

LAST CRUSH

ENVELOPE O

THE RETAINER

Open first. No code required.

Inside: a letter from your client, a newspaper clipping, a wine label, a map of the property, and a worksheet.

1904 West Kings Highway
San Antonio, Texas 78201

October 23, 1989

Dear Detectives,

My brother Walter Brannock died sometime in the night of Friday, October 13, at the vineyard he built outside Blanco. On Tuesday the 17th the Blanco County Sheriff ruled it an accident. Carbon dioxide, they said. He leaned into the tank to punch down the grapes, the gas got him, and he fell in. They said it happens.

I taught eighth grade for thirty-eight years and I know when a story has been tidied up.

Walt did that punch-down on that same tank every night of every harvest for ten years. Three thousand nights, give or take. After the accident at that winery in Gruene in 1984 he put a fan in that room and a chain across the door and lectured everyone who would listen. He was many things, my brother, but he was not careless around Tank 4.

He telephoned me on Wednesday the 11th. He said, "Dee, I'm doing something big and half of them are going to hate me for it. I'll tell you Sunday." He never got to Sunday.

I am enclosing what I have. The clipping from the Blanco paper. A label from the case of '85 Reserve he sent me last Christmas, which I include because he was prouder of that wine than of anything except Cal, and because you should know what he made. A map of the place, which I traced from one he drew for me in 1982 and which I have tried to keep true. And a worksheet, for which I ask your forgiveness. Once a teacher.

Everything I have gathered is here, in envelopes, sealed. I wrote you a letter each time something new came to me and dated it, so you can follow me in order. I have put a four-number combination on each envelope the way Walt would have done it, and I will not tell you the numbers. Whatever you need to open an envelope is always in the ones that came before it. Walt locked everything, and every padlock on the place opened with the same four numbers: the year he put the first vines in the ground. Not the first vintage. He would correct you every time, and I could never remember which was which. You will work it out. Everything you need is in this envelope.

One more thing, for honesty's sake. In 1984 Walt put my name on a safe deposit box at Blanco National Bank and never told me what was in it or what the number was. I have not had the heart to go ask. If it becomes necessary, I will.

I have enclosed a check for your retainer. Find out what happened to my brother.

Sincerely,

Dolores B. Avery

The Blanco County News

BLANCO, TEXAS

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1989

VOL. 87, NO. 42

35 CENTS

Vineyard Founder Dies in Fermentation Accident

Walter Brannock, 61, found in tank at Cypress Hollow after harvest party; sheriff cites carbon dioxide

BY CAROLYN MABRY, STAFF WRITER

Walter "Walt" Brannock, founder of Cypress Hollow Vineyard on Ranch Road 165 and one of the first men to plant wine grapes commercially in Blanco County, was found dead early Saturday morning in one of his own fermentation tanks, hours after the winery's annual harvest party.

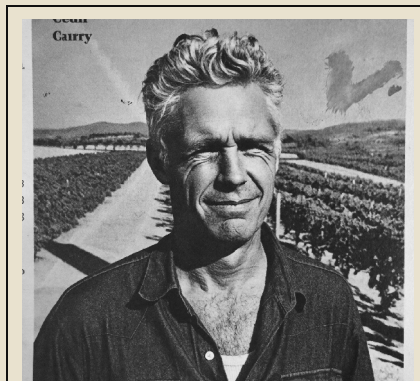
Blanco County Sheriff L.D. Purcell said Tuesday that the death has been ruled accidental. "Fermenting grapes give off carbon dioxide, and it pools in an open tank like water in a bathtub," Purcell said. "Mr. Brannock was performing a routine task alone late at night. He was overcome and fell. It is a known hazard in this business and it is a tragedy."

Brannock was discovered shortly after 6:30 a.m. Saturday by his son, Calvin Brannock, 34, the winery's assistant winemaker. Blanco Volunteer Fire Department responded. The Travis County Medical Examiner, which handles autopsies for Blanco County under contract, listed the preliminary cause as asphyxia.

A similar death occurred at a winery near Gruene in 1984.

Brannock was born in Blanco in 1928 and graduated from Blanco High School in 1946. He served six years in the United States Navy as a radioman, including two tours during the Korean conflict, and returned to run the family feed store on Main Street until selling it in 1975. He released Cypress Hollow's first vintage in 1979, at a time when, as he liked to say, "you could count the wineries in this state

on your fingers and have some left over for the bottle."



Walter Brannock at the winery's first crush, 1979. (File photo)

The winery's 1985 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon won a gold medal at the Lone Star State Wine Competition in 1988 and was served at the Governor's Mansion this spring.

Friends described Brannock as stubborn, generous and devoted to the vineyard. "He'd stand out there in Block C at midnight talking to the vines," said Bettye Teague, a neighbor. "Nobody worked harder."

Brannock is survived by his wife of 33 years, Ruth Cavanaugh Brannock; his son, Calvin, of Blanco; and his sister, Dolores Brannock Avery, of San Antonio. Services were held Wednesday at First Baptist Church of Blanco with burial in Blanco Cemetery.

Ruth Brannock said the winery would complete this year's harvest. "Walt would

come back and haunt us if we didn't," she said. Longtime vineyard manager Marisol Reyes is overseeing the remaining fermentations.

Purcell said the case remains open only pending routine toxicology results, "which we expect will confirm what we already know."

WEEKEND WEATHER RECAP

A line of thunderstorms crossed the county Friday night ahead of a weak cold front. Rain at the Blanco gauge fell between **10:15 and 10:50 p.m.**, totaling **0.4 inches**, with gusts to 38 mph. Skies cleared by midnight. Saturday's high was 74, low 51. Outlook: dry through the weekend, chance of showers Tuesday.

PANTHERS FALL TO JOHNSON CITY

The Blanco Panthers dropped a 21-14 district contest Friday at Johnson City, despite two touchdowns from senior back Trey Ochoa. Blanco (4-3, 1-2) hosts Comfort next Friday at 7:30 p.m.

COMMISSIONERS TABLE ROAD BOND

Blanco County Commissioners Court voted 3-2 Monday to table a proposed \$1.2 million road bond until January, citing uncertainty over state matching funds. Precinct 2 Commissioner Dale Ferris said RR 165 resurfacing "cannot wait another year."

ESTATE BOTTLED

**CYPRESS
HOLLOW**

VINEYARD

1985

Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon

TEXAS HILL COUNTRY

Blanco, Texas



CYPRESS HOLLOW VINEYARD

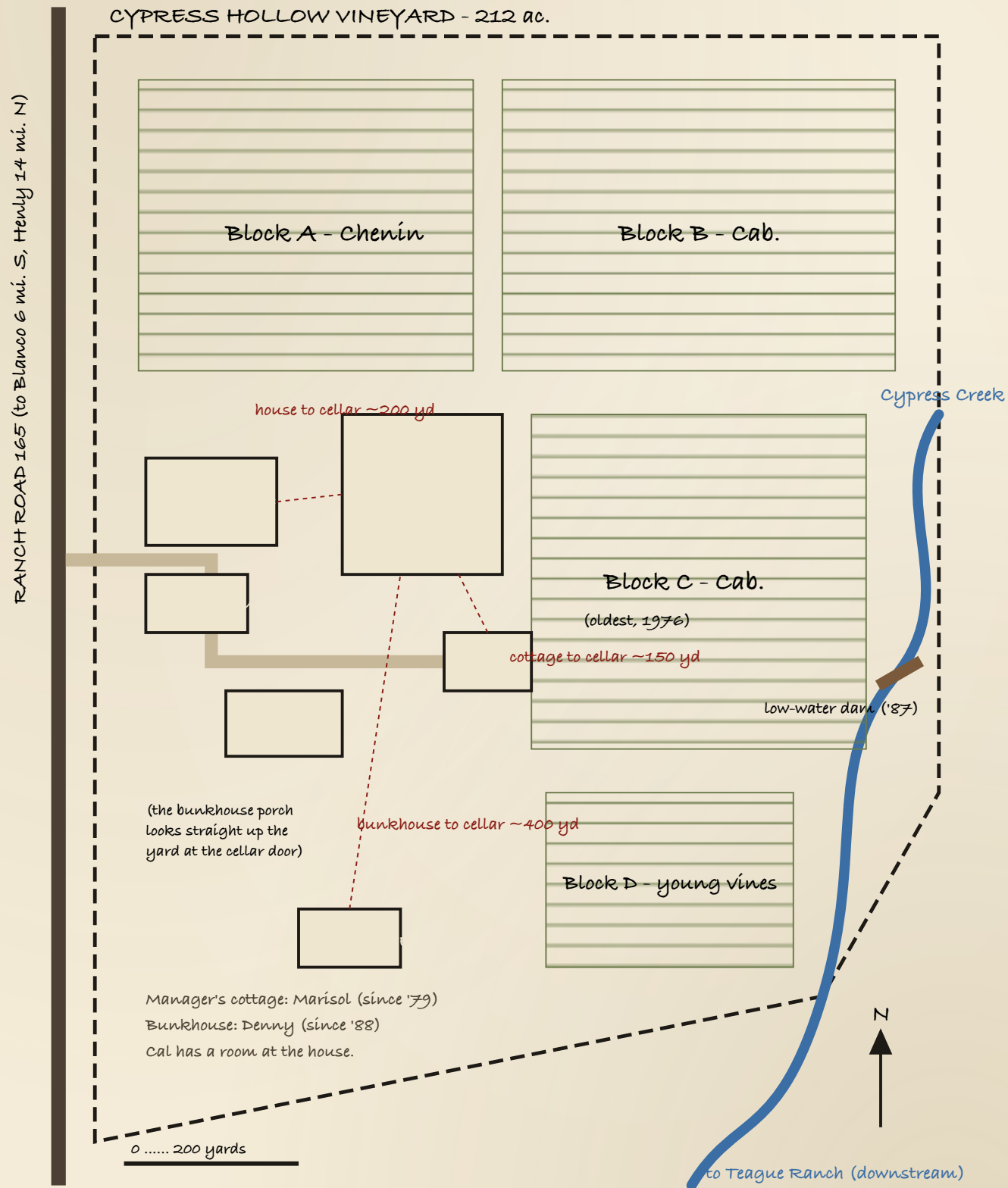
From vines planted on the Brannock homeplace in 1976. This wine is drawn entirely from **Block C**, our oldest Cabernet, picked by hand on **September 21, 1985 at 24.6° Brix**, fermented in open-top Tank 4 with twice-daily punch-downs, and aged twenty-two months in French oak.

Walt Brannock does the last punch-down of every night himself. He says the wine can tell.

ALCOHOL 13.4% BY VOLUME · 750 ML · CONTAINS SULFITES
Produced and bottled by Cypress Hollow Vineyard, 4410 Ranch Road 165,
Blanco, Texas 78606 · (512) 833-2202

GOVERNMENT WARNING: (1) According to the Surgeon General, women should not drink alcoholic beverages during pregnancy because of the risk of birth defects. (2) Consumption of alcoholic beverages impairs your ability to drive a car or operate machinery, and may cause health problems.

Traced from Walt's 1982 drawing. Distances are his, paced off. - D.



DETECTIVE'S WORKSHEET

One row per person. Fill in as you go. A suspect is not cleared until you can write down *which document* clears them.

PERSON	MOTIVE	MEANS / ACCESS	WHERE 11:00 - MIDNIGHT	CLEARED BY (DOCUMENT)
Ruth Brannock wife				
Cal Brannock son				
Marisol Reyes vineyard manager				
Hollis Teague neighbor				
Dr. Evelyn Sato consulting enologist				
Denny Pruitt cellar hand				

TIMELINE, FRIDAY OCTOBER 13

9 PM	10 PM	11 PM	MIDNIGHT	1 AM

COMBINATIONS

ENVELOPE 1	ENVELOPE 2	ENVELOPE 3	ENVELOPE 4	SOLUTION

Questions you must be able to answer before you accuse: **How** did he die (not the sheriff's version, yours)? **When**, to the quarter hour? **Who** could have, and who could not, and why not?

DOLORES B. AVERY

Retired, Horace Mann Middle School

1904 W. Kings Hwy · San Antonio · (512) 736-0418

DOLORES B. AVERY
1904 W. KINGS HWY
SAN ANTONIO TX 78201

No. 2231
88-1104/1140

Oct. 23, 1989

PAY TO THE

ORDER OF Detectives (retainer) \$ 1,500.00

One thousand five hundred and no/100 DOLLARS

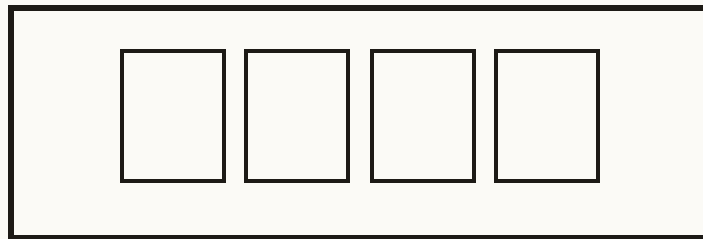
FROST NATIONAL BANK · SAN ANTONIO
MEMO Walt

Dolores B. Avery

LAST CRUSH

ENVELOPE 1

THE SHERIFF'S FILE



Sealed. Do not open until you have the four-digit combination from Envelope 0.

Inside: Dolores's second letter, Blanco County Sheriff's Office case 89-1013-A (incident report, eight statements, evidence inventory, three photographs, preliminary autopsy), the Tank 4 log, the vineyard phone directory, and the party guest list.

San Antonio
October 30, 1989

Dear Detectives,

Sheriff Purcell taught school with my late husband's brother for eleven years, and I reminded him of it politely, and then less politely, and on Friday he handed me a copy of the file. It is thinner than I expected. Read the statements twice. Somebody in there is not telling it straight, and I have my suspicions, but I am his sister and I am not to be trusted on the subject.

Some things I noticed that you may make more of than I can. The deputy says the fan was running when Cal found him. Marisol says the fan had been acting up. Both cannot be simply true. The decanter was clean. Ruth will tell you what that means. And Walt's watch stopped, which is the only mercy in the whole business, because it tells us when.

Ruth has let me into the house and the cellar. Walt's office has a steel cabinet with a four-number lock that Ruth never knew. She says Walt told her once that it was "his tank and his number, tank first," and that "his number" was on the label of the '85 Reserve, and then she cried and I stopped asking. You have the label. The log in this envelope will tell you which tank was his. I worked it out myself, eventually, sitting at his desk with the label in one hand and the clipboard in the other, and the cabinet opened. What was inside is in the next envelope, sealed with that same number. I will not write it down. Walt would not have.

Marisol has been a great help. She found the clipboard with the tank log and gave it to the deputy herself. She has run that vineyard for fifteen years and she is running it now with a dead man's harvest in the tanks and I do not know how she is standing up.

One more thing. Cal is not himself. He was short with me on the telephone and he has not been to the house since the funeral. Ruth says he is sleeping at the Icehouse. Grief takes people differently, but I taught boys like Cal for thirty-eight years and short with his aunt is not grief. It is something else.

Sincerely,

Dolores

BLANCO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

L.D. Purcell, Sheriff · 101 E. Cypress St., Blanco, Texas 78606 · (512) 833-4141

BLANCO
COUNTY
SHERIFF
TEXAS

INCIDENT / OFFENSE REPORT

CASE NO.	DATE OF REPORT	TIME DISPATCHED	TIME ON SCENE
89-1013-A	10/14/89	0641	0658
LOCATION	CLASSIFICATION	REPORTING OFFICER	
Cypress Hollow Vineyard, 4410 RR 165, Blanco	Death - unattended	Dep. R. Kimbrough #14	
DECEDENT	RACE/SEX	DOB	AGE
BRANNOCK, Walter Dean	W / M	03/02/1928	61
COMPLAINANT	NEXT OF KIN NOTIFIED		
BRANNOCK, Calvin W. (son)	BRANNOCK, Ruth C. (wife) - on scene		

NARRATIVE

At 0641 hrs dispatch received a call from Calvin BRANNOCK reporting his father unresponsive inside a fermentation tank at the above location. R/O arrived 0658 with Blanco VFD (Unit 2). R/O was directed by Calvin BRANNOCK to the tank room on the north end of the cellar building.

Decedent was observed submerged to the chest in grape must inside Tank 4, an open-top stainless steel fermenter approx. 8 ft tall and 6 ft dia. A rolling steel platform ladder was positioned against the tank with wheel brakes set. A wall-mounted exhaust fan on the east wall was operating on arrival. A steel chain was found hooked across the tank room doorway with a cardboard sign reading "NO ENTRY - CO2 - FERMENTATION IN PROGRESS." Calvin BRANNOCK stated he unhooked the chain to enter at approx. 0635 to perform the morning punch-down, observed a flashlight lying lit on the platform, climbed the platform and saw his father in the tank. He stated he attempted to pull the decedent out and could not.

VFD removed decedent from the tank with a rope sling. Pronounced 0712 by VFD Capt. Ochoa. No pulse, rigor beginning in jaw. Decedent clothed in denim shirt, khaki trousers, work boots. Punch-down tool (stainless plunger, 5 ft) recovered from inside tank. Decedent's flashlight (Eveready, on, batteries weak) recovered from platform. Reading glasses on office desk. Wristwatch on decedent's left wrist not running (see inventory).

Dep. Ortiz photographed the scene, two rolls. R/O walked the residence and outbuildings with Mrs. Ruth BRANNOCK. At the request of the Travis County ME (Dr. Castellano, by phone 0805) R/O inventoried the medicine cabinet in the master bath of the main residence for the decedent's medications (see inventory). Decedent transported to Travis County ME under county contract, 0850.

Statements taken 10/14 and 10/15 from family, employees and guests of a private party held on the premises the evening of 10/13 (approx. 40 guests; list attached). Last known contact with decedent by any witness: 11:05 PM 10/13 (see PRUITT).

Vineyard manager Marisol REYES advised R/O that fermenting must produces carbon dioxide which pools in open tanks and that the decedent performed a nightly punch-down of Tank 4 alone, and further that the tank room exhaust fan "had been acting up." R/O notes the 1984 fatality at a Gruene winery under similar circumstances.

PRELIMINARY: Accidental death, CO2 asphyxia with fall into tank. Case to remain open pending ME

BLANCO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE • WITNESS STATEMENT

Case 89-1013-A • Statements taken by Dep. R. Kimbrough #14 • Page 1 of 4

STATEMENT OF: BRANNOCK, RUTH CAVANAUGH (WIFE), AGE 58

10/14/89 • 0940 HRS • MAIN RESIDENCE

The party broke up when the rain came. The last of them were gone by five till eleven. Walt walked the Teagues out at half past ten and then stood on the porch with me saying goodnights. He said, "I'll check on Four and be up," which is what he said every night of every harvest for ten years. I called my sister Joanne in Amarillo a little after eleven, which I do on Fridays, and we talked a good while. I was asleep by midnight. Walt often slept on the cot in the office during fermentation, so I did not think anything when he was not in the bed. Cal woke me.



Yes, I take a Seconal every night. I have since 1987. Dr. Whitfield. Walt took a heart pill and Motrin for his back and nothing else, and he would not have taken one of mine if you paid him, he said they were for weak people.

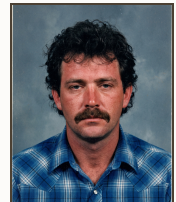
The decanter? He rinsed that decanter once a month if I nagged him. He said the port seasoned it. If it is clean somebody cleaned it. Marisol, probably. She cleans up after him. She has been a blessing.

Ruth C. Brannock

STATEMENT OF: BRANNOCK, CALVIN WALTER (SON), AGE 34

10/14/89 • 0725 HRS • CELLAR OFFICE

I went down at half past six to do the morning punch-down like always. The chain was up, which is normal at night. I unhooked it. I saw his flashlight first, lying on the platform, still on. Then I saw him. I tried to get him out. I couldn't.



Yes, Dad and I had words last night. About half past nine, by the equipment barn. Family business. It's got nothing to do with this. I left around twenty after ten and went to the Icehouse in town and drank beer till they closed and came home and slept in the truck because I didn't want to wake Mama. I don't know what time. Late.

You want to know who's a thief on this place, you ask Denny Pruitt about six cases of '86 Reserve that walked out of the cellar in September. Dad wouldn't hear it. Dad hired a convict and wouldn't hear it.

Cal Brannock

BLANCO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE · WITNESS STATEMENT

Case 89-1013-A · Statements taken by Dep. R. Kimbrough #14 · Page 2 of 4

STATEMENT OF: REYES, MARISOL (VINEYARD MANAGER), AGE 41

10/14/89 · 0810 HRS · CRUSH PAD

I have worked for Walt Brannock since 1974. I run the vineyard. I live in the manager's cottage.

The rain started about a quarter past ten. I went back to the cottage at half past to get out of it. I made tea and I was in bed by eleven. I did not hear anything but rain, and then nothing. I did not see Walt after the party. The last I spoke to him was around ten, at the crush pad. Vineyard business.

You should know that fan in the tank room has been acting up for weeks. I told Walt twice. He would have said it was fine. He always said it was fine. Fermenting must makes carbon dioxide, it sits on the wine like a blanket, and if the fan is not pulling it out and a man leans over that tank he is gone before he knows it. That is what happened. He was tired and he leaned in.

Fifteen years. He was like family. I am not going to say any more right now.

M. Reyes



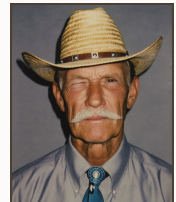
STATEMENT OF: TEAGUE, HOLLIS (NEIGHBOR, TEAGUE RANCH), AGE 63

10/15/89 · 1400 HRS · TEAGUE RANCH

Bettye and I went to the party at half past six. We left at half past ten when it started raining. Bettye drove. We were home by ten till eleven. I did not see Walt again after he walked us to the car.

Walt and I had our differences. That is a matter of public record and of my attorney's, and I will not discuss it with you or anybody. Ask Jim Haskell or ask Walt's man Baird. I will say he was a fair man at the end and I am sorry he is dead, and that is all I will say.

Hollis Teague



BLANCO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE · WITNESS STATEMENT

Case 89-1013-A · Statements taken by Dep. R. Kimbrough #14 · Page 3 of 4

STATEMENT OF: SATO, EVELYN, PH.D. (CONSULTING
ENOLOGIST), AGE 46

10/15/89 · 1030 HRS · BY TELEPHONE,
FREDERICKSBURG

I consult for Cypress Hollow and three other Hill Country wineries on fermentation management and laboratory analysis. I had been on site most of the week for harvest. I attended the party as a guest.

Walt and I had a misunderstanding in September about some fruit from Block C and we cleared it up that evening. He apologized, in fact, which was not like him. He was in good spirits. I left at ten to eleven, when the rain let up, and drove home to Fredericksburg. I arrived about a quarter to twelve. I live alone.

I did not go into the tank room that night. I had no reason to. The punch-down was Walt's and he did not like company for it.

E. Sato



STATEMENT OF: PRUITT, DENNIS RAY (CELLAR HAND), AGE 29

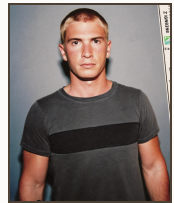
10/14/89 · 0850 HRS · BUNKHOUSE

I was on the bunkhouse porch most of the night smoking. I don't drink. You can see the whole yard and the cellar door from that porch.

Cal's truck left about twenty after ten, fast. Mad. The rain started right after that. The Teagues left in the Buick at half past. Dr. Sato's white Volvo about ten till eleven, when it quit raining. Mr. Brannock came out of the house at five after eleven with a flashlight, whistling, and went in the cellar door like he does every night. I went inside around midnight. I didn't see nobody else.

Yes, I did time in Hays County. Burglary, 1985, eighteen months. Mr. Brannock knew that when he hired me. He's the only one who ever did.

Denny Pruitt



BLANCO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE • WITNESS STATEMENT

Case 89-1013-A • Statements taken by Dep. R. Kimbrough #14 • Page 4 of 4

STATEMENT OF: CANTU, LUPE (BARTENDER, BLANCO ICEHOUSE), AGE 10/15/89 • 1615 HRS • BLANCO
52 ICEHOUSE

Cal Brannock came in about twenty till eleven Friday. He had four or five Lone Stars. He was upset about something with his daddy and I didn't ask. He left a little after eleven. He did not close the place. I close at midnight on Fridays and he was long gone. He did not say where he was going.

Lupe Cantu

STATEMENT OF: TEAGUE, BETTYE (NEIGHBOR, GUEST), AGE 60 10/15/89 • 1415 HRS • TEAGUE RANCH

It was a lovely party until the rain. Walt made a toast about the harvest and about his son and everybody clapped. I did see Walt and Marisol having words down by the crush pad around ten o'clock. She walked off toward her little house. I did not think anything of it. They squabbled like an old married couple, those two, for fifteen years. We left at half past ten. Hollis will have told you. He does not want to talk about the lawsuit and I would not push him on it if I were you.

Bettye Teague

Guests contacted by phone 10/15-10/16 (31 of 34 remaining): none report contact with decedent after 10:55 PM. None report entering cellar bldg. - RK

**BLANCO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE · EVIDENCE / PROPERTY
INVENTORY**

Case 89-1013-A · Dep. R. Kimbrough #14 · 10/14/89

#	ITEM	LOCATION RECOVERED	DISPOSITION
1	Wristwatch, Timex, analog, brown leather band, not running, hands at 11:41 . Crystal fogged, must inside case.	Decedent, L wrist	To ME w/ body
2	Flashlight, Eveready 2-D cell, switch ON, batteries weak	Platform, Tank 4	Released to family
3	Punch-down tool, stainless, 5 ft	Inside Tank 4	Released to family
4	Wallet, brown leather, \$63 cash, TX DL, Farm Bureau card, misc.	Decedent, R rear pocket	Released to family
5	Key ring, 9 keys, brass tag "WB"	Decedent, R front pocket	Released to family
6	Notebook, pocket, spiral, saturated, illegible	Decedent, shirt pocket	Released to family
7	Reading glasses, half-frame	Office desk	Left in place
8	Decanter, cut crystal, approx. 1 qt, empty, clean, inverted on folded white dish towel	Office shelf	Photographed, left in place
9	Wine glass, small (4 oz), clean, in dish rack	Office sink	Photographed, left in place
10	Bottle, "Cypress Hollow Cellar Port," 750 ml, approx. 1/3 full, corked	Office cabinet, lower	Left in place
11	Tank 4 log sheet, clipboard (copied, original left in place)	Tank room wall hook - produced by M. Reyes	Copy to file
12	Cardboard sign "NO ENTRY - CO2 - FERMENTATION IN PROGRESS," black marker, on steel chain	Tank room doorway	Photographed, left in place
MEDICINE CABINET, MASTER BATH, MAIN RESIDENCE - inventoried at request of Travis Co. ME (Dr. Castellano) for decedent's medications. Counted in presence of Mrs. Brannock.			
13a	LANOXIN 0.25 mg tabs, Rx 4460930, W. Brannock, Blanco Drug, filled 09/30/89, qty 30 - 17 present	Med. cabinet	To ME
13b	MOTRIN 600 mg tabs, Rx 4412207, W. Brannock, Blanco Drug, filled 08/29/89, qty 60 - 41 present	Med. cabinet	To ME
13c	SECONAL 100 mg caps, Rx 4471186, R. Brannock, Blanco Drug, filled 10/03/89, qty 30 - 11 present	Med. cabinet	Noted, left in place (not decedent's)
13d	Assorted OTC: Bayer aspirin, Pepto-Bismol, Ben-Gay, Visine	Med. cabinet	Noted

Photo log: Roll 1 (24 exp) printed, 3 frames attached. Roll 2 (24 exp) exposed by Ortiz, not printed - accidental, no need. Negatives in file. - RK



89-1013-A · Roll 1 Fr. 4 · Tank room, Tank 4 and platform, looking N. Fan on E wall running.
0705 hrs. - Ortiz



89-1013-A · Roll 1 Fr. 11 · Cellar office, shelf above sink. Decanter inverted on towel. 0740 hrs.
- Ortiz



89-1013-A · Roll 1 Fr. 2 · Tank room doorway from yard, chain re-hung for photo per C. Brannock's description. 0700 hrs. - Ortiz

CYPRESS HOLLOW VINEYARD · FERMENTATION LOG · HARVEST 1989

One line per reading. Punch down twice daily minimum. Initial every line. Tanks 1-3, 5: CB. Tank 4: WB only. - W

DATE	TIME	TANK	TEMP °F	BRIX	CAP PUNCHED	INITIALS	NOTES
10/11	7:10 AM	1	78	16.4	Y	CB	
10/11	7:20 AM	2	79	17.0	Y	CB	
10/11	7:30 AM	3	77	18.8	Y	CB	
10/11	7:45 AM	5	72	21.2	Y	CB	just started - Block D
10/11	7:00 PM	4	80	16.5	Y	WB	
10/11	11:20 PM	4	81	15.8	Y	WB	smells right
10/12	7:05 AM	1	80	14.9	Y	CB	
10/12	7:15 AM	2	81	15.2	Y	CB	
10/12	7:25 AM	3	79	17.1	Y	CB	
10/12	7:35 AM	5	75	20.0	Y	CB	
10/12	7:00 PM	4	82	14.6	Y	WB	
10/12	11:10 PM	4	83	13.9	Y	WB	
10/13	7:00 AM	1	81	13.0	Y	CB	
10/13	7:10 AM	2	82	13.4	Y	CB	
10/13	7:20 AM	3	80	15.2	Y	CB	
10/13	7:30 AM	5	77	18.6	Y	CB	
10/13	7:00 PM	4	82	13.0	Y	WB	party - back at 11
10/13	11:15 PM	4	84	11.2			
10/14	7:50 AM	1	82	11.1	Y	MR	Cal can't. Doing all tanks today. MR
10/14	8:00 AM	2	83	11.6	Y	MR	
10/14	8:10 AM	3	81	13.4	Y	MR	
10/14	8:20 AM	5	79	16.8	Y	MR	

Last entry in decedent's hand 10/13 11:15 PM (temp & Brix only, no punch-down mark, no initial). Copied 10/14 - RK

CYPRESS HOLLOW VINEYARD - TELEPHONE

Dial 4 digits from any set. Outside line: dial 9.

Main House 2201

Cellar Office 2202

Manager's Cottage 2203

Bunkhouse 2204

Tasting Room 2205

Residence line (512) 833-2201 • Business line (512) 833-2202

HARVEST PARTY - FRIDAY OCT. 13, 1989 - GUEST LIST (departure times per witnesses - RK)

GUEST	OF	LEFT	GUEST	OF	LEFT
Ruth & Walt Brannock	hosts		Bob & Nancy Lindley	Farm Bureau, Blanco	~10:40
Cal Brannock	family	10:20 (Pruitt)	Pastor Gene & Carol Ashby	First Baptist	10:15
Marisol Reyes	staff	10:30 to cottage (self)	Dale & Kay Ferris	Commissioner, Pct 2	10:45
Denny Pruitt	staff	on site	Carolyn Mabry	Blanco Co. News	10:50
Hollis & Bettye Teague	neighbor	10:30 (Pruitt, Teague)	Tom & Ana Herrera	Herrera's, San Marcos	10:35
Dr. Evelyn Sato	consultant	10:50 (Pruitt, self)	Ray Ozuna	Blanco	left early ~9:00
Gerald Kemp	Austin	did not attend	Lupe Cantu	Blanco Icehouse	did not attend (working)
Tom Baird	Austin, attorney	did not attend	Bill & Jo Ann Haskell	Johnson City	10:45
Doc & Marge Whitfield	Blanco	10:20	the Ochoa family (4)	Blanco VFD	10:30
Pedernales Ridge crew (6)	Fredericksburg	~10:40 in two trucks	Blanco Panthers boosters (8)	Blanco	10:15-10:50

Approx. 40 total. No guest reports seeing decedent after 10:55 except PRUITT (11:05). No guest reports entering cellar bldg after 9 PM. - RK

OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL EXAMINER • TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS

1213 Sabine Street, Austin, Texas 78701 • Anne Castellano, M.D., Deputy Chief Medical Examiner

PRELIMINARY REPORT OF AUTOPSY

ME CASE

ME-89-2210

AGENCY CASE

Blanco SO 89-1013-A

DATE OF EXAM

10/16/89

DECEDENT

BRANNOCK, Walter D.,
61

EXTERNAL. Well-developed, well-nourished white male, 71 in., 188 lb. Clothing saturated with red-purple liquid consistent with fermenting grape must; same material in hair, ears, nares and mouth. Contusion 3 x 2 cm right temple with underlying scalp hemorrhage, consistent with impact against the rim or interior wall of a tank. Abrasions dorsal hands. No defensive injuries. Rigor full, lividity posterior, consistent with recovery position.

INTERNAL. Pulmonary edema and congestion, bilateral. Frothy fluid and red-purple particulate matter in trachea and mainstem bronchi. Approx. 250 ml red-purple liquid in stomach with a strong sweet odor of fortified wine; no solid food. Cardiomegaly, mild (480 g), with moderate coronary atherosclerosis. No acute cardiac lesion identified grossly. Liver mildly fatty. Remaining organs unremarkable.

PRELIMINARY OPINION. Findings are consistent with asphyxia due to displacement of oxygen by carbon dioxide in a confined space, with terminal aspiration of liquid. The temporal contusion is consistent with a fall. The distribution of findings does not exclude contributing factors. Blood, vitreous, urine and gastric contents have been submitted for comprehensive toxicology, including ethanol and a sedative-hypnotic screen. Results expected in two to three weeks.

CAUSE OF DEATH: Pending toxicology. **MANNER OF DEATH:** Pending.

SIGNATURE

Anne Castellano, M.D.

DATE

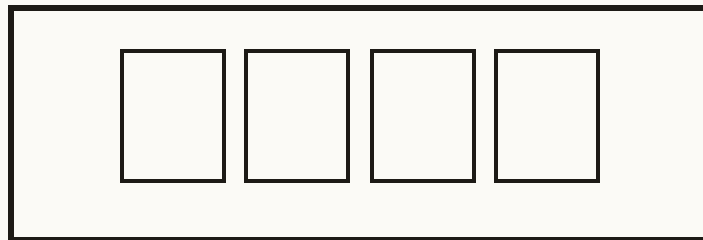
10/17/89

PRELIMINARY

LAST CRUSH

ENVELOPE 2

THE CELLAR OFFICE CABINET



Sealed. Do not open until you have the four-digit combination from Envelope 1.

Inside: Dolores's third letter and the contents of Walt's steel cabinet: his private ledger, business letters, an invoice, a telephone bill, two pages from his address book, three index cards, and a barrel inventory.

San Antonio
November 6, 1989

Dear Detectives,

The cabinet took me two tries; I had the numbers in the wrong order the first time. Ruth stood in the doorway and would not come in. I have sent you everything that was inside except a bottle of port, which I left, and a photograph of Cal at his high school graduation, which I kept.

You will find a telephone bill. Ruth gave me that herself, before I asked. She said "You think I don't know what people are saying. I was on the telephone with my sister. Bells don't lie." She is right that they do not, but check it anyway, because that is what I am paying you for.

You will find his ledger. Walt kept two sets of books his whole life: the ones Ruth saw, and this one. Read it slowly. There are things in it about Cal, and about Denny, and about Dr. Sato and Hollis Teague, that Ruth did not know and that I did not know, and one thing in it that made me put it down and go outside for a while. You will know it when you get to it.

You will find three index cards. One is a table of letters that Walt called his radioman's table. He kept notes to himself in code from the day he left the Navy until the day he died, and it drove our mother to distraction. He told me once that he had used the same key word his whole life, and when I asked what it was he laughed and said it was the first word of the name of the only thing he ever loved more than Ruth. He meant the vineyard. The second card is in that code. It took me the better part of a week and a pot of coffee, and I am not going to tell you what it says.

The third card I do not understand at all. It is a childish thing, Cal's, from when he was ten or eleven, and I do not know why Walt kept it in a locked cabinet with his business papers. Keep it. Walt kept everything for a reason.

There is also a barrel inventory, which I include because it was in the cabinet, not because I know what it is for.

Marisol asked me today what the sheriff's file said. I told her it said accident. She said "Good," and then she said "I mean, good that it's over for Ruth." I am sure that is what she meant.

Sincerely,

Dolores

P.S. Once the card gave up what it said, I drove to Blanco and did what it told me to do. What I found is in the next envelope, sealed with a number the same trail will lead you to. I am not going to spoil Walt's last piece of cleverness by writing it here.

9/2 Boot order, Cavender's San Marcos. Mari, Denny, Cal, me. \$412.

9/8 Block A Chenin picked. 9.2 t @ 19.8 Bx. Clean.

9/12 Block B Cab picked. 14.1 t @ 23.9. Best B since '85.

9/16 6 cs '86 Res to D. See my note. Off the books.

9/21 E.S. says declassify ALL of Block C. Sell bulk to

Pedernales Ridge @ \$410/ton. Cab is going \$900.

Pedernales is HER client too. Ask why.

9/26 E.S. lab rpt on C came. VA 1.4. I don't believe it.

C is my best block. Getting my own samples.

9/28 Paid Cal's marker to R. Ozuna. \$6,500. LAST TIME.

Told him. He didn't hear me. He never does.

10/1 New bottle Cellar Port in the decanter. Doc says two

glasses a night and no more. Two it is. Never washed

that decanter in 10 yrs and I'm not starting.

10/2 Called Baird. Lantana wants an answer by the 20th.

10/4 H.T.'s lawyer's letter. Baird says settle. My offer:

pull the dam, easement on the creek. H. gets his

water back and Lantana's bank gets its easement.

Everybody wins but Hollis won't believe it.

10/6 Lantana letter came. \$2,150,000. A subdivision.

God help me. Cal will never forgive me. Ruth

might. It's the heart. Doc says 2 yrs, maybe 5.

Can't leave her a vineyard and a mortgage.

10/9 Fan motor in tank room replaced. Hill Country Elec.

\$340. Stood there for the test. Runs like new.

10/10 Told Baird: addendum for M. Do it right, do it

in writing, and do it before I lose my nerve.

15 yrs. I owe her more than a handshake.

10/11 Called Dee. Told her Sunday. She'll be the

only one who doesn't yell.

10/12 Pulled C samples myself, back rows. Sour rot.

She's right. My mistake. VA is worse than her

number. \$410 is a gift. Apologize Fri.

10/12 M. cold all week. Won't look at me. She saw

Baird's letter on the desk Tues, I'd bet the

place on it. Should've told her first. Sunday.

10/13 H.T. 4:30 office - SETTLE. Signed. Put it away

with the rest until Sunday. Party 6:30.

Tell Cal tonight. Tell Ruth Sunday. Tell M. Sunday.

Then Dee. Then it's done and they can hate me

in comfort.

(remaining pages blank)

LANTANA LAND COMPANY

8911 North Capital of Texas Highway, Suite 3200 · Austin, Texas 78759 · (512) 346-9100

October 6, 1989

Mr. Walter D. Brannock
c/o Thomas J. Baird, Esq.
Baird & Whitcomb
816 Congress Avenue, Suite 1100
Austin, Texas 78701

*Answer by the 20th.
Tell them all Sunday.*

Re: Letter of Intent - Purchase of approximately 212 acres, Blanco County, Texas ("Cypress Hollow")

Dear Mr. Brannock:

This letter sets out the principal terms on which Lantana Land Company ("Buyer") proposes to acquire the above property from you ("Seller"). It is not a binding contract of sale but reflects our good-faith intent to proceed to a definitive agreement.

- 1. Purchase price.** Two million one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$2,150,000.00), cash at closing.
- 2. Property.** All of Seller's approximately 212 acres on Ranch Road 165, together with improvements, the winery facility, equipment, inventory in tank and barrel, and the Cypress Hollow name and marks.
- 3. Intended use.** Buyer intends to develop the property as a single-family residential community under the working name "Cypress Hollow Estates," retaining the existing winery building as a community amenity.
- 4. Contingencies.** (a) Survey and title acceptable to Buyer. (b) Seller to remove the low-water dam on Cypress Creek prior to closing. (c) Seller to deliver at closing a recorded conservation easement over the Cypress Creek frontage, not less than 150 feet in width, in a form acceptable to Buyer's lender, and to resolve to Buyer's satisfaction any pending claim by the adjoining downstream landowner.
- 5. Employment and other matters.** Seller has advised that an addendum regarding M.R. will be delivered under separate cover by Seller's counsel. Buyer is agreeable in principle.
- 6. Timing.** Buyer requests Seller's response on or before October 20, 1989, with a definitive agreement within 30 days thereafter and closing on or before January 31, 1990.

We are enthusiastic about this property. Please call me directly with any questions.

Very truly yours,

Gerald T. Kemp

Gerald T. Kemp
Vice President, Acquisitions

cc: T. Baird

TEXAS FARM BUREAU INSURANCE COMPANIES

Blanco County Office · 412 Main Street, Blanco, Texas 78606 · Robert L. Lindley, Agent

February 21, 1989

Mr. Walter D. Brannock
4410 Ranch Road 165
Blanco, Texas 78606

Dear Walt:

Enclosed please find your policy No. TL-4471-0928, a twenty-year level term life policy in the face amount of **\$250,000**, insured Walter D. Brannock, primary beneficiary Ruth C. Brannock, contingent beneficiary Calvin W. Brannock. The policy was issued **at your request following our meeting of February 9**, and I want to thank you again for your candor about the Lanoxin. It made the underwriting slower but it made it honest, and the rating came back better than I feared.

Annual premium is \$1,412.00, due each February 15. As we discussed, you asked that the premium notices come to the cellar office and not the house. I have so noted the file.

Nancy and I look forward to the harvest party.

Sincerely,

Bob Lindley

Robert L. Lindley

HILL COUNTRY ELECTRIC

Licensed & Bonded · TECL 11402
207 W. Pecan Dr., Johnson City, TX 78636 · (512) 868-7100

PAID 10/12
INVOICE No. 8917
Date: 10/09/89
Terms: Net 30

BILL TO: Cypress Hollow Vineyard, 4410 RR 165, Blanco **JOB SITE:** Cellar bldg, tank room

DESCRIPTION	QTY	AMOUNT
Remove and replace tank room exhaust fan motor, wall unit E wall. Dayton 1/2 HP 115V 1725 RPM, new belt, new switch. Test run 30 min. Operating normal. Customer present at test.	1	242.60
Labor, journeyman	2.5 hr	87.50
Shop supplies		10.00
TOTAL		340.10

Technician: **J. Molina**Customer acceptance: *W. Brannock - runs good*

Aug. 22, 1989

Walt -

My stock tank has been dry since June and you know why. That dam of yours. Forty head watering out of a trough I fill with a truck while you make wine for people in Austin.

Jim Haskell says I will win and I believe him. You had a chance to be neighborly about it and you were not.

You will be sorry you didn't settle.

- H.T.

He's right about the tank. Call Baird. - 8/23

Southwestern Bell Telephone

Statement of Account

Statement date: **OCT 16 1989**

Account: **512 833-2201 402**

Page 2 of 3

BRANNOCK WALTER D 4410 RANCH RD 165 BLANCO TX 78606 Billing period SEP 16 - OCT 15

ITEMIZED LONG DISTANCE CALLS - DIRECT DIALED

No.	Date	Time	Place called	Number	Rate	Min	Amount
1	SEP 22	7:14P	AMARILLO TX	806 355-0142	E	38	6.84
2	SEP 25	9:02A	AUSTIN TX	512 477-2100	D	11	3.41
3	SEP 29	7:31P	AMARILLO TX	806 355-0142	E	51	9.18
4	OCT 02	10:12A	AUSTIN TX	512 477-2100	D	6	1.86
5	OCT 06	7:05P	AMARILLO TX	806 355-0142	E	44	7.92
6	OCT 08	2:40P	SAN ANTONIO TX	512 736-0418	D	22	5.06
7	OCT 11	4:22P	SAN ANTONIO TX	512 736-0418	D	14	3.22
8	OCT 12	8:50A	FREDERICKSBG TX	512 997-3310	D	4	0.88
9	OCT 13	3:15P	JOHNSON CITY TX	512 868-4021	D	7	1.19
10	OCT 13	11:10P	AMARILLO TX	806 355-0142	N	42	5.46
11	OCT 14	7:02A	SAN ANTONIO TX	512 736-0418	D	9	2.07
12	OCT 14	8:15A	AUSTIN TX	512 477-2100	D	3	0.93
13	OCT 14	8:31A	AMARILLO TX	806 355-0142	D	19	5.32
14	OCT 15	6:40P	SAN ANTONIO TX	512 736-0418	E	31	5.58
TOTAL ITEMIZED CALLS							58.92

Rate periods: D = Day (8AM-5PM Mon-Fri) E = Evening (5PM-11PM Sun-Fri) N = Night/Weekend (11PM-8AM daily, all day Sat, Sun to 5PM).
Times shown are the time the call was connected, Central time. Duration rounded up to the next full minute.

Calls placed from extension telephones on this line are billed to this account. Business line 512 833-2202 is billed under separate statement.

"Bells don't lie." - R.

Palmer Feed - Blanco - 833-2203	P	Sato, Dr. Evelyn - 214 W. Main, Fbg	S- T
Pickett, Joanne & Earl (Ruth's sister)		office (512) 997-3310	
4412 Bowie St, Amarillo 79110		home (512) 997-6621	
(806) 355-0142		Seguín Moreau (barrels) - Napa	
Pedernales Ridge Winery - Fbg		(707) 252-3408	
(512) 997-8800 - ask for Ed		SW Bell repair - 611	
Purcell, L.D. (Sheriff) - 833-4141		Teague, Hollis & Bettye - Teague Ranch	
home 833-0977		RR 165 - 833-2917	
Pruitt, Denny - bunkhouse 2204		Travis Co. ME - Austin (512) 854- 9599	
mother: Ida, San Marcos		Tonkawa Cooperage - Demptos rep,	
(512) 396-2288 (hospital: 396- 7100)		Lockhart (512) 398-4401	
Pastor Ashby - 833-1140			

KDXRQ YGPCA FSCAP
PPTOF APCQR VJWNR
WIIW
10/13 - W

Card 2 of 3 - "Radioman's table" - front

RADIOMAN'S TABLE · W.D.B. · USS Bataan 1951																										
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
A	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
B	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A
C	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B
D	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C
E	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D
F	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E
G	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F
H	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
I	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
J	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
K	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
L	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
M	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
N	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
O	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
P	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
Q	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
R	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q
S	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
T	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S
U	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
V	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
W	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V
X	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W
Y	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X
Z	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y

KEY: _ _ _ _ _

Write the key under the message,

over and over. For each pair:

ROW = key letter (left edge)

find the CODE letter in that row

read the PLAIN letter at the top

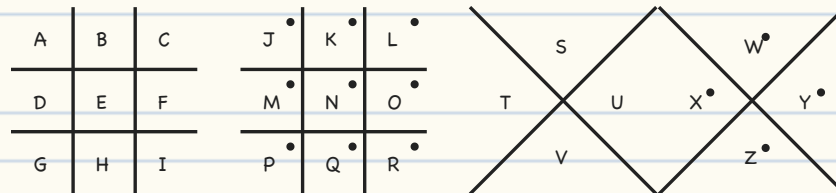
of that column.

To code: row = key, column = plain.

Same key since '52. Don't be clever.

CAL'S SECRET CODE - 1965 - DO NOT SHOW MOM

no dot = first grid dot = second grid



Each letter = the shape of the lines around it. Write the shape, not the letter.

Example: = C A L

(on the back, in blue ink:) "Kept it. Might need it. - W"

CYPRESS HOLLOW VINEYARD · BARREL ROOM INVENTORY · FALL 1989 (page 2 of

3)

Racks run 1-12 from the tank room door south. Four barrels per rack, numbered 1-4 top to bottom, left to right. Serial is the cooperage stamp on the head.

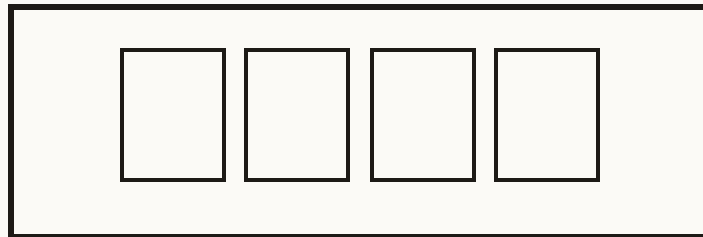
RACK	BARREL	COOPERAGE	SERIAL	CONTENTS	FILLED	TOPPED
7	1	Seguin Moreau	SM-1907	'88 Cab, Block B	11/1/88	10/2/89
7	2	Seguin Moreau	SM-1911	'88 Cab, Block B	11/1/88	10/2/89
7	3	Demptos	D-2260	'88 Cab, Block B	11/1/88	10/2/89
7	4	Demptos	D-2263	'88 Cab, Block B	11/1/88	10/2/89
8	1	Seguin Moreau	SM-1922	'88 Cab, Block B	11/2/88	10/2/89
8	2	Seguin Moreau	SM-1925	'88 Cab, Block C	11/2/88	10/2/89
8	3	Demptos	D-2271	'88 Cab, Block C	11/2/88	10/2/89
8	4	Demptos	D-2274	'88 Cab, Block C	11/2/88	10/2/89
9	1	Seguin Moreau	SM-1931	'88 Cab, Block C	11/2/88	10/2/89
9	2	Demptos	D-2278	'88 Cab, Block C	11/2/88	10/2/89
9	3	Demptos	D-2281	'88 Cab, Block C (reserve lot)	11/2/88	10/13 - W
9	4	Demptos	D-2284	'88 Cab, Block C	11/2/88	10/2/89
10	1	Tonkawa	T-0412	'87 Cab, Block A/B blend	11/8/87	10/2/89
10	2	Tonkawa	T-0415	'87 Cab, Block A/B blend	11/8/87	10/2/89
10	3	Tonkawa	T-0417	Cellar Port (solera)	1983	10/1/89
10	4	Tonkawa	T-0419	empty - to be rinsed	-	-
11	1	Seguin Moreau	SM-2040	'89 Chenin (Block A) - new	10/8/89	-
11	2	Seguin Moreau	SM-2041	'89 Chenin (Block A) - new	10/8/89	-
11	3	Seguin Moreau	SM-2044	empty	-	-
11	4	Seguin Moreau	SM-2045	empty	-	-

Racks 1-6 on page 1, rack 12 and the library on page 3. Topping schedule is the first Monday. - MR

LAST CRUSH

ENVELOPE 3

RACK 9, BARREL 3



Sealed. Do not open until you have the four-digit combination from Envelope 2.

Inside: Dolores's fourth letter, what was behind the barrel, the Medical Examiner's final report, a pharmacy label, a traffic citation, and four handwritten notes.

San Antonio
November 13, 1989

Dear Detectives,

Rack 9, Barrel 3. I drove up Saturday. Denny came with me into the barrel room because I did not want to go alone and because I could not have moved a barrel if my life depended on it. There was nothing in the barrel, of course, it is full of wine. It was behind it, wedged in the gap between the barrel head and the wall, wrapped in a piece of oilcloth and tied with baling twine. You would never find it unless you knew. Denny found it in about a minute once I told him where to look. I have photographed it as found and sent you what was inside: an agreement between Walt and Hollis Teague, a laboratory report from Dr. Sato with Walt's writing on it, and a torn ledger page with more of Walt's scribbles that I cannot read. I think you can.

The Medical Examiner's final report came to Ruth on November 3 and she gave it to me without a word. Read it first. Then read everything else again. I had Baird call Sheriff Purcell about it. Purcell says he is "reviewing." Baird says that means he is hoping it goes away.

Some other things have come to me since I wrote last, and I set them down in the order they happened.

At the funeral home, before the service, Cal took me into the hallway and gave me a piece of paper and said, "I wasn't there, Aunt Dee. I didn't tell Kimbrough because I'd had six beers and the trooper didn't test me and I got lucky. I wasn't there." It is a speeding ticket. I have enclosed it.

I sat with Denny on the bunkhouse porch for an hour. He is not what Cal says he is. He gave me a note from Walt and asked me to give it back when I was done with it, and he told me one thing he had not told the deputy, which I have typed up for you as near to his words as I could get them.

Marisol came to the house while I was there and gave me a Christmas card from 1981 with a note from Walt on the back, and a note of her own. She said she wanted me to know what he was to her. I have enclosed both. I do not know what to say about them yet.

Ruth answered a question I put to her about the house keys, in writing, because I asked her to. She also let me photograph her pill bottle, which I did after reading the Medical Examiner, and which she watched me do without asking why, which tells you something about Ruth.

Last. I asked Baird about the "addendum for M." in Walt's ledger. He says it is privileged until the estate is settled and that Ruth is executor. He did say that Walt's safe deposit box is not part of the estate, because my name is on it, and that if Walt wanted me to have something, that is where it would be. The bank would not give me the box number over the telephone, so I went in on Monday with Baird's letter, and the girl at the desk, who was in my class in 1971, looked it up. I have opened it. What was inside is in the next envelope, sealed with the box number. I am not going to write the number here. If Walt's scribbles on that torn page are what I think they are, he already wrote it down for you, in the only code he ever taught Cal, and I think he would want it read the way he wrote it.

Sincerely,

Dolores



Rack 9, Barrel 3, as found after Denny pulled the bundle out and set it on the barrel. Sat. Nov. 11. - D.

OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL EXAMINER • TRAVIS COUNTY,
TEXAS

1213 Sabine Street, Austin, Texas 78701 • Anne Castellano, M.D., Deputy Chief Medical Examiner

FINAL REPORT OF AUTOPSY AND TOXICOLOGY

ME CASE	AGENCY CASE	DATE OF REPORT	DECEDENT
ME-89-2210	Blanco SO 89-1013-A	11/02/89	BRANNOCK, Walter D., 61

TOXICOLOGY (Travis County Forensic Laboratory, report 89-T-3391, 10/31/89)

SPECIMEN	ANALYTE	RESULT	REFERENCE
Blood, femoral	Ethanol	0.09 g/dL	-
Blood, femoral	Secobarbital	2.4 mg/L	Therapeutic 0.1 - 0.5 mg/L; toxic > 1.0; fatal range reported 1.5 - 5+
Vitreous	Secobarbital	1.9 mg/L	Consistent with antemortem distribution
Gastric contents (250 mL)	Secobarbital	approx. 180 mg unabsorbed	-
Gastric contents	Ethanol; sugars; grape pigment	Present; consistent with fortified sweet wine	-
Blood	Digoxin	0.9 ng/mL	Therapeutic
Blood, urine	Comprehensive drug screen	Negative for other drugs of abuse or sedative-hypnotics	-

INTERPRETATION. The femoral blood secobarbital concentration is approximately five to twenty times the therapeutic range and is inconsistent with the ingestion of one or two 100 mg capsules. Together with the unabsorbed drug recovered from the stomach, the findings indicate ingestion of an estimated **600 to 900 mg of secobarbital** within approximately one hour of death, in a liquid vehicle consistent with fortified wine. In combination with ethanol at the level found, a dose of this size would be expected to produce marked dizziness, ataxia and loss of consciousness within **ten to thirty minutes** of ingestion in a man of the decedent's size, and would by itself have been potentially lethal.

No prescription for secobarbital or any barbiturate was identified for the decedent. The decedent's physician (H. Whitfield, M.D., Blanco) confirms by telephone that none was ever prescribed and that the decedent expressed a specific aversion to sleeping medication. Secobarbital capsule contents are readily soluble in wine and are bitter; a fortified sweet wine would substantially mask the taste.

CAUSE OF DEATH: Asphyxia due to displacement of oxygen by carbon dioxide, with aspiration of liquid, following a fall into a fermentation tank.

CONTRIBUTING: Acute secobarbital and ethanol intoxication.

MANNER OF DEATH: **UNDETERMINED** (pending investigation; the circumstances of ingestion cannot be established from the autopsy alone).

Investigating agency (Blanco County SO, Sheriff Purcell) notified by telephone 11/02/89 and in

BLANCO DRUG · 5th & Main, Blanco, Texas · (512) 833-2500

Rx **4471186** Date filled: **10/03/89**
BRANNOCK, RUTH C. 4410 RR 165, Blanco
SECONAL SODIUM 100 MG PULVULE (Lilly)
TAKE ONE CAPSULE AT BEDTIME AS NEEDED FOR SLEEP.
QTY: **30** Refills: 2 Dr. H. WHITFIELD RPh: JMT
CAUTION: Federal law prohibits the transfer of this drug to any person other than the patient for whom it was prescribed. MAY CAUSE DROWSINESS. ALCOHOL MAY INTENSIFY THIS EFFECT.

I did not open it. Ruth did, and tipped them onto the counter, and counted them in front of me. Eleven. Same as the deputy. She said she had not touched them since the funeral. She cannot sleep, but she will not take them now. - D.

Nov. 10

Dee,

You asked who has a key to this house and I will tell you and then I do not want to talk about why you asked.

Walt. Me. Cal. And Marisol, since 1983, so she can see to the dogs when we go to Port Aransas. Nobody else. Denny has never set foot in this house and would not know which door to try. Hollis Teague has not been through that door since the Fourth of July, 1987, and you know why. Evelyn Sato has been in for supper twice, both times with us at the table.

The doors were locked from nine o'clock on. Walt locked up himself when the Ochoa boys kept running in and out for ice and letting the dogs out. I know because I had to let the caterer in the front door with my own key at half past nine and I said something to Walt about it.

The pills. I count them, Dee. I have always known how many were in that bottle. I had not looked since the funeral. When I tipped them out for you it was light and I told myself I must have been taking two. I have never taken two in my life.

Ruth

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Brannock / Teague - Cypress Creek

October 13, 1989. Cypress Hollow, cellar office, 4:30 PM.

1. Brannock will remove the low-water dam on Cypress Creek at his own expense on or before December 1, 1989.
2. Brannock will cause a conservation easement to be recorded over the Cypress Creek frontage of his property, not less than 150 feet in width, in perpetuity, preserving the natural flow of the creek to the Teague Ranch. The easement will run with the land and bind any purchaser.
3. Teague will dismiss Cause No. 89-CV-211, Blanco County, with prejudice, within ten days after the dam is removed and the easement is recorded.
4. Each party pays his own lawyer.
5. This memorandum records our agreement in principle. Formal documents to be prepared by Baird and Haskell within 30 days. Nothing is recorded or filed until then. If either of us dies first, God forbid, the other will see this through with the survivors as a matter of honor, because that is the kind of men we were raised to be.

Walt Brannock

Hollis Teague

Baird says paragraph 5 is worth exactly what Ruth decides it is worth, and that Lantana's bank will want the easement anyway, and that Hollis is "in a very bad spot" without Walt. - D.

SATO ENOLOGICAL SERVICES

Evelyn Sato, Ph.D. (U.C. Davis) · 214 W. Main St., Fredericksburg, Texas 78624 · (512) 997-3310

LABORATORY
REPORT
No. 89-0412
Date: 9/26/89

Client: **Cypress Hollow Vineyard** Material: **Block C Cabernet Sauvignon** Received: 9/24/89

PARAMETER	C-1 (ROWS 1-40)	C-2 (ROWS 41-58) (ROWS 59-72 BACK ROWS)
Brix	23.8	22.1
pH	3.71	3.82
Titrateable acidity (g/L)	5.9	4.6
Volatile acidity (g/L as acetic)	0.62	1.41
Acetobacter, plate culture	trace	heavy growth
Visual: sour rot / Botrytis, % clusters	5-8%	30-40%

Recommendation. Declassify Block C for the 1989 vintage. Do not co-ferment with Block B; the acetic load in C-2 will carry. Sorting C-1 from C-2 at the crush pad is possible but labor-intensive and the fruit will not make reserve quality this year. The best economic recovery is bulk sale to a producer of fortified or blended product. I can arrange this with Pedernales Ridge at the market rate for compromised fruit, currently \$400-425/ton. I understand this is not what you want to hear.

E. Sato

For Dee. If you're reading this, you did
the barrel. Good girl. One more. Cal's
code. You'll find the card.

U E > ^ O F E C E < F E E E

V O ^ O O U E J O L E O O J > L

- W

Given to Dolores by Cal Brannock, Oct. 18, 1989. Driver's copy (yellow).

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY - UNIFORM TRAFFIC CITATION No. K-4471882				
DATE 10-13-89	TIME 2332	COUNTY Hays	HWY / LOCATION RR 165 @ US 290, Henly	
DRIVER (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE) BRANNOCK, CALVIN WALTER		DOB 06-14-55	DL NO. / STATE 07331498 TX	
ADDRESS 4410 RR 165, Blanco TX		SEX / RACE M / W	HT / WT 5-11 / 180	
YEAR 1984	MAKE Ford	TYPE PK F-150	COLOR Brn	PLATE / STATE 887-TXN TX
VIOLATION SPEEDING - 71 MPH IN A 55 MPH ZONE (RADAR)			DIRECTION NB	
COURT Justice of the Peace, Pct. 4, Hays County, Dripping Springs - appear within 10 days			FINE \$78.00	
OFFICER (PRINT) R. SALINAS		BADGE 4410	UNIT 2A-17	
SIGNATURE OF DRIVER - NOT AN ADMISSION OF GUILT - PROMISE TO APPEAR Cal Brannock			REMARKS Odor of alc. Driver coherent, coop. No FST.	

Henly is 14 miles north of the vineyard gate by RR 165. Twenty minutes if you drive like Cal. - D.

Given to Dolores by Denny Pruitt, Nov. 11. Torn from Walt's pocket notebook. To be returned.

D -

Take the 6 cs of '86 to Herrera's.

Tom will give you \$75 a bottle and no questions. Keep what you need for your mother. Pay me back when you can or don't. Don't tell Cal or Ruth, they wouldn't understand and I don't feel like explaining.

- W 9/16

DENNY PRUITT - bunkhouse porch - Saturday Nov. 11, about 4 PM - typed from my notes that night. D.B.A.

"I told the deputy everything I saw. He didn't ask what I heard, and I've been thinking about it since, and I should have said it anyway.

"After the rain quit, I was still on the porch. I heard the chain on the tank room door. It's got a sound, that chain, it rattles on the hook when you hang it. Half past eleven, maybe. Could've been a little later. I figured it was Mr. Brannock closing up like he does, and I didn't think about it again till the next morning when Cal said the chain was up when he got there. Well, sure it was. Somebody hung it.

"I didn't see who. From the porch you see the door but the light over it burned out in August and nobody fixed it. You see a shape if you're looking, and I wasn't looking, I was listening to the creek run.

"Ma'am, I know what Cal says about me. Mr. Brannock gave me those cases. That's his note. My mother's on dialysis three days a week in San Marcos and Mr. Brannock knew it and he never said one word about it to anybody, he just did that. Tom Herrera paid me \$5,400 and it's all gone to the hospital and I can show you every receipt. You give that note back to me when you're done. It's the only thing I've got with his writing on it."

From Marisol Reyes, at the main house, Saturday Nov. 11. A Christmas card, 1981, and a note. Both enclosed below.

(back of a Christmas card - a snowy barn, "Season's Greetings")

Mari -

Five years you've broken your back out there and I've paid you like a field hand because that's all I could pay. When this place is worth something, a fifth of it is yours. I mean it. Hold me to it.

- Walt

Christmas '81

Mrs. Avery -

You asked what Walt was to me. I want you to have this. He wrote it in 1981 and I have kept it in my Bible since.

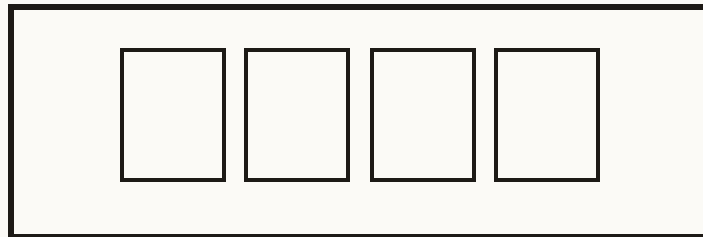
I do not want anything from anybody. I want people to know he was a good man who kept his word.

- Marisol

LAST CRUSH

ENVELOPE 4

THE SECOND ROLL



Sealed. Do not open until you have the four-digit combination from Envelope 3.

Inside: Dolores's last letter, what was in the safe deposit box, the deputy's unprinted second roll of film, a party snapshot, a boot order, and the accusation form.

San Antonio
November 20, 1989

Dear Detectives,

Box 417 at Blanco National, which you will have read off that torn page by now. Inside were four things: a draft of a legal paper with Walt's writing on it, a letter to Marisol that he never gave her, a page of notes for his will, and the deed to the feed store lot that I will deal with later. I have sent you the first three.

I have also done two other things. The negatives of the deputy's second roll were in the sheriff's file in a glassine sleeve, never printed, and I asked Purcell if I could have them printed at my own expense and he said he did not see why not, which I think he will regret. Blanco Photo charged me eleven dollars. The frames that matter are enclosed with the deputy's own log, in Ortiz's hand, which was folded around the sleeve. And I asked Ruth, without saying why, whether the vineyard bought work boots for the hands, and she pulled the order from the expense file in about a minute. Walt bought everyone's boots every September. It is the kind of thing he did and never mentioned.

Bettye Teague sent me a snapshot from the party. She thought I would want a picture of Walt happy. He is in it, at the back, and he does look happy. I am sending it to you because everyone else is in it too.

I have read the letter to Marisol four times. I think I know now. I hope to God I am wrong, and I want you to tell me, not the other way around, because I no longer trust myself to see it straight.

Tell me who. Tell me how. Tell me why. Write it on the form and then open the last envelope. The combination is the killer's four-digit telephone extension, from the card in the sheriff's file. If you are right it will open. If you are wrong, it will not, and you should think again before you try another, because a wrong name is a terrible thing to say out loud.

Whatever the answer is, thank you. Walt would have liked you. He liked people who did the work.

Sincerely,

Dolores B. Avery

BLANCO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE • PHOTOGRAPHIC LOG

Case 89-1013-A • Dep. M. Ortiz #22 • Roll 2 of 2 • Kodak Gold 200, 24 exp. • 10/14/89

FRAME	SUBJECT	TIME	NOTES
1-3	Tank room, wide, from doorway	0718	after VFD removal
4-6	Tank 4 rim and interior, from platform	0720	must level 14 in. below rim
7	Floor, N of platform base, partial footwear impression in wet caliche mud over concrete, w/ scale	0724	Lug sole. Heel + partial sole. Heel-to-break approx 6 in. Est. full length 9 3/4 in. Consistent w/ women's 7 - 7 1/2 or youth. Not decedent (Red Wing, M11 - checked). Mud still damp. Not pursued - accidental per RK.
8	Same, oblique, w/ flash from L	0725	toe pointing toward platform
9-10	Platform steps, decedent's boot prints (Red Wing) in must drips	0727	
11	Doorway threshold - mud tracked in from yard	0729	yard is caliche, rain 10:15-10:50 per Pruitt
12-14	Cellar office: desk, cot, sink area	0742	
15-18	Exterior, cellar bldg, yard, approach from house	0750	
19-22	Exterior, approach from cottage; cottage porch	0755	no prints visible on caliche path (rain-packed, then dried)
23-24	Party area, tables, banner	0800	

Roll 2 not printed - RK advised accidental, budget. Negatives to file. - MO 10/16

Frames 7 and 8 printed 11/16/89, Blanco Photo. Frame 7 enclosed. - D.



89-1013-A · Roll 2 Fr. 7 · Tank room floor N of platform. Partial impression, wet caliche over concrete, scale in inches. 0724 hrs. - Ortiz



From Bettye Teague. Harvest party, about 8 o'clock. Everyone is in it. Look at the shoes. - D.

BAIRD & WHITCOMB · 816 Congress Ave., Suite 1100 · Austin · For W.D.B. review - 10/12/89
distribution

DRAFT 10/12/89

**ADDENDUM "A" TO AGREEMENT OF PURCHASE AND SALE
LANTANA LAND COMPANY, Buyer / WALTER D. BRANNOCK, Seller**

1. **Payment to Marisol Reyes.** At closing, Seller shall pay from the sale proceeds to MARISOL REYES, of Blanco County, Texas, the sum of TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND AND NO/100 DOLLARS (\$200,000.00), free of any claim by Seller's estate or heirs, in recognition of fifteen years of service to Cypress Hollow Vineyard and in satisfaction of Seller's written undertaking to Ms. Reyes of December 1981.
2. **Employment.** Buyer shall offer Ms. Reyes employment as Vineyard Manager of the retained winery amenity and vineyard blocks A and C for a term of not less than FIVE (5) years at a salary of not less than \$48,000.00 per year, with the housing described in paragraph 3.
3. **Cottage.** Seller shall convey to Ms. Reyes at closing, at no cost, the residence known as the Manager's Cottage together with two (2) acres surrounding it, to be surveyed, and Buyer shall take title subject to that conveyance.
4. **Survival.** This Addendum shall survive Seller's death and shall bind Seller's estate, heirs, executors and assigns, and Buyer agrees that it is a condition of closing.

Walter D. Brannock, Seller

G.T. Kemp

Lantana Land Company, by

Good. Sign Monday. Show her Sunday. - W 10/12

Oct. 12

Mari -

I know you saw Baird's letter on the desk Tuesday. You've been cold all week and I don't blame you. I should have told you first. Before Cal, before Ruth, before anybody. I didn't, because I'm a coward about the things that matter, and you know that better than anyone alive.

Sunday, when the party's done and the Teague business is signed, I am going to sit you down in the office and show you something, and you are going to yell at me for not showing you sooner, and I am going to deserve it.

I said a fifth of this place was yours. I meant it in '81 and I mean it now. I took care of it. I always said I would.

Don't do anything foolish in the meantime like quit on me.

- Walt

Item 3 of 3. Notes for Baird, on the back of a Farm Bureau envelope.

For Baird - the will, after Lantana:

- Dee: the Navy footlocker and the '52 photos. She'll know.
- Cal: Tank 4 and 12 acres of Block C if Lantana will carve it out. Ask. If not, cash equal.
- Ruth: everything else, and the house in town if she wants one.
- Denny: forgive the cases. \$5,000 for Ida.
- M: see the addendum. Done right this time.
- Hollis gets his creek. Put that in too, in case.

CAVENDER'S BOOT CITY

IH-35 at Hwy 80 · San Marcos, Texas · (512) 396-8811

COMMERCIAL ACCOUNT ORDER

Ticket 21-08874 · 9/02/89

Sold to: **CYPRESS HOLLOW VINEYARD**, 4410 RR 165, Blanco · Acct. 4471 · Purchaser: *W. Brannock*

QTY	STYLE	DESCRIPTION	SIZE / WIDTH	COLOR	FOR	PRICE
1 pr	Ariat 10002 Lacer	Women's lace-up work boot, lug sole	W 7 M	Brown	REYES, M.	89.00
1 pr	Justin 3703 Roper	Men's roper, crepe sole	M 12 D	Bay	PRUITT, D.	96.00
1 pr	Justin 763 Work	Men's steel toe, lug sole	M 10 D	Brown	BRANNOCK, C.	118.00
1 pr	Red Wing 1155	Men's pull-on, oil resist sole	M 11 D	Brown	BRANNOCK, W.	109.00
TOTAL (tax exempt, ag)						412.00

Paid: Cypress Hollow check 3312. Thank you for your business. Sales: **Kenny**

Ruth says Walt bought everyone's boots the first week of September every year since 1980, and that Bettye Teague wears a 9 and Evelyn Sato "has never owned a boot in her life." - D.

THE ACCUSATION

Do not open the Solution until every line below is filled in and you both agree. Dolores is waiting.

WHO killed Walt Brannock?

HOW. What did the killer actually do, in order, between 10:15 PM and midnight?

WHY. What was the motive, and what did the killer not know?

PROOF. Name at least three documents that, together, point to this person and no one else.

THE OTHERS. For each of the five you did not name, write the one document that clears them.

Ruth Brannock	_____	Hollis Teague	_____
Cal Brannock	_____	Dr. Evelyn Sato	_____
Marisol Reyes	_____	Denny Pruitt	_____

NOW OPEN THE SOLUTION WITH THE KILLER'S FOUR-DIGIT TELEPHONE EXTENSION.