

Interviewed: March 8, 1976

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- First started to work for Canadian Fish Co. in 1928 for 2 years.
- Then went to work for California Packing Co where Richie Nelson was the superintendent.
- The California Packing Co. was located on the West Coast of Vancouver Island.
- Then went to the Albion Plant situated at Ucluelet at Barkley Sound.
- Spent several seasons there, then went to Canadian Packing Co. and stayed there for five years.
- This was a Reduction Plant.
- Explains the process of reduction plant.
- The fish are put through a digester type of machinery referred to as cookerries.
- The resulting product is then put through a press and then the oil and water is seperated from the mass of fish.
- And the result is you have the oil and water which is seperated and the oil is retained.
- The fish mass is pressed which is called a press cake, which then goes through a dryer and the end result of that is fish meal.
- Built a reduction plant for B. C. Packers at Namu.
- Following year, 1937, built a reduction plant at the Imperial Cannery.
- The first reduction plant in B. C. were what you called the old hydraulic type of plant and you reduced dog fish.
- There was one over on Pender Island.
- The continuous reduction plant didn't come into B. C. until 1927.
- These reduction plants were seasonal.
- In 1929 there were 32 reduction plants on the west coast.
- By 1931 they were all gone.
- From 1930 - 1935 there was very little profit made from the reduction plants.
- It started to improve in 1935 and 1936 and the profits started to look good again.
- And from there on there was a good profit or a reasonable profit.
- Speaks on a population of pilchards that got trapped at one of the northern inlets.

- So instead of processing herring that year they did pilchards which was much more profitable.
- Did up ten to fifteen thousands tons of pilchards that year.
- Explains the technique of the fishermen finding fish with piano wire.
- At the Namu reduction plant they had electricity but we didn't use electrical driven motors.
- For power the cannery used a steam engine to a line shaft and then wire belts off of a line shaft to each individual machine.
- And in the reduction plant we installed a diesel engine driving a line shaft and the line shaft driving the individual machines.
- You had your own D.C. generators and driven by diesel at that time.
- You used to rate the plants by the number of tons you could put through in an hour.
- Namu was a five ton an hour plant which by today's standard is very small.
- The Imperial Plant used to have fifty tons an hour.
- We used to catch and reduce about one quarter of a million tons of herring a year.
- Believes fish conservation has always been very well controlled.
- Mentions when dog salmon or chum were 2-3 cents a piece.
- Speaks on the Japanese taking the dog salmon and salting them and then sending them to Japan.
- Last year dog salmon was worth 70¢ a pound.
- There was no market for dog salmon in those days.
- And it was strictly a "no no" to do salmon in a reduction plant.
- Remembers one time when a boat got caught in a storm and the engine gave out.
- By the time the engine got fixed, the ice had melted and the fish were no good.
- We had to get a special permit to put the salmon through the reduction plant.
- Speaks on canning herring during the war years.
- Back in the 30's the reduction plants employed about six men per shift, and there were three shifts.
- The plants were kept going 24 hours a day as long as there were fish there.
- Talks on pollution devices of today's plant.

- The first reduction plant built for Imperial (B.C.P.) was to take care of the salmon offal (heads, tails, waste) that was normally dumped into the river.
- Speaks on the Japanese herring saltery on the Gulf Islands.
- There was great market for them in China.
- There was a big political battle whether they would allow this herring to go through a reduction plant.
- Because it was being utilized for a saltery.
- The Japanese weren't harvesting these herring to its full potential.
- Because the salteries weren't utilizing it to the full extent, herring then became open for reduction.
- Causing reduction plants to be set up on the lower mainland.
- Describes the trollers and explains this operation.