

Completed  
Matis house, while  
improvements made.  
Bess Cookin

McGILL UNIVERSITY  
ARCHIVES  
ACC. NO. 1010  
REF. 223

Little Matis  
June 9<sup>th</sup> 1898

Dearest Love,

Again I have left myself very little time for writing, but I have been reading A. A. Exam. papers all afternoon and was very ~~at~~ anxious to get them finished. Now that they all read I shall be able to make up the results and send them off tomorrow.

My two cooks are sitting on barrels and have no objection whatever to eating what they have

cooked. I have agreed to pay them wages for their services, with a deduction of one cent for every time that there is an active disagreement between them.

To-day we had fried bacon and poached eggs for dinner - well cooked too. Yesterday we had great difficulty in getting a loaf of bread, but today the boys encountered the baker and secured three ~~loaves~~.

Caril and three other men turned up early this morning and have put in a good days work. Yesterday

we cleared the decks  
for them by moving nearly  
everything from the kitchen  
into the nursery and to-  
morrow we are to move  
the cooking-stove into the  
shed and turn that into  
a temporary kitchen. If  
the weather holds fine  
we shall probably be  
able to move it back in  
the course of 3 or 4 days.

You will be sorry to hear  
that the mice have been in  
the house during the winter  
and gone through nearly  
everything with straw in it  
~~and~~ — sofa cushion in parlour,  
bolsters, pillows &c. — <sup>many holes found</sup> In  
other respects we found everything

in partly good condition.  
It took me most of the  
morning to cover the plants.

Friday

I did not send this yesterday  
as Caril told me that I  
was too late, which was  
a mistake as I find that  
you can post letters up  
to 8 or 9 o'clock at night.  
Your letter arrived this  
morning and we were very  
glad to hear from you,  
but sorry that the weather  
is so hot. Here it was  
quite warm yesterday morning,  
but a breeze from the north  
sprang up in the afternoon  
and during the night we  
found it hard to keep  
warm in bed even with

extra blankets. This morning  
 it was cloudy, but as the  
 sun got higher the clouds  
 dis appeared and now  
 it is beautiful & clear.

There is perfect plague of  
 black flies here and my  
 head is a mass of bosses.  
 The mosquitos were thick  
 too yesterday, but today  
 it is too cool & windy  
 for them.

The men all turned up  
 again to-day and the  
 work is really progressing  
 rapidly. Of course it is  
 the finishing that always  
 takes most time, but I  
 think it will be possible  
 to use the kitchen by the  
 middle of next week. As  
 a matter of fact we are

using it now and have decided not to move the stove to the shed at all. No doubt it will be weeks after next before it will be possible to properly move into the kitchen and in the meantime cooking could be done on the stove and meantime the nursery will be required as a stove-room.

The new roof is going on to-day as it seemed best to get the place covered in as soon as possible, so that if it rained the men could work at partitions &c. inside. We have also got the back wall moved out and the first floor of the

new bed-room and shop  
laid. The new bed-room  
will have a charming  
outlook - better than  
any other room in the  
house.

Bernard went off fishing  
yesterday afternoon and  
brought back a nice little  
strip of trout which he  
cleaned and cooked for  
our tea. Con is working  
hard and has a marvellous  
stock of energy. He looks  
as if he had gained several  
pounds in weight already.  
The foolish fellow left the  
new bicycle pump behind.  
This morning I borrowed  
one from Macnider, and  
now Con finds that one of

the bicycle valve is leaky. He has decorated the house with tastefully arranged bunches of flowers - chiefly Iceland poppies, of which there is a great profusion. Such large ones I never saw before, the stems in some cases are nearly two feet high and the flowers very fine - all of them however, yellow.

We continue to take our meals at home, for the hotels are not opened yet and Miss Astle would evidently look upon giving us meals as a great favour. So I prefer to be independent. Then too it is good for the boys to have a little taste of roughing it. They are enjoying themselves



greatly this afternoon, nailing boards on the roof.

I ordered the "Star" before leaving town and have already learned from its fraternal pages that I am as metis with my family.

As to furniture for the servants room, all I notice is an old canvas-topped bed and a cracked looking-glass. We can easily put in a wash-stand, but as to other necessaries you must judge. The place would of course stand more complete "equipment."

The flour has reached the station, but nothing else as yet. I shall wait before sending until there is sufficient freight to make a load.

Lucky has not been near us since the first day, although there are many things requiring his attention.

Tell Poppy that I was greatly pleased to get his letter and will try to write to him soon. I wish we had the dear little chaps here, although our hands are certainly pretty full already.

I have to think of all the toil you will have in getting your detachment off and wish I could make myself useful in two places at once.

With love to yourself and the boys  
Ever your fond Bernard.

If you see Dale tell him  
not to charge Mrs. Motson  
for all the plastering.

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