

Mr. Frank Airey, 83

Interviewed April 18, 1972

1132 Bridgeport Rd.

Father Albert Airey came from Yorkshire - settled in Toronto 2 years - big Vancouver fire, request for builders to re-build city so came to Vancouver 1888.

-father told of early doctors in Vancouver, Dr. Lefevre - also Dr. Carroll who came on a sailing ship (street in Vancouver named after him) - no hospitals in Vancouver - doctors came to homes - Albert Airey first and only undertaker in Vancouver, also a builder and one of founders of Christ Church Cathedral.

-recalls joiner or carpenter measuring corpse in home of deceased and build casket, arrange funeral and burial - on Deadman's Island now H.M.S. Discovery.

-fathers house on Thurlow St. between Pender and Melville - signs^tlands outside for business (see picture)

-Frank born in home Feb. 5, 1889 and two sisters, Lillian Brown, Seattle and Miss Rosie W. Airey, Vancouver.

Frank went to school in wooden building at corner Nelson and Howe St., Dawson School.

-father owned 6 acres land Bridgeport Rd. near No. 5 Road - no access road - only way along River Rd. over Marpole Bridge up Simpson Rd. planked, then Simpson to No. 5 Rd., opened up also planked.

-father intended growing loganberries.

Frank returned W.W. I - lived 4 years Soldiers Settlement orchard Okanagan - to Richmond property built Airey Greenhouses (4 in all) 1932 but lived in Marpole till 1936 when built house here - Dad and Frank operated - 6 or 7 kids in picking time - tore green houses down about 6 years ago (Freda windstorm) tore out glass.

Grew rotation tomatoes, cucumbers, chrysanthemum, stock - prices - first tomatoes \$4.50 a 20 lb. crate petered to \$2.50 a 20 lb. crate - cucumbers, packed 40 lb. boxes at \$1.00 a doz. (10¢ a piece)

-cf. one peak year price: year Mississippi flooded, U.S. prohibited export tomato so hot house tomatoes sold \$10 a 20 lb. crate. Airey grew first the 2 cell Elsie Craig, English tomato then 4 cell Veta-mould tomato firmer.

-Ablitt on No. 6 Road the earliest hot house tomato grower - Chinese in Burnaby had one hot house - Chinese field market gardeners no competition Dutch growers Richmond and Surrey also grew tomatoes.

-Airey sold to Vancouver Wholesalers

-Frank is registered in England as first Scoutmaster in Canada (1910) - interview March 7, 1969, Richmond Review from Sec. Baden-Powell Guild.

-Frank a sargeat in Boys Brigade, Christ Church rep. came to Victoria, Vancouver to start scouts in mission in Fairview, St. George's Church 1909 in operation before Troop was registered.

-Scoutmaster Airey had 73 scouts.

-Frank enlisted in W.W. II, Scouts ceased til war end in Marpole: wife had Girl Guides, both in work St. Albans Church: Wife Margaret Dowie (died was President of Church W.A., Nursing director St. Johns Ambulance, Richmond, during W.W. II; in charge of E. Richmond Red Cross.

-Frank enjoyed square dances -organized group "The Tumbleweeds" - had 5 squares - practised in house - later held in St. Albans Church hall and St. Edwards hall.

-started with Savages and Mays - then Frank encouraged youth who picked fruit for him for years - attended square dance festivals - square dancing now in Cambie School.

Children: 2 daughters: Francis Margaret (Mrs. E.S. Gregory) at Powell River; Shirley May (Mrs. Ades) Vancouver is head, Health and Welfare, provincial bacteriology.

Frank travels -

Pilgrimage to Mafeking, S. Africa to scene Lord Baden-Powell's siege, where decided to start Scout Movement, Boer War - met sister of W.W.I first Boy Scout - Rhodesia Cottage Baden-Powell's lived in - met Lady Baden-Powell in Africa.

-followed David Livingston route - to Holy Land twice - to Spain with daughter visit tomb of apostle St. James buried Santiago-also travelled to South America and Trinidad, Porto Rica; India, Turkey, Greece.

30,000 people saw pictures.

1925 Carpenter Frank Airey built houses Johnson Reeve and Watson, Vancouver - built Joseph Goldney's house and own house 1936 in Richmond - no money in it -greenhouse business saved family - lumber for own house from Eburne Sawmills.

-Has Box factory in sheds at back - relates ingenuity during Wartime (W.W. II) in getting tin to bind edge of fruit boxes.

-tin plate refused him except for food containers so got veneer plywood from B.C. Manufacturing, New Westminster and 200-300 lbs. waste tin from American Can Company, Powell St. - Other growers asked wholesaler for baskets - foot controller - O.K'd 200 lbs. waste tin - then Frank visited old wartime friend Sgt. Major Gill and daughter cleared huge pile tin plate from American Can for him - at end W.W. II Company ordered proper size tin plate for Frank - he supplies thousands of fruit boxes, including Okanagan - three women on piece work - 9 students in summer - all he can handle.