

AGRICULTURE - - Dairy to Berries

T.28 S.2

R.H. Maddocks
1033 Steveston Highway, Richmond

Interviewed - March 16, 1973.

Born 1888 in Birmingham, England.

1912 - to Canada.

1938 - to British Columbia . . . bought present land from Finlayson originally belonged to Spencer (of Spencer Department Store) whole 300 acres . . . Maddocks bought 110 acres of which the house was on 10 acres . . . pulled down old house and lived in small 4-room cottage . . . also bought 20 acres between (for taxes) partly belonging to Radio Station CBU (bog land) . . . built it up by lime and fertilizer to grazing land for dairy . . . 40 head Holsteins . . . grew potatoes, oats and hay . . . money scarce on arrival from Saskatchewan so paid bills as exchange for oats . . . family of nine.

1948 - sold some of land for subdivision . . . Matthew McNair had other half of original 300 acres . . . bought across road from Sam Gilmore's farm (originally Thomas Kidd's) eventually acquiring 100 acres . . . started gradually in strawberries, raspberries . . . as market increased cutting down on hayland . . . these fruits finally half of main income . . . 50 acres of berries . . . 40 acres potatoes.

1969 (fall) - sold whole herd of cattle . . . difficult to find herdsman . . . hands affected by detergents, milking, expenses heavy with the herd.

Strawberry varieties - British Sovereign, Marshall, Puget Beauty (canning), Agassiz, then mainly Northwest very susceptible to frost and red stele . . . new hardier varieties - Totem (Canadian) and Shuksan (American) . . . planting included taking off 3 crops before ground was ploughed under . . . then rotation of grass, clover, oats, hay, root crops for 6 - 7 years / . . . currently on order 125,000 plants of new variety . . . scarce this year because 30% frost damage expected . . . plants from Mt. Vernon and Puyallap, Washington . . . frost damage here is once in four years . . . water damage often at Christmas 2 - 3 days, tides high, water comes over pumps, no place to put water so fields don't drain right away.

Raspberries - Less affected by frost. Varieties - Williamette, main one, Puyallap, from Puyallap, supplies late market.

Sumner - late maturing. Fairview - sweet - has a weak lateral, gets disease. New this year from Agassiz Experimental Station is BC201 now called Haida . . . from test plot of 100 plants Maddock expects 5,000.

Field work - fertilizing - handled by grandson.

Potatoes - Netted Gems - main crop.

Kenebec - for chips (Nalley's plant)

Red Pontiac - limited quantity.

Newer are - Norgold, Russet, Norland, Norchip - 4.5 acres. Check soon whether strawberry crop wintered okay, if frost loss will seed area to oats, then hay for two years . . . if prefer will plough in crop, to put straw fibre into land, then to potatoes, but not return to berries under 5 years . . . expect price high . . . price pickers high, weeding - a son contracts spraying on Lulu Island: Jacks Farm Spraying, Shell Road . . . no aerial spraying now, neighbor complained.

Sells from sales stand 1050 Steveston Highway. Blackberries (picked from hedges), blueberries, peas, beets, corn, carrots, cucumbers . . . also sell all "fresh" in market basket stores in Kerrisdale "picked by 10 a.m. sold before 12 noon", . . . own trucks deliver, started 20 years ago, no orders placed . . . not consignment selling . . . contract selling of strawberries . . sales to Canadian Cannery, Penticton, who send trailer trucks for pickup.

Contract raspberries to cannery, New Westminster. No wholesale selling . . . if they want produce must come out to farm to get it. Deal with Fraser Valley Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association . . . Maddocks signs contract on their tonnage . . . establish price processors will pay for strawberries, not for raspberries. Maddocks rent land - across Steveston Highway. 20 acres for paying taxes, insurance. 26 acres on No. 2 Road.

D. Cleland