



George B. Wright and Family Papers

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Otter Tail Power Company



Office at
Fergus Falls, Minnesota.

Vernon A. Wright, President.
C. S. Kennedy, Vice Pres. & Gen. Mgr.
Samuel P. Adams, Vice Pres. & Treas.
W. L. Hatch, Secretary.

May 8, 1931

Dear Mr. Y.

Mr. McCloud is making a good looking job of insulation and has nearly finished, including the closet. I gave him the keys to the garage so that he can put up his shelving. Peter has put the dock in and extended it farther out and in T form instead of L form. The plumber is repairing the leaks which the sudden freeze up made in our pipes. The tank is full and ready for service. Clara has cleaned the cottage and to me it looks clean. I have had the old Buick brought into town. It seemed to work well but the garage men will check it all up. When the mud was washed off the wheels and fenders looked badly from lack of paint and I have ordered them painted. The body is in excellent condition. There were no keys to be found and I wonder if Le Gault knows where they are. The only cottage key which I have been able to locate is Peter's key which is inconvenient. My glasses dropped out of my pocket at the lake yesterday but I found them on the ground today.

The enclosed invitation I have declined. I wonder what it would be like to meet a lot of relations whom I never heard of. My love to thee and the children.

Y.

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May 10, 1931.

Dear Mr. G.

G. and Louise went to Minneapolis yesterday afternoon and I am alone in their house for a day. They will be back tonight. We all had lunch at the River Inn and Louise asked the Bishop Conagator, who happened to be there, to join us. He is quite personable for a bishop.

The old Buick is repainted and will be ready for service tomorrow. I hope Le Gault knows where the keys are. If there should be a puncture of tires I could not get the spare tire off the frame at the rear. It rained much of yesterday which was most welcome to the farmers and the O.T.P. but did not conduce to driving to Swan L. This afternoon, if it doesn't rain, Mr. Hannah and I will visit what he calls my "Estate", meaning the two farms which were taken over from the Chas. Wright Co. subject to mortgages. C. R. is more cheerful and he says Clara's venture is running satisfactorily considering the times. Love y.

The Hallam-Erickson brief will not be submitted until May 16th.

Whitcomb had gone back to St. Paul but saw Mr. crossing a street and looking quite the same. I had thought last night

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May 14. 1931

Frank G.

Yesterday, Thursday, I went to Wahpeton with Geoffrey to look at the inside of a steam turbine which had been opened up for examination after many months of almost continuous operation. Nothing needed mending so they cleaned it with compressed air and put it together again.

In the evening there was a surprise house warming given to L. and Cy. Seven couples with food and a present (something to do with bidge) dropped in. Louise hadn't got over the excitement this morning. I haven't been to Iron Lake again but Harry Longden came in and reported all fixed and in working order. Adams, Mr. Maher and J. P. Adams ^{house} were being cleaned the last time I was out. Trees are only just coming out. All white cedars in town have been killed by early heat in Feb'y. Red cedars are all right.

Love V.

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May 15, 1931

Dearest G.

It is now 94° in my office and I am
glad that the train for Minneapolis leaves
in an hour. I expect to stay until Tuesday
morning. It may be that my plans should be
changed. It is a long time since ~~they~~^{my eyes} were
examined and either they get drained when
I use them or else Ann's example has set up
a sympathetic demand on my part. I have not
yet heard the result of her visit with Dr. Strout.
The water softener will be ready for another
reconditioning. I hope it is not damaged. Evidently
it is one more thing to look after - but a very
good thing

Love
T.

Otter Tail Power Company



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May 20, 1931

Dear G.

after summer heat it has turned back to freezing temperatures and today it has been snowing. I wrote to you last in N.Y.C. and hope you received the letter in Nova Scotia.

Mr. Stephens has not yet succeeded in getting the ~~box~~ bronze delivered. He paid the \$2.07 freight charge but the custom house required a different form of assurance that the freight has been paid before they would release. I concluded that it would be better to be at the house when the box is delivered rather than to put the responsibility on Mr.

Groschen. I am planning to go down on May 29th and should be able to get delivery the next day. Everything seemed to be in good order at the house and all is well in F.T. except the general business situation which gives room for misgivings. The O.T.P.C. is proceeding on the theory of confidence in U.S. Love &.

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June 20. 1932

Dear G.

Thos. has just shown me your letter to him and I am taking it out to the girls. It is hard for me to realize that good Britons are maintaining religious formalism to the extent you describe.

Suey had a letter from Cy today turning back to her a savings account which she had put under his direction. He is to have a vacation beginning July 18. Suey's passport came today and I have forwarded to Chandler and Schilling to get the British visa.

Last night Ann complained of feeling tired in her legs and Francis wrote to her doctor to see if he wants her to take pills which he had ordered discontinued. This morning Ann was full of pep again and at 3 P.M. she had finished repainting the DNV red and white and the party started for a walk. I was coming into town and took them to the so. end of Lake Lake from where they were to explore the Long peninsula. She looks all right.

Love U.

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June 23, 1932

Dearest G.

The new gate at Swan L. is under way. The opening in the fence has been made and enough grading done to make the way passable. The posts were set in concrete yesterday by Gordon Miller and a new friend and they will be back tomorrow after the concrete has had time to set. It will not be possible to shut off the old road until the tennis court is extended but I intend to do that soon.

The family is well and so far as I can see Ann is in good condition. She is usually up in the morning before L. and F.

Mr. Adams did not get a place on the congressional ticket though he was not far behind.

The great and only event in F.T. is the coming celebration of the incorporation of the city in 1882.

There will be floats in procession and exciting games. I regret to say that I do not even know the date. Also a circus is coming to town for the first time in three years.

May the week be enjoyable at Cape Cod. V.

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Dear Mr. Y.

June 25 '32

The bank is forwarding ^{check} to Cummings this afternoon. They had no authority under his instructions to deliver it to me.

I have just wired you that Lucy sails July 15. from Montreal. If ^{you} are still there perhaps you might drive up to Montreal to wave her off.

Geo. B., Margaret and Teddy are here and Lucy is coming soon. George asked if you would be ^{back} before he leaves. He is staying about a month. I will see Mr. McLeod and invite him to paint the boats. Ann has painted the ONW and yesterday we pushed it into the water to soak up. Ann immediately set the mast with Johnnie's help and then set up all the rigging without further help from anyone. Today we had lunch in the woods back of Miss Ramsey's with Len and Kate, the children being in or on bed. Lucy was unable to come but is doing well. It is hot.

Best love
V.

Wed

or

Thurs,

Associated Gas and Electric Company
ITHACA, NEW YORK

June 17, 1935.

To the Stockholders of

Associated Gas and Electric Company:

The annual meeting of stockholders of Associated Gas and Electric Company held on June 5, 1935 was recessed to reconvene at the principal office of the Company, No. 123 South Cayuga Street, Ithaca, N. Y., on July 15, 1935 at ten o'clock in the forenoon.

Although a majority of the stock entitled to vote at the meeting was represented, there was less than a majority of the Class A Stock present, and in order that the holders of Class A Stock may exercise their right to elect two directors of the Company it was decided that the meeting be recessed.

The management is doing everything possible to protect the interests of the stockholders and appreciates the cooperation it has already received in connection with this meeting, which is evidenced by the return to date of more than 44,000 proxies.

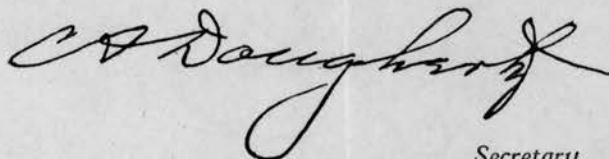
We would greatly appreciate similar action by the remaining stockholders who have not yet, because of absence from home, oversight, or for any other reason, sent in their proxies. It is only necessary that you sign the enclosed card and drop it in the post box. No postage stamp is needed.

We are anxious to get a majority in amount of the Class A Stock so that this class of stock may exercise the right it has under the Certificate of Incorporation of the Company in the election of directors.

Very truly yours,

ASSOCIATED GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY

By



Secretary

Please sign your name on the enclosed proxy exactly as it is printed thereon.

Swan Lake
Some time this week

vi. (?) . 1935

Dear Gi-Gi:

We are well. Ann plays with her
cousins. At this moment an evening
picnic ~~at~~ First Point is on. Last
night, after the ball game, Ann & I + Bridget
called on the G.B. Ma where were also
the Parsi and later the Frank Shaysie
My cousins from Alma, Mich. also dropped in
the day Ann arrived. Pa, Ma and two sons.
The sons are permissible. We could not feed
them and Elsie, kind soul, took them in
and I suspect she put them ^{up} over night.
Next morning (I took Ann) in to see them.
She enjoyed the adventure. I could
not bring myself to suggest that they
call on you on their return though
the opportunity was freely given.
They left here for Morris to see Cy and
I am wondering if they used the tel.
book to get your address. They are
friendly. V.

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F. F.

May 23, 1934

Dear Aunt Y.

I came up Monday and expect to stay until Sat.
Your letter or rather telegram arrived just before I left
Minneapolis. I had already written you about the episode
which may have been funny and I don't know yet
whether it was. Franky said she would attend to the hot etc.
Your letter to Mrs. Sprague seems to have been appreciated. Mr. S.
says it is very helpful. Cyrus and Louise are on their
way with the children today. But they have to go back and
pack. There was no chance to do that in such a small
house with the children about. No house has been found in
Minn. The strike is still unsettled but the federal
agent has taken a hand in the matter and it is probable
the same arrangement will be made. We had no difficulty
in getting food deliveries up to the time I left Mpls.
Swan Lake is low but most alluring and Clara is cleaning.
She has regained some of the pounds she lost last year.
Business is plodding along but the ultimate results and effects
seem to me as uncertain as ever. The children are getting along.
Jon's latest enclosed. He has escaped it. But love. Y.

Did I send you the original
of this?

121 Clifton Avenue,
Minneapolis, Minn.
November 7, 1932

My dear Louise:

It was very kind of you to write me about the storm and Cyrus' part in it. It seems to me that a storm like that, which is a calamity to the Power Company and to the people of the country affected, is bound to bring out the emergency-ability of all who try to help, and much as one regrets the many, many losses that are endured in a storm of that kind, one respects and admires the perseverance and ingenuity that are called forth in such a trouble. For that reason I cannot regret that, since Cyrus is connected with the Power Company, ~~that~~ he had to meet such an emergency and prove his ability to deal intelligently with his share of it. It seems to me that ~~the~~ children have been able

to meet such crises as have come their way with the proper amount of courage and endurance and good sense. ~~I think that~~ ^{it} ~~should~~ ^{be} surprised^a and disappointed^{want} if they could not come up to my belief in them in this respect. I ~~do not~~ believe that it is ^{not} good for people to have too easy or too luxurious an existence; especially is this true of young people, ~~and~~ I am sure that there are a great many people in the world today who have lived too comfortably and too thoughtlessly⁹ for whom the present depression is as good as it is unfortunate for the ^{so many, for too many} others.

We finally left Swan Lake three weeks ago tomorrow with both regret and pleasure. After it begins to get rather cool, and we have to shut off the water, housekeeping, except of a picnic kind, is a little difficult. And yet there is a peace and serenity about life there those last few weeks that help to make up for the increasing fatigue of every summer. Every year when spring comes,

I swear that I shall never go back to ^aSwan Lake ~~Summer~~ and every year I go and end a wreck. ~~and~~ The last days, even though they are busy ones, are so quiet that it is a little preparation for the contortions and complexities of life in Minneapolis.

The early part of the winter in Minneapolis, when one is trying to dig in for the winter, is full of hurry and bustle. Windows and garden and fishes and school, ~~and~~ fur coats and chimneys-that-need-to-be-relined and air-moisteners, ~~and~~ all your Aunt Lois' boxes to be unpacked! ^{despite} ~~and~~ all the things that I gave away in Boston last June and July, there seems ~~an~~ incredibly much left. There are eleven boxes of books, three trunks, a camphor chest, and nobody knows how much besides. If you can think of anything ^{that} Mr. and Mrs. Swiss Family Robinson carried in their luggage, which I haven't, hidden away in the depths of this inheritance, I wish you would let me know! I feel as if I ought to begin to be a fairy godmother right away now, and continue so for many years, there is so much still to be disposed of.

The living room begins to look as if it belonged to the family, although there is much to do there still, curtains to make and furniture to get back from the Art Museum, and Grandparent's to hang on the wall.

The Birth Control Clinic needs a President and money. The President is worn out with her own home anxieties and we have been searching the town for a new president. People seem to be very coy about putting their names before the public in connection with this movement. I feel about it as I do about smoking, if ~~they~~^{we} are interested in it at all, ~~they~~^{we} don't need to be ashamed of letting the world know it. Certainly, at the present time, ~~there are~~^{with} so many people in great distress, birth control is more than a health necessity, it is ~~a~~ economic necessity, and, as such, should have the respectful attention of people who want to use their surplus^{\$s} wisely. The women who come are so grateful for the help they get, and so careful to follow directions, that they are relieved of at least ~~their~~^{some of the} anxiety which would come to them

We feel delighted with her renewed cheerfulness and increased health, and only hope that we can keep her as well as she now seems.

if there were more little children to feed and clothe,

And tomorrow we all vote, and let us hope that the best president will win. Your Father Wright was saying tonight that Emerson once said that the Democratic party had the best principles, and the Republican party the best men. It would probably not be wise to say that, to ~~the~~ mixed gatherings at this moment, because both Republicans and Democrats might say it wasn't so.

I was glad to hear that Bobby was bilaterally symmetrical as to teeth. One would suppose that he is now able to change his gum from one side to the other of his mouth without undue development of any of his muscles.

Lucy looks very well, and has had a very happy and cheering time in Scotland. It was very good for her to be away from the family, away from a too anxious mother, and the rest of the roaring Wrights, and to be in a climate that was beneficial to her and with people with whom she was so very happy.

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June 27, '32

Dear G.

Yesterday I called at Mrs. McCloud's to see about getting the boats painted. Mr. McCloud is sick with pleurisy and will call me as soon as he can. He has had some of it before but not too bad. This time the attack is more severe.

Oris Holbrook is coming up Wednesday night.

I shall have to go to Upton again to see what the carpenters have done to the floor and what the painters have done to the walls.

The city celebration begins tomorrow and last two days. We will not move the D.A.R. Tablet.

We had the usual Sunday dinner at Sam's yesterday with Jan and Kate and the children.

Love
V.

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July 1, 1932

Dearest G.

I came back from Mpls. last night and saw Kate and Elizabeth this afternoon. They both look very well. Kate does not appear to be exhausted and I hope she will not presume on her strength. In Mpls. I saw Mrs. Hanbury once and talked with her over the tel. twice. She seems to want to continue in business and says that Miss W. Hully feels similarly. But she went to see her landlord's agent and he told her that the store was practically rented and could give her no encouragement. It may be Wm. A. French and it may be a beauty parlor. She does not know which. So she has decided to make no further effort at present and I think she will go back to Balsam Lake where Mr. Hanbury is getting well after a rather sudden failing. The painters are waxing the walls of the living room. The carpenters have finished the floor but the painters have not begun on it. The general effect of the room is newness which only time can modify. Lucy is planning to leave F.T. on July 10. and Mpls. on the evening of the 12th which should put her in Montreal (probably via Soo) on the morning of the 14th. I hope you will meet her there. Doris Holbrook came up on same train with me last night and I believe Jean Dickey is coming before Lucy leaves. Best love V. || Deloris wanted no money for herself but some for other expenses.

GEORGE B. WRIGHT MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Fergus Falls, Minnesota

July 25, 1940

To those of you who have watched the Hospital grow, in the last thirty-five years, from its small beginnings, its first outward form,-- to its present useful and efficient bulk,--this moment, to-night, brings added assurance, if that is necessary, that a small, general hospital does inspire in the community which it serves, a constant and continuing desire for hospital progress, a state of mind vital to its future expansion and welfare.

In these years of activity and usefulness, the Hospital has more than fulfilled Vernon Ames Wright's hopes for its solid and healthy growth.

Of the signers of the original Articles of Incorporation (forty-seven in number), ten can testify today to the persistent efforts which they and many others have made to have the Hospital measure up to the requirements of modern hospital methods, equipment, and procedure, and to satisfy the ideals and practical plans upon which the future of a hospital must rest.

Of the Hospital's first Board of Trustees, the first Superintendent, Eliza H. McLean (with her long and stiff training and years of nursing experience), used to say: "Never was there such a Hospital Board!" They knew little about hospitals, but they were intelligent. They devoted themselves to the varied needs of the Hospital, (and these were beyond counting) with patience and persistence. The Hospital must survive!

Before speaking of the more recent changes in the arrangement and uses of part of the East Wing of the Hospital, changes which we are here to-night to see and to enjoy, it may interest you to know something about the reasons for the Hospital's existence.

Like so many things that Vernon Wright did, the decision to build a hospital was the answer to a challenge, a challenge resulting from illness and death, the two tragedies which overtook so many families.

The George B. Wright family, living in Minneapolis in the 1860's were poor in worldly goods, rich in spirit, in belief in the goodness of life.

There was George Burdict Wright, his wife Serena Maria, and their three children: Mary Serena, Vernon Ames, Cyrus Gordon, and a fourth child, yet unborn.

As a surveyor for the United States government, George B. Wright was often far away, and often for weeks at a time. Communication was slow, difficult, sometimes impossible.

An epidemic of dysentery broke out in Minneapolis--in one square block some thirty cases appeared. The twenty-seven year old mother, Serena Maria, was at home alone with her children. The little year and a half old boy, Cyrus Gordon, was a victim of the epidemic. With limited knowledge of disease or its care, with unscientific skill, the frightened young mother tried to cope with this fearsome illness. She used the remedy of the day--tea and dry toast. The child's condition soon became very grave. In a few days the little boy died. Worn by his illness, not too well herself, with her husband beyond immediate reach, this sad and silent Serena Maria herself

became ill. She had a miscarriage. Soon she developed pleurisy. She died ^{8 months} not long after her little boy, Cyrus Gordon, and the loss of the fourth child.

About fifteen years after this series of catastrophes Vernon Wright had diptheria. He became partly paralyzed. He went on crutches for a while, and his father was sure that he would never be well again, that he would not live long. During his slow recovery, his sister, Mary, never very strong, showed signs of increasing ill health. At that time water cures were popular.

They would cure anything. So Mary Wright was sent to a water cure at
11.11.1882 Wilmington, Delaware, where she died, probably of tuberculosis.

Meanwhile, at Fergus Falls, George B. Wright was taken ill. Typhoid was,
like measles, or whooping cough, or scarlet fever, one of the expected, un-
avoidable diseases, an all but inescapable probability--for a large number of
people, year by year. When past the crisis and well on the road to convalescence,
iv.28.1882 George B. Wright died. From what? The wrong diet? Too much of it? No one
knows. So perished the last but one of a family, victims all of a lack of the
sorts of knowledge which are almost common knowledge today. Skill in nursing
has improved immensely, understanding of the causes and cure of diseases has
increased enormously, preventive measures are common practice.

There was left one young man to carry on. He believed (I quote from a
short article in the July Atlantic Monthly called "We the Living"): that a
"pre-occupation with construction" was "an effective answer to" tragedy. He
believed that "an active faith in living" was an important part of his duty
as a citizen. He believed that performance was better than promise.

Practical idealism, a constructive sense of duty: - these can bring to
pass many things. These can help to prevent tragedies, these can help to
preserve, to conserve, much that is precious treasure.

The building of a hospital was a practical statement of Faith in Life.

There are two other people to whom we shall always turn in memory with
deep affection and gratitude; two who have left to their children and friends
ideals and practices which are well worth observing and following.

Fergus Falls was fortunate in having as citizens these two who contributed
to her development a quality of distinction, dignity, and graciousness that is
rare in any community. The fine art of living was theirs in full measure. It
was an innate way of life. Their influence was quiet, steady, constant, wise.
All that is best in present day life in America was theirs to give. It was

given freely, easily, beautifully.

Mrs. William L. Parsons in her many activities was so gentle, so unobtrusive, so selfless, that some times people failed to sense her real ability, the breadth of her consideration and her concern for others, the measure of her love and kindness. ^{the force of her spirit.} Hers was both an inner and an outer grace.

William L. Parsons, an able lawyer, a wise judge, embodied all that we hold highest in the practice of his profession.

During many years, and in many ways Mr. Parsons was my husband's friend-- a well-loved and cherished friend. Mr. Parson's advice was sought, his counsel heeded, his co-operation welcomed. A consistent and understanding friendship, needing few words, enduring easily and serenely to the end. This was the quality of friendship shared by these two men.

In the founding of the Hospital, Mr. Parson's various capacities were evident. The Articles of Incorporation were drawn up in the offices of Parsons & Brown. For many years Mr. Parsons was on the Board of Trustees of the Hospital, and for a short time he was its President, bringing to this service as to all else that he did the best of his advice and consideration.

The Hospital Board and its friends hoped that some tribute to the memory of Mr. and Mrs. Parsons might become a part of the hospital which, for so long a time they helped and encouraged.

Tonight, the four daughters of Mr. & Mrs. William L. Parsons--Mrs. George B. Wright of Orwell, Vermont; Mrs. C. Charles Burlingame of Hartford, Connecticut; Miss Katherine Parsons; and Mrs. James Cowin, both of Minneapolis, join with me in making the former Ward A, the former Women's Ward, available as a waiting room and small lecture room.

It is a pleasure for us to give this room, in its renewed and more useful and convenient arrangement, to the Hospital, its Board of Trustees and its

friends, in memory of those very dear friends who helped to make and keep the Hospital an active evidence of their Faith in Life.

Grace Clarke Wright.

Mrs. Vernon A. Wright

121 Clifton Avenue, Minneapolis 4, Minn.

March 28, 1945.

Dear Mr. Kennedy,--

Very well do I remember when Vernon went to interview you, now so many years ago, in a search for some one to carry on the work which Mr. Kidder started. In the years between then and now, it is not easy to tell whether they have been few or many, so quickly does the slide-rule of time slip back and forth. Often I feel that life goes at more than one speed. Part of it hurries at airplane speed, part of it tarries. I am never sure which part is most real. My friends think I have no time sense, so I probably have none, except a curious relationship to things outside myself, so that often mundane things like trains or dinner-bells or the town-clock ringing its ideas of the divisions of time, seem secondary, and spatial time important. Our conventions and constrictions of conservative living tend to blot out the larger rhythms of time.

It is then hard for me to gauge the years of your connection with the O.T.P.C. So much has happened since you threw in your lot with it. The years have been busy ones, crowded ones, expanding ones, with interesting challenges, many successes, many progressions, many accomplishments,- not too many dull or inactive or unprogressive moments.

Since your coming the Power Company has grown apace. Your interest and devotion and skill and single-mindedness have been unswerving. You have kept on in the face of your own personal difficulties and tragedies. You must have great satisfaction in realizing how much you have done to increase and improve a plant that started with a waterfall.

The British say to-day that they must live austerely, dangerously. Words that I like to believe are close to any challenge that life offers us. If we can't meet such challenges, our days would indeed seem stupid.

II

Mr. Kennedy-

Personally I have not wanted an easy life or a lazy one. But to be well-trained, skillful and forceful enough to work at a stimulating problem, and see the results of thought and work happening before your eyes, must be a great satisfaction.

I hope that now that you are retiring from such an active life, you will find compelling things to occupy your mind and time and ability. It is a mistake to cut off activities too completely. You need some work and the development of resources, recreations, hobbies, what you will, to keep up a vivid, alert interest in all that goes on to-day in this exciting, chaotic thousand and one nights tale of to-day.

Thank you for all these years of devotion to the Power Company that was so dear to Vernon's heart. Hoping to see you when I come to Fergus Falls or when you happen to be in Minneapolis. With regrets, with thanks for these many years.

Yours sincerely,

Grace Clarke Wright.

FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF MINNEAPOLIS

FIFTH STREET at MARQUETTE AVENUE

MINNEAPOLIS 2, MINNESOTA

ADDRESS REPLY TO
TRUST DEPARTMENT

June 7, 1949

Mrs. Vernon A. Wright
121 Clifton Avenue
Minneapolis 3, Minnesota

Dear Mrs. Wright:

At the request of Mr. C. R. Wright, we are listing below the names and addresses of the Hardy and Murray groups who were interested in the Carrie A. Wright Trusts:

✓ Robert Ernest Hardy	1534 West 52nd Street Los Angeles 37, California
✓ Marguerite L. Hardy	c/o Chase Reed 16823 Ilene Detroit 21, Michigan
✓ Leon Allen Hardy	102 Griswold Drive West Hartford 7, Connecticut
✓ Laura A. Hardy Mitchell	180 East Delaware Place Chicago, Illinois
David Allen Murray	120 Percival Avenue Montreal West, Canada
Eva Murray	4110 West Adams Boulevard Los Angeles 16, California
Lester Noble Murray	4110 West Adams Boulevard Los Angeles 16, California
Mattie Murray Vanetta	930 East Burnside Street Portland 14, Oregon
Clifford Murray	1141½ South Sydney Drive East Los Angeles 22, Calif.
Walter Murray	Wilsonville, Oregon

Yours very truly,

Charles R. Miller
Vice President

133.79
17.87
115.92

Charles R. Miller
baf
5102

The Old One thought: -

wake up and face

The problem of to-day

The years have slowed

your lively face

No matter what they say

Let this be last of

birthday dais

And eat with me, I pray,

At half past six, the

twenty-third

The seventy-fifth birthday

Adieu with Grace.

At Swan Lake

vii, 18, 1949.

"The Time has come,

The Old One mused,

"To ponder many things,

"How fast the years

"Have hurried by

"On wide-spread Swan
Lake wings.

"And how each changing,
wondrous year

"Its own stiff Challenge
brings."

Minneapolis, Minnesota.
October 25th, 1949.

Miss Margaret Spence,
6 Netheravon Road,
Hanwell, W. 7,
London, England.

Dear Miss Spence-

At last, on a beautiful sunny October Sunday, the first Sunday in the month, I think, we had our little service for Katherine Spence. The day before, on Saturday, I went out in the woods, and cleared a path of twigs and small branches to the little clearing, by a big and beautiful tree, where my husband's ashes are scattered. I marked the path quite carefully, so that we couldn't miss it. The Rev. Reno W. Quehnel, a very darling man, who entered the church and studied for the ministry within the last few years, when three of his children were good sized, was very happy to come and read the service for me. He read it very beautifully. There were only a few of us; my son Thomas and his wife, my son Cyrus and his wife, Mr. Quehnel and I. Ann had not come over from Lake Vermilion, where she spends most of her summer, and I didn't dare to wait for her because I was afraid we would have a storm. There was a great sense of peace and fulfillment. I was glad to know that Mr. Quehnel felt it, just as my children and I did, we who had known Katherine Spence so well. I asked Mr. Quehnel if he minded if I said a few words about your sister, and he said "no", and so I did

#2 - Miss Margaret Spence.

say a little bit about it, because I couldn't quite bear not to say aloud things I have thought to myself so many times. I also read aloud two little bits that seemed to me to apply to Katherine's life, as well as the lives of other people. I am enclosing you both of them with Mr. Quehnell's letter to me.

One was written by Arthur Hugh Clough, about his brother George Augustus, a native of Liverpool, who had died in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1843, on November the 5th. The other was a little bit about Bertha Carroll, who was my dancing teacher for a number of years. She was a friend of my mother, and a very dear friend of Lucy Welch, of whom you have heard Katherine speak or write many times, I am sure. This little bit about Bertha Carroll was on a tablet put in the little school which she founded, and of which she was principal for a long time.

We were all impressed, I think, with Mr. Quehnell's simplicity and sincerity, and with the beauty with which he read the words. The next morning, I went out to the woods again, and so many leaves had fallen during the night, that no one would know what had happened, and by next spring the earth will have entirely received and made use of the last bit of our dear friend, just as we have made use and trusted the character of her life and spirit.

It may be that next spring I shall be in London once

#3 - Miss Margaret Spence.

more. If all goes well, I want to go and see my daughter Lucy and her husband, who are now in Athens, working with refugee students. Ann and I both hope to get there, and I, at least, hope if I can to spend a month in England. Then indeed I shall try to see you and your sister again, and under better circumstances than last time. Last time I was recovering from a virus cold, and felt wretched.

Mrs. Vernon A. Wright,
121 Clifton Avenue,
Minneapolis 4, Minnesota,
U.S.A.

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Encs.

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Minneapolis, Minnesota.
October 25th, 1949.

Miss Gertrude A. Kennerley,
34 Clarendon Drive,
Putney, London, S.W. 15,
England.

Dearest Gertrude-

When your birthday letter came so many weeks ago, I had no idea that I should be such a long time in answering it. The weeks and the months slide faster and faster, the older we grow, and many times they fly too fast for comfort and happiness. The birthday party was really a success.

Perhaps I never told you anything about these parties. They started out when I was about 10 or 11, as parties to entertain two little cousins, a year apart to a day in age, whose mother had died. These children's parents were both second cousins of mine, although much older, and second cousins of each other, and were constantly at our house, as long as my parents lived. And the children's birthday was a day before mine, so it seemed quite natural to suggest that I give a birthday party for them. That continued until I was 20, when my father and mother died, and presently began again as my children came along. There has been a birthday party for my children and my grandchildren until last summer. They were silly parties, full of fun and joyousness, many times they were dressup parties, with

#2 - Miss Gertrude A. Kennerley.

everyone coming in costume, homemade and entertaining. But it seemed to me last summer that, having reached the ripe age of 75, it was a good time to stop having birthday parties, and let somebody else have a party, if he or she wanted to. These were always very informal, the grandchildren used to walk up and down the camp, on the day before, and say, -"Grandmother, we would like you to come for ice cream and cake to-night after dinner". So you can see that the costumes were impromptu and sometimes put together insecurely.

I used to enjoy seeing my children and my grandchildren coming toward the house, great big Thomas and his wife, and their 4 children, from one direction, and Cyrus and his wife and 3 children, from another direction, all smiling and happy. Every age came, and there are 15 families in our little club. This year, that meant 60 people, and this year I invited them all to dinner, all from my age, 75, down to 3½. It was a perfectly informal party and a perfectly beautiful evening, so that everyone could sit out-of-doors on a big piazza, and the whole party from beginning to end, went on smoothly greased wheels, and seemed to be no effort, and there was no tension; nothing but a happy and joyous occasion in which everybody shared.

After the birthday party, the days slid by swiftly. I drove the 300 miles to visit Ann for a few days, with my oldest granddaughter at the wheel, and then, before we knew it, began the annual exodus of the grandchildren to their various schools. Jean

#3 - Miss Gertrude A. Kennerley.

is a senior at Radcliffe, Barbara is a junior at Barnard, Betty is a senior at Westtown School, a Quaker Preparatory School for college, in excellent standing. Time is in his second year at Andover, with one more year to go before he goes to college. That takes care of one family. Bob is in his second year at Tabor Academy, and Alice has just gone to a very modern co-educational school in Woodstock, Vermont. They will all come to me, including Ann, in Boston, for Thanksgiving, as we did last year. I shall not do it again, after this year, because I think the time has come to stop a good many things.

We had a very merry Thanksgiving in Boston last year, and I hope that with the other two children, Barbara and Alice, with us this year, we can be just as happy or happier than we were. I, at least, enjoyed it very much. After the children have departed in their various directions, I shall go on to New York for a bit, as I always do, and perhaps stay there a week, perhaps more.

Going east is always a great excitement for me, and a great reward. Of my many friends in the east, I seem to be the one most able physically to wander around the world. Some of them are getting too frail to travel, and if I am going to see them at all, I must go. I am very much better than I was last year, so I am hoping for a far better winter. My two virus colds, the Paris-London one, and the one in Boston last year, were not much fun, and its taken

#4 - Miss Gertrude A. Kennerley.

me a long time to get over them, but I seem to be pretty well again,
and able to work hard and with a good deal of interest.

I think about you all very often, and about my happy
visits with you, and the way that you and I met and accepted each other
as if we had always been friends. That happens only occasionally, but
it is a great delight when it occurs.

Mrs. Vernon A. Wright,
121 Clifton Avenue,
Minneapolis 4, Minnesota.
U.S.A.

GCW:LLC