

Sept. 25, 2019

Thrashing at the Francis Litzelman place.

TOURING SULLIVAN COUNTY'S MUSEUM . . . while dusting

Many times, we or visitors when doing research of a family name or land, wonder just how a property goes out of that family's ownership. A sad case recently gives just one explanation of one

family's scenario. This letter was found in a plain envelope with only a man's first name on it. The letter was in an Eagles Mere Water Carnival program for 1980. The gifter was not aware nor had any connection to the letter. Addressed "Dear D. & Family". (Note names are by first letter only.)

"Over 50 years ago Aunt C. came to my Gift Shop and asked me if I didn't think she and I should make out our wills. I told her I had been thinking about that too, but didn't know how to make mine out until I knew how Pop was making his will. If he favored F. or your mother I would favor the other. When Pop's will was made everything was more complicated than before. I never wanted the farm but none of the rest wanted it either. Pop wanted our old home to be kept in the family and I wanted to do all I could to help him when our dear mother left us but never thought I'd have to give up my cozy apartment or my Gift Shop where I had worked up a wonderful business with good friends and no money worries of any kind. I thought we could all work together and plan for Pop and G. but it didn't work out that way and I'm not blaming anyone for anything. I know Pop meant right by us all and he knew I had enough money to hang on to the farm and would be good to G. but so thankful God gave us the strength and courage to hang on for nearly 52 years. G. has worked so hard to keep going but isn't good and I am worse off so we have to sell.

"When I had more money than I have now I kept buying bonds for G, Uncle F. and your mother. I gave them all some of their bonds while they were living and still have or did have until a few days ago. I felt I better cash them while I was still living or the government would get most of the money as my name was on all the bonds so I went to Miss Thayer and the bank and they helped me. They advised me to cash all except G.'s and for him to keep his bonds separate from my money etc. I am sending each of your mother's children \$100.00 and Aunt M. \$500.00 to divide as R., J. and D. are dead. My bond money was from my Iowa property before I gave it to my brother-in-law who was past 90 and had looked after my affairs out there as long as he was able.



“My Prayer – Not how much I can get dear God/ But how much I can do and give/ To help make Your wonderful world/ A better place for all to live. Love to all, Aunt L.”

If someone reading this recognizes the letter or the scenario, please contact the museum. We can be reached by phoning 570-946-5020 or emailing museum@scpahistory.com. And you may also want to check out our web site at www.scpahistory.com and like us on Facebook.

In this letter the woman emits her sorrow not only of her own life disrupted and the tribulations of honoring her father’s wishes but also the realization of her own mortality to disburse of her own assets. She has detailed the division of her monetary holding but only makes the one statement of “so we have to sell”. This last must have been the hardest choice but given circumstances – the only choice left to her. And therein lies just one case of a land going out of a family name.