CITY OF RICHMOND
THE PENITENTIARY
JANUARY 20, 1923

Mrs. Jane Ewing Speed,
2228 Hanover Avenue,
Richmond, Virginia.

Dear Mrs. Speed:

Your very courteous letter asking that I give you a complete synopsis of the tragedy that placed me in this prison was received a few days ago. It is with a great deal of pleasure that I hasten to comply with your request, and you may be assured in advance that anything that you and your good daughter may do for me shall be highly appreciated; The circumstances surrounding the killing were as follows:

In the Spring, 1916, myself and a man named Campenella, came to Hampton, Virginia, from New York City, for the purpose of buying up a large quantity and other kinds of green goods to be shipped back home. We had been in the business for many years and had found it quite profitable. Soon after reaching Hampton we called on a farmer by the name of Caro and closed a deal by which we agreed to pay a stipulated sum of money for his patch of greens. We offered to leave a deposit with Mr. Caro, but he declined to receive any money at this time, as the greens were frozen and there was no way we could get at the exact amount due, until after they were gathered. In March of this same year, 1916, to be exact it was the afternoon of the 27th, I went out to see Mr. Caro. His wife came to the door and told me that her husband was asleep, but that it would be perfectly all right for me to gather the greens whenever I saw fit. I then went into the field and proceeded to cut the greens, when a man, (He was the man who was killed the next day) and one of his employees, and claimed that he had bought the greens. This led to an argument as to ownership, and we both went to the farmers house to settle the matter. Mrs. Cato told this man, Domaneco was his name, that I had purchased the goods several months before, and that I alone had the right to gather them. We both then retuned to the city, Domaneco saying that he intended to return the following morning with his buddies, and gather the greens anyhow.

The next morning about seven o'clock myself and four others who were in partnership with me, returned to this farm for the purpose of cutting the salad. When we arrived there we found that Damoanecca and his crowd had arrived before us and that they had already gathered a lot of the produce, and were still gathering more. This brought on an argument that later led up to fight in which Domenecca lost his life. The shooting then began and everybody took part, with the exception of one man, and he was unarmed. In less than thirty seconds there were thirty shots fired between seven men. Everybody then run with the exception of Domenecca, and he was later found dead on the field. I did not fire in this mans direction at all. The man who did kill Domenecca was Pascale Belache. He was senetenced to serve one year, and has been released. God the Heavenly Father knows that I never killed this man. My companions in this trouble also knew that I did not kill him.

This is all of the facts in the case. The trial came later, and after a spirited defense in which the same attorneys represented us all, with the result that I received a life sentence. One man got seven years, two men got one year each, and one man was acquitted The men who received a sentence, other than myself, have since being freed.

Now, Mrs. Speed, I have given in detail every fact leading up to, and following the shooting. I have served nearly seven years

Mrs. JES #2

in prison where my record has been good. I will be very, very, grateful for anything that is done for me.

Very sincerely yours,

Giuseppe Oddo 14420
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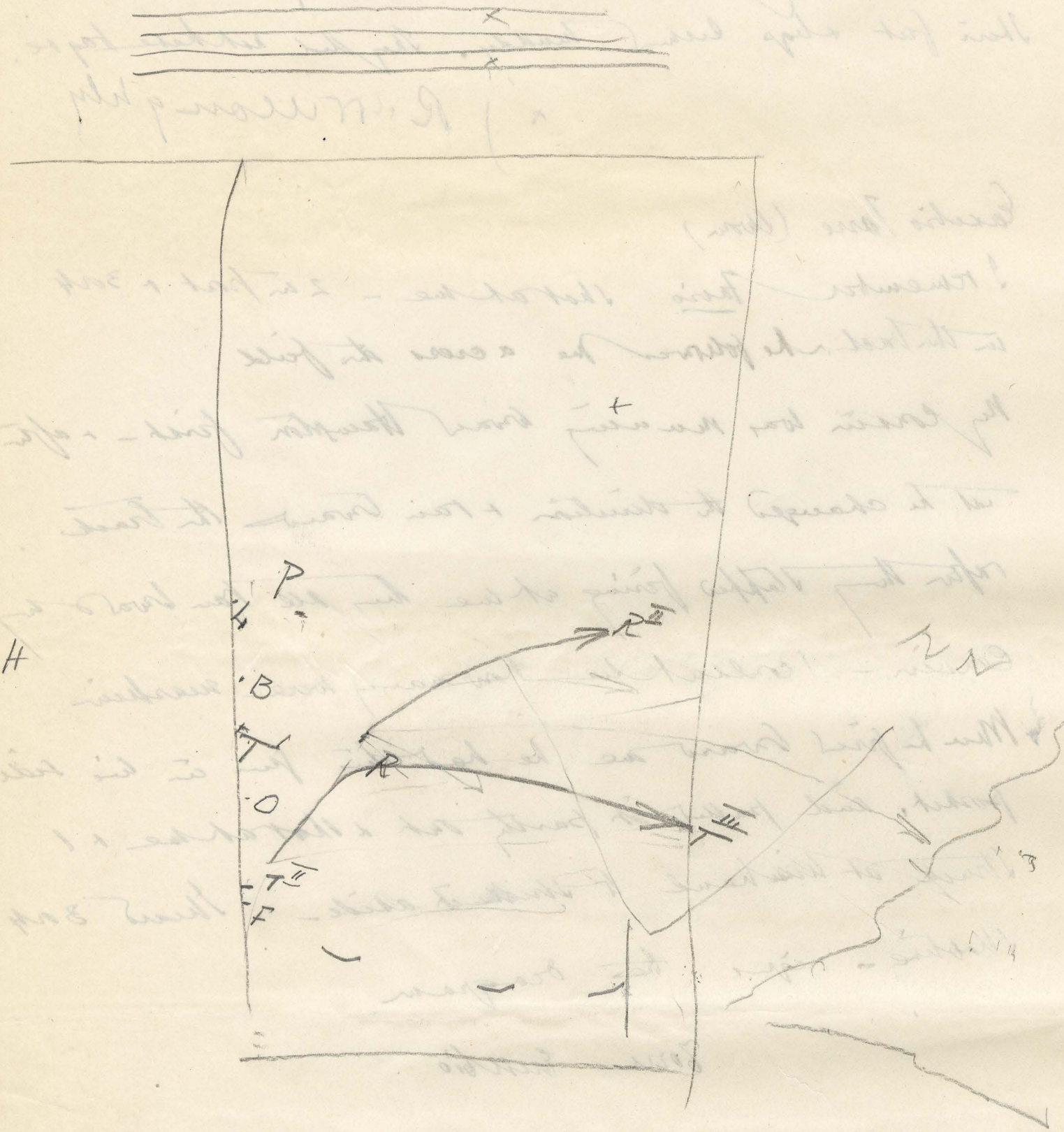
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George Keesee Vanderslice, M. D.
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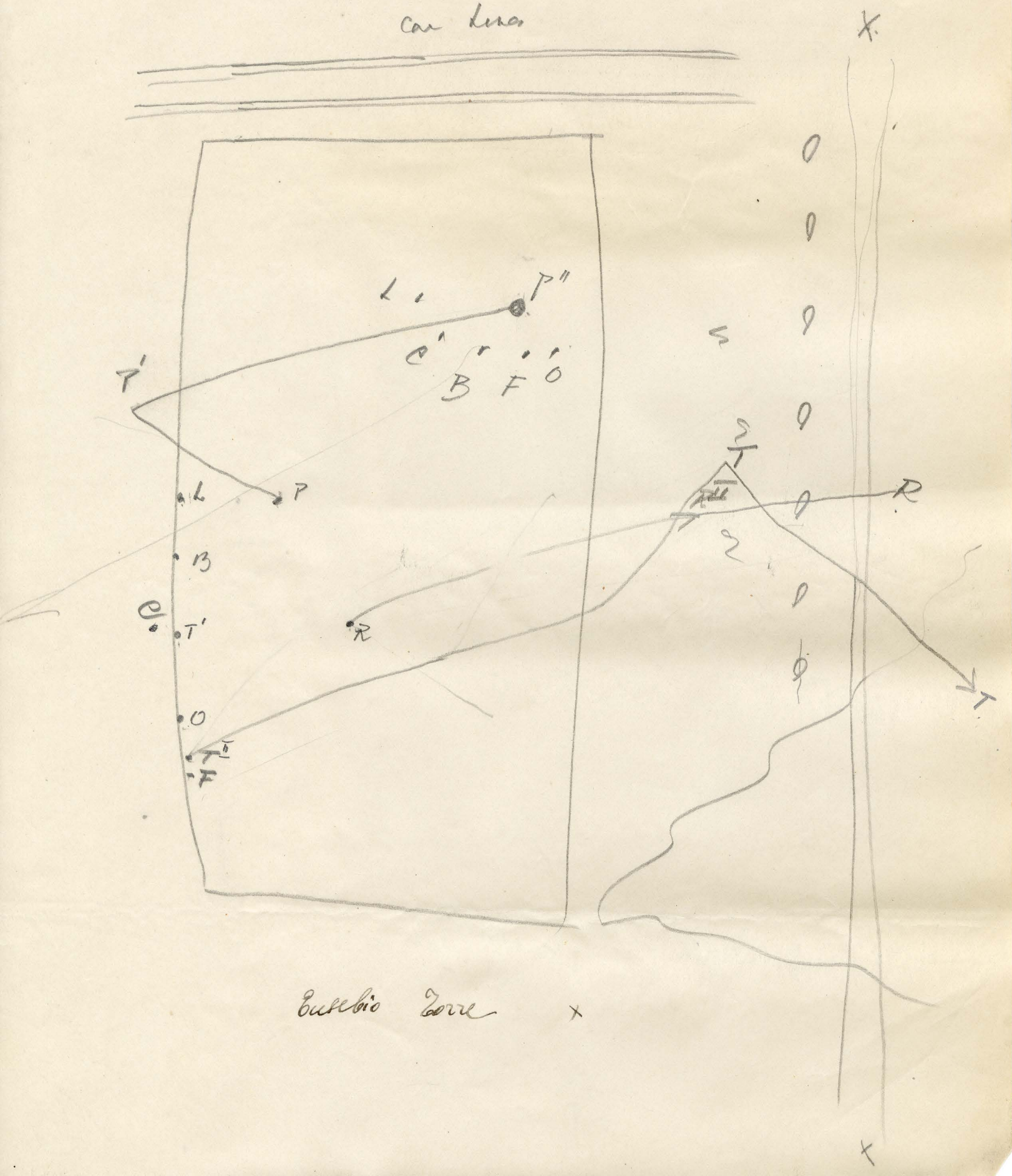

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George Keesee Vanderslice, M. D.
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