

Interviewed: February 26, 1976

Mr. Norman Marshal,

355 Garry Street,
Steveston, B. C. 277-7033

- Born in Kingston, Ontario, in 1894.
- Came to B. C. in 1903, his father was a conductor in the B. C. Electric street car.
- Railway did belong to the C.P.R. but was sold to the B. C. Electric in 1905.
- His father was promoted to Station Master and the family moved out then.
- Went to school in Vancouver.
- His father also worked for Municipality of Richmond in the Water Works Department.
- Present house was built in 1916, when he was married.
- After high school he worked for the branch yard of the Eburne sawmill doing bull-work in Steveston.
- Tom Leslie was the manager.
- Went to local garage and began mechanical work, then he went to the Imperial Cannery 1917, then Columbia cold storage, which belonged to B. C. Packers at that time.
- He was repairing model T-Ford and demonstrating the first Ford tractor that was built between 1917 and 1920; Moffat and Martin was the name of the firm.
- Moffat was the automobile man; Martin was the tin smith.
- 1920 he was making enough to support his family and pay for his house.
- He used to run home from Marpole if he missed the last tram while he was courting his wife.
- They used to have races on No. One Road, he was quite a competitor; he won five firsts in the 24th of May holiday including a 5 mile race down No. One Road to the river and back again.
- He was just young, full of "piss and vinegar", he never made a practise of running races.
- There were only few houses; when he built his house there was only one other house on the block.
- Everything was seasonal on account of the fishing.
- He designed a net drum for a fishing boat with parts from model T-Ford.

- 1935 he started in the machine shop, working on marine engines.
- He describes how the drum works.
- He worked for himself at the bottom of 3rd Avenue, rented a machine and boat shop from a Japanese who was removed because of the war.
- Worked almost a year for Vivian Engine Works, before that in False Creek.
- Although he made a good engine his business closed.
- His wife died 1953 and he retired 1956 and then he never bothered going to the waterfront at all..."I never had any 'bugs' for the game anyways".
- He never belonged to any unions, he worked independent and repaired boats for various canneries.
- Discussion of Japanese in Steveston; there was some competitive 'ill' feelings when the Japanese came here in 30's, a few "rowes" and boats sunk, but eventually they were accepted.
- The houses next to him and across from him are owned by Japanese.
- Big fire in Steveston, south side of the main street burnt right through to No. One Road during the 30's (?).
- No one seemed to be going hungry.
- People helped each other as there was no relief.
- During the war, lots of fellows going around in uniforms, but was not much change.
- After the war the Japanese were gradually accepted back.
- Canneries and their locations are discussed. The following ones were named in order from West to East (#2 Rd.) (*): these ones were in operation when he came to Steveston. Scottish Canadian*; Burrard (later Millard and Goss); Atlas*; Gulf of Georgia*; Star*; Steveston*; Lighthouse*; Imperial*; Phoenix*; Brittania*; Pacific Coast; Great West*; Colonial*; Richmond*; Canadian Pacific; Nelson Bros. (later).
- He also has a list of hotels and bars: first one belonged to Al Trites can't remember the name; Old Commercial; Sockeye; Steveston; Royal Canadian; New Commercial; London; Richmond; Star.
- The week of fishing closed on Saturday morning and then they mended nets and partook of the necessary evils, until the Sunday 6 o'clock gun.

- Comments on the noise of the oars hitting the water on a Sunday night, the only time they calmed down was for fishing.
- He recommends the Steveston barber shop for old-time pictures.
- Sockeye Hotel is the Steveston Hotel now.
- He describes the layout of the hotel.
- They all operated a cafe along with the hotel.
- Most owners families lived with them right in the hotel.
- Star Hotel was on the site of the present picture show house, used to be a Buddhist Church on that site, building is much the same now as then.
- He describes a scene on Saturday in Steveston's main street.
- He never owned a camera in his life.
- People got along very well; the Japanese were not pugilistic; he and the young fellows used to fight with the Indians just for a fight,... no good reason.
- The Japanese people had their own school after the regular public school as well as their own hospital.
- There was an oil well on that property just north of the hospital; it never produced anything though.
- Later on another oil well was tried, again it never produced anything.
- ^{top - gets up} He used to get a free ride to high school because his father used to work for the B. C. Electric; name of the school was Seymour.
- It took him about 3/4 hour to get to school.
- Steveston is getting crowded now, several new houses are going up.