

Bertram Photo Negative Collection (Bryden Collection)

Bertram Bain and Weir Auctions

Information provided by Jean Freeman, Pirie/Bertram descendant
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Mary Bain, eldest daughter of the Honourable Thomas Bain and Ellen Weir, and James Bennett Bertram, youngest son of John Bertram and Elizabeth Bennett, were married February 26, 1907, in Dundas, Ontario. After their marriage, they lived at what is now 60 Sydenham Street, a house which Jim built for his bride and which was completed about 1907.

Not many years later, in 1915, Mary's father died, and shortly thereafter they moved to "Bonnington" which was the Bain family home on the Governor's Road. They lived there for the rest of their married life with Mary's sister, Helen, until Jim died June 26, 1947.

As Mary grew older, she hired a couple by the names of Len and Phyllis Wilkinson to help look after her and the house. Len acted as gardener and chauffeur while Phyllis was the housekeeper and companion for Mary. As Mary and Jim had no children, when Mary died November 25, 1964, all the personal items and household effects from "Bonnington" were put up for auction.

By the time the auction came around the following year, Len Wilkinson was working for the company who handled the auction. There were actually two auctions, the first one being a private auction for the family and the second one a public auction. The family auction took place May 11, 1965, and the public one took place shortly after. Both auctions were held at "Bonnington".

Jean Pirie Martin attended the family auction and purchased three items at it: a Martha Washington sewing table which she gave to her daughter, a topaz necklace, and a watercolour painting of Anne Hathaway's cottage which Jim had purchased in England as a gift for Mary. Eventually her daughter inherited the other items also. After both auctions had taken place, a number of items were left behind unsold and the auctioneer directed Len Wilkinson to burn them. As a dedicated employee of Mary's for so long, he could not bear to do this so he picked everything up in boxes and took them home and stored them in the attic of his house. Phyllis

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