

Herb Marrington, 721 Belair Dr.

Interviewed April 18, 1972.

Born 1887 in London, England - came to Canada at age of 3 - (extended story about his father and trip to Vancouver) - bought 20 acres at corner No. 5 and No. 9 - had old house there needing repair - built another house with help of carpenter - walked from Richmond to Vancouver every Saturday evening and returned every Monday morning - (skunk story) - story about dyke breaking in 1896 that flooded much of Richmond - Sea Is. under 3 ft. of water - went to school first in Vancouver, later to English School - names some of the children - Miss McNeely story - one room school house then - drove into Vancouver via No. 3 Road one house on that road then at No. 3 and Westminster Highway - belonged to a Lord - (describes this in some detail) - No. 3 road was often almost impossible - talks about wild town that was Steveston - Alex Main was chief of police then - Chinese abounded in Steveston then - "Tye" chinaman was a Chinese Contractor who imported coolie labor from China - these men had to work for 3 years to pay off their passage money - Chinese labor used by Municipality to dig the ditches - (missing tools story that results in the murder of Main) - (follow up story about how he was found)- worked on the Gay farm one <sup>1903</sup> summer - delivered strawberries in Vancouver, Woodward's Landing, and Steveston every day - (detailed story about this) - paid \$25.00 month for this work - aged 16 years then - fond of farming although his father wasn't - (extended story about Gay family) - B.C. Land Co. provided many farmers with tools, horses, equipment, drainage, barn, and cattle; in return the Company would want to sell the developed acreage for a certain amount - (talks about smoking) - completes story about Gay family) - Indians worked in canneries during the summer - describes this - talks about 4 mast schooners - names several canneries on the South Arm - he and Woodward set net one Sunday evening and pulled in 3000 salmon for their 500 limit - discusses dead

dead salmon all along shoreline - farmers would bring wagons and pick up carcasses that were plowed under in their fields for fertilizer - talks about handling nets and fish - Mr. Smith had farm east of Woodward's Landing near Rice Mill - house still stands - (story about salted salmon and potatoes as steady diet) - (ton of potatoes story) - talks about early days and difficult times with Japanese and the need for Vancouver Militia - one Saturday night saw a man murdered - talks about opium dens - extended description of this and gambling - discusses prostitution in Steveston - rode on C.P.R. steam-locomotive train - talks about Steves Stage from Vancouver and death of one of the Steves - talks about early stage coaches - talks about plowing in hard tack - describes Toulie shoes - (story about horses sinking into bog and Marrington freeing all four by himself) - plowing 2 acres a day of bush - went on to plow and plant family's 20 acres in oats and got \$300.00 - not satisfied, got 50 acres from B.C. Land Co. on No. 5 Road north of No. 9 with provision he could buy land when he became of age - at that time about 19 years old - had to work as well for Municipality - hauled rock from scow for roads - (stories about this) - story about grading No. 5 Road  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile north of No. 9 - at that time got \$5.00<sup>7</sup> day for self and horses - discusses the cost of a pair of horses - \$500.00 a pair - talks about old fight arena at Brighthouse and the near riot - a fight arena also at Steveston - dances at Opera house - shows put on twice a year for church - 25¢ admission - all Richmond showed up - played lacrosse - discusses various teams - Stories about players and girl friends visiting other Municipalities for game, supper and dance - in Richmond, played in London's field where banquet and dance also held - (extended story about picnic trip to Boundary Bay and adventures with unruly pair of horses) hand dykes built by Chinese - talks about early dykes

-(story about dyke breaking and flood carrying pregnant lady away) - muskrat cut holes in dykes - thousands of ducks and geese off Terra Nova - discusses shooting for the market on Ladner flats - (story about selling ducks a pair for Victoria market; quoting prices) - loaded own shotgun shells - (deer around Reno story) - deer and bear on Lulu Is. - shot a bear - racoons were a pest to the poultry farmers - muskrat tail bounty was 10¢ - (story about this) - Chinese asked for muskrat meat - chinese gardeners on Marine Drive took vegetables into Vancouver and brought manure back for gardens - many chinese on Sea Island (story about this) - discusses wheat growing on Lulu Is. - some barley but mostly oats grown - went hunting in East Richmond - discusses early men who came to Richmond - first car was Model T that cost \$50.00 second hand in 1918 - (story about early driving experiences) - speaks of old Brewery Marine and Fraser that farmers patronized - Marine drive was in very poor condition - No. 5 Road was planked but soon fell into disrepair so was closed - talks about Rice Rees (an old Councillor) persuading Marrington to run for Council - names opponents whom he defeated in 1928 - discusses his intention to put through No. 5 Road - started at Steveston Highway and put in 1/2 mile the first year - (describes in detail the construction of road bed) - talks about Rudy Grauer helping him - discusses wooden water mains and steel ones - (story about Municipal works in earlier days) - (extended graft story) - praises Rudy Grauer - various stories about this - talks about Ward system of earlier Richmond - represented Ward 4 - story about this -

(note:) Mr. Marrington related several stories illustrating the existence of graft in Municipal political life but requested that these not be recorded on tape. This researcher believes that the following summaries do not violate his wishes.

- (1) Collusion between a Contractor and a highly placed technical official of the Municipality was revealed when the Contractor offered Marrington a substantial bribe to vote for him on pending

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tenders. Ultimately the contract was let to another Contractor and the Municipal Official was fired.

- (2) Tax Revenue from a certain source fell below its anticipated amount until it was discovered that certain prominent citizens and land holders were not included in the Assessment lists. The subsequent amending of these lists brought the delinquent account into order and the revenue then attained its anticipated peak.

(David Jelliffe)

TAPE 18 - SIDE 1