THE HERBERT HOOVER BIRTHPLACE
WEST BRANCH, IOWA

by
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Furnishing Plan
Section E

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DESCRIPTION OF RECOMMENDED FURNISHINGS

In 1871, Jesse Hoover and his father built a two room cottage with attached lean-to or shed in the Quaker community of West Branch, Iowa. Although small, the cottage was warm and snug and did not differ greatly from many houses that dotted the towns and countryside of the prairies of Iowa and lands west of the Mississippi. It was in this cottage that Herbert Hoover was born on August 10, 1874.

There was no inkling during the eight years Jesse and Huldah Hoover occupied the cottage that it housed future greatness or that one hundred years later it would be preserved as one of the nation's historic sites. Consequently, it is not surprising to find that contemporary photographs or descriptions of the interior furnishings of the cottage do not exist today. Letters that Huldah Hoover wrote her family were destroyed years ago as being too personal for public eyes, with the result that reliance as to the appearance of the house must be placed on the reminiscences of relatives and friends, many of which were collected by Mrs. Herbert Hoover. Herbert Hoover, himself, retained no memories of his birthplace; and in 1948, when asked if the cottage looked familiar, Hoover, with disarming frankness, replied:

I left this house when I was four years old, and we moved across the street. I don't remember anything about this house.\footnote{Edwin C. Bearss, "The Hoover Houses and Community Structures," \textit{Historic Structures Report} (November 30, 1971), p. 75.}
Mrs. Hoover, fortunately, recognizing the importance of the house, made every effort to ensure its accurate restoration and refurnishing. Her interviews and inquiries brought responses from friends and relatives whose memories were associated with the elder Hoovers, before their untimely deaths left the little family orphaned. There may have been some confusion, however, in the minds of contemporaries between the interior furnishings of the cottage and those of the second Hoover home. Several points, including the use of wallpaper on the walls of the cottage, are not resolved completely today.

In addition to the reminiscences, the probate records of the estates of Jesse Hoover (1880) and Huldah Hoover (1884), structural evidence in the house itself, and statements made by subsequent caretakers have been used to write the following proposed furnishing plan for the Herbert Hoover Birthplace.

Both Herbert and Lou Hoover took great pride and interest in the restoration of the cottage. Mrs. Hoover expressed her concept of what the Birthplace should reflect in a manuscript, dated October 26, 1940:

This little house was dreamed of as the beginning of a family home. It was designed to look just as it looks today, the typical home for a young couple to begin their life together in that time and country....It was to be well built, comfortable, possessed of the modern conveniences and gadgets to make living in it as easy as possible. It was to gratify their eye as well as the sense of comfort, with good lines, good color, appropriate decoration. It was to have pleasant out-of-door surroundings for the pleasant months. It was to be warm and cozy, and near the husband's business for the harsh winter months.
It was to be achieved with the minimum of expense necessary for its accomplishment...

Together the young couple planned its details. Together the young man and his father built it.2/

The Birthplace is to be refurnished to its appearance during the year 1874; and the following furnishings are planned to best interpret the life and surroundings of Jesse and Huldah Hoover, their son, three year-old Tad, and their new baby, Herbert.

2/ Manuscript, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, October 26, 1940.

3/ Theodore Hoover was born in the last week of January, 1871.
THE NORTH ROOM

The north room was approximately 13'6" x 12'0" in dimensions. The floor was laid with 1 x 10 boards. The walls were 1 x 12 boards; and at the time the cottage was restored, it was discovered, after the removal of the weatherboarding, that the walls had been cloth stripped at the seams and whitewashed or wallpapered. The room was entered from the front stoop on the east side of the house facing Downey Street. Two windows lighted the room, one centered in the north wall and a second to the left of the front door. The back door, directly opposite the front door, led out onto the rear porch. One other opening on the south wall gave entrance to the bedroom. Near the bedroom doorway was a stove flue.

After the Hoovers sold their cottage, this room underwent many changes during subsequent occupations. Port Scellers made the greatest. He removed the wall separating the Hoover's bedroom from the north room to give the family a commodious kitchen-dining room. A window was enlarged into a doorway to provide access from the kitchen to the Scellers' living room (a later addition). The removal of the wall destroyed all evidence of original shelving, etc. in both the kitchen and adjoining bedroom. Scellers also had the interior of the room refinished. Wainscoting was installed to a height of about three feet from the floor. The walls above the wainscoting and the ceiling were plastered.

5/ Ibid., p. 8.
Although the room has been restored to its original appearance, much evidence pertinent to a furnishing plan was destroyed during these early renovations.

The Parlor

Although it was not large, the north room served as a multi-purpose room for the Hoovers. The north and east portions of the room became the parlor or living room of the home: the north and west walls of the room functioned as a dining area; and the south portion of the room appears to have been primarily devoted to kitchen affairs.

All of the information regarding the appearance of the north room was gleaned by Mrs. Herbert Hoover from relatives in the 1930's. Much of the information was provided by Mrs. Mattie Pemberton, Jesse Hoover's sister, and by Mrs. Harriette Odell, Herbert Hoover's first cousin. Mrs. Hoover was exceptional in her efforts to authenticate the appearance of the room. About the parlor area, she wrote:

There were two or three rockers or other comfortable chairs and a lounge, later called a sofa. In the northeast corner there was a small drop-leaf table for the lamp, the Bible, books or paper, and a round sewing basket with needles and thread in it and scissors, thimble and button box. A "table cover" was on the table. One remembers vividly "a fruit picture" on the wall, probably a lithograph, but cannot recall exactly where it hung. And there were other pictures, perhaps one or two historic or religious prints and perhaps an embroidered cardboard motto or two, in cross-stitch, the latter very likely "worked" by young relatives.

Huldah's mother, Mrs. Minthorn was "known for her 'cross stitch in blue and red on homespun'" and may have contributed

\[\text{ibid.}, \text{pp. } 87-89.\]
artistic work to her daughter's home. Certainly, she must have taught her daughters needlework, as they were growing up at home.

Mrs. Pemberton's letter to her niece, Lou Hoover, indicates, however, the difficulty her sources were having in remembering the actual appearance of the rooms:

In letter of September 18th you mentioned the pieces and placing of the furniture. The only way I can get certain thoughts of it is to forget every thing I have heard about it in the interest of my duties that puzzle me, and then suddenly run into Jessie's \( \text{sic} \) home as I used to do and I see this and that, here and there and it seems so dear to me, it is almost devotion to me, and the impressions are quite satisfying however I may be mistaken in many things.

I am not so sure about the table sometimes in the panorama there is a drop leaf table in the north-east corner of the room with a table cover, a small round work basket with scissors \( \text{sic} \), needle, thimble, thread and button box in it, as you say the bible \( \text{sic} \), and a paper and a bit of sewing, I never remember seeing Hulda \( \text{sic} \) sit without work of some kind in her fingers doing. Then it seems most common to my thought, a fruit picture over the table, (this is not certain though I firmly believe it)

...The rag carpets were "hit and miss" - it's very probable that grandmother Minthorn wove their carpets for I am sure she had a loom and wove for other people. Aunt Lib Miles had one too and there was a little competition, friendly I mean.\( ^{2} \)

The memories of Mrs. Pemberton and Mrs. Odell find some support in the probate records of Jesse and Huldah Hoover's estates. How much recollections of the second Hoover home influenced these ladies can only be guessed.

\( ^{2} \) Reminiscences of Mrs. Francis Badell, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, May 19, 1939.

\( ^{2} \) Letter from Mrs. Pemberton, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, September 30, 1939.
When the estate of Jesse Hoover was settled, the Probate Court determined that the following items belonged to his widow:

- pictures
- 6 chairs
- 1 bedstead
- 1 oil stove
- 1 cookstove
- 1 sewing machine

Cost: $200.00

The inventory probably was not complete. No mention is made of Huldah's bureau, a dining table, carpet, or other items mentioned in the cottage by Mrs. Pemberton. The 1884 inventory of Huldah Hoover's personal estate, taken almost five years after the family had moved from the cottage into their larger home, is far more detailed. Edwin Bearss points out that Jesse and Huldah Hoover, their economic situation improved and their second home larger, probably purchased additional furniture after they left the cottage. On the 1884 inventory, the following items appear to have been found in the parlor:

- 1 lot of books: $3.00
- 1 single bedstead: 1.00
- 1 lounge & tick: 3.00
- 1 paper holder: .25
- 2 looking glasses (one of which belongs to Mrs. Miles): .20
- 10 pictures (small): 1.00
- 1 case of wax flowers: 1.00
- 1 corner whatnot: .50
- 2 pairs of Texas Longhorns: .25
- 10 chairs: 2.00
- 2 rocking chairs: .75
- 1 heating stove: 1.00
- 1 center table: 1.00
- 2 center table cloths: .50
- 20 yards of rag carpet (good): 6.00-10/
- 2 lace curtains: .50-10/

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9/ Bearss, op. cit., p. 83.
10/ Ibid., p. 84. The single bedstead may have been brought down to the parlor during Huldah's last illness. The heating stove would have made the room more comfortable in February.
One of the rocking chairs and the Texas Longhorns did not belong to Huldah but were borrowed. The case of wax flowers, corner whatnot, additional chairs, center table, heating stove, and lace curtains may reflect the Hoover's improving status. Some of the "lot of books" may have been used in the cottage also. Marian M. MacGregor described her Quaker home in West Branch and discussed the presence of literature:

Our home library, which was not dissimilar to the libraries of most other Friends and probably was very like that in the house which Herbert Hoover dwelt, consisted entirely of books written by William Penn, George Fox and other Friends, to which was added the official magazine of the sect—"The Friend" which is still published in Philadelphia. Later we children were permitted to read the "Youth's Companion," "Pilgrim's Progress," "Stanley in Africa" and Bellamy's "Looking Backward." 11

Mrs. Odell thought that at Christmas the Hoover children received books like Happy Days and Chatterbox among their simple gifts. 12

The following items are recommended as furnishings for the parlor:

Lounge. Two lounges were inventoried in Huldah's estate. One with tick was valued at three dollars; and one, mentioned with a wheelbarrow and hammock, received a modest value of 25 cents. Mrs. Hoover specifically mentions a "lounge, later called a sofa" in the parlor of the cottage. Mrs. Pemberton recalled a "plain pull out lounge," indicating it was one that converted to a bed. 13

Ormsbee describes a combination day bed and settee.

12/ Bearss, op. cit., p. 94.
13/ Ibid., fn. 5, p. 88.
dating about 1870 [and possibly earlier].

This type of lounge usually had spool-turned posts, a repeating curved top rail, supported by ten to fifteen spindles across the back, and a solid seat. A secondary front rail, supported by turned legs, pulled out to form a double bed. The tick or mattress was held by slats. Occasionally lounges of this type still can be found in the Midwest.

It is recommended that a lounge, similar to that described above, be placed against the east wall of the cottage to extend slightly underneath the window.

Chairs In front of the north window, it is recommended that a rocking chair be placed. The chair should be plain and comfortable looking. The back should be canted slightly, with plain side and top rails, the latter slightly curved. Both the seat and the back should be caned. The arms should form a continuous scroll connecting the side rails with the seat. The turned legs at the front and the plain back legs should fit into balanced rockers.

Two side chairs should be set in the parlor. One should be placed against the north wall on the left side of the window. The other should be set between the front door opening and the lounge. These chairs should be very simple cottage-style chairs; and there are two in the collections of the area, which can be used. These chairs have slab seats, round rails supporting plain top rails that curve slightly backwards and are braced by four slender, tapering back spindles, and are armless. The legs, which are round and taper at the base, are braced by four round stretchers. These chairs have been painted with black enamel paint that does not appear to be original and probably was added when the chairs were donated during the period 1953-1954. It is recommended that the chairs be studied by the lab at Harpers Ferry for traces of original color and restored to their earlier appearance.

Tables Mrs. Pemberton has donated a walnut drop-leaf table to the cottage; however, the association of the table is not with the Hoovers, themselves. This table apparently is one Mrs. Pemberton acquired herself.

14/ Pemberton, op. cit.
This table is fairly large (see photograph); and since it is not associated with the Hoovers, it is recommended that a smaller cottage drop-leaf pedestal table, c. 1870, be acquired and placed against the north wall. The table should be walnut and have an oval or circular top, approximately 30 to 34 inches across. The drop leaves should be eight to ten inches and the central fixed leaf about 18 to 20 inches wide. The leaves should be supported by pull or swinging brackets. The pedestal may be a bulbous baluster-turned shaft to which flat scroll-cut legs are attached. An alternative table might have four spool-turned legs and a small drawer in the base supporting the top.

**Accessories**

The table should be covered by a cloth. It is recommended that this be red wool, with scalloped edge and an embroidered feather-stitch design. While elaborate Berlin-worked table covers were popular at this time, a simpler embroidered cloth probably would be more in Quaker taste.

On the table should be placed a kerosene lamp. It is recommended that the lamp be glass pedestal style, with pressed glass font and chimney. At the present time the area has such a lamp in its collections.

Beside the lamp, the Hoover-family Bible should be set. This was presented by Mrs. Pemberton and will be one of the important Hoover-associated items pointed out by the interpreters.

**Sewing basket**

Despite the fact that Mrs. Pemberton remembered Huldah's sewing being placed on the drop-leaf table, it is recommended that a round woven basket be placed instead on the rocking chair, as if Huldah had risen recently, set her work on the chair, and gone to tend her baby for a moment. The basket should contain steel scissors, a flannel needle packet, a thimble, several spools of dark thread, and a small cardboard box containing buttons. The latter may be made of cardboard laced with yarn at the edges or it may be a small manufactures' box, c. 1870, in which medicine (pills) or some other small item might have been purchased. The needle case probably was home-made, of one or more colors of flannel, scalloped or leaf shaped, and sewed together at the top so that needles could be fastened safely inside until needed. Also in the basket should be a child's article of dress, which Huldah might be repairing. This could be

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a little baby cap with blue ribbon strings, a pair of striped stockings, or a little jacket. Because this item is early and may be difficult to locate, it is left to the judgment of the curator seeking items for the house as to what the clothing shall be. It is recommended that it be something that would have been associated with the baby, Herbert.

Hat rack. On the south wall near to the front door, a plain three inch board, approximately two feet in length, should be nailed. To the board five smooth pegs should be affixed on which company could hang shawls and hats while visiting the Hoovers.

Toys. The only toys in the room should be a small wooden horse, mounted on a platform with wheels, and pulled by a string and a simple wooden top. These should be placed on the floor near the lounge, as if Tad had been playing in the room. May Hoover, Herbert’s sister, recalled she had dolls when she was a child; and toys must have been given the boys also.

Pictures. Between the window and the east wall, approximately over the table, a colored chromolithograph should be hung. The subject should be fruit, perhaps in a basket or bowl, c. 1865-1874. The chromo should be framed in a molded walnut frame with narrow gilt liner and hung by wire from a nail in the wall above. (There is no picture molding in the house.) The picture should be slightly higher than pictures are hung today (above eye level) and should be hung to tilt out at the top.

The sampler embroidered “God Bless Our Home” now in the collections of the area should be placed on the wall over the east front door.

Over the lounge there should be a grouping of three small pictures. The subjects should be floral, since Huldah Hoover loved flowers and tended a garden outdoors during the spring and summer. These should be framed in walnut or narrow black frames and should not detract from the fruit chromo, which was dominant enough to leave an impression in Mrs. Pemberton’s memory.

Carpets. On the floor of the cottage there is a rag carpet, which was made by Maud Stratton and is believed to be the “same pattern as the one Mrs. Minthorn had

16/ Bearss, op. cit., p. 94.
woven for her daughter's home." Mrs. Hoover's research indicated the carpets were woven originally from discarded family garments in a "hit and miss" pattern. The carpet was said to go up close to the walls to keep the floors warm and was underlaid with many sheets of newspapers. The inventory of Huldah's estate included approximately eighty yards of carpet. It is recommended that the present carpet woven by Mrs. Stratton be retained.

**Curtains**
The curtains on the windows are recent replacements. They are white dimity and gathered at the top to hang on a rod. These are said to be "similar in pattern to those hung by Huldah Hoover." In the absence of evidence to the contrary, it is recommended that these simple curtains be retained. The poles, however, are modern and should be replaced with small brass rods, c. 1870.

Stenciled black roller shades, removed from an old farmhouse, have been placed at the windows of the cottage. Shades are not mentioned in the reminiscences or in the inventories of the Hoovers' estates, leading one to believe these may have been a luxury the family did not possess. It is recommended that pending further research these be removed.

**Walls**
The treatment of the wall deserves special study. Mrs. Pemberton vaguely remembered "a very small figure, flower, or stripe" as the pattern of wallpaper used in the cottage. The architect discovered during the restoration that the inside of the cracks of the wall boards had been covered or stopped with ticking. This was protection against cold and necessary before wallpapering. The architect also discovered evidence that the walls had been whitewashed; and this treatment now is on the walls. It is recommended that the latter be retained. It is doubtful that Jesse and Huldah would have had wallpaper early in their marriage; and probably if they did paper, it was shortly before their move to the new house in 1879. In any event, until further evidence is uncovered, the whitewash is appropriate to the cottage.

17/ Ibid., p. 96.
18/ Ibid.
19/ Ibid., p. 92.
20/ Ibid.
The Dining Room-Kitchen

Mrs. Hoover's research resulted in the conclusion that during the winter, the west end of the room was a combined dining room and kitchen. In "the long months of pleasant weather," the area became a dining room; and the shed or lean-to on the porch was used as a summer kitchen. The furniture was relatively simple; and Mrs. Hoover described the following:

In 1870 there would have been in this dining end a sturdy table, on which in winter would be carried out the various culinary operations of preparation of the meal and of "cleaning up." Between these two periods the impedimenta would have been whisked off to a nearby shelf, the cloth would have been spread, dishes and cutlery placed in orderly array, and the kitchen table would have become the dining table and the straight-backed chairs would be drawn up for the delicious meal...

Then, as the family dispersed, the remaining food was put away, dishes were gathered up, cloth carefully folded and put in a drawer, if it were still clean, or in the "dirty clothes box" if soiled, and the dish pan was brought out and dishes washed on the same table, which had become kitchen table again.

Mrs. Pemberton recalled a kitchen table and a "few plain kitchen chairs." In the inventory of Huldah's estate, an extension table, valued at three dollars, is listed after the cookstove and its furniture. Mrs. Pemberton also remembered many times during her visits to her brother and sister-in-law that she had helped Herbert into his high chair and had given him "bread and syrup."

Fortunately, the high chair has been preserved and is in the collections of the Birthplace today.

21/ Ibid., pp. 88-89.
22/ Ibid., fn. 6, p. 89.
23/ Ibid., p. 85.
24/ Ibid., fn. 6, p. 89.
Mrs. Hoover speculated that there were additional pieces of furniture and suggested:

This end of the living-room no doubt contained a cupboard for the dishes and glassware. It was doubtless one with drawers across the central portion where the silver, cutlery and linen lived. Some arrangement of shelves and hooks, or cupboard, housed the pots and pans nearby in winter. Probably this arrangement was easily carried to the lean-to when the kitchen moved out in the spring.

Since Huldah did not like a clutter, she undoubtedly had a cupboard of some kind in which to store her dishes, etc.

There was no sink, not even a dry sink in the house. Dishes were washed from water heated on the stove, which appears to have stood near the south wall, just west of the door leading into the bedroom. Located in this area, the stove served to heat the house as well during the winter months.

One other item of kitchen furniture is remembered. This was a large cupboard for food, known as a pie safe, which hung against the wall and in the summer was carried outside and hung on the porch wall near the dining room and kitchen door, when the latter moved to the lean-to. The sides and door of the cupboard were perforated tin. Pie safes were not uncommon and served to protect the food within from bugs and rodents. The pie safe appears in the inventory of Huldah's estate and is valued at one dollar.

The following items are recommended as furnishings for west side of the north room:

Table It is recommended that the drop-leaf table now in the Birthplace be retained and placed, as it is now, against the west wall of the room. This style of table was common during the period 1870-1885. The table has

25/ Ibid., p. 89.
26/ Ibid.
27/ Ibid., p. 90.
28/ Ibid., fn. 8, p. 90.
demilune drop leaves, making when raised an oval top. The table is supported by four turned legs and a matching medial support; and the top can be extended by additional leaves. It is walnut. (Cognizance—here is made of a table—in the collections of the West-Branch Museum, which is reputed to have been made by Jesse Hoover. This table is oak and appears to have been made at a later date than the cottage furnishings.)

Accessories on the table A table cloth probably was spread over the table only at meal time. At other times the table served as a work table. No cloth is recommended, unless, for variety, the table is set for dining.

This is one of the areas in the cottage, where the activities of the household can be interpreted and reveal to visitors something of what life in Iowa was like, when Herbert Hoover was young. The table should be used; and it is recommended that the arrangement on the table change with the seasons. As the gardens and trees are restored to the yard, it will be possible to bring fruits, vegetables, and flowers into the house to give life and realism to the setting. At times a red glazed earthenware bowl or a tin pan filled with cherries, beans or peas can be set in the table center. In the fall apples could be placed in a basket or bowl, with perhaps a pie tin with a crust in it ready for filling and baking set beside it. In the winter there could be a blue glazed earthenware milk pitcher, a small china mug, marked "for a Good Child," and a plate with several home baked cookies on it. These would be ready for three year-old Tad to have as a mid-day snack. The ways to interpret the Hoover's daily living is endless; and an imaginative interpreter undoubtedly will devise a changing variety.

Although no mention is made of a clock in the reminiscences, a clock is listed (value 75 cents) in the 1884 inventory. It is recommended that the plain walnut shelf, now in the house, be retained in its position over the dining table. (Instead of the present clock.) A small plain clock will share the shelf with several books favored by Tucker families. These should include pre-1870 editions of "The Journal of George Fox" and writings of William Penn.
books, a quart-sized, glazed earthenware crock, with lid should be set. This represents a "cookie jar" which Huldah must have had and kept filled for her children.

High chair Beside the doorway leading to the back porch, the little youth's chair in which the Hoover children sat at the table should be placed. Although Herbert would be too young for the chair, Tad probably still was using it; and this is one of the few Herbert Hoover related items in the house. The chair has received a coat of black enamel, which does not appear to be original. It is recommended that this receive further study and be restored to its original finish.

Bracket lamp One of the few evidences of fixtures can be seen faintly by the kitchen door frame (see photograph). It appears that at some time a bracket lamp was attached to this area; however, it cannot be established whether this was during the Hoover's or subsequent occupancies. It is recommended that a cast iron bracket, c. 1870, with glass lamp and chimney be fastened to the wall in the approximate area indicated by the old nail holes. The lamp provided light for both cooking and dining purposes.

Stove There is a small cook stove now in the collections, which appears to be the correct period. The stove rests on a protective metal mat and is attached by stove pipe to the chimney flue. It is recommended that this be retained, however, it should be examined for needed repairs.

It is further recommended that when the stove is in the kitchen a cast iron teakettle, c. 1870, be placed on one of the pot holes. At the back of the stove, at tin coffee pot should be set. There should be a pot-hole lifter in one of the plates or at the back of the stove. Behind the stove there should be a small pile of split wood and a metal coal bucket half filled with coal. A small hand scoop should set on top of the coal. Attached to the chimney flue should be a metal match safe (in the collections) with a few matches inside for lighting fires. Above the safe should be hung a glazed blue earthenware salt container, partially filled with salt.

Beside the stove, there should be placed a small rough wood bench. On this should be set a bucket containing water for drinking, cooking, and cleaning purposes. The bucket should be covered with a homespun towel (to keep insects from falling in the water); and a tin dipper should hang over the side by the handle.

29/ Superintendent Dave Kieb has indicated this stove is in a poor state of repair and will tolerate little movement.
Possible evidence of a bracket lamp, near kitchen doorway. Date unknown.
Shelves

Of all the areas in the cottage, the area near the stove is the most difficult to reconstruct. Evidence of shelves, hooks, etc. were destroyed when Port Scellers "removed the wall separating the Hoover's bedroom from the combination parlor, dining room and kitchen," so that it is impossible to tell precisely how the many items needed to carry out culinary practices in the home were stored. Guests, however, were frequent; and at one time Huldah wrote in a letter:

I have not known a Sabbath since we lived here, scarcely, but what we have had company, averaging three or four, and sometimes as high as ten or twelve... I am always glad to see my friends, but it keeps a body busy to keep something to eat, and everything else done up in apple pie order. 30/

It is recommended that a tier of free standing shelves be built in the southwest end of the partition wall. The shelves should be approximately ten inches in width; and since walnut was then so readily available, they may be made of that wood. On the shelves the cooking needs of a housewife of the 1870's should be placed.

Floor: On the floor under the shelves, a large crock, covered with an unbleached muslin or homespun cloth tied in place by string, should be set. This might contain sugar or flour removed from the barrel and placed in a smaller more convenient container. Beside the crock should be set a wooden bucket with iron bands and a tin dishpan.

Second shelf: Here, two or three crocks, covered as above to simulate lard, preserves, etc., a round tin spice box, and a small coffee mill should be placed. The spice box would contain smaller boxes in which cloves, pepper, etc. were stored. Since Huldah did not like a clutter, this type of spice box may have appealed to her.

Third shelf: On this shelf should be two or more five pound sacks, labeled "Bogota" coffee, c. 1870's, "Chall" oatmeal, corn meal, beans, or other labeled food of the period, a basket with one and one-half dozen eggs (the insides blown out through pin holes), and a jug, stoppered with cork, of the type molasses was found in.

30/ Naud Stratton, Herbert Hoover's Home Town (n.p., 1948), p. 43.
Top shelf: Here, should be set several Mason's Patent 1857 glass jars. These should be filled with canned fruit and vegetables (simulated or real, if possible) and sealed. A few labeled canned goods, which were available in stores, also should be set on the shelf. These might include a box of codfish, "Empire" or "Banner" peas, tomatoes, or string beans, canned peaches, or canned meats, such as corned beef, tongue, oysters, sardines, or mackerel. On this shelf, there might even be a bottle of blacking to use on the stove.

Pie Safe Mrs. Pemberton stated that the room contained a pie safe, which in the summer was carried outside and hung on the porch wall. A pie safe would be approximately 16 to 20 inches in depth. The space between the kitchen door frame and the wall measures only one foot. The pie safe hanging on the wall should make opening the door fully difficult; however, it may be for this precise reason, the safe was removed in the summer and hung outside.

It is recommended that a hanging pie safe, with wooden frame, pierced tin sides and door, be acquired and attached to the south wall of the room. Because of the door swing, it is recommended that this be situated near to the stove flue, permitting the shelving to be set on the other side.

On the shelves of the cupboard, it is recommended that a pie, two loaves of homemade bread, a platter with left-over beef roast or ham, a plate with a round cake of butter (marked on the top with a butter press), the blue-glazed pitcher of milk (when not in use on the table), and several small crocks (simulating honey, apple butter or other preserves) be placed. The latter should be covered with small squares of unbleached muslin or homespun and tied with a string. In season, a bowl of string beans or peas might also be set inside. Perishable foods, pie, bread, meat, etc., can be provided by the Harpers Ferry Lab, which successfully freeze-dries items of this type. (The Smithsonian also uses this method in its period settings.) The pie safe should be kept closed and opened by the guides, when they discuss the diet of Iowa pioneer families.

Cupboard The area possesses a walnut cupboard similar to that described by Mrs. Hoover on page 14. The cupboard belonged in the family, although it is not attributed to Jesse and Huldah Hoover. It is recommended that this cupboard be placed against the north wall to
the west of the window. The shelves should be arranged to look like they are in actual use by the family. Several items currently displayed in the cupboard are articles that originally belonged to relatives of the Hoovers. Only a glass bowl in a pressed maple leaf pattern belonged to Huldah Hoover, herself.31

The following arrangement is suggested for the shelves of the cupboard:

**Bottom shelf:** Plates (transfer or plain white ironstone, c. 1870), large ironstone platter, standing upright, ironstone sugar bowl, ironstone creamer, one large white ironstone tureen, c. 1870 (to be acquired), several serving bowls (to be acquired), and the small glass salts in the collections.

**Middle shelf:** Six ironstone cups and six saucers, same pattern as plates (to be acquired), a teapot, square platter (upright behind dishes), a pressed glass compote (to be acquired), an ironstone covered butter dish (to be acquired), and the pressed glass "maple leaf" bowl that belonged to Huldah.

**Top shelf:** Eight to twelve pressed glass tumblers, additional serving bowls, an earthenware or ironstone coffee pot, similar to plate patterns, and the small mustard jar in the collections. All of the above with the exception of the mustard jar will be acquisitions.

In the middle drawer, silverware may be placed, but this probably will not be shown to visitors. Undoubtedly, the Hoovers used the wooden-handled or bone-handled utensils of this period.

The base should contain extra cooking utensils, pots and pans. These should include: a large cast iron cooking pot with handle, a cast iron frying pan, a small iron sauce pan, and a tin sauce pan.

**Almanac** Mrs. Stratton suggests there was a Friends' almanac hanging under the shelf in the dining area.32 This is a nice Quaker touch; and it is recommended one be acquired and hung from a small nail driven in the back of the shelf.

31/ The glass and china have not been examined by this writer and should be checked for correct dates.

32/ Stratton, op. cit., 41.
Contents of the walnut cupboard. Only the glass dish on the second shelf belonged to Huldah Hoover.

High chair that belonged to the Hoovers, table donated by Mrs. Pemberton (not original), and silver service (not original).
Although the bedroom is small, it seems to have contained a number of articles. Entered from the doorway in the north partition, the room was comfortably and pleasantly lit during the daylight hours by three windows situated on the east, south and west walls.

Mrs. Hoover's research resulted in the following findings:

...On the west side of the room stood the high-legged double bed with the solid headboard and footboard that followed the four-posters in the Middle West. After little Theodore out-grew his cradle, there was his trundle-bed, which rolled under the big one when he was not in it. On them both were woollen "spreads" beautifully woven by some older member of the family on one of the family looms, the last remnant of domestic weaving to disappear from pioneer life. The intricate pattern was very likely in indigo blue and white, although red may have been introduced, probably of cochineal dye. The wool they no doubt carded and spun themselves as well as dyed. Under the "spreads" were charming patch work "quilts" of gay calico, the winter ones heavily padded. Some of these "spreads" and "quilts" of Grandmother Minthorn's own weaving are still in possession of the family.23

May Hoover Leavitt, Herbert's younger sister, wrote concerning the coverlets, saying:

Some things were sent to Oregon, but many things Grandmother had were burned years ago when she lived with Aunt Phoebe at Prune Ridge, Oregon. There were two wool coverlets, a blue and white one and a red, blue and white one made from their own sheep, spun and woven by her in Canada.24

23 Bearss, op. cit., 91.
24 Stratton, op. cit., 45.
Mrs. Pemberton recalled the big double bed, which she said was against the west wall with the trundle bed underneath. Unfortunately, Mrs. Hoover does not give her source that the original bed had a solid headboard and footboard "that followed the four-posters in the Middle West." Mrs. Stratton, who seems to have access to letters written by Huldah to her sister-in-law and interviewed May Hoover Leavitt and others who knew the Hoovers, makes the statement that the "young couple had a walnut four-poster bed with a trundle bed to roll under it in the daytime." This discrepancy in accounts probably never will be resolved.

Huldah was given a "wedding-chest" before her marriage by her mother. It had been made by her mother's brother, Samuel Wasley, a cabinet maker, living near Detroit. It was sent out to Iowa, and it "was very like the one he had made for this very sister when she was married in 1840." Mrs. Minthorn filled the drawers of this bureau with linens that would be needed by her daughter when she set up housekeeping. Unfortunately, the bureau was lost, when the children were dispersed and sent to live with relatives after Huldah's death. At the auction of her effects, her bureau was sold to Allen Hoover for the sum of $4.50.

There was a mirror, perhaps a few chairs, perhaps a little table, a "Singer or Florence sewing-machine, for which Jesse was agent," and a built-in closet to complete the furnishings.

35/ Hearss, op. cit., fn. 9, p. 91.
36/ Ibid., p. 91.
37/ Stratton, op. cit., p. 41.
38/ Hearss, op. cit., p. 91.
The following items are recommended as furnishings for the bedroom:

**Bed**
The present bed in use in the cottage is a low four poster rope bed. It is recommended that this be retained, unless further evidence that the bed was of the solid headboard and footboard style be discovered.

In 1870, there were several styles of bed available to a newly married couple. One was an ornate and elaborate Renaissance style bed. Other candidates might be an early Eastlake bed, with straight footboard and carved headboard (see Ormsbee, No. 229, p. 357) or a Mid-Victorian bed, c. 1865-1875 (see Ormsbee, No. 227, p. 354). All of these, however, seem out of place in this Quaker home. There is some question also as to whether a trundle bed would fit under the above beds.

**Trundle Bed**
It is recommended that the four poster bed remain in the southwest corner of the room with the headboard against the south wall and the trundle bed underneath. The trundle bed should be pushed under the bed as it normally would have been during the day and not partially displayed as it is now.

(Read for the test)

The woven coverlet should be changed periodically. In the winter, the dark side may be shown; and in the spring, the lighter side should be displayed. During the hot months of July and August, it may be desirable to change the heavy coverlet for a lighter weight quilt, as the Hoovers, themselves, undoubtedly did.

There should be two pillows on the bed, with linen cases having a crocheted trim. Over the pillows, pillow shams may be laid. About this time, plain shams with a few rows of tucks and eyelet ruffles around the edges were popular.
Bureau Cora Hoover had a bureau that was very similar to the one owned by Huldah, declared Mrs. Pemberton, and this bureau was given to the area for use in the house. The bureau is an earlier style, suggesting that it indeed was patterned after Mrs. Minthorn's bureau. There are four full length drawers and two half drawers across the top. The two small drawers have key holes only, and the drawers have plain wooden knobs. The top has a slight overhang, and each drawer is planed on the edge to make a slight decoration. The skirt of the carcase is valanced in balancing cyma-curved scrolls. The front corners of the carcase to one-third down are chamfered and end in graduating spool finials.

It is recommended that this be retained in the house and placed against the east wall between the window and south wall. (Mrs. Pemberton stated that the bureau stood in the southeast corner of the bedroom.)

Accessories for bureau The top of the bureau should be covered with a homespun or linen scarf, embroidered in cross stitch. Mrs. Minthorn was noted for her cross stitch in blue and red on homespun and may have contributed an artistic work to her daughter's room. Certainly, she taught her daughters needlework, as they were growing up at home.

Neatly arranged on top of this should be a beaded pin-cushion, c. 1870, into which brass pins have been stuck, a bone-handled brush, with natural bristles, a comb, and a kerosene hand lamp of glass with chimney and handle for carrying.

Mirror It is recommended that the mirror in the molded black frame with gilt cartouches and rounded edges (now in the collections) be hung over the bureau.

Washstand A washstand is not mentioned in this room, although Mrs. Hoover speculated there may have been a little table. With a small child and a baby to care for, it is difficult to believe that Huldah Hoover did not have some washing facilities close at hand. It is recommended that the plain walnut washstand, which has a single drawer across the top and cupboard doors in the base (now in the collections) be set against the south wall near the window.

Accessories for washstand This should be covered with a homespun embroidered scarf; and on its top should be set a plain ironstone pitcher and bowl, c. 1870, and a

Reminiscences of Mrs. Francis Badell, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, May 19, 1939. 23
Bed and Trundle Bed now in use in the cottage.
Note woven rag carpet on the floor.

Bureau said to be similar to the one given
Huldah Hoover by her mother, Mrs. Minthorn.
dish with a bar of homemade soap. (It will not be necessary to display a man's barbering equipment, since Jesse wore a long beard.)

On the right side of the washstand, a pile of several soft white cotton cloths, used as diapers, should be laid. On the pile of diapers, a small tin rattle, popular in the 1870's, should be laid. Some of the latter were "T"-shaped, hollow, and had a piece of metal inside to make the rattle. Occasionally, the handle was stamped with a design or the beginning of the alphabet.

An embroidered splasher (in the collections) should be attached to the wall behind the washstand; and above this should be fastened a small wooden towel rack with two linen or huck towels, c. 1870.

Cradle The focal point of the room is the cradle, which despite some controversy as to its authenticity, is displayed as the cradle in which the Hoover children were rocked. The cradle is walnut, with handholes carved in the side and turned rockers. The cradle should have a mattress, a linen sheet, and be covered with a quilt (now in the collections). It should be placed at the foot of the parents' bed.

Closet Since there was no closet in the house, Jesse is said to have improvised one by nailing horizontal strips of wood to the wall in the corner at the north end. Mrs. Pemberton remembered that Jesse made several shelves overhanging a row of clothes hooks; and from the top shelf, Huldah hung curtains to conceal and protect the clothing. Shoes were lined in a row on the floor underneath, along with scrap boxes, etc.

All evidence of the shelves was destroyed when the Scellers removed the partition between the bedroom and living room. Mrs. Pemberton described the closet as being located: "In the south east corner was the bureau and the north end was a shelf and under the shelf hung the wearing apparel, with a curtain hung from the shelf... This seems to indicate the closet was on the east and north side of the room.

It is recommended that two shelves, ten inches wide and approximately 24 to 30 inches long, be nailed to the north and east walls of the room on strips of wood. The west edge of the shelf may be supported by a wood brace.
Five hooks or pegs should be attached to the wall.

From the top shelf and reaching to the floor should be hung curtains of unbleached muslin. The curtains should be hemmed, top and bottom, with two inch hems. Below the top hem and above the bottom hem, there should be three bands of inch chambray, alternating blue, buff (because the curtains are unbleached, this may have been more of a tan or brown shade) and blue. One curtain should start at the north wall and come around the corner of the shelf to meet a second curtain originating on the east wall. These should be folded into single pleats at the top and tacked to the shelf.

Accessories in the closet: This closet may or may not be shown to visitors. If it is not planned to display the closet, only the things recommended for the top shelf need be acquired.

Iowa orthodox Quaker women wore quiet colors, gray or black. Their costumes generally consisted of a long full skirt, a separate basque, and a soft collar or fichu of white net. (A portrait of Huldah shows her in what appears to be a gray calico dress.) Their bonnets, however, often were exquisitely made of finest silk with tiny pleats and tucks and a soft facing of finest white silk net. Mrs. Odell and her sister cleaned out the attic of their mother's home following her death and discovered a package labeled, "Huldah's bonnet and shawl." These had become so moth eaten that they were burned; but Mrs. Odell recalled that the bonnet was not the "long Quaker bonnet," but it was "a neat inconspicuous poke bonnet of shirred black velvet." This discovery had satisfied Mrs. Odell that Huldah was not radical in her dress.

It is recommended that two gray Quaker gowns be hung on the hooks of the closet. If original dresses, c. 1870, cannot be obtained, copies may be made of the Quaker costume now in the collections of the West Branch Museum and from the photograph taken of Huldah before her death. On a third hook, a man's collarless coat should be hung; and here, again, the West Branch Museum may be helpful in duplicating the costume. On a fourth peg, a shawl of black wool with a deep fringe, c. 1870, should hang.

On the first shelf there should be placed several round or oval lapped boxes, such as would hold buttons, extra thread, ribbons, etc. Also on the shelf might be placed

42/ Bearss, op. cit., p. 95.
43/ Ibid., pp. 91-92.
a handleless basket, filled with black and gray yarn and a pair of children's stockings started but not completed on knitting needles of wood. A crocheted black shawl, of the lace pattern popular for summer wear, might also be folded and laid on the shelf.

On the upper shelf there should be placed several old hat boxes, preferably wallpapered, in which bonnets and hats would be kept dust free.

On the floor should be several pairs of ladies' shoes, c. 1870, and a covered box "filled with scraps." These could be in a small packing box.

**Sewing Machine** The present sewing machine in use is an early "Victor." It is recommended that this be replaced, when feasible, by an 1870's "Florence" sewing machine. Jesse was agent for the Florence Company; and it is believed Huldah had one in her home.

It is recommended that the sewing machine be placed against the partition opposite the bed. At night, it would be necessary to move the machine out into the parlor; however, the smallness of the house must have necessitated many such adjustments during the day-to-day living. It is not intended that the sewing machine detract from the cradle, which is the focal point of the room; nevertheless, a small garment for a baby, c. 1874, may be carefully opened at the seams and placed on the machine, as if ready for sewing. This could be a little flannel dress of the type worn by boys. Brass pins could be used to indicate pinning for stitching. The machine should be threaded and ready for actual use.

**Accessories** Beside the sewing machine, a small wastepaper basket, partially filled with scraps of material similar to that being sewn on the machine, should be set.

**Chair** The small cane-seat side chair (in the collections) should be placed in front of the east window.

**Pictures** Huldah was devoted to her family. Her father, Theodore Minthorn, died in 1866; and she named her first-born son, Theodore. The Hoovers also named their daughter, after Mary Wasley Minthorn, Huldah's mother. Therefore it would not have been out of keeping for Huldah to have hung a photograph of her mother in the home. The picture, now in the collections, was framed in a deep shadow box type of frame; and it should be hung on the south wall.
beside the bed.

A second picture that might have hung in the room is one relating to their Quaker faith. It is recommended that a lithograph of William Penn dealing with the Indians or similar subject be hung on the partition over the sewing machine. Both pictures should be hung by V-shaped wire from a nail above and tilt outward slightly.

Carpets At the present time there is a woven carpet in the bedroom, similar to that in the north room. It is recommended that this be retained. In a letter to her sister-in-law, Huldah wrote:

I enjoy living in my own home and fixing things to suit myself. I proved to be more lucky than thee in getting my carpet made. Mother Hoover and Aunt Mary gave me rags enough and I cut and sewed them through the summer, so that I got it ready to put down against we got the house fixed up.\(^{46}\)

Curtains The curtains in the bedroom at the present time duplicate those in the north room. It is recommended that these be retained. For variety, however, it may be desirable to tie the curtains back with sashes, made of the same material, about one-third of the way up from the sill.

The Lean-To

The lean-to on the porch, which was used as the summer kitchen and occasionally as sleeping quarters, presents particular problems to a furnishing plan.

Heat from the cook stove during warm Iowa weather would be almost unbearable in the house. With great practicality, wives moved the kitchen outside and enjoyed an expanded living area; and this practice was followed by Huldah Hoover.\(^{47}\)

The present lean-to apparently is not original. According to Bearss, Port Scellers removed the shed room and partially en-

\(^{46}\) Ibid., p. 41.

\(^{47}\) Bearss, op. cit., p. 93.
Present furnishings of Lean-to. Note pipes for fire protection of cottage. The Lean-to is not original to the cottage. The latter was torn off by the Scellers.
enclosed and screened the back porch sometime during the period 1890-1912. Destroyed were evidences of a stove flue, shelves, etc. Today, pipes, apparently relating to the fire protection of the house, have been added to this room.

Nevertheless, it is recommended that this area contain furnishings during the summer months for two reasons--historical accuracy and to relieve congestion from increasing visitation to the house. It is recommended that the following furnishings be placed in the lean-to:

**Stove** The stove, mat, and pipe should be removed from the kitchen area and placed against the east wall of the lean-to. (Memo 19??-venting should be detailed.)

**Accessories on stove** There should be a frying pan, a coffee pot and a teakettle (previously described).

**Table** Under the window, a small table should be set. This would be a work table and perhaps double as a dining table for the immediate family. The table should have a plain wood top and four straight legs tapering slightly at the bottom. It may be stained the popular old reddish color; and it may look homemade. The top should be covered with a dark, small patterned piece of oilcloth.

**Accessories on table** On the table should be set a crockery bowl, filled with freeze-dried cooked potatoes, a paring knife, and a plate with six eggs (insides blown out).

**Shelves** The free standing shelves in the kitchen area of the north room should be moved to the lean-to and be placed on the east wall to the right of the stove. All items on the shelves should be replaced on the shelves in the lean-to.

**Water bench** The small water bench and bucket should be removed from the north room and set against the north

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48/ Ibid., p. 8.
49/ Both Jesse's assistant and Tad claimed to be sleeping in the lean-to the night Herbert was born. If so, one or both may have slept on straw ticks spread on the floor.
wall to the right of the table.

Wood A small pile of split wood should set in the northwest corner. Undoubtedly wood was stored in this area during the winter; and some would remain.

Barrels Two barrels with lids should be set against the west wall. These would have contained bulk flour and sugar. The barrels should be old and have iron bands.

The Rear Porch

The rear porch is treated as part of the furnishing plan, even though it will be shown only during the summer season.

Pie safe As Mrs. Hoover suggested, the pie safe should be hung on the east side of the porch to the south of the door. The contents previously recommended should be left inside.

Wash bench Although this is not mentioned in the records, it is probable that Mrs. Hoover would have had a wash bench on the porch for the men to use when they cleaned up for meals and to use, herself, on wash days. It is recommended that a low bench with straight legs, obviously home made, be set at the south end of the porch.

Accessories On the bench should be set a tin wash basin and an ironstone saucer with a bar of home made soap.

Clothes line Tied between a square nail in the side of the house and the south porch post should be a drying line. On this may be hung a bleached muslin dish towel, probably made from old flour sacks, and a huck towel for the men to use to dry their hands. The clothes pins should be straight wooden pins.

Lantern A lantern should hang on a square nail driven into the edge of the frame of the east door. This would provide light at night, if Jesse needed to go to his shop. Many types of lanterns found their way West, even the pierced tin, so-called Paul Revere, lanterns. The piece displayed here could be the latter type, which used candles, or the later “railroad” kerosene lantern.

Toys A fairly large toy cart, painted blue or red, with iron wheels, a box, and a long tongue, c. 1870's, should be parked on the porch. Tad probably would not be allowed by his mother to take a toy of this size into the house.

Add the following to this paragraph: "Some ordinary objects such as pieces of lumber, a brick or stone, etc., may be put in the cart to discourage handling or lifting. The load should not be so heavy it puts an undue strain on the cart. If the security problem continues the cart may be placed in the lean-to providing there is enough room to place it in a logical position."
Illustration from The Fireside Reminder (1879). Note the toys in upper right-hand corner.
FLOOR PLANS AND ELEVATIONS
Herbert Hoover Birthplace, West Branch, Iowa

View of Lean-To and Rear Porch of the cottage
Dining Room-Kitchen

South Elevation

West Elevation
Will be redrawn to agree w/ measuring

BEDROOM

Approx.
1/2" = 1'0"

N
West Elevation

South Elevation
LEAN-TO
(Summer Kitchen)

Approx.
1/2" = 1'0"
North Elevation

South Elevation
THE REAR PORCH

Approx.

$\frac{1}{2}\" = 1'0\"$
THE HERBERT HOOVER BIRTHPLACE
WEST BRANCH, IOWA

by
Sally Johnson Ketcham

Furnishing Plan
Section F

September, 1972
Omaha, Nebraska
Today, the Herbert Hoover Birthplace, which was officially dedicated on August 10, 1972, is a popular area, with future plans that include the restoration of streets, walks, and buildings that will assist visitors to step back in time to the era of the birth of this nation's 31st President.

The Hoover Birthplace is a small cottage; and because of this, it demands special interpretation, so that visitors are able to view the rooms in a relatively short time to prevent congestion in the entry. Immediately, the cottage must feel "real" to the casual visitor. If items, familiar to daily living, are absent, this will become apparent; and the cottage will be in danger of becoming merely a "setting". Careful attention to detail, however, should enable each visitor to feel a moment in time has been recaptured for his special enjoyment. The emphasis should be placed on President Hoover, as a baby, with secondary interest in his parents and family and their activities. Jesse Hoover was described by those who knew him as a good man; and Huldah filled every corner of her home with love. This spirit, intangible as it is, should be recaptured in the house. The rooms should look cheerful and "busy"; and since Huldah did not like things lying about, they should be neat and tidy. West Branch was a Quaker community; and this religious background had a force in shaping the future of Herbert Hoover. The Quaker element should be present in the house.
As the vegetable and flower gardens are restored, a wider variety of interpretation will become available. Fresh flowers, particularly the ones Huldah nurtured, will fill the rooms with fragrance during the warm Iowa spring, summer and fall. Any tendency to have arrangements that overwhelm the rooms should be discouraged; however, small bouquets can be placed on the table beside the family Bible and lamp, on the dining table, or on the bureau in the bedroom. In the winter, a small potted plant might be placed in one of the rooms. The arrangements on the dining table and kitchen table in the Lean-to can be changed almost daily by the interpreters, as vegetables become available from the gardens. Surplus fresh vegetables and fruits may be placed for a limited time on the shelves or in the pie safe. Many memories may be revived by the fragrance of fresh picked apples. In the fall, squash and pumpkins may be set on the rear porch. In season, gooseberries, wild plums, and grapes, which abound in the country, could be set on a table.

As previously mentioned, the coverlets should be turned with the seasons. The bed linen, curtains, etc. should be kept spotless. Particular attention should be paid that no dirt settles on any of the prepared freeze-dried foods recommended. An appearance of disuse will destroy the whole effect. The National Park Service is preparing a housekeeping manual for historic homes at the present time. Undoubtedly, many of the recommendations are being practiced now in the cottage.

Some items in the house may have to be fastened down inconspicuously to discourage theft. Smaller items on the kitchen shelves and small items on the dining table may be vulnerable. In the summer, some attention may have to be given to items in the pie safe or on the water bench. The presence of the guides, themselves, is a strong determent to this type of loss.

To accommodate increasing visitation, it is recommended that the kitchen be removed from the North Room in the summer and placed in the Lean-to. This follows the Hoover's own custom. The situation of the stove is such that it acts as a barrier to visitors and also forces them further into the room, when they pass about it. With this removed, visitors will have more freedom to move forward and to spend a few extra moments absorbing the scene. In the Autumn, when visitation falls off, the stove, etc. may be returned to the North Room.

"Room barriers are often necessary to control traffic flow and protect furnishings. Properly designed they can serve this purpose without being objectionably obtrusive. The banister style, with uprights and railing are recommended particularly for doorways. They can be placed across the opening or recessed into the room, whichever is most desirable for a given situation. Ropes and stanchions serve best in open areas across a room, etc."

It is recommended that woven rag strips of carpet, similar to the present carpet on the floors, be substituted for the plastic

\[2/\] The Birthplace is only a few miles off the Interstate Highway and close to the Amish Amana Colonies, also a popular tourist area.
runners on the floor now. It may be this woven carpet can be purchased from the Amana villages nearby. Enough carpet runners should be acquired to permit cleaning of the strips when necessary.

In the Hoover days, the streets of West Branch were described as either "dusty thoroughfares or muddy bogs." Since Jesse Hoover was a Blacksmith, it is quite likely he made a footscraper to place near the front stoop and walk. During inclement weather, it may be desirable to have a mat outside the front door for visitors to use.

The bedroom in which Herbert Hoover was born is the climax of the visitor's tour of the Birthplace. Ordinarily, this should be the last area viewed, after visitors have toured the house and become prepared for this experience. Today, visitors enter the cottage from the front door, view the parlor and dining room-kitchen area, and turning to the left, see the bedroom, with the cradle. Visitors leave through the kitchen door and proceed on to the Blacksmith Shop nearby. When the gardens, pump, barn, privy, etc. are restored, additional time will be spent by visitors in the backyard. Two tour guide floor plans are suggested, one to be used today and the other after the streets, board walks.

"At this stage in the development of Herbert Hoover National Historic Site, it is difficult and perhaps undesirable to recommend a specific traffic flow for the birthplace and site. The needs and requirements of the Park will change. The following ideas are offered for consideration/plans develop."
Proposed future guide plan for area.
Present tour plan.
ESTIMATES
### ESTIMATED COSTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Room</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>North Room</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Parlor:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Earthenware salt</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bench</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Contents of shelves</td>
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<td>Contents of walnut cupboard</td>
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<td><strong>Bedroom:</strong></td>
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<td>Bureau accessories</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Washstand accessories</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Florence sewing machine</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accessories</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Wood pile</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Barrels (2)</td>
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<td><strong>Rear Porch:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Barrel*</td>
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<td><strong>Grand total:</strong></td>
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<td>$3037.00</td>
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</table>

* Estimates do not include cost of repairs and restoration of furnishings.
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The Fireside Monthly, Vol. 1 (September, 1878).


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