ried daughter, and last Friday they gave a dance in the old ballroom. It was a big affair, and walking up the path to the house—the daughter had invited me—I saw the house all lighted up, heard the music, and saw all the people at the windows and out on the huge porch, the big old house white and fresh and alive again, and I was glad it hadn't burned down and the site sold for an apartment building.

Do you see? Do you understand now what's happening in Galesburg? If you do, then you know why the phone rang late one night last fall out at the old Denigmann farm. It's one of the finest of the farms just past the city limits; a wonderful place. There are a half-dozen acres of fine woodland including some nut trees; there's a small but deep stream that winds through the whole farm and is wide enough for swimming in several places; and scattered over two acres of corn land are a dozen regularly shaped mounds which the kids out there have always believed were Indian burial mounds, and around which every generation of Denigmanns since they've owned the place has carefully plowed.

A lot of the neighboring farms are gone without a trace, the land covered with new houses. That's necessary, of course, and some of them are nice ones. But you wonder why so many of the houses we build nowadays are so tiny, so lightly built, and so nearly identical. And why it's necessary to lay them out in indistinguishable rows alongside raw concrete streets without even sidewalks for children to play on. And why they've simply got to be jammed together a few feet apart, on what was once Illinois prairie with an unlimited horizon. Can you imagine some of the houses we build today lived in and loved a century from now?

Carl Denigmann was going to sell his place to the subdividers, too, a big Florida outfit that was reaching up into the North. It was a good offer; he was fifty-nine years old, a widower, his children all grown and gone; why not? Late one night, he told me—this was last November, about the middle of the month, after all his crops were in—he was sitting alone in the farm kitchen thinking about it. Carl's a small, strong man with black heavily grayed hair, all of which he still has, and he was probably smoking a pipe there in the farm kitchen.

Now, the Galesburg telephone company is an independent, and in the fall of last year it brought various country phone lines up to date including Denigmann's—putting lines underground and installing dial phones. And in many a place, Carl's included, the company didn't bother removing the old out-of-date and now useless wall phone, unless the customer insisted on getting rid of it.

So Carl sat in his kitchen—there's a ninety-year-old fireplace in it, and he had a fire going—staring at the fire and thinking, smoking his pipe, I'm sure. And when the telephone rang—the stuttering, uncertain grumbling ring of an old hand-crank phone—he simply got up, stepped to the wall, and answered it as he'd done hundreds of times all through his life. The conversation, then, was ordinary enough; it was just Billy Amling asking Carl if he wanted to go rabbit hunting with their twenty-twos in the woods after school next day, keeping one eye open, as usual, for arrowheads. Carl listened, half nodding, ready to agree, as always, before it came back into his head that Billy had been killed in the war in France in 1918; and the telephone receiver lay