

The First Years

After the first settlers arrived in the summer of 1907, Fruitvale grew swiftly. At first, most families lived in tents and hastily constructed shacks until more permanent houses could be built.

The men slashed roads and built a log house for the 'Company' which was used as a temporary shelter for new arrivals. This house later came to be known as the Model Ranch.



Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Webster



Fruitvale - circa 1908

A small townsite containing about 150 lots, each measuring 40 feet by 100 feet, was laid out on either side of the railway tracks.

Some large ranches were soon established, and goats, sheep, and cattle were brought into the area.

Many of the men worked part of the year on roads and on the railroad, some as far away as Spokane. Wages were about fifteen cents an hour with a nine-hour day in winter and a ten-hour day in summer.

A Growing Village

By the beginning of 1908, 2000 acres of land had been sold to 200 different settling families.

The land had to be cleared, and the fruit trees planted. Houses had to be built, families fed, and property paid for. Small pieces of land were cleared and planted, the areas of cultivation gradually increasing. Grouse and game were plentiful in the woods, and old-timers used to tell how it was nothing to have 100 fish to a catch on Beaver Creek.



By 1911 the village boasted a broom factory, a sawmill, a hardware store, and a post office.



Fruitvale Hotel beside Mellard's General Store and land sales office - circa 1912



This beautiful new school, Fruitvale's second, opened in 1910, serving as the community hall as well.