

EAGLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Spring 2001

Eagle, Wisconsin

2001 EHS Board

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EHS News

Membership

Current membership stands at over 300, including the following:

Sustaining - \$25.00 to \$49.00

Am & Jessica Chamberlain

Bill & Jan Grotjan

Carl & Lynn Seitz

Sponsor - \$50.00 to \$99.00

Robert & Barbara Hegwood

Cliff & Janet Jensen

Patron - \$100.00 and over

Rick & Sally Harthun (this donation generated a \$200.00 donation from the employer, Cooper Power Systems)

New Members

Dave A. Blasewitz, Myrtle Bohlman, Darlene Burton, Joseph L. Cunningham, Joan Dempsey, Fred Gier, Robert & Roxanne Hardy, Panagiotis Katravas, Jesse Kawatski, Bill Moomey, Jeff & Donna Nagy, Alice Raduege, Marvin & Barbara Ribbich, Marshall & Patty Riley, Dick & Kathy Thayer, Thomas & Geri Traub, Vivian Wagner, Betty Weimer.



Pat Wilton has researched the EHS records and found that contributions were made in memory of the following people: Katherine Howard, Dorothy Baker, Robert Finney, Frank Murphy, Emily Skidmore, Carol "Carl" Thurston, Alvin Kau, Harvey Wambold, Dr. Martin J. Denio, George Kutschenreuter, Rose Kutschenreuter, First Sgt. Agnes K. Clarkson, SFC George Liebl, Richard Martens, Donald Chapman and Norene Fairbrother Richards.

If any names have been omitted, please contact Don Ledrowski (594-3301), who will then make the appropriate changes.

A plaque listing memorial contributions of \$50.00 or more will be on display at the museum. ♦

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Village Sale, May 11 and 12

By Welthy Mueller

It was decided to have our sale from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. This year we'll be in the municipal building instead of in front of the museum. It was so cold and rainy last time, and there was only the back end of the truck as shelter for the plants. It was difficult, and I got so chilled!

We have had many asking us about having a rummage sale again. We hope as you houseclean this spring you donate usable articles to our sale.

My house is full of plants for the sale, and we'll dig some of the perennials again. We hope many others will have plants to donate, since we'll be inside this time.

Visit the museum either day between 9 and 4; enter to win a free sweatshirt.

And thanks for all the bakery that was donated for the April election sale. We had a few things left over to give to the food pantry. ♦

Meet Your Officers

Pat Wilton

Pat, the younger of two children, was born in Milwaukee and grew up on a farm in Mauston, Wisconsin, where she attended a one-room school. At the age of thirteen she moved back to Milwaukee and later attended South Division High School. After high school, Pat was a machine operator at Western States Envelope Company for eighteen years.

Pat and Don Wilton were married on October 9, 1971, and have been living on their farm on Highway 67 ever since. Pat loved every aspect of farming. According to her, it was a clean, wholesome way to raise their two boys.

Farming was a good life. Your family was with you, working and having fun together. The work was hard. When their dairy herd was very large, it was necessary to milk the cows in two shifts. It was also difficult to go on any



vacations. The only thing she hated about farming was getting up in the middle of the night, chasing the cows when they got loose.

Since their retirement, Pat and Don have been free to take the vacations they were unable to take before. Now they are chasing around the world, fishing in northern Wisconsin and visiting Las Vegas, London, China, Hawaii and Turkey.

Their son Steve and his wife, Wanda, live in Eagle; Pat enjoys being Grandma to their daughter, Tabitha, and her cousin, Aaron.

Pat was instrumental in organizing the Eagle Historical Society and serves as treasurer and historian. She is interested in every type of history, especially that about Eagle and the Civil War. She is also interested in antiques.

Watch for Pat on Main Street, where she works as a crossing guard, assisting Eagle Elementary students.

Letter

Elaine and Don,

I wish to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to use my new metal detector on the grounds of the Eagle Historical Society museum in the summer of 2000. Your hospitality opened the door for me to get permission to do two other lots on Main Street. I was learning to use new equipment, and your lot provided many interesting challenges.

The equipment I was using to search with was a White's Electronics Spectrum XLT. It uses low-frequency radio signals, making it capable of locating a penny down about 6 inches, and a quarter down about 8 to 10 inches. It is also able to tune out various kinds of metal and has many other programmable settings.

One of the interesting aspects of the lot at the museum is that Thomas Street once ran through what is now the east side of the lot. This area turned out to be where most of the older items were located.

A small shed seems to have been burned down in the area directly east of your building. The back yard appears to have been used as a dump, and much trash & burning was done back there. Three areas seem to have been redone in recent times: next to the west sidewalk ramp, the septic area, and the area between the sidewalk and Main Street. Nothing was found in those areas that was more than 10-15 years old.

My records are shown in the list below:

Quantity	Description
11	dimes clad
43	memorial cents
2	nickels
4	quarter clad
4	wheat cents - 1909 AG drilled for use as a pendant & mercury plated 1953 pendant
1	copper horse saddle decoration?
1	conduit hook
3	aluminum ash trays
1	50th anniversary medal 1908-1958 West Chicago State Bank used as a fishing lure
1	Master Lock key 2164
1	1/2 old time key and lock
1	railroad spike
1	watch cover
1	brass spoon
1	makeup compact
2	porcelain canning lids
	various square nails

If anyone might be curious as to the contents of their lot (the older the better) or need to locate jewelry, please pass my name on. I'm sure they will find I'm very reasonable.

Wayne Schott
618 Olde Prospectors Trail
(262) 594-34510

Curator's Corner

By Elaine Ledrowski

Spring is finally here! It's time to get out of the house and come visit the Eagle Historical Society museum to check out the changes made over the winter. The museum is located in a small, cozy building at 217 Main Street and is full of exhibits containing actual and representative artifacts reflecting the lifestyle of the people in the Eagle area. New curtains made by Bea Nowicki and Welthy Mueller add a homey touch to the museum. Our toy display has been greatly enhanced by the addition of a shelf unit made by Jeff Nowicki.

We have a nice selection of vintage clothing ranging from baptism dresses to wedding gowns. The wedding display features clothing from both the bride and the groom. The three men's suits are distinctly different and beautifully tailored. We only have the wedding skirts and slip/blouse from our oldest wedding dress (1881). The jacket has either been misplaced or perhaps worn out.

Often the bridal dress became the new bride's Sunday best. You may be surprised by the beautiful colors of the wedding dresses.

The farm exhibit features farm tools and items used on dairy farms.

Items found outside the Eagle Historical Society museum with a metal detector make up an interesting exhibit. (See the Wayne Schott article.)

The second floor of the museum contains our collection of donated books, magazines and newspapers. Information is available about people, businesses, churches, schools and yes, even the famous Eagle diamond. Old plat maps of the area are also available. You could spend hours reading about the rich history of Eagle.

The museum is open Fridays and Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to noon. Group tours can be arranged for other times by calling 544-8961. The museum will be open on Sunday, May 6, from 1-5.◊

Growing Up on a Farm

By Dorothy Kau

I was born on the farm of my parents, John J. and Katherine Faestel Von Rueden, and grew up helping with the chores and all the farming activities that go along with farming. It was much different then from how it's done today. There were no buttons to push when I first started out.

The milking was done by hand, so it was one pull after the udder. That chore had to be done before going off to school in the morning, but then we got lucky and had an electric milker, which was quite an improvement, still having to strip, or making sure the milk was all out and the cow completely dry. Not like this day and age, when the machine shuts off automatically when the milk supply stops coming.

There were other jobs around that we all had to help with. Many farmers always had a flock of chickens, so we had a good size chicken house and a large flock of chickens, which meant helping with feeding, watering and gathering the eggs. Trying to get the eggs out without the old hen pecking you was quite tricky, and disgusting at times. Now I can see her point of view, but the pail full of eggs was the payoff.

There were always different jobs as the seasons changed. In the spring there was getting the seed ready by using the fanning mill so the seeds would be ready for planting. Then in the summer it was trying to keep the weeds under control. I especially remember one cornfield that always had to be hoed by hand because there was an abundance of Canadian thistles that were

in between the stalks and couldn't be reached with the cultivator. Besides, we had a neighbor that was a weed commissioner and kept a good watch on our obnoxious weeds—namely Canadian thistle and oxeye daisies, which had to be cut or pulled so they wouldn't go to seed. (Now they grow wild along the roadsides.)

That wasn't the worst. My mother, being raised as a vegetable farmer, always believed in planting a gigantic garden. Or at least I thought so, when it came to hoeing, cultivating and picking pickles. I had to lead this big workhorse on a one-row cultivator, guiding it through the

(Continued on page 4)



On the Jolliffe farm, 1952 Photo courtesy of Irma Jolliffe

(Continued from page 3)

narrow rows, being sure to keep a close eye on those huge hoofs so it wouldn't step on my feet when we had to turn around on the ends. We had to make sure every inch of ground was worked. Needless to say, I was pretty happy at the end of the season when the plants got too big and we no longer could get through with the horse and cultivator.

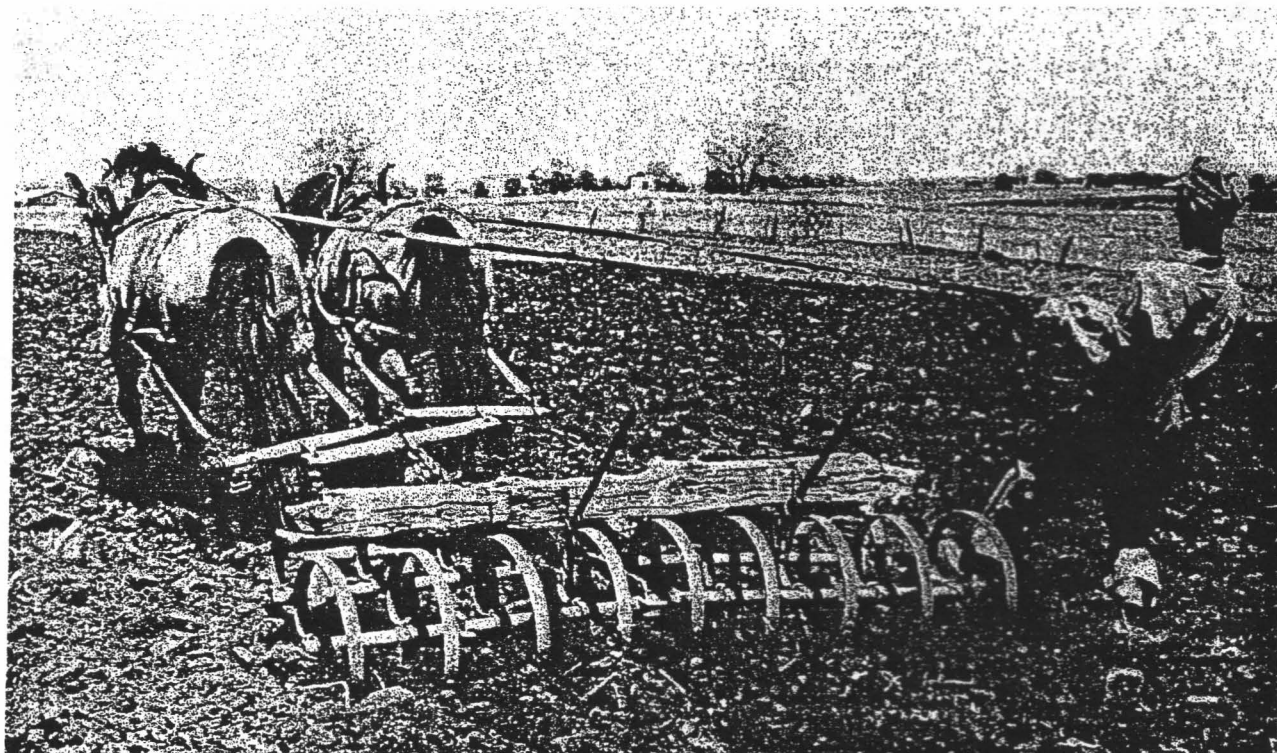
Then it would be mid-summer and the grain would be starting to ripen. We always hoped to get it cut while it was still standing good (or before a storm would come and smash it down, which made it much harder to pick up with the grain binder) and it made better bundles, so it would be much easier to shock. Which wasn't the most fun on a hot August day. The oat bundles weren't the worst, but they sure could make you itch; but nothing like the wheat or barley, which had the beards and were very prickly to work with. Then came the threshing, which as kids we really enjoyed seeing the old steam engine and threshing machine pull in. I don't know about the men who had to do the work, but when I think about it, they always got a great meal. The women would always try to outdo each other and the men seemed to enjoy having the meal together. I will never forget how my husband, who had run a threshing machine in his youth, always fondly remembered a special cake he was once served. He often talked of Mrs. Aus-

tring and the dark red devil's food cake that she had served him on such an occasion. He never had one that was as good. Trying my darndest, I could come close, but he would always say my cakes were good, but they still were never quite as good as hers.

With the grain being harvested, the next would be the corn, which I never had to do very much of because I would be in school. But I still remember how we would always have to pick up corn after the binder went through, not like today, where they just leave it lay. (Of course, the combine of today really doesn't leave much behind—you have to look pretty hard to find a cob. Maybe a stalk or so will be missed at the end of the field if the machine can't get it.) There still was the silo filling and shredding to do. They sometimes worked together with a neighbor or two or worked away at it alone.

With the corn in and if the ground wasn't frozen yet, they would start plowing with the horses and walking plow but the tractor sure changed everything, and every year it would get bigger and bigger. Today we don't even own a plow with a plowshare on it. They have a chisel plow, which is done right after the combine has gone through and the land is ready to start the spring planting again.

(Continued on page 5)



Ed Mueller and team working with a springtooth harrow

Freeman photo courtesy of Ed and Welthy Mueller

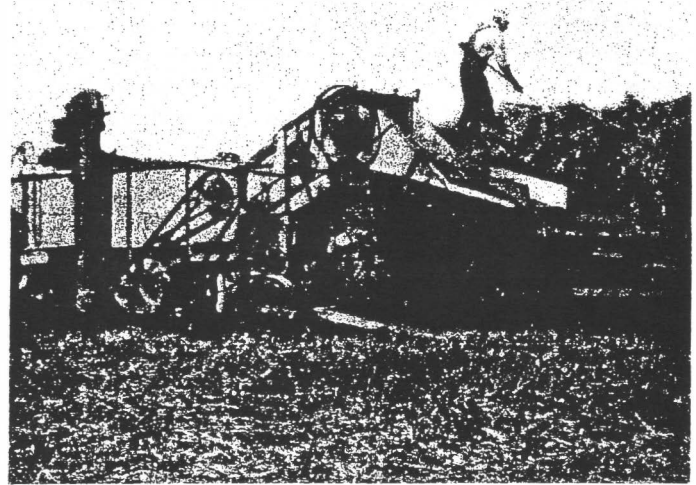
(Continued from page 4)

When the crops were in and the winter weather setting in, they would think about making wood for the winter to help out with buying coal. Of course, after the fuel oil came in, that sort of put an end to woodmaking.

There were also the winter projects of preparing meat for the coming seasons. The poultry consisted of chickens, ducks and geese. They were usually done in the fall so as not to have to house them over the winter, whereas the other meat was done in the colder weather because of (lack of) refrigeration. There would be the butchering of a couple of pigs and a beef. Every part of the animal was put to use, from the pig snout, even the tip of the tail. They used to say they used everything but the squeal. We would make head cheese, liver, blood, potato and summer sausage. We cured hams and bacon by smoking them in the smokehouse. We also fried and boiled the meat and put it in quart jars. When we finished, the basement shelves were filled until next summer.

Now, with most of the work done, it was kind of a vacation time. There were always chores to do in the winter and with the freezing weather there was always some trouble such as frozen pipes. And snow to shovel, as we didn't have snowplows. After the chores had been done, there might be a couple of relaxing hours or maybe a nap. Often my mother would catch up on her mending—or clothes making, if there was need for a new dress or maybe a slip, a pair of sheets or pillowcases. Of course, some were made out of feed sacks. In the evening she would be cutting up odds and ends of material to make strips for crocheting rugs. I thought it looked like fun to do, so my Grandpa whittled me a wooden crochet hook, and that's how I got my start in crocheting. I have been doing it ever since and love it; it's a great pastime.

In the summer those leisure hours never seemed to



Threshing - 1951 Photo courtesy of Irma Jolliffe

come. You never would have a chance to slow down. You could always find something to do from sunrise to sunset.

I did move off the farm for a year or so. I put in some time at Krestan's Grocery, but when I got married, what do you know? I was just transplanted back to the farm. Ironically, about two miles as the crow flies from the farm where I grew up. It was larger, with more acres and more modern advancements.

My husband Alvin and I purchased the farm from his father, Matt Kau, who had bought it from Sam Engel after an auction for a handshake and a dollar for a down payment. People were much more trustworthy in those days. We stayed at the same place for fifty years with many, many more changes and enlargements, enjoying it all. But that's another story, enough for now. ◊

Clubs for Farmers' Wives Are a New Necessity

The farmers' wives of a town in Michigan seemed to have solved the problem of obtaining the social and mental relaxation which is usually so restricted by the isolation of farm life. The women got permission to use 2 vacant rooms in the county courthouse as club rooms. They furnished them by the simple plan of each woman paying for one yard of carpet, and giving one chair, one cup and saucer, one knife, fork and spoon. Here, every Saturday those who wish to come for reading or rest or sociability, and in the afternoon or evening there is usually a literary and musical program. Once a month there is a meeting with refreshments. Such little clubs of

farmers' wives would bring a wholesome variety into the life of many a hard-working woman whose present opportunities are in no way commensurate with her needs or sacrifice. They would at least make it impossible for such a pathetic case to exist anywhere in the country as that recently reported in the newspapers of a farmer who remarked, when his wife went insane, that he couldn't imagine the reason, for she hadn't stepped outside the kitchen for thirty years. One cannot help wondering if a club—of some sort—would not also have been a good thing for that farmer.

Eagle Quill, July 20, 1900 ◊

Farmers' Strike

Milk production per cow in the herds of Wisconsin crop reporters at the beginning of January was the lowest reported since 1925...Because of the low price of milk, compared with the prices of feed and the small supplies of feed grain available in this state, farmers are feeding about 23 percent less grain and concentrates than that reported a year ago.

Eagle Quill, February 2, 1934

Increase in the wages paid to employees of milk distributors in Milwaukee probably means that farmers supplying milk to Milwaukee will get 15 cents a hundred pounds less for their milk. The increased wages were ordered by the labor board. Dealers contend that they cannot pay the back wages ordered by the labor board and that some adjustment must be made if they are to remain in business. All sides agree that the retail price of milk cannot be increased and conferences have been held in Milwaukee discussing the

possibility of solving the problem by reducing the price paid to farmers for milk.

Eagle Quill, November 16, 1934

In the thirties we went into several years that were the slimmest and the hardest to get through. Gardens were planted, but the drought was bad. Gardens died. Eggs sold for ten cents a dozen. Feed for cattle was high. Milk was lowest at sixty-five cents per hundredweight. A carload of sheep didn't net enough to pay their freight to Chicago. We hesitated to spend twenty-five cents. The slogan was make it do, do it over, or do without. It took all year to earn enough to pay the interest on the mortgage. Many farmers lost their farms. Finally they got together, it was in 1934, and had this 'Farmers' Holiday'—a big strike. They banned all the deliveries of milk and picketed the roads leading into the cities. Governor Schmedeman called out the troops, four thousand sheriff's deputies. Took into the farmers with billy clubs.

From My Land, My Home, My Wisconsin by Robert and Maryo Gard ♦

Waukesha Dairy Show

By Gerald Baker

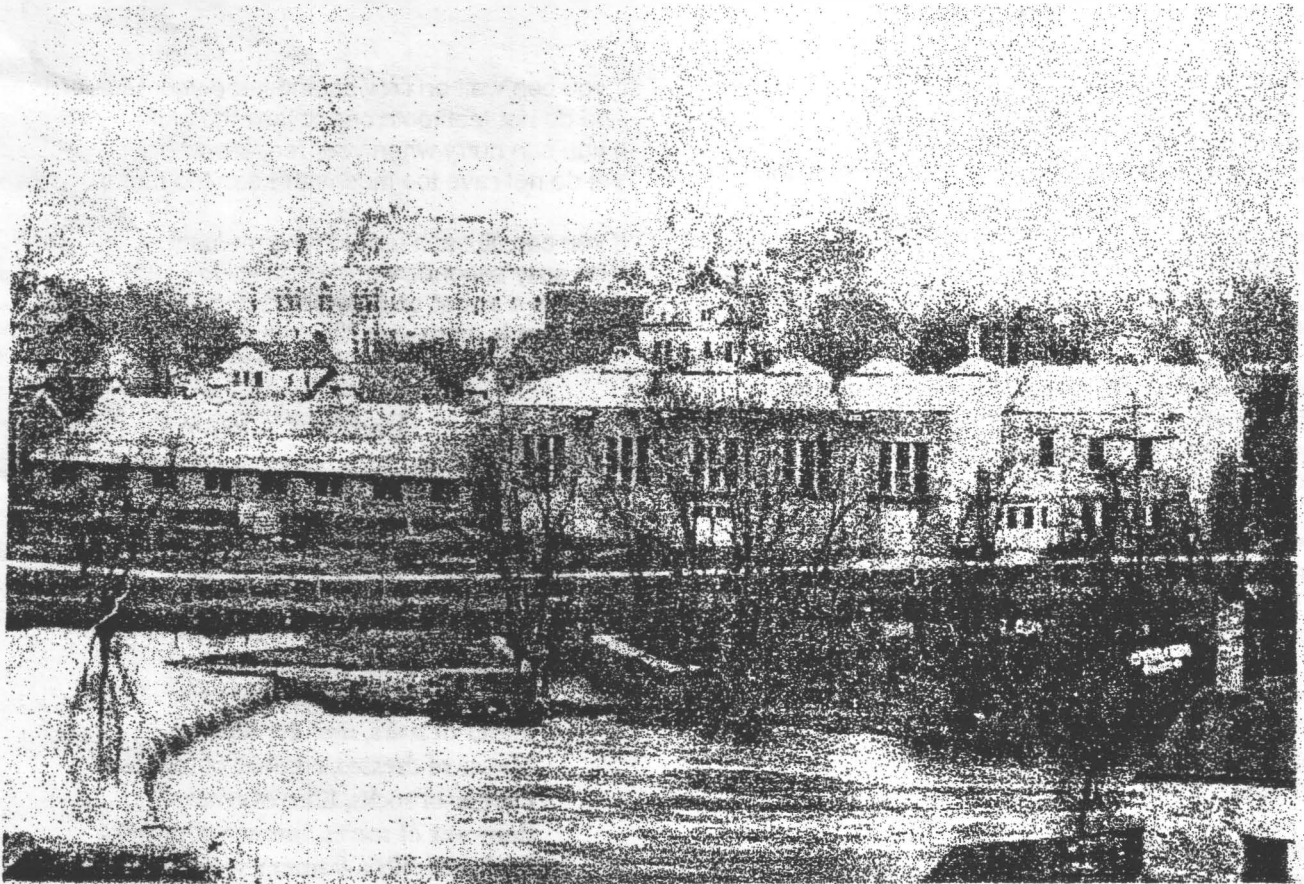
The stock sale pavilion was built in 1916 and was demolished in 1990. It housed the Waukesha Dairy Show for 40 years.

The show ran for 4 days and nights, usually during the last week in March, on both the balcony and lower level. It involved all the county schools; 1500 youngsters from all sections of the county came. There were exhibits for people to show clothing, canning, vegetables, baked goods and handicrafts. Admission was 35 cents days and 50 cents at night. Many people stayed at the Avalon Hotel.

Dairy cattle (all breeds) were judged during all four days of the show. Breeders came from all around, some from Illinois. I won first prize on a junior calf and second place on a herd sire.

Every night there was entertainment. The last night each year a card party and dance were held.

The Waukesha County Fair began after the end of the annual dairy show. The 4-H program went to the fair, too. ♦



Stock Sale Pavilion

Photo from Waukesha County Museum collection

What is a Farmer?

Farmers are found in fields—plowing up, seeding down, rotating from, planting to, fertilizing with, spraying for and harvesting if.

Wives help them, little boys follow them, city relatives visit them, salesmen detain them, meals wait for them, weather can delay them, but nothing can stop them.

A farmer is a paradox. He is an overalled executive with his office in his home. He is a scientist who uses fertilizer attachments, a purchasing agent in an old straw hat, a personnel director with grease under his fingernails, a dietician with a passion for fresh fruits and vegetables, a production expert faced with a surplus, and a manager battling a price-cost squeeze.

He manages more capital than most of the businessmen in town.

He likes sunshine, good food, county fairs, dinner at noon, auctions, his neighbors, his shirt collar unbuttoned and above all, an above-average rainfall.

He is not much for droughts, ditches, freeways, weeds, the eight-hour day, dusty roads, development, insects,

diseases, freezing weather or helping around the house.

Nobody else gets so much satisfaction out of modern plumbing, good weather, automatic furnaces, electric blankets and homemade ice cream. Nobody else has in his pockets at one time a three-bladed knife, a check-book, a billfold, a pair of pliers and a combination memo book and general farm guide.

A farmer is both Faith and Fatalist. He must have faith to meet the challenges of his capacities amid the ever-present possibility that an act of God (a late spring, an early frost, flood, drought) can bring his business to a sudden halt. You can reduce his acreage but you can't diminish his optimism.

Might as well put up with him. He is your friend, your competitor, your customer, your source of food and fiber. He is your countryman—a denim-dressed, businesswise statesman of stature. And when he comes in at noon having spent the energy of his hopes and dreams, he can be recharged anew with the magic words—"The market's up!"

Bud Lee, county director and farm adviser, Univ. of California

If

"If you can rise at five while all the family
Sleep sweetly on, and leave it all to you
And still can radiate a cheerful patience,
Nor call them 'till you've made their breakfast, too:

If you can wait for them, still sweetly smiling,
Nor worry if the food they criticize,
Or, hot and tired, don't give way to frowning
Because the bread you've set has failed to rise;

If you can work and not make work your master,
Still cherish dreams and always play the game;
If you can see your men folks scatter ashes
And sweep them up, nor speak one word of blame;

If you can bear to see the floors you've polished
Tracked up by muddy boots or careless feet,
Or see your bric-a-brac and china broken,
And yet, when asked forgiveness, can be sweet;

If you can hang your line with all your washing,
And then go out and find it in the dirt,
And do it once more as in the beginning,
And do not look too sour or feel too hurt;

If you can sweetly smile on early callers,
Who waste your time, nor soon away are gone,
And hurry to replace those idle moments,
And so from morn till wee keep bravely on;

If you can wait on crowds and keep your temper,
And do not feel too cross or look too glum;
If you can hurry when your feet are weary,
Yet do not rave too much nor keep too mum;

If you can fill each unreturning moment
With sixty seconds worth of busy life,
Yours is a sweet and generous disposition,
And what is more—you'll make a farmer's wife."

Anonymous

Farmer's Wife

A farmer's wife is...

An early riser, family adviser
Maker of beds, baker of breads
A planner of meals, a dancer of reels
Feeder of chicks, healer of sick
She's milker of cows, she's chaser of sows
Planter of peas, picker of these
Preserver of beans, and patcher of jeans
Sorter of pairs, mender of tears
Maker of dresses, comber of tresses
Darned of socks, filler of crocks
Remover of scares, listener of prayers.
And generally a farmer's wife,
Finds contentment in her busy life.

Fay Blodgett Shores

Only A Farmer

Though you call me "only a farmer"
I'm "monarch of all I survey."
As I live out here in the country,
In a pleasant and peaceful way.
My dear ones and I are contented.
To dwell 'mong the bountiful fields,
Where sunlight gilds the ripening grain
That our soil so lavishly yields.

Oh, ye who scoff at the farming class,
And belittle calm rural life,
Take note of the strength and rugged health
Of the son of toil and his wife.
Their children also are well and thrive
On good, wholesome and varied fare,
For the farm supplies their daily bread,
With enough for all, and to spare.

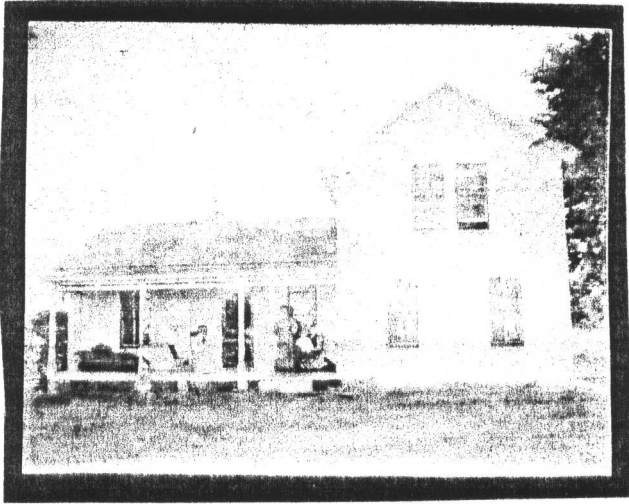
We ask no pity from city folk,
And we envy them not their lot
Our lives are honest and useful, too,
In God's country, our chosen spot.
Our joys are many, our wants are few;
We're blest with contentment and peace;
Our work is the nation's very life,
And it never shall fail, or cease.

"Only a farmer," but proud of that;
And of life where the Sabbath bells
Ring out their call to the faithful souls
In the homes of the fields and dells.
We worship God in the old, true way,
In the little church in the vale,
Where our forebears sleep and we shall rest,
When there comes the Good Shepherd's hail.

A. S. Alexander

IN MEMORIAM
Clara Burton

MYSTERY HOUSE IN THE WINTER NEWSLETTER IS LOCATED AT 503 MAIN STREET



1908 Photo Submitted by Donald Donahue



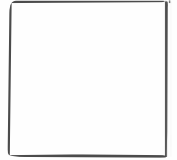
Recent Photo by Pat Wilton

CAN YOU IDENTIFY THESE HOMES?



Postcard Courtesy of Paul Kramer

Eagle Historical Society Inc.
217 W. Main Street
P.O. Box 454
Eagle, WI 53119



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

COMING EVENTS

MAY 11 & 12

Plant & Rummage Sale

9:00 - 4:00

Municipal Building

Visit the Museum and Enter a
Drawing to Win a Free Sweatshirt

JULY 8

Ice Cream Social and

2:00

Band Concert Featuring

The Palmyra/Eagle Band

Village Park