

## Adam and Eve



Leona and Frank

### Sweethearts

It was March when Leona Speicher's family moved to Johnstown, Pa., and she entered a sixth grade class of pupils who all knew each other but to whom she was a total stranger.

Although she didn't notice him on that first day of school, Frank Rogers noticed her. He especially noticed her long black hair.

It wasn't long before Leona became good friends with Frank's sister. Then Leona and Frank not only saw each other in school but also at his house after school.

In a few weeks Leona and Frank were childhood

sweethearts.

They're still sweethearts more than twenty years later.

There were a couple times when they stopped "going steady." Frank wanted to get aquainted with some other girls, or thought he was depriving Leona of the chance to get to know other boys. But those break-ups didn't last long. After every agreement to stop seeing each other Frank came back to Leona—as soon as she went out with another fellow.

"I'll die an old maid"

When Leona was only thirteen she told her mother very seriously, "If I don't

marry Frank, I'll die an old maid."

They got more and more serious about each other. After Frank got a driver's license when he was sixteen, he started taking Leona out in his car. One night they were parked in his car on a hill overlooking a lake. They both were tired and fell asleep in the car. When they awoke it was 3 a.m.; Leona's mother was upset when Leona came home close to four o'clock.

**Married at 17**

Their parents weren't so keen about their deepening romance.

But love has an irresistible momentum.

Frank and Leona quit school and were married when they were seventeen.

The wedding, a simple ceremony, was paid for by Frank, five dollars to the preacher, which left him the sum of 50 cents for beginning his marriage.

### Economic problems

A year after their wedding they had a daughter, Janice. Unfortunately, Janice was born with club feet, which required expensive medical care and special shoes to correct.

To pay all the bills Frank worked as a carpenter's helper, helped his father-in-law by driving a truck, and spent three hours every day mining coal. His pay for coal mining was enough coal to heat his family's house.

When he heard about a good-paying job in Buffalo, N.Y., Frank moved his wife and daughter there. The job only lasted six months, however, and he was unable to take a good job his new employer offered him in Arizona, because Leona was about to have her second child. The Rogeres got back to Johnstown three days before their second daughter, Hazel, was born.

### Helps father-in-law

Three years after their marriage Frank and Leona had Donna and next, Susan. They were still paying medical bills for Janice when Susan was born.

Again, Frank was working at three different jobs. When his father-in-law suffered a heart attack, Frank kept Mr. Speicher's busi-

ness going until he recovered six months later.

"Not many sons-in-law would do that," Leona says. She adds, "But it worked both ways. They helped us too when we needed it."

Frank got a better paying job, but it was out of town, so that he could see his family only on weekends. Neither Frank, Leona, nor their four daughters liked that schedule.

When Leona's brother found out that Pennsylvania Malleable in Landisville, Pa., was hiring, he and Frank came to Lancaster County, and both took jobs here.

### A pretty town

Frank had noticed a pretty town nearby which looked like a nice place to raise a family. It was Mount Joy, and Frank and Leona's brother went to the Bulletin office to ask where they could find a temporary room. "A nice lady" (Ruth Rainbolt?) told them that Mrs. Barbara Fellenbaum was renting rooms.

It wasn't long before Leona's brother found a house in Manheim, and Frank rented a house on Main Street from Jay Lonaw.

### A new life

Frank brought Leona and their four daughters to their new home, which he had furnished with bunk beds and a borrowed lamp. They moved here just in time for Janice, her feet perfectly straightened now, to start kindergarten at Grandview School.

The family joined Gloss-

brenner United Methodist Church.

A new life had begun for the Rogeres.

For their four daughters, Mount Joy is the only home they can remember.

Janice and Hazel now attend Donegal High School. Their principal, Mr. Donald Drenner, was their parents' biology teacher at Conemaugh Township High School near Johnstown.

Frank and Leona now own their own home on Main Street, a double house; Leona's parents, John and Hazel Speicher, live next door.

On their vacations the Rogeres camp and see the U.S.A. The girls are good water skiers.

"God made us for each other"

Leona Rogeres does not want her daughters to marry as young as she and Frank did. She says that there aren't many early marriages which last.

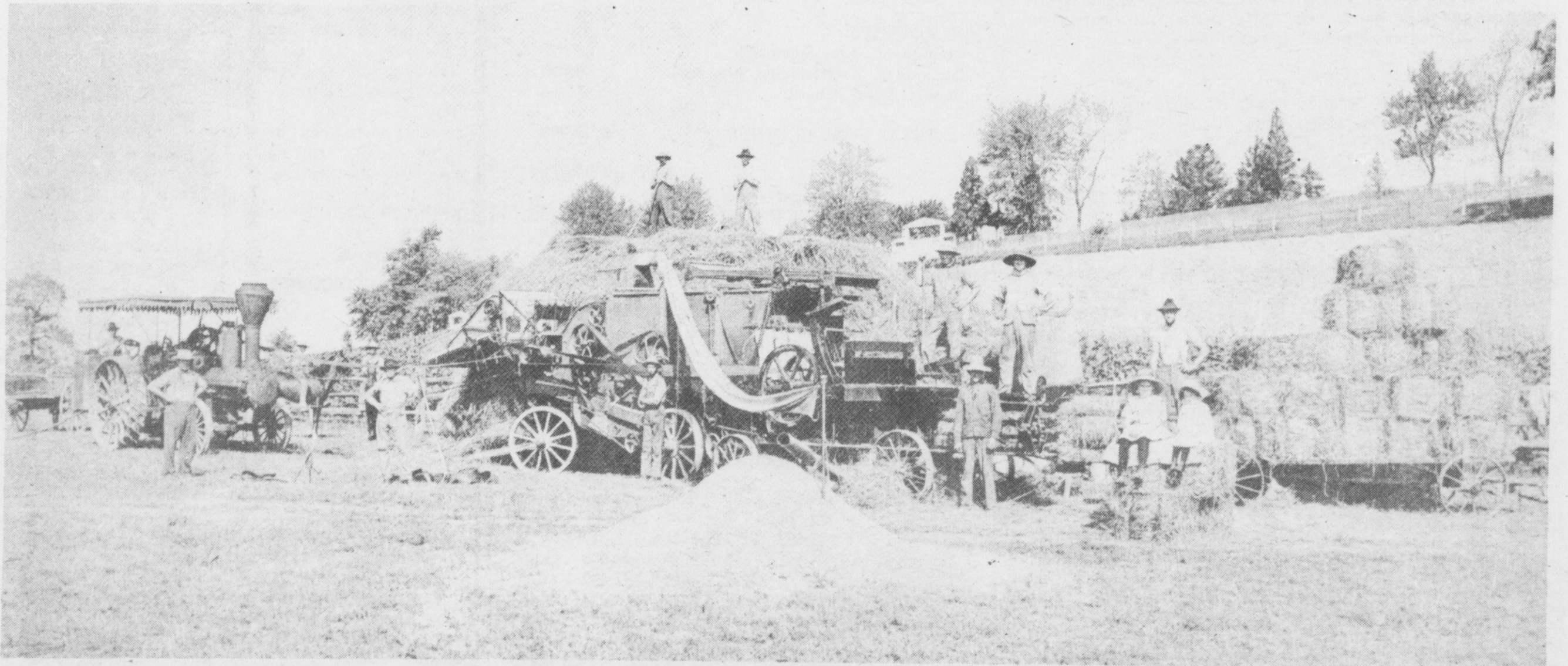
But she never once doubted that hers and Frank's marriage would last. Not even during those early years when the going was "tough" did she ever doubt. "We never gave up. We stuck it out."

"We tried to raise the girls the right way. That's the most important thing."

Asked why she and Frank became attached to each other when they were so young, Leona says, "God made us for each other... We loved each other."

Her daughter Janice, listening, murmurs, "I think that's cute."

## In 1908, Mount Joy Vo-tech was the Brenneman farm



Mount Joy Vo-tech stands on the site of the old Brenneman farm. Mel Hoffman, grounds maintenance man at the school, lent the *Susquehanna Bulletin* this picture of his grandfather's baler—separator at work on

the Brenneman farm.

The Hoffmans did custom work on area farms for many years. Mel's father, Harvey G. Hoffman, still owns a mint-condition steam baler.

The picture above was taken in 1908. The equipment includes a 1895 model T steam engine, an Eli baler and a Peerless separator.

Mr. Brenneman is at far right. Mr. Hoffman is standing on the baler.