

At home
Wed April 27, '10

Dear mother: -

Since I wrote to you from Bassano there has been a big prairie fire here. It started the day after I left here & while I was in Bassano writing to you the fire burnt all my grass off. I had no fireguard at all, not even one around my tent so of course, when I heard about the fire I was sure that my tent & everything else was burnt but when I got here it was not even blackened. It was nothing short of a miracle. The grass is burned off clear up to the tent, not a

sign of a piece anywhere, &
my tent & stuff all here
and unharmed. I am sure
that god saved the tent because
there is no other way that
it could have been. I have
never been so thankful for
anything in my life. Please
show your thanks too.

Of course I have no grass for
my horses now so I will
have to buy hay soon. One
of the Pudeant fellows said
he saved about eight acres
of his grass & that I could
picket my horses there. He
is three miles south of me.

This fire started about seven
miles south of me & burnt

way up north miles & miles &
east clear into Saskatchewan
There have been big prairie
fires all the month & there
is hardly any grass between
Calgary and the line of
Saskatchewan (forty miles
east of me). The fire here started
from a man who was burning
a guard between two furrows
when suddenly a whirlwind
came up and took the fire
right along with it.

My grass will be up by fall
enough so that it could burn
but there is never going to
be another fire go over my
land if I have to spade
up a guard by hand.

I am going to start building my shack tomorrow. It took me quite a while to decide on the spot to place it but I guess I have decided now. If I don't like it there after it is built I will haul it away to some other place.

As soon as I finish this letter I am going to drive over to the post office. I hope there will be some mail there for me from you & Willie. When I get back I expect to start digging a place level to put my mansion. It will be heaven to live in a house again even if it is only 10x12

When I get the shack finished I will begin on a sod stable. The stable will be half underground on the side of a hill, on top of which will be my mansion. When I get the stable finished I expect to start digging on the well again. I don't know whether to go on at it here or over nearer the shack.

I have plenty of provisions to last me a month or six weeks but I only have about five bushels of oats for the horses & I can't buy them up here at all not for five times

what they cost in Bassano.
I will have to make a
trip to Gleichen in about a
month anyway so I'll try to
make the coats last until
then. I have driven my
ponies almost six hundred
(600) miles since I have had
them!

Well I must get ready to go
over to Churook. Churook
is a big city; it consists of
a tent for a store, a sod
barn for a house + barn
+ postoffice + hotel +
restaurant! You can buy soap
+ baking powder only, at the
store!

I must not forget to tell you

about the railroad. There are
gangs at work on it now
grading, only about thirty-
five miles east of me. It
may be running here before
winter but nobody knows
If I had a figger team I
would go work there & make
some money but since I
haven't & my camera has
not burned up I will take
a trip down to High River,
Nanton & Okotoks & take
pictures. High River is two
hundred miles drive from here.
Well goodbye, you can
send this letter around to the
sisters of mine if you want
to because it's too hard

work to think of what to
say to each one & write it
sitting on the ground with
a box on my knees.

always your most
loving son
Zeddy

Charles Selden Belden
Chinook, Alta

Via Bassano.

Sent Ellen -

Mamma's tries to let
Curley's letters go out of the
house, as she wants to read
them over again, but I

knew you'd both like so
much to see this before
it gets any older. So
please send back real soon,
Ellen -

P041

4/1910

Mrs. ~~Wm~~ H. Belden
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Cleveland
Ohio

