

[Ostrander House]

#19

FIELD NOTES

Taken on Interviews [?]

AUG 22 1938

(Information given by a San Angelo Merchant, who worked in Swartz-Haas store at the time Ostrander disappeared)

(OSTRANDER HOUSE)

The Ostrander - Loomis Land and Cattle Company, organized in New York*, were among the first to fence large tracts of land in this area. The electric system with which the ranch was wired, was controlled by dry cell batteries. This system extended from the basement of the Ostrander house to every gate on the ranch. [Every] time a gate was opened, it flashed a signal in the basement, whereby the, family knew just which gate was opened.

The blood on the floor of the third story was from beeves that were hung there to keep then away from the flies. It was thought that flies would not bother the meat if it was placed that high. The meat had to be carried up the ladder (which extended about ten feet from the floor to the entrance door) to the third story. Of course it had to be cut into small pieces to be carried up there. No one knows why the house was so built that this third story could not be entered except by this ladder or through a trap door into the other room in this third story.

Library of Congress

The Ostrandens left in the latter part of the 80's. The care-taker remained in the house several years after the flight of the Ostrandens.

The Ostrandens had purchased large amounts of goods, (canned goods, bolts of fine linen, etc.,) from Swartz and

*NOTE: Court Records show that the company was organized in New Jersey. 2 Haas store in San Angelo and when they left, this firm went out and recovered much of this which had been bought on time and was not yet paid for. This was about 48 years ago.

They were selling stock in the Land Company under misrepresentation; using the mails to defraud. This was the biggest offense of which they were guilty, so far as anyone knows. They were not intentionally frauds - just got in too deep. Their New York idea of luxury in West Texas was considered very absurd.

Ostrander returned in later years, a grey-haired man, after having done his time in the penitentiary.

The noose, which hung in the third story until recently, was probably place there by some prankster who wanted to convince someone that the story of the hanging was true.