

Miss Edith Christiansen
879 Minler
Richmond, B. C.

(cannery worker)

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277-8439

Interviewed: January 12, 1976

- Started in 1941, paid 25¢ per hour, children 15 years old--- youngest worker then.
- Some health hazards.
- Fish all hand filled.
- Indians were washing fish then.
- Everybody got same wages.
- Some herring were being produced.
- Fillers were paid by the tray on top of the 25¢ per hour.
- The faster you worked the more you were paid.
- Working conditions have greatly improved in the cannery, i.e. they had no lunch room, no washroom facilities. It was so cold that the girls would stand in paper bags to keep warm.
- Women worked two weeks on day shift---two weeks on night shift from January to April.
- They then filleted sole and cod, sometimes salmon.
- The fillets were then packaged and put in the frozen fish department.
- The work was very heavy for the women especially filleting halibut.
- Recounts the details of filleting six foot halibuts.
- Union appeared in the winter of 1942.
- Recounts the details of the first strike in B. C. Packers in 1942 and the eventual pay raise to 42¢ per hour.
- The strike lasted 8 hours.
- Couldn't get work in the cannery till the war era.
- Bunkhouses were provided for the Indians who were recruited from the North.
- About 12 people lived in one bunkhouse.
- Chinese men worked on the heading machines.
- During the war era there were Chinese, White, foremen.
- The Chinese foremen were more influential.
- Seniority system used.
- Those who had worked the longest usually got paid the most as they got to work more hours.
- Housing provided along the dyke for people who came from any distance.