

Burning of old home in 1951.

Entrelac P.O.
Province of Quebec, Canada
June 14, 1951.

Dear Frederick and Marjorie:

So many of you have asked for more details concerning the burning of our Canadian home for over fifty years, that it is impossible to answer each one as we would like. So we decided to take this method of sharing with you some of the circumstances. We had a week in New York and some days with our niece, Miss Helen White, at Silver Bay, N.Y., before proceeding to Montreal by train, and we spent one night there at the Mount Royal Hotel. Our two faithful helpers - man and wife - came ahead in our car and had our home in order. They met us in Montreal and we all came in our car to our home in the Laurentians, some seventy miles from Montreal, arriving about 7:00 p.m., on a beautiful day. After a light supper, we retired early for a good night's rest.

The next morning, June 7, we had breakfast and prayers over, then Daisy had dishes washed, beds made, etc., when coming from the "lodge" where they slept, she saw on the shingle roof over the dining room a small patch of burning shingles about three feet from the fireplace chimney. For some unaccountable reason the electricity had been off all night and so we had no power. The men tried to put up ladders and carry pails of water from the lake. Meanwhile we were trying to make noise in every way to reach anyone. No neighbors had as yet come to the lake except Mr. and Mrs. Calhoun. Their servant, Madame Lafond, thought the noise meant trouble. She came and ran the best part of a mile to inform our French neighbors. Then she rushed in and so we heard of a fire company at Ste.Emile, three miles away, with an engine and large hose. Our housekeeper drove our car to get them. They came quickly and did everything mortal men could do to master the flames. For four hours or more they poured two great steady streams from the lake, but the fire had spread very swiftly over the wide extended roof. Probably in less than half an hour it was too dangerous to enter the intensely blazing structure.

Fortunately, we had not had time to open and empty our bags and trunks. So they were dragged out and thus we saved our personal clothing and valuable papers. We saved only our Navajo rugs and but a few of our valuable curios from different parts of the world. Everything else, including the piano, over 1500 books, all our bed and table linen, dishes, kitchen furniture, blankets, several pieces of specially carved furniture, two new canoes, and the adjoining carpentershop with practically all our tools, was destroyed.

Unfortunately, we had left the same insurance run on for many years without change. It has proved to be utterly inadequate.

We have not lost faith, hope or purpose.

With our love,

Mother and Father