

*From the front cover -*

## **Electricity comes to the country**

**T**he Rev. and Mrs. Clyde Harris of River Falls, as shown in the photo, enjoy favorite evening pastimes of the 1920s and 1930s—reading and listening to the radio. But the lack of electricity made both activities difficult for farm families in Pierce and Pepin counties.

Yet, when power finally flowed through Pierce Pepin's newly built lines in 1938, those simple pleasures commonplace to most urban communities soon became part of everyday life for rural residents as well. The drudgery of farm life slowly made way for added leisure time as early Pierce Pepin members became more familiar with the benefits that electricity provided.

This newfound product not only lighted homes, barns and farmyards, but also powered electric milk coolers, egg incubators and chick brooders, water pumps and water heaters. Mechanized implements like barn cleaners, bale elevators, and hay dryers saved labor, waste and money. Each kilowatt-hour they bought monthly could provide them with 100



pounds of ground grain, 10 gallons of cooled milk a day, one cow milked for 20 days, eight sharpened mower blades, a hen house lighted for six days, two tons of hoisted hay, one-half cord of sawn wood, or one ton of cut silage.

Farm wives, mothers and daughters also reaped the benefits of electric lights and appliances. The electric iron, washing machine, cream separator and refrigerator saved enough labor to allow women more time for pleasant individual or family activities.

Yes, Pierce Pepin brought electricity to the country, forever changing lives and landscape—a triumph which no sensible person can dispute.