

## East Falls Past--Ella Boyd McGlynn Interview

*The Fallser*, November 2010, by Wendy Moody

Ella Boyd McGlynn, born in the Falls in 1893, was 88 when she was interviewed by Cherie Snyder in 1981. These excerpts from her oral history help us picture turn-of-the-century Falls.

### ***Where were you born?***

At home, 3341 North 35<sup>th</sup> Street (Conrad)

### ***Did the home originally have a bath?***

No. That was added 60 years ago. Everybody had outside toilets. There were no water pipes. Conrad and Bowman were dirt roads. They were all dirt - no pavement.

### ***Were your parents from the Falls?***

No, they came from Scotland with two children. I'm the youngest of twelve.

### ***They had ten children here?***

Yeah. They could count two years apart...

### ***Tell me about Indian Queen Lane.***

It was a path. At the bottom, it had cobbles. It was such a hill! We sledged on it many a time. Where Medical College is was all woods and a big house – Abbottsford's. Henry Avenue wasn't cut through. And of course the library was there (in Old Academy). The librarian, Ella Boyd, had the same name as mine. Where the new library is now was a duck pond where my brothers skated.

### ***When did you start working?***

At 13, in Gimbel's, after school. I was a milliner there. I worked four months for nothing to learn my trade. I worked 8am - 6 pm until age 72. No vacation money. I made many a hat for East Falls' brides.

### ***How did you get there?***

The old trolleys with the wire. If we were stuck in back of anything we were just stuck.

### ***If you were real sick, would the doctor come to your house?***

Yes, in a horse and carriage. If you were having a baby, you'd call him the night before and he'd stay overnight and have breakfast. I had my baby at Memorial at 6am. Dr. Rath



Ella Boyd McGlynn

just pulled his pants up on top of his pajamas and went with me. You know what he charged for delivering? \$25! Did you ever hear of Dr. Rath in the Falls?

***Yes, he seemed an important person.***

My mother was the first broken arm he ever set. She fell on ice on Queen Lane and before coming home she went to Dr. Rath to set it. My father said "I mightn't be right - it's his first year." So he took her to Memorial and they said "Why it's perfect."

***Doctor Rath was in the Falls for many years.***

He never was any place else. He stayed in just a plain, two-story house. No fancy room or anything. His office was on Indian Queen Lane. He was head physician in Memorial - head guy.

***Can you describe Ridge Avenue?***

At Ridge and Midvale Corner was Roseman's Saloon, owned by Whalen's. It had a porch to sit in the summer. They served beer and dinners. There were rooms upstairs to stay overnight. Outside was a trough and a place for horse and carriages. It was like a big mansion - there until the '20's. They shouldn't have torn it down. It was historical.

***If you travelled up the Ridge, what else would you see?***

Odd Fellow's Hall was on the corner. We'd watch silent movies for five cents on the second floor. A men's clothing store was underneath. Next was McIlvaine's Funeral Parlor, the fire house, another big hotel, and a mansion called Turfilla. I think it's a little field now. Then the Presbyterian Church, another inn, and little houses up to the lake (Gustine). The lake was much bigger than now with a big fountain in the middle.

***When did you first start seeing cars?***

Hohenadel had the first car on Indian Queen Lane. I made Mrs. Hohenadel's hats.