

Ambition, learning lead couple to mill business

BY GINGER SECRIST MYERS
Staff Correspondent

HANOVER — Sometimes it's not what you know, but how much you're willing to learn, that can determine where your vocational talents will lead you.

That's what the husband and wife team of Dick and Janet Hamilton have discovered in their quest to own and operate their own feedmill business. Neither Dick or Jane come from farm families, but they have combined Dick's knowledge of animal nutrition and salesmanship with Janet's business background to take over W.L. Mummert Feeds in Hanover, the last of five feedmills to survive in the area.

Dick, a 20-year veteran of the Navy, got into the feed business by what he calls an accident. After leaving the service, he worked for the Lancaster Planning Commission. Not satisfied there, he answered an ad for a manager for a hog operation. The owner didn't hire Dick, but told him that with his sales pitch, he should think about becoming a salesman. Dick did just that and joined West Willows Farmers, Lancaster.

With no formal education in animal nutrition, Dick began absorbing information from every source available, Dick began

absorbing information from every source available. "I went to Purina job training courses," he recalled. "I read about feeds, and I talked to anyone who would talk back to me about it. I really liked working with dairy from the start."

"The best teacher I had was Skip Weaver, a district sales manager for Purina. The more I learned, the more I realized that learning the business is just a matter of applying yourself."

Dick and Janet have given themselves ample opportunity to learn how to run a business. Janet, who has had extensive formal training in accounting, worked as a freelance accountant for a number of businesses in the Frederick area. Dick worked for Farmers Supply Co. as sales manager from 1977 to 1981.

In 1981, the Hamiltons really got their feet wet in the agribusiness community when they formed the North Glade Feed Co. in Keymar, Md. They owned 30 percent of the Company with Dick holding the position of vice president and manager and Janet serving as office manager. However, this experience only served to whet their appetites.

"You can only work for someone else so long, and then you see things you want to do, and you

want to do them your way," he said.

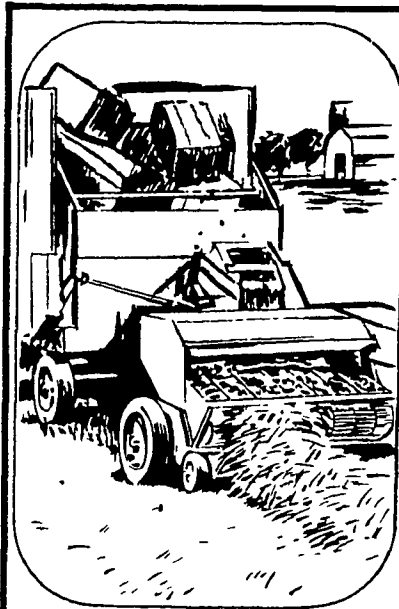
On the rumor that a feedmill was

for sale, the couple traveled to Hanover to visit William Spahr, former owner of W.L. Mummert

Feeds. "It was two days before Christmas when Janet and I came (Turn to Page D11)



Dick and Janet Hamilton examine some of the chicks which are marketed through their newly acquired feed business, W.L. Mummert Feeds, Hanover. The couple is establishing a Purina dealership, specializing in dairy and poultry feeds.



The satisfaction that comes from doing a good job of farming

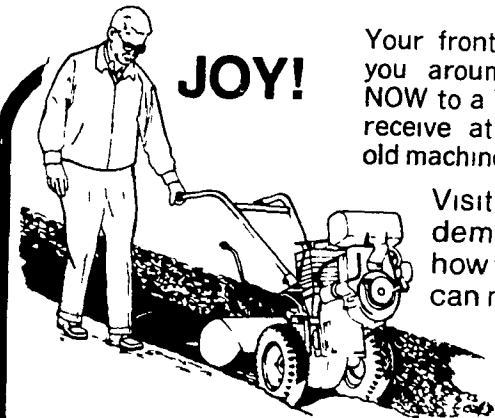
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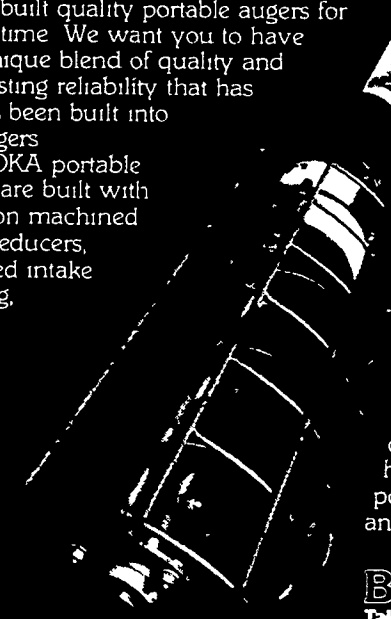
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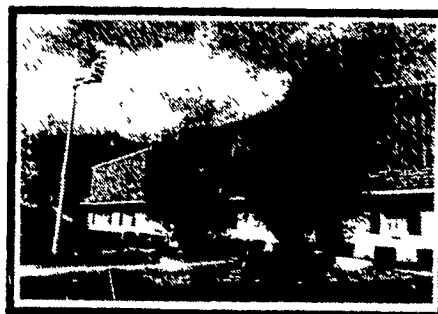
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