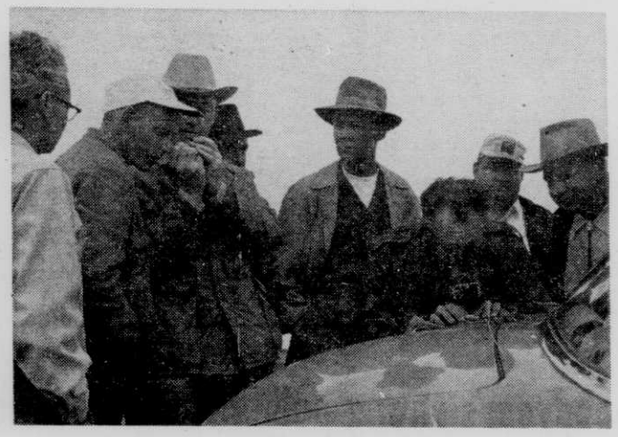
Song of THE LAZY FARMER

MY NEIGHBOR claims if only he could choose again he'd never be a farmer 'cause, for piddling pay, the life's all work without no play. He says he'd get a job in town where now and then he could sit down, an eight-hour day and five-day week is just the kind of deal he'd seek. With neighbor I must disagree, 'cause farmings's just the life for me; he's prob'ly right that better pay would come to us some other way, it's true the hours can be quite long, especially if you plan things wrong, but town would be a total loss 'cause someone else would be my boss.

A farmer has to tend his stock but doesn't have to punch a clock; I do not have to feed a steer exactly right at 5:03, a cow needs milking but she'll wait if I must be a little late. When choretime suffers some delay because the fishing's good that day, my pigs may squeal but they will not be apt to fire me on the spot. If I should oversleep a bit, nobody throws a great big fit except Mirandy Jane, and she will never take my job from me; and you can bet I won't resign, 'cause loafing right here suits me fine.

Crop, Weed, Range Tour



Most wheat growers are familiar with the damage streak mosaic can do to a wheat field, but not too many have actually seen the small mite that is responsible for the damage. At a crop, perennial weed and range management tour held June 10 in Cascade county, farmers had an opportunity to see the microscopic insect. Pictured above, third from the right, Dr. Mitrofan Afanasiev, professor of botany and bacteriology, Montana State College, adjusts a microscope so producers can see the tiny white mites. (MF-S photos)

Ted Fosse, Cascade county agent, left, and Lonnie Guill, Cascade county weed supervisor, explain a weed control project where grass is seeded along 130 miles of county road. Fosse said farmers could contribute much toward weed control by helping the county to keep weeds mowed along their property. They stressed the importance of seeding down shoulders and borrow pits to keep weeds from taking over and infesting nearby fields.

FARM & RANCH Experiences

We Are Glad We Built a

Steel Framed House

By LLOYD TWEDT, Hill County

BUILDING OUR STEEL framed farm house was an interesting experience and one I am not sorry we undertook. I say we because building a farm home is usually a family project in which all will share in some way or another from the beginning of the plan to the last coat of paint.

In planning the house we cut pieces of paper to scale for each desired room size and arrived at the floor plan by placing them together to arrive at the best arrangement.

I wanted a fireproof office and thought the basement would be the economical place for it. After talking to the engineer at the company that sold the steel, I decided to frame the main floor of steel and so have a fireproof basement, since the rest of the basement would likely be of concrete and cement blocks anyway.

Steel Frame

We investigated some plans of steel building which included houses, compared costs, and decided to frame the whole house of steel. The decision to build with steel came quite gradually.

This type of steel is used much like wood in the building except for the methods of fastening it together. It comes in different lengths like two by fours and must be cut to length to be used, just like lumber.

At first I bought a power hack saw to cut the steel with but that didn't work so well. Then I bought a radial arm saw and used a friction cutoff blade in it. After trying several different kinds of blades I found one that was quite satisfactory and the cutting went quite well after that.

Welded Together

The frame was cut and welded together much like a wooden one is nailed together. The walls were cut, squared, welded and then erected and welded together. Then the rafters and upstairs floor joists were cut and welded together and raised into position and welded. Then partition walls were cut and welded in.

This house was not much different from a wooden one to build after the frame was complete except that instead of having a whole two by four to hit with a nail we had to hit the crack in the center of the stud with each nail and miss the spot welds that held the stud together. These welds are about eight inches apart.

The roof is covered with shiplap, paper, fiber board sheeting, paper and asbestos shingles, in that order. The outside walls are covered with fiber board sheeting, paper and asbestos siding.

All doors and windows are steel except the large door in the garage and all windows are casement or thermopane picture windows. Storm doors are aluminum. We like the steel doors and windows but the steel window frames frost more than wooden ones do.

Concrete Floors

The inside walls are of steel lath and plaster. Strips of sill seal were used between the lath and studs for insulation and the spaces between studs were filled with fiberglas insulation. The joists between main and second floors are 6-inch joists and filled with fiberglas and vermiculate insulation.

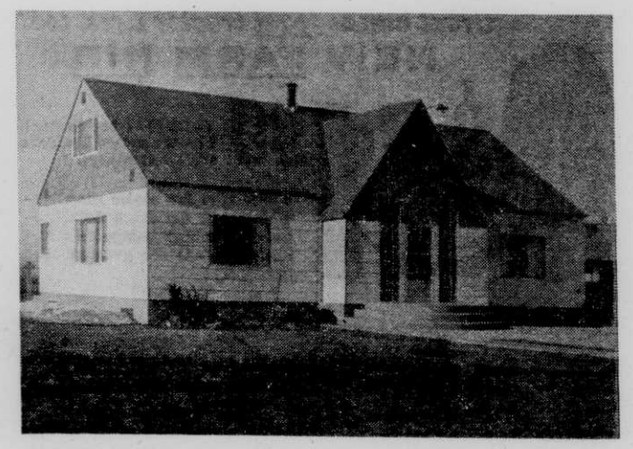
Our stairways are of re-enforced concrete. Concrete floors and stairway are excellent for radiant heating and are quiet to walk on but it is quite a job to fasten carpets on them unless fasteners are put in before the concrete hardens.

Basement Construction

All basement windows are of glass blocks, and an insulated wall was built inside the outer basement wall for insulation. The basement was designed with nearly the same floor plan as the main floor, so that every wall on the main floor is supported by a bearing partition of pumice blocks in the basement, except for one wall which is supported by a steel I beam. This allowed one large room in the basement for recreation.

This happened to be the floor plan we wanted and it greatly simplified the engineering of the floor joists, since they span only one room at a time and the main floor is quite heavy. The main floor is two and a half inches of concrete poured on corrugated steel sheeting which is nailed to the joists. This is covered with rubber tile in some rooms and carpets in others. It seems to be quite satisfactory.

We probably would not have built this house of steel if I had not had previous experience in welding, plumbing, wiring and heating. Being able to do these myself saved a lot on the cost of the building.



This house built by Lloyd Twedt on his farm in Hill County has steel framing throughout and concrete floors.