

Mrs. Esther Baldwin - 1106 - 3rd Ave. Interviewed April 13, 1972.

Born in Ontario, came to Richmond in 1907 with parents and younger brother Percy who was 6, from Calgary - Father worked in Hunt's Store Corner 2nd Ave. and Moncton St. - store sold to Walker - then worked at Tom Leslie lumber yard (lumber from Eburne Sawmill) - then foreman on roads for municipality, Ward 3.

Esther 12½ years when came - attended Steveston School - then 1 year at Bridgeport School on interurban tram - Steveston teachers: Mr. Davidson, Miss Champier who married Carvel Steves - at Bridgeport had Mr. McIlveny or McIlveny and Miss Estabrook, just 2 rooms.

-relates incident re noon time walk to find old man and delay on Lulu to Sea Island Brdige - water supply shut off when boatthrough - got rain water in 2 barrels - new shingled roof so couldn't use that water - ditches all too alkaline to use - brother and Esther took 10 pound lard pail and smaller one and dipped water from Fraser River for Mother for wash water - got 1 pail daily drinking water or cooking - from old lady in Steveston Mrs. McDonald who lived on 2nd Ave. in house of which front had original Post Office - Parker ran Post Office - hot summer - had padlock on water tank, water stolen - Mother boiled river water for drinking, cooking - 1st summer recalled family walk up dyke past No. 5 Rd., brother thirsty - asked old man for drink shouted her down, offered drink of milk.

-through misunderstanding electricity not in home until 1917, paid deposit much earlier - lived along railroad, near Garry St. - father looking for land for market gardening but had to compete against Chinese who had land along River (now full of mills) - only land, dyke around Island when father came - using floating dredge to build permanent dykes land under water so chose land high and dry by Railroad track - finally sold home,

orchard to Japanese Buddhist Association for picnic grounds, municipality refused - so house rented out - municipality taking over, bottom part of land, and cousin's and brothers for park - house bulldozed down. -had 2 sets of Tooley shoes hung on wall - as child Steveston Hotel doing roaring business - fire destroyed 1918 - went to concerts at Opera House, operas from Vancouver, later dances held - Esther worked home - family grew lots strawberries, raspberries, sold strawberries to store in Steveston, then to Empress Jam factory, also cherries from orchard - no sale for currants, gooseberries.

-shopped for Mother at Woodward's, Spencers downtown - later father had herd of 8 cows, Holstein, part jersey - got meat in Steveston - Willwater's Butcher shop and Skouse shop later -

property not on proper road, 250' wide 1000' long - saw 1st aeroplane take off from Brighthouse - wanted ride - sold rides to people

-first May at Richmond held May Day celebrations back of little United Church - picnic, horse racing, harness racing, foot racing.

-married August 11, 1915 to Clifford Alan Baldwin, barber, previously was a carpenter, drying house out in winter with charcoal burners he was gassed - died 1935 - family lived in Vancouver 20 years - Esther came back to Richmond around 1938 when father ill to take care of him.

Children: Ellen (Mrs. Perry) Burnaby

James - No. 4 Road

Raymond, Coombs, Vancouver Island

Doug, Seafair area, Richmond

16 great grandchildren.

Anecdote re son playing truant, Doug went fishing - showed 2 early maps of Steveston - one about 1907 shows property of Fentiman and Norton

families - 2nd shows Richmond Oil Company which had derrick later caught fire around 1930 gas brought in on Fentiman property - Japanese Hospital also on map.

TAPE 16 - SIDES 1 and 2.