

HEINLEIN GENEALOGY

BELL FARM

herd of about 200 head of Holstein cattle and decided to combine the herds bringing everything to Bell Farm. He also brought his farm superintendent, Mr. Splitstone.

Fred Splitstone, the superintendent's son, recalled how he became a Bell Farm employee. He said his father moved from Ohio and was hired at Bell Farm starting in February 1928. Fred started working there in June 1928 in the milk barn. Then he worked in the creamery for about two years. One day the superintendent asked him to transfer to a job in the office. Fred said that despite his inability to type and his expressed reservations, the superintendent persisted; so, he agreed to take the job. He said he found his new job interesting and enjoyable. And he became proficient at it, holding the job of office-manager and secretary until the farm was sold. Mr. Splitstone said that because of the size and scope of its operation, Bell Farm was considered the ideal location for testing new experimental farming methods and equipment. Two of the new methods recalled were four-time milking and the use of molasses in the cattle feed.

The practice of milking four times daily was tried, then discontinued in the early 1930's when it was determined that the health of the milkers and the cows was being adversely affected by it. The men were in a cycle of milking, eating, sleeping a couple of hours if possible and then repeating the same cycle. Through a six-hour cycle of eating, producing and resting, the animals became exhausted and would perspire heavily even in rest periods. The test was discontinued. In another test, many drums of molasses were brought in and added to the feed of the animals. It was explained that molasses provided extra nourishment for the cows as well as making their coats very shiny and smooth.

Bell Farm had a fleet of 9 to 11 tractors that were all made by International Harvester. The farm was one of four test sites in the country where International Harvester would send their new products for on-the-job testing before putting them on the market.

Mrs. Delores Heath Gray recalled that her grandfather, father and uncle all got jobs at Bell Farm and the family moved there in December 1929 when she was very young. She has many pleasant memories of her childhood living at Bell Farm. Families were provided with a home, including electricity, water and coal or gas. Garden space was available for those who desired it, and at least one quart of milk was provided daily to each family. Women, girls, and younger boys did not become involved in farm work.

Mac Torrance was the last farm manager of Bell Farm. His son, Ron remembers that he was six years of age when his family came