

Mr. Les Richards

Interviewed Feb. 18, 19

Born 1889, Raised on Sea Island and went to school on Sea Island. The School was built in 1890 at the end of Grauer Road. He went to school with Mr. Rudy Grauer. The Stage coaches went from Vancouver to Steveston. The early settlers travelled by water and lived along the river using rafts to go back and forth. Most of the people that came into Richmond went to the canneries for work. He remembered the fishermen being paid 10¢ a piece for salmon. The first cannery cleared \$60,000 in the first year of business. A spring was located at the back of Grauers store and people came to get water there for 5¢ a barrel. There was continual trouble with the dykes, they used to break and the farmers worked all night at times to fight against the river.

He was a Blacksmith apprentice, started working with Clugston and later he and another fellow bought him out. He was in business for himself at the age of 22. There was a Blacksmith shop on Sea Island and at Steveston. He built a number of wagons, all steel wagons. Built potato graders, did ironwork for fishboats. Fishing was all done by sailboats, in the gulf and in the river. In 1907 there were 25 canneries. He later did ironwork on towboats. There were lots of log booms in the river then. Fraser River was full of salmon in those days. The blacksmiths followed the horses from track to track. There was a big difference between shoeing racehorses and workhorses. Made Tooly shoes to prevent horses from sinking in bog. They did not last long. He never shoed oxen.

During the fishing there was usually two men to a boat, 1 to row and 1 to throw out the net. The Japanese came to Steveston and built their own boats. He made rudders and shoes for the boats.

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Electric welding came in and it was a big help, previously he had to heat the iron and pound it. Cedar slabs were used for the side roads and planks for main roads. He sold his shop about 10 years ago and it has since been changed to a auto shop. He did a lot of work for the mill. When he got a power hammer it helped his work. He had a good location. Played on lacrosse team in early days in Eburne.

Mr. Sexsmith operated the Post office on Lulu Island for a few years, then Eburne had a store and they turned the Post Office over to him after awhile and the name was changed to Eburne. In 1904 it changed from North Arm to Eburne.

TAPe 4 - July 2.

Son Mel Principal Stev High
" Dad Band leader in Van