

Researcher: Don Banister

Tape 65; 4

Interviewed: February 19, 1976

ANONYMOUS JAPANESE FISHERMAN (SKIPPER II)

- Started fishing around 1918.
- His father was a fisherman.
- He grew up in Japan.
- Came to Canada when he was 16 years old.
- He did not fish in Japan.
- His father died before he came to Canada.
- He started out gillnetting on a sail boat.
- Two men would work on the sail boat.
- He started fishing on the Skeena River.
- It was hard work on the sail boat.
- There was no cabin on the sail boat so when it started to rain they would have to put up a tent.
- Starting at 6 o'clock on Sundays, they would work five days a week, coming back on Fridays at 6 o'clock.
- They could make good catches using sailboats but the price they got for their catches was poor.
- The sailboats that they used on the Skeena River were owned by the canning companies.
- He had a friend at the Skeena River who was a cash buyer on link cod.
- There was no union at that time.
- During the fishing season he lived in a company house.
- He had five members of his family living in Japan at that time.
- About the company house he says "Not too good, at that time every fishermen lived in a company house, you know, not very good, no heating (wood stove)". They had out-houses.
- There was about two to three hundreds fishermen there at the time; Japanese, Caucasians and Indians.
- They were being paid 25¢ a piece for sockeye, 5¢ for humps, 2¢ for springs.
- There was about as many Japanese fishermen fishing around the Skeena River as there are today.
- About the union's performance regarding the fishermen he says: "Sometimes good, sometimes not too good".
- They got better prices with the fishermen.

Anonymous Japanese Fisherman (SKIPPER II)

-2-

- Fishing is easier now than it was in the earlier years.
- He lost his boat during the war.
- It was second-hand and cost \$1,200, the government gave him \$400 for it.
- He moved to Alberta during the war and worked on a grain farm.
- He came back to the coast to fish in 1951.
- The company lent him a boat to get started again.
- His sailboat was about 25 foot long.
- He carried 200 fathoms of net in it.
- The nets were put out and brought in by hand.
- He has two sons who are fishing.