



The Red Bridge, the first road crossing of the lower Stave River, was built in the summer of 1908. The photo shows horses and buggies crossing the bridge after it was formally opened by Governor General Lord Earl Grey. The site of the bridge is now behind the Ruskin Dam under about 20 metres of water.

The Red Bridge at Ruskin

Alma Ward née Hampton wrote:

At the time the bridge was built, Mr. Robert Bonson (Bob), son of the pioneer Lewis F. Bonson, was the Government supervisor of roads and bridges.

He was a friend of William Hampton's who visited and stayed at our home when in the vicinity.

In the book *Maple Ridge, A History of Settlement*, page 54, it says, "it was popularly known as the Red Bridge, from the bright color of its paint, and it was opened by no less than the Governor General, Earl Grey, in front of an unimpressive scattering of local people."

This bridge was built in 1909, in the wilderness miles from Ruskin or any other locality. The "local people" who attended were eight young ladies from Port Haney, some of them school teachers. The picture taken at the time shows them to be dressed in their best summer dresses; three Hampton girls were there, Annie, Vina, and Alma, and from Haney: May and Esther Best.

Our brother Ernie was working in the area hauling logs with a team of horses, and it was from him and Mr. Bob Bonson that we learned of the opening ceremony. Behind us on the hill, there were two men in dress attire with high crowned silk hats. They were Earl Grey, the Governor General of Canada, and an aide or BC Government official. They arrived in a very nice carriage with a team of horses from the Livery Stable at Port Haney. After the ceremony, on our behalf we presented Earl Grey with a basket of Maple Ridge apples, and he was quite impressed with the gift.



Esther Best.



Annie Hampton.