1949 Explosion of kitchen Stove

To give you a little background to this story I will proceed with the following. This incident took place approximately in the summer of my 10th year of age. My parents had rented a two unit home on the main street of Victor Idaho. The house floor plan was a rectangle shape building laying east to west. The outside dimentions were probably 22 feet wide and 40 feet long with the back 12 feet of the south wall expanded south another 8 feet. The east or front unit was the part that my parents rented. The inside floor plan of that east unit, not including wall dimensions, was divided east and west down the middle, the area was then divided south to north from the east end extending west approximately about 12 feet, the next division left the rooms about 8 feet wide with the last area about 10 wide. The center wall in the east rooms were arched with the entire wall taken out except for two feet on each end and two feet from the ceiling. The ceilings of that unit were ten feet high. The two east rooms made a large front room and when guests came for thanksgiving dinner and such, it was transformed to a large dining room. The center south room was the kitchen and dining room, the center north room was the bathroom, leaving the two west rooms as bedrooms. The home was heated with an oil stove in the front room and a wood / coal burning stove in the kitchen. A 2’ x 2’ flue was centered on the wall, up from the floor about 6’ and extended up through the roof. The stove pipes from each stove entered into the flue, one on the west side and the other on the east side. If you would take the time to draw these dimensions out you would quickly understand how small this home really was.

This incident took place on a summer day that Mom had gone to Teton where she and Aunt Wilma went shopping and spent most of the day. Dad was at work so that left Irven and I alone. Sometime after Mom had left, I guess that we were looking for something in a drawer, when I found a shot gun shell. We proceeded to carefully open the folded end of the shell. First we found the shot and emptied those out. Second we used a long screw and pulled out the plug pads which exposed the gun powder which we dumped out into a container. As I remember we took small portions of the powder outside and carefully spread it out and lit the powder with a match watching with excitement as is quickly ignited and burned out. It didn’t take long until we had ignited all the powder and was left with the buck shot, which we just threw away, the pads and a hollow shell. Thinking that I should get rid of those evidences I opened the kitchen stove and throw them in. I didn’t think there was much left that wouldn’t burn but when the firing ignited the cap it made quit an explosion. The top of the stove was all made of removable iron parts assembled similar to a jig saw puzzle. The explosion had the force to lift the entire top of the stove several inches up and also blow the front doors of the stove open. As the top of the stove settled it was all in disarray.