

# Ida's Notebook

Ida Risser



I've been rereading the ledger that my grandfather kept from 1877 to 1899. In it he recorded every cent that he paid his hired help. Their pay ranged from \$5 per month to \$12 in 1895.

They were not paid weekly but rather bit by bit over a year's time. What is interesting is that when they received 25 cents, 70 cents or \$1.50, he recorded what it was used for. As his farm was only one mile from the village of Oregon, they often walked there on a Saturday night to go to the store. Sometimes

he paid their store and mill bills. Boots cost \$2 or \$3, overalls 50 cents, shoes \$1 and a bushel of clover seed was \$4.50. Of course, they were only paid two cents per shock for husking 306 shocks of corn.

Only two women are mentioned in the records. Apparently, they only came to do the washing and to make the butter as when they missed butter making it was noted in the book.

I found their social activities, as listed when they took a day off, to

be quite fascinating. Sometimes they went to a fox chase, horse races, a circus at Lancaster, a fair at Lititz on Sept. 4, 1896, a camp meeting at White Oak or simply a country auction.

Occasionally they took off to "Fetch coal at Rothsville," or "pick up chestnuts," or "deliver

tobacco," or "pick huckleberries." Some prices that they paid were extremely low according to our standards today. A chicken cost 30 cents (not dressed, I'll bet), a pair of pigeons 25 cents, a guinea 12 cents, two ducks 85 cents, a bundle of rye straw 15 cents, one dozen eggs 14 cents, one pound of butter

18 cents and one bushel of potatoes was 75 cents.

My grandfather noted that he bought a red bull for \$30 and 12 shoats for \$36. A fat pig cost \$10, a buggy \$8 and a watch was \$2.

I'd suppose that a farmer's situation was similar to today's — it had its ups and downs.

## Kline Named Chairman Of 4-H Board

UNIVERSITY PARK — Richard Kline, general supervisor for Philadelphia Electric Company, Schuylkill Division, was elected chairman of the Board of Pennsylvania Friends of 4-H for 1986/87 at the board's recent annual meeting at Penn State.

As chairman of Pennsylvania Friends of 4-H, Kline will lead the board's efforts to obtain private support for the 4-H program at the state level. Over the past six years, this organization has raised more than \$350,000 for educational programs for 4-H members and volunteers.

Last year alone, Friends of 4-H sponsored 28 educational programs costing over \$75,000.

"None of this would have been possible without the tremendous support of our many donors, the Cooperative Extension Service staff, and other members of the board," Kline said. "I am looking forward to the many challenges this position will offer me next year."

Kline is a graduate of Drexel University, where he received a B.S. in business administration and did graduate work in marketing. He served as a first lieutenant with the U.S. Army in the United States and in Germany.

Kline is active politically as a Montgomery County Republican Committeeman. He is a member and past chairman of the

Lakemont Township zoning hearing board and was a supervisor of Whitemarsh Township from 1970 to 1980. He is also a member and past president of the Steven Girard Lion's Club.

Kline is a member of the Pottstown Building Industries Exchange and the Southeastern Home Builders Association. He also is president of the Manufacturers Association of Greater Conshohocken.

He has been a member of the Board of Directors of Pennsylvania Friends of 4-H since 1982. He currently resides in Conshohocken with his wife, Joanna. His son Richard is a junior at Penn State.

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