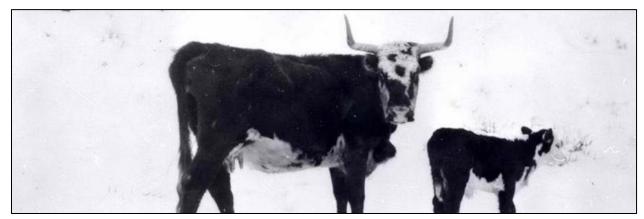# Who Brought JR?

By Trail End State Historic Site Curator Dana Prater; from *Trail End Notes*, Summer 1999

In 1999, an enormous steer hide was donated to Trail End. After much discussion, it was placed on the floor of Manville Kendrick's bedroom. The hide, measuring some fifty-six square feet, is like nothing else we've ever had here at Trail End.

OW-Branded Cow-Calf Pair, 1930 (White Collection, TESHS)

This was not just any old steer, but the last living animal that carried the Kendricks' original OW brand. According to his former owner, Kendrick Cattle Company foreman Al Visborg, JR was the offspring of a neighbor's Longhorn bull and one of "Mr. Kendrick's tough little Hereford cows."

Born in the spring of 1982 somewhere on Hanging Woman Creek, JR was raised with Al and Deanna Visborg's cow herd and became quite a pet - one that weighed about 2,500 pounds. Al wrote that JR had a sweet and gentle disposition and loved to pose for photographers.

When the OW was sold in 1988, JR went home with the Visborgs and became the special friend of one of their herefords, "Pet Cow." Al says that they were never far apart and "it was touching to see them eat cake and hay together - the cow with her head under his horns - he would gently prick any other cow that tried to eat near Pet Cow."

Trail End is truly fortunate that when JR passed away in 1996, Al Visborg and local rancher Bucky King (along with additional financial assistance from John B. Kendrick II and the Trail End Guilds) had his hide and skull preserved. They were donated to the site [in 1998].

As time and finances allow, we will be working on a fitting and proper way to exhibit JR's massive skull and every inch of his beautiful hide. Hopefully, they will remind all our visitors that JR and animals like him were the foundation of the ranching empire that made possible this magnificent house in Nielsen Heights.