

The night the lights came on . . .

The first farm family
to get electricity flipped
the switch 45 years ago.



The Ralph Pierson farm.

by Doris Stadig

"The lights are on! The lights are on!"

That was the dramatic cry Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Pierson heard from their four children the evening of Nov. 24, 1937.

A power line strung to the Pierson farm had been energized earlier in the day. And when the family returned home, the Piersons became the first farm family to see what electricity looked like in rural North Dakota.

Today, nearly every farm family in North Dakota enjoys the comfort and convenience of electricity. On this 45th

anniversary of the month when it all began, it's fun to look back; not to rest on past accomplishments, but to understand from what has happened how important it is that this program called rural electrification continue.

The article on the next page was written by Doris Stadig. She has written a book on the history of Baker Electric Cooperative. Her husband, Lloyd, was a long-time director of the cooperative. Her before and after look at what rural electrification has meant to this state and country is just what we need when we start to think the job of providing electric service to rural America is over.