

Life at the Time We Were Married

February 14, 1906

Because Dr. Westgate, who owned the 160 acre farm across the road from Father Knight's farm, wished to sell his farm, Will and I thought it would be best to buy it before we were married. Therefore a deed was made out to Will Ruesink and Grace Knight for the north 80 acres, with a five year option on the south 80 acres, during which time we were to rent it. The lawyer laughingly remarked that he had never before made out a deed to an unmarried couple. He then added, "What will you do with the farm if you should happen to break your engagement?"

As each of us had put most of our earnings as teachers into the farm, there was little left for us to use for luxuries. Among some of the things bought were ten cows at \$25 each, a good work team of horses and some second hand machinery, and a double buggy large enough to carry jars of butter into Adrian once a week.

For the house we bought a second hand heating stove for \$6 and a second hand cook stove for \$2. An elderly woman in Adrian wished to sell her furniture and go to New York to live with a son. Most of it she bought when she was married 50 years before. From this we got a three piece solid walnut bedroom set which was very much out of style. (Antiques were not in style then.) Being so old, we were told that it should be worth about \$7 for the three pieces. Today, 1964, it is considered one of our choicest pieces of furniture. A sewing machine from Sears and Roebuck of Chicago, the best they had, cost about \$20. It is still in use.

Aunt Nellie Luther gave us her six cane seated chairs, now about 100 years old. Will has since recaned them. My parlor carpet, all wool, new, cost less than \$25, which was \$.75 a yard. My living room carpet, a rag carpet, was made of rags I had sewn. The weaving was done for \$10. The entire cost of household goods was a little more than \$100.

As the house was large, 13 rooms besides a pantry, cupola and two rooms in the basement, we hired a family who were to live in part of our house, receive some milk, pork, a garden spot, fuel, and \$20 per month as wages. He gave full time except holidays, to help with farm work.

This arrangement was not quite satisfactory, as we discovered later that when we were gone to church, they helped themselves to whatever appealed to them. Also one Sunday, on arriving home from church, we found that there had been a fire in their part of the house. As their household goods were well insured, they were pleased with the adjustment. A few days later a fire broke out in the same room. The adjuster told them that if another fire should occur, he would think they had set it intentionally.

Three different families lived in part of our house and helped with farm work. It was a relief to us when we began having a single man rather than a married man as helper. It was still better when our boys grew up to help their father. He always looked back to those days with pleasure.