

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Paxton

Interviewed April 20, 1972

Mrs. Paxton taught at Japanese School, Richmond - father James Thompson came at 14 years old from Ireland to brother in Ontario until 20.

1888 came to Mitchell Island worked for Sam Mitchell mixed farming 6 months - rowed milk across River to Fraser Ave. where picked up by dairies.

1889 went to work for Shaw who owned 600 acres - Terra Nova - farming - 3 years - walked on hand dyke July 1st in snowstorm to get job - worried about high tides at Christmas Time - put cattle upon crabapple knolls to avoid tides - then managed Shaw's farm 13 years - worked along with Art Laing's father Tom Laing and Billy McKenzie.

Father married Esther Abercrombie Feb. 22, 1893 in white house River Rd. (just past Lynas Lane) still stands - father rowed to New Westminster to meet bride who came to end of rail line.

1904 acquired land eventually 125 acres - Children: Elizabeth, Letitia, John (died), Jessie, David, Mary (self), Violet

Mary went to Bridgeport School at 6 yrs. - in horse and buggy - shed for them - finished high school there - rode horses recalls Punch and Blossom threshing big deal - got drivers license at 14 yrs. drove Dad in McLaughlin Buick touring car 1917, 1918 - went driving with brother to see brother's wife in Westminster met only 2 cars - at home collected eggs - milked only 1 quiet cow - Mother made wild rose beads, black with silver tiny beads between

-orchard on farm - apples: Gravensteins, transparents, russetts, northern spy, tolman sweets (liked to bake) - later grew strawberries - no sale one year so left in fields - sold to Empress Cannery - grew peas for Broders Cannery, Westminster - threshed peas, cut them, put through drum run by tractor at daylight - empty shells binds used for silage - cannery picked up peas - father or brother sold cattle to Joe Stein who peddled meat to

homes - butchered calves on spot - wouldn't buy pigs - threshing - pigs killed for - lasted 1 week, depended on weather - meals: sandwiches for afternoon tea - not all present for breakfast but Hindus, Chinese were - hot meal at noon - family got meat (beef at Grauer Store story Jacob Grauer to Thompson - Interurban tram accident in Marpole - father shook up, trouble after, Grauer, Tom Laing in accident - early Doctors recalled: Dr. Mills, Vancouver for Mother to deliver babies, all family born at home - Indian women walked in to see oldest sister born said nothing - old "Clothes" came for old clothes - Indians stole potatoes, father let them - recalls Austin Harris and old coats - stage coach - knew Billy Mellis, stage driver - didn't swim, father warned re water - Suzuki girls friends from Terra Nova

Around 1930 - recalls ice in River floes cut into banks - Mr. Paxton hauled lumber to Marpole saw people skating on River between old Railway Bridge and old Marpole Bridge - hauled firewood from Eburne Saw Mills - Mary's Mother walked from old McCallan house across Middle Arm of Fraser to Sea Island on ice - very smoky from bog fires - terrible fog - incident: Mary returning from night school in Vancouver left car across bridge, girl friend left her at Cambie Rd. walked rest way home (3 miles)

Mother a Methodist so no dances, cards or smoking or movies - Mary went to school concerts -

1924, 1925 to Normal School, Vancouver - substituted for 5 years before a School - no jobs - taught at Jap School, Sea Island, Vancouver Cannery just outside the dyke - could hear water lapping underneath - taught all subjects - 3 teachers - principal Mr. Fitchett (lives last house Granville Ave.)

around 1929 - taught 11 years students no trouble - parents looked after them - finally 2 Japanese boys out from Vancouver encouraged hockey - 2 trustees: Japanese and English (parents of Cannery kids) - what one set didn't get school other did e.g. little picture stamps approve student work - around 1940 change in student attitude - propaganda pamphlets on teacher's desk - Japanese very anxious to learn - one boy hardly wait to quit at 14 - came birthday morning then left - taught intermediate grades, then primary - school cut to 2 teachers - some girls cried - sold back to Japan - some came over to Mary's parents home by boat - brought own lunch - egg sandwiches smelled - gave Mary wedding gifts - coffee table, clock, cut glass bowl - gave Xmas gifts to teachers - had Xmas concerts - oranges children - May Day last one at Minoru about 1940 - Japanese children led parade, Marie Grauer May Queen - Hawker Hurricane planes flew over - many people disgusted at Japs leading -

as child Mary picked black, red, white currants on farm - and tiny blackberries wild along dyke - wild roses on dyke - caught oolichans off dyke, riverbank - Chinese threw oolichans from baskets on to tin roof - family bought fish from Terra Nova Cannery - sometimes were given - later after married, canned salmon - got electricity on farm - Mary's husband 1924 went to see her Dad when 20 for job, having party, father fixing mantles on ceiling gaslights - by mid 1920's electricity to No. 2 Road - farmers charged for pole - and paid for line - had crank phone on wall.

Before 1924 - water in wire wrapped wooden mains down River Rd. - Dad had windmill, pipe ran out into River - his son-in-law Charles used windmill iron to make fence for sweet peas.

Mary sisters played in barn but kept away from animals - all girls took piano lessons - teachers: Miss McPhail (dead), later Mrs. Swartz - sang lot of hymns.

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Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Paxton

Dad a trustee 10 years with School Board and on Dyking Commission - Thomp
School named after father, picture.

Mary Thompson and Charles Paxton married June 1940 the day school was out

Children: James, teachers Grauer School, Leona, teaches Steveston High.

Charles worked H.R. McMillan Plywood - 33 years.

Reference Book: James Thompson, British Columbia, Vol. 4, Biographical
by F.W. Howay and E.O.S. Scholefield

TAPE 20 - SIDE 1 and 2.