

Henry's notes, 1940

(Written just before the 10 children of John and Mary Lorang decided to consolidate their ownership of the farm)

“Prelude to ‘Twenty Years After’.

In my boyhood days, I was skinny and undernourished looking—susceptible to every ailment that spread across the country. I was brow beaten by certain dominating influences and consequentially suffered an inferiority complex which was a hinderance to my progress even to my maturer days. *(Henry and his father John often sparred about Henry running off to perform in plays rather than work the fields.....there's more to the story)*

My grade-school education was much the same as any other child in our day, while it is the farm work both in the spring and in the fall and did the chores in the morning and evening. My first year in High was a term of six months as was my second year, the last two years comprised eight months each and I was graduated in May 1908. After this I worked diligently at home until after I was 21 years of age when I left home and started on my own hook here & there and at one thing and another. On various occasions I went back home & worked for dad at the same wage the he paid his other men while I assumed the entire responsibility always doing the most complicated and hardest of the work as well as to put in the longest hours. “

“Twenty Years After”

It was during the period of extreme inflation-in the fall of 1919-that we purchased the farming outfit at auction sale with which to engage in agricultural production. I seemed to be the only thing left for us after my discharge from the army, in which I served Uncle Sam during the world war as an enlisted man, in a capacity that I deemed the most worth while and incidentally the sole representative of the entire relationship. *(The older boys were too old and they mentioned how they wished they could serve at the time. Henry is just angry here. He is having difficulty pay rent to the brothers and sisters.)*

But, I am digressing and I started to say that the outside bidders, knowing that I was acquainted with the stock and

machinery, ran the prices up and out of reason without my realizing, in my excitement, that I should call a halt.

After all was said and done, I signed a note that, in the deflation that descended down upon us, became a stumbling block to our very existence.

When we moved into the house that we were to occupy in our new venture, we started right in to shelling out in order to make it inhabitable. We bought the shades 12 in number & as many window latches, there wasn't any paint outside nor inside which I painted. Also I packed the pipes under the house and boarded up from the sills to the ground, after the cold had frozen and busted the water-front in our kitchen range. The floors were all rough so I dressed them down and painted or finished them in varnish. Besides we put linoleum on two big rooms & bathroom to avoid standing on ice. Other furnishings that belong to real-estate, which we brought are sinks, bath tub & toilet at cost of \$121.00. I built the cesspool but after it crashed in twice, I installed a concrete septic-tank at cost of \$50.00, not including my work-just material.

We built steps, walks, concrete slab at back entrance and more re-paint jobs inside. All of the screens, and screen doors too we bought and paid for. Before we moved into the big house it had to be shingled because every room down stairs had the wall-paper ruined from rainstains-great large blotches-& up stairs the Kalsomined rooms were ruined too. The shingles & carpenters were paid & charged against the rent but I helped from start to finish and my work was gratis.

We did the Kalsomining ourselves and papered the rooms that needed it most assuming the entire expense. The smaller rooms had to bear the blotches for years longer & when anyone came the rooms were kept closed to avoid remarks. The kitchen with the floor rotten under the sink & behind the stove underwent a change.

The cupboards that mother had, were taken out & sold at auction so it was up to us to figure out something from those bare walls that would work in with the cabinets we had made for the other house at cost of \$35.00.

We had the windows changed to make room for the work-table & and sink. We bought the material & the work was charged against rent.

Later (which was done by the carpenters) in the bath-room & toilet the floor broke in & we replaced that and put linoleum on it. In the bedroom where mother had carpet we put in linoleum all at our own expense.

Later, the kitchen porch went out so we replaced that & gave it several coats of paint as well as the walls adjoining. The linoleum that was in the dining-room, when we moved in, finally went to pieces after I patched patch upon patch to maintain a certain degree of decency. Well, we put in new linoleum there and bore the expense. The next thing was in the kitchen where we had put new linoleum, and it went to pieces in a short time so there wasn't anything to do but have a new floor put in over the old one to make it worth while to put in linoleum. We stood all of the expense labor, lumber & linoleum. And while this was being done I changed the kitchen sewer which was continually clogging due to a lack of slope toward the north pool. I built a cess-pool south and down in the yard to the expense of which (pipes etc) we assumed. Then the cess-pool north of the house filled in unhealthy condition, endangering the very lives of our loved ones. It is needless to say, again assuming the entire expense. In the wash-room the oil-cloth was in shreds so we bought a new clothe to put it on & forgot it.

No one had ever heard of our asking for paint nor paper and all must agree that new paper and fresh paint are periodically a necessary evil. We have always assumed these expenses and right now a couple of rooms need a new job very badly but due to my hospital siege it will have to go along many a fond hope dashed to bits on the rocks.

When the community organized a company to build a high-line for electric light & power, we assumed our proportionate share of the total expense of building and paid cash for yard pole & changing the outlets & wiring & installing new fireproof conduits to various other outlets as required by law to conform to insurance requirements. This entire cost was around 35.00 or so and maybe more all told. In no instance do I include anything for our own labor or disadvantages. Any workmen that did anything here had to eat too and we furnished the board without further ado.

About the place & on the outbuildings, many a repair job has been done in which material nor work were considered, **but when one is cornered**. Well—plank-floors & foundations at the hog-house,

repairs in the barns & on the roof to meet necessary requirements. Broken doors, hinges, door-hangers etc. Some buildings are badly in need of repairs now-but we will have to wait, since no credit is being given. It will be 14 years next Feby. Since dad left us and that is a life-time for some shingles under certain conditions.

I built a storm entrance onto the cellar and then it was set afire burning the roof off and hadn't it been for the city fire dept. at charge of \$25.00 to us, for their coming into the country, it would have burned to the ground. One will ask "who set it afire?" Well, it was history repeating itself- how often in years gone bye have little hyenas set a fire only luckily, to be nipped in the bud. When the hog-house burned down 48 yrs. After I helped dad butcher, and he was occupying the same, it was considered a big joke-but that's different. Remember too there were fuses to be kept in repair that required posts & staples. In some instances where brush had grown ten to twenty feet high it was necessary to take out the whole fence, grub the brush and replace with very nearly every post new because the posts that were not rotten were broken off by huge snowdrifts weighing on the brush & hocus pocus—In round numbers, I have used about 1000 posts at cost of from 20 cents each to 11 cents making an average cost of perhaps 12 cents each. The grubbing which we spent quiet a lot of time, naturally involving money.

Charles will remember when he was still on the ranch how I tried to keep the creeks within their course by hauling strawbottoms on the banks but as the channels kept on filling up with silt, it gradually became an impossibility so it required plowing and scooping out, but even now, there is no guarantee that there will be no washing away of good soil on the flat in the case of extreme high water. But I tried at my own expense and when you come right down to it, each member of the family owes just as much to the estate as I do and if each of the other nine, had in the past years, donated as much as we have the farm would be in "A No. 1" shape today.

There is many a little task, many an escapade in the last twenty years that will have to go beyond recall.

Does anyone of you realize how much time I spent looking after the menagerie and the museum. The deer got out several times and it was up to me-once I (drove?) him in a hand to hand combat at no little risk. He and the coyotes and other animals had to be fed,

watered & protected in cold weather. When anyone came to tend to the museum, whose time did it take and who boarded and tolerated the personality-who aided him to take on inventory, to box up and take to and from the station certain specimens. Who sprayed the specimens at certain designated intervals Who got up at night in night clothes, awakened by the incessant barking of the dogs & in the fear of prowlers took a gun on a tour of inspections only to have to go back to bed sleepless and chilled? Many a scare had to lived down and detours taken when going out at night in the fear of being slugged.

Now then there pops up question of rent. As you all know, I had a lease with dad for a cash rental of \$137.00 and for a few years that worked out OK because prices were good and we netted about the same as in a third share rental. The reason this arrangement was preferred is on account of the division of crops. I was always conscientious. When we were on the shares-Charles will back me up on this-and yet, dad always felt he was being cheated. So- Prices on all farm commodities began to slip and when the bottom fell out, the whole crop did not bring the amount of the rent not to mention the cost of production. Just to give an idea of the cost of threshing alone – one year I wrote a check to John Kluss for \$117.00. Then there was the binding and twine, oil, repairs, feed, board of 3 shockers their wages at \$7.00 per day. That was in 1921 I think. Of course as wheat etc came down the cost of production did too but only one half in proportion to the returns.

During these lean years we assumed the current taxes in lieu of giving off any rent because by the time all expenses were paid & we had patched out a miserable existence and allowing a moderate carryover we were even with the board. We did give Mother some cash however, at intervals, for which she said she would give us due credit. (\$100.00 check & \$50.00 in bills at some other time about 5 & 6 years before her death.) Earlier than this we gave her some, but the time & amounts are beyond recall.

If we had given a third rental, the sales of said share would have netted about enough to pay ½ of the current taxes, so by our assuming them (and we were on the spot) the estate was far better off than the other way.

There is still some due on old taxes that we are supposed to pay, but after assuming it all up, I don't think it anything but a grave injustices to us.

And another thing, the State of Idaho passed a law—a moratorium law-and in some instances entire obligations were cancelled. In our obligations to the defunct (*Genesee*) Exchange Bank which was a current paper, a cut was made to less than a third of the face of the note. My obligation to Uncle Tom which was also current was cut in two and all accrued interest cancelled. Now the, this old obligation that is being held against me, is figured in its entirety; and, with all the summing up I have made in the foregoing pages, not counting on any cut, the budget could easily be balanced.

I haven't vouchers for every transaction of the past 20 yrs, and if I would have had, it would be some job to go thru a twenty years accumulation of canceled checks, slips, bills, vouchers and "what-nots". At that, this accounting is just nearly current as an outlawed note.

It was agreed before the round-table discussion took place, after mother's passing, that "whatever those present at our family meeting, decided upon with regard to the status of affairs, would be absolutely O.K. But the wind took a decided change and the receipts were refused a signature.

The will to "share & share alike" was accepted by Mother & probated awaiting certain formalities and a decree of distribution was issued on the half it was in dad's power to bequeath.

Of course if we had the burdens that some of you have with your families, we might be considered.

--Henry Lorang



c.1926 photograph of White Spring Ranch