

Names:

Fearn, Thomas, Dr.
Martin, John

Monte Sano
Mountain
Roberts, Frances C.

The Romance and
Realism of Monte
Sano

mountain of health in
Italian

Places:

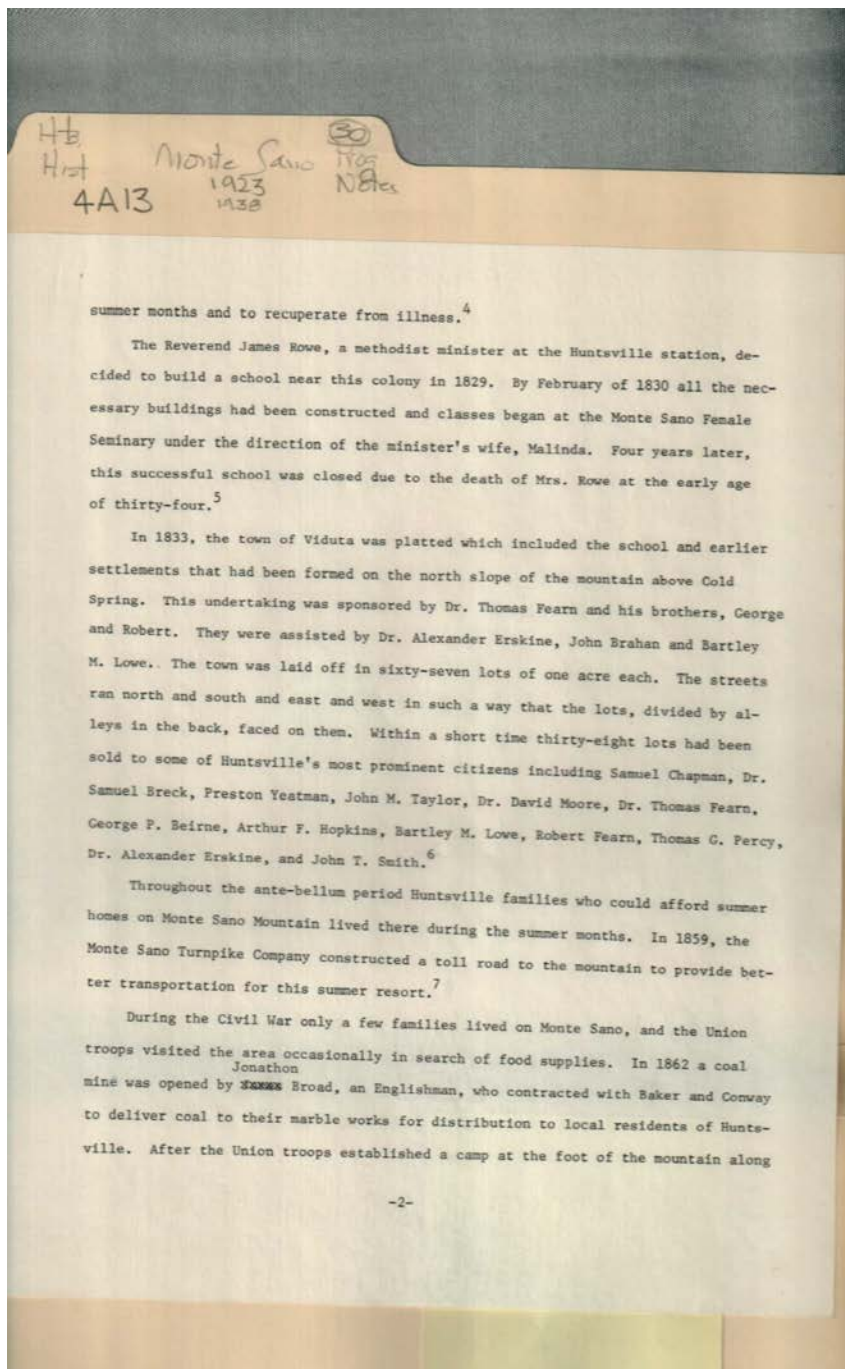
Huntsville, AL

Types:

essay

Dates:

1814



Names:

Beirne, George P.
Braham, John
Breck, Samuel, Dr.
Broad, Jonathon
Chapman, Samuel
Erskine, Alexander,
Dr.

Fearn, George
Fearn, Robert
Fearn, Thomas, Dr.
Hopkins, Arthur F.
Lowe, Bartley M.
Monte Sano Female
Seminary

Monte Sano Turnpike
Company
Moore, David, Dr.
Percy, Thomas G.
Rowe, James, Mrs.
Rowe, James, Rev.
Smith, John T.

Taylor, John M.
Viduta, town of
Yeatman, Preston

Places:

Huntsville, AL

Types:

essay

Dates:

1829

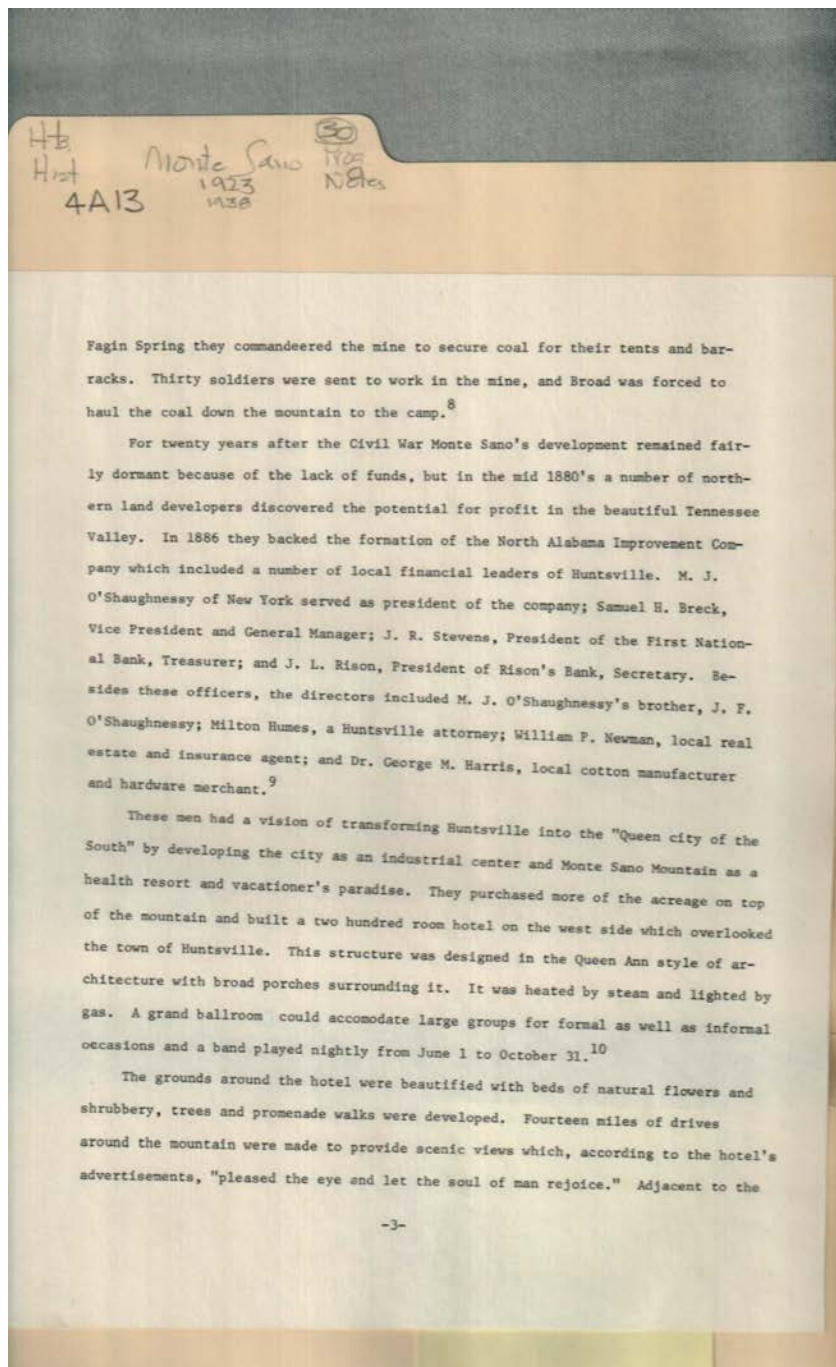
1830

1833

1834

1859

1862



Names:

Breck, Samuel H.
Broad, Jonathon
Harris, George M.
Humes, Milton

Monte Sano Hotel
Monte Sano
Mountain
Newman, William P.

North Alabama
Improvement
Company
O'Shaughnessy, J. F.

O'Shaughnessy, M. J.
Rison, J. L.
Stevens, J. R.

Places:

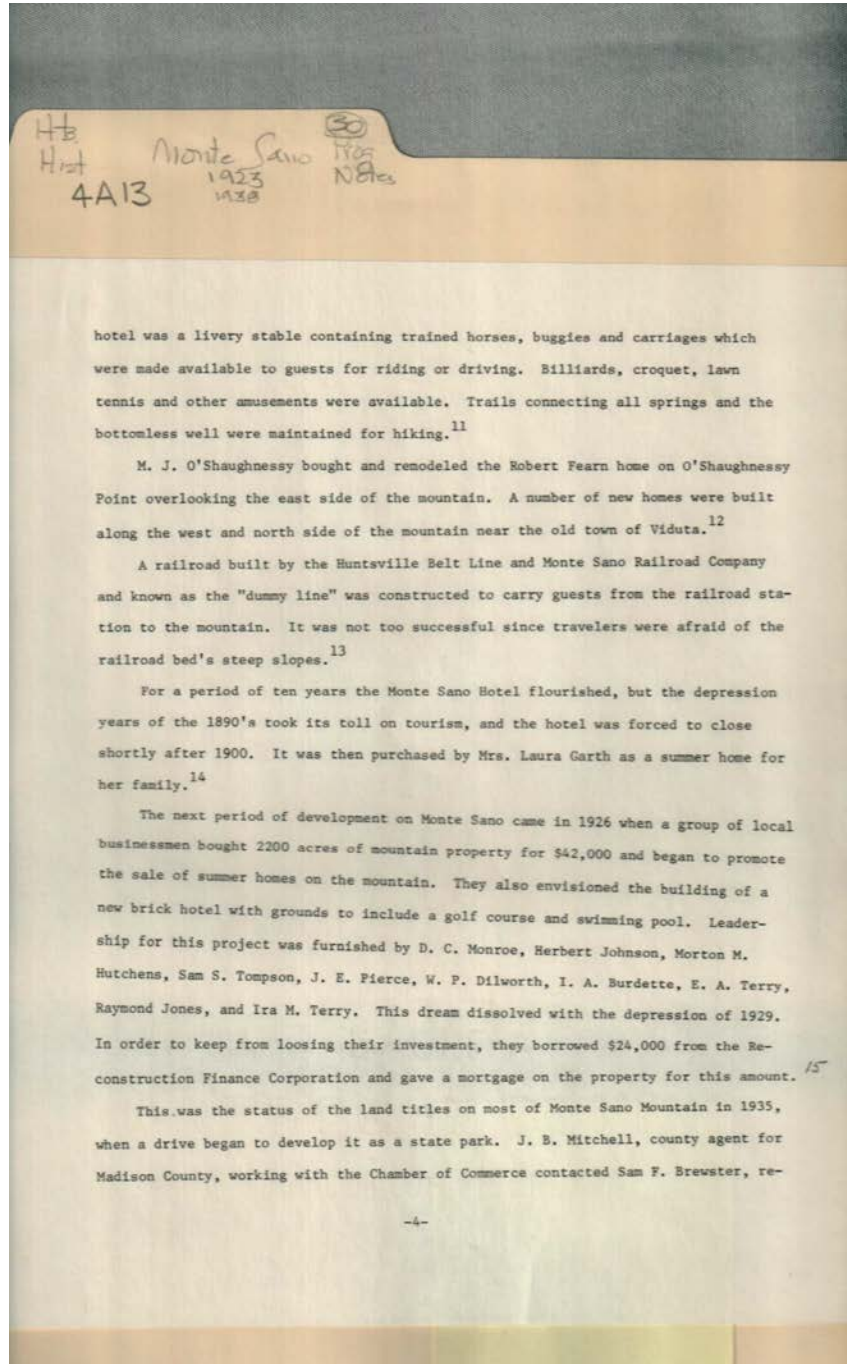
Huntsville, AL

Types:

essay

Dates:

1880s



Names:

Brewster, Sam F.
Burdette, I. A.
Dilworth, W. P.
Fearn, Robert
Garth, Laura, Mrs.
Huntsville Belt Line

Hutchens, Morton M.
Jones, Raymond
Mitchell, J. B.
Monroe, D. C.
Monte Sano Hotel

Monte Sano
Mountain
Monte Sano Railroad
Company
O'Shaughnessy, M. J.
Pierce, J. E.

Terry, E. A.
Terry, Ira M.
Tompson, sam S.
Viduta, town of

Places:

Huntsville, AL

Types:

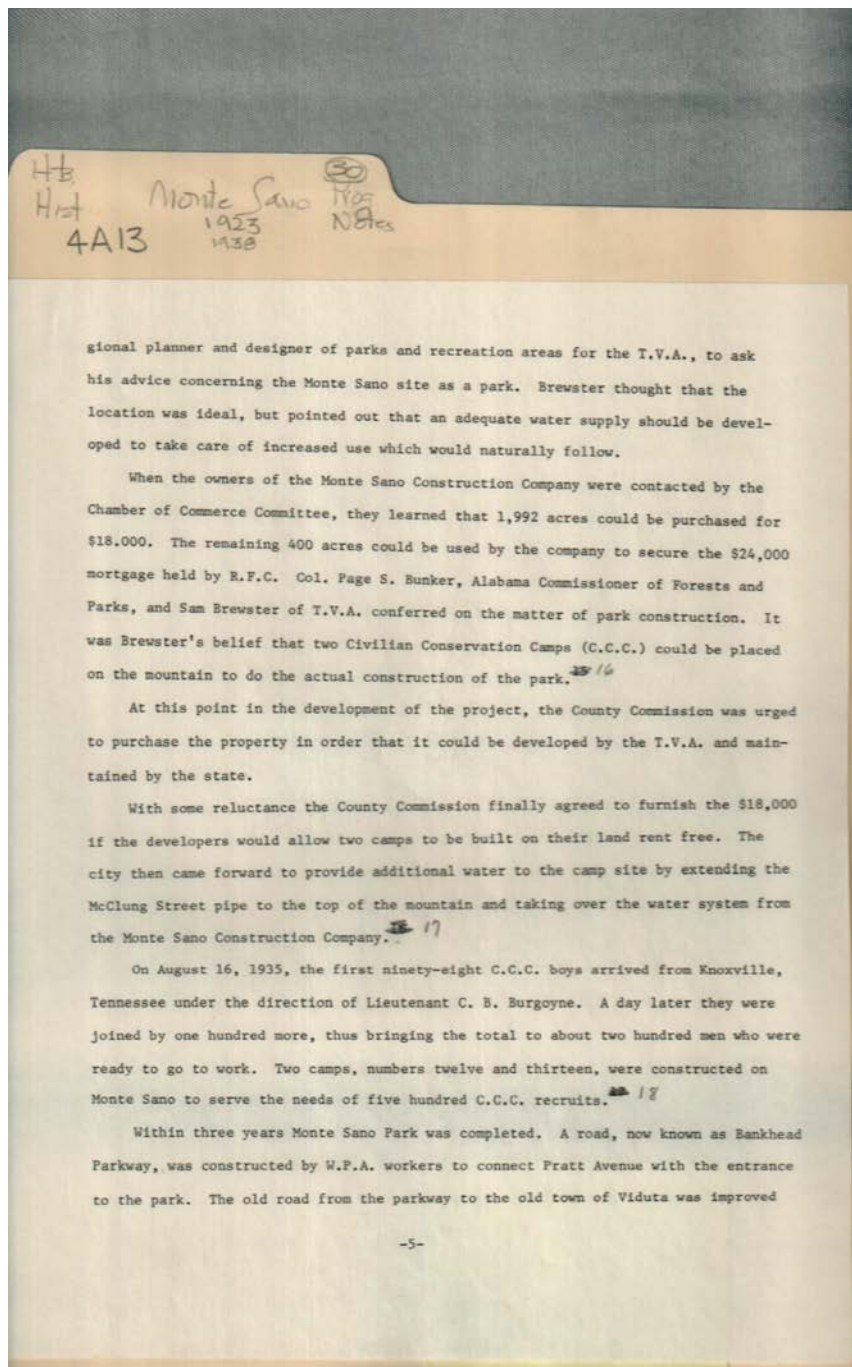
essay

Dates:

1926

1935

ca. 1900



Names:

Brewster, Sam F.
Bunker, Page S., Col.
Burgoyne, C. B., Lt.

Civilian Conservation
Corp

Monte Sano
Construction
Company

Monte Sano Park

Places:

Huntsville, AL

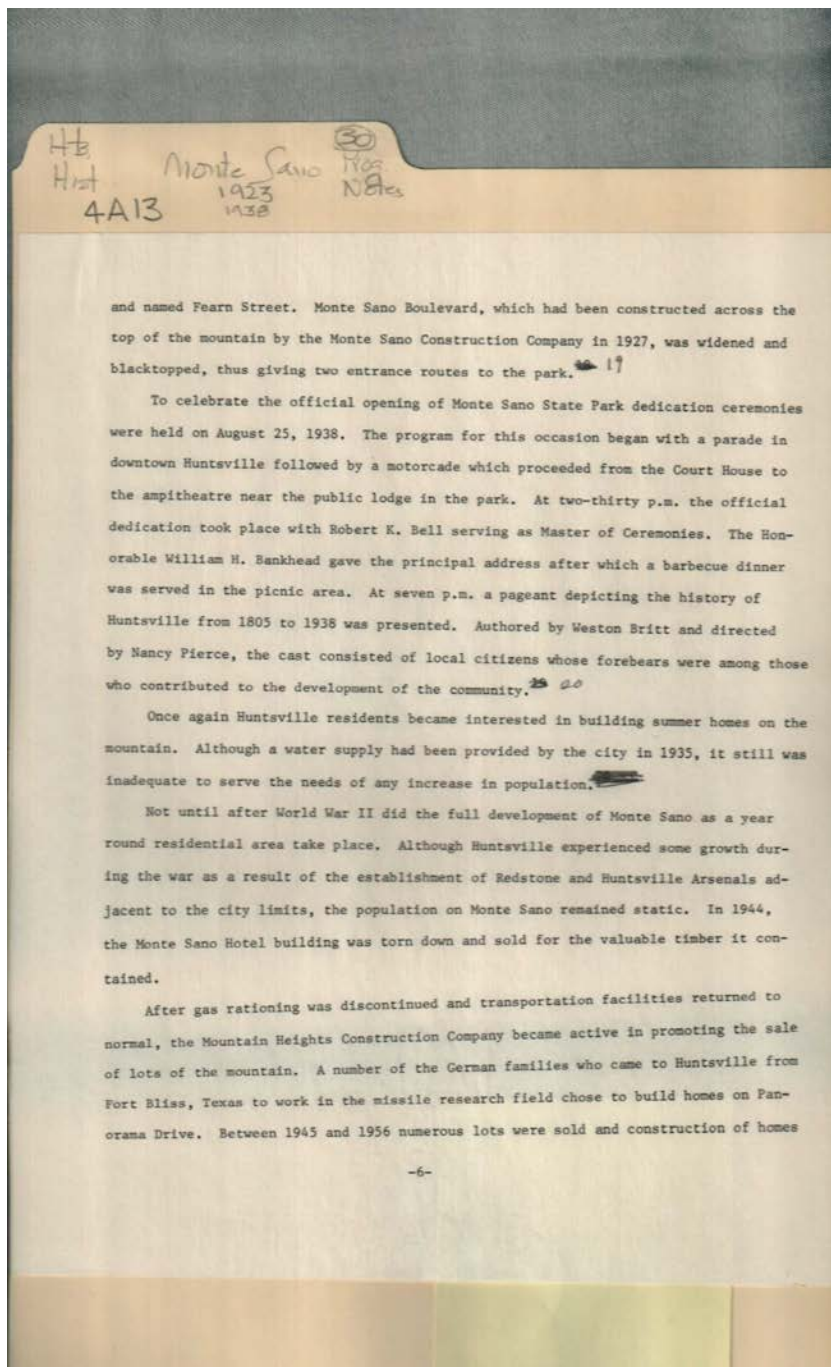
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essay

Dates:

1935

1938



Names:

Bankhead, William
H.

Bell, Robert K.
Britt, Weston

Monte Sano Hotel

Monte Sano State
Park

Places:

Huntsville, AL

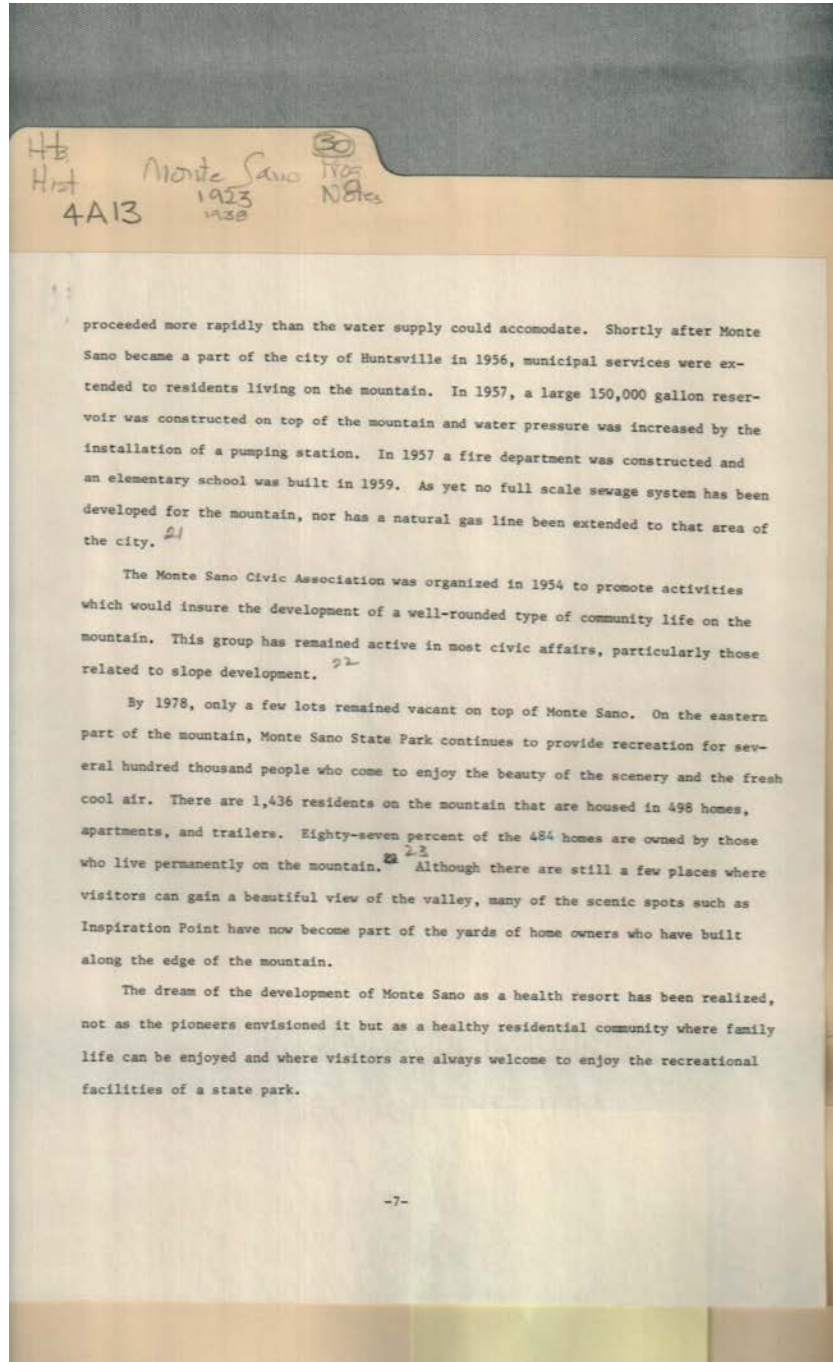
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Dates:

1938

1944



Names:

Monte Sano Civic
Association

Monte Sano State
Park

Places:

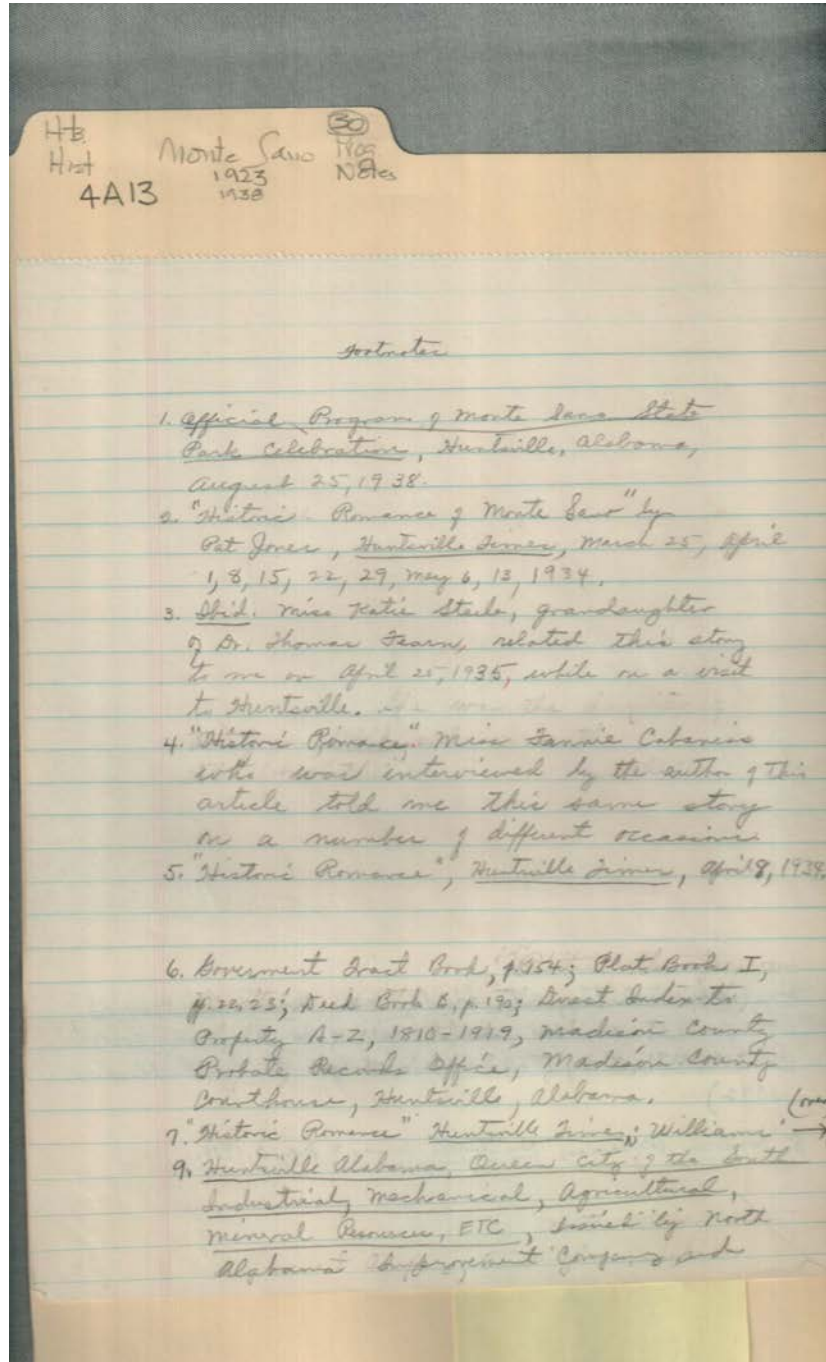
Huntsville, AL

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Dates:

1954



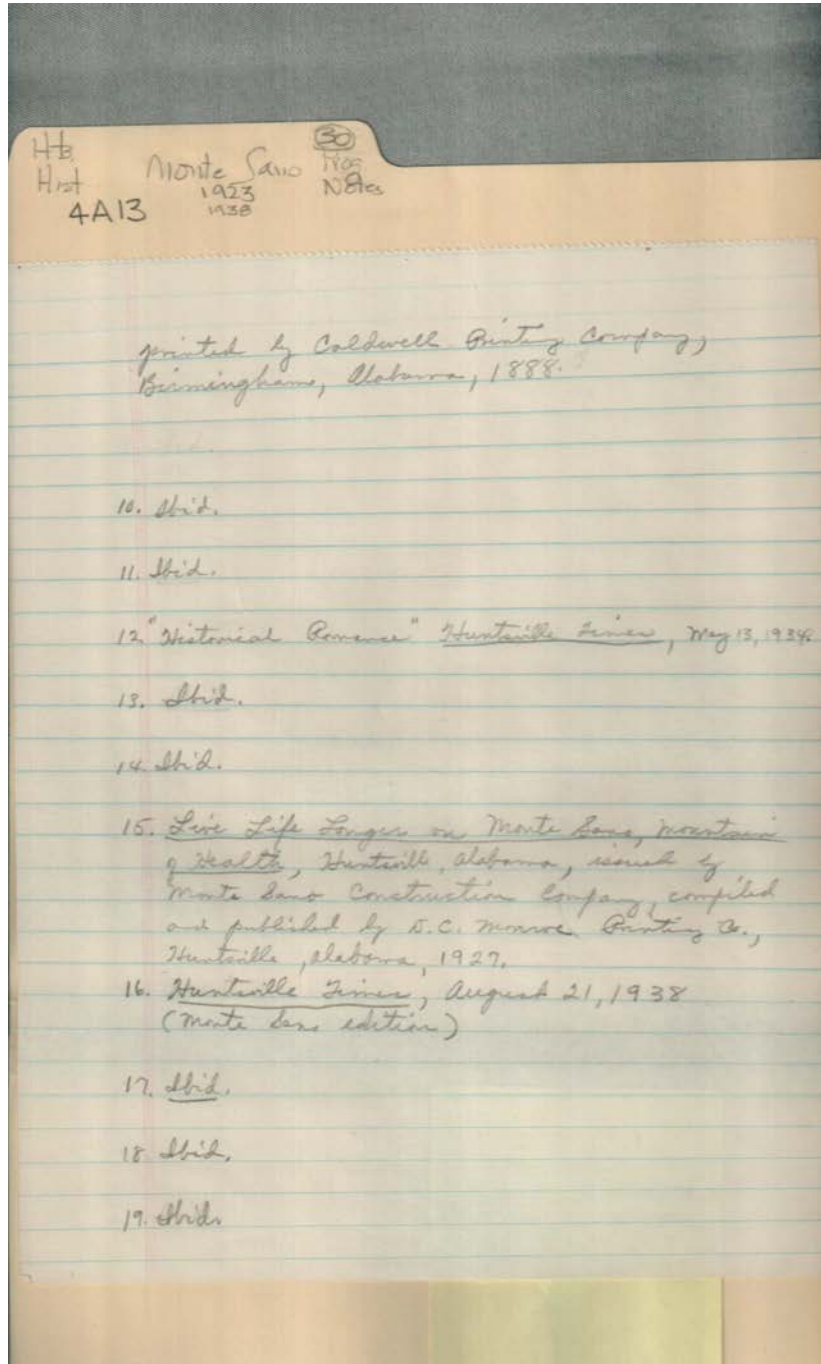
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Types:

footnotes



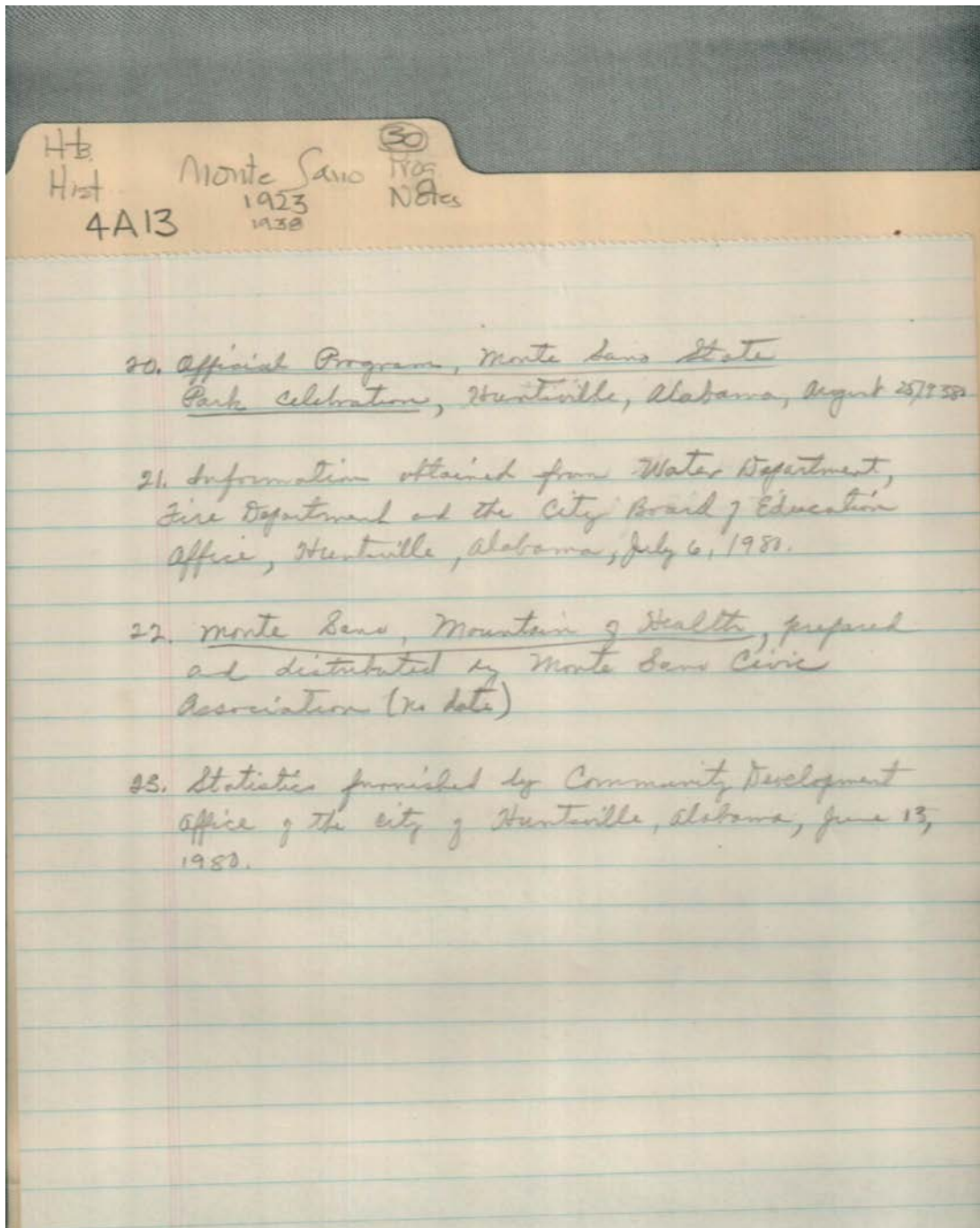
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Realism of Monte

Sano

Types:

footnotes



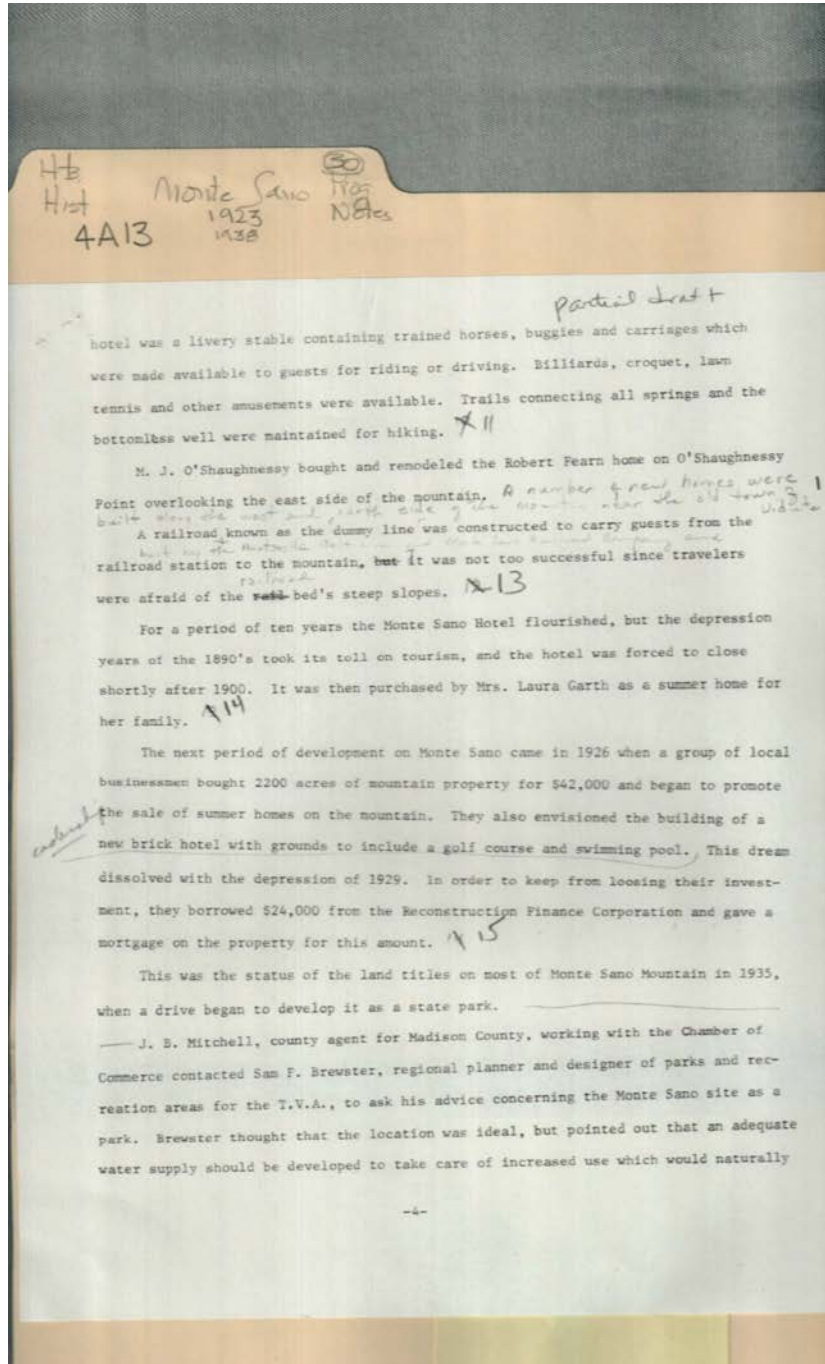
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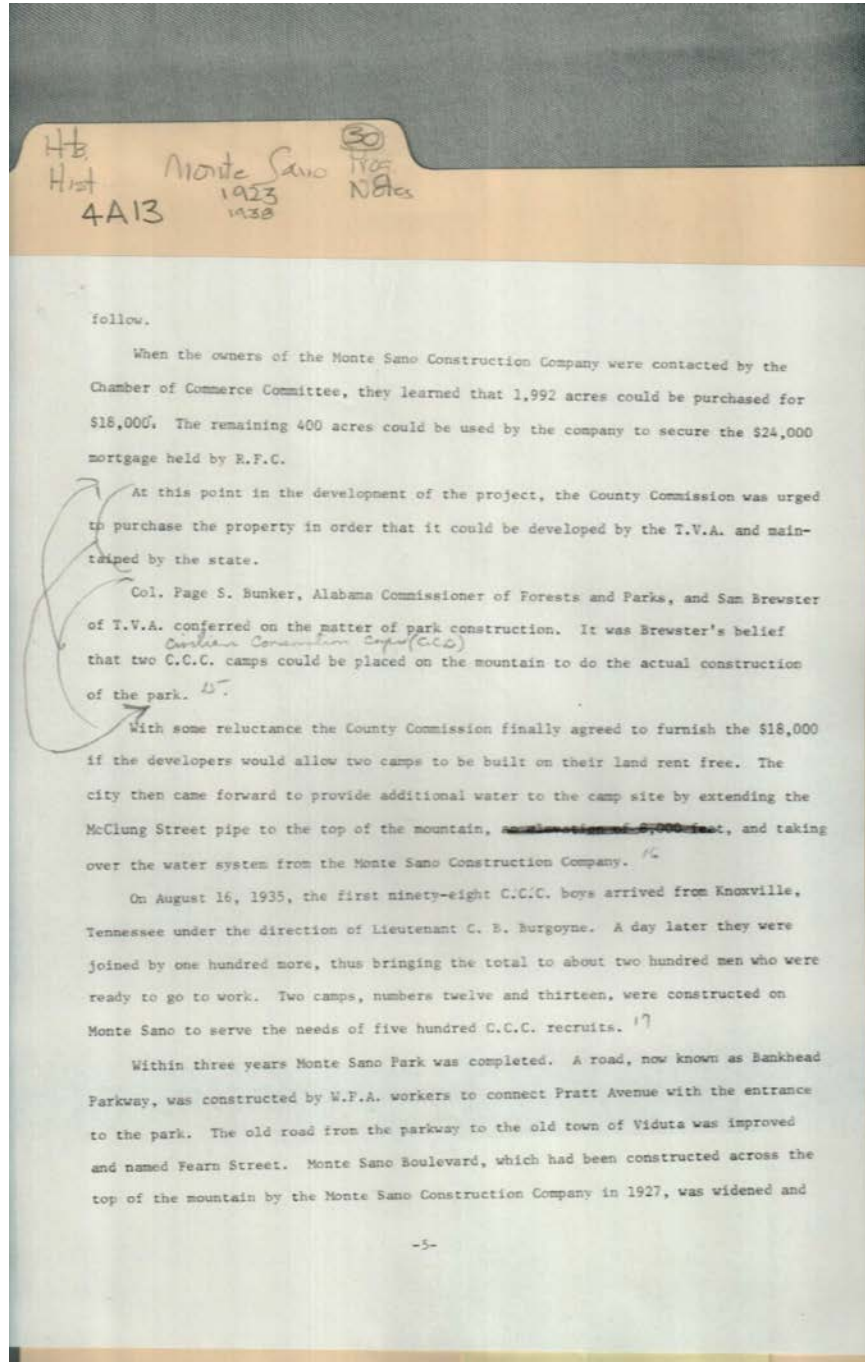
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The Romance and
Realism of Monte

Sano

Types:
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Names:
The Romance and
Realism of Monte

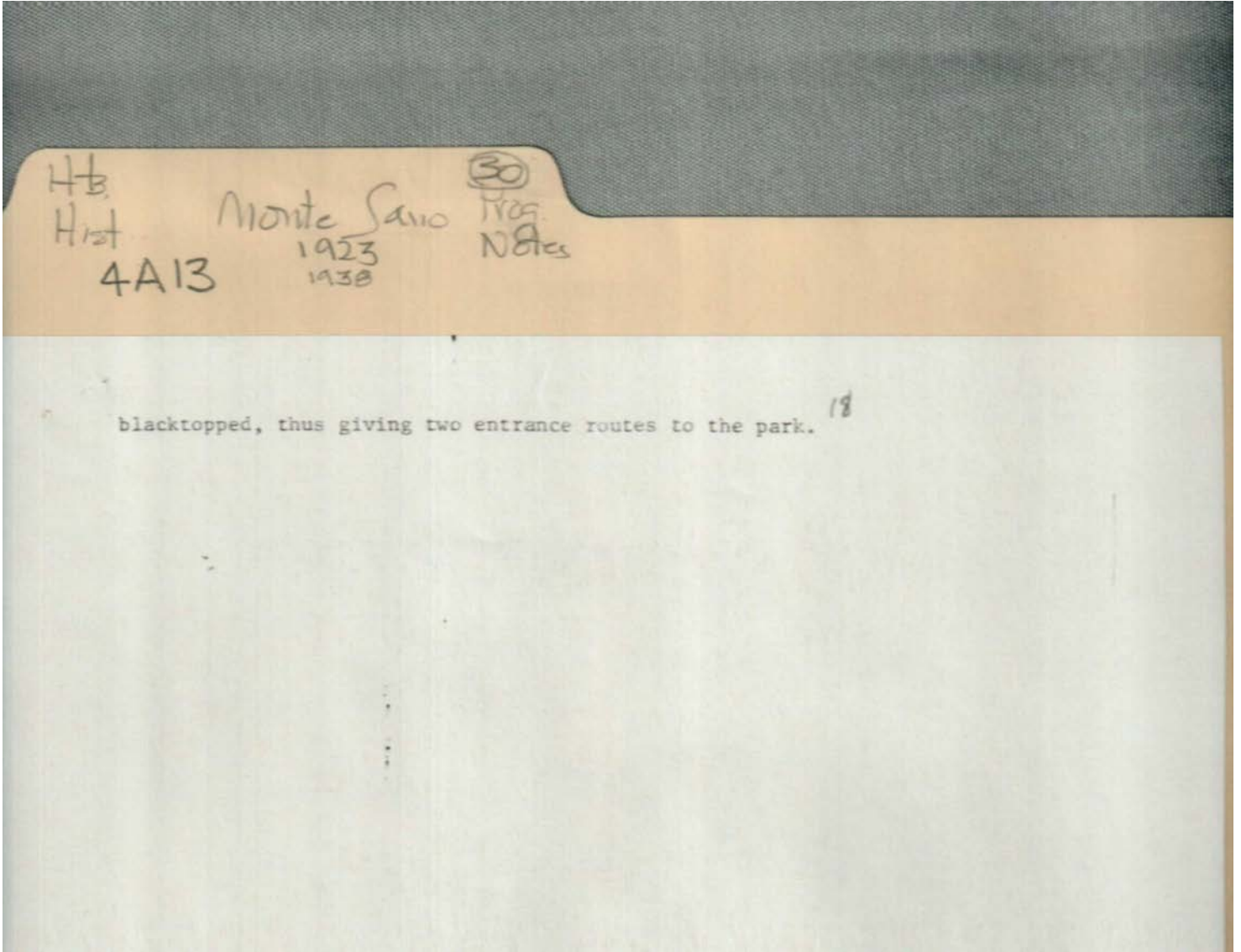
Sano

Types:
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Frances C. Roberts' essay "The Romance and Realism of Monte Sano" and her notes - Parks

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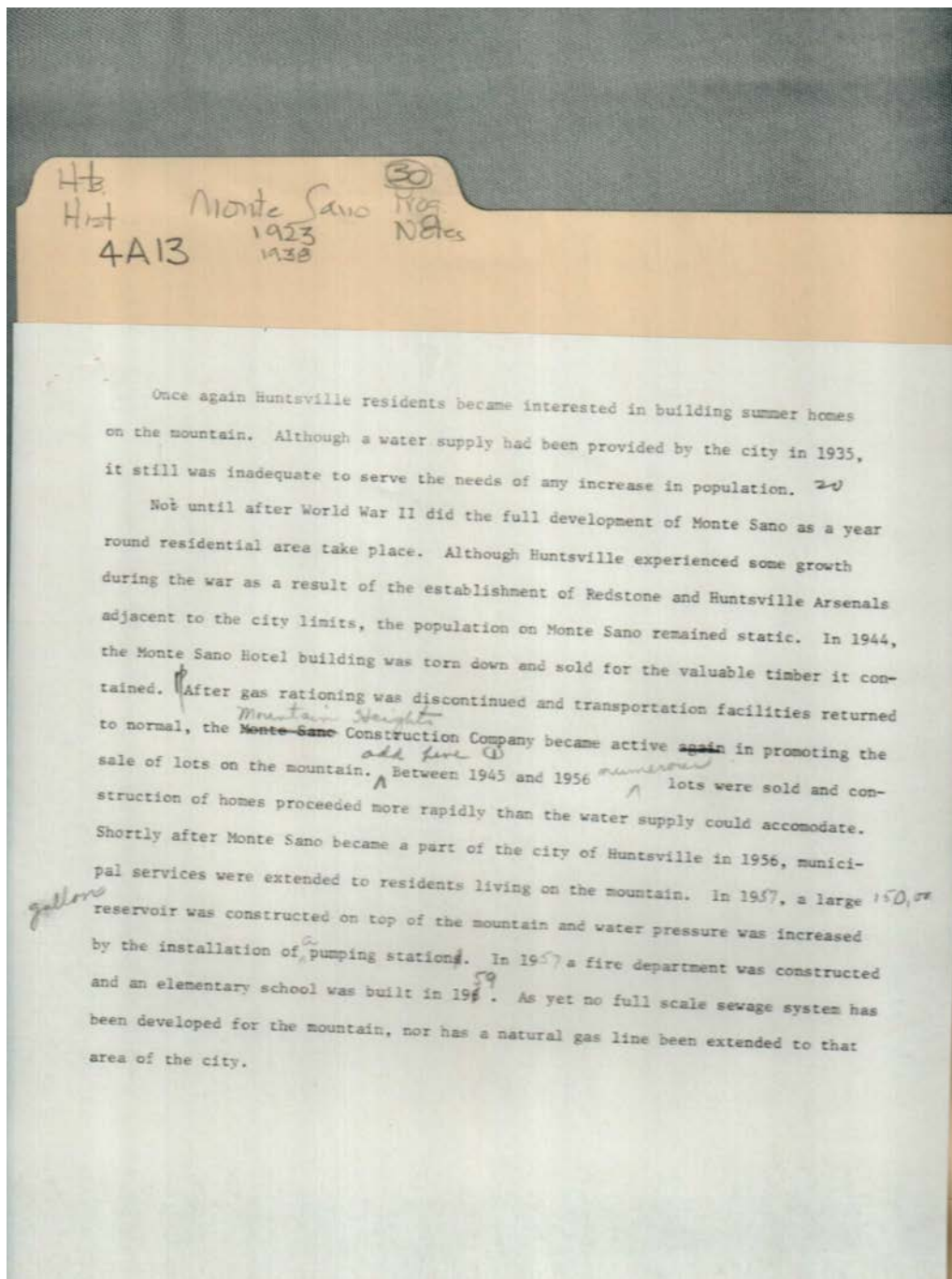
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The Romance and
Realism of Monte

Sano

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Names:

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Monte Sano
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1938

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1925
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hotel was a livery stable containing trained horses, buggies and carriages which were made available to guests for riding or driving. Billiards, croquet, lawn tennis and other amusements were available. Trails connecting all springs and the bottomless well were maintained for hiking. X 11

M. J. O'Shaughnessy bought and remodeled the Robert Fearn home on O'Shaughnessy Point overlooking the east side of the mountain. A number of new homes were built along the west and north side of the mountain near the old town. X 12

A railroad known as the dummy line was constructed to carry guests from the railroad station to the mountain, but it was not too successful since travelers were afraid of the ~~well~~ ^{railroad} bed's steep slopes. X 13

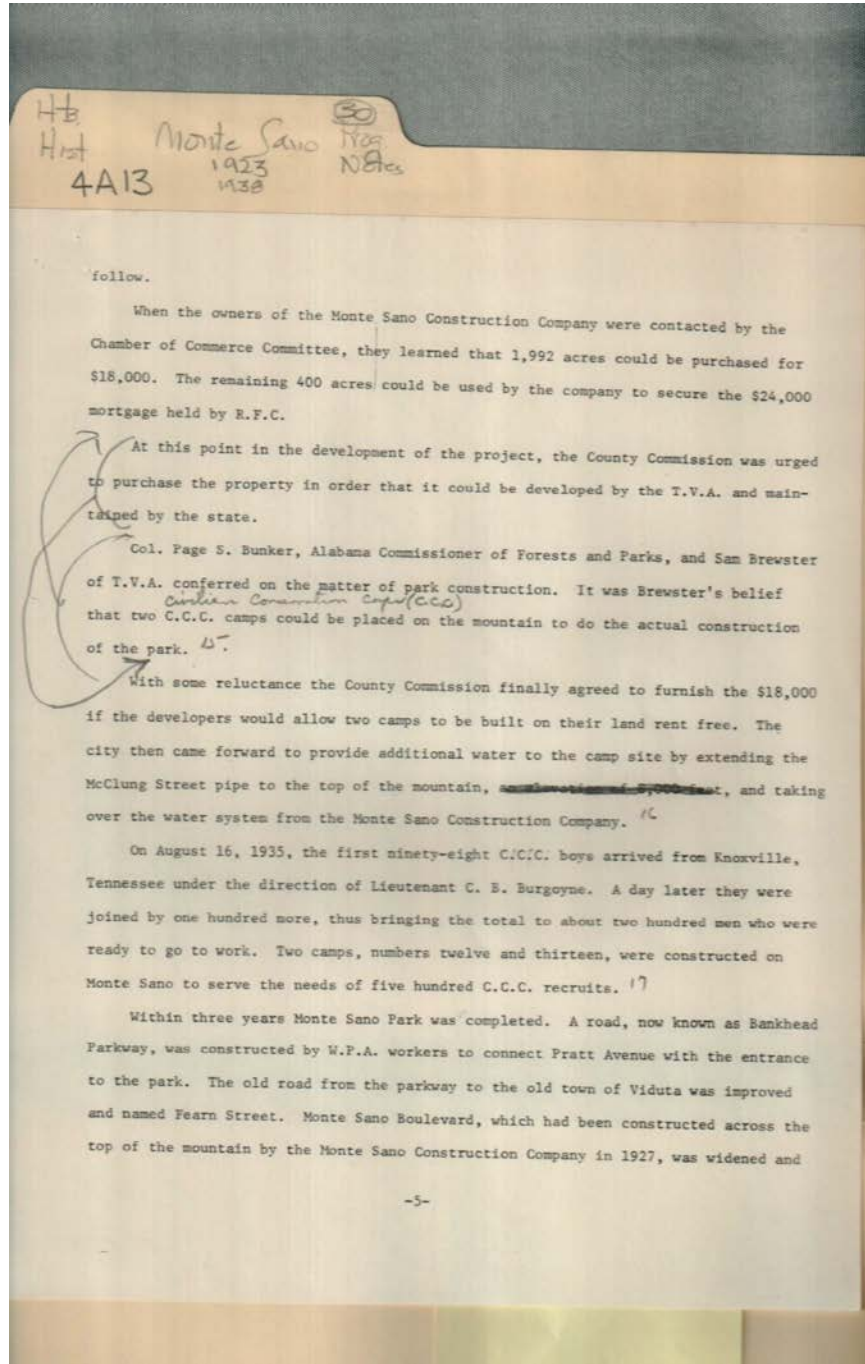
For a period of ten years the Monte Sano Hotel flourished, but the depression years of the 1890's took its toll on tourism, and the hotel was forced to close shortly after 1900. It was then purchased by Mrs. Laura Garth as a summer home for her family. X 14

The next period of development on Monte Sano came in 1926 when a group of local businessmen bought 2200 acres of mountain property for \$42,000 and began to promote the sale of summer homes on the mountain. They also envisioned the building of a new brick hotel with grounds to include a golf course and swimming pool. This dream dissolved with the depression of 1929. In order to keep from losing their investment, they borrowed \$24,000 from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and gave a mortgage on the property for this amount. X 15

This was the status of the land titles on most of Monte Sano Mountain in 1935, when a drive began to develop it as a state park.

J. B. Mitchell, county agent for Madison County, working with the Chamber of Commerce contacted Sam F. Brewster, regional planner and designer of parks and recreation areas for the T.V.A., to ask his advice concerning the Monte Sano site as a park. Brewster thought that the location was ideal, but pointed out that an adequate water supply should be developed to take care of increased use which would naturally

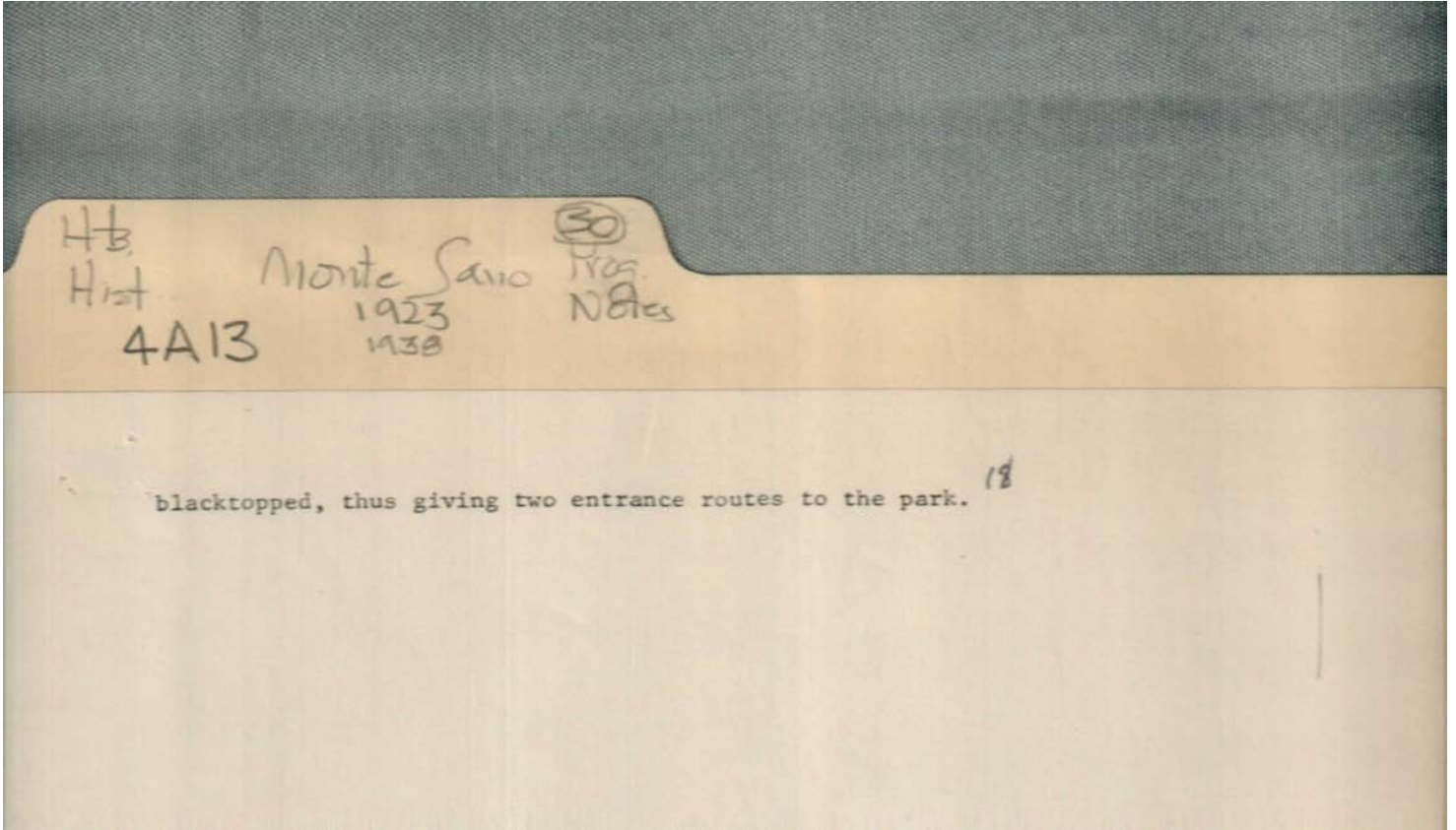
-4-



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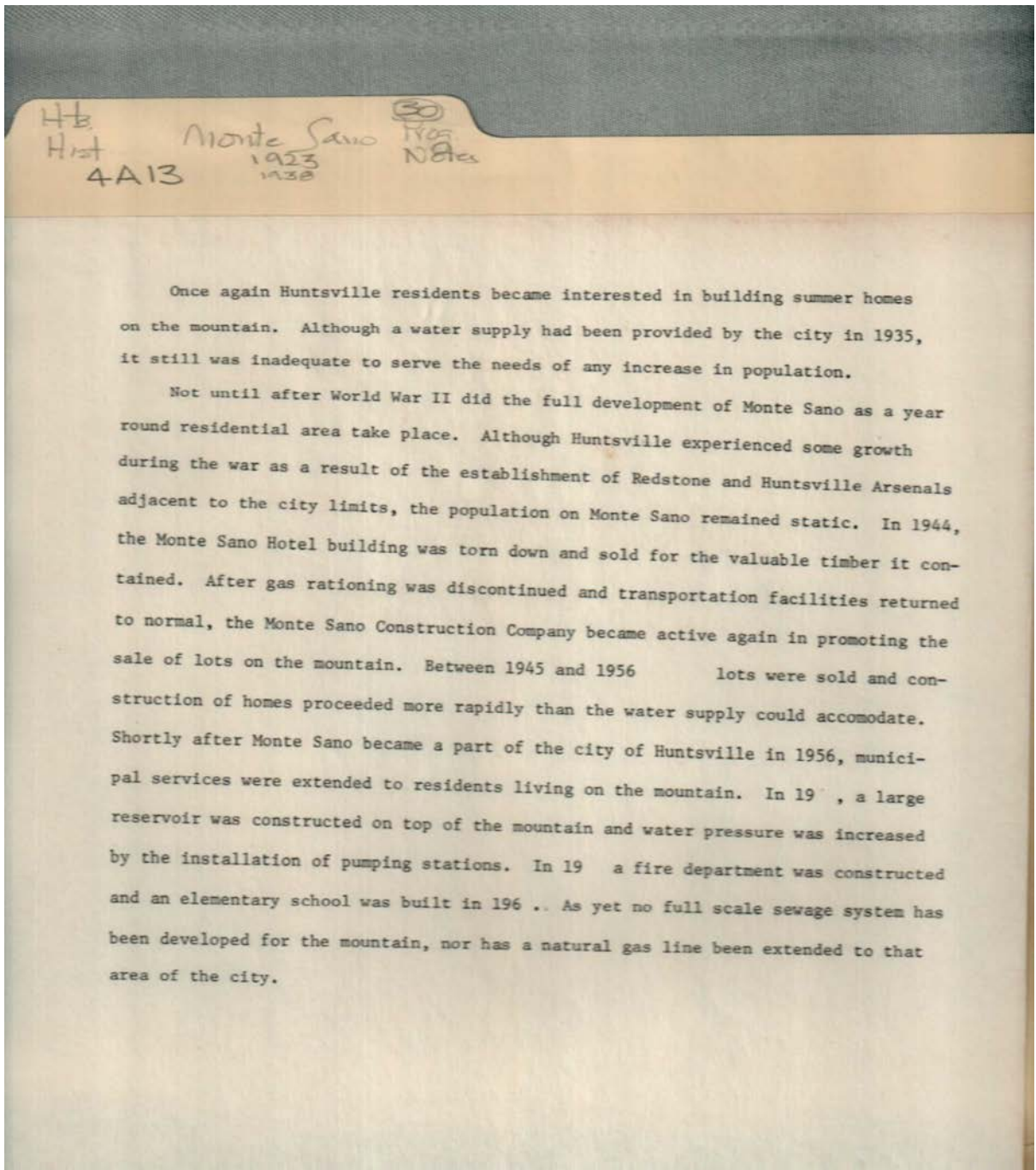
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Hist
4A13

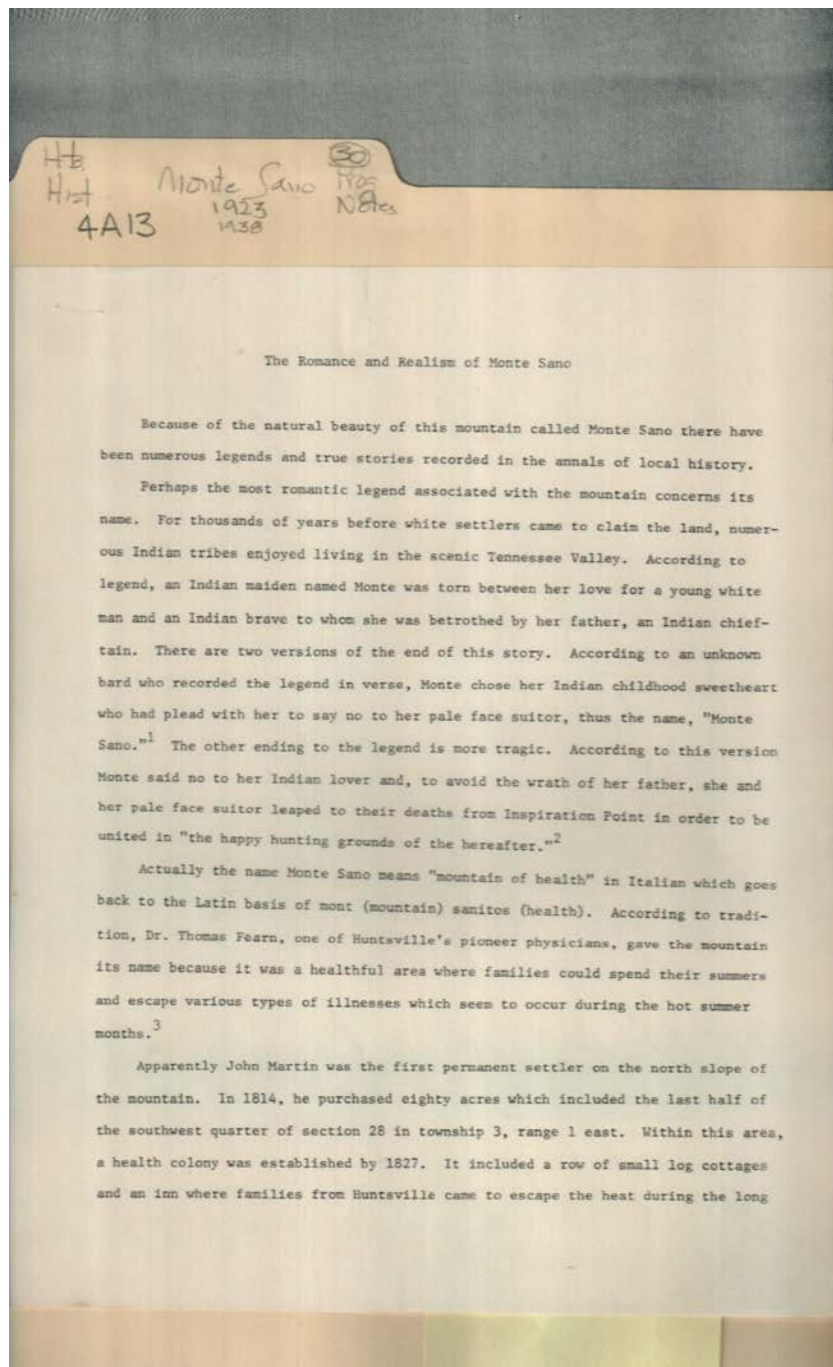
Monte Sano
1923
1938

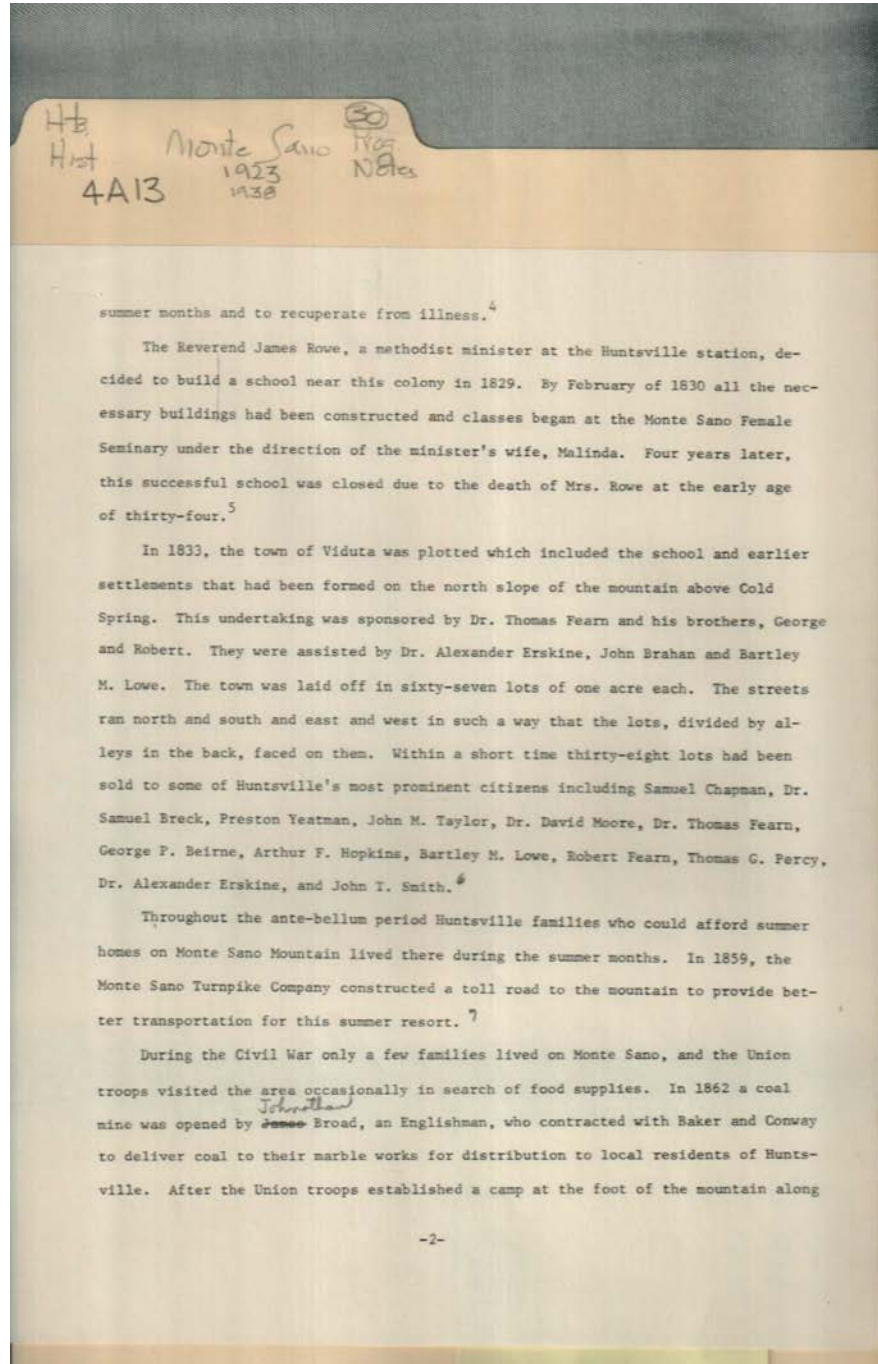
30
1905
Notes

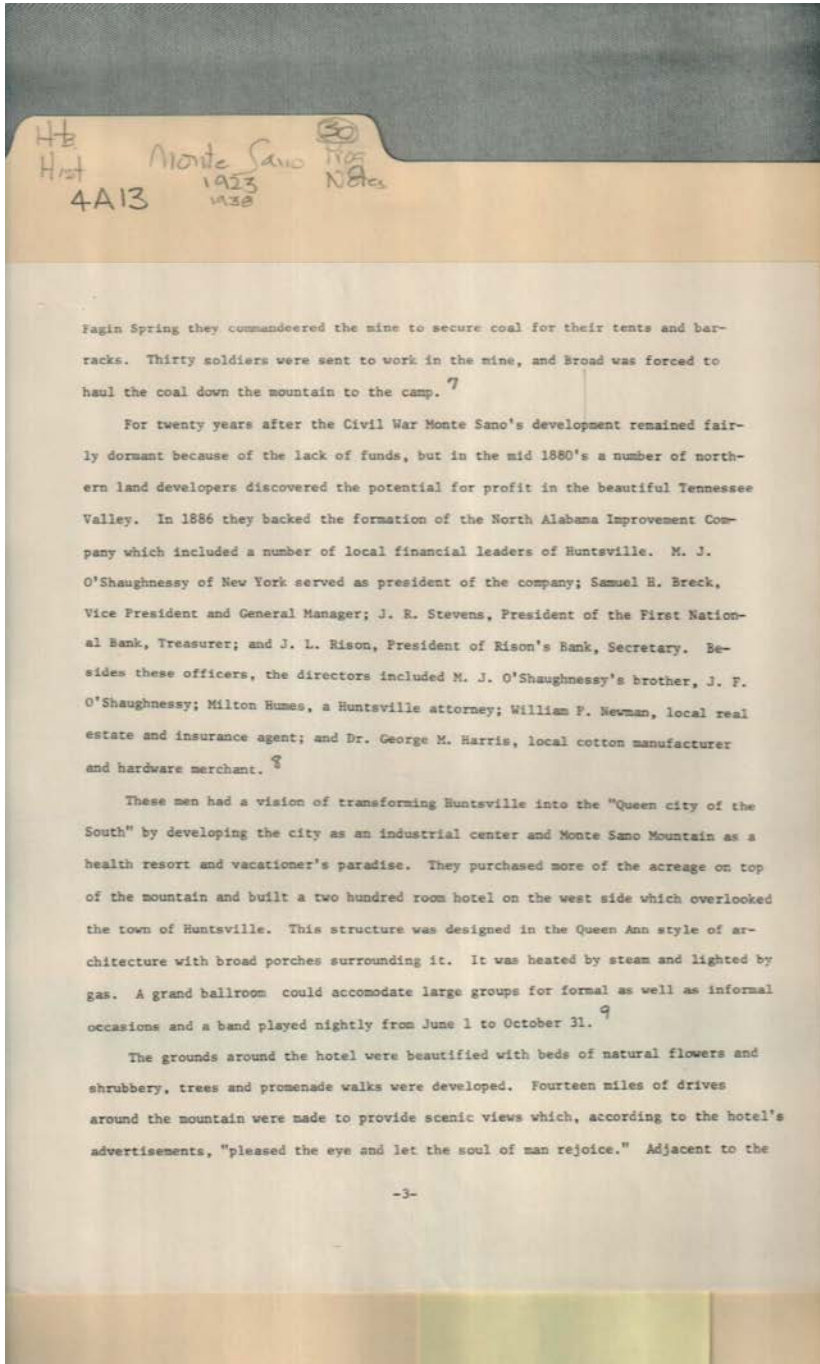
Once again Huntsville residents became interested in building summer homes on the mountain. Although a water supply had been provided by the city in 1935, it still was inadequate to serve the needs of any increase in population. 20

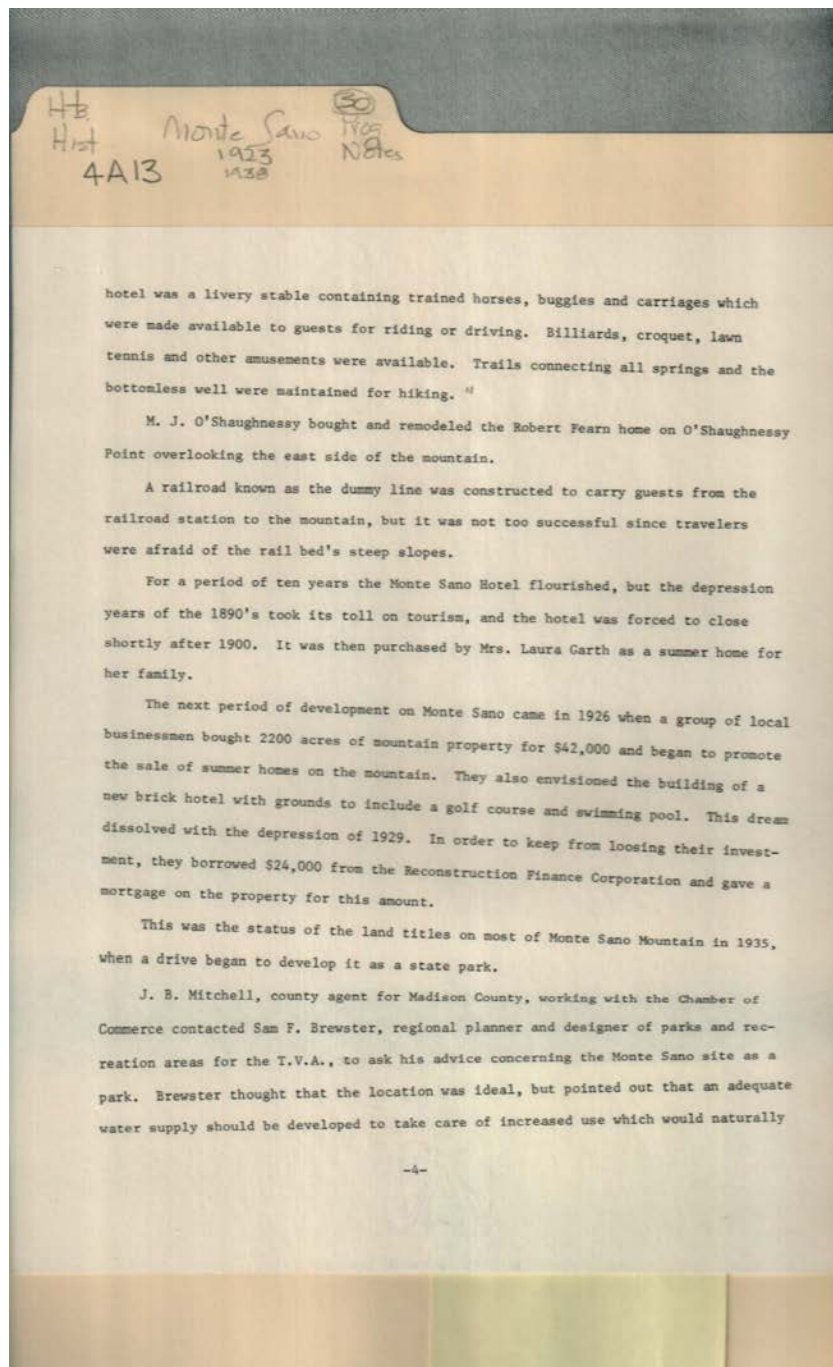
Not until after World War II did the full development of Monte Sano as a year round residential area take place. Although Huntsville experienced some growth during the war as a result of the establishment of Redstone and Huntsville Arsenals adjacent to the city limits, the population on Monte Sano remained static. In 1944, the Monte Sano Hotel building was torn down and sold for the valuable timber it contained. After gas rationing was discontinued and transportation facilities returned to normal, the ^{Mountain Heights} ~~Monte-Sano~~ Construction Company became active ^{add five} again in promoting the sale of lots on the mountain. Between 1945 and 1956 ^{numerous} lots were sold and construction of homes proceeded more rapidly than the water supply could accomodate. Shortly after Monte Sano became a part of the city of Huntsville in 1956, municipal services were extended to residents living on the mountain. In 1957, a large ^{gallons} 150,000 reservoir was constructed on top of the mountain and water pressure was increased by the installation of ^a pumping station. In 1957 a fire department was constructed and an elementary school was built in 1958. As yet no full scale sewage system has been developed for the mountain, nor has a natural gas line been extended to that area of the city.

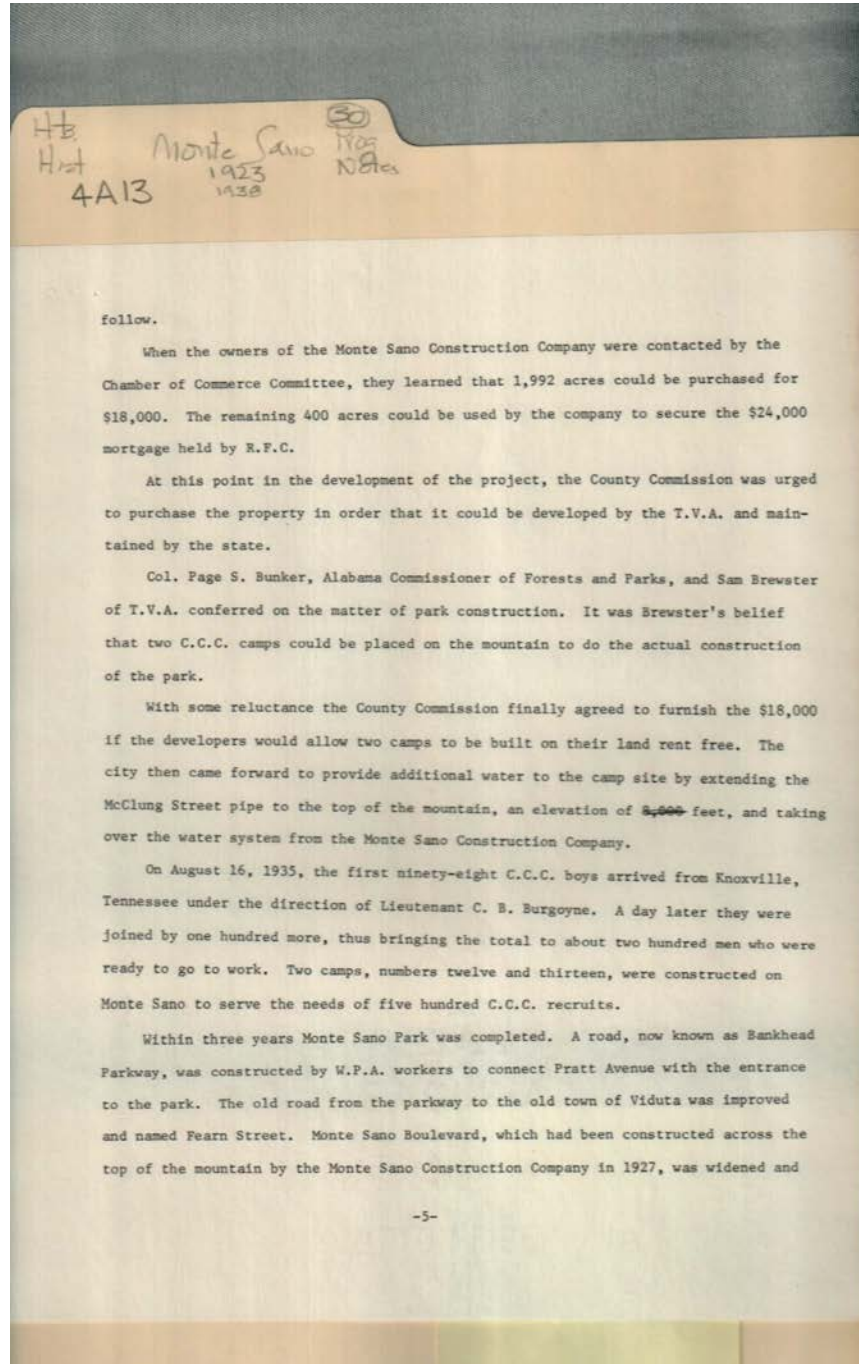








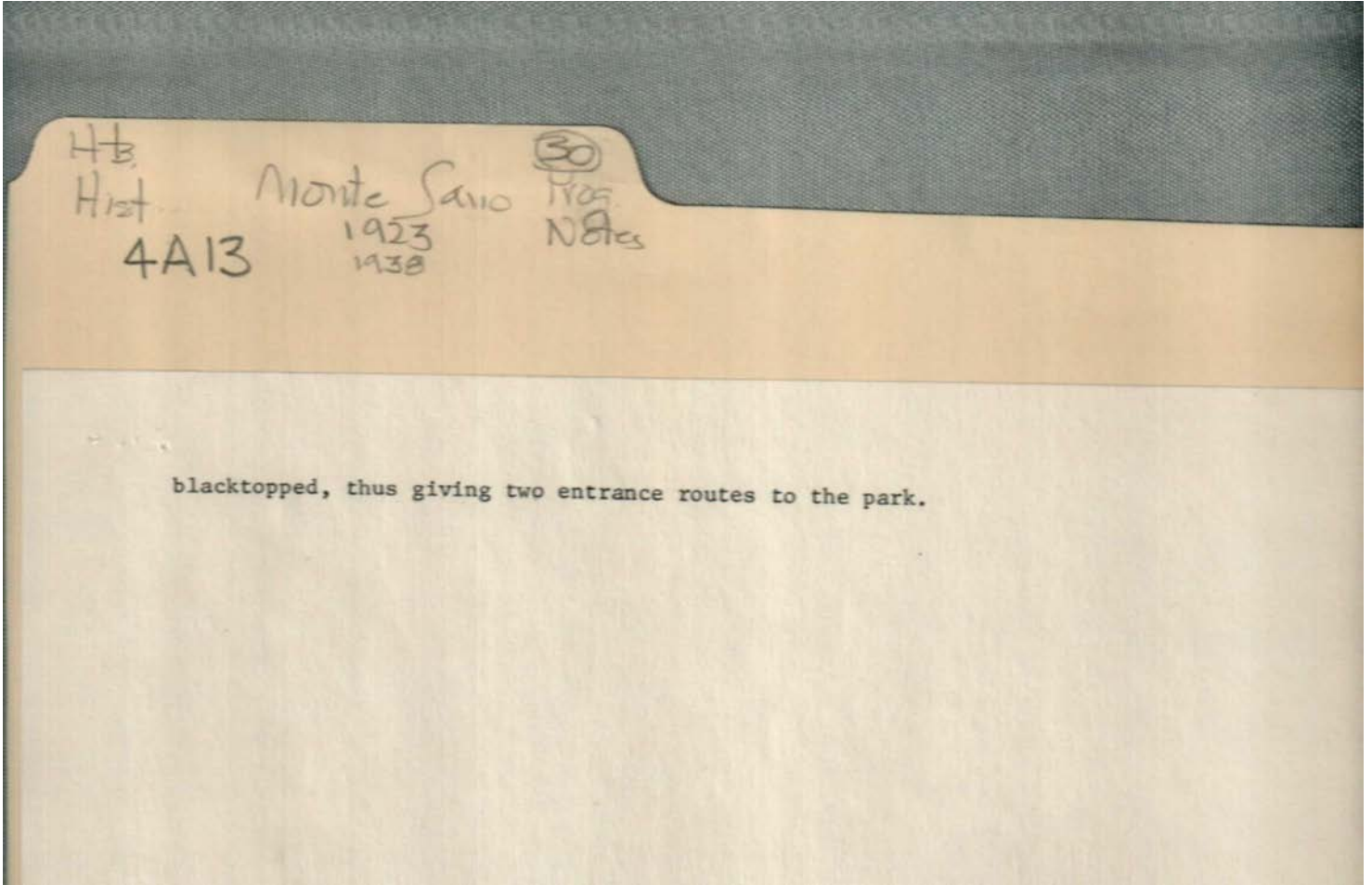


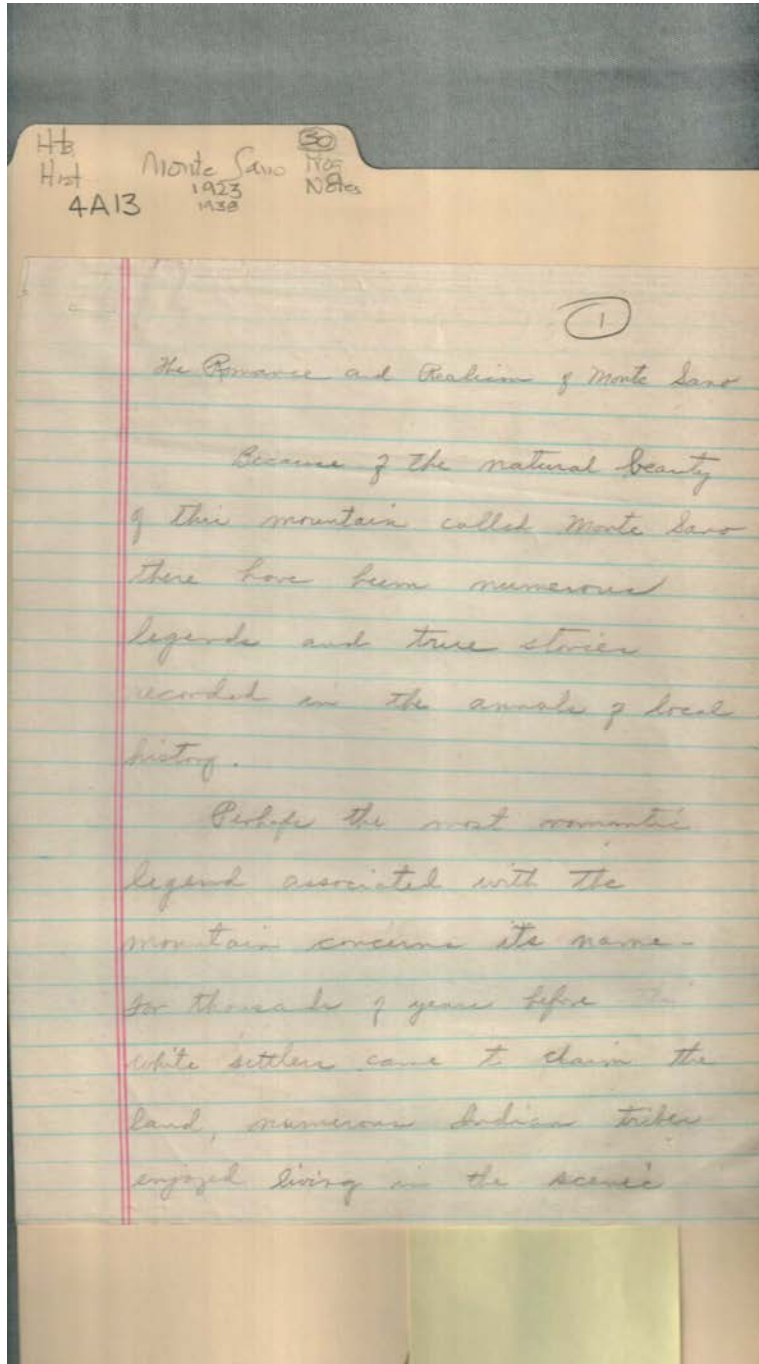


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The Romance and
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Monte Sano
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Notes

(1)

(2)

Summers Valley. According to
~~a~~ legend an Indian maiden
named Monte was torn between her
love for a young white man
and an Indian brave to whom
she was betrothed by her father,
an Indian chieftain. Here are
two versions of the end of this
story. According to an unknown
source who recorded the legend in
verse, Monte chose her Indian
childhood sweetheart who had pledged
with her to say no to her pale
face suitor, thus the name, "Monte
Sano." (over)

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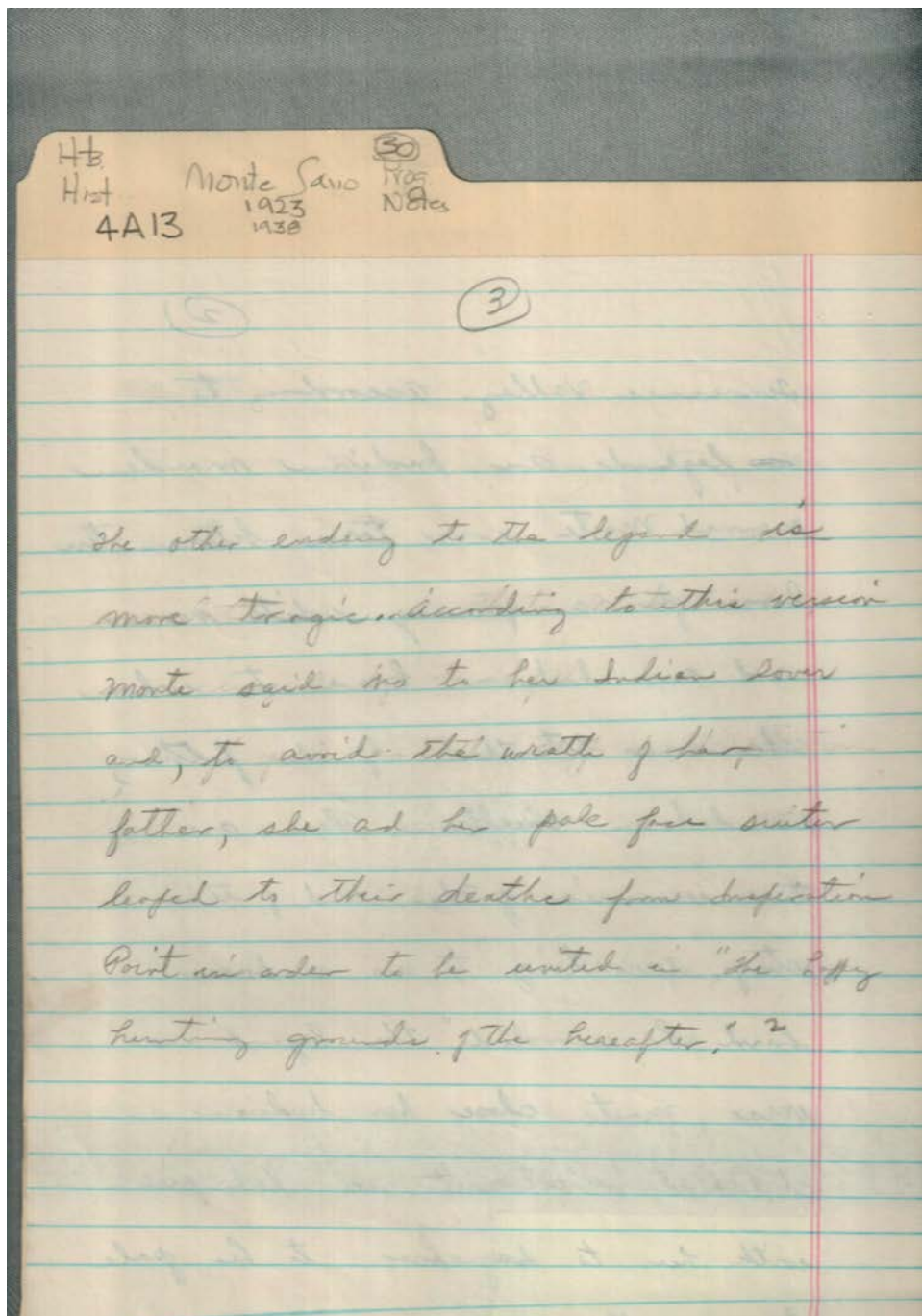
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The Romance and
Realism of Monte

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Hist
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1923
1938

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Notes

(4a^a)

add I)

apparently John Martin was the first permanent settler on the north slope of the mountain. In 1814, he purchased eighty acres which included the east half of the southwest quarter of section 28 in Township 3, range 1 east. Within this area a health colony was established by 1822. It included a row of small log cottages and an inn where families from Huntsville came to escape the heat during the long summer months and to recuperate from illness. 4

The Reverend James Rowe, a Methodist minister at the Huntsville station, decided to

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Hist
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add I page
(2)

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build a school near this colony
in 1829. By February of 1830 all the
necessary buildings had been constructed
and classes began at the Monte Sano
Female Seminary under the direction
of the minister's wife, Melinda. Four
years later this successful school
was closed due to the death of Mrs.
Rove at the early age of thirty-four. ⁵

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NOTES

(4)

actually the name monte santo
means "mountain of health" in Italian
which goes back to the Latin bases of
mons (mountain) sanitas (health).
according to Tradition Dr. Thomas
Fearns, one of Huntsville's
pioneer physicians, gave the
mountain its name because it
was healthful and where
families could spend their
summers and escape various
types of illnesses which seem to
occur during the hot summer
months³ (add) see I
In 1833, the town of Vidalia

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Hist 4A13 Monte Sano 1923 1938 30 Hist Notes

(5)

was platted which included the ^{school at} earliest
settlements that had been formed on
the north slope of the mountain
above Cold Spring. This undertaking
was sponsored by Dr. Thomas Fearn
and his brother George and Robert. They
were assisted by Dr. Alexander Erskine,
John Graham and Bartley McLove. The
town was laid off in sixty-seven lots
four acres each. The streets ran north and
south and east and west and such a
way that the lots, divided by alleys in
the back, faced on them. Within a short
→
throughout the ante-bellum (1840s)
period Huntville families who
could afford summer homes on
Monte Sano Mountain lived there
during the summer months. In
1859, the Monte Sano Lumber Company

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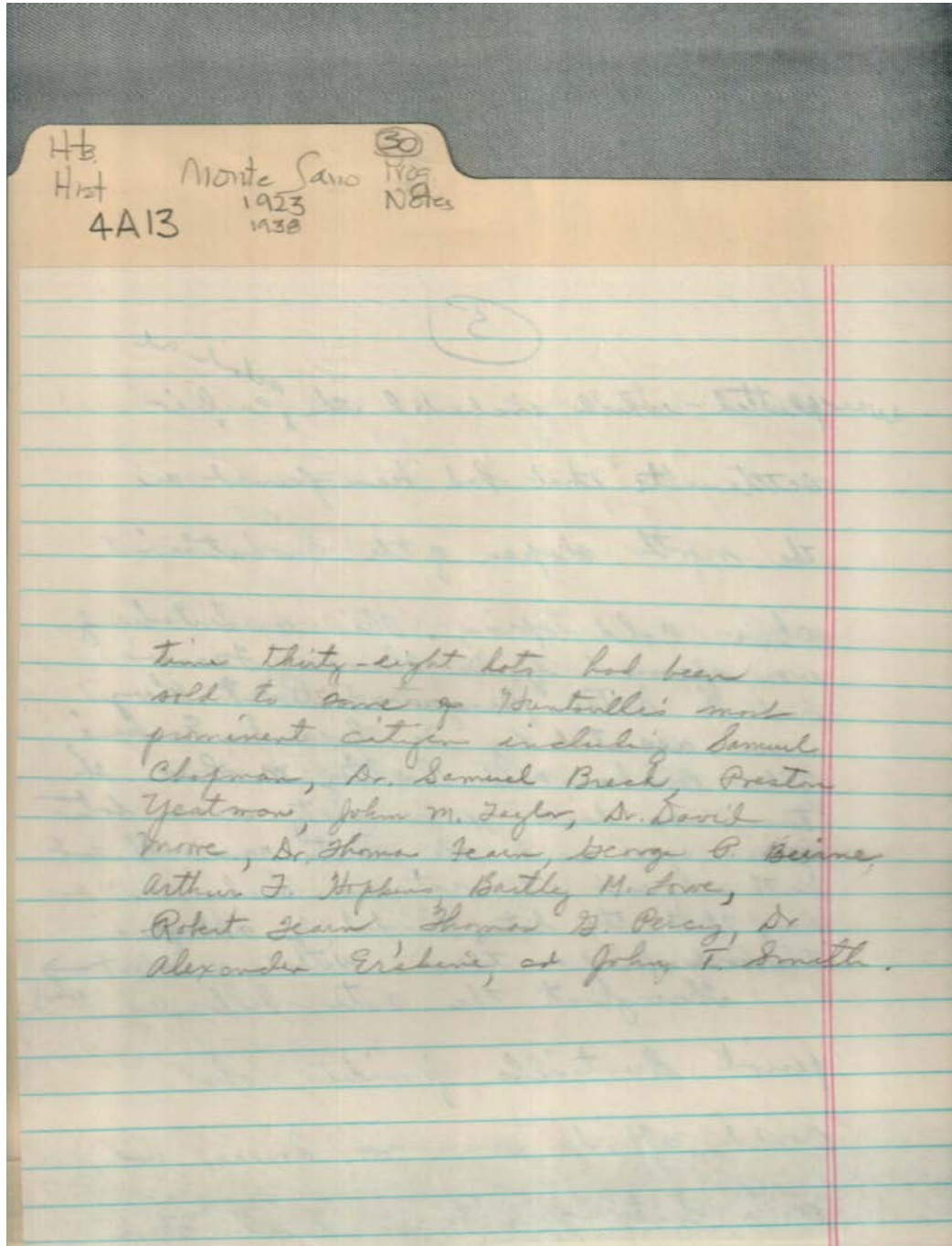
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Realism of Monte

Sano

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H/rt
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Monte Sano
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30
1925
Notes

(6)
constructed a ^{toll} road to the mountain to provide better transportation for the summer resort.
add (2) - /m/s

For twenty years after the Civil War Monte Sano's development remained fairly dormant because of the lack of funds, but in the mid 1880's a number of northern lands developers discovered the potential for profit in the beautiful Tennessee Valley. In 1886 they backed the ^{formation of the} North Alabama Improvement Company which included a number of local financial leaders of Huntsville.

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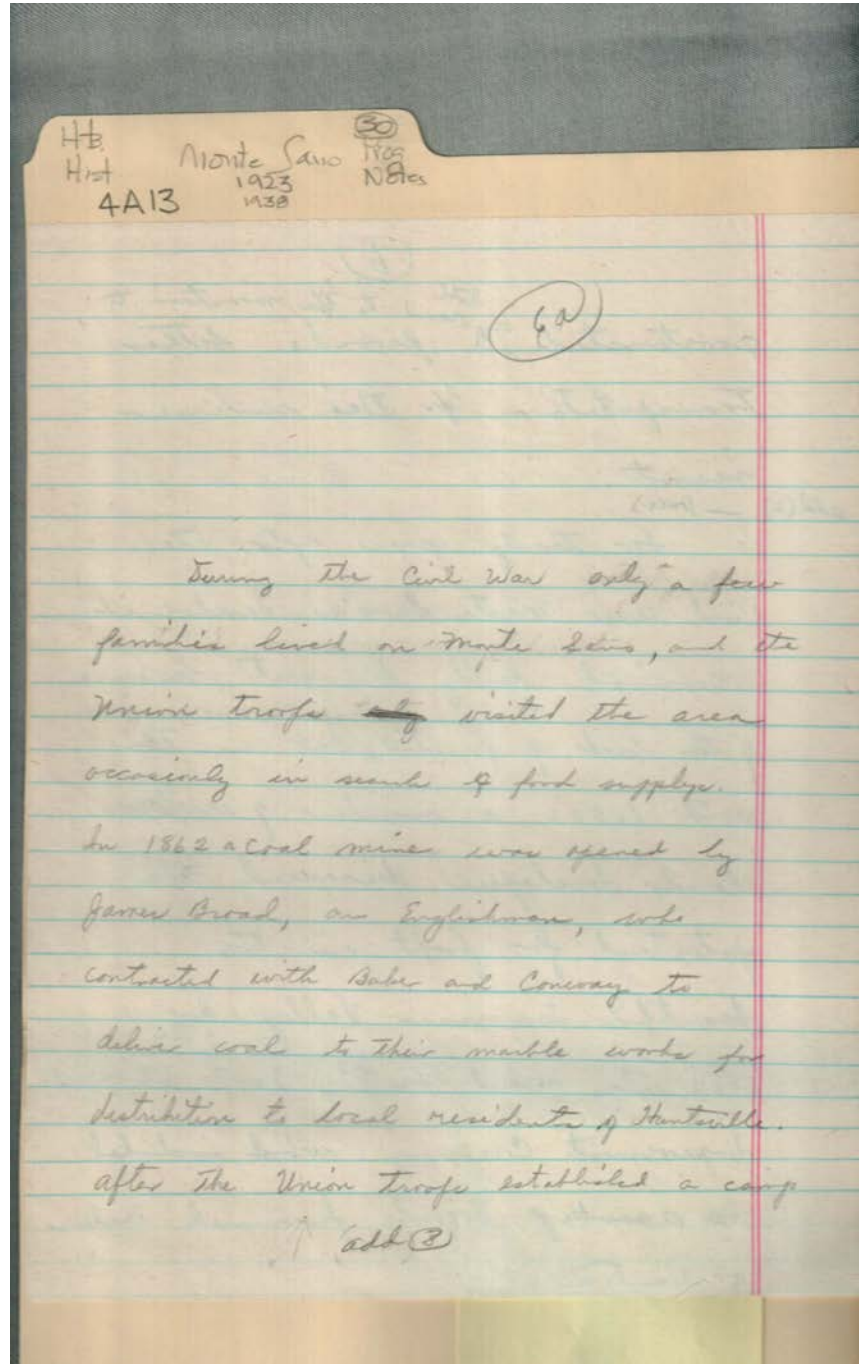
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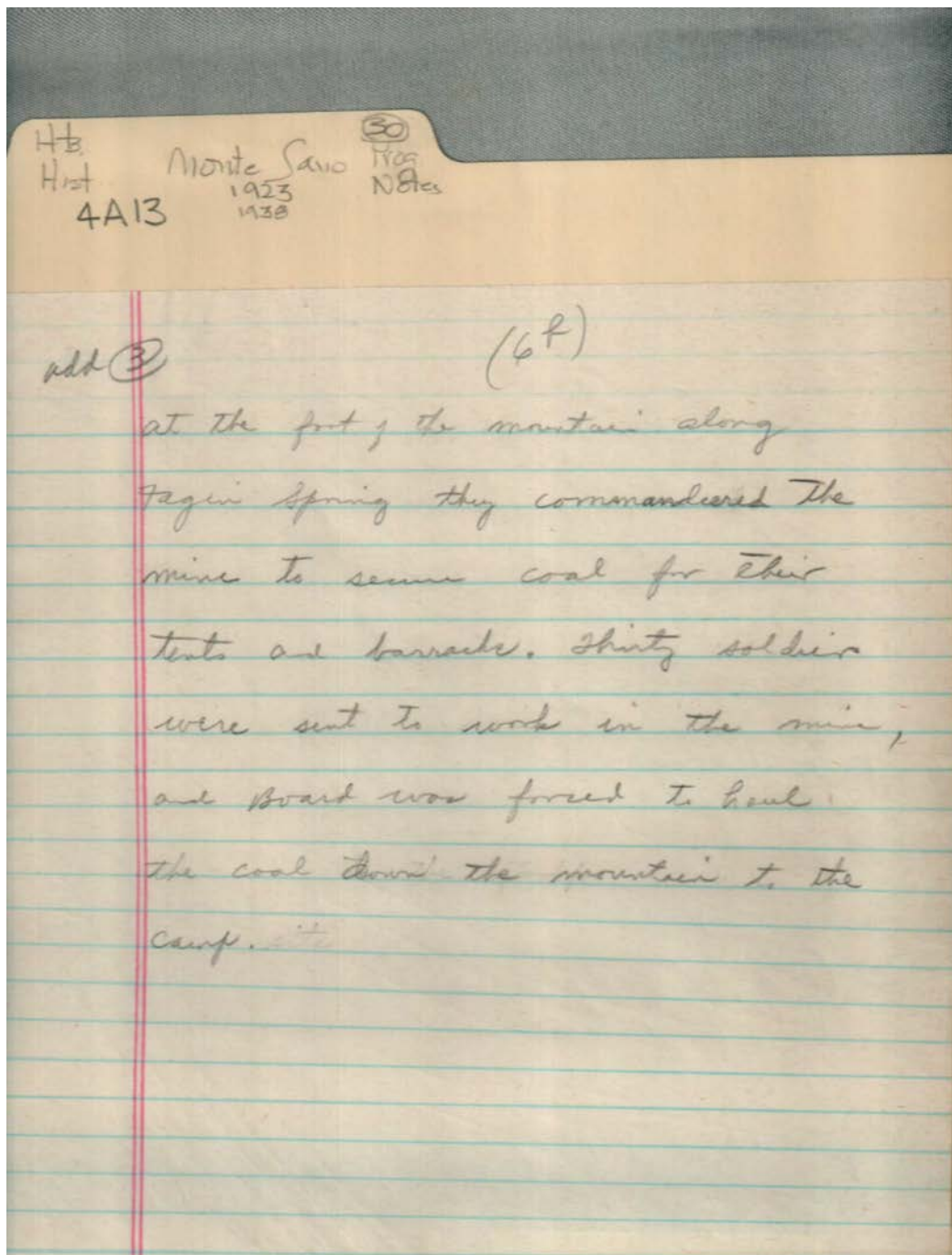
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Types:

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Realism of Monte

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Handwritten notes on lined paper. At the top left, it says "Hb Hist 4A13". In the center, "Monte Sano 1923 1938". At the top right, a circled "30" and "Notes". A circled "7" is written in the center of the page. The text describes the formation of a company and lists its officers and directors.

(7)

M. J. O'Shaughnessy of New York served as president of the company, Samuel H. Bush, vice President and General Manager, J. R. Stevens, President of the First National Bank, Treasurer, and J. L. Reiser, President of Reiser's Bank, Secretary. Besides these officers, the directors included M. J. O'Shaughnessy's brother, J. J. O'Shaughnessy, Milton Hurmer, a Hartsville attorney, William P. Newman, local real estate and insurance agent, and Dr. George M. Harris, local cotton manufacturer and hardware merchant.

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These men had a vision of transforming Huntsville into the "Queen City of the South" by developing the city as an industrial center and Monte Sano Mountain as a health resort and vacationer's paradise. They purchased most of the acreage on top of the mountain and built a two hundred room hotel on the west side which overlooked the town of Huntsville. This structure was designed in the Queen Anne style of architecture with broad

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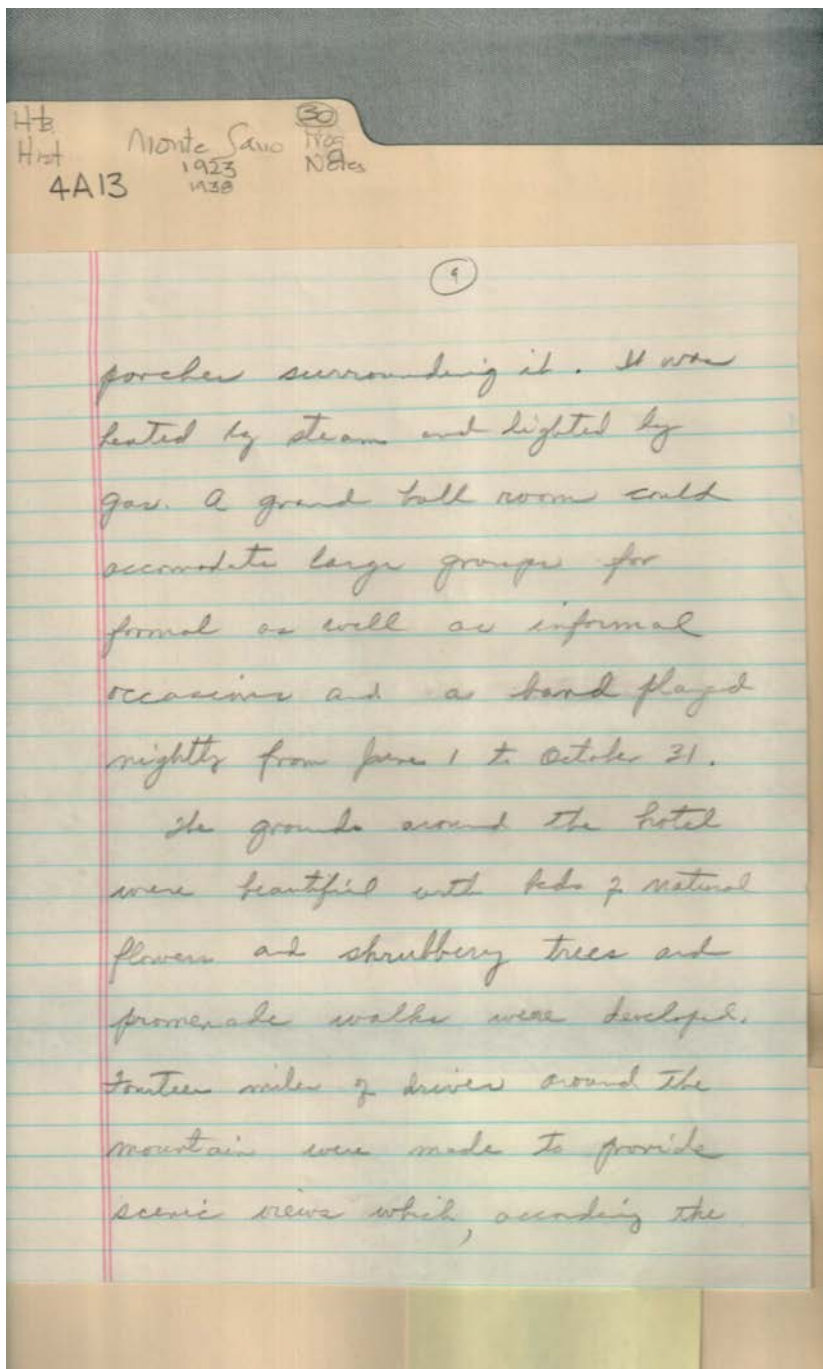
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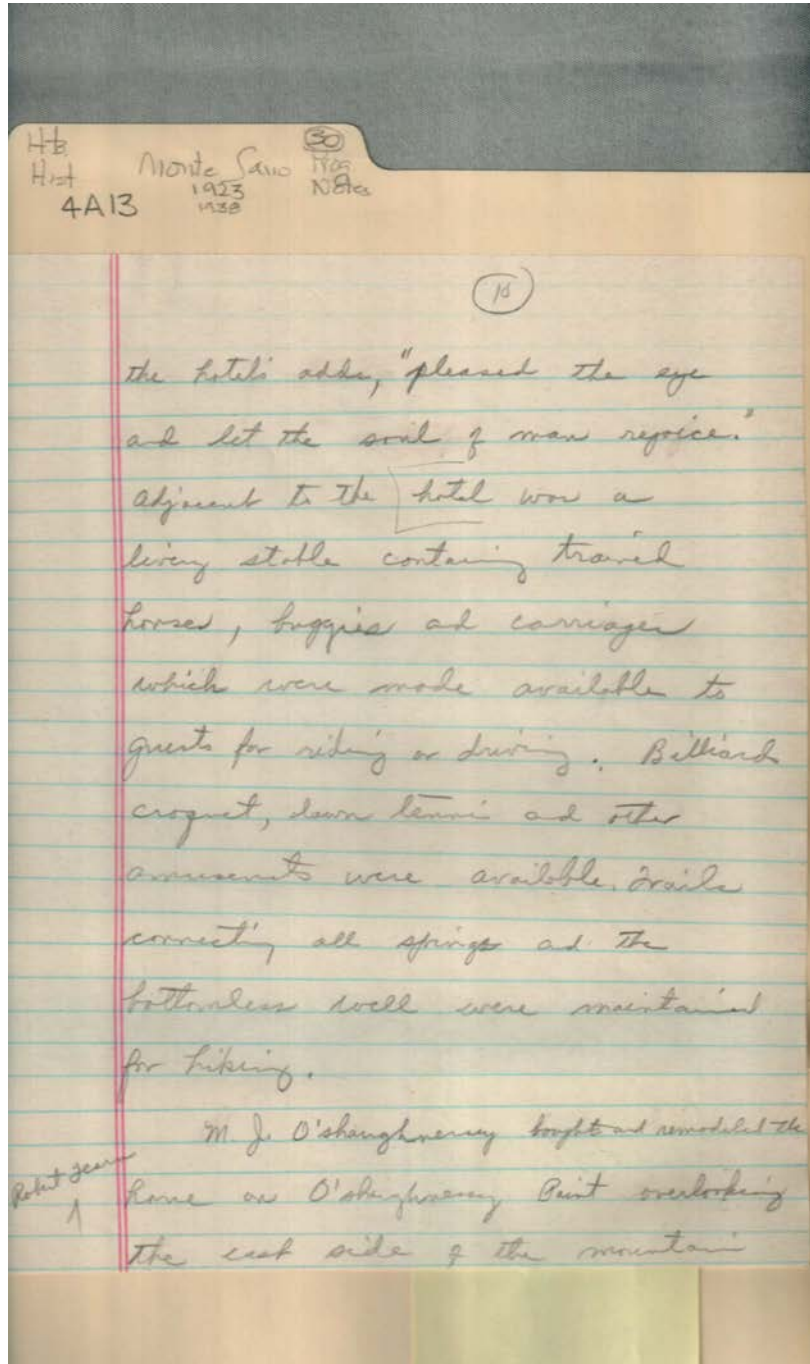
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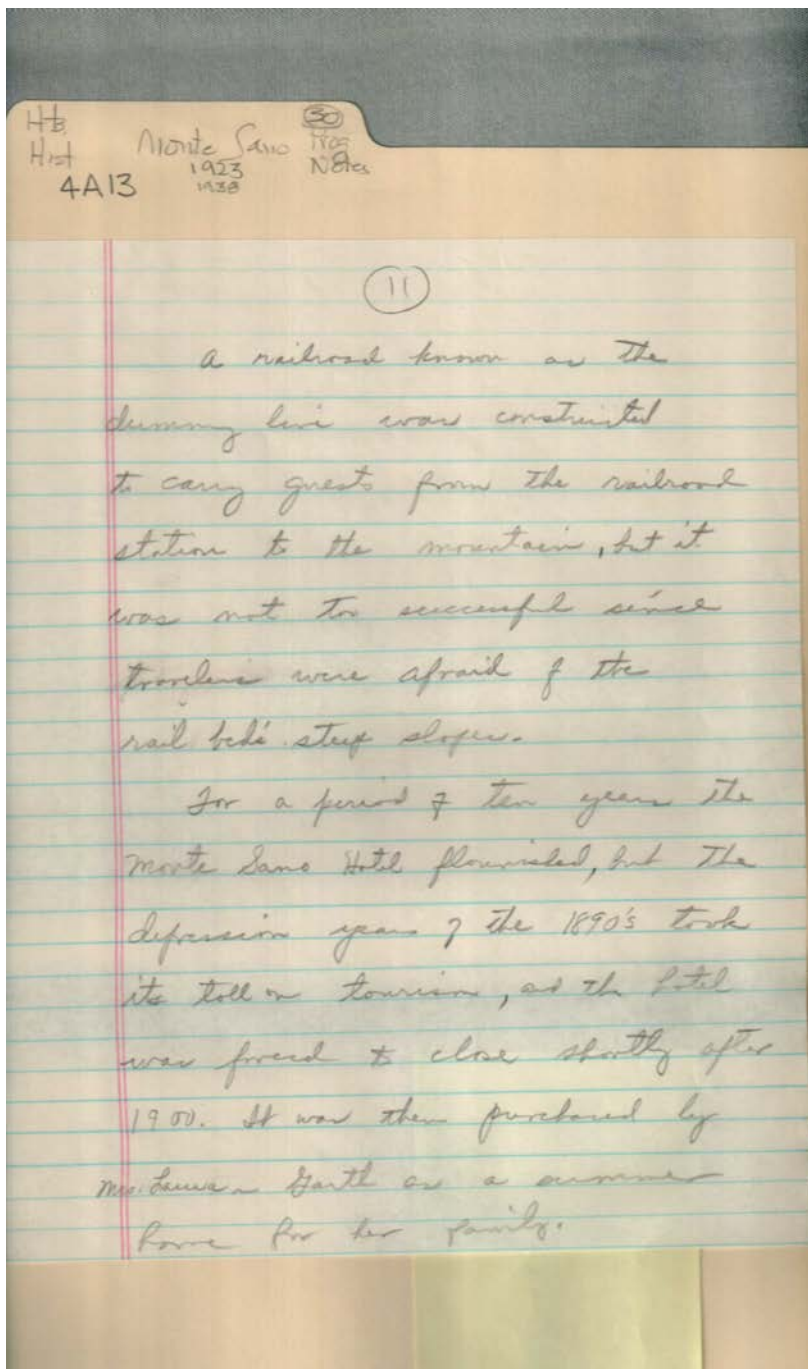
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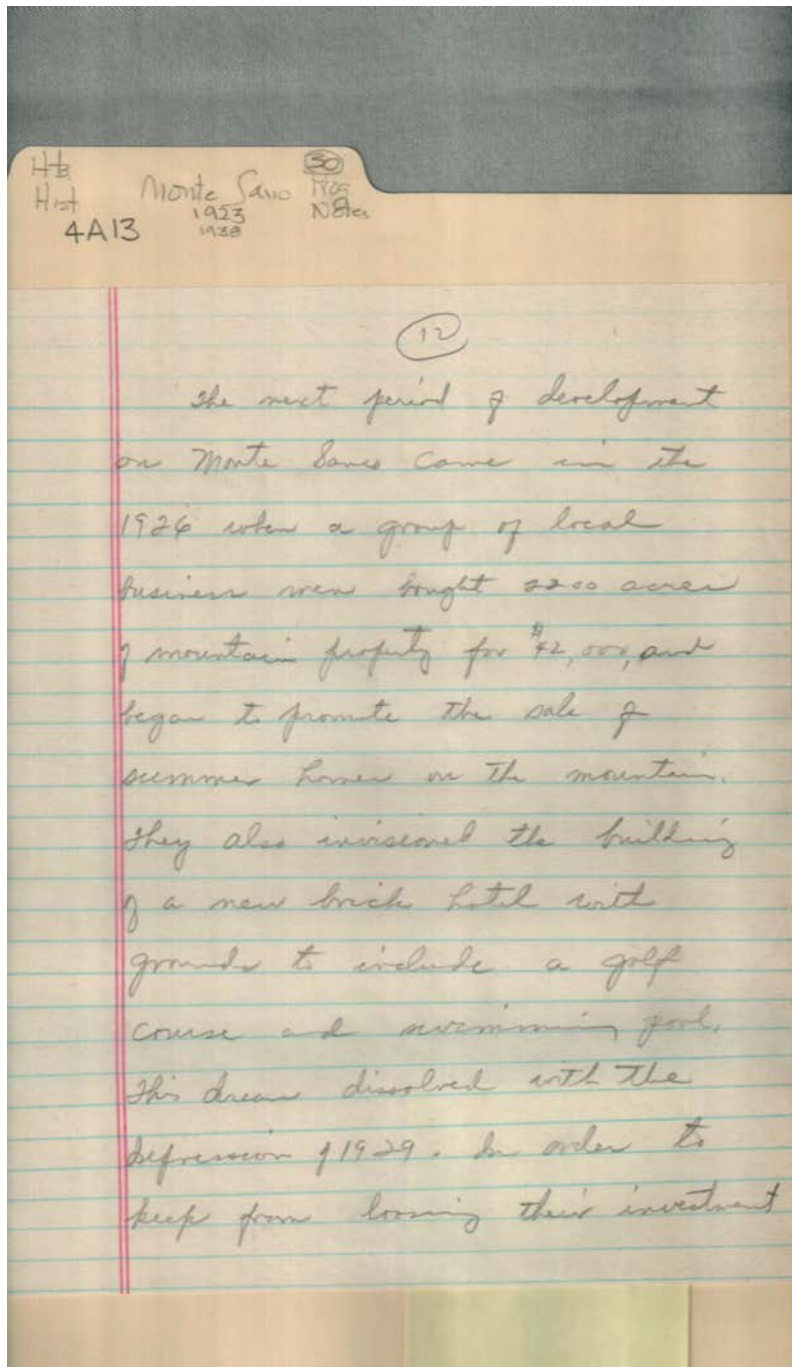
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They borrowed \$24,000 from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and gave a mortgage on the property for this amount. The location was this was the status of the land title on most of Monte Sano Mountain in 1925, when a drive began to develop it as a state park. J. B. Mitchell, county agent for Madison County, working with the Chamber of Commerce, contacted Sam S. Brewster, regional planner and designer of parks and

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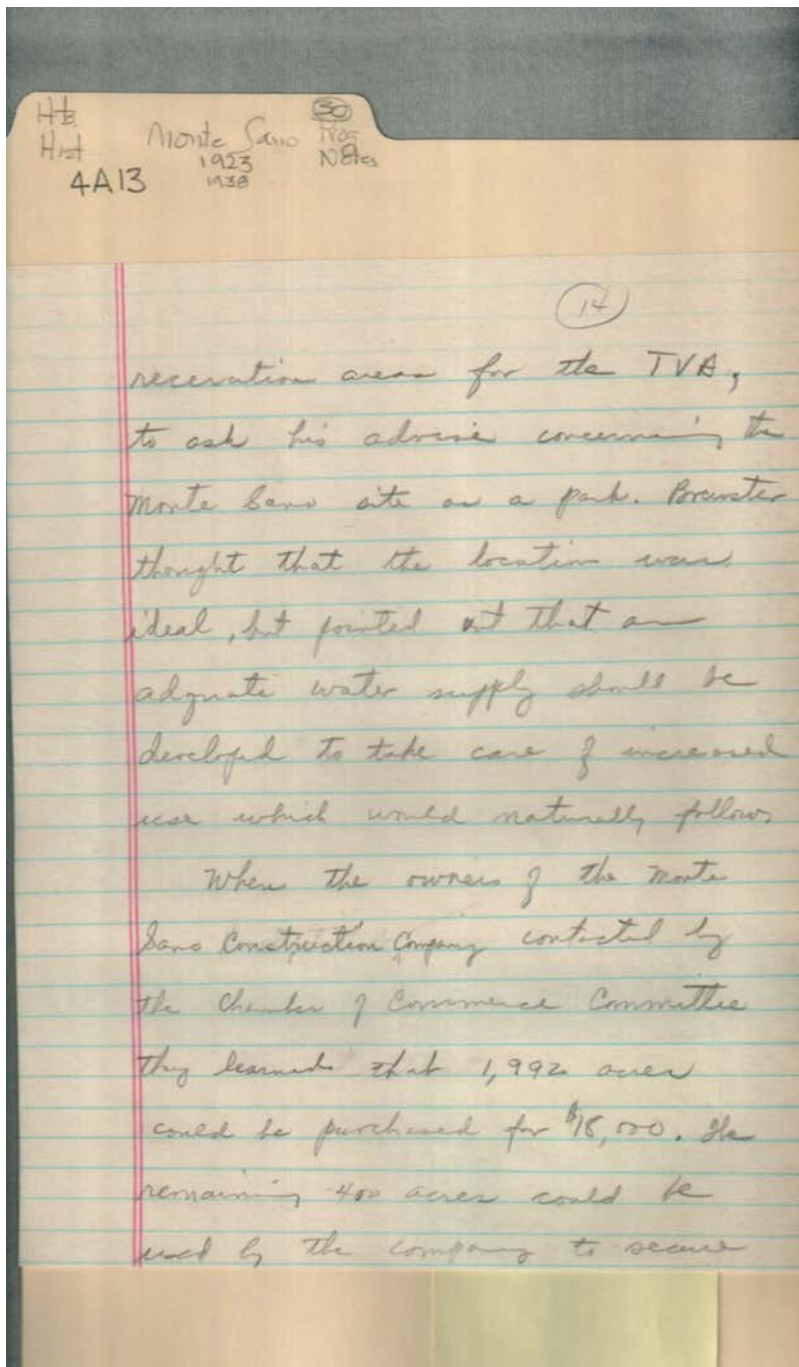
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the \$24,000 mortgage held by R.F.C.
at this point in the development
of the project, the County Commission
was urged to purchase the
property in order that it could be
developed by the TVA and maintained
by the State.

Col. Page S. Barker, ^{Assistant} Commissioner
of Forests and Parks, and Sam Brewster
of TVA. conferred on the matter of
park construction. It was Brewster's
belief that two CCC camps could
be placed on the mountain to
do the actual construction of the
park.

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Monte Sano
1923
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with some reluctance the county commission finally agreed to fund the \$18,000 if the developers would allow two camps to be built on their land rent free. The city then came forward to provide additional water to the camp site by extending the existing street pipe to the top of the mountain, an elevation of 8,000 feet, and taking over the water system from the Monte Sano Construction Company.

On August 16, 1925 the first ninety-eight CCC boys arrived from Knoxville

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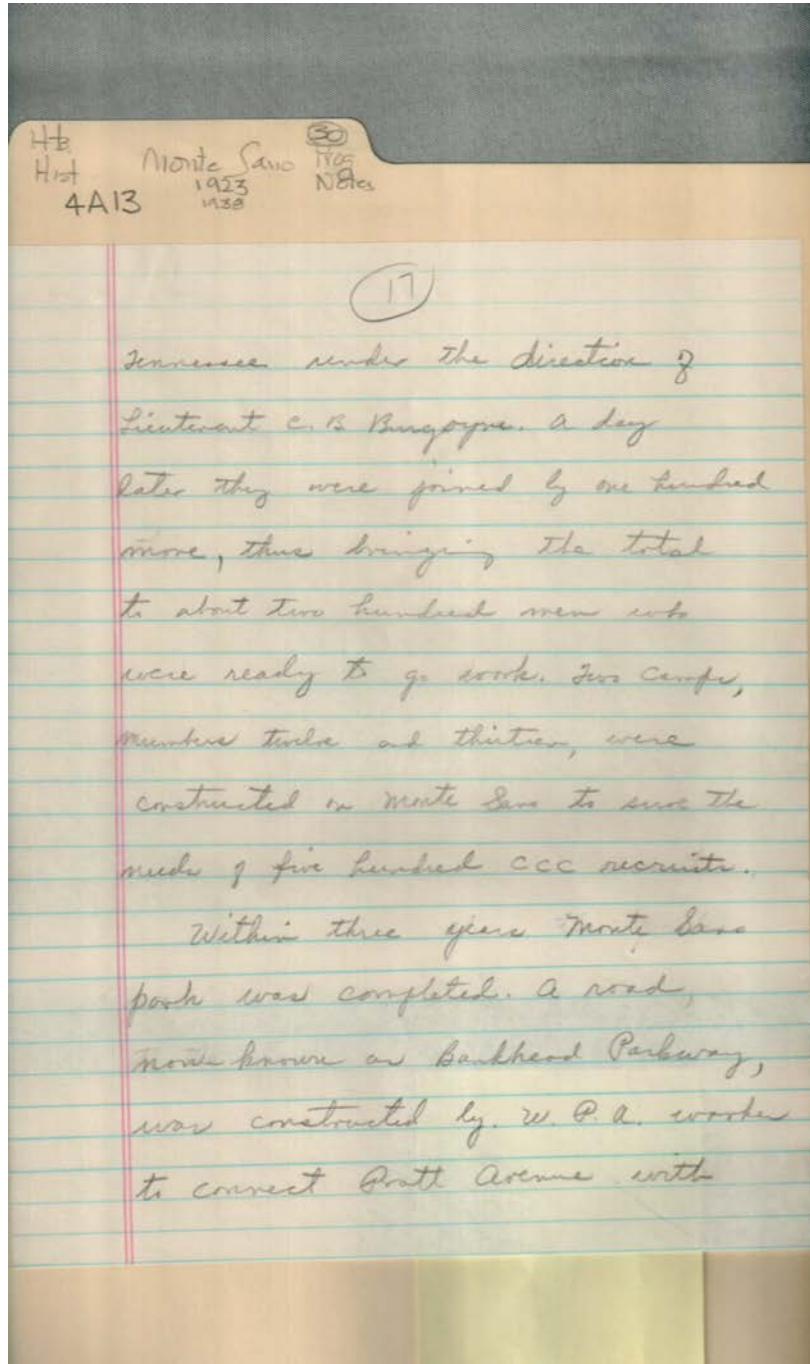
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Monte Sano
1923
1928

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(18)

the entrance to the park. The old road from the parkway to the old town of Vidette was improved and named Fearn Street. Monte Sano Boulevard which had been constructed across the top the mountain by the Monte Sano Construction Company ^{in 1927} was widened and black topped thus giving two entrance routes to the park.

(add 4)

~~new part~~ Once again Huntville residents became interested in building summer homes on the mountain. Although a water supply had been

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provided by the city in 1925, it still was inadequate to serve the needs of any increase in population.

Not until after World War II did the ^{full} development of Monte Sano as a year-round residential area take place.

Although Huntsville experienced some growth during the war as a result of the establishment of Redstone and Huntsville arsenals adjacent to the city limits, the population in Monte Sano remained static. In 1944, the Monte Sano Hotel building was torn down and sold for the valuable

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Hist
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Monte Sano
1923
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timber it contained. after gas rationing was discontinued and transportation facilities returned to normal, the Monte Sano Construction Company became active again in promoting the sale of lots on the mountain. between 1945 and 1956 — lots were sold and construction of homes proceeded more rapidly than the water supply could accommodate. shortly after Monte Sano became a part of the city of Huntsville in 1956, municipal services were extended to residents living on

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Hist
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Monte Sano
1923
1938

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NOTES

(20)

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Monte Sano
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the mountain. In 19 , a
large reservoir was constructed
on top of the mountain and water
pressure was increased by the
installation of pumping stations.
In 196 a fire department was constructed
an elementary school was built in
196 . As yet no full scale
sewage system has been developed
for the mountain, nor has a natural
gas line been extended to that
area of the city.

handwritten copy

Names:

The Romance and
Realism of Monte

Sano

Types:

draft

Handwritten notes on lined paper with a tab at the top. The tab contains the following text: "Hb Hist 4A13 Monte Sano 1923 1938 30 1925 Notes". The main body of the text is written in cursive and describes the official opening of Monte Sano State Park.

to celebrate the official opening
of Monte Sano State Park dedication
ceremonies were held on August
25, 1938. The program for this occasion
began with a parade in downtown
Huntsville followed by a motorcade which
proceeded from the Court House to
to the amphitheatre near the public
Lodge ^{in park} at two-thirty P.M. The
official dedication took place with
Robert K. Bell serving as Master
of Ceremonies. The Honorable William
H. Bankhead gave the principal
address after which a barbecue
dinner was served in the presence

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Names:

The Romance and
Realism of Monte

Sano

Types:

draft

HB
Hist
4A13

Monte Sano
1923
1938

30
Notes

area at seven P.M. a pageant depicting the history of Huntsville from 1805 to 1938 was presented. The pageant was written and authored by Weston Britt and directed by Nancy Pierce, the cast consisted of local citizens whose forebears were among those who contributed to the development of the community. 17

handwritten copy

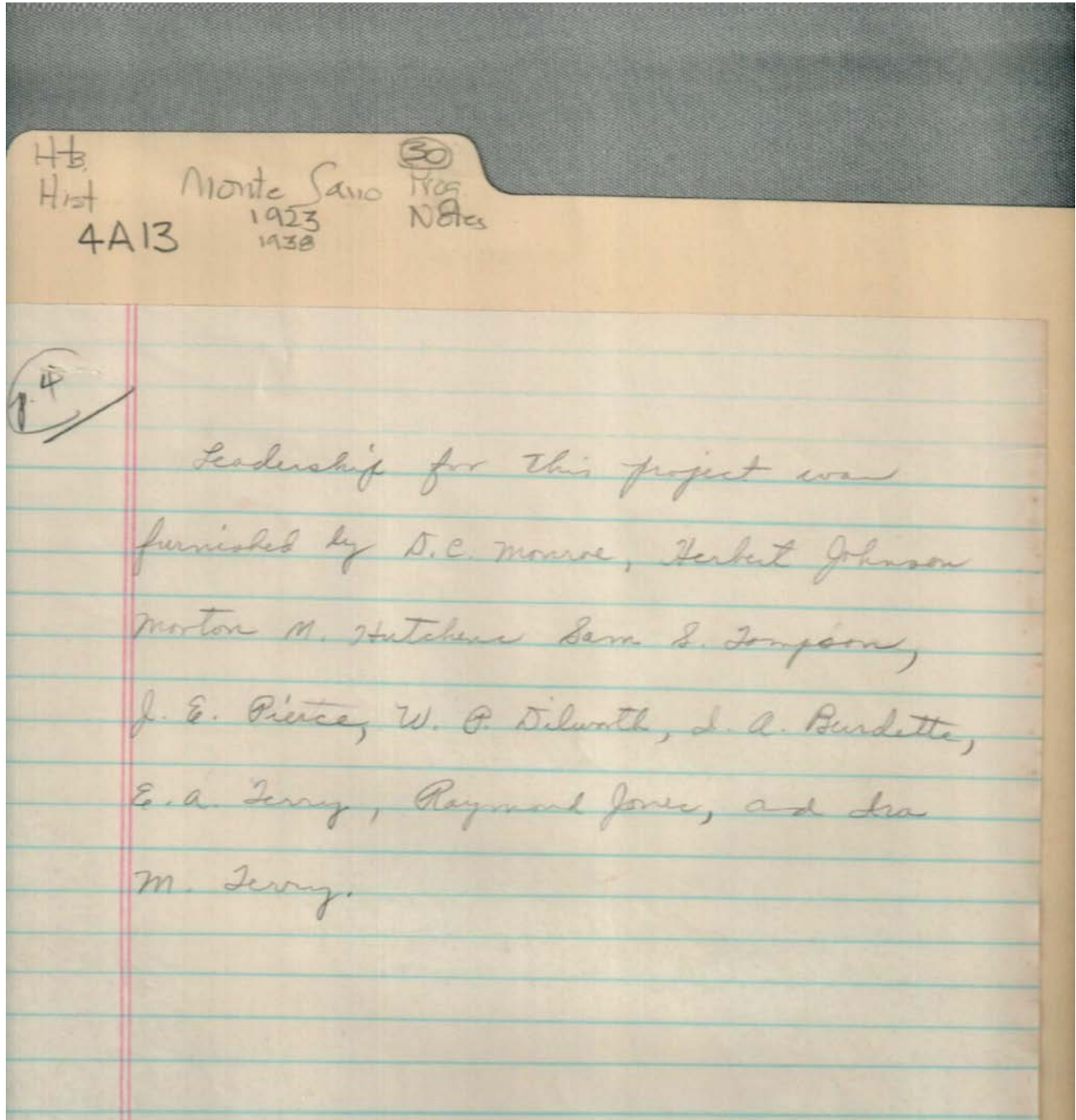
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Sano

Types:

draft



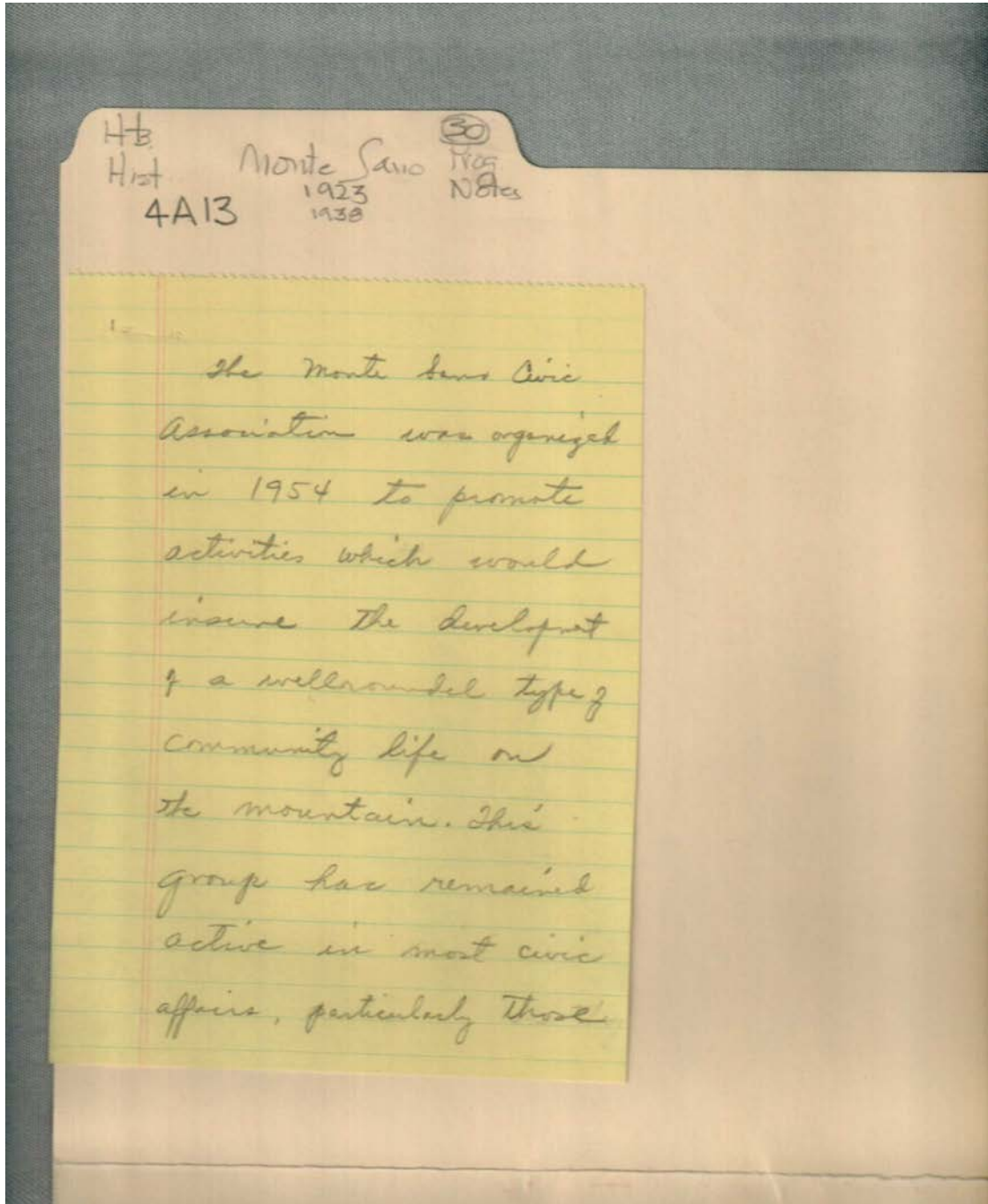
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Names:

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Types:

draft



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Names:

The Romance and
Realism of Monte

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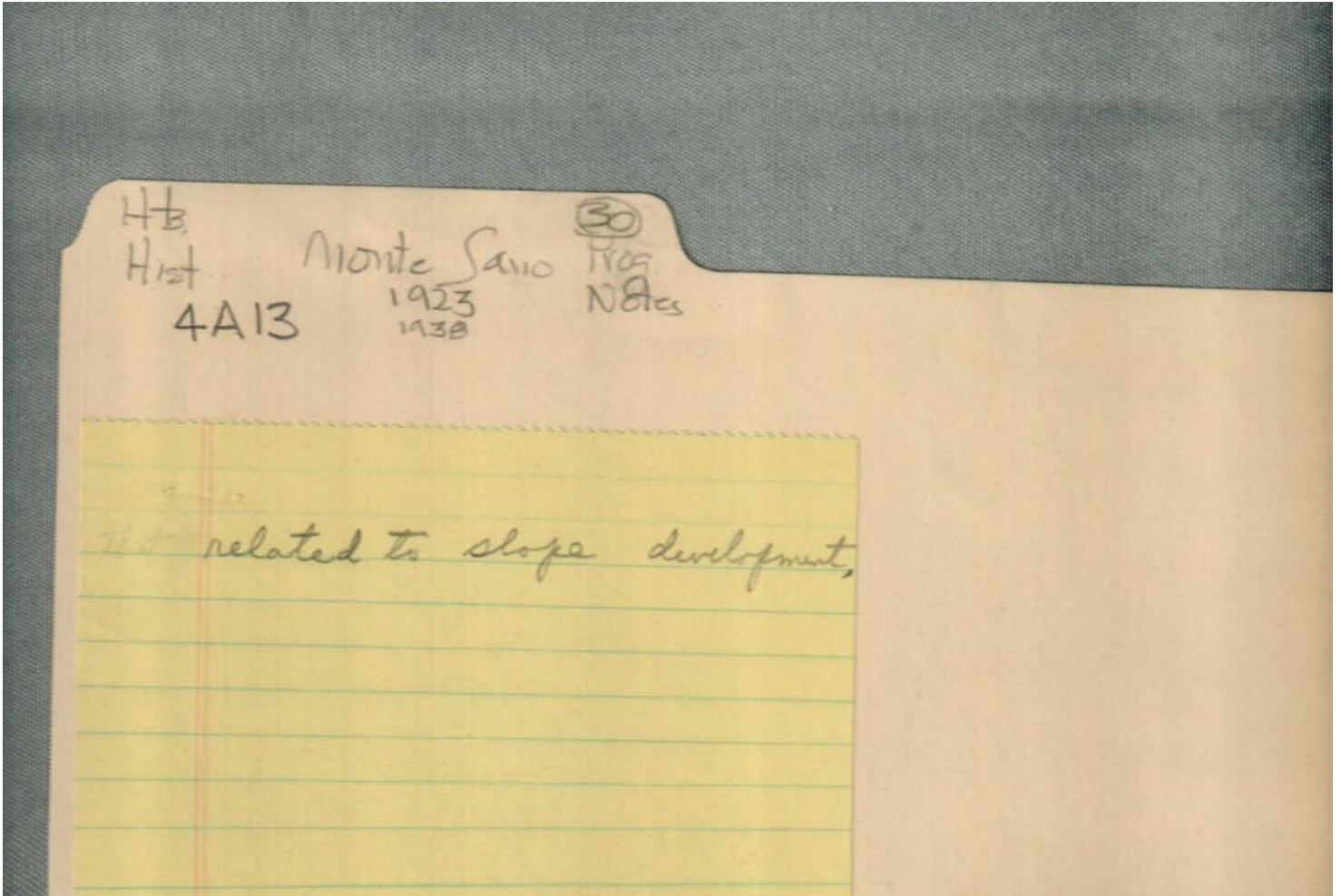
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Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries A, Box 13, Folder 30

Frances C. Roberts' essay "The Romance and Realism of Monte Sano" and her notes - Parks

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Realism of Monte

Sano

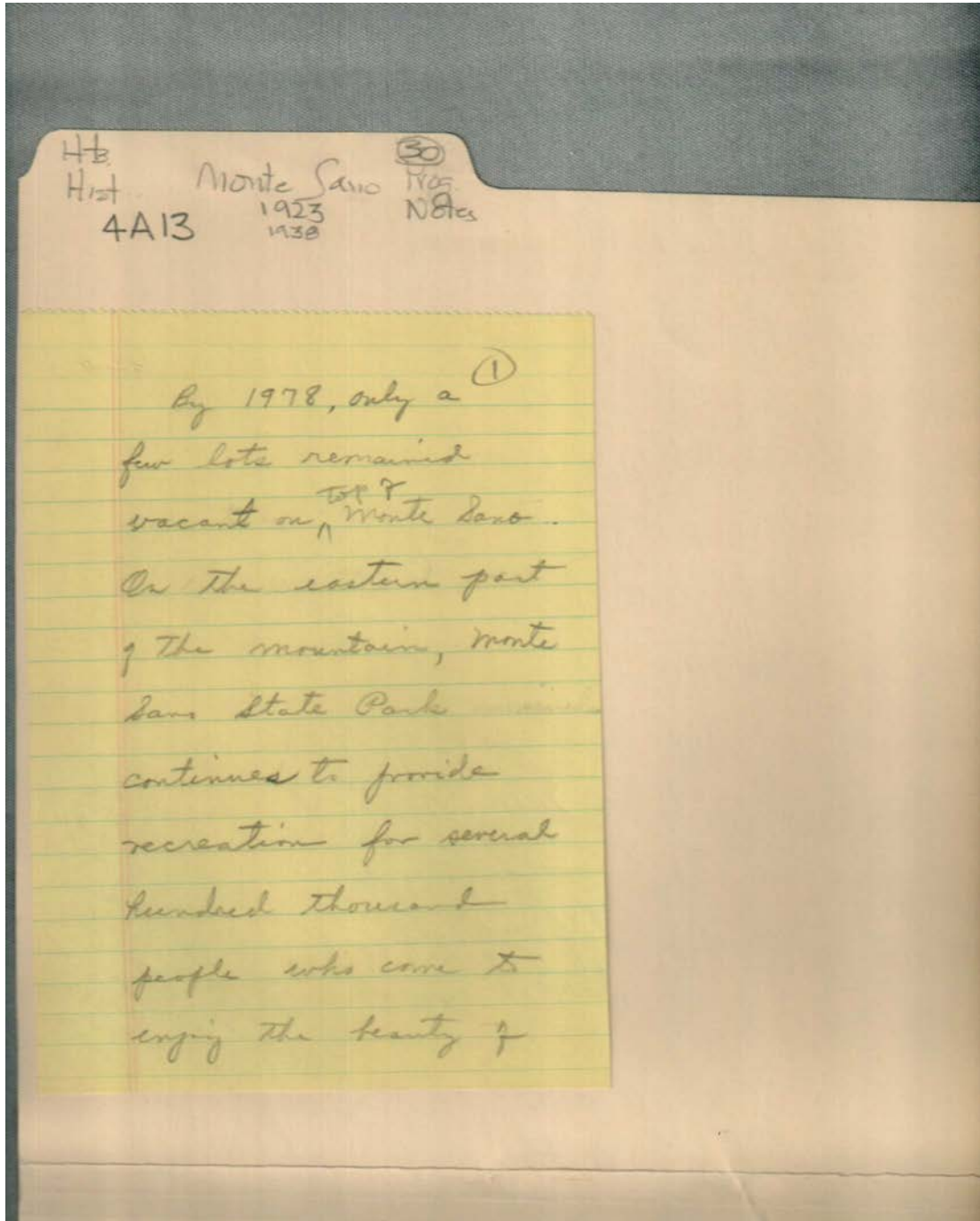
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Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries A, Box 13, Folder 30

Frances C. Roberts' essay "The Romance and Realism of Monte Sano" and her notes - Parks

Image 58 r04a13-30-000-0097 [Contents](#) [Index](#) [About](#)



handwritten copy

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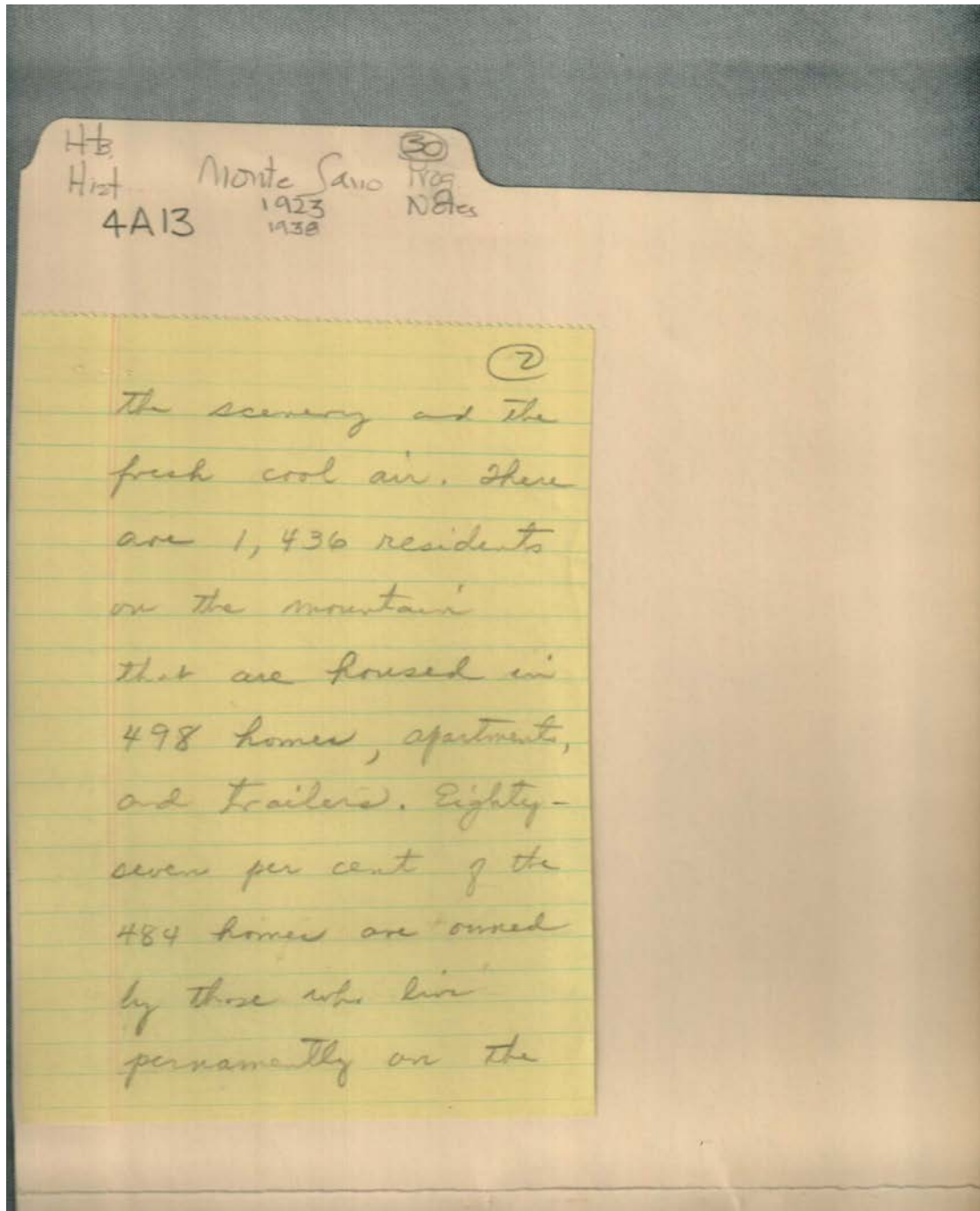
Types:

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Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries A, Box 13, Folder 30

Frances C. Roberts' essay "The Romance and Realism of Monte Sano" and her notes - Parks

Image 59 r04a13-30-000-0098 [Contents](#) [Index](#) [About](#)



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Realism of Monte

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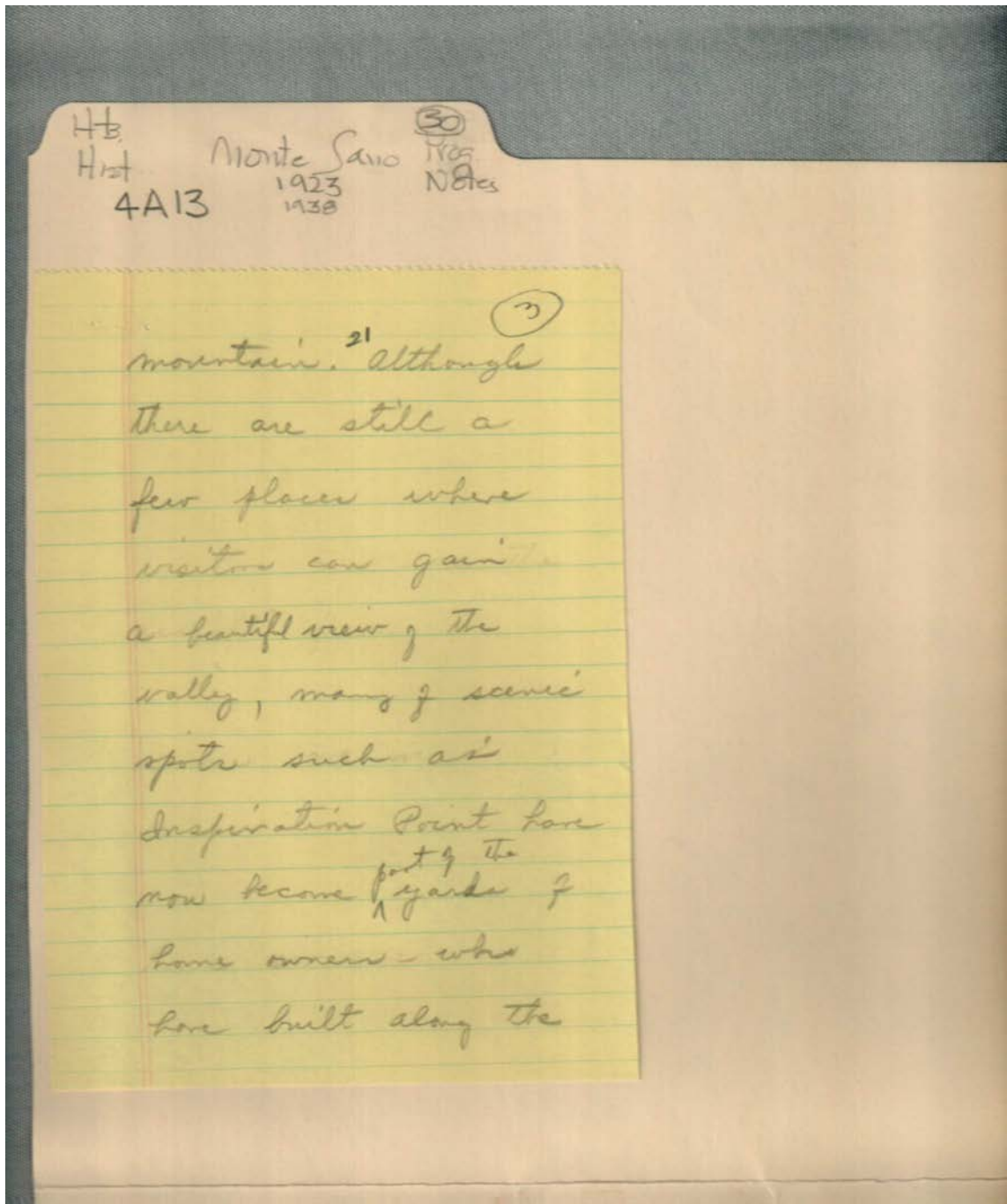
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Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries A, Box 13, Folder 30

Frances C. Roberts' essay "The Romance and Realism of Monte Sano" and her notes - Parks

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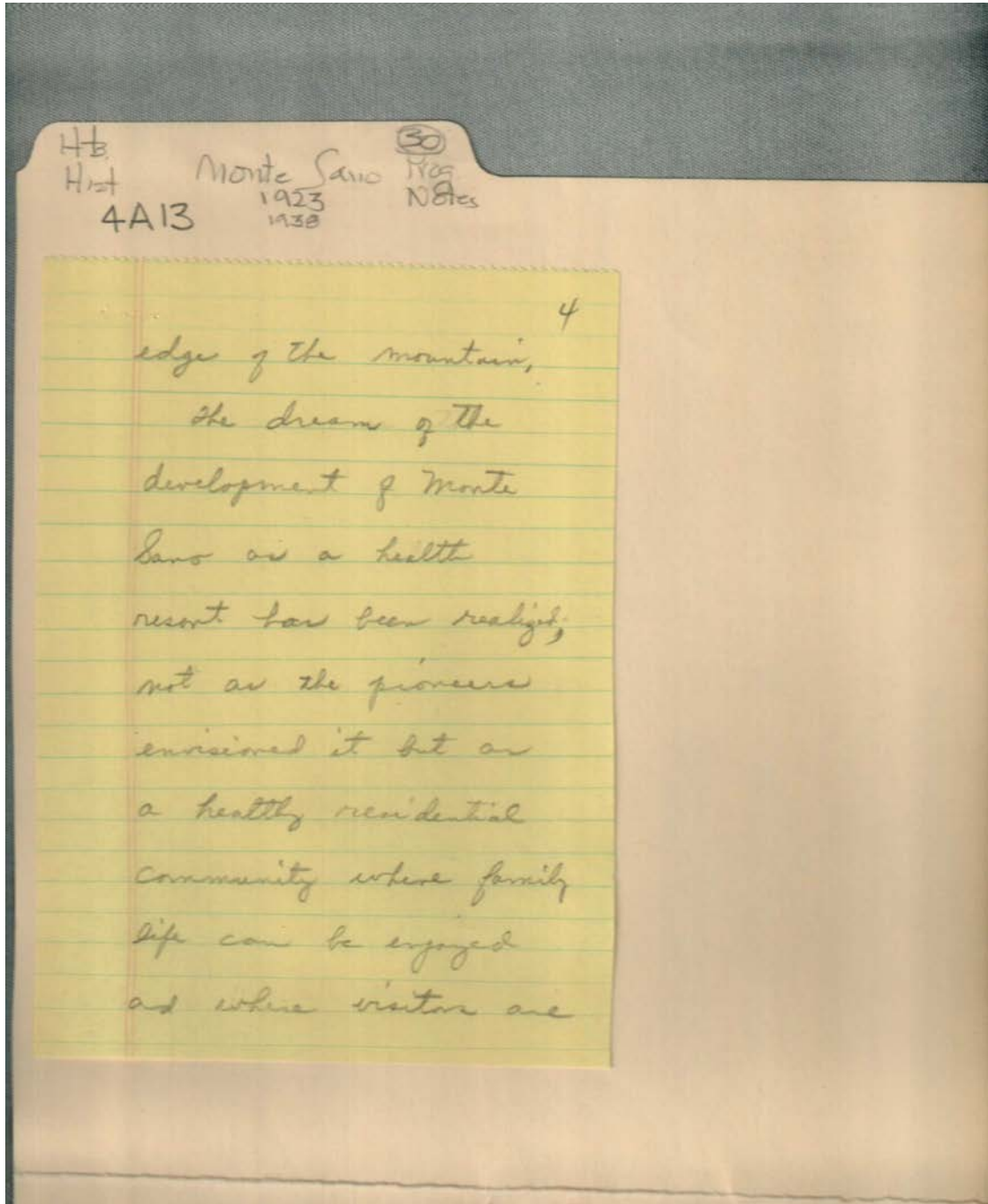
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Realism of Monte

Sano

Types:

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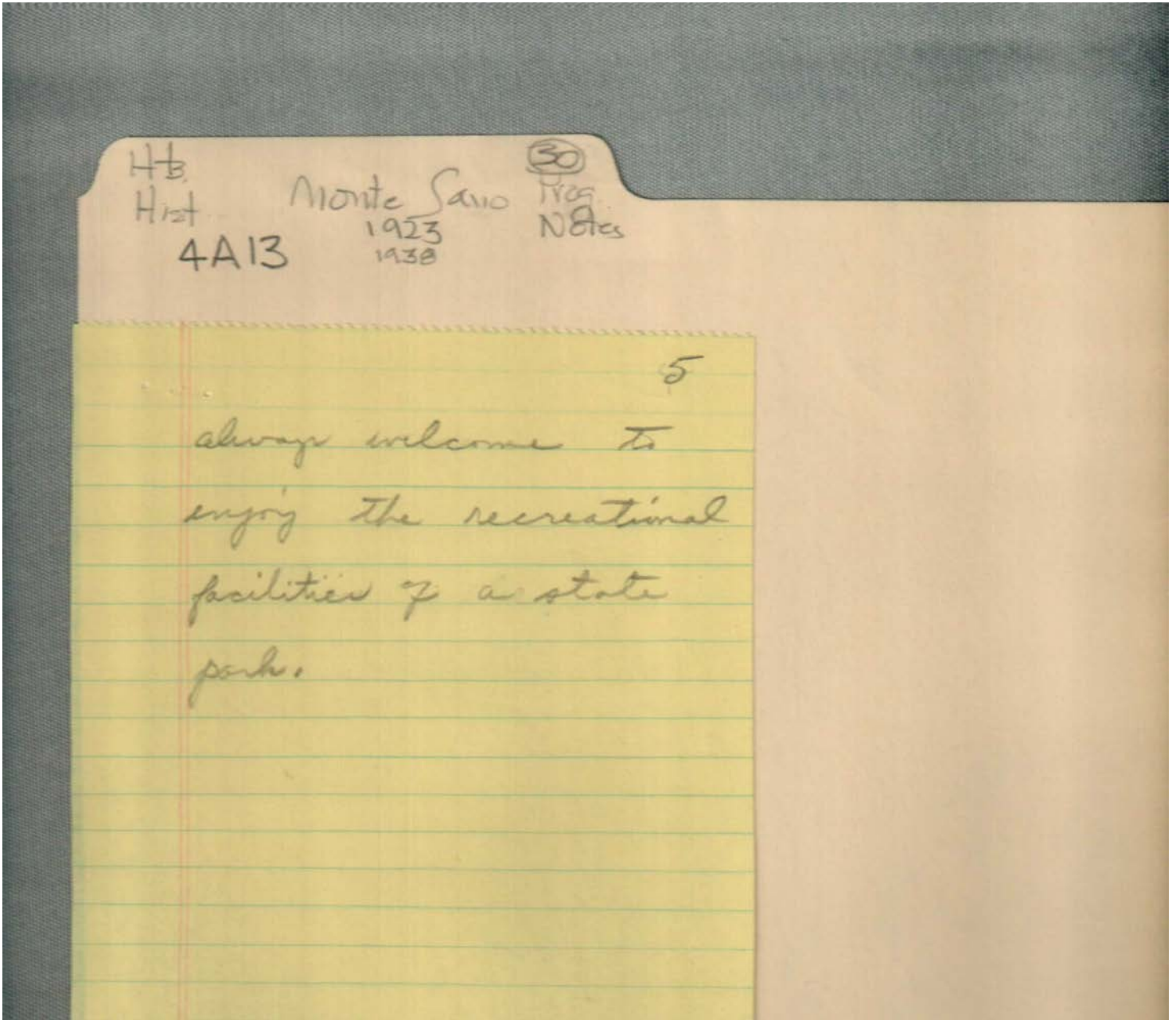
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Types:

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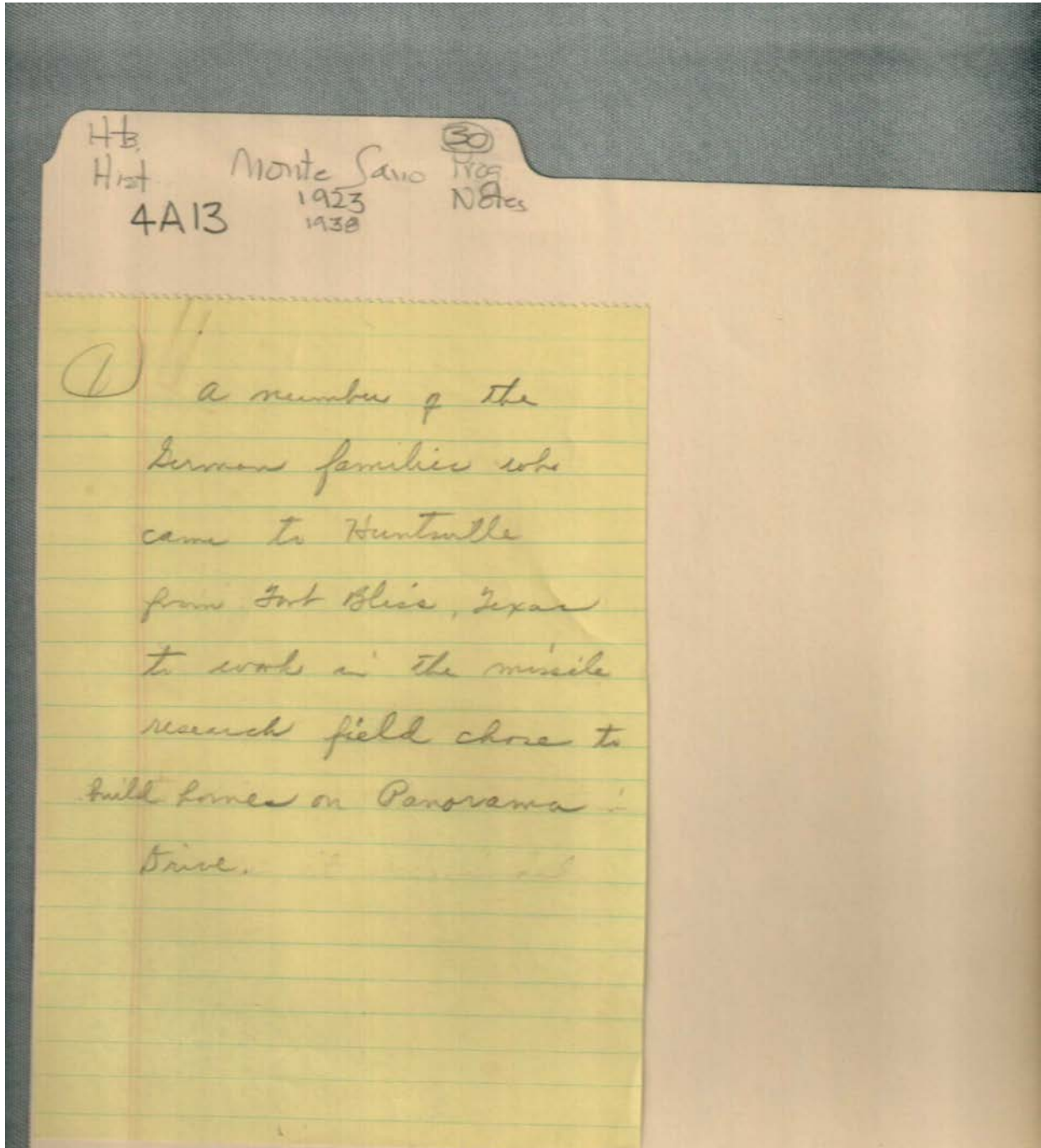
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Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries A, Box 13, Folder 30

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Names:

German families

Types:

notes

HB
Hist
4A13

Monte Sano
1923
1938

30
1905
Notes

1977-1978

Pop. 1,436
Home 484
Family 2.9
F. Inc 20,756 - 17,600
49% Home
Ret. - 14.3 12%
1978 Home 86.2% 69%
Home of W. 498

Stable Units 23%

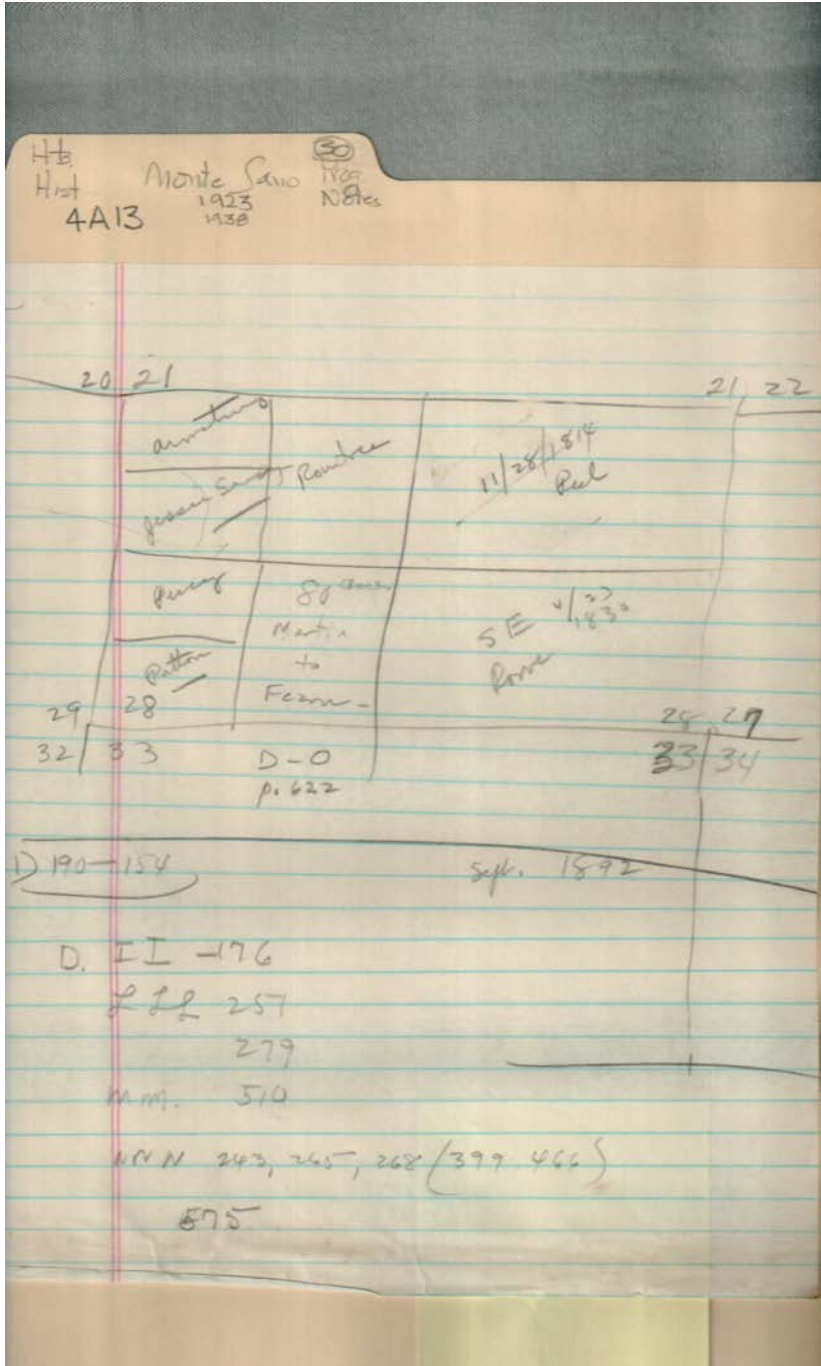
School
Fire Dept. Checks 2
TV. 4TV.
Burnitt Museum -
→ State Park

bank trails - →

Names:
Monte Sano

Types:
notes

Dates:
1978



Names:

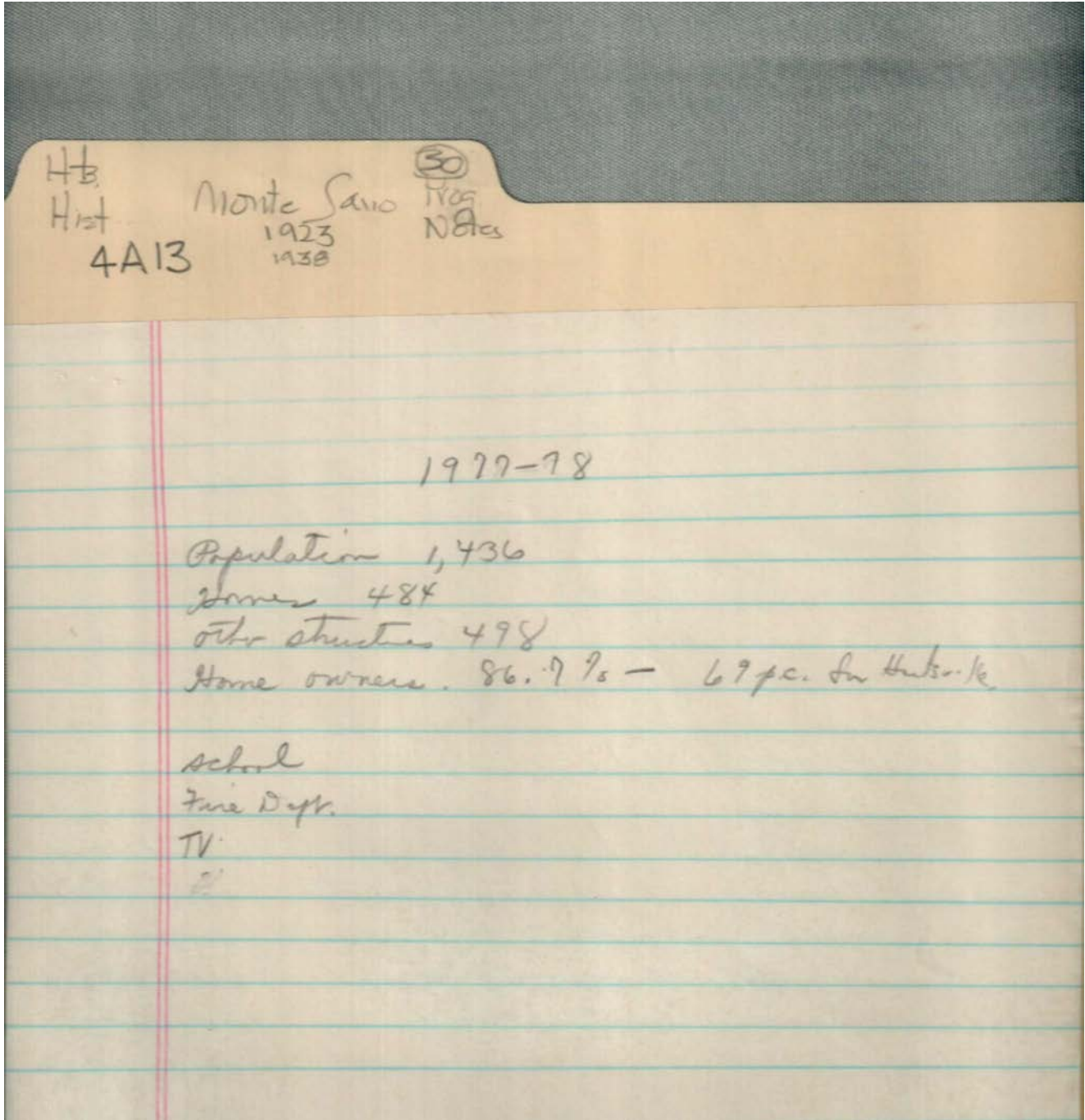
Armstrong,
 Fearn,
 Martin,

Patton,
 Peel,
 Percy,

Rountree,
 Rowe,
 Savoy, Jessie

Types:

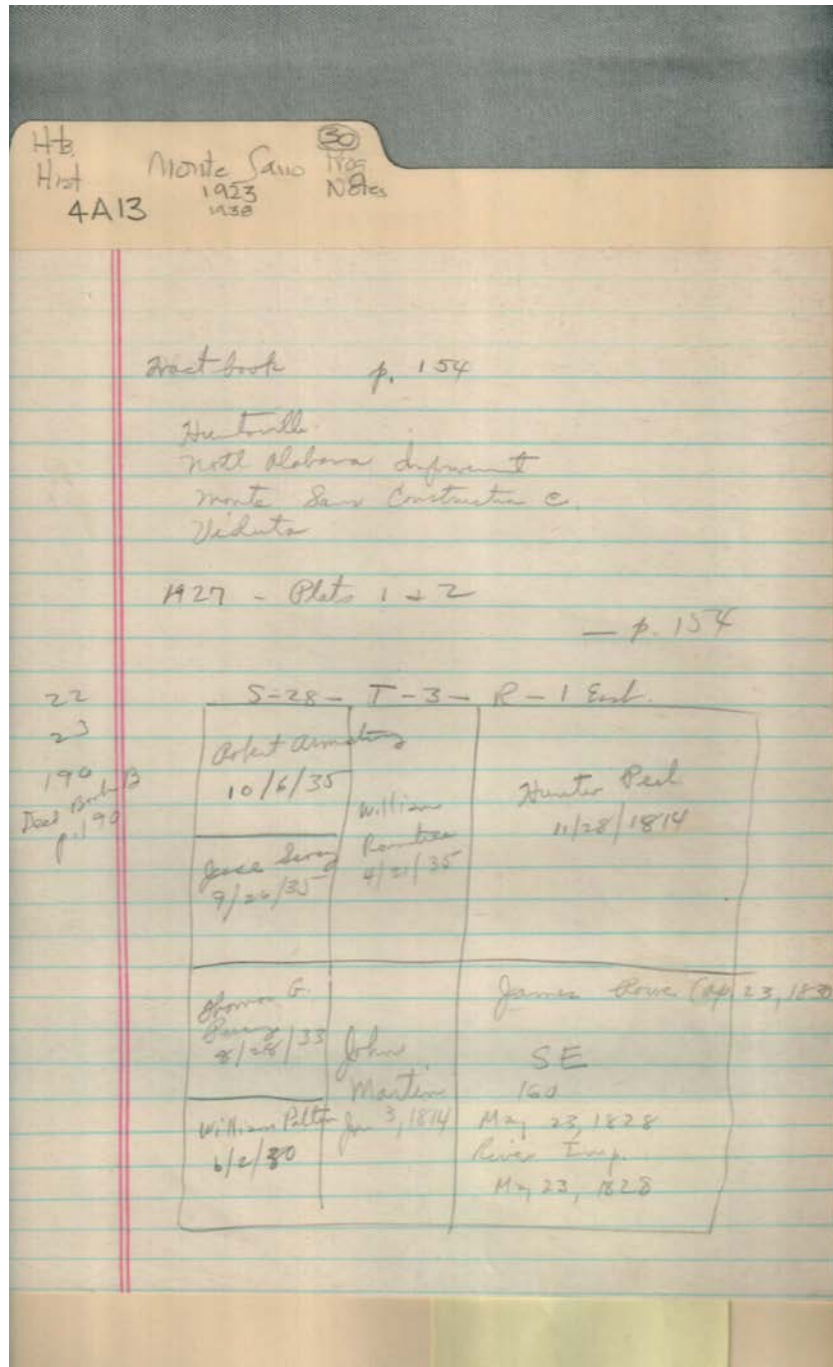
plat



Names:
Monte Sano

Types:
notes

Dates:
1977-1978



Names:

Armstrong, Robert
Martin, John

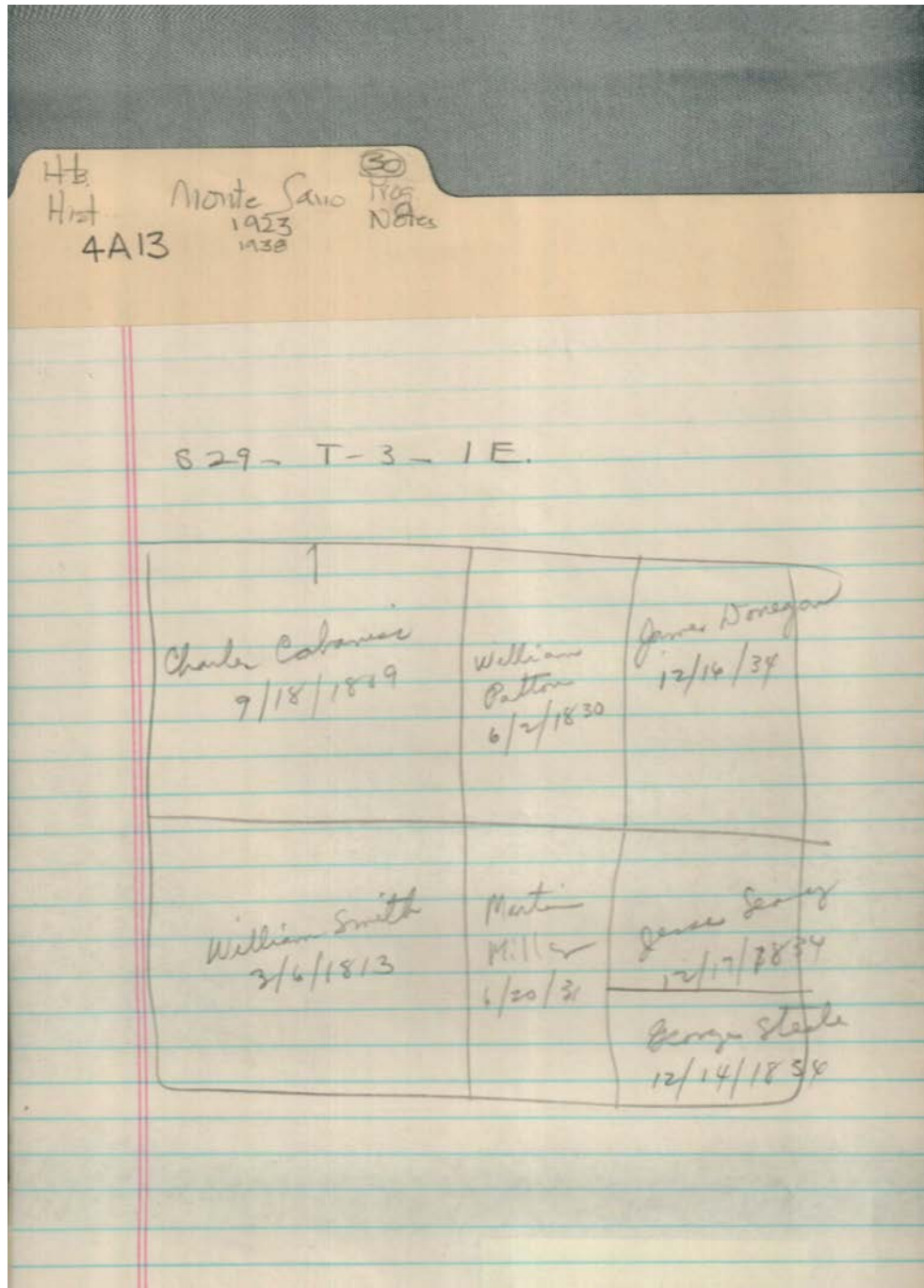
Patton, William
Peel, Hunter

Percy, Thomas G.
Rountree, William

Rowe, James
Searcy, Jessie

Types:

plat



Names:

Cabaniss, Charles
Donegan, James

Miller, Martin
Patton, William

Searcy, Jesse
Smith, William

Steele, George

Types:

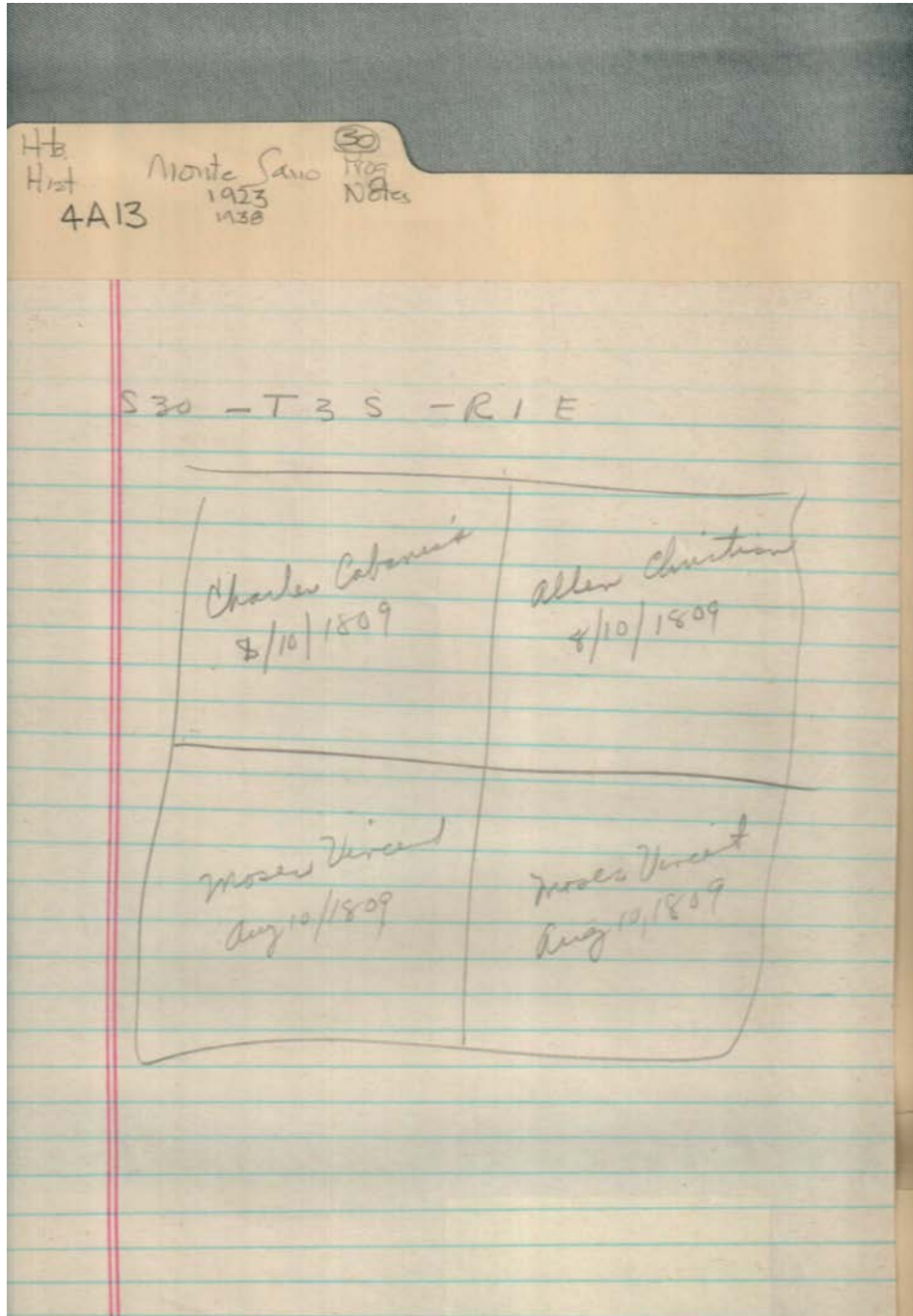
plat

Dates:

1809
1813

1830
1831

1834



Names:

Cabaniss, Charles

Christian, Allen

Vincent, Moses

Types:

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Dates:

1809

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Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection

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Collection Scope and Content: The Collection of 114 Linear ft. includes a total of 156 Archival Boxes. The Frances Cabaniss Roberts collection covers the historical records of the Cabaniss Roberts family. This collection contains extensive correspondence records of the Cabaniss Roberts family circa 1830 to 1930.

Archives/Special Collections Access Restrictions: None

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