Source 3
For many years the methods of striking a light were very primitive, just as they were in Europe; many families possessed no adequate means, or very imperfect ones. If by ill fortune the fire in the fireplace became wholly extinguished through carelessness at night, someone, usually a small boy, was sent to the house of the nearest neighbor, bearing a shovel or covered pan, or perhaps a broad strip of green bark, on which to bring back coals for relighting the fire. Nearly all families had some form of a flint and steel,—a method of obtaining fire which has been used from time immemorial by both civilized and uncivilized nations.


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