

Battle Creek fires - 3-11-65 DF 453&

Rt. 4, Box 411  
Battle Creek, Michigan  
4th December, 1965

Elder Arthur L. White  
Andrews University  
Berrien Springs, Michigan

Dear Elder White:

Your morning sermon at our tabernacle stirred many memories. Though I am only a bit past sixty years our Adventist history is very dear to me. I was raised in Battle Creek, went to old E. M. C., worked many years in Africa and am now back in the academy.

Your mention of the fires destroying so many of our old landmarks brought back many memories. On our garden acreage was the old freight elevator from the burned out Review and Herald. The old food bactory burned and later the Tabernacle. Our academy quartet was having a sing at our music teacher's home the Sabbath afternoon of the day when the Tabernacle burned. We went to the fire which began right after sun-down. It was the last Sabbath of the Week of Prayer.

On the next morning after the fire I went down to the ruins and took many snaps. Then later I assembled the best of these, including one of the tabernacle before the fire, into a small booklet. These I sold to pay my youthful pledge of \$50.00 to build a new church.

A big enlargement of my snap of the T bernacle before the fire was placed in the window of the Owl Drug Store, the people who were printing the pictures for my booklet. Chief Weeks, of the Battle Creek Fire Department saw the enlargement and wanted it for study on how to fight fires of such a nature that might occur in the future. I was called in about the picture.

During our conversation he remarked that he had fought every one of our big SDA fires in Battle Creek and that his score was zero. "Something strange about your SDA fires. This Tabernacle fire had more than enough water poured onto it. On your fires our water acts more like gasoline," was about all he could say. From his files he took a snap with smoke rolling around the Tabernacle belfry. He pointed to kind of a face. Maybe the spirit of your prophet, Mrs. White, returned to watch the fire."

Chief Weeks knew about our fires but not the One who set them.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)

December 4, 1965