

Read over, July 26, 95. Get the cost of Chez Nous out, trouble with Makr Keller as a carpenter. Do the rye yard story.

side 2: RAD/VWD, Chez Nous March 20, 1979

Landscaping (VWD): U of Wis. offered seminars on various stuff. A free course on landscaping, lasted two or three days. Run by their horticulturist. Professor Oust was her name. Stayed at the Loraine Hotel. They'd show a certain landscape defect and show us which trees would look good there. They talked about shrubs and bushes, the ones best for Wis. and what areas of the yard they'd do well in. We kept notes and drawings. Then we did our own and they looked at them. Sometimes they'd change them. It was very interesting, so much information in two or three days. I have the blueprint of what we decided to do. The Un. did it for us.

That's why we have mountain ashes and various pines.

And Chinese elms. The first two didn't last long. We left the mulberry tree, there were two elms--then one died.

The two maples out front were old and rotting when we moved in 40 years ago. We thought they'd topple over. They're still there.

The trees that were in good shape and had good shade we left and worked around. One whole clump of the white birches are gone, but we still have a few.

I remember coming up and pouring buckets of water around the trees every night after school for a while. And chopping out crabgrass with Dad out by the smokehouse.

It was during the era when they were working on the house and we were thinking of what to do in front of the house.

The US Dept of Ag decided to renovate some old farmhouses in several states, cheaply, and make them as nice as any city home.

One of the big projects was to conserve heat. They showed us how to use insulation. They had to measure the heat. We accepted the offer immediately because we were going to do the house over anyway.

The service was free. All the work, architecture, and materials. It was all through the connection with the University.

Get straight: had to move from Little House, looked around at houses-- one at Chapin and ? but had ice in kitchen and one on Sherwood Dr. (swimming pool). None of the kids wanted to move into town. They wept. In spite of the convenience of the Sherwood

Dr. house (Gardener's), kids didn't want to leave farm. Didn't want to be town kids. Had rented the farm for a year. Had enjoyed working on hill--the view, a lovely spot.

Used to come and sit on the lawn and look over fields, etc.

Paid about \$12,000 for it. (The house, I think. see below. JJ July 95)

I remember coming through as a kid, after we bought it. There was a terrible, filthy back pantry.

Didn't move in until after the remodeling. The Snides were renting. Or the Dummers.

Had bought and decided to remodel, Mother goes and takes course on landscaping and gardening. Have blueprint for flowers and flowering shrubs.

Roy Beamer (Viehman, I bet) and RAD dug up and planted the lilacs on a hot, hot day.

Tried to make the yard more like a real yard and not just an extension of the farm.

Planned to have dense woodland in back of the house. Planted ash, elm, maple, apple...///

Side 2

Mother: found out about US Dept Ag projects while at Univ course. They were offering their expertise on old farmhouses to show how they could be remodeled to make more comfortable and to conserve heat. LaRock was the chief architect of this idea. I signed up and told them I was interested in having them come here. Dad found them standing out on the lawn one day.

RAD: asked them what it was all about and they told him. The cost would be moderate. They probably picked your Mother because she's a good-lookin' woman.

I don't know why they picked me. I told them we had a house we needed to remodel.

The cost was supposed to be moderate, only a few thousand dollars. Once they got started, did blueprints, etc. we started. If we needed more money, I'd come up with it.

We gave LaRock ideas about what we wanted. He liked the idea of a big, attractive home up here.

It was strictly Wis. Gothic to start with. Talked about other projects when came to work on ours. The university paid his salary. I have the bulliten from the USDA showing the house before and after.

Make a file for Jackie--everything I'd be interested in.

I remember fourth grade when the remodeling was beginning. Building little brick houses out of the piles of bricks.

I remember feeding them all down at the Little House and then up here as they got going.

It started in spring and ran through Oct when we moved in. Still didn't have interior doors.

We moved in while we kids were at the lake. When we left it was from the Little House and when we came back, it was to this house. It was all done when we weren't here. I started fifth grade walking down that lane, seeing the asters in the lane. And we got Lassie.

I still think there's things up in the attic that we never brought down. When we were moving in, we stored things up there from the Little House. Books, and some old suitcases with stuff.

Craig has been through there time and time again.

He didn't look in everything.

I will look through for pictures, drawings, and schoolkids stuff. I never could find Patty's pastels of the stuffed animals like Johnny Stubtail, we had them at the Little House and I wanted to frame them.

They might be up in the drawers. In the room with the double beds. Or maybe you'll find them in the attic. One box is from Hazel, I don't know what it's in it. I'd like to see. Gramma's hope chest is out in the back hall. Up above. There's a bunch of comforters and useful things.

I'll be back for weekends in the summer and we can look. I'd like to look at Gramma and Grampa's correspondence and see what's there. Sort out stuff.

We moved into this house before the furnace was operating. Hung quilts over the entrance to the main living room and kept warm with a fireplace.

(talk of somebody (--Daddy Haugen)Hogan? top builder) Built the St. Paul train station. Mark Keller got to the point where he couldn't do the finer things anymore. LaRock was very taken with the fact that Paul and I could play the classics and the kids played fiddles. He knew we would have a very comfortable, spacious home. He did a marvelous job. Moved the second floor up and added the attic. Hougan came up and helped with the things that Keller couldn't. Like that door between the kitchen and the dining room. He made them tear that out and fix it up again.

Larock wanted you to feel welcomed into the place. A wider opening and then set in a little bit, then you came into the door. Mark couldn't see that. Hougan did. He went by the rule of thumb. All the windows and doors were done that way. All the doors we ordered were 2 inches too short. Keller had them all framed in at the higher level, and plastered in.

He didn't read the specifics. It was all down on blueprints, perfectly laid out. But Keller never paid any attention to those things. That's why we had Daddy Hougan (?) come up. He was an expert, and could fix things that would be ruined otherwise. They turned us out a very lovely home.

We did this remodeling during the Depression, '37 & '38. Wages were low, we were paying \$1/hr. to the top carpenter. \$.45/100 for the studies.

USE/?For awhile, Gramma and Grampa were very much upset that we were having this done. Their idea was to have someone come in and repaint the whole house. Check the foundation. If we had done that, we would have been moving into a house that was only a little larger than the one we were leaving. We needed room for four kids. We just went our own happy way. They had to admit it was a good idea.

Actually we would have been as well off if we'd started all over. The roof was good but after meeting all Rock's specifications, all the windows were changed, none of the old stuff was left.

When we dug the cellar, we added the foundation, too.

We dug out underneath the house, with a scoop and horse team. We got the basement to the level we wanted and then poured the cement which we mixed ourselves. We added onto the length of the house. It used to end where you go into the kitchen now. The kitchen, the back hall, and the garage were added. The partitions upstairs were added. We practically rebuilt the house.

I remember you thinking there wouldn't be much to do and that it kept growing and growing.

USE!!!When they got up to \$10,000, I quit telling anyone about it. We spent about \$12,000. For 20 years I wouldn't tell anyone the cost because why should a farmer spend so much on a house? For the last 30 years, I've been ashamed to tell anyone what a nice house we got for only \$12,000.

We were happy about it afterwards, and you kids were.

When we made the cellar window wells, we roughed it in with cement and then after supper Grampa and I went out and smoothed it up.

We all helped.

We mixed the cement ourselves in a little mixer. When we'd finish for the day but hadn't finished the job, we'd leave it for the next day. We'd pour new cement on the previous stuff. You can still see the difference in the cellar walls.

Some of the rock from the previous foundation is still there, we couldn't get it all out.

(something about someone connected to house remodeling doing an apartment house in Chicago) PAUL PROBABLY

Mother, you came home from the university with a sheaf of papers asking about how often you had to go to the kitchen, what rooms you used the most, what they were used for. You were supposed to note your schedule all day.

That was after we moved up here, a woman came by and wanted me to keep track of what we did, where and when.

We kids had great fun filling those in.

They didn't care about the house we were leaving, they wanted to know things about our using this house. This woman from the university was kind of an inconvenience, I had to cook for her. She made the reports. I think her job was to show me shortcuts and different ways of doing things. I never figured out if she did much for me. I just thought she was a pain in the neck. We never felt that way about LaRock, we just loved him.

When the cost started to get high, they'd go over the blueprints to see what could be cut or changed, several of those sessions. I don't think we lost any nice features, after 40 years.

We insulated the house completely with redwood scrap or bark. It was shredded into bales. We had to shred it before it went into the house to make it workable. We had redwood dust all over for a while.

(talk of some of the bushes around the house. Forsythia never did real well, but the spirogeia (?) did).

The mountain ash is a short-lived tree. We've replaced those several times.

Some of the cherries went.

Beautiful blossoms, but the birds got the cherries faster than I could pick 'em.

We picked some and make cherry pies, but I remember the birds being crazy about them.

We'd get enough for about two pies.

The mulberry still give us as many as we care to pick. Phil Jewel's son came down and worked here for awhile. I'd have him go out and get me mulberries for my breakfast. He didn't like that idea.

One time we kids were hired in the East 20 to pull suckers. It was hard, hot work.

(description of what a sucker is)

The pond area used to be full of weeds, mostly burdock and thistle. The horses couldn't get through it with a mower. I had that rhyme in my head for many years. "Kill'em in June, kill'em too soon. Kill'em in July, they're sure to die."

Craig said Don't believe it. Nothing kills a burdock. END OF TAPE