

Genesee, Idaho, April 18th 1920

Dear Christina

Amalia told me she wrote and told your girls about the fire. no one knows how it got started, but I and some others were talking that they think it got started by some one. nobody knows. only the guilty one. it was certainly fierce, just getting a new gramophone (*gramophone*) I suppose that it cost over two hundred dollars.

the people were there quite early and they... it seems so crazy.... nobody saved a thing. Rodney's tricycle and automobile was standing on the porch, but nobody saved a thing.

Gus Fickens kicked the front window in, but did not take a thing out. I think they were just like out of their head cause they thought Charly (*Whalen, Mollie's husband*) was in there. Ida Schooler rang us up, it half past 4 and asked where Charly was, but we thought he was in the house. but instead of that we found out that he was in Moscow and stayed over night. so we thought if he is in Moscow he is at the Moscow hotel, so Martha found him there and she told him about it. he came right away but it was everything burned down to the ground. the people were maybe the electric iron, but no, I was glad the ironboard was not burned. Of course it was seined, but they can use it yet. so I was glad it was not Amalia's fault.

the people collected money for him (Charley Whalen), Papa gave him, 125 dollars I think they got 1,500 dollars and they had it insured for 3,400, but all the debt that he had after he had everything paid I think he has a little left but don't tell anything about but I really think that he has more money now than he ever had but keep for yourself. burn this.

Aunt Tina is in Spokane you ought to see her leg it really is worse than mine. you go and see her she will tell you about the fire. I think she knows more about it than I do. I wrote to Bertha you better let her read this and you read hers, excuse poor writing with love, your Mama

(photo is 1920 fire at Amalia and Charles Whalen home by John Lorang)

