



A Thematic Guide to the Early Records of Chinese Canadians in Richmond

City of Richmond Archives

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Introduction to the Thematic Guide to the Early Records of Chinese Canadians at the City of Richmond Archives

This guide includes:

- ◆ A brief history of Chinese Canadians in Richmond
- ◆ Listing of municipal and community records relating to early Chinese Canadians
- ◆ Annotated bibliography for select records and publications
- ◆ Explanations of the different information resources and various types of records in the Archives' holdings and how they can be accessed by researchers

Although this guide attempts to be as thorough as possible, it cannot be regarded as a definitive listing of all the records pertaining to early Chinese Canadians in the Archives' holdings. Additional records are continually acquired and processed. The City of Richmond's Records Schedule determines when municipal records will be transferred to the Archives.

It should also be noted that even though extensive research of the Archives' resources identified a number of key records related to Chinese Canadians, there may still be other important municipal and community records that researchers may wish to view. Individual researchers are encouraged to consult the complete array of finding aids at the Archives.

Disclaimer

This City of Richmond Archives publication is not an official statement of city policy, law, practice, services or procedures, and should not be construed as such. The City does not guarantee the accuracy of the information it contains as it is intended only to give general information about the City and about a facet of local history.

Chronology

- 1858** Chinese arrive in British Columbia to work the Fraser River Gold Rush.
- 1872** Provincial Qualifications of Voters Act denies the franchise to Chinese and First Nations peoples.
- 1878** Provincial law prohibits Chinese people from employment on construction projects financed by the province.
- 1880-1885** Thousands of Chinese men are contracted to help build the Canadian Pacific Railway.
- 1883** First Chinese labour contracted to build roads and complete ditches in Richmond.
- 1885** Chinese Immigration Act of 1885 demands all Chinese entering Canada, except tourists, students, diplomats, and businessmen, pay a head tax of \$50 on arrival.
- 1890s** Chinese are hired in large numbers to work in fish canneries in Richmond.
- 1895** Ling Chung Lam establishes Hong Wo Store (“Living in Harmony”) along Trites Road in Steveston, creating “Richmond’s first supermarket”.
- 1900** Head tax on Chinese immigrants increases to \$100.

Richmond Police Chief Alexander Main is murdered in Steveston. Yip Luck, who pleaded guilty, was hanged for this murder.
- 1903** Head tax increases to \$500.
- 1906** Smith Butchering Machine is introduced to offset labour shortages; it is known as the “Iron Chink” since it ultimately replaces the Chinese butchering crew.
- 1907** Fire hits the Steveston area – hundreds of Chinese Canadians are left dispossessed.
- 1908** Fire destroys the eastern area of Steveston where the majority of Chinese lived. Several bunkhouses are ruined.

- 1918** Mah Bing, a Chinese-Canadian market farmer, purchases 160 acres of land on No. 1 Road between Williams and Francis Road.
- Fire destroys much of the business area of Steveston. An estimated 600 Chinese and Japanese are left homeless.
- 1923** Chinese Exclusion Act of 1923 restricts Chinese immigrants to diplomats, Canadian-born Chinese children returning from abroad, Chinese students attending Canadian institutions, and Chinese traveling through Canada.
- 1936** Chinese farmers rebel against the new Vegetable Marketing Act.
- Sing Lee is attacked by two provincial constables while transporting potatoes to New Westminster; he is fined \$50 for assaulting an officer.
- 1944** Active organization of Chinese cannery workers by the Fish Cannery Reduction Plant and Allied Workers Federal Union No. 89.
- 1945** System of contract labour for Chinese workers in the canneries is abolished.
- 1947** Chinese Canadians are granted the franchise for federal elections.
- 1949** Chinese Canadians in British Columbia exercise the franchise for the first time in provincial and municipal elections.



History of Chinese Canadians in Richmond

Starting in 1858 with the Fraser River Gold Rush, many Chinese began to arrive in British Columbia in search of a new life, new opportunities and new wealth. While some merely left after achieving success or failure, countless remained. In the 1880s, many began working on the western segments of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Illiterate and unmarried, these men were unafraid of menial and grueling labour. The established settler society felt the threat of Chinese labour even before the construction of the railway. In 1878, a provincial law was passed that prohibited the employment of Chinese in provincially financed building projects.¹ However, because of their reliability and affordability, the Chinese continued to be an asset for railway, road, and dyke construction.

After the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, the Chinese began to seek other employment opportunities. Many became domestic helpers, gardeners, road and dyke builders, market farmers or cannery workers. Ultimately, these occupations guided them to parts of Richmond.

Richmond's "Chinatown"

There are two areas of Richmond which have been termed "Chinatown": the area along No. 1 Rd. between Moncton and Dyke Rd.; and the area along Dyke Rd. between Pacific Coast Cannery and the Hong Wo General Store.² Both were positioned along the water in Steveston, where there were a slew of cannery companies, which provided opportunities for employment.

Chinese Cannery Workers

By the 1890s, Chinese made up the majority of cannery workers.³ Working in butchering crews, the men were responsible for cleaning and slicing the salmon, while the First Nations and Japanese would fill in the cans.⁴ The Chinese were employed under the Chinese contract system. Acting as a mediator between the Chinese workers and cannery companies, a bilingual contractor would create a standardized contract and provide wages, room and board to their employees.⁵

¹ Stacey, Duncan and Susan Stacey, *Salmonopolis: The Steveston Story*, p. 72.

² Yesaki, Mitsuo and Harold and Kathy Steves, *Steveston Cannery Row: An Illustrated History*, p. 51.

³ GP 143, "Steveston's Cannery Channel", p. 2.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁵ Keen, Mary, *The Country: Richmond's Eastern Neighborhood*, p. 14.

One of the most famous Chinese contractors in Richmond was Ling Chung Lam. In 1895, he established a local grocery store, Hong Wo Store (“Living in Harmony”), while his company, Hong Wo Co., also became a major cannery contractor.⁶ Lam was a respected entrepreneur in both the settler and Chinese communities. As a contractor, he built several Chinese bunkhouses. In fact, the Chinese presence in Richmond was most prominent around the Hong Wo Store, at the foot of Trites Road.

During the salmon seasons (approximately from May to September), the Chinese temporarily lived in bunkhouses near the canneries. Accommodations were divided by ethnicity – Europeans, First Nations, Chinese and Japanese all slept separately.⁷



Unlike their Japanese counterparts, the Chinese were commonly seasonal workers who were either single or married with families in China. During periods of leisure, these men entertained themselves with gambling, prostitution and opium. More often than not, these activities led to repeated encounters with the law. In one particular case, a night of gambling at a Chinese bunkhouse turned chaotic when an overturned

lantern sparked a fire that blazed through Steveston. Hundreds of Chinese and Japanese lost their homes and their businesses.

In the early 1900s, the number of Chinese workers in Steveston started to dwindle. In 1906, the Smith Butchering Machine, also known as the “Iron Chink”, was introduced into the cannery workplace. This machine succeeded in replacing the Chinese butchering crew. Despite their reputable skills, the Chinese could not compete with the device.

⁶ McNulty, Bill, *Steveston: A Community History*, p. 25-26.

⁷ GP 143, “Steveston’s Cannery Channel”, p. 7.

Undeniably, the Chinese had a large impact on Richmond's early fish canning production. As a key component within a multiethnic labour unit, the Chinese were essential in maintaining the quality and abundance of the salmon canning industry in its formative years.

Chinese Road and Dyke Builders

In 1883, the municipality of Richmond first contracted with Chinese labourers to build roads and dykes. There was opposition to the use of Chinese labour in this way by many citizens and various restrictions were placed on road building contracts to ensure that pay rates for Chinese did not make for unfair competition. Despite these restrictions, many of the roads and dykes in early Richmond were built by Chinese labourers.

Chinese Market Farmers

By the 1920s, there were a substantial number of Chinese market farmers in Richmond. Most worked or leased the land from early settlers. Only a few were fortunate enough to possess their own property. One of Richmond's most prosperous farmers was Mah Bing. With 160 acres of land, Mah employed over thirty Chinese workers.⁸ Like many Richmond farmers, he sold much of his vegetable produce in Vancouver.

In 1935, in the midst of the Depression, the British Columbia Marketing Board was created to regulate prices of produce for all market farmers.⁹ Farmers were instructed to tag their produce, but many did not receive the proper tags. This simple



⁸ In an oral history interview, Mrs. Chu Fung (Polly Bing), daughter of Mah Bing, recalls her childhood days on her father's farm.

⁹ Keen, p. 23.

error led to violence towards and arrests of several Chinese market farmers, most notably Sing Lee and Chung Chuck. Both farmers ran afoul of the “Potato police” and were at different times imprisoned and fined.¹⁰

Other Chinese Residents

From the early 1900s, Chinese were also employed as domestics working for the wealthier members of the settler community. Domestic labour included cooks, farm hands, and gardeners.

Chinese Canadians Granted Municipal Franchise

In 1949, Chinese Canadians in British Columbia were finally allowed to exercise their franchise in provincial and municipal elections. For the first time that year, the names of Chinese landowners appeared on Richmond’s voters’ list. This marked the end to an era of exclusion and the beginning of an era of acceptance.

| | | | |
|------|------------------------|------------------------------|----|
| 5657 | Winfield, Cecil | 1140 Westminster Hy. | 0. |
| 5658 | Wing, Lim Jung | R.R. 1, Steveston | 0. |
| 5659 | Wingrove, J.E. | 1283 No. 4 Rd. | 0. |
| 5660 | Wingrove, S.B. | 1283 No. 4 Rd. | 0. |
| 5661 | Winkelmans, L. | 1166 No. 1 Rd. | 0. |
| 5662 | Winkler, Jos. | R.R. 2, Vancouver | 0. |
| 5663 | Wise, Ernest J. | 1347 Blundell Rd. | 0. |
| 5664 | Wish, Johnny | Steveston | 0. |
| 5665 | Wish, Teenie | Steveston | 0. |
| 5666 | Wishart, Robert | Steveston | 0. |
| 5667 | Witham, Alfred E.M. | 890 Dunbar St. | 0. |
| 5668 | Witherly, Erven Osgood | 664 W. 30th Ave., Vancouver | 0. |
| 5669 | Wiwslanski, Paul | Steveston | 0. |
| 5670 | Wolfe, Jack | 954 Alberta Rd. | 0. |
| 5671 | Wolfe, Margaret | 954 Alberta Rd. | 0. |
| 5672 | Wolfram, Emma | 1063 Cambie Rd. | 0. |
| 5673 | Wolfram, Edward | 1063 Cambie Rd. | 0. |
| 5674 | Wolfram, G.W. | 8662 Selkirk St., Vancouver | 0. |
| 5675 | Wolfson, Arnold W. | 305 Airport Rd. | 0. |
| 5676 | Woloszyn, Helen | 961 Geal Rd. | 0. |
| 5677 | Wong, Ben Chong | Sub P.O. 36, Vancouver | 0. |
| 5678 | Wong, Dan | 922 E. Pender St., Vancouver | 0. |
| 5679 | Wong, Joan | 922 E. Pender St., Vancouver | 0. |
| 5680 | Wong, George | Fraser Mills, B.C. | 0. |
| 5681 | Wood, Alex | 942 Alexandra Rd. | 0. |
| 5682 | Wood, N.K. | 942 Alexandra Rd. | 0. |

¹⁰ *Marpole Richmond Review*, June 18, 1941, “‘Legalized Highway Robbery’ Charged By Magistrate Darling Re: Potatoes”

Introduction to the City of Richmond Archives

The City of Richmond Archives, located in the Library and Cultural Centre building at Minoru Park Plaza, is the official repository for records about Richmond. Governed by the Corporate Records Management Program Bylaw 7400,¹¹ the Archives acquires official City records, such as Council Minutes and Bylaws, as well as records generated by private individuals and organizations. Whether of public or private origin, these records include textual documents, photographs, maps and plans, audiotapes, and videotapes.

The Archives' Reference Room is open Monday to Thursday from 9:00 AM – 4:30 PM and visitors are welcome to browse through the various finding aids to locate records relevant to their research.

You can also begin your research by visiting the City of Richmond Archives' website

<http://www.richmond.ca/archives> where you can search for records in three ways:

1. **Photographs** by subjects, name, or keyword search
2. **Maps** by subject, name, keyword, planning areas, legal description (block, range, and section) or date search
3. **All-Media** by selecting a drop-down menu from community records or municipal records and by subject, name or keyword search

In addition, the website gives detailed information about other historical resources at the Archives and provides access to a variety of virtual exhibits of archival material.

Phoning ahead to book an appointment ensures that the City Archivist can set aside the time to give you a personal introduction to how the finding aids work and help to get your research started.

Unlike other information materials, archival records are one-of-a-kind originals and it is imperative that they are handled carefully – if a record is lost or damaged it cannot be replaced. White gloves are provided for handling fragile records and photographs, only pencils are permitted, and original order within the files must be maintained. Research is conducted in the reference room, as archival records are not available for loan. Photocopying and photographic ordering services are available.

¹¹ The Corporate Records Management Program Bylaw 7400 can be viewed at the following link

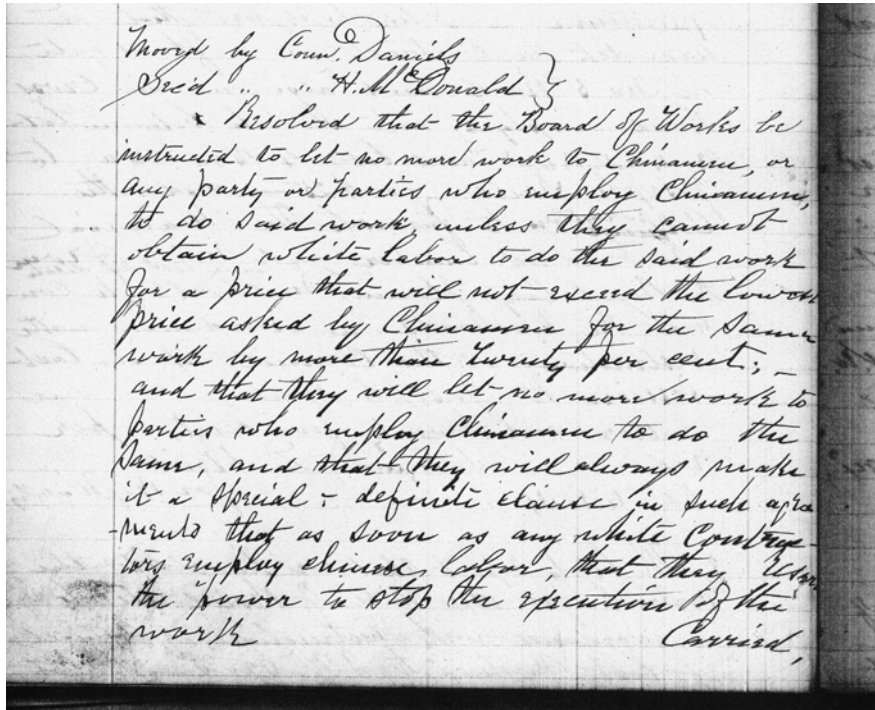
http://www.richmond.ca/_shared/assets/bylaw_7400463.pdf

The City of Richmond Archives can be contacted as follows:

- ◆ Address: 7700 Minoru Gate, Richmond, B.C. V6Y 1R9
- ◆ Telephone: 604-247-8305
- ◆ Email: archives@richmond.ca



Municipal Records



Series 1 – Council Minutes

| | | |
|---------------|----------------|--------|
| 9 June 1884 | Chinese labour | p. 162 |
| 6 Oct. 1884 | Chinese labour | p. 178 |
| 4 May 1885 | Chinese labour | p. 1 |
| 30 Apr. 1892 | Chinese labour | p. 151 |
| 21 May 1892 | Chinese labour | p. 165 |
| 18 June 1892 | Damage claims | p. 177 |
| 23 June 1892 | Chinese labour | p. 181 |
| 17 Sept. 1892 | Chinese labour | p. 217 |
| 7 Jan. 1893 | Chinese labour | p. 278 |
| 10 June 1893 | Chinese labour | p. 357 |
| 7 July 1893 | Chinese labour | p. 367 |

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| | | |
|---------------|------------------------------------|-------------|
| 7 Dec. 1895 | Chinese labour | p. 152 |
| 7 Nov. 1896 | Anti-Chinese petition | p. 257 |
| 5 Dec. 1896 | Anti-Chinese petition | p. 261 |
| 5 June 1897 | Encroachment | p. 305 |
| 7 July 1897 | Removal of Chinese building | p. 318 |
| 18 Sept. 1897 | Demand of compensation | p. 331 |
| 4 Dec. 1897 | Chinese labour | p. 342 |
| 5 Feb. 1901 | Chinese labour | p. 238 |
| 19 Jan. 1903 | Chinese labour | p. 25 |
| 1 Aug. 1903 | Gambling in Chinese houses | p. 85 |
| 3 Sept. 1904 | Encroachment | p. 200 |
| 6 Oct. 1906 | Chinese labour | p. 74 |
| 6 Apr. 1907 | Chinatown Fire | p. 154 |
| 5 Oct. 1907 | Chinese labour | p. 208 |
| 21 Mar. 1908 | Chinese labour | p. 27 |
| 5 Sept. 1908 | Gambling/prostitution in Chinatown | p. 314 |
| 5 Nov. 1910 | Chinese labour | p. 271 |
| 1 Apr. 1912 | Refuse in ditches | p. 168 |
| 16 Sept. 1912 | Chinese living conditions | p. 304, 306 |
| 18 Nov. 1912 | Chinese business conditions | p. 335 |
| 7 July 1913 | Encroachment | p. 125 |
| 6 Apr. 1914 | Sunday Observance Bylaw | p. 287 |
| 6 July 1914 | Complaints re: liquor | p. 352 |
| 7 Mar. 1916 | Chinese labour | p. 173 |
| 5 Feb. 1917 | Chinese labour | p. 324 |

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|--------------|---|-------------|
| 15 Apr. 1918 | Securing slip | p. 146 |
| 7 Oct. 1918 | Chinese living conditions | p. 234 |
| 19 Oct. 1920 | Obstruction of slough | p. 183 |
| 3 Nov. 1922 | Chinese labour | p. 107, 108 |
| 19 Feb. 1923 | Meals for prisoners | p. 149 |
| 21 Feb. 1921 | Chinese prisoners | p. 235 |
| 2 June 1924 | Drainage | p. 321 |
| 7 July 1924 | Chinese labour | p. 332-340 |
| 6 Apr. 1925 | Opium and Narcotics Act | p. 36-42 |
| 7 Mar. 1938 | Special Conference for Oriental Problem | p. 35 |
| 6 Aug. 1945 | Flooding | p. 217 |
| 8 Apr. 1947 | Roads: Mah Bing | p. 94 |
| 18 Aug. 1947 | License for dine and dance | p. 256 |
| 3 Nov. 1947 | Piggery on Mitchell Island | p. 321 |

Series 2 – Clerk’s Correspondence

File H-General (1915)

Records include letters from Hong Wo Co. and the Vancouver General Hospital relating to Chinese patients.

Series 6 – Water

File 1140-1 Waterworks Contracts - - 1910-1932

Records include a contract between the Municipality of Richmond and a Chinese contractor

File 1108 Extension of Water Mains - - 1912-1939

Records include a request from a Chinese tenant

Series 35 – Voter’s List – 1949-1950

Names of Chinese landowners and their addresses are presented for the first time in the voters’ list

Series 36 – Miscellaneous

File 4499 M-2 Miscellaneous Requests - - 1948-1949

Series 41 – Health Sewers

File 5400 Vancouver General Hospital - - 1939-1946

File 5401 Medical Health Office and Miscellaneous Letters to
Doctors - - 1938-1949

File 5409 Complaints Re: Unsanitary Conditions - - 1937-1949

Records include a complaint against the unhygienic nature of a Chinese piggery

Series 42 – Justice & Police

File 5503 Prisoner Meals - - 1932-1938

File 5518-1 Reports from Provincial Police - - 1947-1950

File 5518-2 Reports from Provincial Police - - 1941-1946

File 5520 Provincial Police - - 1940-1950

Series 47 – Damage Claims

File 6000-1 Damage Claims - - 1918-1936

File 6000-2 Damage Claims - - 1919-1944

File 6000-3 Damage Claims – Flooded Crops - - 1908-1935

File 6008 Floor Damage Claims - - 1933-1935

File 6010-2 Miscellaneous Damage Claims - - 1937-1948

Records include the damage claim of a Chinese market farmer (list of crops and diagram of farm provided)

Series 48 – Legal Matters

File 6108 Re: Bylaws - - 1914-1932

Series 70 – Ledgers

File 3 General Ledger - - 1908-1910

Records include names of Chinese individuals, specifically Chinese road contractors

Series 85 – Tax Ledgers

File 1 Tax Ledgers - - 1881-1891

Series 202 – Lulu Island West Dyking District

File 1600-1 Miscellaneous - - 1905-1933

Records include a list of Chinese leaseholders

File 1659 Collector's Roll - - 1922-1925

Records include names of Chinese landowners

File 1660 Tax Book - - 1916-1917

Series 403 – Board of License Commissioners Minutes - - 1894-1917

File BLC 1-1 Board of License Commissioners Meeting Minutes - -
1894-1917

Series 404 – Board of Police Commissioners Minutes - - 1915-1938

File BPC 1-1 Board of Police Commissioners Meeting Minutes - -
1915-1920

Topics include the death of Chinese individuals

File BPC 1-2 Board of Police Commissioners Meeting Minutes - -
1927-1932

Records include a letter from Hong Wo Store to Chief W.A. Johnston

File BCP 1-3 Board of Police Commissioners Meeting Minutes - -
1933-1938

Tax and Assessment Rolls

Names of Chinese owners provided, along with their ward number, address, block/range/section, sub-division, number of acres, value of land (per acre), and value of improvements. Organized by legal property address. Before 1946, they were grouped by ward.

Government Publications

GP 17 *Historical Vignettes of Richmond – A Series of Articles (School District No. 38)*

1. “The Hong Wo Store – Richmond’s First Supermarket” by John D. Belshaw
2. “Richmond Battles the Sea” by Barbara Hyneck
3. “Murder By Brush Hook” by Ruth Leaming

GP 25 “Steveston Area Plan”

GP 50 “The Britannia/Phoenix Heritage Study”

GP 140 “Heritage Inventory, Phase II”

GP 143 “Steveston’s Cannery Channel”

A thorough account of Chinese cannery workers at Steveston

GP 316 “An Archaeological Heritage Resource Overview of Richmond B.C.”



Community Records

BC Packers

Barker Letter Books Volume 1 & 2

<http://www.richmond.ca/cityhall/archives/exhibits/barkerletterbooks.htm>

Series 3, sub-series 3

File 7 Hong Wo Net Racks - - 194-?

Elva Moreside fonds

Series 3

File 1 Teaching records - - [194-?] – 1966

Records include names of Chinese students

Hong Wo records

1991 26

File 1 Lam Chong Ling – Accounts & Contracts - -
1940s

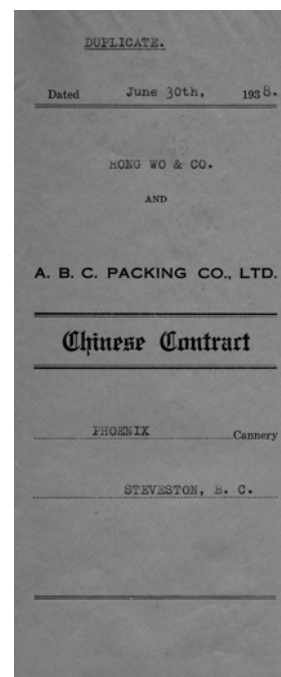
File 2 Hong Wo (Contractor for Canneries) - - 1910

File 3 Commercial correspondence, invoices and bill
of lading - - 1937

2008 3 Hong Wo Store ledger - - 1917

2008 11 Hong Wo Store insurance premiums - - 1941-
1945

2003 2 Hong Wo Company receipts, invoices, blank
cheques- - 1943-1968



Don Gordon Sea Island records

2003 3 *Records include a map of Sea Island detailing various properties of
Chinese market farmers*



McDonald family/Wong York records

2006 40 *Elvin McDonald writes “Memories of Wong York”, an account detailing the life of a Chinese domestic helper who worked for the McKay family. [ca. 1900]*

Richmond School Board fonds

Series 1

File 2 Richmond School Board Minutes –
1916-1924, 1926, 1927, 1944

p. 79, 148

Topics include tuition fees of Chinese and Japanese students

Richmond Volunteer Fire Department fonds

Series 1

File 2-1 Minutes [text] - - 1922-1929

Topics include fire at a Chinese residence

Robert Gordon Collection

File 4 Notebook - - 1903-1906

A notebook relating to activities of Robert Gordon in various elected capacities. Topics include Chinese gamblers.

Steveston Ratepayer and Householders Association fonds

Series 3

File 1 Membership records - - 1949-1952

Thompson family fonds

Series 1

File 1 Ledger - - 1892-1898

p. 26

Records include a list of Chinese individuals.

Photographs

Some examples of photographs of early Chinese Canadians in Richmond:

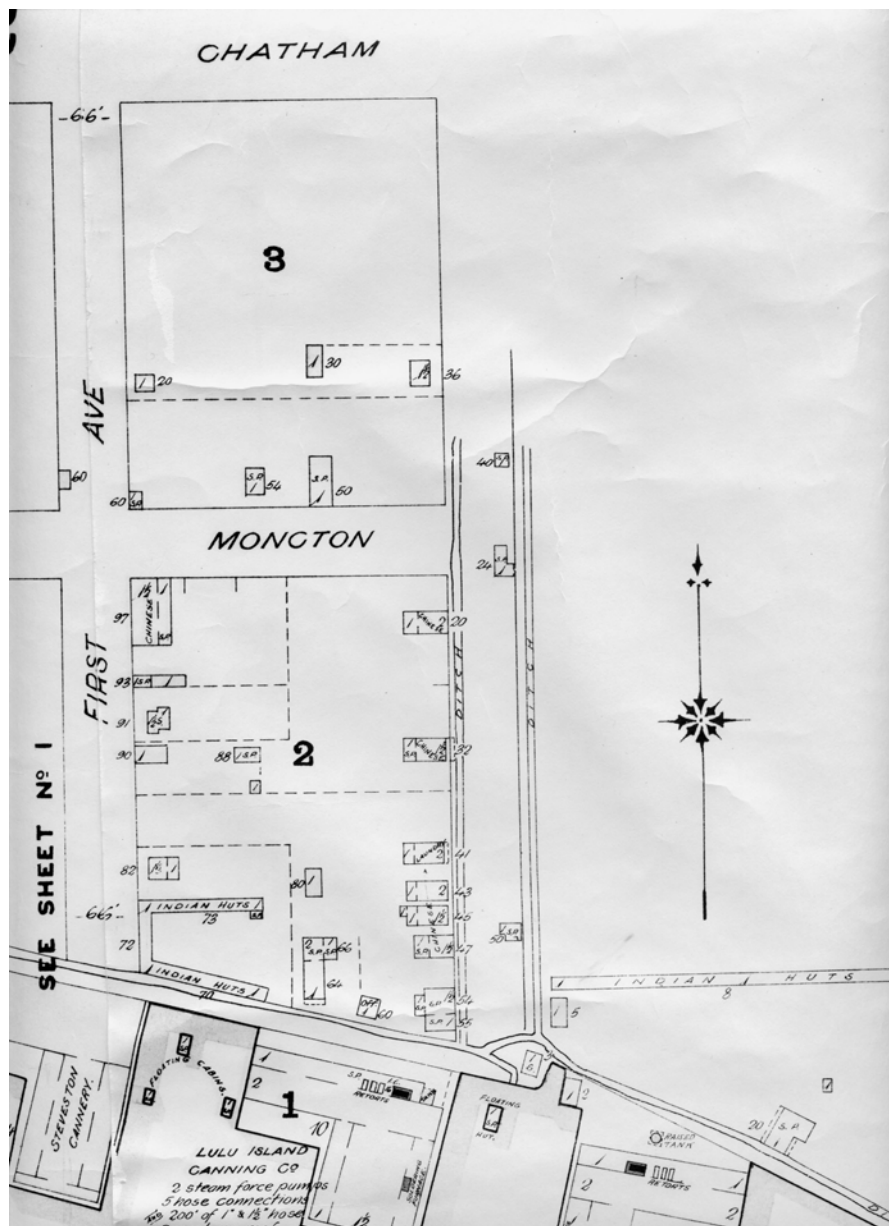
| | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| <i>Preparing salmon for canning</i> | [ca. 1890s] | RCF 178 |
| <i>Taking a break at Imperial Cannery</i> | [ca. 1920s] | 1978 34 21 |
| <i>Mending fishing nets</i> | 1942 | 1978 34 42 |
| <i>Testing after first cooking cannery line</i> | [ca. 1918] | 1984 17 76 |
| <i>Star Cannery, Steveston</i> | [ca. 1900] | 1985 4 202 |
| <i>Cannery workers at patching tables</i> | [ca. 1943] | 1991 2 9 |
| <i>Cannery workers on production line</i> | [ca. 1943] | 1991 2 12 |
| <i>Cannery workers with cooked fish</i> | [ca. 1943] | 1991 2 13 |
| <i>Hong Wo Store</i> | [ca. 1949] | 1995 23 1 |
| <i>The gardener</i> | 1916 | 2006 39 208 |
| <i>Three nationalities</i> | 1916 | 2006 39 212 |
| <i>Jim</i> | 1916 | 2006 39 232 |
| <i>Skating on Mah Bing's farm</i> | 1949 | 2007 30 |



Maps

The earliest map of Richmond showing Chinese-Canadian properties is a copy of the 1895 Steveston fire insurance plan (1985 132 1). The Archives also has copies of fire insurance plans of Fraser River canneries from 1897 to 1911, some of which show the location of Chinese housing (1985 132 2 – 1985 132 13).

Another source for researchers is the 1936 Richmond Waterworks Atlas, which depicts all standing buildings in Richmond at the time.



Additional Sources

City of Richmond Archives Oral History Collection

| | |
|--|---|
| Buchanan, J.M. | <i>Int. 22, Tape 2</i> |
| Cooney, Lloyd | <i>Int. 29, Tape 2</i> |
| Cross, Cliff | <i>Int. 25, Tape 1 and Tape 2</i> |
| Deagle, Charles | <i>Int. 71, Tape 1; Int. 72, Tape 1</i> |
| Easterbrook, William | <i>Int. 8, Tape 1</i> |
| Francis, Mrs. James | <i>Int. 3, Tape 2 and Tape 3</i> |
| Fraser, Ken | <i>Int. 22, Tape 2</i> |
| Fung, Chu, Mrs. (also filed under 'Bing, Polly') | <i>Int. 22, Tape 2</i> |
| Gillespie, Charles | <i>Int. 65, Tape 1 and Tape 2</i> |
| Gilmore, Les | <i>Int. 12, Tape 1</i> |
| Gilmore, William | <i>Int. 14, Tape 2</i> |
| Hall, Isabella | <i>Int. 10, Tape 2</i> |
| Harris, Donaldine and Harris, Eylene | <i>Int. 25, Tape 2</i> |
| Harrison, John | <i>Int. 29, Tape 3</i> |
| Hayward, Hewitt | <i>Int. 28, Tape 1 and Tape 2</i> |
| Herbert, Eric/Etta | <i>See summaries</i> |
| Huggard, Cline | <i>See summaries</i> |
| Jacobson, Henry | <i>Int. 11, Tape 1 and Tape 2</i> |
| Kaisla, Kal | <i>Int. 64, Tape 1 and Tape 2</i> |
| Kennedy, Ruth | <i>Int. 65, Tape 3</i> |
| Laing, Richard | <i>Int. 16, Tape 2</i> |
| Lam, Jessie | <i>Int. 13, Tape 1</i> |
| Lanoville, Dorothy | <i>Int. 31, Tape 2 and Tape 3</i> <i>Int. 32, Tape 1</i> |
| Lee, Maggie and Mack, Mary Margaret | <i>Int. 5, Tape 1</i> |
| Lobban, Maurice | <i>Int. 76, Tape 1</i> |
| MacKay, George | <i>Int. 48, Tape 1 and Tape 2</i> |
| Marrington, Herb | <i>Int. 18, Tape 1</i> |

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Matsuzaki, Isamu | <i>Int. 74, Tape 1</i> |
| Mitchell, S.M. | <i>Int. 21, Tape 1 and Tape 2</i> |
| Montgomery, Hugh | <i>Int. 48, Tape 1</i> |
| Neilson, Andy | <i>Int. 31, Tape 1 and Tape 2</i> |
| Nishii, Frank | <i>Int. 4, Tape 2 and Tape 3</i> |
| O'Dell, Vera (nee McMyn) | <i>Int. 14, Tape 1</i> |
| Obayashi, Mrs. | <i>Int. 65, Tape 3 and Tape 4</i> |
| Olsen, Albert | <i>Int. 6, Tape 1</i> |
| Parker, Arthur | <i>Int. 9, Tape 2</i> |
| Parkin, Tom and Parkin, Vera | <i>Int. 56, Tape 1</i> |
| Ransford, Bob | <i>Int. 66, Tape 1 and Tape 2</i> |
| Robertson, Malcom | <i>Int. 66, Tape 2 and Tape 3</i> |
| Savage, Mrs. John | <i>Int. 13, Tape 2</i> |
| Skinner, Hugh | <i>See summaries</i> |
| Smith, R. | <i>Int. 28, Tape 3; Int. 29, Tape 1</i> |
| Steves, Sr., Harold L. | <i>Int. 2, Tape 1 and Tape 2</i> |
| Thomas, Phil | <i>Int. 72, Tape 1</i> |
| Turner, John/Turner, Mrs. John | <i>Int. 75, Tape 1</i> |
| York, Roy | <i>Int. 65, Tape 4 and Tape 5</i> <i>Int. 66, Tape 1</i> |

Biography Files

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Blair Family | Lam, Jessie |
| Chung, Chuck | Lam, Jane Kang Eng |
| Debeck, Edwin K. | Mah, Bing |
| Ewen, Alexander | Main, Alexander |
| Fong, Mah | Sing Lee |
| Gilmore, Annie Isabella | Shimizu, Hide (nee Hyodo) |
| Hing, Harry | Steves, Ida |
| Harris, Goldwin Hershall | Wong, York |
| Lam, Ling | Wong, Sam |

Reference Files

Demographics – Volume 2

1901 Census of Canada

Records the names of Chinese individuals (includes their sex, colour, relationships, marital status, birth, age, birthplace, year of immigration, racial origin, nationality, religion and profession)

Birth Records in Steveston, B.C. - - 1872-1903

Ethnic Groups – Chinese

“The Chinese Presence in Steveston” by Kathleen Lum

“The China Contract System” by Duncan Stacey

Fish Canneries

“The Changing Geography of Salmon Canning in British Columbia, 1870-1931” by Edward N. Higginbottom

“Technological Change in the Pacific Coast Canned Salmon Industry” by Patrick W. O’Bannon

“Technological Change in the Fraser River Canning Salmon Industry” by Duncan Stacey

Hong Wo Store

File includes photocopies of articles, interview notes, correspondence and photographs relating to the Lam family and Hong Wo Store

Murder

“Murder on the Dike” – *article reports the murder of Police Chief Alexander Main*

Pioneers

A listing of Richmond early pioneers, includes Mah Bing and Harry Hing

Richmond – Statistics – Volume 2

1901 Census of Canada

Records the names of Chinese individuals (includes their sex, relationships, marital status, birth, age)

Schools – Richmond High School

Annual books of Richmond High School, includes students: Mary Bing and Sammy Sam (1943)

Steveston – History

“Steveston Boom Day Fire” – article chronicles Steveston’s major fires in 1904-1905 and 1918

Richmond Reflections

Series of Articles Written by Archives Staff for Publication

| | | |
|-------------|---------|--|
| 1983 | July 22 | <i>Brighthouse Volunteer Fire Brigade, 1919</i> |
| 1984 | Feb 5 | <i>Richmond in flood, 1952</i> |
| | June 3 | <i>Steveston Fire, 1918</i> |
| 1985 | Mar 15 | <i>First machine-made dyke, Sea Island, 1910</i> |
| | Apr 19 | <i>Steveston waterfront preservation</i> |
| | Aug 2 | <i>Star Cannery and Native Indian Bunkhouses, circa 1900</i> |
| 1986 | Mar 7 | <i>Hong Wo Store</i> |
| 1987 | Feb 20 | <i>Gulf of Georgia Cannery</i> |
| | Oct 30 | <i>Steveston fires (1917 and 1918)</i> |

Newspapers

Marpole Richmond Review

- 1935**
- May 23 *Water Charges Complaint*
The Oriental Red Herring
- June 13 *Richmond Pupils Recommended In High School Announcement*
- July 11 *Local Police Busy With Race Track*
- Aug 15 *Oriental Object To The New Marketing Mandate*
- Sept 12 *Potato Decision May Upset Marketing Act*
- Dec 11 *Richmond Recordings*
- 1936**
- Feb 5 *More Evidence Coming In Police Investigation*
- Mar 5 *School Estimates, Auditors Report At Council Meeting*
- Mar 25 *Potato Board Has Helped And Hurt*
- Apr 1 *Only No. 1 Potatoes Are Wanted For 1936 Market: Good Potatoes Possible*
- Apr 15 *Delegate To Possible Meeting Appointed*
- May 27 *Past, Present, And Future Discussed*
Economic Foundations
Charms All Its Own
- Sept 2 *Provincial Constables Are Hauled Into Local Court*
- Sept 9 *Inspector McKay and Constable Bennett Committed to Court*
- Sept 29 *Wide Divergences In Prices for Potatoes*
- Oct 7 *City Women Protest Against Potato Mktg. Board Exploitation*
Approves Potato Control
- Oct 14 *Contempt of Court Charges Issued Against Two Editors*
Contempt Of The Court

- Officials Guilty Of Assault Charge*
- Oct 21 *Two Editors Found Guilty Of ‘Contempt’*
Editor Gets Singular Honour
Women’s Council Has Stormy Potato Meeting
- Nov 11 *Visit to Victoria: Junior Members*
- Nov 18 *Victoria Mission Declare Useless*
The “Tibbits” Person
- Nov 25 *Victoria Mission*
- Dec 16 *Joker In the New Spud Amendment*
- 1937** Jan 20 *Action Started To Declare Marketing Act Ultra Vires*
- Feb 10 *“Control” Is Rapidly Waning*
- Feb 24 *Chinaman Gets A Refund From Board*
- Mar 3 *Riot at Bridge In Potato War*
Correspondence
- Mar 10 *Merry Session At Gym Saturday*
One Man A Goat For The Board
Correspondence
- Mar 17 *Chung Chuck Gets Hearing In Brighthouse Court Wednesday*
Lo! The Poor Heathen
Trial Resumed At Brighthouse Today
- Mar 24 *Fraser Bridge Case Heard Of Brighthouse*
“Not The Oriental” Says Correspondence
- Mar 31 *Potato Cases To Be Heard In April*
- Apr 14 *Hearing Adjourned In Potato Cases*
The Battle Of Richmond

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| | April 28 | <i>Chung Chuck's Case</i> |
| | June 2 | <i>J.S. Woodsworth Talks At Cambie Gymnasium</i> <i>The Oriental Question</i> |
| | June 9 | <i>Judge Makes Plea For British Justice</i> |
| | June 20 | <i>"Local Government Hypocrisy"</i> |
| | Aug 4 | <i>Marketing Act Is "Out" Says Mr. Manson</i> |
| | Sept 1 | <i>Chung Chuck's Case Up Again Thursday</i> |
| | Oct 27 | <i>Nearly Two Cars For The Prairies</i> |
| | Nov 3 | <i>Wife of Well Known Chinese Is Buried</i> |
| | Dec 1 | <i>Where Will The Japs Wing Up</i> |
| 1938 | Jan 12 | <i>Chuck Chooses Jail Sentence</i> |
| | Jan 26 | <i>Funds And Bandages Wanted for China</i> |
| | May 11 | <i>Richmond Recordings</i> |
| | Sept 14 | <i>Chinamen Robbed In Richmond Recently</i> |
| 1939 | Feb 15 | <i>Growers Plan To Organize Widely</i> |
| | May 31 | <i>Twenty Pigs And Buildings Burned</i> |
| | June 7 | <i>Interior Board Gives Secret Rebates And Swamps The Market</i> |
| | Aug 9 | <i>Two Suggestions for Richmonders</i> |
| | Nov 8 | <i>Chinaman Hurt Hallowe'en Night</i> |
| | Nov 29 | <i>Ton of Carrots Moving To Town</i> |
| 1940 | Dec 11 | <i>Short But Interesting Meeting Of Council Members</i> <i>Wednesday</i> |
| 1941 | June 18 | <i>"Legalized Highway Robbery" Charged By Magistrate</i> <i>Darling Re Potatoes</i> |
| | June 25 | <i>Board Can No Longer Seize Produce Under Marketing Act</i> |

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| | July 2 | <i>“Chuck” Charges Illegal Practices</i> |
| | July 9 | <i>Another \$300 Fine For Mr. Wong Sam</i> |
| | July 16 | <i>Another Test Case of Section Fifty-Seven</i> |
| | July 23 | <i>Wholesalers, Not Farmers, Need Compulsory Government Control</i> |
| | Aug 13 | <i>Manslaughter Case May Not Be Pressed</i> |
| | Sept 17 | <i>Chickens, Goats, Pheasants, Fall Before Stray Dogs In Richmond</i> |
| | Oct 1 | <i>Richmond Police Are Kept Busy</i> |
| | Nov 5 | <i>Farmers Invited To Testify At Potato Board Investigation</i> |
| | Nov 19 | <i>Columbia Potato Growers Sold In Excess Of Their Quotes</i> |
| | Nov 26 | <i>Farmers May Yet Testify</i> |
| | | <i>The Inquiry Goes On</i> |
| | Dec 3 | <i>Gamblers Fined in Steveston</i> |
| | | <i>“I Think It Smells”</i> |
| 1942 | Apr 23 | <i>The Letter Box</i> |
| | July 22 | <i>Another \$300 Fine</i> |
| | Aug 12 | <i>Six Months Hard Labour for Wong</i> |
| | Sept 23 | <i>Indians And Joy Water In Court</i> |
| 1943 | Apr 14 | <i>Race Snobbery Condemned By Vancouver Officer: “Civic Rights Of B.C. Orientals”</i> |
| | Apr 28 | <i>Five Tons Of Potato Burn</i> |
| | May 19 | <i>Talk On China Is Appreciated</i> |
| | Aug 4 | <i>Chinese Relief Fund Now Opened To Contributions</i> |
| | Aug 11 | <i>China’s Patience Is Terrifying</i> |
| | Sept 1 | <i>Canadians Asked To Help Chinese Allies</i> |
| | | <i>Canadian Funds Will Help Chinese Orphans</i> |

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| | Sept 8 | <i>Can We Not Do Better Than This?</i> |
| | Sept 15 | <i>Food For The Aliens</i> |
| | Nov 10 | <i>Chinese Girl Gives Radio Broadcast On Republic Anniversary</i> |
| 1944 | Nov 1 | <i>Illegal Permits And Beer Charged</i> |
| 1945 | Apr 18 | <i>New Fire Engine For Steveston</i> |
| | Aug 15 | <i>Spectacular Car Crash At Blundell</i> |
| | Dec 5 | <i>Forty Year Old Mortgage Held By Richmond Amounts to \$29, 244</i> |
| | Dec 19 | <i>\$300 Liquor Fine For Local Chinaman</i> |
| 1946 | Feb 13 | <i>Liquor Charges Bring Revenue To Richmond</i> |
| | Apr 16 | <i>War Heroes From Richmond</i> |
| 1947 | Jan 8 | <i>Grass Roots: Canadian Aid To China</i> |
| | Jan 29 | <i>Chin Lee Wong Dies</i> |
| | Feb 12 | <i>Wiseology</i> |
| | Apr 9 | <i>Honour Roll of Richmond "High"</i> |
| | Apr 30 | <i>Richmond Recordings</i> |
| | Aug 20 | <i>Start On Richmond Theatre Give Yet Another Host</i> |
| | Sept 10 | <i>Law Enforced On Bicycle Without Proper Lights</i> |
| | Nov 12 | <i>Steveston Bootlegger Actually In Jail</i> |
| | Dec 17 | <i>Final Meeting Of The Year Held By Richmond Council</i> |
| | | <i>Steveston Snapshots</i> |
| 1948 | June 2 | <i>Point Grey Junior High School Sports Day Winners</i> |
| | Aug 25 | <i>East Point Grey District Enjoy Life At Camp</i> |
| | Sept 1 | <i>Well Known Chinese Opens Bridgeport Produce</i> |
| | Nov 3 | <i>Caught Again</i> |
| | Nov 10 | <i>Gamblers Pay Fine of \$800</i> |

Reference Library

Directories

Names of Chinese residents appear from 1888 to 1949 in the Henderson Directories. The directories document the occupations and locations of each individual.

Books

A Bridge to the World: The Life and Times of Sea Island by Mary Keen. City of Richmond Archives 2002.

The Country: Richmond's Eastern Neighborhood by Mary Keen. City of Richmond Archives 2010.

Published by the City of Richmond Archives, this book studies the eastern parts of Richmond. The author specifically examines the lives of Chinese workers in the Ewen Cannery. She also highlights the dispute between the Marketing Board and Chinese market farmers during the Potato Wars.

Fishing: British Columbia's Commercial Fishing History by Joseph E. Forester and Anna D. Forester. Hancock House Publishers Ltd. 1975.

History of Lulu Island and Occasional Poems by Thomas Kidd. Wrigley Printing Company 1927.

Richmond: Child of the Fraser by Leslie J. Ross. Richmond '79 Centennial Society 1979.

Although this book is a general summary of Richmond's history, the author manages to thoroughly cover many topics relating to the Chinese people. Topics include tension between the Chinese and settler community; Chinese contract labour; crimes committed by or against Chinese; and tragedies caused by fires in Steveston.

Salmon: Our Heritage by Cicely Lyons. British Columbia Packers Limited 1969.

Salmon Canning on the Fraser River in the 1890s by Mistuo Yesaki and Sakuya Nishimuro. Fraser Journal Publishing 2000.

Embellished with illustrations, this book explores the technical procedure behind the salmon canning industry in Steveston. Not only do the authors describe Chinese workers and their skills with precision, but they also attribute the success of the industry to the work of Chinese and Japanese labourers.

Salmonopolis: The Steveston Story by Duncan Stacey and Susan Stacey. Harbour Publishing Co. Ltd 1994.

Covering issues relating to the salmon canning industry, this book thoroughly investigates the lives of Chinese cannery workers. It reports on the interaction between the settler and Chinese community; the Chinese contract system; anti-Chinese legislation; the Iron Chink; Chinese farm owners; the murder of Alexander Main; recreational hours of workers; and Hong Wo General Store.

Steveston: A Community History by Bill McNulty. Steveston Community Society 2011.

Steveston Cannery Row: An Illustrated History by Mistuo Yesaki and Harold and Kathy Steves. Lulu Island Printing Ltd 1998.

Steveston Cannery Row is a broad overview of the salmon canning industry in Richmond. However, it is also an in-depth examination of the Chinese community within that area. Topics include the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1923; Chinese contract system; Chinese cannery crew; leisure time; education; the Steveston fires (1904-1905, 1918); and Hong Wo General Store.

Sutebusuton: A Japanese Village on the British Columbia Coast by Mistuo Yesaki. Peninsula Publishing Company 2003.

Despite his emphasis on the Japanese community in Steveston, the author, Mistuo Yesaki illustrates the history of Chinese cannery workers with great detail. He discusses their living conditions; the immigration policies; the Steveston fires (1904-1905, 1918); Chinese female workers; and Ling Lam's Hong Wo Store.

Time and Tide: The Settlement of Lulu Island's South Arm Shore Shore by Mary Keen. City of Richmond Archives 2005.

The West Beyond the West: The History of British Columbia by Jean Barman. University of Toronto Press 1991.

General Resources Available at the City of Richmond Archives

The City of Richmond Archives provides researchers with access to a variety of archival records and reference materials.

Municipal Records are those records created, received and preserved by the City of Richmond in the course of its official business.

- ◆ The **Council Minutes** record the official meetings of the Richmond Council and cover the period from 1880 to 2005. Researchers can search the Council Minutes indexes (binders) in the reference room. The Council Minutes are available in microfilm and microfiche.
- ◆ The municipal **Bylaws** reflect the official rules that govern and regulate City affairs. The Archives provide access to Bylaws 1 through 6799 (1880-1998) with the most recent bylaws accessible on the City of Richmond website.
- ◆ The records of the different offices and departments of the City of Richmond are arranged into **Municipal Records Series** according to function. Researchers can identify relevant records via keyword searching on the Archives website and by reviewing the name and subject indexes for the Municipal Records in the Archives reference room.
- ◆ **Government Publications** are City of Richmond publications and reports. These include planning studies, engineering reports, surveys and general information publications specific to Richmond produced between 1955-2003.

Community Records are the records created by private individuals, families, businesses or organizations.

- ◆ Descriptive inventories of the **Community Records** are available in the reference room. These non-governmental records range in date from 1900-2005 and cover a wide variety of subjects.

Non-textual Records are acquired from both public and private sources. Photographs are the most extensive non-textual records within the Archives' holdings.

- ◆ The Archives provide access to **Photographs** on many subjects and its collection of aerial photographs are particularly useful for identifying structure and land use details. Researchers can search for relevant photographs on the Archives' website and by reviewing the binders in the reference room which allow you to search by name-as-subject, subject, and by area and date for aerial views.
- ◆ There are many **Maps and Plans** specific to Richmond that can be accessed via microfilm at the Archives. These include published street maps, specialized thematic maps and a 1930s Waterworks Atlas that provides considerable detail concerning buildings. Researchers can search for maps and plans on the Archives' website and by reviewing the binders in the reference room which allow you to search by subject.
- ◆ The Archives also has **Oral Histories** accompanied by supporting documentation that researchers can access. You can choose to search by interviewee name or subject, but the recordings and summaries are only available in the Archives Reference room.

Additional Resources are non-archival material held by the City of Richmond Archives.

- ◆ The Archivist can provide access to over 200 **Biography Files** on individuals and families that have played a significant role in Richmond's development. Researchers can browse an alphabetical list by surname on the Archives' website.
- ◆ **Newspapers**, specifically the *Marpole Richmond Review*, are available. The Archives has original copies of the *Review* from late 1935 to 1975.
- ◆ The Archives is continually adding **Reference Files** (currently there are approximately 300) to its resource collection. These files, which are arranged alphabetically by subject, may contain newspaper clippings, pamphlets, publications and other forms of information.
- ◆ The **Reference Library**, which includes books on Richmond's history and city directories, is available for use in the reference room only. Books on Richmond's history published by the Archives and City of Richmond are also available for purchase.

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| Page 3 | <i>Cannery workers on production line [ca. 1943]</i> | 1991 2 12 |
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| Page 6 | <i>Jim (1916)</i> | 2006 39 232 |
| Page 7 | <i>Voter's List (1949-1950)</i> | Series 35, VL1949 |
| Page 9 | <i>The gardener (1916)</i> | 2006 39 208 |
| Page 10 | <i>Excerpt from council minutes (6 Oct. 1884)</i> | Series 1, Vol. 1, p. 178 |
| Page 15 | <i>Cannery workers at patching tables [ca. 1943]</i> | 1991 2 9 |
| Page 16 | <i>Contract between Hong Wo Co. and Phoenix Cannery (1938)</i> | 1991 26, File 2 |
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| Page 19 | <i>Hong Wo Store [ca. 1949]</i> | 1995 23 1 |
| Page 20 | <i>Steveston fire insurance plan (1895)</i> | 1985 132 1 |
| Page 30 | <i>Riot at Bridge In Potato War (3 Mar. 1937)</i> | <i>Marpole Richmond Review</i> |

Appendix I

Example from Municipal Record Series:

Series 47

File 6010-2 Miscellaneous Damage Claims - - 1937-1948

Rm. 6, Bank of Commerce Bldg.
501 Main Street

Gordon Won Cumyow

Telephone
Office PAcific 6513
Residence HAst. 0665R

隆 日 温

INTERPRETING & TRANSLATION SERVICE
OFFICIAL CHINESE INTERPRETER
POLICE COURT - CORONER'S COURT
CITY OF VANCOUVER

July 21st 1948.

The Municipality of Richmond,
Municipal Building,
Richmond, B.C.

Dear Sir:

On behalf of Lew Yee, Chinese Farmer at 912 River Road, Richmond B.C. I wish to present his claim for compensation in respect to damages done to his crops on the occasion of the construction of water mains through his property at this address.

I am enclosing herewith a rough sketch showing dimensions of corridor which is approximately 20 feet by 500 feet and the different vegetables designated therein.

I am presenting herewith calculations of the losses sustained in the various vegetables and their market values corresponding to those in effect in the year 1947.

Lew Yee is claiming compensation in the sum of \$1289.80 and I would be glad to discuss this matter with you in person if you will designate the time and place of meeting.

Yours truly,



LOSS sustained re Corridor to provide installation of water mains.

PRICES mentioned herewith correspond to those market values in effect
in the year 1947.

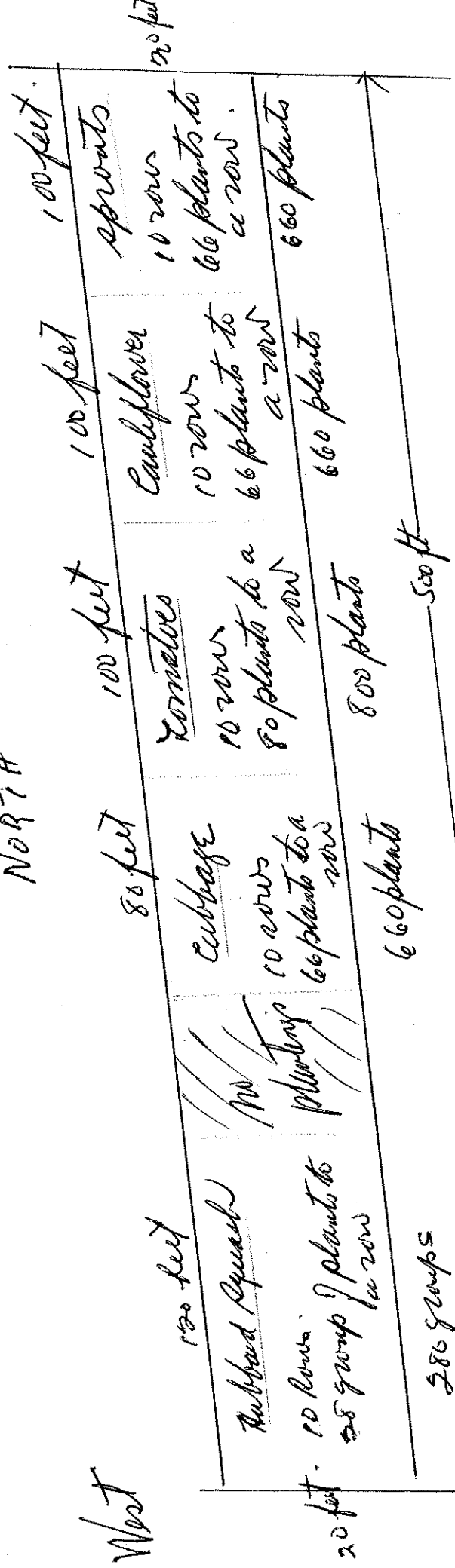
| | | |
|-----------------------|---|------------------|
| <u>Hubbard Squash</u> | 280 Groups of plants, each group yielding 60¢ value in Hubbard Squash | 168.00 |
| <u>Cabbage</u> | 660 Plants each valued at 5¢ each | 33.00 |
| <u>Tomatoes</u> | 800 Plants, each plant yielding about 10 pounds of tomatoes, selling at 8¢ per pound | 640.00 |
| <u>Cauliflower</u> | 660 Heads at 8¢ per head | 52.80 |
| <u>Sprouts</u> | 660 Heads, each head yielding approximately 5 pounds at 12¢ per pound | 396.00 |
| | Total..... | <hr/> \$ 1289.80 |

Corridor approximately 20 feet x 500 feet.

EAST.

NORTH

West



Low Yee Farm

912 River Road.

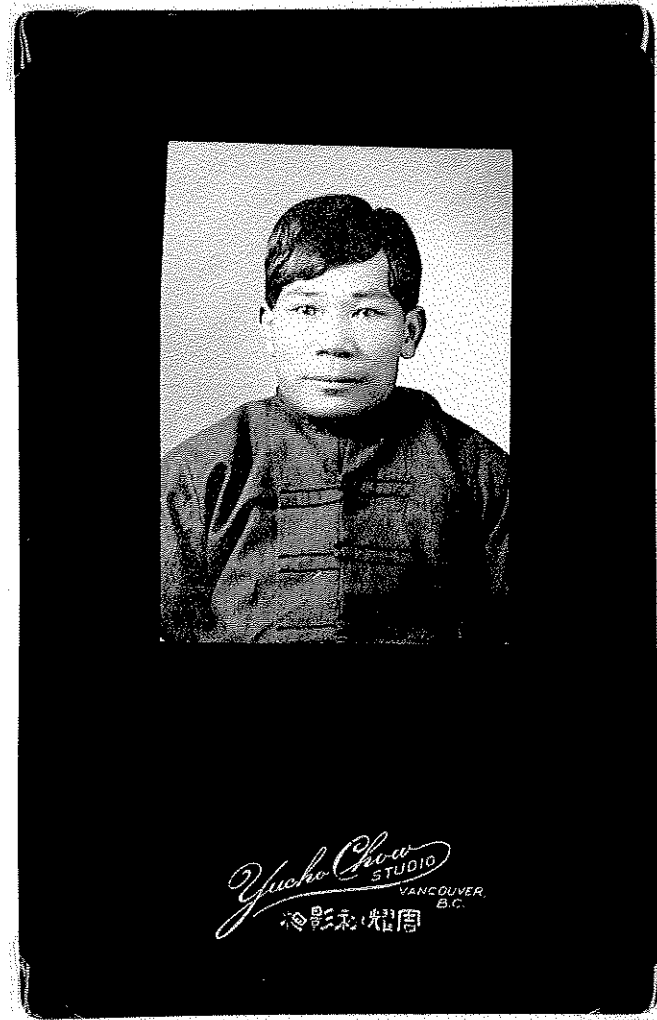
SOUTH.

Richmond 18C

Appendix II

Example from Community Records:

File 2006-40 McDonald family/Wong York records



Wong York

Memories of Wong York.

Wong was an early pioneer of Richmond and the Vandover area. I know he came as a very young man. I believe before 1900. He had left a family in China and as often as he could he sent money home. His family in China was considered very wealthy. Probably because of the money he sent to China. The wife had a large and very prosperous farm.

In Richmond he had a cabin near the Water Tower at Bighouse Race Track, near No. 3 Rd and . Wong did whatever jobs needed doing at the track. Later still working at the race track he worked for my grandfather, Dan McKay on the farm. When he got older he did odd jobs for all the family. One day he would work for mom & dad, Harry & Jane McDaniel another

day for my Aunt Pearl also Uncle Don and Uncle Gordon. Wong was never a servant but a member of the family. He always sat at the table for lunch or dinner and ate with us.

Wong had a great personality always smiling and laughing. He loved sugar. He always had Christmas with us. As children we always waited for Wong. Every year he brought an unwrapped box of Sandies Ginger from Chinatown for each child. Christmas was celebrated each year in turn at a different relations. Wong was always welcome. He was a great friend.

One time Wong was sick (now quite old) my mother and her sister Pearl called at his cabin and found ^{him} in bed, very ill. They described his problem and the Doctor ordered a prescription. He was told 1 tablespoon per day. He thought if one tablespoon would help he would take the whole bottle and get better fast. Which he did.

around 1940 Wong wanted to go home to China before he died. The relations gathered enough money to send him home. It wasn't long before a letter arrived wanting to come back to Vancouver. Being away from China for so long she didn't fit and I guess his own family did not know this stranger. Wong never returned.

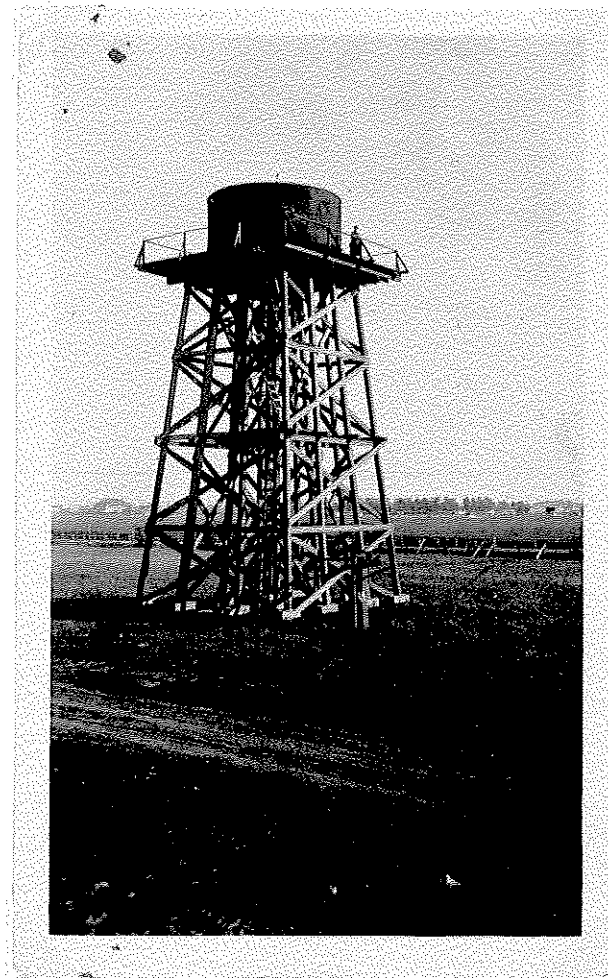
This story on Wong York is from the McKay family of Richmond

Elvin McDonald

E H McDonald
9383 Slater Rd RR 2
Mission BC V4S 1G8

604-826-6342

If my memory is correct I believe Wong worked on the C.P.A. construction. I can't say for sure.



The Water Tank
Brighthouse Park.

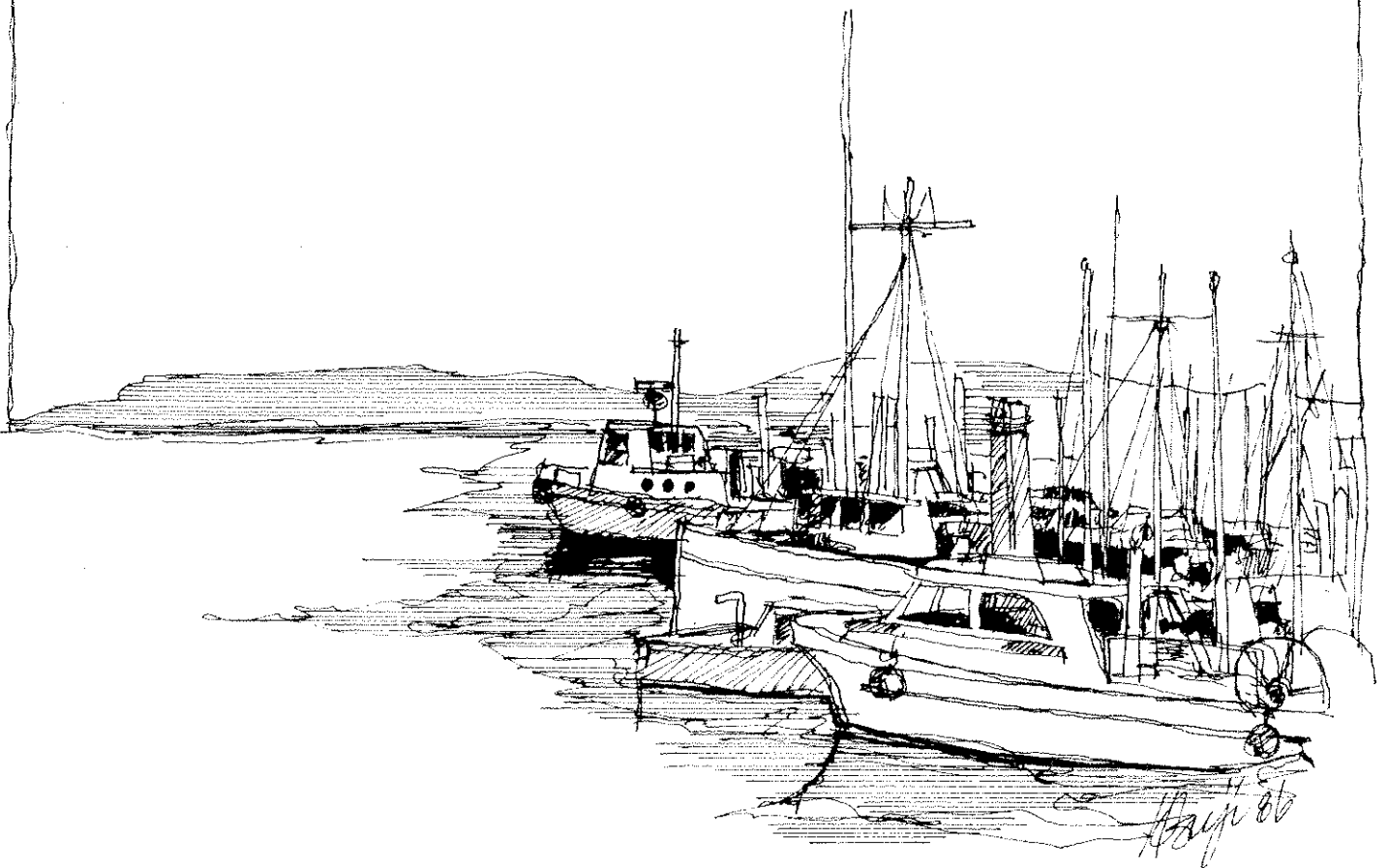
Appendix III

Example from Government Publications:

GP 143 *Steveston's Cannery Channel*

Steveston's Cannery Channel

A SOCIAL HISTORY
OF THE FISHING COMMUNITY



STEVESTON'S CANNERY CHANNEL:
A SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE FISHING COMMUNITY

Duncan Stacey, Industrial Historian

May, 1986
Richmond, British Columbia, Canada

Document 4063K

prepared for the
Corporation of the Township of Richmond
Planning Department

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1. Setting

Cannery Channel is in the southwest corner of Lulu Island on the south arm of the Fraser River. It runs from Garry Point in the west to just east of Number Two Road. The first European to pass this foreshore was John Work who, on December 20, 1824, was on an exploratory trip of the Fraser River to locate a site for the establishment of Fort Langley¹. Garry Point was the earliest identified navigation point for vessels entering the Fraser River and was named for Nicholas Garry, the deputy governor of the Hudson Bay Company, by Capt. Simpson of the H.B.C.'s schooner Cadboro when he first entered the river in 1827². The Cadboro was the first vessel to navigate the Fraser and sail past the Steveston area on its way to establish Fort Langley³. Originally Garry Point had a large tree on it which made a leading navigation mark: "When at the entrance a remarkable solitary bushy tree will be seen on Garry Point."⁴ By 1888 it was reportedly cut down, however, and in time was replaced by the present Garry Point light.⁵

Cannery Channel received its name from the numerous salmon canneries established along its shoreline in the late nineteenth century. In its heyday at the turn of the century it boasted fifteen canning complexes. The first of these was the original Phoenix Cannery. It was built around the mid 1880's [1885?] and was also called English's Cannery at that time, burned in 1895, and was replaced by the present Phoenix Cannery in 1898.⁶ It was not only a major cannery but was also an important navigation point:

Leave the black buoys within close on the port hand, and the red buoys close on the starboard hand, up to Garry Point. Keep within a cable of that point, and of the shore south-eastward, nearly as far as English's cannery, which is about 9 cables south-eastward of Garry Point. Then bring that cannery to bear N.N.W. astern, and with it on that bearing cross over to the Westham island bank, keeping about one cable off up to the beacon on that island. Thence alter course to the eastward and pass between the two spar buoys at the entrance of Woodward's slough. Steer in mid-channel, rather on the northern side of the river, through Woodward's slough and Gravesend reach; thence southward of Annacis island, keeping outwards the south shore through the first bend, then in mid-channel to New Westminster.⁷

The above quote also proves that the present Steveston (or Shady) Island on the south side of cannery channel was originally only a sandbar. The present configuration (except for this sandbar at the top end of the channel above English's cannery) was manmade by constructing a rock fill dam at the top end of the channel and a mile-long breakwater running from the Steveston bar to just past Gulf of Georgia Cannery in 1953.⁸ This construction made possible the establishment of the present wharfing development in the lee of the island.

FIRST SHIPMENTS OF CANNED SALMON - BRITANNIA

In 1890 the first windjammer to enter cannery channel, the Titannia, loaded a cargo of canned salmon from Britannia Cannery (the oldest remaining cannery on the Fraser, built in 1890) for direct shipment to England.⁹ Prior to 1889 the Steveston canneries had to export their pack and order their canning

supplies of lead, tins, nets, and machinery via Victoria. By the mid-1890's, however, a fleet of windjammers lined the waterfront every fall to pick up the season's pack. Many of these vessels travelled in ballast across the Pacific from the Far East and dumped their ballast in the Steveston vicinity before loading salmon. Consequently the Steveston waterfront has Chinese sand as well as sand from the Fraser River.

2. Early Canning Operations

Prior to the early 1900's the Steveston canneries were a manual operation based on a single canning line. The typical cannery had a per diem capacity of 1200 cases (a case being 48 one-pound cans) and employed a cannery crew of 84 and 140 fishermen. Originally the greater percentage of this labour was native Indian but by the 1890's Orientals were replacing native labour -- Japanese in the fishing fleet and Chinese in the canneries. This came about because by the 1890's the canneries were moving to a contract system of hiring labour rather than the previously popular day wage system which the natives preferred. In the turn of the century cannery the largest percentage of the workforce was Chinese males, the second largest was Indian and Japanese females, and whites made up the smallest group. In the fishing sector The Japanese made up the largest percentage of the labour force by 1900 as fishermen and boatbuilders. The last remaining traditional Japanese boatyard is the Kishi Boatyard located next to Britannia Shipyard. It was built around 1914 for the Phoenix Cannery complex.

A typical late nineteenth century manual canning operation in Steveston would have five whites (foreman, machine man, retort man, engineer, and bookkeeper), fifty to sixty Chines who made the cans prior to the canning season and who did all the canning except for washing the fish and filling the cans which was done by twenty to thirty Japanese and Indians. Long before Henry Ford developed his Tin Lizzies millions of tins were rolling out of Steveston's canneries such as the Gulf of Georgia which were using those methods of mechanization (minute division of labour, repetitive operations, and line assembly) that are usually considered the hallmark of United States industry.¹⁰

The following explains the manual canning process as the Gulf of Georgia Cannery (which stands at the foot of 4th Avenue) for the year 1898:

The salmon having been received from the boats at the Fish House are handed on to the splitting tables where the head, fins, tail and entrails of the fish are removed, passing from there to the first sliming tanks where the receive, both inside and out, a thorough cleaning. From the first sliming tanks the fish pass to the second sliming tanks, where the same process is again gone through. The fish are then placed on a revolving elevator which carries them up to the machine salmon knife, where the knives are set to the size of the can then being packed, in order to cut the salmon into the correct size to suit the can being handled at the time. After the salmon knife has done its work, the fish are placed in brining tanks of strong salt and water, the object of this being to remove all slime, etc., off the salmon before being filled into the cans -- after remaining in the brining tanks for ten minutes the fish

are removed to the drainers, where all moisture is allowed to drain off before they are taken to the filling tables to be placed in the cans. The cans having been duly filled by hand are then taken to the washing machines, where all impurities on the outside of the can are removed by the cans revolving against a system of rubbers, combines with steam and hot water. After passing through the washing machines they are taken by the topping machines, which place the lids on the cans at the rate of 150 a minute. They are then carried by a belt and tripped into the crimping machine, which firmly welds on the lids of the cans and passes them on to the soldering machines. Here the lids of the cans are soldered by solder at white heat running down an inclined shoot under a cooling stream of water to the receiving tables below. They are then taken and placed on coolers, and the small hole on the top of the can, made to allow suction, is filled up by solder, when the can should be air tight. The coolers are then bodily placed in the first testing tanks to see that the cans are perfectly airtight before being boiled, those from which bubbles escape showing them to be leaky are taken out and made right. The air-tight cans are then placed in the steam boxes for the first boil, steam being turned on to a temperature of 210 for a period ranging from 35 to 50 minmutes, according to the class of can being boiled. On coming out of the steam boxes after the first boiling has been undergone, a process called 'brogueing' is gone through, the cans being pricked to permit the steam, etc., generated in the boiling, and the hole thus made is again stopped by solder. The cans are then again tested in the second testing tanks, and if any are found leaky they are taken out and re-treated, while the sound cans go into the iron retorts for the second boiling, where they receive from fifty minutes to one hour in a temperature of 240. After emerging from the second boil the cans are placed in the lye tank, made up of strong caustic soda, etc., where they are thoroughly cleansed from the dulling effects of the steam in the boiling. Coming from this treatment a strong stream of water is turned on to the cans to cool them, and they are then laid out on the floor to cool until the next morning, when they are tested by experts before being piled up ready for lacquer. At the end of the season the pile of cans is thoroughly overhauled by experts to see that all is in order before passing into the lacquer tanks, a solution of benzine and lacquer, from which the cans emerge a beautiful brown colour, so familiar to the consuming public. They are then labelled (if necessary) and again tested before being boxed up for shipment either to England or other parts of the world so that it is extremely difficult for a can to leave the cannery which is not perfect in every respect. Sailing ships for both London and Liverpool come up the Fraser River and lie at the cannery wharves, the salmon being thus loaded right from the cannery direct to England.¹¹

CANNERY BUILDING COMPLEX

A cannery complex is comprised of various buildings and structures identified by function. These can be divided into two basic groups according to their function in the industrial process. First and foremost are the structures involved in the actual processing of fish: the cannery, the ice house/freezer and/or the reduction plant. The second group are structures not involved in the actual processing of fish but which provide support functions to the processing structure or structures. Such support structures are worker

housing (specifically the Chinese, Japanese, and white bunkhouses), the Japanese and white married quarters, the manager's house, the native huts, boatyards, netlofts for constructing, repairing, and storing nets, and dockage and netrack wharves to service the cannery's fishing fleet. All are easily identifiable except for netlofts as once a cannery complex stops performing its fish processing function its various components are usually converted to netlofts and fishing gear storage areas such as occurred at Phoenix, Paramount, Canadian Pacific, Richmond, and Gulf of Georgia canneries.

The oldest remaining "cannery" structure on the channel (Britannia) it was converted into a shipyard in the late 1910's.¹² This reuse of Steveston's cannery complex structures when salmon canning ceased in them (especially after the 1913 Hells Gate canyon slide which seriously diminished the Fraser's sockeye run) accounts for the present existence of these structures. In addition World War II created a demand for non-salmon fishery products such as canned herring and fish oils for vitamins and industrial lubricants. Fish oils and meal are produced by the reduction process and the war demand led to the reactivation of some of cannery channel's salmon canneries as herring canneries and reduction plants (the Gulf of Georgia being one example). Modifications were also made to producing plants. This reactivation led to reconstruction of and additions to these plants to accommodate the larger machinery needed for the reduction process. This accounts for the present configurations of Phoenix, Imperial, Gulf of Georgia, and Paramount plants. It should be noted, however, that Paramount's present structural form was achieved in 1956-7 when it was reconstructed to become the major plant for Nelson Brothers Fisheries,¹³ now part of the British Columbia Packers organization.

THE WORKER'S WEEK

A typical workweek in the Steveston canneries around 1900 began on a Monday morning with the blowing of the cannery whistles, the signal for the crews to come to work as there was no regular starting time. The cannery starting time was dictated by the delivery of salmon to the plant by its fishing fleet.

THE FISHERMEN

The fishermen set their nets at 6:00 P.M. Sunday at the end of the weekly fishing closure which lasted from midnight Friday until Sunday evening. This closure was a conservation measure to allow a certain percentage of salmon to spawn, ensuring the survival of the fish and the fishery. The weekly 6:00 P.M. fishery opening reportedly provided the liveliest aspect of the week:

The several thousand fishing boats scattered across the Fraser's generous mouth, each boat with a mast, resemble nothing so much as a forest of gaunt trees, and give an adequate idea of the extent of the industry. A gunshot is the signal for commencing operations. Impatiently the fishermen await it. When given, the scene instantly changes: The mast-forest becomes indescribably active as the nets are being thrown out, the multitude of floats striking the gunwales, making a report like a prolonged volley of musketry. It dies gradually to complete, almost

painful, silence. A quarter of an hour later the visitor witnesses the gleaning of the fish harvest. Sockeyes and humpbacks are taken in about equal numbers; considering the fishing area each net secures what seems a profusion. The sockeyes are thrown into the "wells" for the canneries, and the humpbacks, oilless and valueless, are returned whence they come -- often, in a spirit of fun, thrown into a close-lying net. The congestion in the river is soon relieved, the boats seeking "ampler fields" in the Gulf. An area of fifteen or twenty miles is covered. Unless the run has been exceptionally heavy, the fishermen remain out twenty-four hours, sleeping and eating when opportunity permits, one can imagine with what pleasure! It is not an uncommon thing in a good year during these few weeks for fishermen to make from \$500 to \$1,000; it must be conceded, however, that by hard, dirty work, and long vigils is it earned.¹⁴

THE CANNERY WORKERS' DAY

The Chinese unloading gang transferred the salmon from the fishboats or tender scows, which transported the catch from the fishing grounds to the cannery, onto the receiving floor of the gutting shed and the boardwalks joining the workers housing to the cannery came alive with throngs of canning crews. Part of this boardwalk system, which originally ran the full length of cannery channel directly behind the original wooden dyking system, still remains at the Britannia site. "It was a curious sight to see the butchering gangs coming to work in the morning flourishing their long knives. If you would pass they might make a pretend thrust at you, often watching your face to see if you were frightened."¹⁵

Each worker took his assigned position on the canning line. The Chinese did all the canning labour at a contract price of 1¢ per can for the whole crew,¹⁶ except for cleaning the fish, filling the cans, and miscellaneous work such as carrying empty cans from the can loft to the filling tables and wiping cans. These cleaning, filling, and miscellaneous functions were performed by families of the cannery fishermen, Indian and Japanese women and children who were paid on piece work rates of \$1.00 to \$1.25 per day unless they were white boys, who received \$2 per day.¹⁷ Whites were generally employed as foremen, mechanics, and steam engineers for the steam engines which powered the canning line and the cooking retorts.¹⁸

The Chinese gang cleaned and cut the fish into appropriate sizes to place in the cans. Indian and Japanese women, quite often with babies on their back, filled the cans. They would suckle their babies or attend to their toilets, then continue filling the cans with salmon. When a protest was lodged to a cannery manager that the process was hardly sanitary, the reply was: "It will all be sterilized in the cooking."¹⁹ As child labour laws were not enforced in the early canneries Indian and Japanese women often brought their children to work. The older ones did simple repetitive jobs such as wiping cans and feeding cans into shoots from the can loft. The younger children were allowed to run all over the cannery while others were allowed to sleep in their cradles or boxes. These practices were stopped after 1915 when strict federal health inspections were imposed in the canning industry.

There was no control on working hours and as with any assembly line employment the work was tedious and repetitive. For mealtimes the workers would return to their houses. When the canneries operated the Chinese were provided three meals a day, but during slack times the contractor saved money by serving only breakfast, at nine o'clock, and supper at four o'clock.²⁰

After the work day or on the weekly fishing closure the single workers gambled in the bunkhouses. The Indians dried salmon for their winter supplies and smoked salmon heads, tails, and napes over open fires on cannery can cooling trays and also played violins and sang outside their huts. As only sockeye were originally used for canning, the natives were provided with the other species of salmon from the cannery or its fishing fleet. The drudgery and long working hours of the canners should not be over-emphasized, however, as it was strictly seasonal work. Employment in the fishery often represented the workers first cash income of the year as well as a reunion with friends and relatives and a welcomed break from winter unemployment and rooming houses in Vancouver, Victoria, and the native villages. As native labour was drawn from all over the lower coastal area, Steveston often had a holiday spirit during the fishing season as potlatches and open air dances were held.

THE "IRON CHINK"

Traditionally pre-1905 canneries were built in the shape of an "L" as is evident today in Britannia (1890), Pacific Coast (1893), and Colonial (1897) canneries.²¹ However with the introduction of the "Iron Chink" salmon butchering machine, so named because it replaced Chinese butchering gangs, circa 1905 the short leg of the "L" was no longer needed as a butchering area and became a storage or networking area.

Between 1903 and 1913 the technology of Fraser River salmon canning changed from primarily manual processes to primarily mechanized ones. In the canneries hand butchering gangs gave way to butchering machines, manually soldered cans began to be replaced by the mechanically produced solderless, or sanitary, can and all other sections of the canning line experienced varying forms of mechanization. Technological change became no longer essentially an aid to the hand processes; it mechanized these processes. In the fishing fleet engines replaced oars and sails and mechanized seiners supplemented the gillnetters. The steam engine of the tenderboat tug was replaced by gasoline powered collectors.

3. Organization

During the 1903-1913 period the capital and organization of the industry became dominated by large corporations having a high degree of concentration. Between the peak cycle sockeye years of 1901 and 1905 there was a rapid centralization of plant. In 1901, 49 canneries operated on the Fraser River, but by 1905 this number had decreased to 38, four of which were new entrants. Most of this centralization was a result of the formation of the British Columbia Packers Association, which absorbed 29 of the existing canneries in May of 1902.²²

The present "new" Imperial plant, the head office of B.C. Packers, is an example of this centralization of plant. It was formed out of three old one line canneries, old Imperial (1893), Brunswick #1 (1893), and Hume's Cannery (1896), in 1902. Brunswick became the warehouse portion, Hume the netloft, and old Imperial was demolished to facilitate the building of the four canning lines of the new Imperial.²³

RACIAL DIVISIONS

Racist divisions were very much a part of pre-1940 Steveston. Each cannery had separate living quarters for whites, natives, Japanese, and Chinese -- Chinese and Japanese bunkhouses run by the China and Japanese bosses or head contractors, the native huts, and the white houses. Each race performed a specific task according to preference and division of labour. The Chinese worked solely in the canneries as piece workers under a China boss who, as part of the contract, provided room and board in the China house. The Indians fished and made and repaired nets and their families did day work in the cannery, filling cans and washing fish as did the families of the Japanese.

CONTRACT LABOUR

From the mid-1880's the major source of cannery labour was Chinese contract labour. All cannery contracts followed a similar format. The contractor agreed to supply a certain number of men for the canning season in return for a stipulated number of cents per case processed. In 1927 the Gulf of Georgia's contractor was Earl Chong Suey and Charlie Suey and the agreement was to provide 30 skilled labourers at 40 cents for each case of 48 cans of one pound talls and 65 cents for each case of 96 half pound flats unless the pack was over 30,000 cases in which case there would be a reduction of two cents per case. If the cans were not to be lacquered there was a further reduction of three cents per case. The contract ran from when canning started, about June 15, to November 1.²⁴ Before the introduction of the sanitary can Chinese contracts would have started well before the actual canning season as they would have to make all the cans for the season's pack. By 1927, however, all the cans were purchased from companies such as the American Can Company. Contract crews agreed to perform the following functions: "unload from vessels or scows alongside wharf all tools and materials including tin cans, coal and firewood, also fish from scows or boats, prepare fish for canning, fill cans, cook, and properly test, lacquer cans so filled and if required label same, pack in cases, nail and make ready for shipment and truck the canned salmon to ship slings while cannery crew are at the cannery."²⁵ For all work not stipulated in the contract 30¢ per hour was paid. The cannery provided accommodation for the contract crew in the China messhouse, but the contractor had to furnish firewood.

4. Fires, Floods and Storms

Fire was a continual problem on the Steveston waterfront and numerous canneries burned down over the years: Star in 1895, Phoenix in 1895, Beaver and New Richmond in 1924.²⁶ Fire insurance regulations which demanded whitewashed cannery buildings and corrugated iron over the wooden shingle roofs to retard

the spread of fire did little to decrease the hazard. On May 14, 1918, a disastrous fire destroyed three cannery complexes (Steveston, Star, and Lighthouse) and the whole waterfront between the present Gulf of Georgia and Imperial canneries as far back as Moncton Street.²⁷ In large part this fire explains why Steveston's historical integrity lies along cannery channel rather than the main street (Moncton) which has only four original historic buildings.

FLOODS

Fires were not the only disasters to affect cannery channel; floods and storms also took their toll. Flooding was a yearly threat during the Fraser's spring freshet. Garry Point Cannery, built in 1889, was abandoned in June of 1893 as "70 feet of wharf and buildings dropped into river, more expected to go -- water has been gradually cutting away ground for some time."²⁸ The most serious flooding occurred in 1894 when the water upriver in the Hell's Gate canyon rose 90 feet above its lowest known level. Downriver, at points jutting out along the shore of Lulu Island (e.g. at Holly Point which extended over 100 feet out into the river) canneries were swept away. By the time the freshet had lessened and the flood receded 5,000 cases of empty salmon tins had disappeared and two-thirds of the cannery situated on the point was a twisted wreck. An eye witness account of the flood in the Steveston area made the following observation:

At 5 A.M. one June morning in 1894 I was a passenger on this boat and as we left the wharf at Steveston and made for the Westham Island shore we observed a long white line extending out to where the river flow entered the Gulf of Georgia, and, looking up river, stretching as far as the eye could see. On closer approach the white line proved to be a procession of bright, shiny, empty salmon tins, minus tops, following one behind another down river and bobbing up and down as the chop of the sea agitated them. Occasionally a can would tip over too far and would ship some water. This gradually lowered its level in the stream and subsequent additions to its liquid contents would result in its being completely filled, when it sank from sight. Other tins appeared to advance to close the gap and the line continued to hold its unity and close formation. We crossed this line and lost it as we headed for Canoe Pass and nothing was known of its cause and place of origin either there or at Ladner's Landing. But as we advanced around the southern end of Deas Island to proceed up river a singular sight met our eyes and explain the procession of tins.²⁹

The greatest change resulting from the 1894 flood was in the river bed itself and most disastrously:

affected were the canneries along the Ladner's Landing shore. Formerly the main river after passing the Deas Island cannery swept in a southeasterly direction and the course taken by the river steamers was almost a straight line from the Deas Island cannery to the Delta cannery. Thence the main river continued down the Delta shore to Canoe Pass where the Wellington cannery point shot it about four miles above the river's mouth. Thus the main stream almost completed a half circle in its seaward journey between the Deas Island cannery and a point halfway between No. 3 and No. 4 roads on Lulu Island. Woodward's Slough which connected these

commencing and finishing points ran in a straight line due westward but its depth at low tide did not exceed six feet and it was never used by anything larger than the fishing boats. Larger vessels traversed the half circle via Landner's Landing. All this was altered by the great freshet of 1894. The forces that cut off the projections of land at the Holly Point and Wellington canneries scoured a new channel to the sea through Woodward's Slough. Where formerly that passage had only six foot depth of water at low tide it now has between fifty and sixty feet. The Ladner's Landing shore was by-passed and the present ship channel goes in almost a straight line directly west from the head of Deas Island to the Gulf of Georgia. Ocean going ships drawing 25 feet now navigate the lowest stretch of the river along the Westham Island shore. Where formerly Lulu Island from No. 4 Road to Garry Point had deep water frontage today even fishing boats avoid that side of the river on account of its shallowness and a new island several miles long now lied in the river parallel to and adjacent to Lulu Island. The old main channel fronting the Ladner shore has almost completely filled up.³⁰

STORMS

The most vicious storm to hit Steveston occurred on December 22, 1932:

Vancouver and the lower mainland is busy today repairing extensive damage caused by the fifty-mile-an-hour gale which swept over the North Pacific Coast. Extensive damage occurred at Steveston, where a break in the dyke were wrecked and a cannery was blown down. Several sections of Lulu Island fronting on the main Fraser River were flooded when the high tides, forced higher by the southeast gale, caused leaks in the dyke. At the south end of No. 3 Road there was an inrush of water where the dyke was weakened last fall when cut brush was set on fire. The flames had attached the brush roots in the dyke leaving holes in the ground. High water gradually worked into the sieve-like earth and eventually saturated the dyke which, in spots, broke down under the pressure. Thursday's high water found many of these weakened places through which to enter. Damage to the fishing vessels at Steveston is estimated at \$4000. Loss of the cannery, collapse of the wharf and flooding of houses will approximate \$7000 or \$8000. No estimate can be placed on the damage done to the dyke. It was at the point where the cannery and wharf were located near the C.P.R. pier that most of the damage was done. Several boats had been stored on the wharf and were undergoing repair; all of them fell into the water when the wharf collapsed. More than half of the boats damaged will be total wrecks.³¹

5. The People

At the turn of the century Steveston had thirteen canneries and during the fishing season (June to September), when its population swelled from 400 to 6,000 it had a typical West Coast boom town atmosphere.

A contrast to fishing villages in the Old Land. No landscape here to delight the artist's heart and employ his brush. Steveston, nevertheless, possesses an interest for the student of psychology as well as for the merely curious, that makes it worth a visit ... the crude low frame stores; the unsightly but capacious Chinese "apartment" houses; the fishermen's shacks all speak plainly the exigencies of business of a migratory population.³²

Taking this migratory population numerically, the Japanese were foremost, the Chinese were the next largest group, followed by native Indians and whites. As the majority of this summer population were single males entertainment included gambling, drinking, bootlegging, whisky smuggling, opium, and sporting houses.

OPIUM

Prior to the prohibition of the importation, manufacture, and sale of opium in 1908,³³ it was used both during leisure time and in the canneries (in the form of resin pills). The initial effect of this prohibition is highly questionable as the 1910-11 Royal Commission appointed to investigate opium smuggling on the Pacific Coast noted: "There is no doubt however that opium enters Canada as freely as it ever did, in fact more freely, as there is now no duty to pay."³⁴

GAMBLING AND PROSTITUTION

Gambling (e.g. poker, mahjong, fantan, dominoes, lotteries) and sporting houses also provided popular leisure time activities:

Attention was drawn to the baneful influence of Chinese gambling houses near the canneries and the Secretary [of the B.C. Salmon Cannery Association] was instructed to have notices prepared in Chinese and Japanese characters stating the laws prohibiting gambling will be strictly enforced during the canning season 1905.³⁵

By 1907 there was a major attempt to crack down on both gambling and prostitution in Steveston's China town:

Now the trouble is that the Chief of Police has verbally notified the owners of the building that the Council ordered that there shall be no sporting women or gambling allowed on any of the premises and that the first sight of sporting women occupying the premises shall be arrested and persecuted to the fullest penalty of the law ...³⁶

Prior to this date it is evident that sporting houses were tolerated: "... what the owner wants is if you could have some arrangement with the Chief so to only fine the women during the whole canning season ... same practice as years before ..."³⁷ It appears that a solution was found to allow the whorehouses to continue: "He says it is alright for you to go ahead and rent one cabin for one single woman in each row of the building but be careful not to sell any liquor, but they could give them away if people ask for them

...³⁸ "Solutions" were also looked for in connection with gambling. In 1909 the secretary of the Cannery Association was instructed "to take up the matter of the desired suppression of Chinese gambling houses in the vicinity of the canneries, with the Provincial Minister of Fisheries and Supt. Hussey and bespeak their cooperation."³⁹

ALCOHOL

By 1900 Steveston boasted five legal watering holes: the London, Richmond, Star, Grauer, and Sockeye Hotels, the last still operating today under the name The Steveston Hotel. "Blindpigging" and whiskey paddling enjoyed a brisk business, especially to native Indians who could not purchase liquor legally. This selling of liquor seems to be the most common crime of the period, having flourished from the mid-1880's. "The Chinese have lately redoubled their efforts to sell Chinese liquors to the Indians. They peddle it to northern Indians on the River working at the fisheries."⁴⁰ As a result all China cannery labour contracts contained a clause stipulating that the contractor would forfeit \$100 to the canner for whom he worked if his crew was found selling liquor to whites or Indians.⁴¹ Sometimes the canner had the right to search the contractor's gangs and confiscate any spiritous liquors found.

The Fraser River Cannery Association passed bylaws to restrict the alcohol trade in its fishing fleet as early as 1902: "No member of the association shall buy fish from jobbers or whiskey peddlers."⁴² In 1917 they unanimously carried the motion "that no collecting boat or camp boss shall supply intoxicating liquor to any fishermen on the river or at the respective camps during the coming season."⁴³ The enticement of alcohol enabled jobbers and whiskey peddlers to buy fish from company fishermen (fishermen who fished boats owned by the canners) thus obtaining fish which rightfully belonged to the canners.

From the above it is evident that in turn-of-the-century Steveston the illegal sale of spiritous liquor was considered a far more serious crime than gambling, prostitution, or even drugs. Gambling and prostitution were considered problems only during canning season and/or in the vicinity of canneries when they could and did disrupt the fishery's production process.

OTHER LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Steveston's leisure activities also included potlatches which were reported in the British Columbia Police records because they were discouraged by the Indian Affairs department: "A large number of Indians had a big open air dance ... Indians began to give away blankets, etc. and the Indian agent told them they would have to stop giving away any clothing."⁴⁴

Steveston's non-migratory and married labourers centered their leisure activities on church affairs, picnics, dances, prize fights, sports, and the local; opera house and saloons. Saloons, however, were a male domain as "respectable" women did not frequent them.

6. Labour

Civil disobedience in Steveston was generally sparked by the fisheries labour force -- cannery workers or fishermen. In 1895, for example, there was a riot by the Chinese cannery workers at Phoenix cannery:

Munroe reports strike ... bathroom [can testing and sealing area] man complained of certain work. Chinaman attacked and the whole crowd turned loose ... six locked up, rest working since noon ... Chinaman tried before Atkinson at Steveston ... one man got 2 mos. on assault, other and he as well to be tried Thursday for riot.⁴⁵

Riots were usually a result of mechanization (workers felt their jobs threatened) and racial prejudice. An example of the latter at English's Cannery is described in Henry Doyle's manuscript:

He had a white employee in the cannery who was a domineering bully whose special delight was to play mean pranks on the inoffensive Chinese workmen that laboured under him. He picked especially on one oriental, a harmless quiet man who plodded steadily on at his task under provocations that would have aroused the anger of almost anyone else. But even the most timid of persons has a limit to his stock of endurance and one day the ribbing this Chinaman was subjected to was exceptionally severe and because he bore this he was being pushed around even more roughly than ever. Finally the victim protested angrily. Thereupon the white bully knocked the Chinaman down and the latter, striking a table as he fell, arose with a nasty cut on the top of his head, with blood flowing freely down the side of his face. Immediately the other Chinamen present, who had witnessed the assault, set up a "ki yi" and made for the offender. Like all bullies he became frightened when menaced himself and called on the cannery forman for help. The latter on coming to the rescue struck down one of the orientals with a can tray he had seized as a weapon whereupon every Chinaman in the place, most of them armed with large sized fish knives, joined in the fray and the whites, badly scared, rushed for the door and scurried through to safety with the Chinamen in hot and angry pursuit behind them. Mr. English was on the point of entering the cannery when the white men in panic terror rushed past him on their way out. He realized at once something untoward had happened but had no time to enquire as to the cause for he saw, and heard, the armed and angry Chinamen rushing toward him. Quickly he stepped inside the building and as quickly shot the bolt that locked the door and then turning he, with arms folded across his breast, faced the excited mob that was seeking vengeance. His cool courage momentarily cowed the angry men and when one of the few who could talk English recovered sufficiently to tell him to get out of the way so they could pass he sternly refused and, through their Chinese foremen, ordered them all to stop their foolishness and return to their work. Thus alone and defenseless he faced twenty or more maddened men, bent upon attack, and they, awed by his bravery and cooled down by the delay, silently submitted and resumed their work. When order had been restored he examined into the cause of the disturbance and immediately discharged both the bully and the foreman; the first for his treatment of the Chinamen; the latter for taking the offender's side without first ascertaining who was in the wrong. From then on there never were any labour troubles in the cannery of English and Co.⁴⁶

THE 1900 STRIKE

The height of civil disobedience by the cannery channel labour force was the 1900 strike of Fraser River sockeye fishermen. When the 1900 sockeye fishery initially opened on July 1 a few fishermen struck for 25¢ per sockeye, but the canners offered only 20¢ and no commitment not to drop that price as the season progressed.⁴⁷ Tensions increased and on July 10 the Canners Association sent the following telegram to the Hon. James Dunsmuir: "In connection with the strike men without uniforms, unarmed and inexperienced utterly useless. We are informed by our detective these men stood by last night and saw riot."⁴⁸ On July 21 they submitted the following to the Attorney-General:

Until last evening there has been no sign of disturbance on the streets in this town; the cause of the trouble was as follows: -- The manager of the Phoenix canning company sent out two boats to fish, evidently to test the attitude of the strikers; three steam tugs were also sent out to protect the boats with three special constables on each. Presently there appeared on the scene eight or ten boats, each containing from six to ten men of the union, no doubt all of the lowest grade of society. They succeeded in capturing one of the boats, net and men, while the specials were saving the other boat; the captured boat, men and net, were landed at the public wharf, where the men were roughly handled before I could reach there with the other specials. There are in the neighborhood of four thousand licenses issued on the Fraser River, about forty per cent of which are Japanese; the balance are about equally divided amongst Indians and whites. I am informed that it is the intention of the Japanese, Indians, and a few whites to go out fishing on Sunday at 6 P.M. If they should, it is almost certain that a large element of the union will go out to intimidate and prevent others fishing. As most of the fishing is done out side the mouth of the river, over an area of possibly 20 square miles of water it is impossible to cope with a mob of four or five hundred with a few constables.⁴⁹

On July 24, at six o'clock, two hundred of the Duke of Connaughts Own Rifles arrived to prevent the intimidation of strike-breakers and to maintain order. Originally these troops were billeted in various canneries along cannery channel until a supply of tents arrived at which time they camped in a field behind the Gulf of Georgia cannery. They were dubbed the "Sockeye Fusiliers" by the fishermen. Although each man was issued with ten rounds of ball cartridge with twenty rounds in reserve and told that in event of action being demanded of them they were "to shoot to kill."⁵⁰ There was no violence and only two arrests for intimidation of strike breakers, neither of which were substantiated. On one occasion, however, events took a

possibly dangerous turn when the striking fishermen circled the headquarters of the military at Gulf of Georgia cannery, where strikers jeered the soldiers and sang, with intentional irony, "Soldiers of the Queen" and parodies directed at the troops. The militia stood to arms under these provocations, but after Colonel Worsnop ignored the demands of Henry Bell-Irving that the Riot Act be read the procession dispersed without further incident.⁵¹

The only blood drawn by the Sockeye Fusiliers was that of the municipality's Chief Constable Shae on July 29:

Early yesterday morning the first and only collision that has occurred between the civil and military forces was reported from the dike, where Chief Constable Shae was halted by a sentry at Malcolm and Windsor's cannery. The constable indignantly protested that he was not to be interfered with by any common militiaman, and insisted that the dike being municipal property, it was his duty and privilege to keep it clear for the public. After a hot argument as to jurisdiction over the dike, the constable grabbed the bayonet of the soldier, who regained it by twisting -- to the pain as well as the discomfiture of the policeman -- and then gently prodded the officer with its point, the sergeant being at the same time called upon. He heard the two sides of the case and, of course, decided the soldier to be in the right, and that the military and specials were supreme upon the dike.⁵²

Jurisdictional disputes over rights to the dike are settled in a much less interesting manner today.

THE UNION

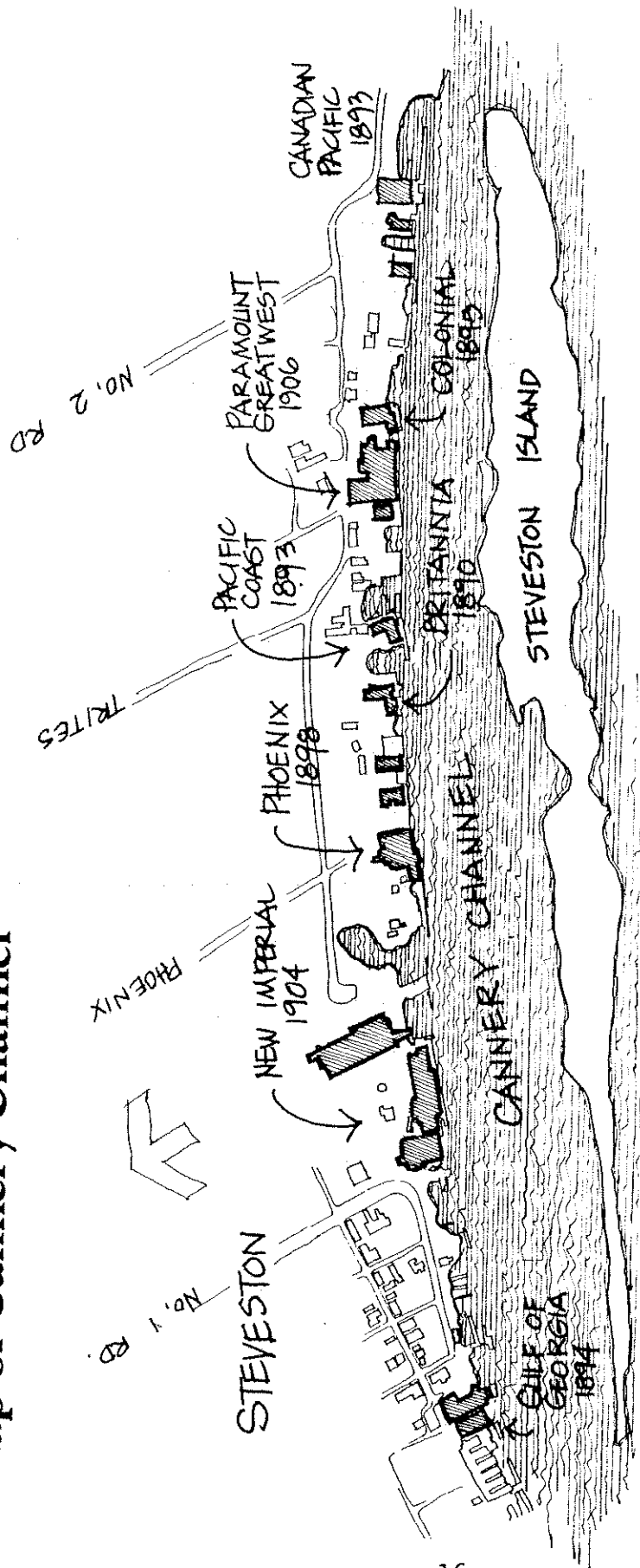
By early August the strike was settled with the union getting the fish prices they wanted but failing to get formal recognition for their union. The 1900 fishermen's strike resulted in the formation of the first coast wide fishermen's union, The Grand Lodge of British Columbia Fishermen's Unions, in September of 1900. In 1901 it led another strike on the Fraser River, but was disorganized by 1903. Between 1903 and the 1930's various labour organizations were formed in the fishery, but they were all narrow and exclusive groups based on various fishing gear types (gillnet, seine, troll) and more often than not divided along racial lines. They were also often at odds with one another. In the 1930's a series of unions, mainly with leftwing leanings, organized all members of the fishery's workforce regardless of race and job skill and culminated with the formation of the present day United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union in 1945. This union presently represents all unionized workers in the B.C. fisheries and is based on the principle of industrial unionism, where all members of any race, sex, political leaning, or trade belong to one big union with the motto "In Unity Lies Strength." This union has done much to alleviate the pre-1940 racial tensions of the fishery's labour force. It guaranteed the safety of returning Japanese-Canadian fishermen and their families to Steveston after their deportation (1942-1949). The difference between pre- and post-World War II Steveston is summed up by the following quote by a Steveston fisherman: "When I left I was a Jap and when I came back I was 'Frank'."

7. Yesterday and Today

Cannery Channel today is a far cry from what it was at the turn of the century. One operating cannery, B.C. Packers' Imperial Plant with its eight canning lines, has replaced the original fifteen canneries. Due to mechanization it cans far more salmon than all its predecessors put together. In 1901, the year of the largest ever Fraser River sockeye run, cannery

channel's fifteen operating canneries packed 335,591 cases of salmon, or 16 million pounds. In 1985 Imperial Plant alone packed 505,000 cases or 24 million pounds and froze another 12 million pounds of salmon. Gone are the China, Japanese, and Indian cannery housing and the contract labour system. All but one of the boatyards are gone. Virtually all the workforce works under union contracts either in the form of a minimum price for fish for fishermen (who are paid a share of the catch rather than a wage) or union wages and conditions for shoreworkers (cannery crews, netmen, etc.). Cannery channel still is one of the major fishing harbours on the west coast however, as well as a center for net storage, construction, and repair as is evident by its docks and netlofts such as those at the Gulf of Georgia, Phoenix, and Paramount sites. Unlike the earlier period, when the canning company owned the boats and worker housing, most of the modern fishing fleet are privately owned by owner-operator fishermen. Also gone are the migratory population which accounted for cannery channel's unique place in British Columbia's heritage.

Map of Cannery Channel



Endnotes

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Appendix IV

Example from the City of Richmond Archives Oral History Collection:

Jessie Lam

Interview 13, Tape 1

Jessie Lam

Interviewed March 28, 1972.

Father was Ling Lam - built Hong Wo Store 1895 - lived in Vancouver - mother originally from China and lived in store before moving to Vancouver in 1909 - 1910 - Had farm adjacent to store approximately 100 ^{acres} years - area at end of Trites Rd. called chinatown then - many chinese stores - (discusses contract labor) - original store burnt in fire circa; 1905 - as child nicked berries on farm - since 1940, did books - 1954 took over the store with brother - store closed 1971 - father died 1939 - at the busiest, store had 7 - 9 clerks - store carried everything hence called General Store - trade was mainly with fishermen - (discusses this) - had a wharf, material and goods came by boat from New Westminster - ramps provided for river traffic - discusses accounts and credit system with various native groups (e.g. Japanese - Chinese - Indians - Whites) talks about Marpole Bridge - talks about fogs - discusses bog fires in Vancouver, lived on Broadway East - father was president of Lam Society - discusses internal arrangement of the Lam "clan" - father was arbitrator of all internal disputes - also President of Chinese Farmers Associations - spoke chinese as child - her brother and sister had imported tutor - went to chinese school after regular Canadian school - most B.C. Chinese from the South or Canton area of China - talks a bit about friction between Japanese and chinese - 1927 - 1928 chinese had to register with Immigration - couldn't vote until about 1946 - story about some chinese refused to be drafted until they get franchise - talks about inability of Chinese to get good canadian jobs until after W.W. II - Brother and sister both University trained but couldn't get jobs - early chinese either worked for self or other chinese - Father was one of the first customers with the Merchants Bank in Steveston - later became the Royal Bank - father early rode bicycle to New Westminster to do buying for his store - store

- 2 -

Jessie Lam

had an early delivery system at store - fishing during season was just behind store in river - discusses offal being taken out to Gulf to be dumped - children playing on river and in rowboats went out to Steveston Sandbar - remembers 1 or 2 drownings per year - mostly children - (discusses this) - after fishing season - father made and delivered pickles back east - grew cucumbers - did all the dill pickles for Nalleys - train track (C.N. near) store where boxcars loaded - also beans for canning talks about various produce canning companies - (story about father's honesty with respect to honoring contracts) - contracted for various crops - many Japanese at one time or another worked for her father - father imported many chinese for work - Moh Bing not such a big outfit as Lams - talks about various markets.

TAPE 13 - SIDE 1



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