



The Mahlon Lehman farm, located midway between Elizabethtown and Middletown, has been in the same family since 1800. The first white settlers took possession of the property in 1743.

Bicentennial farm

Laundry propelled by puppy power

By DIETER KRIEG

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the 31st and final article in a series which was begun a year ago to recognize and salute area farms which had been in the same family for 100 years or more. It was one way of paying tribute to agriculture during 1976, this nation's Bicentennial, and to underscore the fact that agriculture is the foundation of any civilization.

ELIZABETHTOWN, Pa. - Three-quarters of a century ago there was a dog in extreme southern Dauphin County who didn't like to be around home on a Monday morning. Every Monday morning, without fail, he went into hiding, the story goes. One might say he was mistreated - he certainly wasn't leading a regular dog's life.

The dog, we're told, supplied the power each Monday morning to run a mechanical washing machine in the early 1900's.

Telling the story are Mr. and Mrs. Mahlon Lehman, owners of a 171 acre farm which has been in their family since 1800. The pup-powered laundry was reportedly owned by a neighbor in the area, but it's still being talked about to this day as an example of how animals were put to work to help man in his work.

The Lehmans had a contraption of their own which harnessed regular good old fashioned hay burners for the purpose of running a threshing machine.

Each of four horses was tied to one of four beams protruding from a vertical shaft which extended up through the stable ceiling and into the grainery. The horses walked around in a circle in the stable, and their motion was transmitted through shafts, pulleys, belts and gears into the actions necessary to separate the wheat from the straw. It

was a boring job for the hay burners, and apparently also for the young lad whose job it was to keep the hooves stomping.

"My father used to talk of getting hollered at to keep the horses going - to move faster and pay attention," recalls Lehman, who has owned this southern Dauphin County farm for the past 10 years. The original property consisted of 143 acres. Now there are 171 acres, says Lehman. He lost some ground to highway construction (Pa. Route 283 cuts through the fields) but purchased additional acreage to bring the total up to 271.

Originally deeded to a white settler in 1743, the property was transferred to Jacob Lehman in 1800. Since then it has been passed down from one generation to the next. Mahlon is head of the sixth family to own and operate this farm and he and his wife both agree that the place has been "a very nice place to live and raise a family. We hope the farm will stay in the family," they said.

The farm is located in Londonderry Township, about midway between Elizabethtown and Middletown.

As was the case with most farms in years gone by, the Lehman homestead probably had a little of everything, its present owner believes. Today, however, it's primarily a dairy farm, and that's how Lehman has always known it. Married to the former Ethel Brubaker of Mount Joy, they have five children and two grandchildren. They maintain a herd of approximately 100 Holsteins, of which half are of milking age.

"I always liked farming and couldn't wait to get out of school to get home to farm and work," said Lehman in answer to a question. Of special interest to him are his "Lehmanstead Holsteins."

One of the more unusual facts about the Lehmans is that they still do their own butchering. It's a way of life which has faded from many a farm in the area, but not here. They have their own butchering tools and process several hundred pounds of bologna annually - not to mention a variety of fresh meat. Lehman's brother-in-law, Clarence Givens, helps along this line a great deal.

A spring near the house still supplies the farm with water as it has for generations. There is no well here. "It went dry twice, but only because someone left a spigot open," commented Lehman. For as long as he can remember, water has always been pumped from the spring to the house and barn. Before electrical service was installed, the family relied on a 32-volt Delco system. It provided power for the lighter mechanization of the day, while horses propelled the big machines. And, of course, if you didn't have electricity, you could call the family pooch in for duty and hope he wasn't hiding too well.

The Lehmans' barn was originally built in 1815 and rebuilt around 1880, according to impromptu records left on the walls, and verbal family history.



Eggs down

HARRISBURG, Pa. - Pennsylvania layers produced 257 million eggs during November, down one per cent from the previous month and nine percent below a year earlier, according to the Crop Reporting Service.

The November average of 13.1 million layers is up three per cent from the previous month but down seven per cent from a year ago.

The nation's laying flocks produced 5.3 billion eggs during November, down two per cent from the previous month and slightly below a year earlier. The number of layers during November averaged 278.6 million compared with 279.0 a year earlier.

The end of the year means it's time to go through the record books to calculate taxes, losses and profits. Taking a little of their time to share their experiences and memories of life on a "Bicentennial Farm" were Mr. and Mrs. Mahlon Lehman.

PA. BERKSHIRE BREEDERS ASSOC.

BRED GILT SHOW & SALE

AT 61st PENN. FARM SHOW

Harrisburg, Penna.

SHOW: MONDAY, JAN. 10, 77 - 12:30 P.M.

SALE: WEDNESDAY, JAN. 12, 77 - 1:00 P.M.

Annual Meeting: Jan. 10, 2:00 P.M. in Room B of the Farm Show Building. Whatever your interest in the Berkshire Breed, please feel welcome to attend.

For catalog contact

ARLIE CORNBOWER,

Rt. 1 Box 41

New Freedom, PA. 17349 PH: 717-235-1549