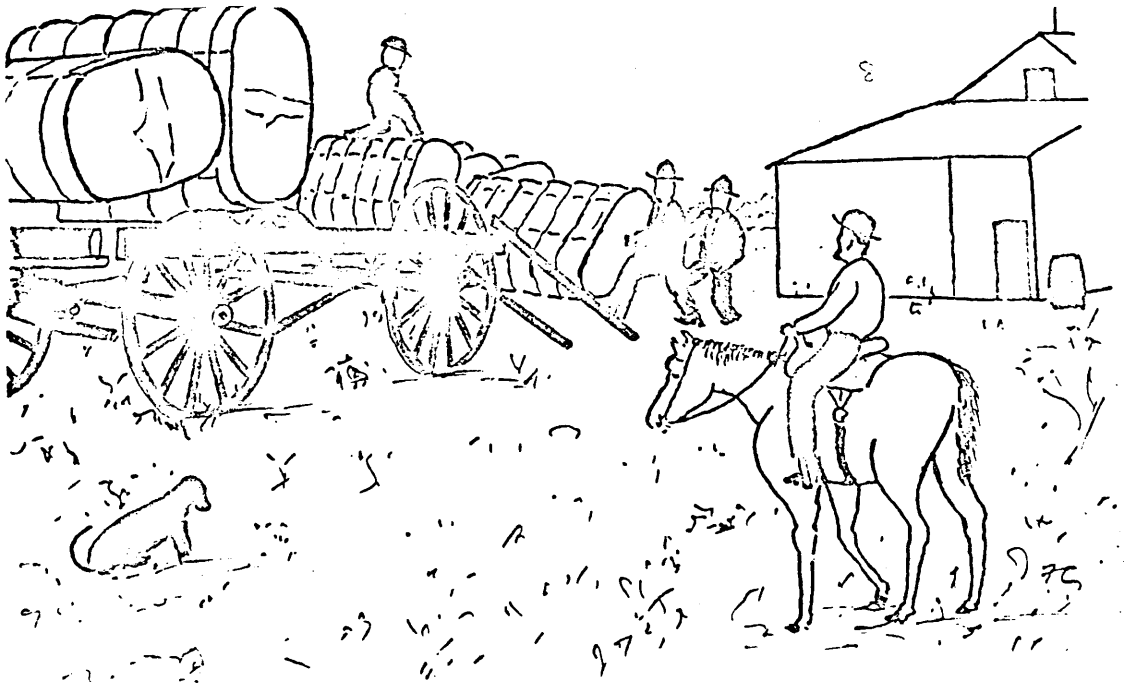

VIII. Family Life of a Country Squire

In the mornings Mary and the children were up early and about their chores by six o'clock. Ethel started the kitchen fire and cooked the oatmeal, bacon and coffee and set the table. If Mary was not feeling well one of the boys started the fires in the kitchen, and in the living room stove if the weather was cold, then joined his brother to feed the stock and milk the cows. When breakfast was ready George got up and the family ate together.

For a sweet at breakfast there was sorghum molasses so long as the supply lasted from the preceding fall. At a certain stage it turned to sugar though it could still be made eatable by warming it up on the kitchen stove. When the molasses was gone home-made preserves filled the gap. As a matter of course there was butter but the children preferred bacon drippings, especially if the grease wa cold and had solidified. This had more flavor than butter. Home cured bacon and ham, and maybe sausage, were on the bill of fare in

cold weather, though eggs were likely to be scarce. Until the hens began to lay in the spring a single three-minute egg was served to George; the rest did without.

Dinner (lunch) was another work meal. Teams were unhitched and given a short rest while the men ate; then all returned to the fields. After the day's work and the donning of clean clothes came supper, followed by the home life of the family. Bed time for the children was 9:00 o'clock, and an hour later for grown folks. During the afternoons the women were busy with mending, ironing, darning socks, crocheting and other household tasks. As soon as supper was over and the dishes washed they completed any unfinished jobs and joined the family circle. This was the time for reading, study and general family activities for the family.

George had never forgotten his own lack of formal education. By strenuous efforts he had acquired a fair mastery of arithmetic and some knowledge of geometry. He never made any particular headway with algebra and would comment that his use of square root (like that of many a young student) was shaky, and that he always felt better when he had multiplied his answer by itself to be sure that his work was correct in the first place. But his real love was history and literature.

This broadening interest of the family was greatly aided by the introduction of the Rural Free Delivery system for United States mails. For many years a star route had brought mail from San Marcos and left sacks of it at country stores such as Zorn, two miles from the Callcott farm. After the passage of the R.F.D. act in 1901 a carrier placed mai in individual farmers' boxes along a 25 mile stretch of the highway

on six days each week. George's farm was a long mile from the highway but the idea of such service was almost too good to be true. As early as December 1901 the new route had been established for a letter carrying a postmark of this date was received addressed to:

Mrs. G. H. Callcott
Hill House
R.F.D. No. 1
San Marcos
Texas.

Here was a revolution in country life and thinking. George at once subscribed for a daily paper, The San Antonio Express. This arrived at the farm only one day after publication and took the place of the old weekly ("weakly" might have been the better adjective) paper that had carried only the vaguest reports on national and international affairs. Also, in short order the distribution of Montgomery Ward and other mail order catalogues rapidly increased. The parcel post system was not to make its appearance until 1912 but with improving package service by Wells Fargo Express Company it was increasingly easy to order by mail.

When the first rumors of the new delivery system reached Long Branch some protested they did not want their mail scattered around the country side. George went to town and asked for information at the post office. When the rumors were confirmed for a route to proceed south of San Marcos to Zorn and then to circle back toward town over another road he was satisfied. He bought a regulation mail box that was for sale at local hardware stores. Each box had an officially approved lock. The

mailman (he was never called a postman) carried a master key that fit all locks — a marvel of ingenuity when one key fitted all locks on the route, but none of the other keys were supposed to open more than the particular box for which they were made.

Now the family's reading matter increased rapidly both because of the new service and because more money was available. Even when money was scarce George had subscribed for Public Opinion and the Illustrated London News. The boys were given gift subscriptions to The Youth's Companion and Saint Nicholas. The women had The Woman's Home Companion and later The Ladies Home Journal. After 1900 Harpers and the Atlantic appeared. But these were the trimmings. The staples of diet appeared on family birthdays and at Christmas. Gifts for each member of the family regularly included books, which passed from hand to hand until Dickens, Thackeray, Scott and less well-known authors were surprisingly familiar to the children. In May 1903 twelve-year-old Frank noted in his diary: "Self working 1/2 day (as it was my birthday). P/apa/ & H/erbert/ working all day. Papa gave me a pair of cuf links; Mama a tablet & suspenders; Herbert a book named Uncle Tom's Cabin; Ethel a tie & my cards; Wilfrid a leed pencil as it was my birthday."

George himself seized every opportunity to acquire the standard works of history. Plutarch's Lives and the works of Herodotus, Gibbons, Rollins, Macaulay, Marcus Aurelius, Emerson and especially Josephus were his favorites. How he was able to make such selections can only be explained

by an evident attention to recommendations he found in such journals as the Atlantic and Harpers. After the family moved to Sabinal in 1908 he bought a set of the Eleventh edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica. The print was small and the paper not too good for he economized on a cheap edition but the facts were there and he pored over volume after volume, reading article after article simply to "find things out."

While George was reading or working at his account books the children were expected to do the same. Frank's diary carries repeated entries stating that he was studying in the evenings even though school was not in session. On October 23, 1902 when he was eleven years of age he started the school session but had to stop in the early days of April to plant cotton. And when he was sixteen three months schooling per year was all he could get. Interestingly enough at that later date his diary stops with the comment that he was going to continue it in Spanish though the local schools gave no instruction in Spanish. Unfortunately the Spanish version is not available. George never felt that formal education was essential, for he was sure that a young chap should make his own career if he was capable of pursuing it. In Frank's case the study of Spanish was to culminate after World War I when, after serving as a young captain of infantry, he entered Columbia University to become a graduate student in Romance Languages. There he remained until he retired as a full professor years later at the age of sixty-five.

Bedeviling religious thought of the time were the doctrines of Darwin. Just how George thought the matter through is not a matter of

record. In some way he did acquire a set of remarkably firm convictions based on his respect for the work of scientists of all kinds. From time to time he expressed his ideas to others along these lines: "I believe in a God who made the whole earth and who loves all His peoples. Each people has interpreted Him as best it knew. Who am I to blame anyone who does the best he can? Neither do I believe the God I worship will blame him. It may be my duty to provide other people with an opportunity to know my own way of thinking so that they will have a chance to change their beliefs for something better. But just as I believe that the other person should be willing to accept new truth, I believe that my own religion and beliefs should be developing. God has given us brains to discover new truths that our fathers were not able to find or to know. If I expect the Hindu or Buddhist to change and accept better and more progressive beliefs when we offer them to him, so we should stand ready to accept new truth when it is demonstrated to us." He simply took new scientific theories in his stride.

The doctrine of the transmigration of souls also interested him but he dismissed the matter saying that such matters were the responsibility of the Almighty and out of his hands anyway. He did not ignore the ideas for he read extensively all materials on Theosophy that he could acquire. To him such ideas were just another manifestation of sincere men seeking for truth.

At a quarter to nine each evening individual activities stopped. The Bible was brought. The eldest son at home read a chapter and George

led a short prayer. This closed the day officially. The younger children went to bed and the older members of the family returned to their chosen reading or study for another hour.

George always appreciated the things of Nature. The reader will recall his description of a Yorkshire daybreak as seen from his signal box on the Great Northern Railroad. After supper on a summer's Sunday evening the family would occasionally sit on the front porch and look at the brilliantly clear sky with its multitude of stars. The names of the chief planets, most of the signs of the zodiac and always the location and significance of the North Star were commented on. At the same time George would comment on the universe as conceived of by the then up-to-date scientists.

When spring storms, the turmoil of the approaching "blue whistler", or thunder showers came up he would take small children by the hand and stand with them watching the lightning and tossing storm clouds. He taught them to recognise what different cloud formations actually meant to the farmer. The ragged and torn fragments of tossing hail clouds were feared but watched as things of superb beauty. The rushing clouds that heralded the approach of the mighty norther and the towering thunder heads with their summer showers were closely watched and evaluated. The child who left the fields to avoid a shower that did not materialize was laughed at with the clear implication that he was a loafer; and one that failed to take precautions against a shower that did

come was equally laughed at. The dreaded possibility of the black-funneled tornado (not much of a danger in Central Texas) was instilled into the children. All in all, Nature was a friend of incomparable beauty with lightning and thunder as spectacular diapason accompaniments (Yes, the word "diapason" was used for the full-toned stop on the family organ carrying this name was familiar to the children). As a result the children grew up appreciating the beauties of a storm and were not blindly afraid of that which was truly respected.

On Saturday nights activities varied. Checkers, dominoes or flinch entertained some members of the family. George himself enjoyed chess and loved a game with one of the boys. This, however, was too long a game for an evening and was usually reserved for a wet day when farm work was interrupted. Some Saturday nights there was a call for music. While George played the violin he had brought from England the family joined his bass and Mary's soprano in church hymns or songs of the day.

In 1903 a new feature of family life appeared when an organ was bought. Ethel undertook to learn to play the instrument and rode five miles each week for lessons. Of course she used one of those modest but dangerous monstrosities known as side-saddles. No proper young lady would be caught astride an animal. Instead they perched on top of the creature with one knee hooked around a specially constructed horn on top of the saddle so that both legs hung down on the left side of the mount. In this fashion her skirt covered both legs down to the ankles. With the rider's

weight on one side of the animal there was constant danger that the saddle would slip sideways and cause the rider to slide to the roadway. To prevent this the saddle girths were tightened until the animal could scarcely breathe — but the appearance of the rider was reasonably graceful and certainly modest so long as she remained topside.

Ethel worked on her organ lessons with consistency, if not with enthusiasm. In due course she graduated from chords and mere exercises to the songs used at Sunday School. Frank had more of a love of music and learned to play the organ with some proficiency though he preferred his Father's violin and secured mail order lessons to learn to play the instrument. He was the only child of the family who showed a definite tendency to inherit the musical and artistic talents of the old English family. Wilfrid "took up" the organ with enthusiasm via his sister's lessons that were passed down to him at second hand. He had no ear for music but he did have a reasonably good memory and nimble fingers. He quickly learned a few songs but had scant appreciation of the spirit of the music. His idea was that speed of execution was synonomous with efficiency so he jazzed up the most respected church hymns in shocking fashion. After listening to one such performance George voiced the opinion that the boy was too young to engage in such confining activities as the practice of music, and that he would be healthier if he spent more time in the open air. A musical career of sorts was abbreviated.

Increasing glimpses of the outside world appeared. Word was distributed at Sunday School and through the children attending the day school

that Long Branch was to have a "magic lantern" show. Small pictures were to be reflected through the magic instrument onto a bed sheet attached across the back of the schoolhouse stage. The man who owned the marvelous machine would come out from town to show them if as many as fifty tickets could be sold to adults at 10¢ each, with children to be admitted at 5¢. Any combination of such sales that would provide the operator $5.00 would insure the performance. The ticket sales brought $5.60, so the man got his $5.00, and the school kept the balance.

The whole Callcott family left home and reached the school house at 8:00 P.M. The unreasonably late hour for a Saturday night was necessary because the performance could not start until dark and the sun set late at that time of year. When the lights in the room had been extinguished there appeared before the entranced eyes of children and adults scenes from the Grand Canyon, big trees of California, amazing buildings of New York City and other marvels. The man who provided the display briefly described each offering until he reached a climax in the form of a pretty girl clasping a bouquet of yellow roses. For weeks thereafter it was a matter of dispute in the community whether this flippant note was out of keeping with an educational and intellectual evening.

On another occasion, probably in 1904, the whole family crowded into the old hack to go to Staples to hear a "lecture". This formidable term was understood to designate something very learned indeed. The speaker that evening was Mr. S. A. Steele of Nashville, Tennessee.

He spoke on life and times in the Old South during the Confederate (not "Civil") War. The nine-year-old boy received a lasting impression and sixty years later could recall the speaker's dramatic narration of the hardships endured. Evidently Mr. Steele was quite an accomplished lecturer. The People's Era of San Marcos referred to him on November 3, 1898 saying that his lecture on "Dixie During the War" was "the best thing we have listened to in many a day."

About once a month George and Herbert made the trip to San Marcos to attend a meeting of the Masonic lodge. Here was contact with the outside world in a group that was non-denominational and included Jews in its membership. Mary and Ethel joined the Eastern Star to give them contacts with the society and fashions of the city. Questions of dress became serious. After two hours of dusty driving the ladies had to appear in the company of, if not in competition with, town ladies who had just driven to the meeting from their homes a few blocks away. Further, many of the town ladies had regular dress makers to help them keep au courant with the latest styles, while the country women had to make their own garments.

All this was bad enough for the regular meetings, but once a year came the annual social evening of the society. George always looked impressive in his Prince Albert coat and striped trousers, but for the ladies preparations began weeks in advance. On the appointed afternoon the expedition left the farm at 3:00 P.M. On reaching town George

"went the whole hog" and paid fifty cents for a hotel room for a couple of hours so that the ladies could wash their hands and faces and change their dresses. The charge was the more exorbitant since the group also ate supper in the hotel dining room where the thirty-five cent noon meal cost fifty cents per person after 5:30 P.M. But the end justified the means. The ladies felt their evening was a definite success.

From time to time there were vague suggestions that George, or George and Mary, might ~~make a visit back to~~ revisit the Old Country. Mary's immediate family, however, was for the most part in Texas and George was evidently not too anxious to make the trip. Apparently he felt that he would just not be comfortable there. From time to time his brother, Frank, had proposed that he too might migrate to Texas. This George actively discouraged. He felt his brother was happy in the Old Country (though he had never married) and was too old to adjust to the New World. Apparently the feeling was that George and Mary had bridged the gap by heroic efforts and could no longer feel comfortable in Old Skeeby — yet they were hesitant about advising anyone else to take such a chance.

Yet the family did observe certain old English customs. Hot Cross buns made their appearance at the proper time. Also on New Year's morning the person who first entered the house always brought in a sprig of evergreen leaves as a harbinger of growth, energy and prosperity in the New Year.

In 1904 reports spread of the marvels of science and beauty displayed at the World's Fair then being held in St. Louis. The railroads were offering special round-trip rates so Mary and other Long Branch women insisted their husbands make the trip. The result was that about the end of September four men left on the day coaches of a through train for the thousand mile journey that took thirty-six hours. After four days at the Fair they got home a week later.

Whatever the cause George developed a case of chills and fever (malaria) while at the Fair. Possibly the change of climate had something to do with the development of the ailment but he showed no signs of it before he left home or after he got back. The ailment was so well known, however, that it was not too alarming and a minimum of time was lost. George's letters from the Fair and his later conversation showed that the exhibits (after his London experiences) made little impression on him but he was entranced with the sheer beauty of the colored electric lights as they flashed in patterns and illuminated gushing fountains.* These appealed to his poetic nature so long suppressed by the harsh realities of farm life in Texas.

When George returned he came bearing gifts and saying that he would never leave home again on a pleasure trip without his wife. Each of

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*Electricity for routine home lighting was available in San Marcos but it was worthy of newspaper comment as late as 1899 when a dynamo was installed at Staples store and gin (The People's Era, April 20, 1899). Mr. Malone had his refrigeration plant and by 1904 The Hays County Times (January 6) stated there was a "probability" that an electric railway might be built from San Marcos to Luling.

the two younger boys became the proud possessors of a dollar watches that weighed about a quarter of a pound ~~each~~. Now Mary had a hurry job on her hands to install watch pockets in small boys' pants. Gently, ever so gently, the new owners walked with half-bent knees so as not to jolt the precious new possessions. As a matter of fact those Ingersol watches were sturdy articles and kept time for many a day.

As part of his idea of family recognition and of proper respect George took a particular pride in his periodic and at times extravagant personal gifts to Mary. The first of these were the water color landscapes in Old England. When he sold his cotton for a "dime" a pound for the first time he went to the best jewelry store in San Marcos and ordered a solid gold hunting case watch for Mary's Christmas present. On another occasion when cut glass was all the style for fine tables and parlors he came home with a handsome sample of this beautiful, but heavy and relatively fragile, stuff. On another occasion he gave her a diamond and ruby dinner ring.

Christmas was an annual high water mark for the family. Anticipation began soon after Thanksgiving when Mary made her annual plum pudding and hung it on the back porch to season and to waft its aroma all around. After that came fruit cake baking. About ten days or a week before the 25th the greatly anticipated package from Grandmother in England arrived. Never opened until Christmas Day it always had a card carefully addressed to accompany a book or simple gift for each

of the children. A favorite gift was a silk handkerchief which could easily be shipped and which the children were convinced could never be equalled in the stores of the United States.

About two days before Christmas itself Uncle William (one of the sons of John Ireland by his first marriage) drove up in his peddler's van. He was an old bachelor who operated a small photograph studio at Round Rock, some twenty miles north of Austin. But he had an itching foot and the studio had little patronage for much of the year. He accordingly loaded up a small van and took to the roads through the country selling a tin pan here, a bit of ribbon there and a package of needles elsewhere. He was a favorite with the country housewives for if sales were out of the question but some housewife put him up for the night he usually found a watch or a clock or a sewing machine that was not working properly. He usually got them back in operation and left behind a friend for the next trip. The farm men might be somewhat scornful of his way of life but he kissed the children and jollied the housewives and no one ever criticised him very much. His arrival at Hill House brought Christmas dinner in the form of a turkey which he had acquired in his travels. It was of course alive so a pen was kept handy at that time of year where the poor creature could be given the food and water of which it was likely to be in sore need.

On Christmas Day Santa Claus arrived in good time. The night before the stockings were hung beside the heating stove in the living room.

Restless youngsters awoke early, ran to the living room, seized their respective stockings and scrambled back in bed. Trembling fingers unearthed the apple, the orange, a few nuts including the splendid English walnuts (grown in California but romanticised by their very name) and also a piece of candy or two. Then down in the toe of the stocking was found the item of the occasion, specially wrapped and tied. It took the form of a Jew's harp or some wholly unexpected item. It was always small. Santa Claus could not carry heavy items on a trip when he had so many children to care for. Family gifts followed at breakfast. These were in line with the season and included the expected book or two, and articles of clothing such as a tie and a toy.

In these recreations and incidents of family life George's attitude toward hunting and fishing should be noted for it was they were to be stamped on all of his children. He was quite a fair shot and could hold his own with pistol, rifle or shot gun. The boys, too, were early taught to handle a gun. Doves and partridges were quite plentiful and from time to time George or one of the boys would go out and bring in a few birds for a special meal. More often, however, they used a rifle to fire at a small tin can as a target on Saturday afternoons. In fact a target post to which a can could be quickly attached stood in the back yard for years.

When asked why he did not do more hunting George's answer was: "Well, you know I am not a very good shot. When I wound a bird and

know that the poor thing is huddling on the ground to starve to death because I have broken its wing and cannot find it to end its misery, I just don't feel too good." He felt that sport at the expense of innocent animals was cruel. If food was needed fish should be caught in a seine and not dragged around by their mouths to a painful death. By and large the boys adopted much the same attitude, though when Frank volunteered for Officers' Training Camp in World War I he promptly earned an Expert Rifleman's badge for marksmanship on the rifle range. The back yard target practice paid off.

At about this time the Methodists in Texas began to operate a summer encampment at Epworth by the Sea. This was located on the beach just a few miles north of Corpus Christi, Texas. Tents were erected in long rows and were rented for family occupancy by the week. Religious services were held each morning and afternoon, with outstanding preachers and lecturers on the platform. In 1905 George and Mary decided to take a tent for a week.

And the preparations! Again the ladies had to consider clothes, but this time there were special complications. It was understood that the tent was only about seventy-five yards from the water's edge at high tide, and that surf bathing was taken for granted.*

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*The change in public attitudes toward vacations and recreation should be noted. On April 13, 1899 The Peoples' Era of San Marcos had bitingly remarked in its "Personal" column that "Mrs. ... /name given/ left the first of the week for her summer sojourn in West Virginia. She enjoys enviable privileges." Now church people were indulging themselves.

What about ladies bathing suits? Stores in San Marcos did not stock such articles for ladies. To complicate matters it was understood that it was not advisable to wait to buy them in Corpus Christi where the garments were sure to be expensive and where the supply of desirable styles might be exhausted at any one time. A sales lady at the leading dry goods store in San Marcos said that she would have a St. Louis house send patterns on special order direct to the customer. In the meantime the store would sell the cloth needed. Mary and Ethel placed their orders and in due time the flimsies arrived. Meanwhile the material to be used was a problem. It had to be proof against fading both in salt water and in fresh and also in strong sun light; also it had to retain certain qualities when wet.

The upper part of each suit covered the shoulders and fitted the neck closely, while the sleeves came down the upper arms about four inches — a bit risque but acceptable if all others were wearing similar garments. The lower garments, and of course there were two of these, were first, ample bloomers that came down below the knees. Then, lest these be too revealing when wet a skirt was worn that also came down to just below the knees. George protested vigorously that the bloomers were death traps. He said they would fill with water and make swimming impossible. However, decency had to be served. The ladies wore the whole outfits and were pleased to find that they were quite in style. None of them drowned and all insisted they had a rare good time.

The two hundred and fifty mile trip to Corpus Christi
Getting to the encampment was something of an experience.
was a journey to remember. Herbert stayed at home to
A forty-mile journey was made by train from San Marcos to San Antonio.
care for the farm.
After a wait of a few hours another train carried the party an additional one hundred and fifty miles to Corpus Christi. Herbert was to take care of the farm. He drove the family to town Friday afternoon. After an early supper in town, in itself a luxury and an unusual experience, the family entrained at about 7:00 P.M. to reach San Antonio an hour and a half later about 8:30. Next there was a wearying wait in a noisy station periodically bathed with coal smoke. At last, just before midnight the announcement was made that the cars for Corpus Christi were open and would leave in twenty minutes. The already tired family hurried to settle down as best they could in day coach seats for the rest of the night.

A large crowd was going down to the encampment so there were several extra coaches and a heavily increased amount of baggage to be handled. Midnight came and passed. Occasional starts and jolts simply indicated that new cars were being added to the already long string of coaches. At about one o'clock the journey began. Normally the trip took six hours but with the extra load of passengers and baggage entailed additional delays occurred all along the line and it was about 9:00 A.M. before the hungry, tired and dirty crowd reached Epworth. Some fore-sighted persons had brought along a midnight lunch to add the odor of stale food to those of so a hot night and coal smoke. perspiring bodies and stale food demanded that car windows remain open. Unfortunately the coal smoke and cinders flowed unceasingly down the sides of the train to enter the open and unscreened car windows.

Mary soon had a violent headache. Her regular headache powders seemed to have no effect. Finally a friend suggested that a sure remedy was to accompany one of the powders with a stiff drink of whisky. But whisky on a Methodist train on the way to a Methodist encampment! At his wits' end George agreed to try the remedy if the makings could be had. Soon a sympathetic train conductor suggested that the next stop was a junction where the train would stop twenty minutes to change passengers and handle baggage. He added that a saloon that observed irregular hours was close to the station. George made his way somewhat self consciously to the saloon and bought a pint. The medicine was administered with fair success, either because of the ingredients or because of the cumulative power of repeated doses.

Unfortunately George had been so concerned about his wife that he had been careless about putting the cork back in the bottle. With the joggling of the train the bottle had turned sideways in his hip pocket and the already loose cork had come out. The aroma spread through the car. His questionable purchase had been observed, and now he was reeking of the vile stuff. All other clothing was in suit cases that had been checked through to their destination so George had to suffer from the damning evidence even though he had derived no inner inspiration from his purchase.

After daylight it became evident that the train would be late in reaching its destination. Some of the young men of the party were

concerned that they were about to make their debut at the social center with a day's growth of beard on their faces. The only wash basin was at the front end of the car and in full view of the travellers. Was it indecent to shave in full view of the assorted ladies in the car? It was agreed that cleanliness was next to godliness; hence decency evidently took a lower rank than either. Also vanity was to be served. Shaving mugs and soap appeared and brushes stirred up a lather. Straight razors were taken out of cases and with legs spread wide to cushion the body against the lurching of the unpredictable train the swains one by one gallantly attacked the accumulated growth. Most of them were reasonably successful though several bloody blotches of lather and damaged chins attested to the seriousness of the undertaking. Most of the San Marcos delegation arrived clean shaven even though one of their older and bearded members appeared to be a questionable character.

On arrival George himself went quickly to encampment headquarters to verify tent assignments and get his wife some rest and quiet. At the office eyebrows were raised and one matron with frowning mien and rigid back hastily retreated from the registration desk rather than serve a character so obviously saturated with whisky. But finally the arrangements were completed.

The encampment grounds on North Beach were just beyond the limits of the city of 8,000 people (8,222 in 1910). Here was an excellent strand where the daily tide was only about eighteen inches with little danger of an undertow. Children could play safely.

The lecture and preaching programs offered were of high calibre and frequently had a distinct interdenominational trend that pleased George. Hunting for sea shells, bathing and boat trips were easy to arrange. Cooking for the family was at a minimum for it was discouraged by the authorities and meals were provided at modest rates in large dining halls. Beer joints, dance halls and honky tonks had been rigidly excluded from the area, but even so there was no way to enjoin the activities of Don Cupid who was reported to have done a thriving business.

All too soon the week came to an end. Loaded with sea shells, a somewhat increased sun burn and many new impressions the Long Branch travellers returned to San Marcos. There Herbert met them at the station to welcome them back to the farm.

One of the most pleasant features of community life was the periodic ice cream parties at private homes. Whenever Herbert and Ethel decided it was their turn to entertain they first bought special stationery from town. Next the invitations were laboriously written out by hand in strictly formal language: "Mr. Herbert and Miss Ethel Callcott request the honor of your presence ... etc., etc." Equally formal acceptances arrived promptly. Next the house was cleaned meticulously and the front yard trimmed. At the barns two or three stalls and the small cow lot set aside for horses of those guests who were to

"spend the night". When young ladies came from distances of from five to ten miles it was out of the question for them to make an unchaperoned trip with male escorts after eleven P.M. As a result young ladies who came from a distance were to stay overnight. Young swains could be relied upon to bring them to the party but logistic arrangements had to be made whereby the buggies of certain ones would be left for the girls to drive home the next morning in groups of two or three. The young men were expected to double up in the rest of the rigs to return to their homes immediately after the party.

There was cake baking galore. The chief problem, however, was the ice cream itself. Most of the families of the community had invested in a two-gallon cream freezer (churn). These marvelous contraptions had just recently come into the community life. Now, two or three extra freezers were borrowed to supplement the one on hand. Early on the morning of the appointed day — and pray for good weather in the meantime — one of the boys took a good team and a light wagon or hack to town. He carried along several cotton sacks, an old quilt or two, some surplus newspapers and some straw. The trip to town was reasonably slow to save the team. In town first the driver did any last minute shopping including the purchase of ice cream salt. Last of all he went to the ice factory and bought two two-hundred pound blocks of ice. These were wrapped in the sacks, quilts and newspapers and then packed in straw. Now the team was pushed to its limit to reach home quickly under the cloudless sky.

The ice cream itself was the product of modern science. The milk custard had already been prepared and was waiting. This was poured into ~~one of the~~ a two gallon metal cylinder shaped containers that stood on its end in a larger cypress bucket. A dasher was centered in the cylinder with one end projecting through a detachable lid. The revolving This dasher was activated or turned by a kind of differential joint operated by a crank at the side of the churn. Now the handle was slowly turned until the ice, which had been crushed and poured into the one and a half inch space between the cylinder and the outer bucket, cooled quickly on coming in contact with salt that was poured over it. This process, in turn, chilled the cylinder and its contents. As the cream began to freeze turning the handle became difficult. At this point the top was opened and the dasher removed. Next the top was replaced, the dasher hole plugged up and the whole covered with ice to await final use. Occasionally the drainage hole in the side of the cypress bucket clogged up. Then the salt water could not escape but flooded into the ice cream container. In such a case a two-gallon churn of cream was ruined.

At 8:00 o'clock the young couples began to arrive. The hour was set rather late so that the young men could get home from the fields and clean up before going for their lady friends (please do not call them "girl" friends). Now the success of the party depended largely on the skill and preparations of the hostess. Dancing was

unthinkable so the hostess had spent long hours in careful planning of a schedule of parlor games that varied from Spin-the-Plate to Fruit Basket and Post Office. Interspersed were intellectual contests such as "proverbs." One member of the group was sent out of the room. The rest agreed upon some well-known proverb whose words were distributed singly to those present in regular order. The person outside was called in and had the right to ask each person one question. The answer was required to be pertinent to the question asked but must include the assigned word from the proverb selected. A skillful answer might use the required word so as not to attract attention to it but relatively few of the contestants were able to do this. As soon as the proverb had been guessed by the questioner he indicated the person whose answer had given him the clue. Now that person had to leave the room and the game continued with the selection of another proverb.

Popular songs were sung, the ice cream was served, and the cakes eaten. A few more games followed until it was obvious that the boys were beginning to think of having to get up early the next morning. Expressions of appreciation and farewells followed while the spend-the-nighters remained. Once the crowd had left the girls who were staying for the night donned aprons, cleaned up the scraps, and washed the dishes; then retired to giggle for another hour or so before all was quiet.

Frank's diary for September 19, 1907 commented that fifteen young people of the community gathered at the George Rylander home to go on a hay ride to attend a church ice-cream party at Martindale. The crowd left their conveyances at the Rylanders and crowded into a hay filled wagon to drive seven or eight miles to the affair. Of course the departure was delayed and the return was later still. The diary laconically remarks that the writer got home at 2:25 A.M. Then, after three and a half hours sleep he "went to riding that old disc plow."

Evidently this affair had been one of those through which some group decided to raise money for a church organ, hymn books or some other enterprise.* Preparations were similar to those for a private party except that a large number of extra cakes were baked. Glistening white with curlicues of cocoanut sticking out all over, or a glossy brown chocolate, these were not simple pound cakes that looked like bread. They were glorious four-deckers.

About two o'clock a crowd of the young folks assembled to freeze the cream in churns collected from the community housewives.

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*This was probably similar to the one reported in The Hays County Times for September 9, 1904 under "Local News". The report read: "The Ladies of the Methodist Church will give an Ice Cream Supper at Martindale, Friday night, Sept. 23, for the purpose of helping to pay for the new seats in their church. Everybody invited. Everybody come."

When farm work was finished and supper over the families and hay-riders from neighboring communities began to arrive in buggies, carriages and wagons. A dish of ice cream and a generous slice of cake sold at the exorbitant price of fifteen cents — but there was the consolation that it was for a good cause. Hoarded nickles of the youngsters came out of hiding. If they could make it ten cents they could get a glass of sickeningly sweet pink lemonade. Young swains found their lady friends and rallied around.

When the ice cream had been eaten there came the climax of the evening. Several of the most impressive and attractive cakes, especially if they were the product of certain glamorous young ladies, were put up for auction. The young ladies hearts were in their mouths dreading the social catastrophe of having their cakes sell for a low price. At the same time the minds of their young admirers were more likely to be on their pocket books. If a young man failed to buy his best girl's cake he could not expect to be forgiven lightly. Yet mischievous pranksters could be expected to keep up the competitive bidding until the favored one had reached the absolute limit of his financial resources. A dollar a cake was considered to be the proper and average price but competitive young bucks occasionally pushed the going price of choice offerings up to three, four or five times that sum. The flattered maker could take pride in her accomplishment until she had become merely another married woman. Thereafter her product would have to sell on its merits.

Another contribution to community life took place when George and Mary and the two older children decided to give each other Christmas presents in the form of a tennis set. No one in the community had one but George understood that it was a gentleman's game. Each of the four ordered a racket and George bought the balls and net. All went to work to lay off the tennis court just to the east of the house. Thereafter the young folks of the community were invited to come over on Saturday afternoons for a game. Some had tennis shoes, but the others used regular shoes for the heels were low and the court was in primitive condition anyway. The result was a lot of fun though a Davis Cup champion might have had his reservations.

On occasion some cousin or girl friend of Ethel's would come to the farm for a visit. This would usually last for one or two weeks; and Ethel about once a year would go to visit one of them for a similar period. The visitor would arrive with a large trunk containing special built-in trays to carry the delicate and crushable petticoats, crinolines and organdies, to say nothing of milliner's creations with ostrich plumes whose normal width had been doubled or trebled by the tedious process of tying extra small shreds of plume to each original pending bit. Also, every properly garbed young lady needed a "merry widow" hat the diameter of whose brim might extend to a fearsome 24" to 30". And here

arose a religious issue. A revivalist preaching in the community gravely irritated many of the ladies when his fervor impelled him to ask that all ladies wearing hats having brims please remove them so that those occupying back seats could see the preacher. Some dared retort privately that this constituted indecent exposure in the Lord's house, while the evangelist's temerity was both praised and condemned.

Tennis was all very fine for the grown-ups but the younger boys preferred less genteel sports. A dilapidated water barrel or flour barrel was levied on for equipment as each boy armed himself with a stave and sallied forth to the fray. The object was to knock down the wasp nests that were so plentiful each fall. In retaliation the wasps made a straight dive at their tormentors. If they missed their objective they regularly circled back to the place of the destroyed home to gather for consultation.

From this beginning in which there were few human casualties the adventurers advanced to real sport. This was to attack a bumble-bees' nest. These creatures were more canny than wasps. Once they located an enemy they would twist and turn in pursuit of the foe with amazing persistence. Either the boy swatted the pursuer or the bumblebee was almost sure to claim the victory. In the latter case the victim was likely to rue the day that he initiated the contest. If a bumblebees' nest was captured the honey, which mere parents said was sorry stuff, was known to the boys to be the finest nectar produced in nature.

In the summer of 1906 Herbert, then twenty-three years of age, began to make regular trips each Sunday to San Marcos to call on a young lady who worked in one of the leading dry goods stores of the town. Later she was brought out to visit the family and all was arranged for the wedding to take place on December 20th.

Herbert's entries in his diary give interesting insights into conditions of the time. After renting from his Father for three years he had saved some money. He now rented about one hundred and eighty acres of land (155 in cultivation) and a good four-room tenant house near the Long Branch community from Mr. George E. Rylander. He supplied his own teams, tools, feed and seed to raise cotton and corn, with a third of one and a fourth of the other going to the land owner. He paid $1,000 cash for animals, plows and other tools. Furniture was ordered for the new home from Montgomery Ward and Company. Gifts from home and from the neighbors provided chickens and a hog ready to kill for winter meat. A cow was bought for $25.00 as well as and 11 1/4 cords of mesquite wood for $19.50 though he had to haul it for himself. While he was getting the new place ready for his bride he slept in the house but took his meals at a neighbor's home for $10.00 per month.

After the wedding in San Marcos on the appointed day the young couple left immediately for their new home in the country. Soon after they arrived the young bloods of the community appeared in force for an old fashioned chivaree. They nailed one end of waxed strings and wires to the front door. Next tin cans with small holes in the bottom were strung on the wires and pulled back and forth to produce weird, screeching noises amplified by the door as a sounding board. Sticks hammering on dish pans and other noise making contraptions and a few raucuous shouts added to the din that was the local welcome to the new home makers.

On January 9th the newly weds received their first cash income when Herbert sold butter made by the bride at 20¢ per pound, and a few dozen eggs at the fine price of 25¢ per dozen, for eggs were scarce in mid-winter. In early March, while work was slack on the farm, one of the neighbors decided to clean his open-air tank of silt accumulated over the preceding year or so. Herbert was glad to help a neighbor and also to acquire a little extra cash so he took a good team and scraper (drag pan) and worked on the job for a week at $2.50 per day for man and team.

Unfortunately even prosperous country life was not simply a matter of hard work mixed with occasional pleasant social occasions. Sickness had to be faced. Malaria or "chills and fever" was a common

scourge that attracted little comment. The treatment was simple. Frank's diary records that one day "they were hauling calomel" into him, and the next that they were doing the same with quinine.

In 1905 there was a yellow fever scare. Local newspapers regularly reported on the epidemic in New Orleans (see The Hays County Times) and in Seguin (The Seguin Enterprise). By October 4th 400 deaths were reported out of 3,100 cases. Fortunately the epidemic did not reach Texas but the people reviewed possible remedies and treatments. The mosquito had already been identified as the carrier but old remedies were not forgotten. One of these that still enjoyed popularity in some quarters had been reported in The Luling Sentinel as early as September 5, 1878. Under the caption of "How to Prevent Yellow Fever" the paper reported that one Mr. Warren, surgeon at the army post at Brenham, Texas a few years before had protected his men so well that very few of them contracted the disease though which the malady was rampant in the neighboring community. His success was attributed to the daily administration to each man of a tablespoon full of white mustard seed in a "drachm or two" of whisky.

Even more feared because of its frequent appearance was typhoid fever. One of the I. B. Rylander boys contracted a serious case of it. The first bout lasted the regulation three weeks but was followed by a relapse and a second round of the disease. The young patient was delirious periodically and before long the family had begun

to feel the strain of the situation. Thereupon four men of the community got together. Each night two of them took turns "sitting up" with the patient — in this way the members of the family and the one professional nurse could get some rest. George took his place on one of the two-man teams. He had an early supper at home, then drove to the Rylander home where his horse was stabled and fed. Then he and his partner took turns throughout the night watching the patient. If the boy was restless both remained on duty the whole time. Then the next night two other men took over. Thus the four alternated. By the end of about a month of this the young man showed signs of improvement.

Before too long the situation was reversed. Frank contracted the disease in May 1907. When the doctor confirmed the nature of the ailment George asked him to bring out a trained nurse from town. The next day a young lady appeared in her fine starched white dress to take charge of the case, even to preparing food for the patient. Once more a relay system of neighbor relief took over. For her round-the-clock responsibility and all-day personal service the young nurse got $3.00 per day. Fortunately the case proceeded in regular fashion with a single cycle of infection only.

The epidemic became quite widespread and soon word arrived that Herbert was sick. He had married six months before and his young wife was pregnant. Frank, just out of bed himself, took charge of Herbert's farm but the chief Mexican worker on the place was afraid

of the fever and soon found an excuse to leave. To make matters worse spring plowing and cotton chopping were at that stage where neglect would seriously damage the young crop. As soon as ~~About the second week~~ when the diagnosis of the disease was definite one of the members of the Long Branch Sunday School mentioned the situation. Promptly each of the men agreed to give a day's work. One young man had recently been sick himself and was not present when the plans were made so the group agreed to say nothing to him. The young wife was notified of the plans but was positively informed that the workers would not eat a bite of food, though they would appreciate a cup of hot coffee at mid day.

On the agreed upon morning wagons began to reach the farmyard at daybreak. Each was pulled by a team and carried a plow or cultivator. Two very practical housewives came along and brought food for dinner for the workers. But this was no social occasion. They cooked the coffee in the kitchen but strictly stayed out of the house otherwise. Food was served on the gallery as the men came and went quietly. The young man who had been deliberately left out of the planning was there with the rest for he had heard of the arrangements and refused to stay away. One neighbor, the Flemings, sent three cultivators with as many drivers and teams; George Rylander and the Watsons sent two teams each and at least five others sent one or two

men to plow, hoe cotton, or do other work for from one to three days as needed. The crop was saved and Herbert's farm diary shows that he harvested forty-four bales of cotton from 140 acres planted. In addition sixteen acres of corn yielded thirty bushels to the acre and four acres of cane (sorghum) gave him a "good" crop.

Horses were not very good for plowing in that climate. As a result most Texas farms kept only two or three for riding and for use in carriages and buggies. The mustang or Spanish pony was entirely too light and too temperamental for work on the farm. He wanted action and would tear himself to pieces nervously when employed in slow and heavy farm work. The favored animals for such heavy work were mules. Oddly enough with all his experimenting George was never interested in raising farm animals (chickens were different). He did not have enough cows to justify owning a bull — also his early experiences with range bulls had not endeared those animals to him. When a cow was dry he secured the services of some neighbor's animal.* Each spring he would buy a couple of small pigs to raise

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*A somewhat typical advertisement of the day attempts a touch of frontier humor:

"Chief Geronimo

U C
W. P. B.
B 4 U
R 2 Late

He has the noted Trotting and All-Purpose Stallion. A fine Jack and the Company Jersey /b/ull. All will make the Season at Fair Grounds. Pay when Product comes.

--W. P. Brittain

--The Seguin Enterprise, June 7, 1901.

for meat, and when another horse or mule was needed he sought out a horse trader.

In 1907 George bought an extra fine pair of mules, big fellows that were excellent for use in a wagon or in the fields. For these he paid $100 each. In addition he needed several good sturdy work animals. Periodically a mule trader came through the country bringing in animals from Missouri. He was known to handle reliable mules and to be as honest as horse traders were ever expected to be. Just when George was interested word came that the trader was making his annual trip with a lot of young mules, rather on the small side, but advertised as "broken," i.e., accustomed to harness. George left word in town that when the trader made his appearance he wanted to see him. Evidently the message was delivered for in a week or two a letter arrived from the man himself. He stated that he would come by the farm on a certain date.

When the trader arrived he brought about a dozen young mules, as well as various older animals that he had taken in trade on previous deals and which he disposed of to Mexican workers who would pay small sums for them. The proposal was for the trader to take two of George's mules that were too old for heavy work and to sell him six young ones. These were vigorous animals that had never worked and were not too accustomed to being handled. The Mexican renters were to use the animals in the field so they were

as much interested in the proceedings as George himself. In fact, two of the renters were each allowed to pick out a pair of the young mules with which they would like to work. After half a day of strenuous consideration and bargaining the deal was struck. The trader was to take the two old animals and was to receive $60.00 each for the six young ones.

But no money changed hands at this point. Instead the young animals were placed in George's barns until the following morning. If at that time George was still satisfied the next morning, the money would be paid; if not there would be no sale. The reason for the precaution was that professional horse traders were known to be knowledgeable chaps who were not above the administration of certain types of inspiration to an animal to give him a false appearance of vigor and enthusiasm. The effects of these drugs could be expected to wear off overnight so farmers regularly kept purchased animals in their own barns for from twelve to twenty-four hours before making any payment. In this case the young animals seemed to retain all their skittishness and meanness so the deal went through.

In 1907 the inflow of Germans into the countryside from Seguin and New Braunfels left the Callcott farm isolated. The nearest English speaking neighbors were in the Long Branch community three miles to the north. The old restlessness of the frontiersmen in response to crowded communities now reasserted itself as reports circulated of

virgin opportunities in new parts. Ranches in East Texas were being broken up into farms where the bonanza rice was holding out promises of wealth to new settlers. One or two of the Long Branch families answered the call of this siren.

More attractive to others were the reports of the breaking up of ranches toward the south and in the Kingsville area. This was becoming cotton land. Also west of San Antonio there was another and even newer movement. In that land where over the years there had been scant barely enough rainfall even to support ranching there now came a series of wet seasons. A few farmers had planted cotton and found that excellent crops were made on the surprisingly fertile soil that required very little grubbing. This very situation should have provided a warning, for the scanty mesquite growth was mute testimony to the fact that there had not been enough moisture to support larger trees. Of four Rylander families at Long Branch three decided to leave for new lands, and another kept the home farm but moved to San Marcos to live. The arrangements were easily made, for the thrifty German settlers stood ready to buy the farms at good prices.

It should be remembered that Long Branch folk were of frontier stock. The women did not think in terms of places where doctors and dentists were available — and such things as hospitals were only resorted to for extreme surgical cases. These women were still ready to face new conditions as their mothers had done. They

expected to become pregnant every year, or at least every two years. Their families were large and births more than made up for high death rates. True, malaria wore them down and few reached old age. However, the few who did last to the age of antibiotics and modern medicine were then able to defy Father Time for a remarkable period. A case in point was Mrs. George Rylander. Her first husband died leaving her with two children. George Rylander's wife also died leaving him with two children. The two then married and produced seven more children. In the meantime they became restless at Long Branch and moved to Blanco, north of San Marcos. Not liking the place they moved again to Sabinal and still later to the area south of San Antonio. In the 1950's the old lady celebrated her 100th birthday. Her children had a special luncheon for her, then took her thirty-five miles to San Antonio for a second family gathering. Getting home late on the summer's night a granddaughter-in-law suggested that the old lady must be tired and would probably like to go to bed promptly. "Yes," was the answer, "I am a bit tired and will go to bed as soon as I have watered my garden."

Herbert became interested in the Sabinal district which was located about sixty-five miles west of San Antonio. George was not at all sure of the wisdom of the move and for himself longed for the idealized stability of the old British Empire. His reading indicated

that there was a great development in western Canada in the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta. Inquiries brought glowing reports from real estate companies that were advertising for immigrants from the United States who would go north to make fortunes in Canadian wheat. The advertisements insisted that newly developed early maturing varieties of grain promised high yields on lands that were still ridiculously cheap.

The problem of facing a new frontier did not faze a man who had migrated to Texas from Old England in 1886. Realistically he felt that there might be some disorders and reckless characters in the new land admitted but he relied on the prestige of the Old Empire and of the Northwest Mounted Police to hold things in line. Mary was not enthusiastic about that cold climate but she too felt a longing for the old idealized society whose virtues might be recaptured in Canada. Not only that but she came from a country where a man was the head of his household, and now for twenty years more she had lived in a man's world in Texas. She would go where George thought best. This undercurrent of love for the Old Country inevitably carried over to the children. Even the youngest, when he was a child of five years of age was asked by a relative stranger who he was, answered: "I'se a little Englishman."

It was decided that Canada would be the next stop. First of course the farm in Guadalupe County had to be sold. One of the prosperous German neighbors agreed to buy the land so George at the

age of fifty made his plans to go north to Chicago and then on to Canada to find a new home. Next he was ~~He then planned~~ to return, collect his family and make the long trek. At this point came an unexpected snag. Sadly one morning just before George was to leave on his trip the would-be purchaser came to the house to say that he could not go through with the deal. He had been to San Marcos to make the final arrangements only to be told that the bank could not let him have the money as tentatively promised. He was a substantial citizen and knew his credit was good so he had hastened to Seguin and to New Braunfels only to receive similar answers. The trouble was the "Roosevelt Panic", as the depression of 1907 was called in some parts. For the time being credit was so restricted that the banks were delaying all new loans, regardless of the credit of the potential borrowers.

Herbert had already made most of his arrangements for the move to Sabinal but he had an immediate need for cash for a payment of $500 he was due to make. Even with George's security the banks could not do anything. George then went to a German friend who, on George's personal security loaned the money. He was well known to have little confidence in banks so his money was not there. If a neighbor was trustworthy and in need his reserves made their appearance from sources unknown.

By the end of the year continued reports from the country around Sabinal and Uvalde indicated that this cheap land was really

good for cotton planting. The money panic had passed and credit was again available. Another factor arose in connection with the two younger boys. Frank had reached the point where he could get no further instruction at Long Branch and Wilfrid was approaching the same stage. Family after family was leaving the community. Herbert was enthusiastic about his new home at Sabinal where he had bought 238 acres of land at $35.00 per acre even though it was only three miles from town. Approximately half of his purchase was in cultivation and the other half was in scrub mesquite. With a good reputation of his own Herbert soon bade fair to become a substantial citizen of the new community.

George and Mary went to visit Sabinal in April, 1908 and decided to move there instead of to far away and completely unknown Canada.

Nearly all of the Guadalupe County farm was in cultivation and could be expected to yield of a third of a bale of cotton to the acre, with no fertilizer expense. If this was sold at nine cents per pound the gross income would amount to $2,500 to $3,000 per year. Much of the household food was raised on the farm, and occasional sales of corn. kaffir corn and chickens provided a reasonably safe average cash income (net) of $1,500 per year.

With his penchant for figuring George decided that he and Mary could live comfortably if they had a guaranteed income of $1,000

per year. Certainly if it had not been for the school situation and the break-up of the Long Branch community they would have been reluctant to leave the home they had established and which was obviously prospering.

Once more it appeared that two neighbors, Paul and Wilhelm Henk, would buy the farm.* This time they had no trouble making arrangements at the bank. The price agreed upon for the farm including the house and barns but not the equipment or live stock was $65.00 per acre. The brothers paid $4,500 in cash and the balance in annual payments terminating in December 1911. The new eight-room house of which the family was so proud was cut up into three pieces to provide small tenant houses. The future Columbia University language professor wrote in his diary for February 4, 1908: "Father & Mother went to Seguin to fix up the papers about the farm, to-day the farm is Messrs Paul and Wilhelm Hank [Henk] and not G. H. Callcott's."

Here was the end of a chapter. For the last few years George and Mary had adjusted themselves to something of the status of country gentry as enjoyed in the Old Country. And the prospects for the future were good. Recurring "bad" years could be expected but improvements had been manifold in the last decade. Now the

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*Deed Record Book No. 31, p. 49 for Guadalupe County at Seguin Texas shows that Paul Henk bought 80 acres and his brother Wilhelm the remaining 112 38/100 acres.

foundations so painfully laid over twenty years were deserted and once more a new life was faced in a new community. Probably George and Mary never analyzed the exact reasons for their move. Later some of the children said that Mary wanted to be near her first born; others said that both of them wanted better educational opportunities for the two younger boys; others that they wanted to be near and more congenial neighbors. More likely the correct answer would be an unknown combination of all of these reasons.