

Ranch

My Dearest:

I have been wondering how things have been going with you since we left, and I suspect you have been wondering about us. Well, I can give a progress report up to the present.

I arrived in Lone Pine at two o'clock without seeing John anywhere on the road, nor did I find any evidence of him in Lone Pine. So, I went on to Independence to see Mr. Sutliff. I found the latter in his office and had a satisfactory talk with him. If anything he had stronger feelings with respect to the trust deed than we had. He said that law professors, judges and the bar generally regarded the trust deed as vicious, that, indeed, it was allowed by law in only five states of which California was one. He told me that he told the Hoars when they came to see him that my argument in the letter to them was all sound, and they readily complied with his suggestion that they accept the mortgage, especially as it was agreed upon in his office. He knew of the escrow arrangements that had been made with the bank, but had not been told that they had signed the amendment instructions, which tied up our notes, mortgage and money until a release was signed by the Hoars. The original escrow had not been signed by the Hoars. I suggested two possible ways out. First, continue with the original escrow with the understanding that I would exchange the one-note mortgage for the seven-note mortgage when it came through and, second, signed cancellation by the Hoars of the bank escrow and then proceeding with escrow through him. He approved of either method, but pointed out that by use of him it would be unnecessary to fill out the paper of confidential instructions which required age of husband and wife, former marriages, occupations of all parties for five years or so and some other information which seemed to me to be rather nosey. I, too, felt it was desirable to eliminate this paper which the bank imposes upon one. I arranged to bring the Hoars up the next day to sign the release.

I returned to Lone Pine to find that John had arrived in my absence and gone on up to the ranch. (He had been in a garage in Mojave when I passed through, for the purpose of having a tube vulcanized.) I found Mrs. Hoar and John at the ranch, Mr. Hoar being in town and not yet returned. There was a little constraint upon the part of Mrs. Hoar, but not serious. Mr. Hoar returned presently, also with a little constraint which I felt but nothing said. On his own initiative he confirmed what Mr. Sutliff said to me about the viciousness of the trust deed, so that was verification of Mr. Sutliff's statement to me. He further said he had never heard of a trust deed and really had had no idea what it was, but was simply governed by the statement of the bank manager who said it was the method used in California. In fact he understood the bank manager to say, in answer to his question, that he got both a trust deed and a mortgage, an impression which Mr. Sutliff had corrected. In fact, he seemed to have no clear idea what it was all about. I told them of the necessity of their signing a release of the escrow in the bank before I could get the money and the other mortgage and notes back, and that I had arranged to have them go to Independence to have the matter cleared and completed in Mr. Sutliff's office. This they

were quite ready to do. In fact, when we did go Mr. Hoar volunteered to give me some gas, which he did, for the trip.

~~The next~~ We put up the tent, and arranged for John to sleep on the bed on the back porch. Mrs. Hoar suggested that I sleep in the front room, but things there were somewhat torn up in her packing of personal effects, and I really preferred to sleep in the tent until they leave. That evening they went to a dinner party in town, but gave us full use of the place for cooking our meal, etc., and apologized for having to leave us to our own devices owing to their previous engagement. I assured them it was perfectly alright with us.

The next morning we checked over the items that were on the list that were sent us. I judged these items as worth the price set and valuable to us, except that he had already disposed of the mortar hoe and ice cream freezer, which in my letter I had said we probably would not want. There was some trouble with the motor that runs the saw. First we found a wasp nest in the air-intake to the carburetor, and, then, after that, the motor stopped frozen after running a few minutes. It acted much as though a ring had broken as in our former experience with the tractor. This made the saw-set-up look doubtful. But we took the head off the motor the next day to find the cylinders dry and the oil in the crank-case so thin it really was not a lubricant. We changed oil, freed the pistons and oiled them well, examined them and found that they had not been injured when the motor froze. The motor was then reassembled, the belt put on and sawed wood until the gas in the tank ran out. It does the work alright and is an enormous labor saver, so I O.K.ed it. We found out more about the dog. It appears, not alone from what they say, but from what John had I have been able to see already, that he is almost an essential asset. He drives coyotes and rabbits away from the immediate vicinity. The coyotes are about every night. John saw one in the front yard at dusk yesterday evening. They are very fond of grapes, and the dog is a sleepless policeman. Further, the dog is not an exacting feeder. He lives very largely upon vegetable foods, with only a little meat. He eats practically every thing and, evidently, thrives upon it. He will even eat cooked ~~potatoes~~ tomatoes, as well as all other vegetables. John is in love with him, and so I finally decided to take him. I seemed strong delight on the part of the Hoars when they heard this decision.

After the bank was open we stopped there to get the necessary escrow amendment forms and went to Sutliff's office. The Hoars signed the necessary release and Mr. Sutliff commended the escrow instructions I worked up and you and I signed, and the Hoars agreed with them. I saw the deed, which is the type called for in the option and is already signed by the Hoars. The certificate of title will be ordered as soon as our papers and money are turned over. This certificate costs \$60.00, paid for by the Hoars, and, naturally, is not ordered until everything else is cleared. Mr. Hoar and I went to the abstract office to find out how long the work will take and were told by the girl that she had a lot of work ahead, but seemed willing to push ours

when it comes in. The certificate of title is the final act.

Upon returning I talked to the Hoars concerning our procedure during the interim. It is alright for us to proceed with our plans. Mrs. Hoar said she does not mind cooking, since she must do it anyway, and it would not be necessary for us to do our own cooking. I said we would provide our pro rata of groceries. So far there has been no friction. Rather the reverse. I have been working to pour oil upon troubled waters, mainly by methods unseen, and they seem to like John particularly. Mr. Hoar has been giving us a mass of information. It comes out at odd and unexpected times. And this is needed. For instance, the irrigation procedure is pretty complex and John especially must know it.

Yesterday afternoon we checked part of the boundary stakes. We found one stake which Mr. Hoar had been unable to find for years. The brush had hidden it. We got close to it by chaining from a known point and by use of the compass. We determining a point only about 15 feet from where we found the stake. From there we went to the West point $\frac{1}{2}$ mile toward the mountain, and went to his source of wood. There is lots of it, thanks to that fire, and we can get the tractor all the way. Also I saw the source of the stream. It is a spring a few hundred feet off his land on forest reserve land, a fact which I already knew. But no body could possibly divert any of this water without going over the ranch property, since down grade in any direction goes through it. This water is just about as securedly blocked in as one could expect and, indeed, much of the water rises on the land itself.

I am going to town today to see if the papers and check have arrived from San Fernando. If the escrow dept. at S.F. acted promptly they could be here this morning. I mailed the necessary papers down day before yesterday with special delivery stamp in plenty of time to be taken by the mail truck, but as the incoming mail arrives at 8 o'clock in the morning, this morning is the first that there could be a return.

Papers arrived O. K. Property now is ours as we placed them all with Mr. Sutliff with the escrow instructions of which I have a true copy signed by him as such and a receipt for the money. Certificate of title is ordered today. Papers will remain with Mr. Sutliff until this is completed, then if title is satisfactory, which seems certain, deed will be handed to us, with certificate. The Hoars will not wait for this.

part but will go south day after tomorrow.

I got the old notes and mortgage, which I have mutilated and mailed to you in registered letter. These you should burn.

I have much more to write and will have next letter when I next come down.

Remember me to all, and for yourself my deepest and eternal love.

Franklin.

The Ranch, Sept, 28th.

My Beloved:

We are now in possession; the Hoar's left yesterday morning early. To complete the transation there remains only the work on the certificate of title, but the Hoar's are so certain the title is clear that they packed up as soon as the papers came and were placed in the hands of Mr. Sutliff. Incidentally I have a true copy of the instructions given Mr. Sutliff which he signed as a true copy together with a receipt for the check in favor of Mr. Hoar.

The chickens, stock, furniture and the miscellaneous items that were on the list are now ours. For this I have a combined receipt and bill of sale signed by both mr. and Mrs. Hoar. The cow and heifer look fine. They have been well fed and look healthy. It appears that the heifer has been already bred too. Both animals had gotten away to a pasture where there was a bull, and they have been passing their periods. The swelling in the cow is quite noticeable and it also appears less markedly in the heifer. Mr. Hoar says the calving time figures to be some time in February. I asked as to what needed to be done, and he said they took care of themselves, rarely needing any help. The sheep had already been taken to Mr. Lubkins pasture where they run with a ram. They are to be gotten again in about two weeks. The chickens are now laying as much as can be expected for the number. John gathered 18 eggs yesterday, in addition to one that was broken. Of course, they cannot maintain that rate. There are twenty seven hens and three roosters. Most of the eggs are still small, but some already are attaining full hen size.

The Hoar's have carried through in accdrdnce with the agreement as placed in writing. There is a gallon churn and some butter-making implements, but the milk pans are pretty old and should be added to. They left a five-pound tin of honey, and Mr. Hoar says there should be additional surplus. This seems probable as the bees are working with vigor and there is a super on each hive. I have not yet looked in them. The fruits and vegetables had been gathered as they ripened, but there is no evidence of stripping furtner than this. The strawberry peach was picked, they said because it had ripened and the fruit was falling. Some was here in a pan when we arrived, and it was over-ripe. The fruit left was ~~and~~ mainly apples and one small over-filled peach tree. John picked the latter one evening when a rain with wind came, to guard against breaking of limbs. We got two buckets off of a quite small tree. These peaches are in the basement now. The muscat grapes are just now ripening and there is a pretty good crop - better than what we have on our vines. The dark blue grapes are coloring but not yet ripe. With the exception of the corn, which had matured, all the items that were in the garden are there now and producing. There are rhubarb, peppers - mostly chili - crooked-neck squash, a lot of tomatoes -John says very good - string beans that have gone to producing again and look better than our beans ever did, carrots, turnips, parsnips, cabbage, stock beets, a lot of banana squash and Dickenson pumpkins. There will be excess of beans, banana squash and pumpkins to sell.

The eggs will supply some return over and above feeding costs and household use, though the rate of production will naturally go down in winter. Even the small eggs are bringing 50¢ per doz. at the store. We cannot cut feeding costs substantially until the cows come in and we have been able to harvest a crop of feeds which we will plant next spring. Personally, I think we would be justified in expanding on chickens because the demand and price of eggs is good and we can raise a large part of our feed. It seems easier to keep stock healthy in this isolated place than in most locations.

The feed problem for the larger animals may prove better than Mr. Hoar said. In fact, there is plenty of feed now, and Mr. Hoar said that if this winter is like last it will be sufficient to carry them through. But if the winter is severe some feed will be needed and will also increase milk production. He says about four tons of hay, in the latter case, and this can be secured from Mr. Bedell who is operating the former Country Club place. This man has twenty tons excess for sale and as this would hardly last long, I think it best to get four tons at once, since there might not be any if we wait until we actually need it. This, together with the taxes and such funds as John will need in addition to the egg and vegetable-income will constitute the visible expenses until the crops come in next season, except, of course, supplies for the tractor in preparing the land.

There are items about the place which go with it and which were never mentioned. There are small tools and implements like picks and mattocks. John and I found a pick and a mattock at the upper pasture yesterday when we took the stock back up there. Mr. Hoar seems to have left tools where he was last working with them and may have forgotten them. There are wrenches, including two stillson wrenches. Also I saw a wrecking bar. There is a good sprayer for orchard and vegetables, much larger than anything which we have had. A good deal of old iron here and there with fittings for pipe. All in all I do not yet know how much.

Now as to the house furnishings. First, there are three beds ready for use in place, the one in the front room new and, I can testify from use, excellent. In fact, a very comfortable bed. The couch in the front room can be made into a double bed. There is also an old three-quarter bed in the unused chicken house. There are seven ordinary kitchen or bed-room chairs, two rocking chairs, and three front-room padded seated chairs, one of them of the over-stuffed type. There is one ~~xxxxxx~~ dressing table, one dining room table which can be greatly extended with leaves, an old table on the screen porch, a small magazine-rack table, a folding table, an old radio, used as a table to support the operating radio. Further, there is a moveable kitchen cabinet. On the floor there are carpets in both the living room and the front bed-room, beside two small rugs. The kitchen and back bedroom have linoleum down. There are three pictures, of indifferent value, hanging, also two vases. There are five lamps. one Alladin, two Rochesters, and two ordinary. Curtains are hanging on all the windows, and some extras in one of the drawers. Two pillows, with pillow-slips, one sheet, one cotton

blanket and one bed cover were left. The letter stating what the furniture would included mentioned the pillows but did not state bedding would be left for one bed, ~~but~~ in fact, specifically exempted bedding, so this is one variation from the verbal statement. There are three towels and three drying towels for china. The china is plentiful in some items and short in others. There are plenty of plates and glasses, though ordinary. There is also enough saucers, side dishes and glass dessert containers. There are six service dishes, four platters, three pitchers, and a very old English sugar bowl. But there are only two good cups and no bowls for soup or mush. The knives forks and spoons are very ordinary and about enough for two persons. (Silverware was specifically exempted in the letter.) Kitchen utensils are old and, while adequate for two persons, need to be added to. There are some other minor items, such as the waffle iron. All this equipment is necessary and I am satisfied that if we had purchased the equivalent and paid for transportation up here it would have cost much more than \$110.00.

The house was left in a neat and cleaned condition. In fact, everything was orderly inside and out, save that scrap-iron piles are as they always are, rather unattraction, but hidden.

Mrs. Hoar offered to put up a dozen quarts of tomatoes, if I would supply the jars, which I did. These are now in the basement. The put-up fruit in the basement they had taken before we came, but this was as understood. There are a lot of tomatoes ripe and green on the vines. I shall bring some down when I come, with rhubarb ready for cutting, string beans and several dozen eggs, also apples and peaches.

Sunday we ran the tractor for three hours on removing brush. Mr. Hoar showed us a technique for removing large brush with a chain that saves much time. Friday I put in an application for R gasoline, and will get the report from the board today. If ~~fx~~ favorable I will order gas, kerosene and lubricating oils today. There are three fifty gallon bbls. on the place furnished by Standard Oil, two for gasoline, and one for kerosene.

I have made a point of getting acquainted with the place and came to the conclusion that it would be wisest to develop the ground under fence first, as this affords protection from outside stock. Later we can fence more. We have already located the exact or approximate location of nine of the ten corners. Five of them are iron stakes set by government survey of this place. Two of these stakes Mr. Hoar had been unable to find for several years, but with the compass and tape we located a point near enough to find them. Three of the other points, which he said were not surveyed at that time, came near a pile of rocks with a fallen stick in each case. The northwest point we have not yet located, but it is a half mile from the southwest point and a mile and a half from the north east point. It is a long ways from the house. The extreme eastern portion is a pan-handle 1/8 mile wide and 3/8 mile long. This runs down below the corral in the fenced-in forest-reserve property below the house. The road crosses a corner of this before reaching the forest reserve property.

It will take about all the time of one person to maintain the place as it now is. This means cooking, laundry, care of the house and yard, care of chickens and garden, including irrigation, care of the stock, tending fences, gathering and preparing wood, marketing eggs and other surplus, buying supplies and tending to incidentals. Expansion of operations will require at least one more person and preferably two. A woman is needed for the household and the work about the house, to be really efficient.

We do not need outside music up here. We have a concert every night in soprano and bass. The coyotes supply the upper register and the dog the lower. There is usually an early morning concert. But for the dog, the coyotes would come right into the yard. Even as it is, John saw one inside the yard about fifty feet from the house the other evening. The dog was on the porch and missed this opportunity, but Mr. Hoar got a shot at the intruder, though missing. So you can see it is not at all lonely up here.

As to the planting, it is too late to be safe on both alfalfa and wheat. It should be done about the first of September or late in August. But Mr. Hoar said it could be done also about the middle of April, only more irrigation is required. So I have figured it safer to plan for the spring planting. So I propose to work on clearing and the drawing in of wood, both of which require the tractor which John cannot operate.

John seems to take to the life. Old knowledge of farming is coming back to him. But he needs direction as to program and this I am working out as I become familiar with the whole program. There is far more water here than the present set-up can use efficiently. In fact, I think Mr. Hoar has over-irrigated a good deal. Growth can be checked by keeping the roots too cold and also by keeping air out of the soil. It also appears that by subsequent use of cement conduits and some development we can increase our usable water supply. Last night I calculated what a stream like this would cost in San Fernando if it were purchased at irrigation rates and run the whole year. It comes to over \$3,000.00 per year!

Well, I guess I have covered nearly everything to date, and I hope you will find time to read it all.

My love ever abides with you.

Franklin

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The Ranch, Oct. 4.

My Beloved:

First of all, about Jim. Remember the Brothers must play a kind of chess to accomplish their objectives, in which They must be very careful to move within the limits of karma. In general, with respect to this plane at any rate, They may not use Their powers directly without stepping over the boundary into balack magic. Thus They must move indirectly in what is now a radically changing situation, much of the objective detail of which cannot be foreseen. Thus, at one time a certain move is indicated, which later becomes impractical and They must make other plays. This is what I mean by chess. The important consideration is the objective, not the changing technique by which it is accomplished. Senior was categorical as to Jim's safety. That is the important point, not the how of its accomplishment. Remember, the last time words came through as to change of plan. It is important that Jim should not come to injury, physically, morally or spiritually, particularly the latter. How this end works out, whether in Europe, America, Asia or the South Pacific, is a secondary matter. Trust Senior when He speaks categorically. Do not be disturbed because the method of procedure has to be changed.

Could you not get Fransceska to study the words with which she is not familiar? When in the reading unfamiliar words arise, she should take them down and study their dictionary meanings. The big dictionary would be best when the words are mine as I tend to strict rather than popular and second ary meanings. This would give her considerable mental work which she really needs. Also why not carry on the period of silence and emphasize the point that too much speech is a waste of energy which is needed for inner growth?

Yes, I like the idea very much of you and Franceska coming up here as soon as practical. We are having really delightful weather, neither too hot nor too cold ever since we have been here. Further, we are entering the most beautiful season when the autumn colors come. Also, there is no war up here. The garden is beautiful, though many of the flowers are becoming seed pods, but still the flowers dominate.

It is not practical for me to come down the first of this week as I thought, as I cannot get the hay transported until Friday. The man who has it has no truck and we have no means for transporting so much. I saw Mr. Goodwin, the junk and wood man in Lone Pine, after mailing the last letter and he will transport the hay, but he will not be free before Friday. I hardly dare to delay on the hay as the amount for sale is limited and it might all be gone later. So I shall try to get away on Saturday or Sunday.

Saturday, John went to town with me as I wanted him to become acquainted with the various contacts he should know. We left the dog free up here, as had been the prodeedure of the Hoars, and he did not follow us immediately. But evidently, later he hunted us

so when we returned he was not here. Yesterday afternoon John made the circuit of the neighbors and got trace of him over at Lone Pine Creek where he was seen at 2 o'clock yesterday. The parties who saw him there said that if he turned up again they would feed him and hold him until John picked him up. When John takes this letter down he will check on this. The rest of the live stock here and the green stuff is all O.K. The cows and mule are in the upper pasture and I have John check on them each day or two to see that they are alright and that the water is running so that they can drink. The chickens are fine, with beautiful red combs and a singing disposition. They are very partial to all the extra food we give them. They are crazy about tomatoes and corn. They seem to like everything better than the mash which they have before them all the time. They are laying better than I expected, 128 eggs in the past seven days.

Yesterday we had our first laundry. We got by alright. Later, while John was away, I tried my hand at apple sause from apples that had fallen. They came out quite well.

It is a possible idea to have Joe and Kay take over the place. But first try it out up here and see how you like it. The people we have met here are pleasant. The nearest neighbors are the Bedell's who have rented the Crountry Club place from the city of Los Angeles for framing. Saturday I stopped there to see about the hay but found only Mrs. Bedell in when we went down. I introduced John whom I said would stay here through the winter, probably alone. The first thing she thought of was some signal so that they would know if he was sick. When John was after the dog he found everybody helpful and sympathetic. In this country one really has elbow room with the nearest neighbor three and a half miles away, and there is something of the old frontier fellowship.

Well, it is time for John to go. So I send my love and blessing.

Franklin.