

Stranded Motorist Wooed From City To Farm

LOU ANN GOOD

Lancaster Farming Staff

QUARRYVILLE (Lancaster Co.) — Arlene Maule found her husband in a way mothers warn their daughters against — a stranger on the highway.

No, she wasn't a pickup, and he wasn't a hitch hiker. But 17 years ago, Arlene was stranded along the roadside with a flat tire when Bill Maule, a milk truck driver pulled over to offer his help.

Although names were not exchanged, Bill did manage to learn that the motorist worked in Kennett Square. After he finished his milk route, he returned to his Quarryville farm to change his clothes. Then he drove around Kennett Square looking for the car on which he had changed the tire.

It took him almost a half day before he located it. He wrote a note introducing himself as a Penn State graduate with an ag economics degree. He told her that he was a widower with three small children whose wife had died of cancer, and asked Arlene to meet him.

But Arlene, a school teacher for 10 years, was not so easily enticed.

She wasn't sure what kind of "wacko" this stranger might be so she ignored the note. Several weeks later, she found Bill waiting by her car.

"Leave me alone," she said as she flashed her diamond ring at him. "I'm engaged."

Discouraged, Bill returned to farming and driving milk truck.

When Arlene broke her engagement with her boyfriend several months later, she remembered Bill. On impulse, she called information for his telephone number and phoned him at 10 p.m.

"We talked until 3 a.m.," Arlene recalled. Within the next year, the couple married and Arlene adopted Bill's three children, ages 7, 4, and 22 months. One year later, the couple had a daughter.

For the Maules, there are no stories of the "evil stepmother."

Bill said, "The kids loved her from the beginning. She's been a true mother."

With a sparkling smile and a musical laugh, Arlene entertains others with tales of her transition from city to country.

"It took me about five years to



A gracious hostess, Arlene credits her mother: "She taught me everything I know."

adjust, but now I wouldn't go back to the city," Arlene said.

At first she found it difficult to deal with rural living. In Philadelphia, she had lived close to three major shopping centers. She missed the shopping, but surprisingly she found that there is less privacy on a farm than in the city.

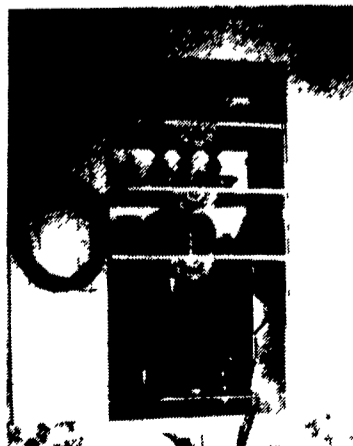
She said, "There isn't much privacy on the farm because feed salesmen and truckers are driving in and out the lane all the time. If they don't find someone in the barn, they come to the house, so I learned to get up and get dressed instead of lounging in a housecoat."

When the Maules were first married, Bill worked for his father on the farm for about five years and then purchased the cattle and equipment. It wasn't until 1990, that the Maules moved to the family homestead, which has been in the Maule family for four generations.

Stories abound about the farm, which is said to be the oldest working farm in Colerain Township. It is said that when the house was being built during the Civil War, the boom of the cannons from the Gettysburg battle about 90 miles away could be heard.

It is said that the house was built one foot each day. The solid plaster fieldstone walls are still difficult in which to pound nails. The iron locks on the doors come from the Christiana Riot House, a former stop of the Underground Railroad.

(Turn to Page B2)



An outdoor window was turned into shelves and allows Arlene to keep an eye on what's happening in the family room while she is preparing meals in the kitchen.



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