

Four generations grew on 30-acre farm

WASHINGTON BORO — It's pretty certain the deed to the Heisey farm was transferred in 1846 to Martin Heisey's grandfather, Henry L. Heisey.

There are actually two deeds for the same land recorded as being transferred to the same man that day.

Martin W. and Mildred F. Heisey, R1 Anchor Road, Washington Boro, were among the 11 farm families honored Thursday evening at the fourth annual Agriculture-Industry banquet.

Today, as it was when his grandfather purchased the operation, the farm consisted of 30 acres. While the farm is a greenhouse and vegetable operation now, it has seen several changes through the years.

The land was owned and farmed by the Lindeman family. Martin Heisey's grandmother was a Lindeman, so the operation may have been in the family even before 1846.

Martin Heisey's father purchased the 30 acres for \$3000. At the time, the farm was a dairy operation.

For a time the cows stayed around. For a while, Martin had 5000 chickens on the place, too, but poultry flocks of that size soon became obsolete.

Today the heart of the Heisey farm is a pair of greenhouses consisting of 7500 square feet under glass.

Heiseys grow greenhouse tomatoes, sweet corn, canteloupes, and other truck crops which are sold at market in Columbia.

"We reared seven children on these 30 acres," the Heiseys say. All but one have left farming altogether, that son is getting a Ph.D. in agronomy and, like his brothers and sisters, won't be coming back to the homeplace, Martin says.

"You just can't make a good living on 30 acres today," he says, although his own presence on the farm behes that statement to a degree.

The farm seemed fire prone in the early days. Twice lightning burned the barn, and once an arson torched it. The last lightning fire Martin remembers — it happened in 1917, during World War One.

Perhaps the PP&L lines across the property today attract the lightning, saving the barn from further strikes.

PP&L did a further service to the farm. None of the deeds to the place ever was recorded in the court house in the early days. All transfers were done by word of mouth.

On March 21, 1934 the utility recorded the deed, establishing a permanent record.

Heiseys have lived on the farm for 37 years and continue to ship produce to market throughout the year.

Their 30 acres of Lancaster County continue to support a family with roots deep in Lancaster County soil.




Martin and Mildred Heisey look over some of the original deeds to the family farm. Many still have tax stamps, like postage stamps, affixed. Others are sealed with wax.




The Martin W. and Mildred Heisey operation at R1 Washington Boro is mainly a greenhouse and a truck farm today although Martin's father maintained a dairy on its 30 acres.

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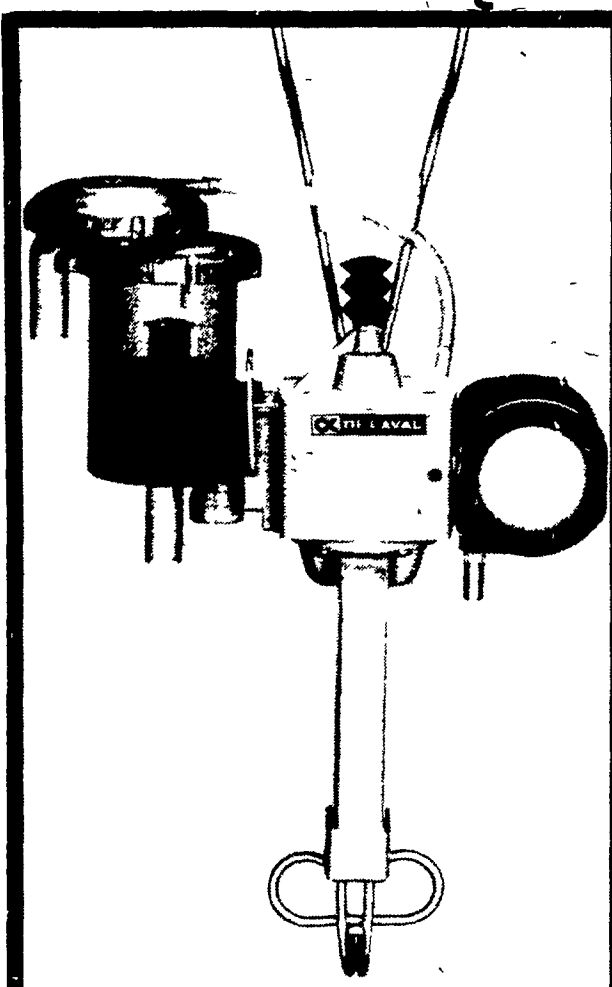
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