

# Farmer's Daughter

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After about two years at Purdue, in 1980 Barb decided it was time to return to her parents' farm after an absence of seven years. She became seriously interested in farming and was completely involved in it.

Now, let's go back to pick up the threads in the life of Steve Wilson who grew up on a farm in Iowa where they also had registered Holsteins.

The idea of dairy farming was always with Steve. After high school, he went to Iowa State University where he received a degree in dairy science, after which he worked back on the farm for eight years. Next Steve came to Pennsylvania to work in the sire department of Sire Power out of Tunkhannock.

While working for Sire Power, part of his job was to do young daughter evaluation (daughters of cows bred by Sire Power service). During one of his stops in Juniata County, one of the farmers asked about his background - was he married, etc. Steve replied that he wasn't and then casually asked if the farmer had any good prospects. The farmer replied that he did, and then he told him about Barb Graham whose father, James, just happened to be on Steve's list for calls.

The rest is history, because Steve married the farmer's daughter in 1984.

The farmers teased him that he had been evaluating more than the cows when he went to the Graham farm where Barb had been farming with her father for four years. Steve and Barb did not take up farming during the first year of marriage because Steve had changed his work to being director of sales for the Pennsylvania Holstein Association, and so they lived in State College for a year.

In 1985, however, this young farm man and woman saw their dreams starting to come true as they purchased the cattle and machinery and took over the operation of Barb's home farm.

Barb is the seventh generation in the Graham family to be on this farm, and their seven-year-old son, David, is the eighth. It is much too early, of course, for David to know whether or not he will want to continue the family career of farming.

About 1982, the State Department of Agriculture gave Barb's parents the Century Award because the farm had been in the family for more than 100 years. Then the Bi-Centennial Award came through the U.S. Department of Agriculture as they honored farms that had been in the family for more than 200 years.

The original deed, preserved under glass but fragile, shows the second day of September 1762, and the county is Cumberland because Juniata County was not yet in existence. It was for 100 acres (more was purchased later so the farm has a total of 190 acres including woodland, with about 85 tillable). The price was given as 15 pounds, 10 shillings. It also showed a yearly "quit-rent" of one-half penny sterling for every acre. The purchaser was a William Graham, which is also the name of Barb's grandfather.

During their years on the farm, Steve and Barb Wilson have been consistent winners of awards and plaques. In 1988 they received the Dairy of Distinction Award, which is still maintained after a re-inspection each Spring to make certain the farm meets the requirements.

In 1992 they received from the National Holstein Association the PBR Award (Progressive Breeders Registry), given when the herd maintains a certain level of production and of type.

In 1991-1992 and 1992-1993, they received the Quality Premium Award for maintaining bacteria and somatic cell count levels below the specified limits. The Milk Co-Op keeps the record. A farmer who keeps these counts below the specified limits receives a 20¢ premium per hundredweight of milk. At the end of the year, if this premium has been received every month, then the award is given.

In 1993, Steve and Barb received the Production Award from Juniata County DHIA for 23,516 pounds of milk and 741 pounds of protein. Until 1993, they had been consistently second or third, and so they enjoy the

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## MIRIAM WERT Juniata Co. Correspondent

Juniata County correspondent Miriam Taylor Wert has been a lifelong resident of Juniata County except for two years when she and husband, Marlin, lived in Jacksonville, Fla., where he was stationed in the Navy Air Force after 18 months in the South Pacific during WW II.

Miriam grew up in Spruce Hill Township and graduated from Port Royal High School in 1941. She went on to graduate from Central Penn Business College (as it was then known), having taken the secretarial course. Her first job was as secretary for a life insurance company in Harrisburg, until marriage.

Miriam and Marlin were married in 1941 and observed their 50th wedding anniversary on February 8. They were blessed with two daughters - Susan (Mrs. Harold) Vogt of Hummelstown, and Peggy (Mrs. Norman) Love of East Waterford. They have six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Miriam started the Wert Insur-

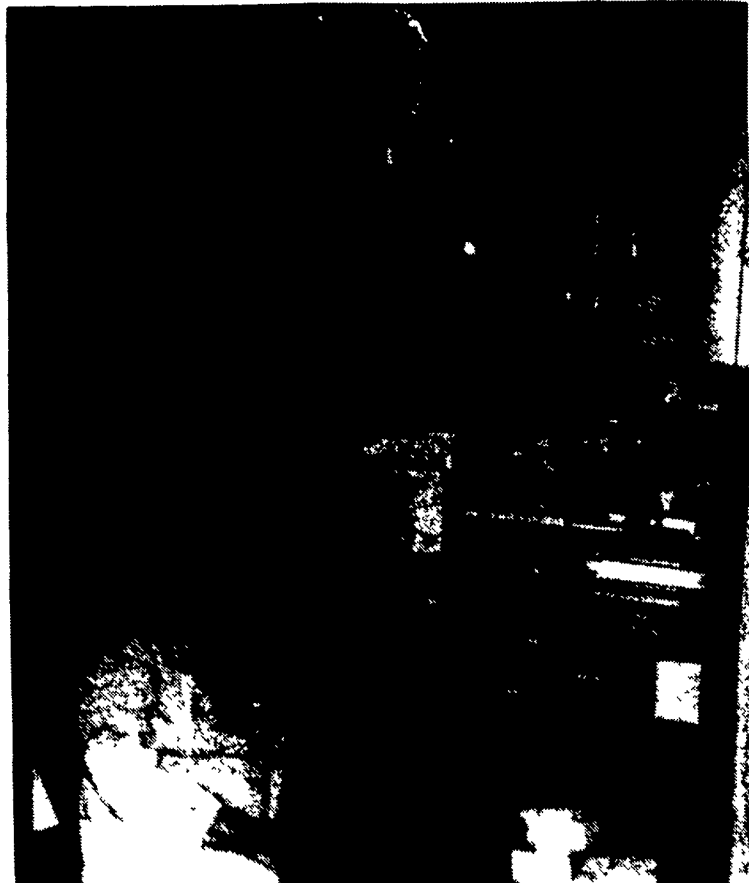
ance Agency in 1955, selling all lines of insurance and serving clients in Juniata, Mifflin, and Perry counties. In 1970 she went to work as supervisor of the M & B Agency in Harrisburg from which she retired in 1986.

In retirement, Miriam started to do freelance writing and has had some of her stories published, especially stories in children's take-home Sunday School papers.

She became a *Lancaster Farming* correspondent in March of this year.

She also remains active physically and participates in the Pennsylvania Senior Games in Juniata-Mifflin counties as well as the state games in Shippensburg. Her husband is her greatest supporter and fan, proudly displaying her many ribbons on the office wall.

Miriam writes the publicity and is volunteer librarian for the Cedar Grove Brethren in Christ Church, where they are members.



Juniata County correspondent, Miriam Taylor Wert. On the desk beside her is a scrapbook, just started, to hold her stories published in *Lancaster Farming*.

## JOHN DEERE ROUND BALERS

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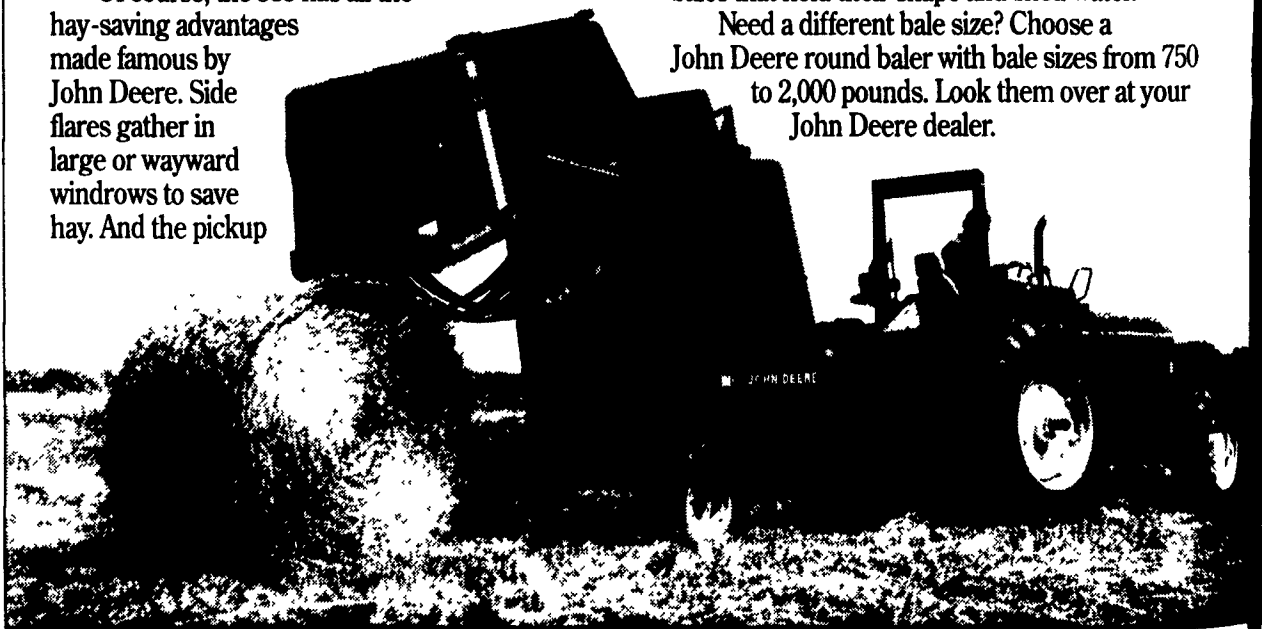
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