

her, and she would withdraw into the little apartment that had been made for her in one wing of the rambling farmhouse.

The arrangement worked well for both families. The payments that Melvin is still making to Mrs. Keim for the farm property are her source of income, and as more children arrived, Esther was grateful for her mother's help with cleaning,

laundry, gardening and canning. Mrs. Keim has enjoyed good health and keeps her own house and buggy for visiting friends and making the occasional solo trip to town.

Over the years, however, Melvin found that farming grew less and less satisfying for him. He suffered from seasonal allergies and in the field would often be sneezing, coughing and have itchy, watery eyes. The small farm did not always provide enough income for the family of eight children, and for awhile, Melvin took a second job selling feed to neighboring farmers.

When Melvin's second son, John, married and announced an interest in taking over the farm, Melvin saw an opportunity to accomplish several goals. John and his wife acquired a mobile home and moved into the side yard. They began



making payments to Melvin and Esther to purchase the property, and John took over the farm chores. Melvin built a small shop behind the farmhouse, and is fulfilling a life-long dream by manufacturing oak furniture.

Younger sons also work part-time for Melvin in his shop, and lend a hand to John with the farm field work in the summer months. Melvin and Esther delight in watching two little grandchildren toddle in the yard, playing with toys that their own children have outgrown.

Now that he is on "the other side of the fence," Melvin understands how difficult it must have been for Mrs. Keim to turn over the farm to a young son-in-law, especially since she had her husband had worked so hard on it for so many years.