

# 'Poor tenant house' teaches history through artifacts

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Feature Writer

Editor's note: The subject of the following story is one of five homes which will be part of the Lancaster County Farmers' Association Heritage Trail tour to be held on April 20. For further information on the time and price of the tour, refer to the article dealing with that subject in this week's Lancaster Farming.

LANCASTER, Pa.—For those interested in early Pennsylvania antiques, the Arthur Reist home, 1050 Eden Road, Lancaster, is a must on the Heritage Trail Tour.

Reist is modest in talking about his 99-year-old frame home, saying, "It is just a poor tenant house; no one will want to see it." While it may be a "poor tenant house," the Reists have done a lot of work to preserve its natural features, and the house, itself, is sure to attract a lot of attention on the tour.

Reist pointed out that the

house cost just \$800 when it was built in 1875 on a corner lot of the Reist property. There were tobacco beds in front of the house at that time, partly because of the economical use of the land, and partly because Eden road was narrower in those days. The original Reist farm, located just up the road from Reist's is also the site of the third oldest tobacco shed in Lancaster County. Reist's father, Linn Reist, Sr., resides in the main farm house. Arthur is the fifth generation to farm the acreage on Eden Road.

The Reists have lived in the "tenant" house for 25 years, and began fixing it up in 1956. In remodeling the home, Reist said, "We tried to keep it in the same basic style as it was when it was built." He related how he had tried to have a new window sash made, but wanted to preserve the wavy panes of old glass. He was told there was no guarantee the glass could be kept intact, so he worked and worked and restored the wood to its natural state—and saved the old glass.

All the doors and window frames are restored to their natural wood, and in getting to the original finish, Reist said, "I scraped and scraped until my fingers were bare."

Reist said he feels people often make a mistake in old houses by trying to mix contemporary architecture with older styles and the result is not complimentary. He said modern kitchens and bathrooms can, easily be installed in old homes, but owners must be selective.

There is an addition built onto the original tenant house which added a kitchen and bathroom to the structure. The present kitchen was once a glassed-in porch which was expanded. Reist recalls that as

a child he went out to the porch to the "icebox."

Even though Reist refers to his home as a "common house, it has some uncommon features, the most striking of which may be the family heirlooms and acquired antiques of the Reist family. Reist makes it clear that his family enjoys using the antiques they have, and are especially happy to be able to share some of the wide variety of early farm equipment he has collected over the years. One of the largest single users of his collection is Sperry-New

Holland, whose agricultural exhibit utilizes much of his antique implements.

Explaining his interest in antiques, Reist said, "I have always been interested in anything old; the older the better." His wife Marian said, "We used to have fun going to sales".

In the house visitors will notice the huge corner cupboard, made of cherry and restored to a lovely lustre. Mrs. Reist says, "It was in sad shape when we got it." In the living room,

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Marian Reist shows a chocolate server, a family heirloom, standing in front of the restored cherry corner cupboard.

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