

X. The End of an Era

For several months launching the chicken business kept George and the boys fully occupied. There were coops, brooder houses and pens to be constructed as well as shipping crates to be made. Meanwhile chicks were hatching and the never ending job of cleaning the chicken houses began. At the same time an eye was to be kept on the farms.

There was little use for a buggy horse in town so George bought a bicycle on which one of the boys could ride out to look at the farms. Frank by this time spoke Spanish much better than his Father, and Wilfrid could get along in the language rather well. In addition, Frank at seventeen to twenty years of age knew farm problems thoroughly.

In good weather the bicycle trip of twelve miles each way was not difficult but when those unpaved roads were muddy the trip became complicated. The route to the farms followed a main public highway for about five miles, then branched off on a secondary

road and through private fields and a ranch or two. The last few miles wound through mesquite pastures. Wheels of passing vehicles frequently tore off projecting branches from the scrubby trees and tossed them onto the road. A bicycle rider could easily dodge occasional branches but frequently thorns from half an inch to an inch long were left in the road. They were almost invisible to a rider and when a bicycle tire ran over an upturned one the result was a puncture.

The boys always carried a puncture mending kit. It was composed of a kind of hypodermic needle attached to a handle; the whole being about six inches long. Two inches from the end of the needle was a movable hook, and the point of the needle, not hollow, was cleft. Now the job was to stretch a small rubber band from the mending kit back and forth between the cleft in the point of the needle and the hook at the base of the needle. When eight or ten strands of rubber were in place and stretched tight the whole end of the instrument was immersed in a bottle of liquid rubber cement. While the cement was still wet and slick the tip of the needle was inserted in the puncture hold carrying one end of the taut rubber bands with it. Once in place a flip of the thumb detached the hook which slid forward to release the rubber bands on the outside. A twisting turn of the needle as it was withdrawn released the bands on the inside so that they contracted to form a tight bundle of rubber on both outside and inside of the tire. After about ten minutes the cement was dry. Next the rider pumped up the tire with a hand pump and was on his way after a loss of about fifteen minutes.

On one occasion Frank had to go to one of the farms after leaving school at 4:00 o'clock so it was dark before he could start home. To ride a bicycle through those pastures at night was impossible without a light for the paths seldom proceeded more than a few feet in a straight line. Fortunately he carried a bicycle lamp. It included a small carbide container with a water reservoir above it. By turning a pet cock the water was allowed to drip into the carbide. This generated a gas which flowed through a metal tube to a small burner in a chamber backed by a reflector and with a protecting glass window in front. When lit with a match and the front window closed to protect the flame from the wind a very good light was provided. It was a never ending mystery to the Mexican families how this gadget burned water to make a light. The whole idea was contrary to nature and smacked of black magic.

Meanwhile George continued his experiments. He again tried to raise grapes but found the climate too hot and dry, especially when he fertilized them with the powerful chicken compost. He next considered the idea of olive culture, saying that his reading indicated that the climate of west Texas was similar to that of the parts of Spain where olives were successfully grown. However, he was unable to find any place where young trees were available and that venture was dropped.

Unfortunately for all farmers the climate of the country returned to its normal rainfall cycle after 1908. Herbert's farm diary

dramatically tells the story. In 1908, the first year Herbert was in Sabinal, his day by day farm record recorded 38 $\frac{13}{16}$ inches of rain. In spite of the fact that he was just getting started in a new country, in spite of a grasshopper (locust) plague in the spring that ruined several acres of young cotton, in spite of a late front on April 30th that killed forty acres of young cotton that had to be planted over, and in spite of fourteen inches of rain in August and September to handicap the picking season, he still made forty-one bales of cotton on 160 acres of land.

For 1909 two accounts of rainfall vary slightly. One recorded 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches and the other 16 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches of rainfall. Herbert harvested a meager twenty-eight bales from 180 acres planted. The next year brought an even seventeen inches of rain and a crop of forty-one bales from 190 acres. He also noted that he had cut all but the best of his corn while still green so as to save a little fodder before the plants died from drought.

On June 10th the diary reports that the temperature was 106 and that the intense heat was killing his corn tassels. Three weeks later it states that the daily temperature varied day after day from 100 to 108 degrees. One patch of his uncut corn yielded exactly twenty bushels of nubbins with shriveled grains that no buyer would make a bid on. The diary continues "about $\frac{1}{2}$ of my cane has headed out pretty good and the other is not more than 2 ft. high." His milo

maize was better and kaffir corn still held out some promise as late as July 1st. In 1911 Herbert harvested thirty-five bales of cotton from 220 acres of land.

The grasshopper plague mentioned for 1908 struck this new country periodically. The insects laid their eggs in the ranch lands, then after an uncertain number (so far as the residents knew) of years millions of the wingless creatures two to three inches in length hatched out. They usually appeared about May or June to devour everything in sight. The ranchers paid little attention to them but they spelled ruin for the farmers. Sticks and staves were used to beat them to death. Trenches were plowed and poisoned meal scattered at the bottom of each trench took care of tens of thousands. To fight them was a messy, dirty job but the season's crops were at stake.

Another climatic hazard was recorded on February 20, 1912 when a sand storm struck. The wind "blew the field so bad that it filled up the furrows so that I will have to lay off the rows again. It drifted the soil up 2 feet high in places." What a climate for a man like George who had taken his first farming lessons on the foggy and ever-wet Yorkshire downs!

Another atmospheric experience came one spring soon after the Callcotts reached Sabinal. High above the Edward's Plateau

(the Hill Country) vigorous cold winds encountered warm incoming and moisture laden Gulf air. The resulting swirling storm generated hail at a very high altitude. Pieces of ice whirled around until they congealed in huge jagged lumps. These were few in number but reached three inches or more across. When they plummeted from a few thousand feet in the air they became lethal weapons. If one hit a carriage roof it crashed right through. Old shingle roofs on houses were badly damaged and small animals on the range were occasionally killed. Yes, a vigorous climate that could send the thermometer to 110 degrees on a July day when boys enjoyed trying to fry eggs on the cement sidewalk in front of the post office (most of the stores still had wooden platforms, or galleries, in front of them). Yet the nights were usually cool for the humidity was low.

Herbert was an excellent farmer who lived on his land and did much of his work himself. He could eke out a living. George, living in town, was not so fortunate. To make matters worse it was next to impossible to get a proper price for the cotton that was raised. The general merchandise stores in town "carried" most of the farmers for their supplies for the year. Each of these stores had a cotton buyer associated with it and automatically took it for granted that the farmer or renter would sell his cotton to the store which had extended him credit. There was very little competition between the buyers for ^{all of them} each knew the farmers of the community and

where each did his business. By a gentleman's agreement they were ^{made} ~~inclined~~ to make little more than token bids for the cotton of a farmer who traded with another company. This left the poor fellow at the mercy of one buyer. Another complication ^{arose from} was the fact that all bids were based on a standard price for cotton graded as "middling" in quality. ^{For} Other grades had the prices ^{were} adjusted upwards or downwards from this base. The technical differences between the grades took a skilled eye to determine. As a result the buyers tended to err on the low side in their grading, and this still further shaved the price received by the unskilled producer.

The cotton brokers, usually in Galveston, who bought the cotton from the Sabinal buyers of course knew the local situation and so kept their daily telegraphic base offers on the conservative side. At the end of the day each local buyer telegraphed a statement of his purchases and received credit for that number of bales which he was obligated to deliver at the given price to the shipping point. With the brokers' base authorizations low, the local buyers inclined to grade the cotton down as to classification, and the lack of competition between buyers, the farmers had a "poor time" of it.

George was never one to take such a situation quietly. He wrote to a major cotton broker and secured a contract to serve as a local buyer in Sabinal. He passed out word at the gins that he would start buying on a certain date. The old buyers smiled and

kept their own council. When the day arrived they made their usual bids, apparently expecting George to play the game and simply cut himself in for a share without putting up too much competition. Not so. On the given date George used the full authorization extended by his broker and bought practically every bale offered for sale in town that day. His prices were from a quarter to a half a cent a pound above any that had been paid locally for several days. By closing time the telegraph lines were very busy. Within a week the established buyers had roused their headquarters and better offers began to come through which were now passed on to their customers. Thus prices settled down on a slightly higher level.

As might have been expected the farmers soon drifted back to their old merchant buyers. If the latter paid as much as the new competitor and the old buyers would soon have to be asked for next year's credit it was just common sense for farmers to keep in good standing with them. For the rest of the season George continued to buy in small quantities. The chief accomplishment was not that he made money buying cotton but that the price level for the crop sold in Sabinal had been raised. At the same time he got a better price for his own cotton than he would have received otherwise.

(Extra space)

the
the
the



Another of George's experiments was on the farms themselves. He and ~~some of his neighbors~~ ^{decided} determined to plant ^{half of the} ~~land~~ ^{land on two small farms in} oats rather than cotton. This small grain could be planted in the fall. Once sprouted it could subsist during the cool winter weather and set its roots. With a few showers in the spring it would rush to maturity before hot weather struck.

In that warm climate the oat harvest came about a month before the end of the school year. Thus it was that Frank for the last year or two he was at home, and Wilfrid thereafter, came in for an interesting experience. George planted a substantial oat crop on two of the farms and bought a reaper for the harvest. The machine had a seven-foot blade like an old-fashioned mowing machine. A revolving overhead reel laid the standing grain across a shuttling blade that cut the stalks at the base and then pushed them back onto a revolving belt. The belt carried them to an automatic binder that tied them into sheaves and tossed them to the ground to dry for a day or two. Later they were shocked to await the threshing machine.

When the oats were ready to cut one of the boys left school. On the following Sunday afternoon he went to the farm where the harvest was to begin. A quilt on top of a pile of hay in the barn provided a good bed. At daylight on Monday a tenant's wife

could be relied upon to bring out a huge cup of steaming hot coffee. Oh, it was cheap coffee ^{laced} with a generous supply of chicory, but its strength substituted for flavor. This, added to the sandwiches brought from home, made a good breakfast.

Pedro, who was the Mexican foreman of the farm, harnessed two teams of mules (three teams if the crop was heavy) and hitched them to the reaper that had been pulled to the edge of the oat field. ^{while} The rear team was a steady one, and Pedro himself ^{managed the animals riding} rode one of the ^{one of the} rear mules ^{re-driver} while he drove the teams. On the machine sat the boy to handle the height of the mower blade, to adjust the reel and keep the oats from clogging the conveyor belt and the binder.

The machine started with a clatter — and the expected happened. The lead team of young mules bolted straight across the field. In fact, the starting point for the machine had been selected with just that in mind. Pedro was an excellent driver so he let the animals go but steadily guided them into the heaviest part of the crop while ^{but at all costs} he kept them headed straight across the half mile long field lest a sudden turn wreck the machine. The rider kept the blade at the lowest point that was reasonably safe. The heavier the weight of the grain the greater the drag on the team. But if the blade got ^{the blade was almost sure} too near the ground and struck either a stump or a stone the machine ^{to be} smashed, and the whole machine might be ruined. On this ride there was little chance to readjust the height of the blade for special obstacles. It was a case of set it, hang on and hope for the best.

The wild ride cut an irregular swath down the center of the field but by the time the outfit reached the far end the teams were becoming used to the noise and had been brought under control. They remained skittish for the rest of the morning but after that rapidly settled down to another chore.

At noon, and again at night ~~came welcome hot coffee from~~
brought out welcome hot coffee.
the Mexican women, [^] With darkness came absolute sleep in spite of occasional near-by coyote howls. By 5:30 the next morning all was astir as two Mexican men came out to the barn to feed the teams and milk the cow. Outraged muscles might protest the previous day's activities and the rump that had bounced over that oat field was hardly suitable for comfortable sitting for some days to come, but the work went on. By ^{saw} sunup [^] the outfit was again in the field. By Saturday noon the job was done so the rider returned to town for a bath, clean clothes and a good night's sleep accompanied by generous meals of home cooking.

Sunday afternoon the boy returned to the same job at the other farm. Over the week-end the reaper had been transferred and was waiting at the second job. Thus another week, similar to the first, passed and the crop was harvested. A threshing machine made its rounds a few weeks later but it had a complete crew of its own. The farmer simply provided wagons to haul the grain from the shocks in the field to the machine and to take the threshed oats

either to his barns or to market. The regular farm workers did this. During the two weeks of reaping the boys heard no English and soon found they were thinking in Spanish. Frank was later to remark that this was another ^{step} in his becoming so interested in the Spanish language that he was to pursue it as a career.

Usually the oat crop was fairly good but from time to time the spring rains failed to cooperate. One year the yield was a meager seven bushels to the acre ^{and} ~~of grain~~ that was more chaff than kernels. At this stage Mary, the woman who stood ever in the background, again took a hand in the family economic picture. The stores of Sabinal no longer used home made work garments such as she had made at Kyle. She did try this but could not compete with the new commercial product which retailed at forty-five cents for work shirts and one dollar for pants. Instead she undertook to make men's ties, and then began to crochet all kinds of center pieces, dresser sets, and even made lace for sale. Next she began to make women's and children's clothes. Soon she had all she could do and once more a trickle of ready cash came in for otherwise unattainable items.

In 1911 the school board decided to add an eleventh grade to the system ^{beginning with the fall} for the 1911-1912 term. Frank was finishing the tenth grade. If he returned for another year he could finish the eleventh grade but would have no money for the college education he was determined

to secure. In any case he would have to take entrance examinations when he reached college. As a result he decided to go to work while he continued to study on the side.

In these renewed hard times George had no cash with which to help the boy. Anyway he felt that a young man should make his own career. He gave hearty encouragement to Frank and told him he would sign his note at the bank if he had to borrow money to go to college. He had done the same for Herbert when he wanted to marry and start out on his own. At this time Frank was twenty years of age (not far from George's age when he went to London). For two or three years he had worked at a local store on Saturdays and during the Christmas holidays. The merchant now told him he would hire him for full time work during the fall and until Christmas. After that, however, employment would be uncertain. As was feared, when the holidays were over business did not justify the extra help.

At this point a new situation opened up. On April 25, 1911 Ethel, long an active church worker, married a young Methodist preacher by the name of Charles W. Rylander. After the church ceremony the guests repaired to the house for a reception. Meanwhile a surprising array of presents had arrived. This was the peak of the era of cut glass — so beautiful and so fragile! The house was inundated with cut glass goblets, bowls and pitchers. Somehow the givers overlooked the fact that the proud recipients were to become a migrant Methodist

preacher^s family ^{and} who would seldom live in any one community for more than two or three years. But so it was — and the presents were greatly appreciated. Other more practical gifts in the form of rugs, pictures and the like also appeared but cut glass was the center of attention at the moment.

In the fall, before Frank found himself out of a job, the newlyweds had been moved by the West Texas Conference of the Methodist Church to a charge on the outskirts of San Antonio. Frank eagerly accepted an offer to live with them while he sought work in the city. He soon heard that Joske's, one of the largest department stores in town, needed salesmen for a January sale. Success. This gave him \$9.00 for a six-day week, enough to pay \$10.00 per month for his room and two meals a day. Unfortunately at the end of the week his pay envelope contained a courteous note stating that the sale was over and his services were no longer needed.

The next morning the Sunday paper carried an announcement that an excellent opportunity was waiting for "energetic workers" who would report to a given address. Bright and early he was on hand. This proved to be an agency for magazine subscriptions. He was given sample^s copies and elementary instructions on solicitation. He was to peddle a package offer which included The Peoples Popular Monthly, The Peoples Home Journal, The Mothers Magazine and The Pictorial Review. He was to collect thirty cents when he sold each

subscription, while the subscriber agreed to pay twenty cents each week thereafter. His diary states: "I worked all morning and got one subscription. When I got a subscription I made 30¢, the first payment was my commission. I bought 5¢ worth of bananas (4) for my lunch and that evening afternoon I spent looking for a position." No jobs were to be found. Two days later he went back to the magazine company and decided to try another combination of magazines. Similar results. "...I had paid 20¢ for car fair fare so I thought 10¢ for about eight hours work was not enough pay for me, so I quit."

More job hunting. On Sunday evening he went to the young peoples (Epworth League) service at his brother-in-law's church. There he met a gentleman who told him to come to a certain address the next morning. Once more he was present when the doors opened. This time he was employed as a grocery clerk for a six-day week at \$7.00 per week. The store opened at 6:30 in the morning and closed at 7:30 to 8:00 in the evening. The manager's wife possessed an uncertain temperament and baited unmercifully the three boys who worked in the store. At the end of the week the country lad was again told that his services were no longer needed.

Once more the local church provided a contact with a business man. This time Frank was told to report to a rental agency in the center of the city. On arrival he found that the vacancy was for a

young man with a bicycle who could ride around town and collect rent money from tenants. Frank at once scouted around and bought a second-hand bicycle for \$17.00. Then he returned and said that he was ready to go to work. His initiative seemed to impress the manager who hired the persistent chap at a straight figure of \$1.00 per day for a six-day week. Later the salary increased somewhat and small additional commissions added a few dimes per week to the college fund.

The new collector soon learned to deal with artists at dissimulation. He accepted complaints gracefully, showed properties to prospective tenants, and prepared rental lists for office use and for advertising. One diary entry states laconically: "Mrs. _____ also got 5¢ of ice this morning but had it charged to the new tenant."

All this time Frank was active in church work but visited Apostolic, Episcopalean, Roman Catholic and other places of worship throughout the city. George's catholicity of taste was showing itself in his son. Evenings were regularly spent studying his eleventh grade school texts. Frank, however, like his Father was a social creature and attractive young ladies were not to be ignored. Diary entries report visits to picture shows (instruments of the devil said many church folk), or walks home after evening services. One entry reads: "Miss Grace is about seventeen and has dark hair and eyes and is Full of life. If I don't have a good time it will not be my fault."

By the fifth of September he had ^{made preliminary} completed arrangements for acceptance at Southwestern University at Georgetown, Texas. He was to take the entrance examinations on arrival and then to complete such background work as might be required in the preparatory division of the college. Meanwhile he was to register for college credit as rapidly as he could. He sold the bicycle for \$10.00, bade farewell to the office where he had evidently become quite popular, and was on his way.

At twenty-one he entered college from which he was to graduate in the regular four years in spite of the deficiencies that had to be made up. In the meantime he married a wife, became a student instructor ^{on graduation} and then started teaching in a public school in East Texas, ^{World War I broke} only to ~~cut so he volunteered for military service~~ ^{volunteer for service in World War I} from which he emerged as a Captain of Infantry. Then on to Columbia University where he became successively: graduate student, instructor, assistant professor, associate professor and full professor. Frank, like Herbert and Ethel, was on his way. This left the youngest boy only at home.

While Frank was going to the city to get a job Wilfrid was finishing his ninth grade in high school at the age of sixteen. After the oat harvest there was little to be done on the farms ^{where} for the renters carried on the work and did not want to be unduly interrupted by the owner's son. The chicken business was declining so he set out to get

a summer job if possible. Soon he heard that a local butcher's shop needed a delivery boy with a bicycle. At once he applied and received instructions to be ready for work on the following Monday morning.

The alarm clock was set on the early side of 4:30. Twenty minutes later (he was due to be there at 5:00) he was at the door. In a few minutes the owner appeared and opened up. A blast of stifling air, more than a little suggestive of over-ripe meat, was encouraged to leave the shop by opening both front and back doors. By 5:30 the butcher had cut and packaged the chops that had been ordered by the local hotel for delivery before 6:00 o'clock. Ice boxes at the hotel were inadequate so the owner preferred for the butcher to deliver meat each morning in time for breakfast. Another order was to go to a local restaurant. Also there were usually two or three private orders for breakfast chops or steaks. By 6:15 the deliveries were completed and the boy was back to sweep out the shop.

Next he cleaned up the barbecue pit and started the fire. This was simply an outdoor furnace. Two parallel brick walls about two feet high and five feet long were open at one end and terminated in a short chimney at the other. Across the walls was fitted a barbecue pan about 30" x 60". The pan itself was caked with grime and soot on the outside but was reasonably clean on the inside — and of course the heat kept it thoroughly sterilized. Into the pan went meat scraps that were not particularly attractive for sales purposes, and maybe some

that were "on the edge". After being cooked for three or four hours in a sauce substantially laced with vinegar and peppers they made a tasty dish. By 8:00 o'clock the fire was well started and the meat was in the pan. The boy was free to go home for breakfast.

At 10:00 he was back to deliver roasts to the hotel and miscellaneous orders to housewives for the mid-day meal. At 11:15 barbecue orders that were to reach the customers just before dinner (the 12:00 noon meal) were sent out. At 12:30 he was free to go for his own dinner and could do whatever he wished until 4:00. At that time came deliveries for the supper meal. Home ice boxes were so inadequate that meat was regularly left at the shop as long as possible. The result was that small orders might have to be taken to the same home twice, or even three times, in a day.

By 7:00 o'clock the evening clean-up was in order. Next the fire was extinguished in the barbecue pit and the pan cleaned. Thirty minutes later he was free to go home for supper; then to bed to be ready for the next day's work at 4:30. The pay was fifty cents a day or three dollars a week — just that much more than could be had otherwise. The only change in routine came on Saturdays when only one hour was allowed for breakfast and for dinner and when the closing hour was postponed to 9:00 o'clock to give country folk a chance to pick up their meat at the last possible minute before leaving town for home. No one thought of quarreling about the long hours on Saturday

for that was part of the job, and anyway a person could rest on Sunday when the shop was closed all day.

At the end of the summer came a splendid break. The boy was beginning to dream of following his brother to college when he finished high school. Yet he knew that he would have to leave the butcher shop when school started for much of the delivery work came during school hours. He canvassed the local stores for a job. To his delight the owner of the local variety (racket) store where his brother had worked earlier said he would be glad to have help on Saturdays. The hours were from 8:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M. unless a customer came in at that hour to delay matters, with an hour off for lunch. The pay was a splendid seventy-five cents a day, a fifty per cent increase over the butcher shop rate. The hours were not counted; a day was a day.

When school closed ^{in the spring} the job became a full-time one until school reopened in the fall. By the summer of 1913 the boy was a full-time employee at \$6.00 per week. By working for the following fifteen months it was just possible that the way to college might be opened. Now George took the same position that he had taken for Herbert at twenty-one and for Frank at twenty; though in Wilfrid's case the age was lowered to eighteen and a half. The boy was at liberty to make his own way. He could live at home, paying \$10.00 per month for board, and could save his own money. Ever since starting work at

the butcher shop he had been buying his own clothes and now most of them could be secured at cost at the store.

Patriotism was also taken for granted. When the two younger boys volunteered for military service in World War I (Herbert had a wife and three children) George's attitude was: "This is a fine country. It gives every man a chance. It is worth fighting for." By no hint had he suggested that the boys volunteer and interrupt their careers. Yet when each wrote to say that he was going to join the army he took it for granted. They had simply done their duty.

Work at the store gave an excellent insight into the life of the Mexican half of the population. The store catered to them so a reasonably fluent knowledge of Spanish was necessary. These folk were inveterate bargainers and for them haggling over price was good sport and a game in itself. All retail prices in the store were written in plain figures which were the same for all concerned. However, the customers were so accustomed to getting something extra that the owner decided to appeal to their gambling instinct. He installed a bonus system (green stamps had not yet been invented), which the customer was assured, was "pelón" (something extra). With each purchase the customer was given a receipt. When the total amounted to \$5.00 he was allowed to draw a number from a jar. On display were a large number of prizes each of which carried a number. When the number drawn by

see p. 307

see refs. extra appeal here

a customer corresponded with the number on one of the articles on display he could claim it as his own. Most of the prizes were articles of glassware or brightly flowered dishes valued at from fifteen to twenty-five cents at retail. Occasionally an obstinate old woman insisted that she did not want any one of the prizes, she wanted "pelón" that would be different from what other folks got. Then the ingenuity of the owner, or clerk, was invoked to give her something pleasing. If she had a child along it was often a brightly colored hair ribbon, or some similar gew-gaw.

A particularly interesting type of customer came from the "canyons" above Sabinal. A whole family would come down by wagon in the early fall from a distance of forty miles or more, frequently camping by night on the way. Many planned to stay in town at least two days to buy their year's supplies. In town they camped in the wagon yards at one of the major stores. There they could get water and use an open air fire or an outdoor furnace for cooking. After supper a ten-cent picture show provided a proper climax for the summer's vacation.

One day a family composed of the father and mother and four boys ranging in age from seven to fifteen years came in. Each boy was to have a new suit, two shirts and a pair of shoes, while the man and his wife had a long list of household needs.

To shift the family from one salesman to another would have ruined everything, they wanted personal contact. Each item had to be approved by father, mother and the child concerned. Meanwhile the garrulous father told in great detail of the crops raised, family illnesses and the story of the family sow that had produced twelve pigs at a single litter. Periodically he interrupted the narrative to pontificate on world events as gleaned from a weekly paper by which he swore. After a half day of maneuvering, the purchases for each boy and family needs were determined. Next the old man wanted his personal gift, even though he had shrewdly bargained for each item. Another fifteen minutes of verbal fencing revealed one need that he had carefully withheld to this point. He had recently broken the large blade of his pocket knife, and no canyon denizen could afford to be without a pocket knife. This was the gift that he wanted. It had to be a good one for the man really knew his knives and if he went away dissatisfied a substantial customer would not return a year later. Finally he was offered his choice of the best knives in the house.

About the middle of the afternoon the oldest of the boys hesitantly came back and approached the clerk. When asked what he wanted he reached in his pocket and commented:

"Here's the bill we paid this morning. You made a mistake in it."

"Why no," was the answer, "I don't think so. I added it up twice and am almost sure it was right."

"Yes, you did too. See here, you didn't charge us for the belt I got. Don't you remember? I put it right on over my overalls — and you didn't put it on the bill. Here's the money."

He put the thirty-five cents on the counter and left.

Late one night a strange Mexican man and woman who seemed little more than teen-agers came into the store. Though the weather was warm it was raining and windy and the anxious young mother carried a baby too small to walk. They spent the last of their money for a pair of work shoes for the man. The clerk knew it was all they had for he had reduced the price from \$2.35 to \$2.25 when their joint frantic search could reveal no more. They had left their topless, antique buggy and their old horse in the wagon yard at the back of the store. When 9:00 o'clock came they felt they must go home in spite of the rain. All their clothes were flimsy and they could buy nothing to protect the child. Finally the clerk, who ^{was anxious} wanted to go home himself went to a rack and picked up a seventy-five cent umbrella. ^{This he gave to the young mother after he} took the money out of his pocket and recorded the cash ^{from money out of his own pocket.} sale. The grateful young couple left but since they lived close to Uvalde they could not be expected to return. No^t so. Two weeks later the man came in, sought out the clerk, paid him the seventy-five cents and with more thanks disappeared, to be seen no more.

One section of the store was devoted to shoes. To attract the cotton picking money of the Mexicans and to interest the ladies

of the community a line of stylish shoes was stocked. These included pure white suede leather in the very popular sixteen to eighteen button models whose tops ascended almost to the wearer's knees. If the purchaser's limbs — of course no one referred to a lady's legs — were perfectly formed all that remained was to fit the foot itself. Even if the lady's shanks were spindly the buttons could easily be reset by using the machine installed behind the shoe counter. But if the lady was on the chubby side the problem became embarrassing. Manufacturers did not provide enough leather to surround an overly plump calf. A bashful shoe clerk could never tell a young lady that her "limb" was too fat. He could simply lament the fact that he did not have the proper size to fit her stylish foot. If intelligent she would take the hint.

Wilfrid had written to Southwestern University and received the answer that no student jobs were available but that if a student could come to college with \$150.00 he might hope to secure some work before too long. During the fifteen months he worked at the store his salary slowly rose to \$9.00 per week. Every ^{possible} penny was saved, a fine new suit was bought for \$22.80, and with \$160.00 in the bank he gave up his job a few weeks before he reached nineteen years of age. The next step was to go to the college and take the entrance examinations. The last of the children was ready to leave home.

(Extra service)

Here } >

Where George got his time table is unknown but he was wont to comment that a man should have established himself by the age of forty and that after forty-five he owed his community something in the way of public service. When he moved to Sabinal he was fifty and was ^{ready} for that service. He early affiliated with the local Methodist church and soon became teacher of the men's class. This grew to a group of twenty or more men who attended regularly. He was an effective speaker with a good platform appearance and a resonant voice. Each lecture, for his Sunday School lessons became lectures, was prepared with great care. Continuous reading of history gave him a command of facts that was quickly recognized as unusual. His statements were never rashly made but were carefully organized and then pecked out in typewritten form on his own typewriter. After this he was ready to deliver them practically without reference to his notes. If his advanced thinking disquieted some of his hearers they were seldom able to argue with him for he had a complete tolerance for what might be the honest beliefs of others.

He deplored emotionalism as a demonstration of fuzzy thinking though he acquiesced in periodic revival services that were customary in the community. Without ever saying so he left his children with an indelible impression that religion should be practiced

by the individual and seldom talked about, that to do so was in as bad taste as for a man to talk constantly about how much he loved his wife.

George continued his interest in the Masonic lodge ^{and} ~~to~~ the point that when he left Sabinal in 1915 he was presented with a handsome engraved pin in recognition of his special services to the ^{local} group. Also he was in increasing demand as a public speaker in Sabinal and in neighboring communities. One year he was chosen as District Lay Leader in the West Texas Conference of the Methodist Church. His addresses throughout the area received wide acclaim. His writing might show flaws in syntax and spelling but his personality and sincerity always impressed his hearers. He had no patience with the idea that all men are equal. He knew that the Callcott-Ireland blood was superior. Typical was his attitude when Frank talked of becoming a Methodist minister. "If that is what you want, all right. But, remember, you must be a good one." When George was in his middle seventies he was living with his youngest son who had become a member of the faculty of a state university. When the son was elected to a somewhat sought-after assignment George's almost impatient comment was: "Of course you were elected — blood will tell."

He freely admitted that "some fools could always be expected to throw away their birthrights" so he simply wanted every child to have his chance. If he had the right stuff in him he would make good; if not,

Point
to paragraph
p. 300

there was no use wasting time and money on him. As George approached old age his own attitude was: "I have had a full life, and a good one; and each period has been better than the last. Now I feel much like I did after a full day's work on the farm. I would come home comfortably tired, have my supper and sit down for a quiet smoke. I would look over and the bed would look very inviting. I didn't worry, or even think about whether I would dream or not."

A single town marshal represented law and order in the *Sabinal* community. He had a physical affliction, the boys said it was an affectation, locally known as catarrh. To relieve the congestion in his head and throat he had developed a loud and rasping cough that ended in a kind of a hoot that could be heard a block away on a calm night. His nightly rounds, therefore, were well advertised in advance. Fortunately, thievery was at a minimum. Occasionally a lady of pleasure would come to town for a few evenings to entertain young blades who wished to spend a couple of dollars. They, however, timed their ^{arrivals carefully} visits-carefully and left town before the marshal could be expected to know ^{about} of their presence. What the marshal did not know ^{about such} of the matter ^s did not seem to hurt him.

Before long George's position as a liberal became well known. On one occasion word circulated by the underground that a Negro had taken up his residence in a small house on the outskirts of the town.

No Negroes were in the community and local boys boasted that "no nigger had ever slept there." Presumably in this case a warning given to the man had been ignored. Whatever the antecedent facts the Negro disappeared one night after some unusual gatherings of "cowboys" in town, and the next day an apparently grief-stricken woman with a small child left on the train with a ticket for San Antonio.

George had not faced an angry cowman twenty years earlier for nothing. He spoke out clearly demanding that something be done. The perpetrators of the affair, whatever it actually was, were never publicly known but George was elected to the town council. There he worked for more efficiency in handling town business. About the same time he was elected to the local school board. Soon he became Secretary of the Board and was appointed to the committees on By-Laws; Finance, Claims and Accounts; and Teachers, Course of Study and Textbooks. When the Board was accused of paying too much for collecting school taxes in the Sabinal Independent School District he emphatically reported facts and figures through The Sabinal Sentinel (May 23, 1913 and February 11, 1916) showing that the sums paid were at the lowest rate allowed by law. He steadily pressed for more adequate school facilities and for the employment of properly trained teachers. Indeed, there soon began to be talk of securing accreditation in a state wide school system so that local high school graduates could enter colleges without special examinations.

young people constantly visited each other's Sunday evening group meetings.*

Sabinal remained "dry" on the liquor question, but Uvalde twenty miles to the west and Hondo some fifteen miles to the east, were ready to satisfy the thirsty. In both towns, also, dancing was a popular pastime. The Sabinal young folks were torn between their natural inclinations and the Puritanism of their fathers. George too endorsed the restraints on the grounds that he had no right to "cause his brother to offend".

Yet, soon after reaching Sabinal George and Mary joined a group of middle aged couples who met at two-week intervals to play forty-two (a game somewhat like bridge but played with dominoes). They were the only members from the Methodist church but this rather pleased them. The half dozen couples usually assembled at 8:00 o'clock and adjourned about 10:30 or 11:00 after light refreshments had been served by the hostess of the evening. Children too young to be left at home were taken along for a jolly time of it on their own account. Several of the group were quite young but as George and Mary

*In 1907 the Sabinal Christian College was opened enrolling 139 students in the first year. It offered a full program of courses that paralleled the work of the public schools and also had a collegiate department. Board was charged at \$3.50 per week and tuition ranged up to \$1.00 per week. A small-pox scare closed the school in February of the first year, then followed repeated faculty changes and financial difficulties until the school was finally closed in 1917. It was sponsored by the Church of Christ but George and Mary and their children had no particular contacts with either the faculty or students. (For the history of the college see Irene Hart Rates, "History of Sabinal Christian College", MS in Library of West Texas State College at San Marcos, Texas.

grew older they were increasingly restless with "old fogies" and sought contacts with those who "still had some ideas".

Another type of entertainment was always popular through the hot summer and fall weather. A family of the community would invite their friends, frequently numbering thirty or forty people, to a barbecue on the river. On the morning of the affair a well known Mexican barbecue ^{chef} artist would repair to the selected spot, dig a trench about two feet deep, eighteen inches wide and three feet long. Next he would build a fire of mesquite wood whose pungent smoke imparted a flavor considered superior to hickory. While a good bed of coals accumulated he killed a young kid (much preferred to a lamb) and cut it into appropriate pieces. Then, using his own special recipe of sauces, including a generous quantity of muy picante (very piquant) chile peppers, ^{the cook} he slowly turned and basted the meat during the next few hours. By 4:30 or 5:00 o'clock in the afternoon this real barbecue was ready to eat. Families took turns as hosts while the invited housewives brought potato salad, cakes, pies and lemonade. Oddly enough these cowmen seldom used either beef or pork for their own guests on these occasions.*

*In the Hill Country above Sabinal were found an increasing number of sheep and mohair goat ranches. The kinds of the smaller animals were disdained by the old cowman but wool and mohair prices were good and goats could thrive on the sparse shrubbery and almost non-existent grass of the area. Cows in such places did "po'ly".

The Fourth of July was the regular date for a rodeo.

On the third of the month a dozen or more range animals were hazed into the pens built for the purpose in the town park. A strong wire fence was constructed around a couple of acres of land, with a gate opening into it from the cattle pens. Early on the morning of the Fourth the barbecue pits ^{were} ~~would-be~~ fired. These were large pits with iron bars across the tops to accommodate the carcasses of three to five young beeves that had been killed the day before. Again the pits spread their aroma for blocks around. Meanwhile cowboys came in from the ranches up in the canyons. Most of them rode their "second" horse and saved their favorite mount for the contests.

The rodeo started about ten o'clock in the morning. The roping, bulldogging, bronco busting, and the like were much the same as can be seen at a rodeo in the 1960's except for the fact that the animals used were not soft, pen-fed creatures. They were from the ranges, were frightened, wiry, mean by disposition, and plenty tough. When they ran their gait was not a fat waddle; tough muscles put some speed into it. Most of the calves and steers were half longhorn by ancestry for the ranchmen ^{had just begun to import} ~~were-just-then-importing~~ Brahma bulls and other good beef producing strains to cross with the range-wise longhorn cows. The offspring still eschewed town life and came out of the pens thoroughly insulted at the strange things that had been happening to them. When one of them was roped and thrown the cowboy had to be

very sure that the animal was securely tied for it could be relied upon to struggle violently. Also, these were not calves, they were mature and tough. If roped and thrown while running at full speed there was ^{always a} a good chance that the animal's neck would be broken. If that happened the local butcher got some cheap meat. Similarly, bulldogging was a sport with a real edge to it. Those half-breed animals had horns that were long and sharp, and they knew how to use them.

There were neither grandstand nor bleachers so the spectators stood around the outside of the stout fence that had been built. When the gate was opened most of the creatures dashed in a relatively straight line away from the hated pen where they had been confined. ^{By the time a rider had overtaken and roped an animal it had} Of course most of the animals were roped and thrown toward the far end ^{usually reached the far end} of the enclosure. However, if a cast of a rope missed its mark, or if the animal dodged successfully, the terrified creature was likely to run straight through the fence without stopping. Such a mishap would naturally disqualify the cowboy whose animal had escaped. ^{But in view of this} ^{Even so,} ^{possibility} the spectators uniformly considered that it was wise to sacrifice close observation in the name of discretion.

In 1913 came a significant event. George bought a model-T Ford car. There were no paved roads nearer than San Antonio but the family needed some transportation now that their buggy horse was dead and the boys were leaving home. Also, with Frank away from home and Wilfrid at work George needed to get out to his farms in person.

Night travel by car was a particular problem. The carbide for the gas lights had to be replaced whenever the car was taken out in the evening. The principle involved for the lights was the same as that used in bicycle lamps but the carbide container was larger and *was carried on the right side running board. From there* and ~~in one central place~~ with the gas channeled to the lights by conductor tubes. If the lights became too weak, and they were never strong at best, the rate of drip of the water from the reservoir was increased. If the increased flow did not produce more gas the driver knew that his conductor tubes were clogged or had sprung a leak, or that his carbide was exhausted.

Self-starters had not yet been perfected for general use so each car had a crank hanging down in front of the radiator. With the primitive spark plugs then in use and the poorly refined gasoline of the day it was necessary to spin the crank vigorously by hand to get the engine started. Special adjustments of two levers attached to *driving post and just under* the ~~underside of~~ the steering wheel enabled the motorist to enrich the gas mixture flowing into the cylinders, and also to adjust the "spark" to the slower or faster speed of the motor. The trick was to spin the crank just far enough so that one cylinder would fire. To continue to hold the crank handle beyond that point could be dangerous for an overloaded cylinder might backfire. If the operator failed to disengage the crank handle when the first cylinder fired the backfire could jerk the handle out of his hand and spin it in the opposite direction and deliver

a vicious blow on the back of the wrist or arm. A broken arm from such an experience was an occupational hazard of any car driver. Once the engine started the operator raced around from in front of the car to the steering wheel to adjust the spark and gas supply.

On cold mornings all complications were increased. No anti-freeze was on the market so the radiator was drained ^{whenever the} ~~night~~ temperature was likely to drop below 32°. ~~was threatened.~~ The next morning a kettle of hot water was poured into the radiator and the cranking began. As a last resort a back wheel was jacked up to allow it to spin freely and to relieve the engine slightly. Then came several false starts and a backfire or two. When success finally crowned his efforts the exhausted driver could only hope for a fine day. In case of heavy rain water could be expected to leak through the hood to accumulate in sparkplug sockets and short out the motor. Even so, it was all great fun.

The driver of a car had to be able to repair a punctured tire at frequent intervals. A normal three-inch tire carried about fifty-five pounds pressure. Unfortunately the treads were both thin and vulnerable to nails, sharp stones and mesquite thorns. Young swains took great pride in their puncture mending skill. Many boasted that they would never be more than thirty minutes late in reaching a predetermined destination. Any girl expected that in case of a puncture her attendant on a date could jack up the flat tire, remove it from the wheel (there ^{were} no demountable rims with spare tires already inflated and

waiting for use), patch the puncture, replace the tire and pump it up with a hand pump, and be on his way in twenty-five minutes. Twenty minutes was good time indeed, ^{but} and over thirty minutes was so long no self-respecting young man would have admitted to it.

On one occasion the Callcott family undertook a trip from Sabinal via Hondo, Bandera and Kerrville to Junction to visit Ethel who was living there in the Methodist parsonage. Such a trip, over rough and rocky roads which repeatedly crossed rock ledges from 2" to 8" in height, with only one blow-out was something to be proud of. Just in case — George took his rifle along. The round trip through the Hill Country meant a trip of three hundred miles. True, there was an aftermath. On a trip out to the farms the next week an old account laconically remarks: "Incidentally, we had one blowout and three punctures, or, I should say, three old patches ^{inner tubes} [on once mended punctures] came off."

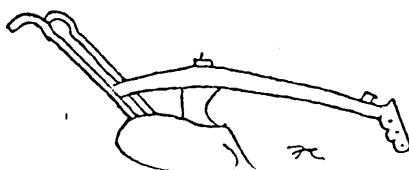
On this trip to Junction the road crossed the Llano River several times between Bandera and Kerrville. At each crossing one of the boys got out of the car, took off his shoes and socks and waded across the stream to locate the road that should be followed. Wheel tracks might enter the water at one point and emerge on the opposite bank either fifty feet to the right or left. To go straight across might mean to drop off a limestone ledge into deep water that would drown the engine. And a drowned engine was no joke in itself. Even more

serious was a miscalculation that caused one or more wheels to sink into mud or sand. If this happened the only means of escape was to wait patiently for the passage of some ^fwarmer in a wagon whose team would drag the car ignominiously to the bank where the drying out process began.

The return trip was made by way of San Antonio. On reaching the rolling hills west of the city, Wilfrid, who was driving, was anxious to get home before dark. George, sitting uneasily beside him, was quiet for a time but then burst out: "Up the hills at twenty-five $\sqrt{\text{miles per hour}}$, and down at thirty-five. That's travelling! What's the world coming to!"

Shortly thereafter George entered the house one day with the abrupt statement: "All fools are not dead yet." When Mary, as expected, asked the meaning of the outburst he answered that he had just bought two new automobile tires "and that fool fellow gave me a guarantee that they would last 3,000 miles."

But all of this takes the story into a new day. When George had bought an automobile and his children ^{had}were started out on their own careers the modern era ^{had}started. Old Texas with its romance, its tragedy, its hardship and its sturdy qualities of stubborn, tough land conquerors was passing. The new generation had to develop its own qualities to meet new problems.



Epilogue

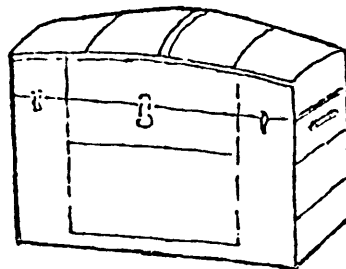
Economic conditions in Sabinall did not improve. Herbert shifted from raising cotton to grain, sheep raising and semi-ranching. With hard personal work and constant attention to details he made a reasonable living out of it. But George and Mary, living in town and at their age did no more than break even. Nothing daunted and with no repining over their luck, they agreed they had made a mistake. They sold out at Sabinall and bought new cotton land near Corpus Christi, Texas, with a home in that little city. There, once more taking their faithful Mexican families with them, they enjoyed good crops and soon the highly inflated prices of World War I brought financial independence. Once more George became a substantial church and community leader. Mary was active in Red Cross activities.

After the war, with their boys back in civilian life, George and Mary prepared to settle down to a comfortable old age, but this was contrary to their nature and was not to be their lot. The old initiative still showed itself. Every year or two the pair of them got into their car and struck off on a cross-country trip. One of these was by way of New Orleans to South Carolina to visit one son thence to New York to visit another one. From New York they returned to Texas via St. Louis.

In 19²⁹~~30~~ came another abrupt change. Wilfrid's wife died leaving him with a three months' old baby boy. Here was a new call for service. George, now 73, and Mary, 70, at once left Corpus Christi and moved to Columbia, South Carolina to make a home for the little family. They must have missed their old friends but never complained. George was wont to say that the new experience had added to two lives that were growing stale.

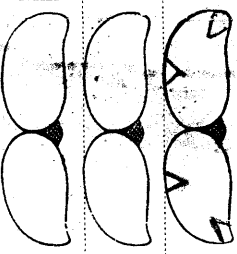

In Columbia it was a joy to see this old Yorkshire couple, with limited education and self-made in a rough society, meet a university faculty. With apologies to none, they calmly commanded respect and confidence.

There, in 1931 George died. Mary followed him four years later. Both were buried among their friends in Corpus Christi.



75

CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION OF MARKS AND BRANDS.

No.	NAME OF OWNER	PLACE OF RESIDENCE	MARK	BRAND	LOCATION OF BRAND	Date of Registration
	<i>Ballcoth & N. Mayr. G.</i>	<i>near Kyle</i>			<i>leg of mules horns with side of cattle</i>	<i>July 1st 1886</i>

THE STATE OF TEXAS,
COUNTY OF HAYS.

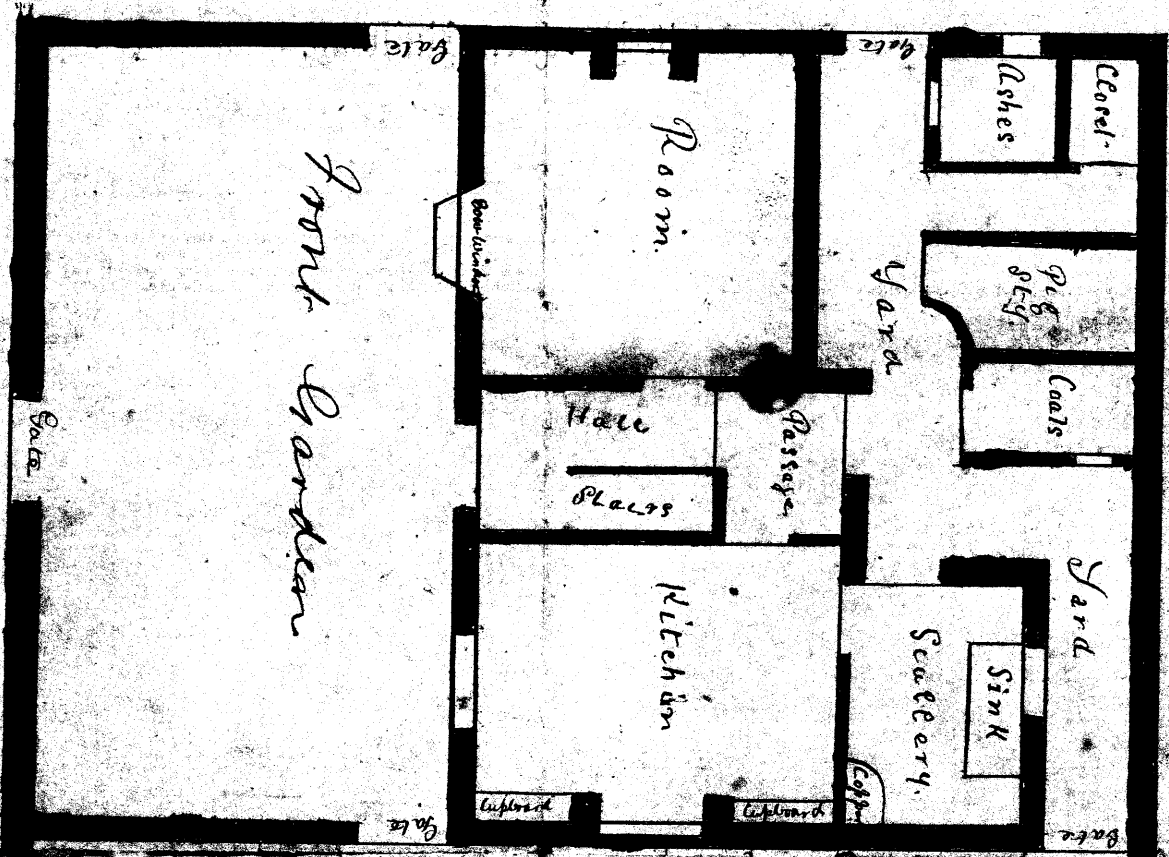
I, **JAS. G. BURLESON**, Clerk of the County Court in and for said County, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the Record of the Mark and Brand of *A. H. Ballcoth* Book "A" Page *120*

WITNESS my hand and seal of office, this *31st* day of *July* 188*6*
 By *Jas G. Burleson* Deputy.
 Clerk County Court
 County

S -B (J) J (+)

S. L. ...

Plot of Ground 100 Square Yards.



Front Garden

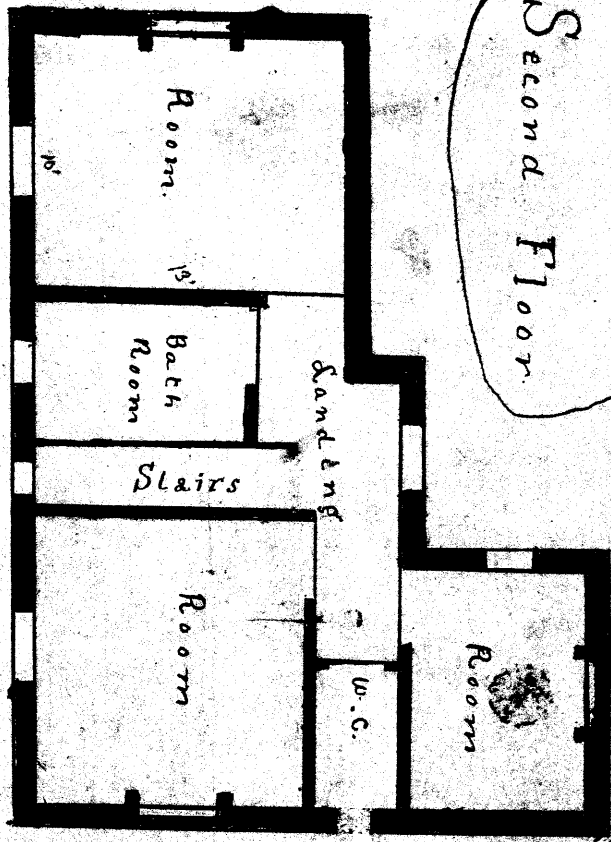
Kitchen Garden

Plan. 2
Ground Floor



1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
feet

Plan 3
Second Floor



Wells

Windows

Doors

Fireplaces

Seals

