass silage in the barn on Penn Del Farm into sacks held by Mr. Witmer — Lancaster County's Outstanding Young Farmer — for delivery to Guernsey heifers. Looking on, at the cameraman, is son Peter, three and one-half. (Lancaster Farming Staff Photo).