

Mrs. Bert Hall

Interviewed Feb. 9 / 1972

b. 1905 Gertrude Hall in parents small house on dyke, #3 Rd. and Fraser River. Moved at age of 3 years to house built on Steveston Highway (then called # 9 Rd.) and Railway Ave. At 3 months age came from Steveston on first inter_urban tram.

Gertrude's father, Robert Blair came to Lulu Island at age of 7 years....arrived with his family July 1, 1887

keepsake is watch presented to grandfather James Blair by friends on eve of departure from Magherarborne, Ireland, June 21, 1887.

Gertrude born at home, attended by doctor out from Vancouver and midwife, Mrs. McGinnis.....father worked two jobs, in canneries, and trucking route Steveston to Vancouver.

2 brothers: Arthur (died 6 yrs. ago), and Williard

2 sisters: Janet and Frances.

Walked 1 1/2 miles to Steveston school: 1911. Two room school: Readers

1 and 2; readers 3 and 4. Teachers: Miss Beck, Miss Crawford, later

Miss Buckingham.....Pot bellied stove to dry clothes (weather), high

button boots. Jap tub geranium pots shown on sides of front steps at

school house (six). Girls curls dunked in ink wells....separate,

unheated long building for sport, games in wet weather.....once a

week (Mondays) went to Bridgeport school for domestic science class

(made macaroni and cheese, aprons)....boys to manual class....on

later had drug store

tram 25 minutes.....Dr. Tapworth, Steveston doctor checked teeth

in schools twice yearly....real health doctor, Dr. Hull, Marpole.

At school: 1916 snow, a "worst"...one school boy looked after fire

for warmth, sometimes teacher couldn't get through...students just

walked back home....grade 4 exams came from Victoria "quite hard."

July 1st an exciting "big" day....150 Blairs got together,
picnics at Blair Place old house at end of #3 Rd. and River Rd now
torn down....many Blairs born on the 1st.Steveston had "little"
celebration, la crose games..... Chinese had own celebration in
"little Chinatown" on the dyke, firecrackers..."I can always
remember firecrackers I never liked them."

May Day: always went to New Westminster event by tram (parents went
by boat....grandmother had a boarding house end of # 2 Rd., a captain
stayed there, gave mother Vabel Branscombe a penny.)

....about 1923-24, May Day at Brighthouse, Minoru Park, clubhouse, trees,
races for kids. School teachers, initiated by Miss McNeeley, then
Miss Murphy taught dances.

.....moved to Chilliwack, where father bought farm 1918....c. 1921-
1922 returned to own house, qualify for Entrance, then attended 1st
and 2nd year Bridgeport school (high school.)....

.....house built under \$4,000....3 bedrooms up with bath, 3 down, hall
ways. living and dining rooms, kitchen, pantries, "awfully large rooms
with high ceilings", round coal and wood stoves, no heat in bedrooms.

....no water except rain barrels at first; bought water from Marpole
1/4 gallon barrels, cans....wash water from river....drinking water
from creeks in Marpole.

....Roads were good...road roller smoothed them out every year.

....to visit peat bogs taboo....no way to get there, just plank roads.

C. Gray, ins. agent advertised "richest land in country, just need
fertilizer".....everyone had farms.

.....to visit grandparents on Blair estate...walked on CPR tracks,
ro le side car watching for trains....few pheasants...lots of ducks
everyone had own chickens, cow, so eggs and milk....red sockeye
salmon 25 cents to 50 cents from old fishermen...grandfather put
salt pork and fish in barrels.

Her mother sewed daughters clothes, sons shirts and pants, grandma knitted socks. Underwear from bleached flour sacks...made own (lye) soap.....pix shows school dress of pongee.

.....handicrafts: made Rose Beads of real rose petals, stored, brown in pots, rolled up, hole in center with darning needle, colored red, black, dipped in cornstarch, gold bead each side to hold in place, cut gut for stringing (at age 16)....also strung popcorn, put real candles on Christmas trees.

....for spending money picked loganberries at neighbors...made \$2 a day.....parents grew strawberries . so helped pick, land of $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres rented for 5 years.

....worked part time in Steveston telephone office...handled long distance calls.

.....married at 23, in 1928 at home.....under arch of yellow mums... buffet for over 100 guests....to Victoria for honeymoon "great".

....lived in Marnole 4 years, then back, Sea Island for 22 years.

.....children all born Grace Hospital...all schools, live in Richmond. Bobby, 1929 (3 sons. 19, 17, 13): Ted, 1933: Joy, 1944. now Mrs. Bill Kause.

....hobbies: indoor gardening. Husband outdoor gardening...hanging trees, yellow painted bay rakes bent, with baskets, hold geranium pots in yard.

no tape recording