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ROGER ANDERSON

(COPY)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Glacier National Park
West Glacier, Montana

December 6, 1950

Mrs. Leona Harrington
West Glacier, Montana

Dear Mrs. Harrington:

I am returning herewith the group of letters from oldtimers around Apgar which you so kindly loaned me some time ago.

These letters were read with much interest by various members of the staff, and I believe they are a valuable part of your school library am therefore returning them. I appreciate very much the opportunity of having been able to circulate these through our organization.

With best wishes for the continued success of the Apgar School,
I am

Sincerely yours,

J. W. Emmert
Superintendent

Enclosure 1

When Glacier National Park was established by an Act of Congress in May 1910, Mr. Hutchings was employed in the office of Major W. R. Logan. Major Logan was then Indian Agent for the Fort Belknap Agency at Harlem, Montana, and was later appointed as first Superintendent of Glacier Park. When the forest fires of 1910 became serious, Major Logan came to Belton bringing Mr. Hutchings with him and they established camp at the foot of Lake McDonald. They were here about a month, and then went back to Fort Belknap for the winter.

In the spring of 1911, they came to Belton and were in the Belton Chalets for a short time, later moving headquarters to the first cabin in the row of Apgar Cabins, which is just to the side of the present home of Bill Mackin. I arrived shortly after they moved from Belton. I had wired that I would arrive on the Great Northern Oriental Train about eleven o'clock at night. I had expected to be met by my husband and did not know that he had moved into the wilderness and wouldn't receive my message.

Instead, I was met by a strange man, and walked a very long distance toward a dim light which I later discovered was a kerosene lamp sitting on the desk at the Belton Hotel. There was no one about but the register was open with a note on it saying which rooms were unoccupied. The next morning when I came down to the dining room, I found that there was no way I could get word to my husband that I had arrived, as there was no telephone or mail service and no regular stage as yet. Mr. Tom Dawson, a very old timer even then, was at the Hotel and he told me that he was walking out to the Lake to see the Superintendent and would deliver a message for me.

Late that afternoon, Frank Kelly, who lived at the present Kelly Cabin site, came in for me, with a wagon and a big sorrel team of horses. He also had much freight to take back with him. The road at that time was a mere trail through thick timber. It was raining, too, but I sat on my trunk holding on to my bag and loving every minute of it.

We lived in a small cabin next to the office. At that time the Apgar family and Chas. Howe were the only people at the foot of the Lake. Helen Apgar was the only child in either Belton or Apgar. The Grubers had their summer home on the west shore and Charlie Russell had some sort of cabin on his lots on the west shore. Mr. and Mrs. Kelly, Mr. Geduu and the Lewis family were at the upper end of the Lake. Mr. Kelly operated the only boat on the Lake, and later that summer Mr. Weightman operated a Stage Coach from Belton to the foot of the Lake. The work on the present surfaced highway was started that summer and finished in 1912.

The Secretary of the Interior, Carnie Thompson, visited the Park that summer and had dinner with us at our official Mess Hall. Robert Taft and his sister Helen were also at headquarters on a tour of the Park.

At the end of the season we moved back to the Belton Chalets for the winter. Major Logan went to Washington D. C. Mr. Hutchings was named Acting Superintendent until Mr. Chapman was appointed the summer of 1912 and we again moved to Apgar for the summer, living in tents and having the same cabin for the office. We did that same thing through 1913, and in the spring of 1914 moved headquarters permanently to Fish Creek where we remained until the present headquarters were built in 1918.

I find it very hard to try to describe how beautiful it was. The forest of cedar which was so dense that I was most afraid to walk the trails through it even in day time, the abundance of game, the wild flowers, the Lake McDonald mountains, -- still untouched by forest fires -- and the fact that we could at any time catch more trout than we knew what to do with, made it a very wonderful place to be.

The government owned a launch "The Janet" and the Grubers also had one so we spent much time on the Lake. We had of necessity to provide our own entertainment, but managed to have fun.

I should mention that Eddie Brewster's parents were early-day residents also, his father being the very first Park ranger, and I spent many happy days with them on the trails and in their ranger station home.

Each year brought new residents and the scene changed very rapidly, until now we find ourselves in a very modern community, in which your own Apgar School plays a very important part.

(by Cora Paris Hutchings)

Jean was born in Butte and came here with his parents in 1908 where they had a homestead at Camas Creek about eight miles from Apgar, and has made his home around here most of the time since.

My first glimpse of this part was in 1918. I have never seen anything so beautiful as that drive from Belton to Lake McDonald before the 1929 fire.

We became permanent residents of Apgar in 1936.

(by May Sullivan)

When I was a young sprout back in 1905 our school, the Bad Rock School, made an excursion to Apgar for our school spring picnic. We came to Belton on the train, to Apgar by stage which was a mule team driven by Mike Apgar's grandfather, then took a steamboat to the old George Snyder hotel. This hotel is now the big log building at the Lake McDonald Hotel which houses the summer help. The steamboat belonged to a Jake Walters and it burned so much wood that it kept two men busy cutting wood for it. This was a wonderful day for the little Bad Rock farm children.

Later, about 1908, when the South Fork bridge was finally completed, the Bad Rock School, their two teachers and some of the parents, took a large wagon and one team of horses and drove to the George Green homestead near Coram. Here they changed to two fresh teams (four horses) and drove on to Apgar. They ate a big picnic dinner on the lake shore, then drove back to the Green place, put on their rested team and drove home, all in one day.

There was a very high winding road through Bad Rock Canyon. It was very frightening. The road to Belton went by way of Lake Five. All the roads were full of chuck holes and were very winding through heavy timber. It was a long day but a lot of fun.

(by Roy Wiles)

We came to the Park in the fall of 1913, headquarters were at Fish Creek at that time located in a log building, 16 x 20. The first job I had was building a chimney on this building; it was 20 below zero. I told the Superintendent that the building would burn and he said that was what he wanted. So it burned that winter.

We were sent to St. Mary's Ranger Station, leaving Glacier Park Station Jan. 26, 1914. In the meantime I had been appointed Park Ranger. We were stationed at different places on the east side until the fall of 1918. At that time I was transferred to headquarters where it now is located. Mrs. Swetnam began teaching about that time in an old saloon building known as the "Bucket of Blood" in Belton.

We moved to Apgar in 1923, and in the meantime I had become one of the partners with the Belton Mercantile Co. in 1924. We built a store at Apgar. Mrs. Swetnam began to teach at the present schoolhouse and she taught 16 terms at Apgar and Belton.

(by L. M. Swetnam)

CHARLIE RUSSELL

Charlie Russell, the cowboy artist, had his summer home in Apgar at the foot of Lake McDonald. Here in this beautiful spot, in 1908, he had a cabin built by Dimon Apgar, Sr. He loved this place and each year in late June he came to Apgar and stayed until snow fell in the fall. In 1916 or 1917, Eddie Cruger and Mart Sibley built his studio and D. L. Greenwalt put in the skylight. This studio with its bark door and flat rock steps is still standing.

Charlie Russell was a familiar figure to the people of early Apgar; an outstanding figure with cowboy hat and boots and the always-present sash tied about his waist; a quiet, unassuming figure yet friendly toward everyone.

Many famous people came to visit Charlie Russell in his lakeside home.

THE BREWSTERS

The Brewster family came from Hays, Montana to Glacier National Park in August 1910. They came the same year of the big forest fire. For a week they couldn't see the sun because of smoke. When they came to Apgar, they were just making the road, and it was full of holes where they had been blasting stumps.

The Brewster family came as far as Belton by train and to Apgar by stage coach. Eddie Brewster's dad, Horace Brewster, was the first ranger in the Park under Major Logan. He was stationed at Fish Creek. Horace Brewster was stationed in different places in the Park for a number of years.

Ed Brewster had started school up at North Fork, then later he went to school at Apgar. When he was going to school at Apgar, Mrs. Powell was then teaching. He then went on to Columbia Falls High School. Mr. E. Brewster worked for the Park about three years as temporary ranger. Later, he worked at Belton Mercantile for a number of years, then started the store in Apgar which this year of 1948 he still operates. During the summer of 1928, Mr. Brewster worked at the Apgar Lookout.

Mrs. Horace Brewster is now living at Lake Five.

The Earl Ross family moved from Oakdale, Nebraska to Glacier Park in 1926. At Oakdale, Mr. Ross was employed in carpentry work.

When we first came, we camped at Fish Creek with our three small children.

The 1926 forest fire was out of control at this time, so Mr. Ross's first job was on the pump line.

Later he went to work with Mr. Blair rebuilding the Slack and Durry logging camp.

We bought the property we now own in 1930. The fire of 1929 had burned all the timber off of the property so it looked rather desolate. In the spring of 1930, we started building the cabin camp we now own. We call it the "Moose Camp".

All of our eight children attended Apgar School. The four youngest still attend Apgar School.

(by Rita Williams)

GEORGE SNYDER

George Snyder came to Lake McDonald when he was a young man. He always had a great deal of financial backing from his father in St. Paul. At the time, he was quite a noted bicycle racer. He homesteaded the land where Lake McDonald Hotel is now located but sold it in 1906 to Mr. and Mrs. John Lewis who operated the hotel until 1929 when it was sold to the Great Northern Railroad. He also owned the land now occupied by Park Headquarters and at one time had a hotel and saloon there. His greatest love was for boats and he owned several different ones on Lake McDonald.

The first time I saw this country was in 1911. We came on a trip and never forgot the beauty of the place.

In 1925 we came again, bringing friends with us. We stayed in a cabin right next to where I now live. We were here three weeks. After this, we came every year.

In 1928, we bought the place I now own. It was a gift to me from my husband on our 25th anniversary. In 1929, we lost our home in the big fire of that year. This was rather hard to take for we loved our log house with all the beautiful timber around it. Across the road the berries, mostly huckleberries, grew so thick that if you wanted to make a pie you simply crossed the road and picked the berries.

In 1930 we built our present home, although I have remodeled it twice.

In 1938, I lost my husband.

We always traveled by train.

To me there is but one step between this and heaven and I'd like heaven to look like this.

(by Mrs. Ida Goos)

We never had any snaps of the boys in their uniforms and we haven't any snapshots either. I was always sorry about not having one of the boys.

Ace came in October 1914 and I came February 1915. All eight of our children graduated from the eighth grade at Apgar. Six of them attended Columbia Falls High School and five graduated.

A Miss Merrill taught 2nd after me and later Miss Wilcox and Miss O'Connor.

We have never found anyone who knows when the Belton School was built.

Might say we now have three grandchildren in the same Apgar School.

In haste,

(by Myrtice Powell,
2nd teacher in Apgar
and 1st teacher in
the present schoolhouse.)

Many years ago the Indians came through what is now Apgar. They were accompanied by Duncan McDonald, who named our lake. Later came the pioneers--Frank Gedehun, Frank Kelly and George Snyder--all of whom filed claims on land around the head of Lake McDonald Hotel. At the foot of the lake, three homesteads were claimed by Mr. Grover, Charles Howe and Mr. Apgar, the grandfather of the present Dimon Apgar.

We, the Greenwalt's and Sibleys, arrived in 1912, two years after Glacier National Park was established. Park Headquarters was then located at Apgar. At that time, there were two families living in Apgar -- Mr. and Mrs. Apgar and daughter Helen and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Howe. Frank Gedehun and Mr. and Mrs. Frank Kelly were living at the upper end of Lake McDonald.

In January, with snow at a five and six foot level, Mr. William Sibley, Sr. bought a tract of land from Charles Howe and started building a home. Helen Apgar and my son Bob, then about two years old, were the only children for miles around.

Soon, however, logging operations started and each year a few more people came. The first school was held in our home with Mrs. Harrington, who now teaches here, as the first teacher. She had come from Iowa to visit her sister, my brother's wife.

We built and operated the first service station in the Park in 1924. It seems such a short time ago, as I look back, but really it has been half a lifetime. The first settlers are now all gone.

(by Mrs. D. L. Greenwalt)

CHARLES HOWE

Charles and Maggie Howe came to Lake McDonald from Great Falls many years before it became part of a National Park. Mr. Howe had originally been a Wisconsin river fisherman. After his arrival here he made trips down the river with fishing parties. He died in Kalispell about 1936.

I have been asked, as an old timer, to write something about Apgar.

While I do not think I am really in the "old timer" class, I did come here in 1921 with the Gold Bros., Douglas and Sidney, and helped build their hotel and was a partner in the business for two years. After selling my interest there, I went to work for Mr. J. W. Sherwood, Great Falls, Montana, whose summer home is now owned by his son, James W., Jr.

While working there I met Charlie Russell. Mr. Sherwood had a Mr. Seltzer, an artist from Great Falls visiting him and he was painting a picture of the home. Mr. Russell came over every day and talked with him about the picture. He was very interesting and told us many stories about the West. He would bring with him the writer, Irving S. Cobb, who was visiting him. Through Mr. Russell I also met Powder River Jack and Kitty Lee. They were frequent visitors of the Russells'.

There was also Dr. C. F. Coulter, an eye, ear, nose and throat specialist of Great Falls, Montana, whose summer home is next to the Russells' and very intimate friends of theirs. The family spent the summers there and still do.

Then there was the J. M. Gruber family, St. Paul, Minn. Mr. Gruber was vice-president for the Great Northern at that time. I believe he came out here before the government made this a national park, and liked it so well, he leased a lot and built a summer home above Fish Creek. That beautiful home was burned in the fire of 1926. They now have a lovely place at the foot of Lake McDonald, Apgar, where the family spends their summers.

There is also the W. T. Greely family, Great Falls, Montana. Mr. Greely owns many grain elevators in the state. I have worked for these people, taking care of their places in winter and doing odd jobs for them in summer. I can truthfully say I have never worked for finer people. Mr. Gruber and Mr. Greely are the only ones of the men left.

I think another one who deserves mention in the history of Apgar is Mr. William Sibley, better known as "Bill" or "Gran'dad". We Apgarites can never forget him because we depended on him and his team of five horses to do our hauling of lumber, wood, etc., in those days when roads were not kept open as they are now. He was always willing and it was a bad storm indeed when Bill could not get out and lend a helping hand. I have many pleasant memories of fishing through the ice with Bill. We were allowed this privilege in the years gone by.

(by Peter A. Aubert
Alias Gus)

LAKE McDONALD

Lake McDonald was called the "Sacred Dancing Water" by the Indians of long ago and the Apgar vicinity was reserved for their religious ceremonies and sacred dances. So goes the story handed down to early settlers here from the earliest whites who got it from the Indians.

They seemed to see in the beauty of Lake McDonald the handi-work of the Great Spirit, so they never lived here but came here on yearly pilgrimages to camp in a clearing at the foot of the Lake and hold, near the lake shore, their religious pow-wows and sacred dances.

This story was told to me personally by a descendant of some of our earliest settlers.

(by A. Wiles)

HOW LAKE McDONALD GOT ITS NAME

Duncan McDonald was born in 1849, the same year as the gold rush. He was born at Post Creek, a few miles from the present town of Ronan, Montana. He remembers going on scalping raids against the Blackfeet.

On one secret mission the Blackfeet were after them as they were going through a mountain pass, but Duncan's scouts saw the Indian before they got into the pass. And they turned around and camped on a beautiful lake. While they were there, Duncan carved his name on one of the big cedar trees. When his name was found there a few years later, the lake was named after him. It still has the name, Lake McDonald.

It is now early fall of 1948 and I have been asked to write a few lines about my early life and the present surroundings of Apgar, situated on the south shore of Lake McDonald. Apgar was named after Harvey Apgar who homesteaded on the shore of Lake McDonald. Lake McDonald was named after Duncan McDonald who was born at Fort Connah near Dixon, what is now the Flathead Indian Reservation, in 1849. His father, Angus McDonald, built the fort in 1847 for the Hudson Bay Company. Angus McDonald was a native of Scotland and his wife was a Nez Perce Indian woman.

Duncan McDonald died at Thompson Falls in 1937 at the age of 88 years. On one of his secret expeditions, he, with a party of Indians, camped on the shores of a lake, and while there, McDonald carved his name on a large cedar tree. When the carving was found in later years the lake was called McDonald Lake.

I first saw Lake McDonald in 1901 and when I think of the real old timers who were attracted by the wild game, fur-bearing animals, the fish in these clear waters, and probably most of all by the unsurpassed scenery, I know I have missed a great deal in life. My wife, Aurice, with her folks, came into Flathead Valley in a covered wagon, 61 years ago. I never will forget walking from Belton through large beautiful timber and over a rough muddy wagon road. When we arrived at the foot of Lake McDonald, I was so amazed by the gorgeous view, I just couldn't talk. I have talked plenty since, but never was able to say anything that was really good enough to express my feelings of Lake McDonald and the mountains in the background.

And I still feel the same way today. I was fortunate enough to acquire a small piece of land on the south shore of the Lake about 40 years ago. We built a cedar log house 25 years ago and we still are thrilled to look at the gorgeous view from our front porch. At this moment, there are six mule deer licking salt from a stump not more than 50 feet from our window.

Some wise men in 1910 saw fit to set aside one million acres of this mountain scenery into a national park. Only a few of us old timers still own our property in the Park. But we all hope Glacier National Park will remain in its natural state as much as possible.

(by Roderick Houston)

I came to Apgar in 1914, called by the very serious illness of my sister, Mrs. Martin Sibley. I had been teaching in Iowa and Mr. Apgar persuaded me to stay in Apgar and start a private school, as there were a number of school-age children and no school. Later Apgar was given a school by the school board and I continued teaching until the end of the school year. I then married Charles Harrington. My husband was in construction work but we had a cabin in the Park to which we returned whenever possible. In 1933, we decided to live in the Park. We had been "burned out" in the 1929 fire but had rebuilt. Our older son, Van, went to Apgar School in the second grade. Our younger son, Tom, started school here and went to Apgar School until I began teaching here in 1946. Since the death of my husband, I have continued teaching in Apgar until the fall of 1957 when Apgar School and West Glacier School were consolidated. Since that time I have taught in West Glacier in the third and fourth grades.

(by Leona Tidrick Harrington)

Mr. Blair lived in Massachusetts. He was going to go to Alaska so he got as far as Spokane and met a man who advised him not to go because it was the beginning of the first World War and there was no work in Alaska.

Then he went to Big Sandy, Montana, to see Ray Price and his brothers whom he knew in Massachusetts. This was in 1914. Harry Price asked him to stay and work for him and so he did. From there he made a trip to Flathead Valley and on recommendation of Joe Cizner, a neighbor in Big Sandy, he made a trip to the North Fork to trap and hunt, etc. He spent the winter of 1915-16 there with Ray and Gordon Price. In 1922 he moved to Apgar. He lived in a house by the schoolhouse. He worked for the Park Service, building a house for the Superintendent. This house he lived in, burned down. Then he bought a lot right behind that and built a house on it. Then later he bought land up across McDonald Creek where he built a house and five cabins to start on. He has had cabins for 18 years and has lived in Apgar for 26 years.

BOOK II

STATE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
Helena, Montana

May 25, 1950

Mrs. Leona Harrington
West Glacier, Montana

Dear Mrs. Harrington:

Miss Condon gave me your HISTORY OF APGAR and I was very interested in reading it as it gave me a chance to reflect on the Glacier Park and Apgar communities from the time I first spent a summer there in 1912, when my sister, two of the children, and I rented a cabin at the Lewis Hotel. The descriptions by these various people gave me the feeling that they too had thoroughly enjoyed the beauties of that part of the country. Furthermore, I enjoyed reading the stories of these various people that I knew, including Mrs. Hutchings and Mrs. Swetnam, who I knew very well, as I visited her school every year that I was in the office until she passed away.

I also remember the Powell children, the Ross children; the Sibleys and the Wiles, which made me feel that I was back in the Flathead country. I have many times, during the past two years, enjoyed the news items from the Apgar School as reported in the Hungry Horse News. They reflect so much true interest and wholesome living that I always feel encouraged in the fact that the school seems happy and progressive. Many of the pictures from the school I have cut from the paper and filed.

I am wondering if your school would not like to send a copy of the HISTORY OF APGAR to Mrs. Lucinda Scott, State Historical Librarian. She has often mentioned the value of a project such as yours and I feel sure she would appreciate it greatly. Address her at State Capitol Building, Helena.

With kindest greetings to you and the children.

Very sincerely,

(signed) Lillian L. Peterson

Mrs. Lillian L. Peterson
State Rural Supervisor

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MONTANA

Helena, October 10, 1950

Mrs. Leona Harrington
West Glacier, Montana

Dear Mrs. Harrington:

Will you accept for yourself and convey to the pupils of Apgar School the sincere thanks of the Historical Society of Montana for the booklet, HISTORY OF APGAR. This will be put in our files and will be real source material on that area.

To me, the proper approach to creating an interest in history is the home and neighborhood approach and your school has done a fine job in compiling this booklet. I am hoping that this is just a fine beginning and that this year a second volume, a continuation of this, will be issued.

Very sincerely yours,

(signed) Lucinda B. Scott

Mrs. Lucinda B. Scott, Librarian

P.S. I might add that I have a very special interest in this history, for two or three years before Glacier Park was established, I spent a week or two at the head of Lake McDonald at the Geduhn cabin camp which was operated by a Miss Ferguson of Kalispell, a lovely hostess and an excellent cook. I have memories of the Lewis Hotel, of riding to the head of the Lake in a steamboat, of fishing in the Lake when a squall came up and we had a hard time rowing to camp, of eating dinner at the same table with Mr. and Mrs. Russell and, after a long horse-back ride to Avalanche Basin or some other point, swimming in the Lake at night under the, no doubt delusion, that such action would keep us from being stiff for the next day's activities and delighted, as I remember, that in comparison with the cold night air, the waters of the Lake seemed actually warm. Also when Mr. Geduhn returned to the camp, we had a big bonfire and sat around it in the evenings to listen to his stories. The thing that one never forgets is the absolute beauty of the water, the mountains and the woods.

L.B. S.

Just a bit of my early days....

On July 1st, 1914, my Mother and I arrived by train in Belton where we met my Aunt and cousin from Helena. We were to spend two wonderful months at Camp Geduhn at the head of Lake McDonald. We arrived in Belton loaded with meat, eggs, bread, vegetables, fruit, blankets and many other items not furnished with the cabin. Mr. Weightman, who drove the horse stage from Belton to Apgar, loaded us all in, bag and baggage, and away we went, headed for Apgar where Mr. Kelly took charge and into the "Emeline" we snuggled for a ride across the Lake. When we arrived at Camp Geduhn, we were met by Mr. and Mrs. Conlon, who were our neighbors, also Mrs. Mosby, who ran a small hotel for Mr. Geduhn. It took all day to move our belongings from the dock to our cabin and my cousin and I were immediately given the job of keeping the smudge pots burning as the mosquitoes were really all there to welcome all strangers. We spent many wonderful days swimming, riding and rowing over to the then being constructed Lewis Hotel where we met very lovely people such as the Lewises, Uncle Billy and Aunt Mae Talbot, the Grubers, the Scotts, Mrs. Baker and her daughter Maud. Mrs. Baker was really our shining star as she told our fortunes every day and they were never the same.

On July 1st, 1915, back we all came but to the Lewis Hotel this time where we had a cabin for the summer. We spent a wonderful summer. Mr. Rogers and Mr. Higgins each had horse camps near the hotel and we were allowed to ride any time we cared to, provided we had "split" skirts. The high-light of those summers was the Eaton party who camped at Jacksonville (Now Sprague Creek). We were also allowed to sit down in the Clubhouse and watch the dancers twirl to the tunes made by two "Darkies". Many times Eddie Cruger, Wilfred Bose and Heinie Hutchings asked us to dance.

1916-17 I spent at Apgar in what is now the Greely cabin but was built and owned in those days by Mr. and Mrs. Bellefleur. While there, I met many fine people, the Apgars, Greenwalt's, Sibleys, Howes, Powells, Harringtons, Cal Tidrick, and I know I am missing some names. Last but not least, my husband, who was driving bus for the Transport Co. Bill Lindsey, my husband, was Commissioner from 1919 to 1952. At his death I was appointed Commissioner for Glacier National Park.

by Margaret Lindsay

January 12, 1952

The first thing I thought of, when I read your request for my memories of Charles Russell, was one evening when we had all been dancing in the old clubhouse, some eight or ten of us, including Mr. Russell, and we walked up the hill to the hotel lobby.

It must have been midnight, but he perched on the arm of one of those big, rustic chairs, and we all gathered around to listen to his tales of life in Montana when he was a young cowhand in the early days. He was a reserved, almost shy person, but when with friends and a congenial bunch of acquaintances, he was a most entertaining storyteller.

Mr. Russell, Mr. John Lewis and Mr. Eaton (Uncle Howard) were fast friends. "The Eaton Dude Ranch" in Wyoming was the first one I had ever heard of; I think probably the first in the United States. Each summer a bunch of tourists, together with Mr. Eaton and guides, would ride up to the Lake McDonald Hotel for a day or two. This was usually the event of the summer. This crowd of eight or more persons and the usual McDonald bunch, would gather and fill the hotel lobby for an evening of reminiscences and storytelling.

The evening was always quite still young when someone would call for Charles Russell's moose story. So year after year he had to tell the same tale. The guests enjoyed it and to us old habitants it became a bigger joke every year. It went something like this:

Two guides went out one morning to round up their horses, and in crossing a strip of wood land, they met a belligerent moose who made it necessary for them to seek cover with no delay. One of the guides slid into a convenient hole and the other climbed a tree while the moose just waited around.

After a time, the man in the hole stuck out his head and asked: "Has he gone yet?"

The man in the tree said: "No!" And they began waiting again.

Then the man in the hole inquired again: "Hasn't he gone yet?"

And the man in the tree said, "No! After a few minutes, he raised up again and asked, "Hasn't he gone yet?"

The man in the tree replied in not too-refined language: "No! and he never will go if you keep peeping out of that hole. Get back in there and keep out of sight!"

"Well", said the other fellow, "There is a bear in this hole!"

One of Mr. Russell's paintings that I enjoyed most was a small canvas probably 18 x 24 inches (most of his pictures were much larger) depicting a small group of Indians apparently returning from a hard day's hunting, with no game. The three in the foreground, riding one behind the other, looked disgruntled, and the weary ponies seemed too tired to lift their feet. This picture stood on the showcase in the hotel lobby most of one summer. I seldom passed it without stopping to look at it. I was standing by it one day when Mr. Russell came up

Scott -

Page 2

I told him how I liked it and mentioned several things about it-- especially the way the light fell along the side of the tired ponies. He was interested at once and asked brightly: "Do you know how I get that? I model those figures, set them in a line and set a lighted candle so as to make the light fall where I want it. It is much easier to model than to draw or paint."

I thought that glimpse of his technique might prove interesting-- not that I think it would be easy for many people. He had many small models cast in bronze. These are for sale at many resorts in Colorado. I recognized his work at once the first time I saw it at a hotel in Estes Park. He could take a lump of modeling clay in his hand, put it in his pocket and in a few minutes, bring out a bear, modeled with one hand and without seeing it.

I am enclosing a snapshot that I think very good. The pose is typical. He posed for almost everyone, if not everyone, who asked him. He always wore the high-heeled boots and the sash. The position of the hands shows to advantage the beautifully formed artistic fingers.

(Mrs.) Caroline Scott

"The Land of Shining Mountains," didn't mean much to me until I came to Lake McDonald in 1912. For beauty, nothing I had seen before or since could compare with it at that time. Coming from the east side of the mountains down south of the Yellowstone River, I couldn't get used to so much water and all of it good to drink. When I first saw Lake McDonald, I thought to myself there sure is one pothole that won't dry up in summer.

In 1913, I worked for Johnny Weightman driving stage. There were three of us drivers—Mart Sibley, Bill Berry and myself. Cap Lanneau was barn boss that summer.

In 1914 and 1915 I guided in the Park. I worked for Joe Rogers who had a string of horses at Lewis's Hotel and also a ranch up on Camas. Joe was a swell fellow and many of the old timers worked for him at one time or another. Some of them were: Walt Gibb, Boots Combs, Earl Doverspike, Cy Bellows, Hugh McGuire, Sam Sonsevere, and Fally Brayton. Fally Brayton was foreman of the outfit when I worked there.

Many times I left this country for what I thought were richer fields in the city, but there was always that something that drew me back. Call it contentment, or what you like, this country has a drawing power that is hard for some of us to resist.

Although not an old timer myself, I have become richer in my appreciation of the country for knowing some of them.

by Cal Tidrick

McDonnell - 1

The first visit of Mrs. McDonnell, myself and our son Robert H., then eight years old, to Glacier Park, was in July 1913 - three years after its creation as a national park. We came up a winding dirt road from Belton through heavy timber perfumed by odors from pine, spruce, fir and cedar. The country seemed alive with deer, many darting across the road in front of the two-seated surrey driven by John Weightman. We were thrilled by the first sight of beautiful Lake McDonald 38 years ago and have since then made our first season's approach each year by this same winding road.

At the dock was the boat awaiting its load of passengers and freight, with Eddie Cruger in charge of the woodburning craft, the "Eli Whitney", which was later wrecked on the east shore of the lake.

While the freight was being loaded on the boat, I thought I would catch a few trout. The boat left me behind and my wife asked Eddie Cruger, "Where is my husband?" He replied, "Have you got a husband?" "Yes, and I need him." He replied, "You can easily get another in Montana." After a little more argument, Eddie backed the boat up and I got on the boat with two fine trout.

On account of similarity of names, many of our visiting friends ask if the Lake was named after us. To those we reply that the Lake was not named after us - but before us.

Our love and admiration for the place is proved by 38 annual visits — only missing one season. We recall with pleasant memories, the charm of the Lake before the road was built. We often watched the visitors, many clad in bloomers, disembark from the boat and climb the hill to the hotel. The after-dinner pow-wows by the Eaton party were participated in by Charlie Russell, John Lewis, Howard Eaton, Mary Roberts Rhinehart, Judge Bolinger, and others. These events will never be forgotten.

The building of the highway and circling of the first automobile around the hotel wiped out the primitive beauty of the spot in the minds of many. Such picturesque characters as George Snyder, Charlie Howe, Frank Geduhn and Frank Kelly added to the early pleasures.

Frank Kelly, who piloted the Emeline for years, had just tied up at the Apgar dock one day when the first motorcycle ever to appear in the Park, noisily zoomed up to the dock. It was a new-fangled outfit to all of us. "How fast will she go?" asked Mr. Kelly. "Get on behind," said the young dare-devil rider. Mr. Kelly got on, and off they sped at a terrific pace. Mr. Kelly's coat tails stood straight out, his hat blew off, but with arms clasped around the driver, he hung on for dear life. He gasped afterwards, "I never expected to get back alive!"

Mr. and Mrs. Kelly spent their entire winters at the Lake. They jointly built most of their cabins. Then both caught the flu, which proved fatal and they passed away on the same day. It was Mr. Kelly's wonderful description of the beauty on the Lake in mid-winter that led me to make a trip into the Park in the wintertime. On an eastbound

railroad trip in February 22, I asked the conductor to stop his train and let us off at Belton. He protested, saying that the snow was fully ten feet deep, ice covered the Lake, and it was 18 degrees below zero. Finally he said, "If you're fool enough to go up to Lake McDonald, I'll stop the train and let you off, but remember you'll have to flag the train 24 hours later to get out."

I stepped off the train in the dark about 6:00 P.M. and Herb Chatterton, the most affable clerk I ever knew, was picking up the mail sack. He was startled to see me and exclaimed, "Macque, what in the world brings you up here at this time of the year?" I explained my desire to see the lake in winter. "Will you join me in skiing across the ice and up to the Lewis Hotel tomorrow?" I asked. His reply was, "Oh, no! We see too much winter right here, but come over to our cabin for the night and we'll fit you out for the trip." That evening he repaired his skis and made me a pike pole with a headless steel spike in one end and a leather wrist thong in the middle for twisting around my wrist to keep me from falling through thin ice at air holes.

I set out at the first break of dawn, through the woods for Apgar, not disturbing Herb and his wife, intending to breakfast with Charlie Howe and his squaw wife, who lived in a cabin at Apgar. After a loud knocking at the door, Charlie Howe opened the door with a revolver in his hand. He was naturally surprised at any visitor, especially at that early hour. He put away his gun and we three had a fine breakfast--venison, smoked fish, toast, and hot coffee. Charlie Howe instructed me to hit it straight across the lake on the ice which was about 24 inches thick and perfectly safe. He warned me that, when the sun came out the ice would crack and pop under my weight, but there would be no need for fear. I couldn't help being scared by the loud cracks under my feet, but my worst scare came when I noticed a large coyote following me at about 100 yards distance. The coyote would stop when I would stop, always keeping his distance. He was merely waiting for me to fall down. I passed close by a herd of at least one hundred deer playing on the ice and drinking water at an air hole in the ice. I got some good snapshot pictures of the deer. I arrived at the Lake McDonald Hotel about 11:00 A.M., going to the cabin then and still used by the caretakers.

The caretakers were very surprised to see me. The snow was about ten feet deep, just about up to the eaves, making it impossible to get into our cabin, which is the cabin now owned and occupied by Frank Stewart and built for us by Eddie Cruger in 1918.

The beauty of the place in winter can hardly be described. The heavy snow still remained on the branches of most of the trees. The sun glistening on the white snow made a wonderful picture. I don't think it would take too much encouragement to get visitors to see Glacier Park in mid-winter.

My trip back to Belton was made the same afternoon. Here I made a big mistake for I should have stayed overnight with the three caretakers. I exchanged about ten pounds of magazines for about ten pounds of trout caught through a hole in the ice cut there by the caretaker.

Herb Chatterton, to my pleasant surprise, was waiting at the Apgar dock on a saddle horse, with a hand sled for my use. This hand sled ride was without doubt the most pleasurable ride any human being ever made. Herb Chatterton in some way just knew how tired I would be after my long trip.

We just had time to flag the evening eastbound train but I was so tired and exhausted that I had to have two trainmen assist me to the platform. My only casualties were temporary loss of several toenails but it was worth it all to see Lake McDonald in mid-winter.

by R. E. McDonnell

Our first visit to Glacier Park was during the summer of 1915 when we were guests for three weeks of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Davidson. Clarence Davidson was solicitor for the Park at that time and Administration Headquarters were at Fish Creek.

We lived in a tent with a board floor during our visit. There was no road to the head of the Lake but we had several nice trips in the government motor boat "Janet" that summer. The next time we lived in Colonel Nolan's cabin at the head of the Lake and by the following year we had bought the Eaton cabin from Mr. John Lewis. This is the site where our present cabin stands.

The two things that stand out in my memory of those years of Apgar, were Charlie Howes' cabin built of vertical logs and the boat landing which commanded the magnificent view of the mountains at the head of the Lake. Another memorable event on those trips from Butte to the cabin was the trip through the beautiful cedars from Belton to Apgar. We usually arrived late in the evening and it did seem as if their branches touched the sky.

It was a great loss to the beauty of the Park when the cedars were burned in the 1929 fire.

In those days, we rarely left the Lake during the entire summer.

We got our supplies and mail at the store at the rear of Lewis' hotel.

Another unique thing about the Park is that nothing else seems to matter excepting the things one is doing up here. The happenings of the world seem far away and of little consequence. One of the very young grandchildren felt this when he said, "Why, Mother, I did that yesterday", and his mother said "No, Tommy, you did that last year". All the intervening time and events had vanished from his mind.

This is the fascination of the place that brings us back year after year.

...by Lulu Wheeler

(Mrs. Burton K. Wheeler)

When I first saw Lake McDonald, there was a narrow road from Belton to the Lake just wide enough for a wagon to pass between the trees. There were not very many places wide enough for two wagons to pass, with the branches interlocking overhead.

There were one or two cabins on the shore and a temporary dock located just east of the outlet where the Kelley and Snider boats landed. There were no trees cut for miles around and no fire scars on any of the mountains.

It was just as it had been since the beginning of time. An old trapper's trail skirted the east shore of the Lake and little did one visualize that in a few short years such a change could be possible. The primeval beauty, that was there such a short time ago, is gone.

But those who are left, who were lucky enough to see all just as the Creator had fashioned it so many, many moons ago, can fully realize what a great privilege was theirs.

By Jim Whilt

Recollections of Lake McDonald

There is little I can add to the intensely interesting reminiscences I have read in your "History of Apgar", since I never spent any time at the foot of Lake McDonald, except long enough to get off John Weightman's horse stage and onto the steam-boat, the "F. I. Whitney", to go to Geduhn's landing at the head of the Lake. But I knew practically all the oldtimers -- and by that term I mean those who were there years before Glacier National Park was created in 1920 -- mentioned in your "History" and many others.

I first came to Lake McDonald as a high school kid from Kalispell with my father, W. C. Whipps, and my mother and younger sister, in the summer of 1902. We came by train from Kalispell to Belton, by aforesaid stage to the foot of the Lake, that is, Apgar, and by above-mentioned steamer to the head of the Lake, where we had one of Frank Geduhn's cabins for four seasons. Then in 1906 my father bought several acres from the homestead of Geduhn, next to the place Charlie Sanford had bought on Geduhn's north line, and that spring built a two-story cabin, upon which Charlie Sanford, Eddie Cruger and others, whose names I no longer recall, worked.

Our family spent part or all of the summer in that place, which we called "Wissahickon" from 1906 to about 1926, when my mother became so ill we could not go up there. I myself spent a part of each summer there until 1917, when we entered the first World War, after which I was overseas until the winter of 1921. I have been there several summers, and after father died in 1933, my sister and I sold "Wissahickon" in 1934 to Dr. Aronow, and it is still the Aronow place.

The highway did not reach the head of Lake McDonald until 1923 or 1924. When we spent our honeymoon at the Whipps place at the head of the Lake in 1922, my wife and I drove as far as the foot of the Lake -- Apgar -- rented a garage to store our car in there, and took a boat to our dock at the head of the Lake. I think the boat at that time was the "Emmaline" run by Frank Kelly, though it might have been a later one. At any rate, I rode the "Emmaline" a great many times.

As our neighbors, we had, among others, Senator Thomas J. Walsh and his family, who built next to us on the east about 1908, and the Senator Wheelers and their six children who were west of us perhaps four hundred yards on grounds leased from the Park Service. Mrs. Genevieve Walsh Gudger, the senator's widowed daughter, still owns the Walsh place, and my sister and I, also my wife, spent a few days with her last summer. We were invited this year again, but could not go. Genevieve is spending the present winter here in Helena.

W. C. Whipps, my father, was one of the principal advocates for the creation of Glacier National Park. He kept at it for several years with Senator Thomas H. Carter, and I have a large correspondence between my father and the senator to substantiate my statement. I have seen a good deal of the world, but never anything to rival the grandeur and beauty of Lake McDonald, and the peaks at the head of it, all of which I have climbed, except Goat Mountain.

.....by W. O. Whipps

Gudger - 1

Lake McDonald, Montana
May 6, 1951

My dear young Historians:

So you want a story from me of my experiences at Lake McDonald. I am glad to comply but I am bound to admit that, as I begin to write and realize that those cover fifty-one years this summer, I am a bit aghast. You will realize that I was, therefore, quite a little girl when I first came to Lake McDonald. Perhaps my memory is not always quite accurate. You may have to check with others to fill in some names and verify some dates, but I'll do my best.

My home was in Helena, Montana. In the summer of 1899, my Father went with friends on a hunting trip into the area of what is now Glacier Park and came eventually to the head of Lake McDonald where he spent a few days at Frank Geduhn's cabin camp, which was already a going concern. He was so deeply impressed by the great beauty of the country and its opportunities for rest and recreation that, before he left, he made reservations for a cabin for the next summer and brought my Mother and me here.

It was quite a trip. There was then no railroad from Great Falls to Shelby, as there has now been for many years. We left Helena by sleeping car in the late afternoon when the westbound main-line train came through. Of these early days in Havre I can remember little. We always paid a visit to the Devlins and the Hollands, - both of these families later summer visitors at the head of Lake McDonald in the cabin called "Havre", where there was always delicious homemade candy. And someone in the town had a pack of thoroughbred greyhounds which were used in tracking down coyotes. I always insisted upon spending an hour with the dogs. It was a long slow haul up the Rockies in those days, two locomotives before and one behind to push. And the train was always late. Half asleep, we would be pushed off of the cars onto the cinder bank at Belton. It was pitch dark, with only a faint light at the station way up ahead where the locomotive always stopped for the convenience of the trainmen but not of the passengers. We'd load up with our hand luggage and stumble across the tracks and down to the very primitive hotel which still stands in the old town of Belton. But no forests ever smelled so good, no air was ever so invigorating, no stars were ever so brilliant as those of this lovely country to my nine-year-old nose and eyes.

Shortly after eight, a horse-drawn stage carried us to the foot of the Lake.. I recall very well that Mr. Weightman was later the owner of this stage line but I cannot remember with whom we made our first trips. As you now travel the broad paved roads which serve our area, as you pass the many homes and buildings which now abound in and around West Glacier and Headquarters and Apgar, and particularly as you contemplate the appalling destruction of the fire of 1929, it is hard to picture the density of the forests as I first saw them. The road from Belton to the foot of the Lake was a slender ribbon, the trees so close that my father, standing in the open coach, pulled white and brown moss from the trees for me. My dolls all became blondes with the wigs I

I made them from this moss. The wagon trip was so deep with needles and moss and leaves that the hooves of the horses made only a gentle clop-clop as they sped along.

And then suddenly the road emerged from the forest and the whole beauty of the entire Lake was before us. I have always regretted that the present highway deprives the newcomer of that first entrancing view. The funny old steamer was waiting for us at the dock. You have seen pictures of it I know. My memory is of a high boiler set in the exact middle of the boat, into the flaming maw of which the firemen constantly fed cordwood sticks. And the passengers sat on benches around the sides and were showered with sparks from the engine.

I recall well Mr. Geduhn's later efforts to maintain an adequate dock at the head of the Lake. But try as he might, every couple of years it was broken up by the winter storms and ice. At any rate, we always managed to get ashore even though we sometimes got wet doing so. All the original cabins are still standing though the larger ones, nearer the creek, were added later. Of that first summer, my Mother wrote an article entitled "Picturesque Lake McDonald" which was published in the January 1901 issue of a magazine called "Rocky Mountain Magazine". It is the first article of which I know extolling the virtues of this area as the ideal vacation land and is illustrated by her own snap shots. I have one copy of it which I shall be glad to let you see, if you care to.

We came summer after summer, with an occasional one out to visit other much-talked-about resorts. But none appealed to us as Lake McDonald. So, as you know, my father in 1909 followed the example already set by Mr. Conlon and Mr. Whipps of Kalispell and purchased a small home-site from Mr. Geduhn where in 1910 he built the cedar lodge which we still occupy. Of these later years you need no story from me so I'll go back to the early ones.

This area as I first saw it, was already a Forest Reserve. I cannot speak too enthusiastically of the utter devotion and loving care with which these early Forest Rangers, first Frank Geduhn, then Frank Liebig, guarded their territory. Trails had been cut to the head of Avalanche Lake, to Sperry Glacier and Lincoln Pass, to Paradise Canyon following the west side of McDonald Creek, to Trout and Arrow Lakes. One man cruised the whole area. Each morning at daybreak Mr. Geduhn would start forth on his old black horse, his little dog trotting beside, with an axe and a saw, a little package of food and a blanket roll if, on the longer trips he would have to stay out overnight. Bear in mind that in those days there were no roads to give one a start toward Avalanche or Arrow Lakes. The whole trip had to be made on horseback. But by rotating the routes taken he kept the trails in perfect condition with never a downed tree to interfere with the visitor's progress. Yet, in spite of his strenuous days, he was always ready to join the guests of his camp at the campfire where he would keep everyone entertained for hours with his tales of adventure. Or on rainy nights he would get out his old fiddle and play and call for square dances in which even the children joined.

Of course we all rode in those days. Hiking as a national sport did not come into prominence till long after. George Snyder maintained a small hotel right on the site of the present one. I do not believe that it had more than half a dozen sleeping rooms. On the first floor there was a central room with a huge iron stove in the middle, a small dining room, kitchen and a couple of guest rooms. A second floor had the remainder of tourist accommodations. When later Mr. John Lewis bought the Snyder homestead and built the main section of the present hotel, he moved the original building back to the top of the terrace where it was used as a store until some years after, when it burned.

Two horse companies operated at that time, as I recall it. The Comeau homestead was near at hand and had a fine string of horses for rent, with excellent guides who really knew the country. And the other string had headquarters close to the hotel somewhere I remember chiefly because of the guide Uncle Jeff. Whether he was the owner of the outfit or not I do not recall. But he was a most delightful gentleman, already quite elderly, and he was an experienced woodsman who knew every inch of this territory. We had many trips with him as we did also with the Comeau outfit. Eddie Cruger, son of Mrs. Comeau, was then a young man busy with the boats and various building operations but we always persuaded him to go with us on our trips if we could because everything was made much happier and more interesting by his presence. He taught me how to make a fir bough bed, how to cook over a campfire without burning the food to a crisp, how to paddle a canoe, how to climb with the least effort and fatigue, how to watch for and identify the wild creatures and countless other things. When we built our home in 1910, Eddie was in charge of the construction and literally hand-picked every log which went into the house.

Our favorite trips were to Sperry Glacier and to Arrow Lake. The former was a real adventure in those days. We would set up camp in the grassy field at the foot of the wall, then begin the ascent following a goat trail most of the time. And there was no ironladder or steps cut in the last big cliff then. It was a hand-over-hand job. The ice and snow field extended below almost to the rim of the drop into Avalanche Basin. Arrow Lake was the great fishing spot. We would take pack horses with tents and other equipment and camp for three or four days at the head of the Lake. A deep hole dug in a perpetual snowbank would provide a natural refrigerator for the catch. I have often seen my father with three pound-and-a-half fish on his line at one time. That was a real struggle.

We made many delightful friends during those years. The Whipps and the Griffiths of Kalispell were regular visitors at Geduhn's camp. The Faeths of Kansas City came every year. Miss Plank, who lived for so many years at Kelly's Camp was a sister of Mrs. Faeth. The Conlons of Kalispell early bought land from Mr. Geduhn and built their own home. A crowd from Havre had a camp on the site of the present Ranger Station, the old station being in the open space next to the present Wheeler property. To "Havre" came Mr. and Mrs. Devlin, Mr. and Mrs. Holland, Mr. and Mrs. Garruth who contributed so much to the gaiety of the summers and the Misses Swank of Great Falls, now Mrs. Presnell

Gudger - 4

and Mrs. Greenlee. Of course the Comeaus, the Kellys, and later the Lewises were permanent residents.

Mr. Kelly's gasoline launches eventually replaced the old slow steamer. Outboard motors were invented and our movements were less restricted. It was quite a change to be able to chug over to the hotel in twenty minutes for mail and supplies instead of rowing for the better part of two hours coming and going. However, you will understand that, until the road was put through, we had little contact with the good folks at the foot of the Lake. I recall well

Charlie Howe because he was Dr. Houston's predecessor in arranging fishing trips on the Middle Fork and North Fork and Mr. Weightman who ran the coach line.

As time went on, Mr. Lewis enlarged his hotel and built guest cabins. Several individuals purchased small plots near the hotel and built homes, Mr. and Mrs. Talbot, Mr. and Mrs. Thorne, Jr., and Mrs. Smith of Omaha, the McDonnells of Kansas City. Wilfred Bose became a permanent member of the colony. The Chadournes built "Hollybourne" on land bought from the Kelly homestead. A family by the name of Easton from Illinois, I think, leased ground from the Forest Service and built the house which was the original Wheeler home..

And so time has changed the way of living and the residents at the head of Lake McDonald. Of the friends of my childhood, only Mrs. Comeau, Eddie Cruger, Verne Kelly, Mrs. Presnell and Mrs. Greenlee remain still on the Lake. But of the settlers of the intermediate period many are still here, loving every inch of the ground and proud and eager to share with newcomers all the beauties of this lovely land.

With all good wishes for the success of your enterprise, I am

Yours cordially,

Genevieve Walsh Gudger
(Senator Walsh's daughter)

When we lived in Minnesota our pet dream was to have a summer home in Glacier Park.

In 1916 we came to Great Falls, Montana, and in 1918 we bought lots of the Apgar Homestead on the west shore of Lake McDonald.

There were no roads or highways from the east side of the mountains and we had to come to Belton by train. Dad Sibley would meet the midnight train and take us out to our place.

Eddie Kruger built our garage up on the North Fork which we used as a cabin for two years, and it is now our guest cabin near the big cabin.

After a few years we could ship our car across on the Great Northern.

The place was all down timber and swamp, with only a narrow path over and under logs to get down to the shore. It was Dr. Coulter's great delight to clean out springs, dig ditches to drain swampy places, burn the down timber - it was years of hard work but he enjoyed it. It was always his vacation time, and he never brought his medical case along. The family was supposed to stay well, and we did.

But there were emergencies - at 7 o'clock one morning Mrs. Weightman rowed over from Apgar with her granddaughter who had a fishhook in a finger. Another time someone brought a child who had suddenly broken out with a rash. One evening one of the bus boys came to the door at midnight to call Doctor for help - two men in a car had gone off the road just across the Lake. One had crawled out by the time the bus went by, and the bus boys pulled the other one out and gave him artificial respiration all the way up to our garage - but he was beyond help. Dr. Coulter used to say that there was never a dull moment at the cabin.

One year when we came to the Lake, a young man was sitting on the big bench near the shore - he told us he was from the CC Camp -- was shell shocked in World War I - and loved to come to our place because it was so quiet there, and the lovely trees and ferns and springs reminded him of fairyland. I'm afraid we broke the spell because we never saw him again.

We kept one spring just for sprinkling, with a very long hose, and kept it running day and night. One morning we didn't see the hose, and found it wound in and out among the big trees - all chewed up - some bear must have had a good time during the night, or maybe he thought it was a snake.

Many evenings we would row over to the Methodist Epworth Camp to listen to their programs but always kept a lighted lantern on the shore to show us where to land in the dark.

Coulter - 2

On bright moonlight nights the big boat would make trips to the Lewis Hotel where the passengers could dance. One night it got so pitch dark before they got back to Apgar that it took them about an hour to find the dock - there wasn't a light to guide them and that was before the days of flashlights and spotlights.

Charlie Russell and Joe DeLong had a special invitation to the Dempsey-Gibbons fight in Shelby. Mrs. Russell was to meet them at the Belton depot the next night at midnight. But they evidently found no place to stay so came home the same night; no one was there to meet them. So they started to walk home - it was one of those terrible dark nights and they had no flashlight or lantern. Mr. Russell missed the walk around the barn near the road and fell down into the corral. He shouted a warning to Joe but he was a deaf-mute and could not hear him so came tumbling down on Mr. Russell, who suffered from a back injury all that summer. But the next day we all heard the story of the fight.

At the time of the earthquake, we were all in our boat nearing the Apgar shore, when suddenly big, wild waves came up and we could not land. We did not know what was wrong until people came out of the cabins and told us it was an earthquake. We were frightened and started right back for home as soon as the Lake was quiet enough. We found Mr. and Mrs. Russell sitting on our porch. Mr. Russell said he was sitting on their porch when the shock came, and thought he was getting sick, but when he saw Nancy holding onto the door jamb, he knew what it was. Then, as we were talking, the second big shock came.

One nice summer day my sister invited the Russells and their guests over for a funny dress-up picnic party. Powder River Jack and Kitty Lee lived in the Russell guest cabin that summer and they came too. In the evening they went out in a boat near the shore and played the guitar and sang for the party. Many people from Apgar came over in their boats to listen to them.

We have always loved the place, especially in the early days when all the residents at the foot end of the Lake were just like one big family.

Now the grandchildren love it as much as we did, and we are always thankful for the many happy years on Lake McDonald and at Apgar.

--Anna Coulter
(Mrs. Charles F. Coulter)

Big Prairie, on the North Fork

Big Prairie! What a lovely view!
Few have known it, I declare!
God, the Creator, always knew,
And placed the mountains there.

He put the violets in the woods,
The bluebells, nodding in the breeze;
The red paintbrush along the roads,
And the aspen trees.

Dashing mountain streams, He gave,
With fish for the angler's line.
To please the human eye, he gave
The yellow pine.

He gave the great broad-antlered moose,
Denison of the swamps.
The green and grassy uplands,
Where the young deer romps.

Snow-capped mountains, forests, brooks,
He gave for our delight.
Bright-hued flowers, soft blue skies,
With birds in flight.

Harriet S. Walsh
West Glacier, Mont.
April 5, 1954

The name Apgar will always bring back the happiest of memories to us three Pratts. We had come out from Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, to visit my brother on his ranch in eastern Montana shortly after Col. Pratt had returned home at the end of World War I. My brother suggested we should visit Lake McDonald before we started back to Kansas. Mrs. Apgar had five comfortable little log cabins facing the lake and we were fortunate to get the last one near McDonald Creek, where we could watch deer crossing in the evening. The quietness of the majestic forest surrounding us and the peace and beauty of the lake and mountains was to Col. Pratt like stepping out of hell into heaven.

It was most entertaining to sit down by the old wharf and watch Charlie Russell do rope tricks and hear him talk over old cowboy days with old friends. It was more interesting than any book we could read. Our ten year old boy got the thrill of his life when he and his father went down the river on a fishing trip with Charlie Howe who had wonderful tales to tell of happenings around Lake McDonald. I wish they could be written in a book for others to enjoy.

Later on a beautiful little hotel was built by Sid Gold and his brother Douglas so more people came to enjoy our beautiful lake and mountains. I overheard a lady remark one evening while a number of us were sitting out on the balcony at the hotel, "Sister, we have seen all the beauties of Switzerland, but nothing compares with looking up Lake McDonald into the Garden Wall."

Col. & Mrs. Raymond S. Pratt

I have been asked to write a short chapter for the Apgar history, about my acquaintance with Charlie and Maggie Howe. So to use Charlie's byword - "As a fellow says!" I first met the Howes in 1914. That fall my husband and I went on several fishing trips with Charlie and for many years after that - Charlie loved to fish - he always said: "Get to the ripples, that's where the big ones are" and that was true. I remember that fall of 1914 the three of us ate fried chicken on the banks of the big Eddy in McDonald Creek on Thanksgiving Day. It was warm and sunny and we did not even wear a coat. On this day we caught three Dolly Varden trout - one weighed 16 lbs and the other two 12 and 13 lbs. I remember Charlie put a good sized stone in the mouth of the big one in order to get the hook out of his throat. The next two years we had many trips together and in the winter and early spring we used to row up to the head of the lake and fish in the inlet. On these trips we packed the boat full of bedding and food to last 2-3 days. We usually slept in one of Frank Geduhn's cabins.

The first two winters I lived in Belton, I was alone much of the time as my husband worked for the railroad and went out on survey trips for 2 to 3 weeks at the time - so I would ski up to the lake and stay all night with the Howes. Often Charlie went out on trips - hunting or trapping - and Maggie and I would exchange visits. Maggie was a fine housekeeper and a good cook and for our breakfast we usually had fried venison and sour dough hot cakes. Maggie was half Chippewa Indian and she and Charlie both came from Northern Wisconsin. She often told me of the hardships she endured those first years when they lived in a crude log cabin on the point near where the house of Athearns now stands. She was only 16 years old when she came to Montana. However, by the time I met them, they lived in a nice cedar log cabin, very rustic. They even had the luxury in having a sink and a hand water pump in the kitchen. This cabin was located nearer Apgar. Charlie took tourists on river trips and his starting point was usually below what is now Park Headquarters. He always kept two boats there, one on each side of the river, and he would ford across to save walking the long way around by the old bridge to get to the store or depot. In case he had gotten a ride, I would often take him across the river (so as to have a boat on each side) when he was ready to go home. This trick I learned from him - we only used a long pole to guide the boat across, and the idea was to start a short distance upstream so as to land in the right place on the other side and this I could do quite well. It always pleased Charlie.

He was a tall, slender man - and I would say, homely features - but one forgot that after talking to him because he had a keen sense of humor and a sharp wit. Joe Cosley, the old Indian trapper, came to Howe's a lot and in many ways they were much alike. I guess it was because they both had lived so close to nature and also had lived from nature for years. After the 1929 fire, Charlie felt the Lake and surroundings were spoiled for him and as soon as he sold out he moved away. He came back a few times and he told me that his heart and old memories were always at Lake McDonald and the woods and trails he knew so well.

Mrs. Bud Henderson

PANORAMA

Horace Brewster, his wife and son Eddie (then 2 years old) arrived at Belton, August 15, 1910. Supt. Logan was expecting Horace and met us at the train. We went to Dow's Hotel for a few days. We could not see a thing but smoke, smoke, all over the west. It was the big 1910 fire.

My husband sent us to Spokane to his mother to stay awhile. He was stationed at Fish Creek as a Ranger. Six months later Sonny and I returned to Belton. Jack Weightman was at the station to meet trains so we hopped on his coach to Lake McDonald. The road was very rough; we were glad when we reached Apgar. Where next? Kelly's motor boat to Fish Creek Station.

We were moved to every station on the west side of Glacier National Park: Logging Creek, Indian Creek, Kishenelin, three miles to the Canadian line. This cabin burnt to the ground and we lost everything. Horace bought four saddle horses and one Park horse in order to patrol his district. We went along with him.

Our next post was North Fork Station where the North and South Forks meet - the wildest and hardest station in G.N.P. What a life for a cowman who had lived on a saddle since he was 15 years old! Now he had to learn to use Bear Paw snowshoes and skis. This was too much for Horace. He wanted to resign and go back to the Prairies. Not me! I had learned to love the mountains, trees, creeks, streams, and the wild life, etc. I had snowshoes and skis too and traveled in the winter months with him. It was very hard going up and down hills, creeks to cross, etc. It was a thrill for me but not for him.

Well, we tramped the trails together, winter and summer, did our beat. Finally we were moved to Headquarters.

Clemence M. Brewster

Travelling the Old Trails with Apgar School

My first visit to Belton, Apgar, and Lake McDonald, was in May 1893. There I found Ed Dow, Charlie and Maggie Howe. At the foot of the lake were Esli and Dimie Apgar and their mother. George Snyder and Ed Price were at Snyders, the present site of the Lake McDonald Hotel. Frank Geduhn was at the head of Lake McDonald.

The Apgars had two cabins then and were building two more. Geduhns had two small cabins and were building one more. I was with Denis Comeau. I returned to Kale McDonald later that year in July with Comeau and his string of saddle and pack horses.

There was no trail up the Lake so we fought our way up through the McGee Meadow to Camas Creek, up through the Christenson and Roger's Meadows, past Rogers Lake to Trout Lake. From there we went over Camas Ridge to the head of Lake McDonald. There Comeau had a small cabin and had started to build a larger one.

We handled the Sperry Party of '98. Burt Bryant and Joe Rogers came in with a string of horses and were with us. Lou Hofins cooked for the outfit with my help. Most of the party were from St. Paul, Minneapolis and Cleveland.

That was the year that L.O. Vaught and his wife brought their first "Jacksonville party" to the Lake. They camped where Sprague Creek Campground is now. I was there each summer thereafter through 1905 and handled Sperry parties and Jacksonville parties each year, as well as others who came to the Lake. I met Hamlin Garland there in '99. He was on his way to Alaska.

"Uncle Jeff" and Tom Walsh brought in some horses and worked with us in 1900 and 1901. Forest Hardin worked with me in 1903 and 1904. Eli Brunnet was with me in 1905.

John Lewis bought the Snyder place in 1905. I worked for him from the fall of 1905 through 1917, building log cabins in the winter and working on boats on the dock in summers. In the summers of 1911, 12, and 13, I worked on the dock for Kelly and Lewis. There I had many pleasant hours with Charlie Russell who had a wonderful sense of humor of a "David Harum" type. Because his humor was tempered with a great understanding of his fellow men and human nature in general, he could find some good trait in even the worst people.

That region became a park in 1910. Major Logan, who had been Indian Agent on the Belknap Reservation, became the first Park Superintendent and brought Henry Hutchings who had been his clerk. So "Hutch" became the first clerk in Glacier National Park. He was joined by "Hutchie".

Haney Vought was the first surveyor. Mae Vought had a tent at the north end of the old log bridge across the Middle Fork which was the first checking station.

Major Logan also brought Horace Brewster to the Park and, of course, Mrs. Brewster and Eddie who was about two years of age.

Bill Bose came up to work for Lewis the season of 1908. He built the first telephone line into the North Fork for the Park Service. Then he operated boats for Kelly and Lewis.

I worked for the Park Service awhile in the fall of 1917 and the summer of 1918 when the first four houses were built. I returned to them for a month in 1919. During 1920 and 1921 I built the Sherwood Place. I came back to the Park Service in April, 1923, under Superintendent Ross R. Eakin and stayed with the Service until the end of September, 1951, when I had reached the age of seventy and had to retire.

I wish I had enough years ahead of me to live through the whole era again. I saw that whole region develop from an almost untouched area to its present state and have friends scattered about the country I first met at Lake McDonald.

I hope that all of you children who attend Apgar School will be able to look back from your later years with as many fond memories and happy thoughts of your younger days spent about Lake McDonald as the years I spent there are so filled for me.

Sincere good wishes for each and every one of you on your journey through life.

"Eddie" Cruger

April 22, 1954

A Short Side Trip on the Old Trails with Apgar School

Frank Geduhn was one of the early arrivals at Lake McDonald. He was of German birth. He went from his native land to British Guinea, South America, where he spent about five years. He came to the United States and finally to Montana and Flathead Valley in 1894.

He joined Milo B. Apgar at the foot of Lake McDonald. At this time John Elsher had "squatted" on the place at the head of the Lake, later known as Geduhn's. Elsner, who was known as "Dutch John", decided to make his home at the little lake and meadow east of the McDonald Creek Bridge now known as John's Lake. So when he changed his location, Geduhn moved to the head of the Lake to locate a homestead. I met him first in 1898. He was later a Forest Ranger for a couple of years ranging from McDonald Country to Waterton Lake.

He was a good friend, a conscientious, well-meaning gentleman. He built cabins and had a well known and well liked cabin camp. He was a rather good violinist. His wants were not many and he loved the forests and mountains. Later he sold most of his homestead, built the houses now owned by Jack Hoag and bought a quarter section of land at Oswego, Montana, where he raised flax.

While still living at Lake McDonald, he was quite an entertainer with his violin and was quite a narrator of improbable stories of the woods and mountains, the hunting trails, and traplines - stories that harmed no one, but kept his summer guests interested.

He married late in life a Miss Sherrard of Great Falls. They made their home where the Hoags now live in summer.

He was a good pioneer, a good friend, and I am glad to have known him. May he reap a good man's reward in the Happy Hunting Grounds.

Sincerely,

E.J. Cruger

John, J. Walsh
West Glacier, Mont.

I first saw the North Fork country in the year 1905. I went up and stayed awhile with an old pioneer by the name of Thomas Jefferson or "Uncle Jeff," as we all knew him. He was a pioneer of Montana and also of the North Fork. He had a log cabin just this side of Logging Creek. It still stands on the Jean Sullivan place.

Uncle Jeff was an Indian scout in the early history of Montana and he was the first Park Ranger, having been appointed by Mr. Chapman, the first acting Superintendent of Glacier Park. This lasted only until Major Logan was officially appointed Superintendent and then Horace Brewster was the first Park Ranger under Logan.

I picked out my homestead at the foot of Big Prairie and applied for it under the Act of June 11, 1906. I made my application on the 14th of June in that year.

I farmed for a number of years. I plowed up the prairie land with a walki plow and seeded the grain by hand. I raised barley, oats, wheat and a little of some other grains. I have raised as fine barley and oats as you would see in any other part of the State. I cut my grain for hay as no threshing machine was ever up in that country. I had cattle and horses and I fed them grain hay for several years. I finally seeded the land down to Timothy.

At one time, I had some very fine beef cattle and good milk cows. One summer we milked nine cows. We had a cream separator.

I made a success of my cattle until the depression of the early thirties struck us. I finally got rid of them. We always had some chickens and at one time I tried pigs but was soon glad to get rid of them.

I used to haul freight up into Canada for the oil company. Had some pretty rough trips with my four-horse team.

I worked on seasonal work, on fires, etc. for the Forest Reserve and also for the Park Service from 1907 off and on. In 1934 I was foreman in a CCC camp and worked at that for six years.

In the winter of 1942 I went to Seattle and worked there during World War II. I worked in the ship yards. I came back to the North Fork in 1946 and that fall, I started my house in Apgar, on a lot that I had previously purchased from the old Apgar estate. In the fall of 1948, we (my wife and I), moved into it and have made our home here ever since.

Truly yours,

John J. Walsh

Mrs. John J. Walsh
West Glacier, Mont.

I was asked to write something of my life on the North Fork. There were enough exciting events took place up there during my 27 years of residence, to fill a book but I can give only a very small part of it.

I made my first trip to the North Fork and Big Prairie on about the 24th and 25th of June, 1900. John and I went up on horseback. We stayed all night in Apgar with Mr. and Mrs. Dimy Apgar, Sr. The next day we started out and went as far as the W.L. Adair place.

We took some short cuts on the way and went over some narrow, rocky trails with such steep hills, one wondered how the horses could ever make it. I found out, that in a bad place, don't try to guide the horse but let him have his head and he will take you through. The horses that travelled that road usually showed lots of good horse-sense.

When we reached the Adair place, it was evening and we stayed all night there. Bill Adair and his wife Jessie ran a stopping place and a small store near where the Sullivan ranch is now. Early travellers going up and down that road will never forget Mrs. Adair's good meals.

We got home the next day and I was very tired, not being used to horseback riding so far.

When we reached Big Prairie, it looked beautiful to me after riding so far through thick timber.

Big Prairie is a stretch of open country, about four or five miles from north to south and about a mile to one and one-half miles from east to west. It lies along the east side of the North Fork of the Flathead River. Toward the east you could see the main range of the Rockies, snow-capped and very rugged. To the west was the Whitefish range, lower and covered with green timber. The grass on the Prairie at that season of the year was green and luxuriant. Wild flowers were blooming here and there.

We made many hard trips after that with wagon or sleigh. The road at that time left Apgar by way of a very steep hill that can still be seen near the Dwight Grist place. On the other side of McGee hill, we found another steep grade that shot us down onto an old corduroy bridge with a great bump. This corduroy bridge extended across a wet, boggy marsh called McGee Meadow. It was built by the very first travellers that took wagons into this mountainous country. Anaconda Hill was so steep the freighters for the Milwaukee Survey in the spring of 1909, had to use snubbing ropes to let the loads down the hill. The horses alone could not hold them.

We were soon established in our new home and began farming. We had milk cows and soon quite a herd of beef cattle. When we were both at home we milked the cows together but when John had to leave, I milked them alone. I made butter for a number of years. I used a big barrel churn, a butter worker, and a one-pound print. I sold my butter to people around the country and to Adair's store and the Belton Mercantile when it was in the old town of Belton.

Every spring we put in a garden and later in the summer the gophers took a good share of it. We trapped them and poisoned them but when we cleaned out a village of them, it was soon filled by others that moved in from the outside. When the gophers holed up in August, then the deer took over. We had to hurry in order to get any of it. The only thing they left entirely to us was the onions.

Every day through the summer, someone had to round up the cows. When no one else was there to do it, I chased through the woods after them. I often had to wade the creek, that is, branches of Indian Creek, or find a foot log which was not always handy.

We had neighbors all around us and we visited back and forth. When horses were not handy, we walked. People used to walk three, four, or five miles to visit a neighbor. That is why the people seldom needed a doctor in those days. They say walking is good exercise and most of us got our share of it.

I did all of my own baking as did all the other women up there. I made my own laundry soap for years, and sometimes made my own vinegar.

I was postmistress for the Kintla P.O. from July 1, 1918 until the latter part of December in 1925, when I asked to be released and it was discontinued.

In the winter the neighbors often got together and played cards or danced. Henry Covey or Frank Wurtz played the violin for us.

I was one of the election clerks in the North Fork precinct for nearly every election for about twelve years.

There was a great deal of controversy over the location of a school house, where to put roads, fences, etc., as there always is in a new country.

Mrs. John J. Walsh

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Glacier National Park
West Glacier, Montana

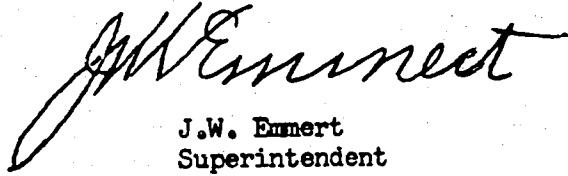
March 8, 1957

Mrs. Leona Harrington
West Glacier, Montana

Dear Mrs. Harrington:

Copies of the additional history of the Apgar area with which you recently furnished me are very much appreciated. This information is being turned over to Mr. Harry B. Robinson, our Park Naturalist, and will be incorporated as a permanent part of the Glacier National Park library.

Sincerely yours,



J.W. Emmert
Superintendent

STATE OF MONTANA
Office of the Governor

March 19, 1957

Mrs. Leona Harrington and Apgar School Pupils
West Glacier,
Montana

Dear Mrs. Harrington and Pupils:

Thank you very much for your thoughtful letter and the history of Apgar, which you collected.

Now that the Thirty-Fifth Montana Legislative Assembly has finished meeting and I am almost finished will all the bills on my desk, I plan to sit down one evening very soon and read this history.

I am well acquainted with Apgar and the Lake McDonald area since I came to Montana more than forty years ago and I want you to know how much I appreciate your sending me this information. When I am finished with it, I am certain Mrs. Aronson and our daughter, Rika, will also want to read it.

Very truly yours,

/s/ J. HUGO ARONSON
Governor of the State of
Montana

I came to Lake McDonald forty-one years ago for the first real vacation with my family. When I finished a term of court in 1915, presenting cases for the Government as U.S. Attorney for the Montana District, the presiding Federal Judge, George Bourquin, called me aside and told me I ought to get out in the mountains and get a rest. He said I was getting nervous and irritable and he was too. I had always assumed that if I left the office for more than a few days at a time the wheels of justice would stop. But I decided that if Judge Bourquin, who was widely known as a merciless taskmaster, would recommend a vacation, then it must be pretty obvious that I needed a rest.

I had often heard Senator Walsh talk of Lake McDonald as the ideal vacation spot. But it was a close friend, a fellow lawyer from Butte, who made our first trip to the Lake possible. Clarence Davidson, newly-appointed Park Commissioner had established a residence at Fish Creek, then headquarters for the Park administration. He invited us to come up and live in some tents in his back yard. We brought our three children, the youngest only one and one-half years old, some friends, Mr. and Mrs. A.A. Grorud (later Asst. Attorney General for Montana), and camped out at Fish Creek. We often fished from a raft at Howes Lake. And on every fishing trip we would take time to pick huckleberries. We made many short excursions around the foot of the lake.

We made our first trip to the head of the Lake when we were invited to Sunday dinner at Senator Walsh's cabin. We rode on the "Janet", a fast, trim launch owned by the government. There was the, of course, no road around the lake. When we landed at Geduhn's dock, quite a few people gathered around to meet us as it was always an occasion when a boat came up the lake. Other families who lived at the head of the lake included the Frank Geduhns, the Whipps', the Nolands, the Conllins, the Carruths and George Sherburne. Near the mouth of the river the Ladows operated a small resort hotel.

We made the trip to Sperry Glacier this first summer at the insistence of Clarence Davidson. As we neared the Glaicer, we ran into a snowstorm. Mrs. Wheeler's feet got so cold riding through the snow that she took off her shoes to warm her feet. Our guide turned out to be a photographer and was not of much help in explaining glacial formation to us.

During the next winter Col. Nolan offered us his cabin at the head of the lake for a month the following summer. Co. Nolan, former Attorney General for the state, had been associated with Senator Walsh in the practice of law. Nolan's cabin was located on the site of the present Clack Cabins. While we were there the summer of 1916, we got to know Bill Young, the ranger at the head of the lake. With his horse, he kept all the trails open in the upper McDonald area. Young suggested that we might be able to buy a deserted cabin next to the old ranger station. This cabin had been built by a hunter for lodging during the fall hunting season, but he had no use for it once the land was set aside as a national park. He had sold it to John Lewis, owner of the hotel, who in turn sold it to us.

During this summer of 1916, Mrs. Wheeler and I with two friends from Butte, a lawyer and a school teacher, went on a camping trip to Quartz Lake. We arrived there late one evening with just a few blankets and pots and pans. We found that Mr. Patterson, President of the National Cash Register Co., had already established an elaborate camp for his party on the shore of the lake. Thirteen pack horses carried the provisions and the company included a cook, doctor and a guide. Patterson's generous invitation to dinner at his camp was most welcome. He convinced Mrs. Wheeler that we should continue on over Brown's Pass. I protested that we had no food for such a trip but he gave us flour, potatoes, butter and the other staples we would need to carry us for a few more days. We traveled on and set up camp at the foot of Bowman Lake in a driving rain. In the morning we discovered a porcupine had chewed up our bridles so that we had to wire them together as best we could. Fishing at Bowman, I caught my first bull trout - little ones - but I thought that they were pickerel until I learned later they were Dolly Varden.

We went over Brown's Pass in the rain but could still enjoy the beautiful flowers that covered the pass. Down at the foot of Waterton we took refuge for the night in an old deserted shack along with a number of mice and rats. When we went to saddle up the next morning, the horses took advantage of our inexperience as wranglers, broke loose, and ran along the trail beside the lake, headed for Canada. I was finally able to catch them by running along the shore to drive them back down the trail.

When we returned over Big Flattop, we ran into snow. To our dismay, one of the horses got colic and just lay down in the snow apparently never to move again. But after awhile he got up and went on. That night we came upon an old barn and a dilapidated cabin. We took the cabin and a party of girls spent the night in the barn. We came on down Mineral Creek and McDonald Valleys without further incident. In spite of, or perhaps because of the bad weather and mishaps, this first camping trip through the park remains one of our pleasantest memories.

Upon our return, the children were full of the news of the big fire at the neighboring home of W.C. Whipps. The children had all been part of the bucket brigade from the lake organized by Bill Young, the ranger. The house was saved but not before extensive damage was done.

When we came the next summer in 1917, with four children, we were kept busy clearing the land around our newly-purchased cabin. In just the few years that the cabin had been unoccupied, the place had become a jungle of fallen logs and underbrush. On our way from Butte we had bought some furniture in Kalispell to furnish the cabin. We watched many a boat come up the lake before it was finally delivered. We had to make out most of the summer with just a few folding chairs and a couple of rough hewn benches that were left in the cabin. It was a small cabin but Mrs. Wheeler and I and the five children slept out every night and ate out on the screened front porch and put guests in the inside bedroom. In 1927 as the children grew larger and had increased in number to six, we built a sleeping cabin with large open screened areas so that we could continue to "sleep out". In 1942 we built a new cabin on the site of the original cabin.

Since 1915 we have missed very few summers at the Park. Until 1923 we always had an eventful three day drive up from Butte. Then we would leave the car at the foot of the lake and come up on the Emmeline to stay for three months. Later the family drove across country, 2500 miles from Washington as soon as school was out, to stay until school reopened in the fall. On the one or two occasions when we were forced to stay in the east, we never found any substitute for the endless variety of pleasures afforded by the Park's trails, lakes, mountains and streams.

/s/ Burton K. Wheeler

Oakland, California
January 5, 1957

Dear Mrs. Harrington,

I am glad to comply with your request for a letter that may add something of interest for your "History of Apgar" project.

Although long-time residents of Lake McDonald, Mrs. Chadbourne and I are not really in the early settler class, having come here and bought land in 1925 of Frank Kelly, one of the original homesteaders near the head of Lake McDonald. However, because we were for several years thereafter all year residents, we came to know nearly all the earliest settlers of Apgar and the fund of stories about them. Many of them became our close friends. It is a very great pleasure to have known them, to recall the many happy times that we have spent in their company, and to have heard the accounts of the earliest days of fun and hardship.

Indeed, as late as 1925, Apgar was a more primitive sort of place than now and carried more the nature of the early settlement than is now evident with the many new homes and the modern accommodations for tourists. Then there was very little automobile travel into Glacier Park. There was no east-west road through the mountains nearer than what is now US 10 at Butte and all Montana roads were still in the dust stage, being mostly narrow dirt roads or at best lightly surfaced with gravel. Almost all tourists arrived by railway, detraining either at Glacier Park Station, for the east side of the Park which with large capital had built extensive hotel and chalet accommodations in all the east side valleys.

Apgar, Lake McDonald and the west side of the Park had received comparatively little national publicity. Here the tourist accommodations were few and of modest kind, having been built by the early settlers with very little capital. Nothing grand at all. At Apgar village, the Apgars had six or eight log cabins which could be rented; Charlie Howe had two or three; the Gold brothers had a few rooms in a log hostel; some settlers like George and Maud Snyder might have a room to rent.

At that time the Apgars, Charlie Howe and one or two others who had lake front property were mainly interested in selling house lots to people who wished to build a summer residence and so provide winter work for the settlers, who were skilled in building log cabins. A log cabin, preferably of cedar, of which there was an abundance in the nearby forests, was considered the only suitable type of construction for a summer residence. It had to be "rustic" even though it lacked modern conveniences now thought essential.

As I remember it, the average price for a building lot was \$10 a front foot on the lake, the land extending as far back as the road. Across the road away from the lake the land was held to have small value for summer homes and was valued mainly for the timber on it, for there was a heavy stand of old-growth cedar, larch and fir.

The same sort of lot selling and building activity was going on at the head of the lake on the original holdings of George Snyder, Dennis Comeau, Frank Geduhn and Frank Kelly. John Lewis had bought out George Snyder and built the Lewis Hotel, but he also had building lots for sale on the land adjoining the hotel grounds. The Comeaus and Frank Geduhn had subdivided their original holdings into smaller parcels. Frank Kelly on the west side of the lake, without an access road to his property, was building a log cabin each year for summer rental and already had seven such. He rented these on a monthly basis. His clientele had free transportation in his launch "Emeline" across the lake to the hotel where they could get their mail and supplies.

After looking over the possibilities for buying and building, we bought a quarter mile of lake frontage from Frank Kelly at a lower price than the \$10 a front foot that was being asked at Apgar. We had no road, and so kept our car a Model T Ford, at the ranger station. For several years our trips to town for supplies began and ended in a two mile trip in a small boat. Not infrequently there was rough water, especially in the afternoon on our return from Belton. We thought ourselves lucky when we got the boat off without getting either ourselves or the groceries wet. In the winter, after snow came, we went all the way to Apgar by boat and usually bought our grociers of Ed Swetnam, who had a store on the corner near the boat landing. When the lake was frozen we went on foot on the ice, pulling a sled.

The Park Service opposed our project of building a road from the head of the lake to Kelly's and our new cabin. Finally in 1931 with the help of Senator Walsh, who used his influence in Washington permission to build the road was granted.

In the early days of the Park there was more of a conflict of interest between the Park administration and private land owners than is now evident. The Washington directors put great emphasis on the conservation and preservation of land within Park boundaries in their original wilderness state. It was hoped that Congress would appropriate money to purchase private land holdings within Park boundaries and the settlers be moved out and their buildings eliminated. Every new cabin that was built was regarded as an eyesore. Especially so at Apgar where all the waterfront was private land. Here was a very beautiful view for tourists coming in at the West entrance getting their first impression of the Glacier Park mountains. Yet there was no place for a transient tourist to get to the lakeshore without trespassing, except at the end of a narrow road which was occupied by a boat dock. The Park Service people could visualize that in a few years every available foot along this shore would be occupied by small cabins cheek by jowl.

The most important factor in the change and development of Apgar Village was forest fire. Since 1910 there had been no really big fire in the Park area. In 1925 there was a forest fire at Apgar west of McDonald Creek and extending toward Apgar Mt. It spotted across creek but was brought under control. In 1926 there was a more extensive fire starting on the North Fork road in the vicinity of Fish Creek. This fire was ignited by the exhaust of one of Slack and Drury's lumber trucks in combination with a leaky fuel tank. This 1926 fire burned over an extensive area, swept up the west side of the lake just missing the Fish Creek Ranger Station, burned the summer home of the Gruber's on a point a mile north of Fish Creek, and went to the top of Howe Ridge for a distance about half way up the lake before it was headed and brought under control. The extent of this fire is still plainly visible.

But the really devastating fire, as far as Apgar itself was concerned was in 1929. Originating at a sawmill beyond Coram, this fire because of poor organization for fire control, was allowed to jump across the Middle Fork of the Flathead River and thereafter cut a wide swath inside the Park, burning the heavy forest which occupied the land between Apgar and Park Headquarters and the houses thereon. At Apgar a few houses close by the lake were saved because of heroic work with water buckets and a couple fire pumps requisitioned from Park Headquarters. East of McDonald Creek, the Apgar cabins, one owned by Rod Houston and another next to it by Gus Aubert, were among the few saved.

I remember coming down the lake to Apgar the morning after the fire swept through and up over the mountain to the east. Gus Aubert was still pouring water on smoldering embers around his cabin; and his pants, held up by stout suspenders, appeared even more loose around him than usual. In telling me about his fight to save his cabin he pulled his pants out to show how loose they were. He said: "During the worst of it the sparks were falling so thick that when I'd be running with a bucket of water to throw on the roof, the sparks would get down inside my pants and I'd have to stop and dig them out before they burned me. I had a boat on shore in case we had to run for it, but we didn't have to. It got pretty hot, but Doc and I stuck it out and saved our cabins."

The courage of those who stayed to fight the fire at Apgar contrasted sharply with some of the firemen along the river who abandoned their fire pumps and allowed the fire to spot across river and get started on the Park side without contesting it. At least that was the outspoken opinion of the people around Apgar, that the fire never need to have got across the river west of Belton if had been properly fought at that natural barrier.

Once the fire got well started north of the river and the firemen were withdrawn to protect the buildings at Park headquarters and at Belton little could be done to save Apgar, the scattered homes

along the Belton road and the many summer homes by the lake. Immediately after the fire the American Red Cross came in with temporary aid for those people who had lost practically everything and gave grants of building material and supplies to many of those burned out. And this policy applied both to those living outside and inside the Park. So before long new houses were being built in the midst of the desolation, but of a frame-type construction instead of the universal log-type building which had preceded it.

The following spring, in 1930, the Department of the Interior sent a purchasing agent to Apgar to buy all the private property he could, especially land fronting on the lake, which land was to become part of the Government holding. The idea was that the people of Apgar would now gladly sell out and move elsewhere, and the lake front would be cleared of any vestige of habitation. To that end the agent, Mr. Solinsky, offered considerably more than the previous going price of \$10 a front foot. Many of the owners that had burned out were indeed happy to sell their now desolated locations at a better price than they had expected to get. But shortly as the word got around what prices Mr. Solinsky was offering, and some offers better than others, a sort of land speculation developed.

Charlie Howe, the Gold brothers, the Methodist Epworth League Camp, Ed Swetnam, and a number of summer residents along the lake front were soon bought out, but then Mr. Solinsky found that the price of land had gone up and some did not want to sell at all. Worse than that, several owners who had already sold to the Government, turned around with their money in hand and bought other land across the road from the lakeshore property. For example, William Sibley, father of Mart Sibley, held title to a large acreage away from the lake. This land with all its timber gone up in smoke was considered of little value by the Government and the agent offered only a small amount for it on an acreage basis. However, Mr. Sibley was now able to sell fringe areas along the road to private parties who had sold their lake front to the Government but still wished to remain at Apgar.

Mr. Solinsky soon saw that part of his program to move all the people out of Apgar was like treading water. Even though he bought land the people didn't go. And the more land he bought, the higher became the asking price for remaining lots. He did succeed in opening up the waterfront greatly and stemming the threatened congestion of building there, but after a few months of fruitless negotiation within the limits of his authorization he departed.

This spasmodic effort to buy out Apgar was really an impetus to a new growth in the village and its accommodations. Going-to-the-Sun highway was being built over Logan Pass; along US 2 connecting Belton and East Glacier Park. More automobiles were arriving because of improved roads and there was more demand for rental cabins for transient visitors. Even though the great country-wide depression of the 1930's was in full swing, the tourist business increased.

Also along with the depression C,C,G. camps were established in the Park and a clean up of the burned-over area between Apgar and Park Headquarters was accomplished. The new approach bridge was built across the Flathead River and the main entrance highway was relocated to by-pass Apgar. New vegetation and tree growth, now that the snags were cut down, masked the ugly appearance of the burned-over country. Although Apgar was off the main stem of travel, its potential as an overnight or longer stopping place for tourists was improved.

Accordingly Apgar Village continued to grow and its accommodations for tourists continued to expand. The buildings were of a different kind from the log cabins of an earlier period, but the hospitality and friendliness afforded the tourist have not changed. Supplying, as it does, the increasing need to house visitors within the Park, Apgar is less in conflict with Park Service interests than was once thought to be the case.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Horace Chadbourne

P.S. This letter is not the best kind of history, being based entirely on memory and not on actual records. I do think your history would profit from other accounts of the 1929 fire and its effect on Apgar's development. Several people who were right on the scene at the time and are still living could furnish valuable accounts.

HC

Dear Mrs. Harrington,

A few more memories - these very personal. But History would be nothing without the people who make it. For the children, big and little, of the Apgar school, these little reminiscences may make the history of Apgar and Lake McDonald more real, because we who contribute to this collection of tales are real folks who lived in this beautiful spot and loved it. We still do.

We remember especially the preparations for our first winter in our own cabin, 1926-27. All that fall, Mr. Kelly and his steady, comfortable "Emeline" made trips back and forth between Hollybourne and Apgar, bringing loads of necessities. Chugging down the lake in the good old boat was great fun, and never a trip did any of us miss. It was like Christmas everytime we landed at the dock at the foot of the lake and saw all those boxes, bags and crates on the truck waiting to be put aboard. And many were the good cups of coffee and pieces of pie we enjoyed in the cabins of friends and relatives of the Kelly's. We remember especially Mrs. Jessie Apgar and her children, Helen, Dimie and Jeannette, whose cabin was always our first stop. Two very dear friends we can never forget were Mart Sibley and his wife, Hazel. Our beautiful fireplace, the work of Mart's hands, is a fine example of his skill, and we are always proud to tell people who admire it, who built it.

When the load was too bulky for the "Emeline", the "Ethel", a much larger boat, named for a niece of the Kellys, made the trip. This boat, used by the Park Transportation Company in the summer to bring tourists from Apgar to Lake McDonald Hotel, was big enough to handle the heavier, bulkier freight. Drawing too much water to come in at our dock, she landed at Kellys and the stuff was unloaded on Mr. Kelly's dock, to be floated over to us.

Speaking of the Kelly dock, I must tell you of two precious loads it carried. One was my piano, a big, old, black beauty of an upright, weighing fully as much as a moose. Brought up from Apgar on the "Ethel", it was transferred to the dock, as the skipper firmly refused to assume the responsibility of unloading it on our shore. Six men, good, strong and steady, Mr. Hayworth, Roy, Chad, Mr. Geduhn, and the handy men from the "Ethel" volunteered as escorts. The piano was placed in the exact center of the dock, the men stationed at evenly spaced intervals, three on each side of the piano. Mr. Kelly hooked onto the dock with his out-board motor, and the fleet moved gently out. If, as they say in "Who-dunnits", I had known then what I know now (since the second load), I could not have watched the progress of events so calmly. As it was, all went well, the dock touched our shore, the men put out planks, and the piano, pulled, pushed and lifted by the powerful six, moved along the uphill path, through the kitchen door, into the living room and came to rest in the corner, where it stands to this day.

The other above-mentioned load? Well, all that fall and into the spring, Chad, Melissa and I selected and pitched up onto the shore, rocks that in color and shape we considered right for the fireplace that Mart Sibley had agreed to build. Lavendar, green, rose, black and cream-colored, they were really beautiful, and we felt sure Mart would like them. Chad borrowed the Kelly dock, poled it along the shore to where the rocks were, lugged each rock

down to the water's edge, waded in and heaved it up and over onto the middle of the dock. When he had his load, he heaved himself carefully up onto the dock, and cautiously poled out into deeper water. When he was opposite the point where Kelly's Creek comes foaming out into the lake, the current caught his pole. Chad stepped too close to the edge, the dock tipped, Chad leaped to the other edge to steady it. The dock, having fun, tipped the other way, and that was all! Chad and the beautiful rocks went into the fifteen feet of clear water. There they lay - the rocks - and still lie like huge jewels in the bottom of the lake. And that, but by the grace of God, and because the six men neither sneezed nor stirred on the trip over, might have been the fate of my piano!

Open winters, when the lake didn't freeze over, were much appreciated by those of us who lived at the head of the lake, but the winters when the ice stretched solid and thick from one end to the other, and from shore to shore, were fun too. Then we could snowshoe, skate, ski, or just plain walk up and down and across, without the bother of a chilly and often stormy boatride. Chad and Melissa used to shovel the snow off the lake in front of the cabin for a skating rink, when necessary, but often the whole lake was a skating rink. Then Dr. Rod Houston used to swoop up from Apgar to pay us a visit. If the wind was at his back it took him no time at all. When it wasn't, he'd just duck his head, fold his arms behind his back and buck right into it. Then going back was a cinch. Only the coyotes could beat Dr. Houston's time. We'd see them scudding along, their tails blown between their legs, hot on the trail of a fleeing deer.

Then, too, Bud (Mrs. George) Henderson and Foine, her son, used to skate up for lunch with us. That was a treat for Melissa especially, whose playmates were few in the winter. Then, all of us, on skates, would take them part way back, our dog Pete, not on skates, skiddin' along beside us.

I could go on and on. Many rich and wonderful experiences and memories center around Lake McDonald and Apgar. We do thank you for letting us contribute a few.

Very sincerely yours,

/s/ Mrs. Horace Chadbourne

Lake McDonald
September 25th, 1957

My Father, J.M. Gruber, was the first of our family to visit Lake McDonald at what is now known as Apgar. He was an official of the Great Northern Railway and came out on a fishing and hunting trip with an old time trapper named Dan Doody. This was in the fall of 1904. He was so impressed with the beauty of the country, and especially around Apgar, that he brought the family out in August, 1906, for a vacation. When we arrived at Belton, Montana, the depot was a small boxcar and next to it was another boxcar in which the G.N. Railway Agent, Bill Cummings, and his wife resided. It was located on the curve east of the present station. Dimy Apgar Sr. met us with the buckboard and we started for Lake McDonald. It was three miles to the old bridge, and after we arrived at the point where the present bridge is located on the other side of the river, the road was so rough we had to abandon the buckboard and walk the rest of the way. The road then was hewn through the forest and the tree stumps stuck up about six inches all over the road, along with many large rocks. It took us a little over an hour before we arrived at the lake, but it was well worth our troubles as we thought it was the most beautiful sight we had ever seen.

On this first trip we remained three weeks and had two of the Apgar original cabins. We made fishing trips to various places, up the North Fork and the lakes up there, and to Avalanche Lake. Eddie Cruger was our first guide. There were no automobile roads; we had to hike or ride horseback. There were two passenger boats on the lake at the time - the F.I. Whitney, a steam boat about 40 feet long, and the Emeline, a gasoline motor boat about 35 feet long. All passengers and freight was handled by these two boats at that time up and down the lake. The Lewis Hotel was a small wooden frame building, not painted, and could take care of eight guests. The present hotel was built in 1914.

There were not many people living around the lake at that time. At the foot of the lake starting from the east there was a family named Graves; next came Charlie Howe and then Apgars. Charlie Howe made the river fishing trip in those days, starting from Lake McDonald Creek into the Middle Fork of the Flathead down to Columbia Falls, where we put the row boat on the train to be returned to Belton. Fish were very plentiful in those days; we could catch as many as we wanted anywhere, including Lake McDonald. A half hour fishing trip would fill our baskets. There was no limit.

We came back again for another three weeks vacation at Apgar in August, 1908. There were not many changes and we had the same two cabins and also an extra one for some friends. During that period my father and mother rowed around the lake several times and finally selected a place for a summer home. It was the third point up on the west shore of the lake a mile above Rocky Point. The place was built that fall and winter and we moved in for the summer of 1909. We had many very enjoyable summers here, but the fires of 1926 burned us to the ground, so we moved to our present location, which was first built as a small cottage in 1921. We enlarged this and have been here ever since. On Fish Creek there was quite a long

log cabin that was owned by Judge Pomeroy of Kalispell, and believe it or not there was a cabin right on the very top of Rocky Point that was owned by a family named Morrow of New York.

When the Park was created in 1910, we met Major William R. Logan and his family. My oldest sister, Astrid, who passed away, had been a classmate of the Major's oldest daughter Frances, so we all became acquainted, and later on in 1920 I married Janet Logan, his second daughter, and I should say the youngest, as there were only the two children in the Logan family. We have been coming out ever since each summer except one summer during the first war, when I was in France, and I missed a few summers after that when I first started working, but we hope to be able to be here most of the summers from now on. We also hope the future generations will enjoy this place as much as we have.

/s/ Marcus J. Gruber

THE BEGINNING OF GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

by

Janet Logan Gruber

I was born in Helena, Montana, at the time that my father, Major William R. Logan, was in the construction business in that area. When I was six months old, my father went to Chihuahua, Mexico to build a railroad for a mining company.

After several years in Mexico, my father went to Fort Belknap Indian Reservation near Harlem, Montana to become Indian Agent there for the U.S. Indian Service. We lived there until 1910, at which time he was appointed first Superintendent of Glacier National Park.

This was not my father's first experience in Glacier National Park. Many years before his appointment as superintendent, he had visited the area in 1883 while acting as a scout for Colonel Comba on an expedition through the northwestern part of Montana Territory. Among those accompanying this party was Professor Raphael Pumpelly, for whom Pumpelly Glacier is now named. On that scouting trip, my father fell in love with this area and always hoped that it would be set aside as some kind of a national preserve.

When the park was established in 1910, the money appropriated for its operation was extremely limited. The total office force initially consisted of Henry Hutchings, who came with my father from Fort Belknap to act as chief clerk, Joe Stevens, who acted as personal secretary, and Herb McCabe, who was office clerk. There were only a handful of rangers and construction workers at that time.

The first headquarters of the park was located at the foot of Lake McDonald about a quarter of a mile east of Apgar. It consisted of several tenthouses for shelter and office space and an old log cabin which served as cook-house and mess-hall. There was no warehouse or other storage space. Most of the equipment consisted of horses and wagons and the only means of communication was by saddle horse.

At this time the only road in the park was a nearly impassable wagon trail from the railroad at Belton to the foot of Lake McDonald and another similar wagon trail to Polebridge. Although the area had been occupied for some years by homesteaders, trappers, and a few private homeowners, there were only a few very poor trails in the park - many of which had originally been game trails.

The first and most important need of the area was the construction of a trail and road system to make possible communication between the various parts of the park. There was also a need for a telephone line system. However, not much progress was made on the construction of these facilities during the summer of 1910 because of the number of large forest fires that year. The situation was so serious that all available manpower was used to combat fires and the militia, including a body of colored troops, was brought in to help fight fires.

By the fall of 1910, the situation had not improved very much. My father went to Fort Belknap briefly and then to Washington, D.C. for the winter. Most of the summer staff was dispersed until the following spring with the exception of a few rangers who remained on patrol duty during the winter.

Among those spending the first winter in the park as employees of Glacier National Park were Horace Brewster and Dan Doody. Horace Brewster had come here from Hays, Montana with my father.

In the spring of 1911, we returned from Washington. The government rented all of the original Apgar cabins for use as park headquarters. The summer of 1911 saw the improvement of the road from Apgar to Belton, the installation of a primitive telephone system, and the construction of some trails throughout the park. At this time, the Great Northern Railway Company was in the process of constructing hotels and chalets in the park. One of the most interesting projects undertaken that summer was the construction of a large wharf at the foot of Lake McDonald, where the present road meets the lake. This wharf was built with heavy planks on piling and a large warehouse was built in the center of the wharf. At that time, supplies were hauled by wagon from Belton to Apgar and then by boat and barge up the lake. Because of the tremendous amount of freight handled it was essential to have handling and storage facilities at this transfer point. This wharf was used by the public and the park service for many years and was quite a focal point of local activity.

In the fall of 1911, the camp at the foot of Lake McDonald was abandoned and the park service force was moved to the Belton Chalets in Belton for the winter. Our family left for the east that fall and my father passed away in Chicago on February 12, 1912.

During the time that Major Logan was superintendent of the park, there were a number of people living around Lake McDonald. Charlie Russell, the famous Montana painter, had a home on the west shore. He was no stranger to our family because he had often been a guest in our home at Fort Belknap. The Grubers had a home about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles up the lake on the west shore. Kellys were developing their camp where it is located today. Geduhns had a home and rental cabins at the head of the lake and John Lewis had a small hotel at the site of the present Lake McDonald Hotel. At the foot of the lake, Charlie Howe and H.D. Apgar had homesteads.

During the period when Major Logan was Superintendent of the park, there was very little travel into the area and certainly nothing similar to modern tourism. However, as I have noted, there were a few people in the area. Living accommodations were far more primitive than those presently available to campers in what are now regarded as the "remote" areas of the park and transportation and communication facilities were almost non-existent. Nevertheless, those of us who were here were as fascinated by the beauty of the mountains and the pleasant summer weather as any modern day tourist. Furthermore, in those days, people were accustomed to creating their own good times by having campfires, boat and fishing trips, and community get-togethers.

We lived off the country and each other. For instance, one time my father "appropriated" a huge watermelon enroute to the Gruber home and then invited them down to a campfire party and watermelon feast. After an evening of singing, fellowship and watermelon, father informed the Grubers of the source of the evening's piece de resistance. A good laugh was had by all.

Major Logan's activities as first superintendent of the park were a mere scratching of the surface in the development of the area. Nevertheless, a first step had to be made. With the coming of more visitors and larger

appropriations and the development of the national park service as a permanent organization, Glacier National Park has been developed into a national recreation area while at the same time the natural beauty and charm of the area has been preserved. I am sure that my father would be happy if he could see modern-day Glacier National Park.

THE APGAR FIRE
by
Betty Lou Sibley Hines

I will try and put on paper, all that I can remember about the 1929 fire, but it won't be very much, I'm afraid. I was thirteen at the time.

When we first went outside, that morning, it was real smokey all around, but it didn't smell very smokey, as the fire was still quite far away. The sun was very odd - bright red. Daddy was excited and had probably been up for hours, wondering where the fire was. He told Mama to get together all of the winter clothes and blankets - that as soon as Uncle Orie took his load of things to the lake, he would be back to get our things and they would take as much as they could haul, in one load. They planned to put them in Grandad Sibley's new house (it was where Bill's house was later built.) They had a huge white canvas bag full of clothes and bedding. We took also dishes, pans and food but didn't have room for furniture. Daddy dug long ditches in the garden and lined them with old blankets and put his guns and relics in them and covered them with dirt. It is a miracle that none of them were stolen but they were all saved.

I remember that we were barely settled in Grandad's house, when Daddy rushed in and told us that it would not be possible to save it, if the fire came that way, so he took the clothing, etc., and sunk it in the lake in a canvas bag. A spark must have landed on the bag because it burned and left only the bottom shell to show where it had been.

He drove the Nash out on the dock, with Mama and Rose (aged 2 years) settled in it, as comfortable as they could be made, under the circumstances. Not being able to hear, it was a full time job for Mama, just to keep track of a lively, excited two year-old, on a dock, where one misstep could be fatal. Mrs. Hayworth and, it seems to me it was Mrs. Powell and Aunt Bernice (and a lot of other women, although I can't remember which ones) had set up a sort of coffeeé lunch deal in one of Hayworth's cabins - it was across the road (east) from the store.

The men were very busy - watching the roofs of the houses that they had decided it would be possible to save. They had pails for water and gunny sacks and what ladders they could find and they would climb up and wet down the places where sparks landed. Shingle roofs burn pretty fast. The men were unable to get a pump, so Uncle Orie drove his truck on the dock and jacked up one wheel and rigged up some kind of a pump, but I do not understand how it worked. Jean, Joyce, Bill, Cal, Dixon and I -can not remember if other children were there or not) stood and watched the Lookout burn and also watched when our places burned - at least the fire seemed to be different when it was the houses instead of the trees burning. Seemed to flare up higher. Daddy and Aunt Bernice (I think it was) fixed us a bed on the floor of the Ethyl and bedded us all down. They explained to us that if the fire got too close they would take the boat out and anchor it. We slept there all night but were all restless.

I suppose the adults simply stayed up all night. I remember going in for hot cocoa and taking some to Rose - they had stayed in the car all night, I think.

Later in the day, Mr. Swetnam told Daddy that they needed help in the hotel at Belton, where they were trying to feed hundreds of fire-fighters, and he wanted to take me over to help. Of course, he said to go, so I missed the rest of the activity at the lake, but Belton was really a busy place. The hotel was not equipped to handle so many, but they did all that they could. The men were really dirty and beat - they worked until they were exhausted before they were replaced.

When Ed drove me back to the lake - the next day, I believe it was - the fire was still so hot along the sides of the road that we could barely make it through. A few places, we had to go real fast, because the smoke blinded him so he couldn't see to drive.

It was certainly a desolate place to drive into - all those beautiful trees along the road were gone.

I guess I don't remember very much about it and doubt if any of this will be of much help to you but you asked me to try to remember. I think Aunt Bernice and Uncle Orie could tell you a lot about it. Rose said not to forget to tell you how she clung to her bird's eye maple stool and Daddy let her bring it because she clutched it so frantically.

Greenwalt

The 1929 fire that burned so many homes in the Park started at the Half Moon saw mill south of Columbia Falls. It burned for nearly two weeks before it reached the park. Lots of talk went on and it was very smoky during that time, but we just couldn't believe it wouldn't be stopped at least at McDonald Creek; but it kept getting closer and closer. Our homes were about a mile from the foot of the lake. We gathered up a part of our household goods and piled them on the big dock along with other peoples' belongings.

Once the fire reached the flat about evening - it traveled very fast jumping from tree to tree. In about ten minutes it had reached the top of the Belton hills.

The women - about six of us stayed on the dock to watch and put out any sparks. The men, thirteen of the natives, did what they could to save as much as possible. The Apgar corner, our service station, the school house and the Weighman buildings were saved. Farther down the road Gus Aubert and Rod Houston managed to save their homes. Bill Bose came down from upper Lake McDonald with a fire pump and, I think single handed managed to keep the fire from going toward the head of the lake. That day, the 29th, a woman had died at the head of the lake and one of the Kelly boats brought her body down. George Slack sent an employee, Eddie Gilchrist, out with a truck to get the body. It was a hazardous trip as sparks and burning limbs from trees were falling across the road but he made it safely.

George Slack also sent out a fire pump which was a great help as we had none at all. It certainly was a night and day to be remembered.

After the fire the skunks were such pests they just about drove us out. Our pet dog, Laddie, and I suppose other dogs, kept them stirred up all the time.

It was so awful to have all the beautiful cedar trees destroyed, the place never really seemed to be the same again. The day after the fire went through, only the charred trunks were left and the ground was deep with ashes.

- Bernice Greenwalt

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Assistant to the President

March 22, 1957

Dear Mrs. Harrington:

The letter, with enclosures, which you and the pupils of Apgar School recently sent to the President has been received. In his absence, I want to thank each one of you for writing and making this interesting history of your school available to the President. Your friendliness and kind thought of him are indeed appreciated.

I know that the President would want me to extend best wishes to you and to the boys and girls at Apgar School.

Sincerely,

s/s Sherman Adams

Mrs. Leona Harrington
Apgar School
West Glacier, Montana

UNITED STATES

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Glacier National Park
West Glacier, Montana

September 10, 1959

Mrs. Leona Harrington
West Glacier, Montana

Dear Mrs. Harrington:

I enjoyed reading your "History of Apgar" very much. You have done a valuable task in the accumulation of this material while it is still available. Thank you for making the data available to me.

Best regards,
/s/ Edward A. Himmel
Superintendent

INDEX - HISTORY OF APGAR

NAME:	<u>PAGE</u>
ADAMS, SHERMAN (ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT)	61
APGAR, MILO	4
APGAR, HARVEY	4
ARONSON, HUGO (GOVERNOR OF MONTANA)	43
AUBERT, PETER A. (GUS)	9
 BLAIR, (MR.)	12
BREWSTER, HORACE	5
BREWSTER, EDWARD	5
BREWSTER, CLEMENCE	35
 CHADBOURNE, HORACE	47-51
CHADBourNE, HORACE (MRS.)	52, 53
COULTER, ANNA	30, 31
CRUGER, EDDIE	36-38
 EMMERT, J. W., SUPT. - FRONTISPICE	0-42
 GOOS, IDA	7
GREENWALT, D. L.	8
GREENWALT, BERNICE	60
GRUBER, JANET LOGAN	56-58
GRUBER, MARCUS	54, 55
GUDGER, GENEVIEVE	26-29
 HARRINGTON, LEONA L.	12
HENDERSON, BUD	34
HOUSTON, RODERICK	11
HINES, BETTY LOU SIBLEY	58-59
HOWE, CHARLES	8-34
HOW McDONALD GOT ITS NAME	10
HUTCHINGS, CORA PARIS	1, 2
HUMMEL, EDWARD A., SUPT. OF GLACIER NATIONAL PARK	61
 LINDSAY, MARGARET	15
LINDSAY, WILLIAM	15
 MCDONNELL, R. E.	19-21
MCDONALD, DUNCAN	10

INDEX - HISTORY OF APCAR (CONTINUED)

PETERSON, LILIAN	13
POWELL, MIRTICE	7
PRATT, COL. AND MRS. RAYMOND	33
ROSS, EARL	6
RUSSELL, CHARLIE	5,13,16
SCOTT, CAROLINE	16,17
SCOTT, LUCINDA	14
SIBLEY, MART	4
SIBLEY, AND GREENWALTS	8
SNYDER, GEORGE	6
SULLIVAN, MAY AND JEAN	2
SWETNAM, E. M.	3
TIDRICK, CAL	18
WALSH, HARRIET	32,40
WALSH, JOHN	39
WHEELER, BURTON K.	44-46
WHEELER, LULU	22
WHILT, JIM	23
WHIPPS, W. O.	24,25
WILES, ALICE	10
WILES, ROY	3