

Mrs. George (Martha) Wright,
767 Francis Road, Richmond.

Interviewed: June 4, 1973.

Born: December 27, 1893, Derbyshire, England. 1910 - came to Canada at 17 years to join two brothers who had been living at Oliver Road, East Delta for 2 years . . . 80 acre farm of mixed farming . . . family name Chorlton . . . dairying, grain, potatoes . . . sold whole milk to dairy in Vancouver.

1918 - married George Wright . . . worked with husband for two years in East Delta for another farmer. 1921 - rented 100 acre farm Smith Road.

early 1922 - moved to Sea Island . . . third child Winnifred born . . . rented 130 acre Mackie Brothers farm . . . mixed farming . . . at site of present Airport Administration Building.

Martha's typical farm day.

Up shortly after 5 a.m. and helped milk 15 to 20 Holstein cows, about 7 a.m. - finish preparing breakfast . . . always had a girl to help with children . . . milking was ghastly experience at first but grew to like it . . . Mrs. Buckingham also milked cows . . . couldn't afford hired help . . . family washing took whole day . . . on scrub board . . . got hand washing machine . . . then gas driven machine . . . had no electric light . . . so had lanterns to clean, chimneys.

Lighting

Barn lanterns were closed at top . . . bail over top to carry lantern, and hook to barn nail . . . half a dozen needed in barn . . . got to know your way around . . . "a little light needed in the odd corner" . . . sometimes quite dark in barn.

About 5 p.m. afternoon milking - took one hour . . . husband out longer feeding cattle and cleaning up . . . husband strict re hours. 6:30 p.m. - dinner . . . then two older children to bed . . . baby fed earlier . . . then reading - got papers through the mail . . . anyone going by picked up mail (about twice a week) at old Eburne Post Office beside Grauer's Store (corner of Sea Island) . . . in busy season got whole week of papers at once - Vancouver Province, Weekly Free Press, Family Herald and Weekly Star . . . B.C. farmers didn't feel isolated but were one big happy family.

Sewing - had treadle sewing machine at Sea Island . . . most clothes re-made because of money shortage . . . used flour sacks for tea towels, underclothes, petticoats for girls . . . soaped out the printing design . . . beautifully white after few washings . . . bought boys jeans in mail order catalogue . . . periodically to Woodward's store, Vancouver . . . got a Chev car the year she married - cost under \$1,000 then . . . Martha got driver's license in 1918. Had own ice cream freezer and made ice cream . . . little free visiting time . . . Sundays back to East Delta to visit mother there but had to be home to milk . . . also Sundays to Stanley Park, picnic lunch, swim, father a great swimmer - taught children. Lived 8 years on Sea Island . . . it was prairie like. Approached Sea Island by old Eburne Bridge, to Miller Road, along to No. 12 Road, then by private road to their house . . . Sea Island roads then were gravel. Milk - taken to platform on the road, picked up by truck by Mr. Jewel or Mr. Hartley (both lived in Marpole) and taken to Vancouver. Walking - into town . . . hired help would walk along the dyke to Eburne - easier than road . . . a footpath or lane on the dyke . . . weeds on dyke . . . blackberries everywhere, "take over" everything.

Crew hay, oats, potatoes, family vegetables, mangels for cow feed . . . cows fenced into pasture land . . . had tests for T.B. . . . lost several cows . . . a personal loss felt by Mrs. Wright . . liked cows better than horses . . . helped with early spring hand planting.

First three children - Jack, Bud, Winnie, all went to Bridgeport School . . . Mr. Jewel drove school bus as well as milk truck.

Airport took over Mackie farm so Wrights sold some cattle and looked all over for a farm to buy. 1930 bought at 1154 No. 3 Road - 70 acres, son George now lives there and operates the farm . . . nearest neighbor, then and now, Erwin McCallister, a bachelor.

Wright's place was again mixed farming . . . remaining cattle were Holsteins . . . it was "starting in again at the bottom" and depression "grim" . . . 6 children were a big help and worked on farm as a family . . . there was no spending money for children . . . farm not productive at first. 1933 sold potatoes for \$6 a ton . . . Martha and husband picked over every potatoe sold . . . had to be No. 1 quality . . . husband handled sacking, etc. for potatoes.

For quick dollars grew strawberries . . . sold to Empress Cannery . . . got 5 cents a pound . . . one day man brought back empty crates - Wright's had a load ready to go but man said "sorry, we don't need any more berries". - what to do: Martha drove the car to Vancouver and sold the berries to a pie company . . . that ended the season . . . over supply . . . also grew a few raspberries.

Oldest son, Jack, works at B.C. Artificial Insemination, Milner, a government agriculture station, improving breed, quality of cattle . . . father's guidance evident in children in following agriculture ideals, improving quality . . . a very loving family.

Mrs. G. Wright

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Later life on Lulu Island farm - had more children but life was easier . . . had electricity, children out on their own more, on bikes they earned by working on the farm . . . didn't call it spending money . . . family active in South Arm United Church, Sunday School . . . schools transported children free to Grade 10 . . . met at South Arm corner (Steveston Highway and No. 3 Road) and went to school . . . one of McKim brothers drove school bus for a while (H.W.) . . . father, George always wanted to work so much.

D. Cleland