

STUDENT

MR. LES. RICHARDS - #104 - 8610 Montcolm St., Vancouver, B.C.

INTERVIEWED:

April 17, 1975

NO TAPE

Sea Island School (approx. 1895)

- A one classroom school similar to the shape of a square box.
- Wooden structure with one main door that led into a hall where students hung their coats. A door from the hallway led into the classroom proper.
- Mr. Barten was the teacher then.
- An addition of another classroom was built after 1895 sometime, and Mr. Richards recalls a woman teacher.
- The drinking water was "hauled in for the kids" from Marpole, particularly in the warm weather when water from the rain-barrel was not useable.
- Teachers were cruel - if a child misbehaved, he was told to get a switch from a tree outside and punishment was received in front of the class. Recalls Mr. Barten, a "Scots person", having a temper.
- Everybody walked to school, cannot recall any of the students getting a ride from their parents.
 - very few Chinese children went to school in the 90's as their fathers were farmers
 - children from Eburne (now Point Gray, South Vancouver area) came to Sea Island School until a school was built at Eburne, now the general area of Ocean Cement.
- Used slates of about 8x12 inches, and a slate pencil.
 - usually erased with a rag, often a shirt sleeve
 - the cheap ones had wood frames on the slates.
- When Mr. Richards started school, had only one text book. All school supplies had to be purchased by the parents. As time went along, required more books - these were for Grammer, Geography, Math. and History. The history book glorified England and made little mention of Canada. All books were printed in England with an exception of a literature text, which was printed in Canada.
- "The Red River Voyage" was the first poem he learned.

.../2

- School hours were from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. with a recess in the morning and afternoon.
- Everybody took lunches - "gulped" lunch to play.
- Boys played baseball, football and nobbies - girls had their own games.
 - all the kids gave 10¢ to the teacher to buy a football
 - kids made their own ball for baseball from an old sack that was stuffed and sewed up.
- Entrance class at the end of 5th year.
 - had to go to Vancouver to write the entrance exam, never received a certificate for same
 - very few students went on to further education.
- School closed when Bridgeport School was built.
- School holidays at that time were Good Friday and Easter Monday and about two weeks at Christmas.
- Christmas concert was the only special event.
 - Greta McLeery used to come over to the school to "get things going and singing"
 - parents used to bring presents to hang on the Christmas tree, but this was called off because some parents complained about the gifts being too extravagant.
- The only other time children had off was when Queen Victoria died (in 1904) - they received 1/2 day off.

High School - Vancouver

- Had to go to King Edward on 12th in Vancouver.
 - then there were three or four buildings used as classrooms, later these turned into isolation units of a hospital.
- Parents paid for the transportation to Vancouver by train.
- Cannot recall a fee being charged to the parents directly for high school education.

Harry Logan

- Second son of the Minister of the Presbyterian church at that time, went to Sea Island School and then to high school in Vancouver. He won the Rhodes scholarship to England for 3 or 4 years, and was a Professor at U.B.C.

.../3

.../3

Mr. Richards was born in Manitoba in 1889, came to Sea Island when he was 18 or 24 months old. He recalls other stories of the early life of Sea Island residents:

- Sea Island School was built in 1890, a one room structure, the same year as Sea Island-Lulu Island mainland bridge was built.
- Three congregations got together - he thinks these were the Anglican, Presbyterian and Methodist - to build a church on the banks of the Fraser River on the Marpole side close to where Ocean Cement Plant is now located.
 - used for a school for a number of years - people from the mainland, Sea Island & Lulu Island went to it.
 - closed possibly after Presbyterian church was built in 1886 on Sea Island.

A.L.DYBALL.