

FINDING THE FARM may be difficult for those not familiar with the unpredictable whims of Lancaster County roads. But once we have mazed across the rolling countryside and have spotted the last elusive landmark, it suddenly lies before us.

The Jesse Dourte home lies in a secluded valley, removed from, but by no means out of touch with, the flow of modern life. Dropping into the valley and moving up the long lane we see the brick home on the right. A white barn stands straight ahead, and to the left we see another white building in which we shall have special interest on this visit.

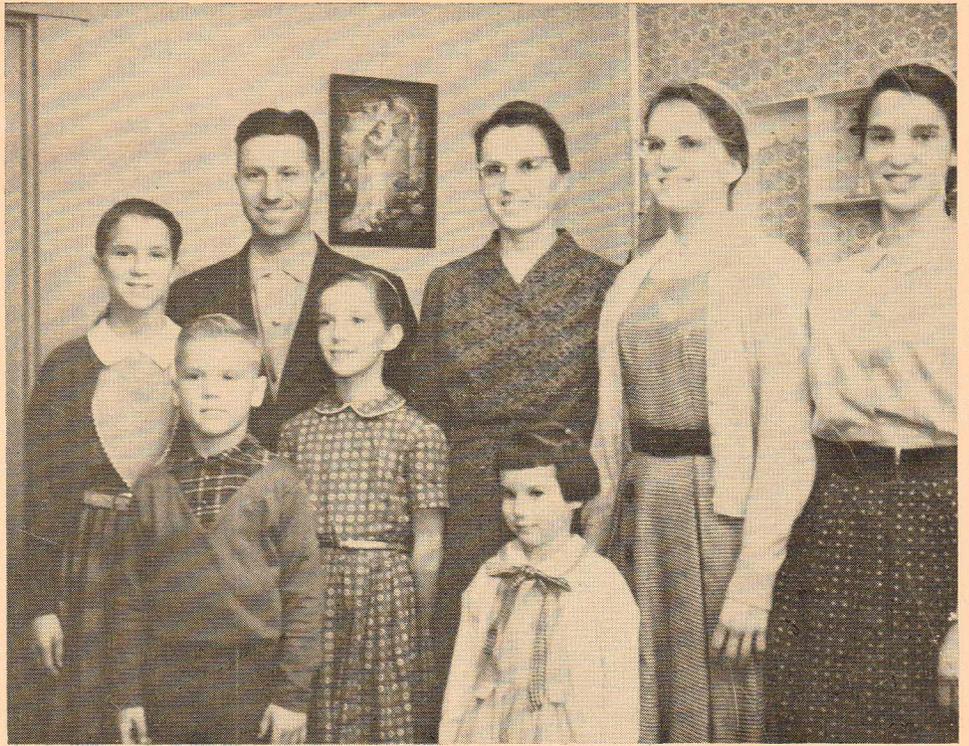
Beyond the buildings and to our right, a low meadow with a mature stand of trees awaits the warm rays of a spring-time sun. On our left the open field sweeps to the top of an imposing hill, creating a clear horizon against the sky. Above us the gnarled and twisted arms of an old tree bear evidence of many more raw winter days. And it is to learn more about what happens within the precincts of these far-reaching branches that we have come to this farm home.

Jesse and Wilma Dourte will tell you that theirs is "just an average family." But we have reason to believe that we shall find evidence of more than average quality. And in recognizing these qualities we share the company of an appreciative neighborhood, a loyal church community, and — the Governor of the State of Pennsylvania.

Governor William Scranton recently met and commended the Dourte family in Harrisburg, the state capital, in connection with the farm labor program. It was a day to be remembered by parents and children alike, from sixteen-year-old Maxine to five-year-old Jeseen. It was a day of meeting officials in the Department of Labor, and, finally, meeting Governor Scranton and having their picture taken with him.

The occasion for this unusual honor is itself an index to the kind of family life to be found here on the Dourte farm. Rev. Dourte annually employs Puerto Rican laborers during the tomato harvest. Since their stay at any one place is transitory, such laborers must somehow be satisfied with minimal accommodations. But on the Dourte farm it is different.

When the farm garage was rebuilt recently, the entire family had a hand in adding a second floor to provide a new three-room apartment for their help. This they furnished with the basic requirements for comfortable living; they even added recreational facilities. When the quarters were inspected by representatives of the Department of



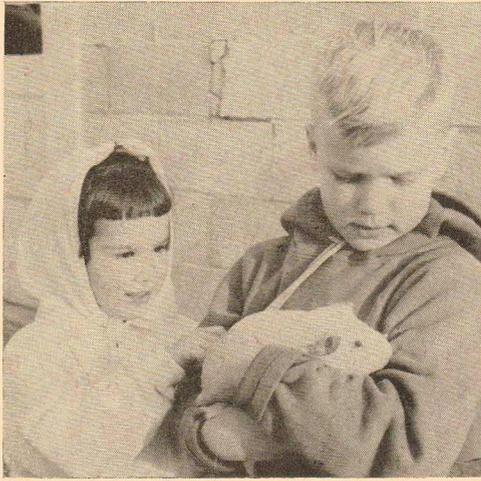
The satisfactions of a Christ-centered home are reflected here in the living-room setting. Seen with their parents, the children are, from left: Marjorie, 13; Nevin, 7; Colleen, 10; Jeseen, 5; Maxine, 16; and Loine, 15.

A Winning Combination

Ray M. Zercher



The Dourte home, three miles north of Manheim, Pennsylvania.



Jeseen and Nevin cuddle one of their many pets.

Labor and Industry, in anticipation of the special citation, these officials did not miss the opportunity to try out the ping-pong equipment.

The Puerto Rican laborers, who have the most to gain from these pleasant facilities, have expressed their appreciation not only in word but in work well done. They have been cooperative in performing the extra tasks without complaint. Rev. Dourte reports that the harvesters have accompanied the family to church on occasion and that they look forward to returning with next year's crop.

Rev. Dourte was much impressed by the ceremony in which he with other farm labor employers received the gubernatorial citation. Presided over by the Secretary of Labor, the occasion merged the interests of those who have a concern for the physical, moral, and spiritual welfare of farm laborers. Recognition of this type over the past few years has been the means of raising the living standards for these workers and their families.

Winning citations, however, is only one aspect of the life of this "average



The Jesse Dourte family meet Governor Scranton at the State Capital.

family." The winning of souls is primary. And they make it an integral part of their family life. They may tell you that they are going this evening to call on a neighbor who has a spiritual need. Such contacts may be in the form of a social call. They enjoy taking a freezer of ice cream, calling on the family and presenting a friendly invitation to attend church and to consider their spiritual commitments.

Rev. Dourte is in his ninth year as pastor of the Speedwell Heights Brethren in Christ Church. This spiritual ministry was begun as a branch Sunday school by the Manheim church in September 1951. The services were held in the nearby schoolhouse for several years. The dedication of the new church on June 9, 1957 was preceded by the ordination of Rev. and Mrs. Dourte to the Christian ministry. On that occasion Bishop H. A. Ginder spoke on the theme, "The Going Preacher."

The instructive comments given by Bishop Ginder on that occasion were well heeded. The preacher and wife ordained in the Saturday evening service are still going strong for God. Membership at the Speedwell Heights Church now stands at thirty-five. Sunday school attendance averages sixty. A full program is carried to enlist the interest and participation of all — the WMPC, Christ's Crusaders, Junior Prayer Band being especially active. Membership is drawn largely from those who are self-employed or who are working in industry. The pastor receives partial support from the congregation



The citation from the State Department of Labor and Industry will be a cherished memento in the Dourte home.

in the form of a monthly offering. The farm operation and part time winter employment augment the requirements of the family budget.

The church program, too, is a family affair. The older children are already assuming roles of responsibility. Maxine, sixteen, and Loine, fifteen, are assistant teachers in the Sunday school. They

also play the organ. Maxine is vice-president of the youth organization, and Loine is assistant secretary. The parents also teach Sunday school classes, Rev. Dourte the Junior High Class, and Mrs. Dourte the Senior Highs.

Rev. Dourte does not consider pastoral involvement in the many aspects of the program as being ideal. He will be willing to turn the class to another teacher as this is possible. But his willingness to fit into many assignments is a part of the picture of this "going preacher" and of his concern that his entire church program be geared to winning the hearts and souls of the community. His commitments also include service as president of the local Parent-Teachers Association. In this kind of service, contacts can be made which are valuable in the experience and concern of a pastor.

Nor are spiritual concerns limited to expression through the church and community programs. The Dourte family considers a spiritual warmth in the home of vital and primary importance. Family devotional periods are alive with interest as they share in reading from the



A glance into the apartment kitchen shows it to be spic and span — and Fab!

Bible or from Bible story books and in question and answer discussions.

Song and music are means of expressing their Christian faith. The daughters are adept at the piano, and Maxine plays the violin. The family often sings together, giving programs of sacred music in area churches. The children have recently enjoyed singing a lesson in obedience based on the adventures of Peter Rabbit.

Home responsibilities for a family of six children are capably managed. Assignments are supervised with clear instructions and follow-through. Concern for social refinement is indicated by a posted series of instructions for table decorum. Provision for pleasant pastime is found in active games or in less strenuous reading or handwork.

The Dourtes consider the farm to be ideal for family living. The care of seventy-eight acres of farmland and a herd of thirty-five cattle provides full employment for all. Each child shares in the farm work, and, according to Rev. Dourte, "They do it willingly."

Summertime brings opportunity for many family activities. When time can be taken from the demands of the farm, they may slip away to the neighbor's farm pond. Or, on rarer occasions, they may drive to the river where water skiing has become a favorite sport for Dad and Loine.

Another trip takes the family for an annual trip with Mrs. Dourte's family,



"We're saved, saved to tell others of the Christ of Galilee."

the Orville Herrs, in Troy, Ohio. And as fall comes and the children return to school, the parents share their interest in hunting. Mrs. Dourte will show you a snapshot of a deer she *almost* got one season. (Another hunter completed the kill.) And winter brings the pleasures of skating and tobogganing for the family.

Another instance of the family's sharing in common interests occurred several years ago. When an opportunity arose to buy a Polaroid camera, the entire family decided to forego their usual exchange of Christmas gifts and to make this family purchase. Since that time the camera has been a busy recorder of the kaleidoscopic pattern of life in this lively household. And the viewfinder often includes rabbits, guinea pigs, ponies, goats, two fluffy cats called Major and Cotton, and a big friendly German Shepherd named Bingo.

But farm life is not all ice cream, sports, song, and kittens. There are real dangers, and accidents do happen. The family is especially grateful for Providential care in several mishaps which could have resulted in serious or even fatal injury. But freedom of action in wholesome surroundings, with plenty of worthwhile employment for ready hands and inquiring minds, makes the farm,

for the Dourtes, an ideal setting for family life.

The Dourtes have lived on this farm, just three miles north of Manheim, for the past three years. But this is not their first residence here. Jesse and Wilma lived here for a while as newly-



An exciting moment in a favorite indoor game.

weds. Then, after an interim of ten years, they returned to buy the farm and to make it their home.

But the home, though well built — physically, morally, and spiritually — is not a home unto itself. An evidence to this fact is the sequel to the building of the new apartment which drew the Governor's commendation.

The building operation was a family project, each one taking his share and



Maxine and Loine atop a sample of their summertime architecture.

doing his part in preparation for the farm laborers. But they were building with another harvest also in mind. A friend who attends the Speedwell Heights Church had been engaged to supervise the construction. As a result of repeated contacts during the building operation and of a continued friendly witness, Rev. Dourte was privileged to lead this friend and his wife to Christ in their home during the fall revival services.

Winning citations, winning friends, winning souls—these comprise the busy life of this young pastor and his family. It would be a high compliment to our society if we called them so, but we could wish that they were in fact "just an average family."



Children and ponies, a natural combination. In background is the new farm labor apartment.