

As my Great Grandparents left the farm in 1915 and moved into town, 140 acres on Likens Road, northeast of Marion, was given to my Grandparents Santford and Viola Seckel, within sight of the home in which my Grandmother was born. This making an ideal new home site, my Granddad moved his family into the house he built in January 1915 for \$5000. It still stands today.

They were very happy to be in the neighborhood where they were born and raised and knew most everyone. My dad and his brother and sisters had many happy memories of growing up in this house: the one room red brick school house a quarter mile down the road and the little country church they attended every Sunday, which still stands today.

December 7, 1941 the Japanese sneak attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii changed our world and the world of 126 farm families forever. Rumors were flying that an Ordnance plant was to be built near Marion to supply munitions for the war. March 2nd a meeting was called for some 126 farm families. What a shock...they were told they would have to sell their land to the government and vacate their properties by May 1st, less than 60 days. My Grandparents received \$25,360 for that 140 acres and surrendered two other acreages beside. They left behind a nice home and exceptionally nice farm buildings. This made farm property scarce and prices soaring.

My Grandparents also knew it was a matter of time before their youngest son who was not engaged in farming would be called to serve his country. My Granddad spent many sleepless nights tossing and turning not believing what was happening. Although my Dad has said he never saw his mother cry, he knew she would never be able to look out the window and down the road and see the house where she was born. It no longer stands. They came through it all, but I am sure that it was not without a price on their health.

Those who knew my Grandparents said they never spoke with bitterness about the whole nightmare. Granddad was philosophical about what they had to go through. He would say, "Our country is at war, and we all need to do our part." He also said, "We have lost our home but that can be replaced while thousands of families lost loved ones in battle who will never come home."

You have heard many testimonies about the prison farm. The house my Grandparents built has been used by the managers of the prison farm for more than fifty years. It is one of a handful of remaining homes that the government chose not to bulldoze. It is my wish that **we\YOU** can give back to my Grandparents and their community what they gave up so unselfishly for their country in the month of May 75 years ago.

This isn't just about history...this is about the future. Please consider how expanding agriculture education for future generations on the prison land can continue Santford and Viola's legacy.

On behalf of my Grandparents...those before them...and my entire family now, I thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Janis Seckel Parthemore