

By DIETER KRIEG

Some of the dearest recollections I have of my life on the farm involve my grandmother and grandfather. They were exceptional people -- a quality which can easily be illustrated by mentioning that even at their respective ripe ages of 87 and 92, they were still travelling across the ocean. Many people dare not undertake such an adventure at 60 or 70 years of age. For them to travel the great distances between America and Germany during their latest years is just one indication of their hardiness and good health. They're qualities, I suspect, which were fortified by their many years of life on the farm.

My grandfather -- affectionately called "Opa" by all in the family -- was an octogenarian by several years already when my father purchased his own farm. My grandmother was close to it. Nevertheless, a day didn't pass that they didn't provide significant help with the farming operation.

Opa was always up with the sun --



## LIFE on the farm

rain or shine, Summer or Winter. He'd occupy himself with anything from feeding heifers and chopping wood, to digging fencepost holes and carrying milk. Meanwhile, Oma helped out in the garden and kitchen.

By lunchtime they both had interesting stories to tell. Oma might remark on how swiftly the asparagus was growing, while Opa told of his observations in the heifer pasture

while he was repairing fences. The world wasn't old to either of them. They found their surroundings interesting and it kept them young, I'm sure. Both kept active to "keep from getting rusty," they said.

Chores as we know them were never chores to Opa. Rather, they were pleasure and delight. At times, I believe, they were even a privilege for him as there wasn't anything he

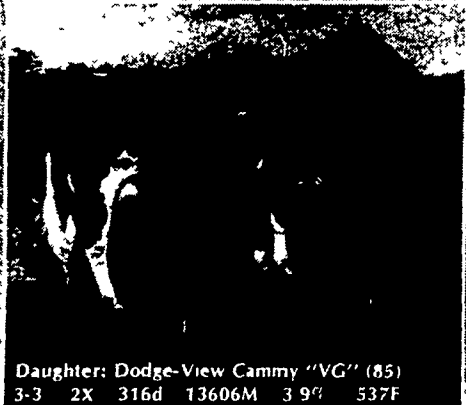
seemed to dislike more than doing nothing. That's not to say he didn't rest.

Nearly every day Oma and Opa would sit on the front porch awhile, with our dog "Shep" at their side. They were as relaxed and content as gentle breezes combing through the trees on the lawn. Always welcoming somebody they could talk to, their company was equally appreciated by all younger members of the family.

Opa dug hundreds of fencepost holes by hand; he fixed fences nearly every pasturing season; he carried up to two tons of milk to the milkhouse per day; he cleaned up the premises whenever he could; he walked across snow-covered fields to feed youngstock at a second farm and he found delight and satisfaction in it all.

What's more, both he and Oma were the type of grandparents a person can't help but love dearly. And their love for their grandchildren was just as strong.

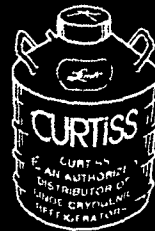
I'll never forget those years of life on the farm when Oma and Opa were with us.



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