

[Page 63 - A Visit With Gertie Boutilier Turnbull](#)ISSUE : [Issue 50](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1989/1/1

A Visit with Gertie Boutilier Turnbull ggrtrygg Flprgncg Dgngaghy BputAligr Turnbull. Coxheath: Red. Oh, the earth was--o- oh. It'd frighten you to death. And that (the earthquake) was in 1929. (And just where were you in Cape Breton when the earthquake hit?) I was in Cox? heath. (Was there any sound of it?) Just a roaring noise. (When you say a roar, was it like a car passing or was it like a plane passing?) Well, I was in the house when this neigh? bour of mine, she said, "Gertie," she said, "it's an earthquake! Let us go for the cellar." I said, "No. My goodness, my kids are in school! I'll have to beat it home." And I took up the road, oh, like a scalded dog. Did I ever go! And when I got in my house, the dishes in the pantry were all--my big clock I had was stopped, and my preserves in the cellar were all nearly ready to fall down on the basement floor. I remember it as if it was only yesterday. (Could you feel it?) I was numb. When I was running up the road, I was nearly all gone. And my husband was in town that day with the white horse. Oh, I'll never for? get that day. (And did anything happen to him?) No, no. He didn't mind that. When he came home, I said, "Why didn't you get home sooner?" "Oh," he said, "I took my time today. And I was outside of a house. And I always have to put the weight on the 4?? horse, you know, when you let him stop. And," he said, "I happened to look out, and the horse was pawing like that on the street." He could hear the--the horse could hear, I suppose, the confusion and the noise. (Of the earthquake.) Yeah, of the earthquake. (You said something about--did you actual? ly see the earth open in some place?) I saw it crack. I saw it crack, in cracks, running up the Coxheath Road there. (And, when you say "red."..?) Oh, it's just kind of a light, light brown colour.... Oh, I was pretty scared that day, coming up the road. I was scared to death. (Gary Boutilier. Gertie's grandson; More like a rumble, or a growling noise?) Oh, it was a noise that would scare you, anyway.... (Gary: Nothing like thunder or anything like that.) No, no. It was far, far, like it was coming to you.... I guess there's not too many left--1929-- are there, around Coxheath? If they would, they'd be very young (then). I was 29 in 1923. That's when I moved over in the house. And it was 6 years afterwards... I was 35 years old when that took place. (You were telling me earlier about Seattle Wallace.) My daughter, yes. (And she was 63