

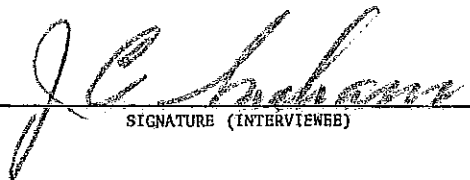
WASHINGTON STATE ORAL/AURAL HISTORY PROGRAM
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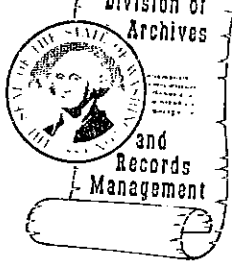
ACCESSION NO. WET 16-39 W	TAPE NO.
INTERVIEWEE'S NAME JAMES CONRAD GRAHAM	

RELEASE

I, the undersigned, hereby consent to the tape recording of conversations given in connection with the Washington State Oral/Aural History Program on JUNE 20, 1976 and to the divulging of said tape recordings and/or transcripts made therefrom.

INTERVIEWER MICHAEL A RUISTREAN	DATE 6/20/76
COMMUNITY ADVISOR	DATE
PROGRAM COORDINATOR TIMOTHY FREELING	DATE 2/22/77


SIGNATURE (INTERVIEWEE)



TAPE ARCHIVE SHEET

INTERVIEWEE'S NAME J. Conrad Graham "Con" BIRTH DATE 1900

HOME ADDRESS _____

INTERVIEWER Michael A. Runestrand

INTERVIEW TITLE MEMORIES OF PACIFIC AMERICAN FISHERIES AND THE FISH TRAP INDUSTRY IN PUGET SOUND

INTERVIEW DATE June 20, 1976 TIME _____

INTERVIEW SUMMARY Family background; Education; 1st job delivering papers; Pacific American Fisheries; Boats used for fishing; early Bellingham; Canning industry; Chinese labor and Goon Dip; Sporting life and prostitution; fish trap industry; fertilizer company on Eliza Island; Indian wives and fishing rights; Con in food processing industry for 30 years and notes changes and his retirement in 1965

RESTRICTIONS _____

PROPER NAMES OR COLLOQUIAL EXPRESSIONS USED Mr. Morgan, watchman at P.A.F.; Deming family; Mr. Lathrop, P.A.F. buyer; Mr. Seghuey, operational boss at Chinahouse; George Wright; Mr. Cowan; George Jardi; Mr. Emerson; Mrs. Kikenbush, teacher; Mr. Douglas, can factory; Lavalie German, P.A.F. worker; Roy Douglas; Goon Dip, China House boss; Mr. Easton, restaurant owner; Jim Chivalier, P.A.F. Superintendent
(cont. over)

INTERVIEW AND RECORDING QUALITY _____

DOCUMENTATION _____

John Jardi
Columbia River
Colorado
Shipyard Point
Alaska
Fairhaven
Lummi Island
Whidbey Island
Cattle Point
Point Roberts, Wa. (Mulligan Trap)
Orcas Island
Boundary Bay
Blaine, Wa.
Everett, Wa.
Ilwaco, Wa.
Bakers Bay
Clipper, Wa.
Montana
Padden Creek
Eliza Island
Admiralty Inlet
San Juan Islands
Cherry Point (Johnson trap)
Legoe Bay
Canada
Custer, Wa.

"North King" - P.A.F. steam & steel vessal
"A.G.Lindsey" (P.A.F. boat)
"Skylark" - his brother's boat
"CeChum"
"A.S.D.C."
"Katherine D" - after a Deming
"Mary D" - wooden vessal
"Firwood"
"U Wandda"
"Calendar"
"Spokane"

Whitehorn trap
Wright trap
Ollsup trap
reef traps
gill netters

A.F.L.
C.I.O.
I.C.S. course

Bellingham
23rd Street
21st & Mill
24th Street
Taylor Street
6th Street (China House)
Donovan Street
Donovan & 21st
11th Street
12th & Harris
Alabama Avenue

Larabee School

Pacific American Fisheries
Imus Parking Lot
Burpee-Letson Machine Shop
Bloedel-Donovan Sawmill
Puget Sound Sawmill Company
Lake Mill (old Larsen Mill)
Stokely Company
Darigold
Pride Canning Company
Cliff Motor Company
Wright Can Company
Uniflite
Kelley-Farquarh Company

Tennis Club
Commercial Hotel
Mothers (brothel)
Lucky Bess (Brothel)

Russian-Finns
Chinese
Hindus

Mr. J. Conrad Graham

June 20, 1976

"MEMORIES OF PACIFIC AMERICAN FISHERIES AND
THE FISH TRAP INDUSTRY IN PUGET SOUND"

Interviewed by: Michael A. Runstrand

Washington State Oral/Aural History Program
Washington State Archives, Olympia, Washington

Accession No. WTC 76-29mr, Tape Nos. L&2, Tape Sides 1,2,3,&4, No. of Pgs: 54

J. Conrad Graham
June 20, 1976

Accession No. WTC 76-29mr, Tape No. 1, Tape Side No. 1

Mr. Runestrand: We're here today with Conrad Graham; and, Con, what year were you born?

Mr. Graham: 1900.

Mr. Runestrand: What was the date of your birth?

Mr. Graham: October 2nd, 1900.

Mr. Runestrand: Were you born in Bellingham?

Mr. Graham: No. No, I was born in a little town called Illwako, at the mouth of the Columbia River; on what is known as Bakers Bay, and it's one mile from the ocean beach. When I lived there there was probably a population of fifteen hundred. Seventy-five percent of 'em were Russian-Fins.

Mr. Runestrand: Is that right?

Mr. Graham: And, my family were all fishermen. There was my uncles; I had two uncles and they had children and they were all fishermen, all of 'em. And, I guess, that's the reason why I turned to fishing as a first step. But, over and above that, while we lived at the beach, one of my older brothers who was also on the lifesaving crew on the ocean beach. At that time they had a place up at Clipsan, a little place called Clipsan that they had a lifesaving station and whenever there was a boat went aground why, they had to go out and find them. And, at that time, they didn't have motors in their boats; it was all oars, they rowed everywhere they went. They had to...well, they had skids down for the boat to...they rolled the boat out, then they'd have to go through the breakers with it.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah.

Mr. Graham: Sometimes it was just a little bit scary. (Chuckles)

Mr. Runestrand: (CHuckles) Was your brother a pretty husky fella?

Mr. Graham: About my build. Maybe not quite as heavy.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: I don't....well, in later years, course he was quite a...much.. he was quite a bit older than I was. You see there was my brother that passed away here, last year. He was eleven years older than I. There was two children between he and I, then there was a girl and then there was the boy we called, Chuck; that was the one I'm talkin' about and above that came another sister and then another brother and then another sister.

Mr. Runestrand: (Chuckles) That's quite a good sized family.

Mr. Graham: (Chuckles) Yes. There was....well, all together, with the two that passed away, there was nine. And, my oldest sister, course, I'm the only one of the direct family still alive. And, my brother died as I say, last year, he died at the age of 85.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: And, really, I don't.....my sister, my oldest sister died several months ago. My oldest brother passed away in 1907. Then, one of the girls, younger girls, passed away shortly well, it was about five, seven, about seven years after that. And, then my oldest sister passed away; she passed away.....she lived in.....well, the last few months, she lived in Montana first and then she lived in Colorado, with her daughter.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: And, then.....

Mr. Runestrand: Had you.....

Mr. Graham: Did you have a question?

Mr. Runestrand: I was just.....did most all the kids go through school then, down at Illwako? Where did you move to.....when you kids were growing up?

Mr. Graham: Well, in 1902, we moved to Bellingham.

Mr. Runestrand: I see.

Mr. Graham: And, the two older boys were already here. My oldest sister was married while we lived in Illwako, and they moved directly from there to... after the...well, this...logging camps kind of shut down; why, he left there and he went to a little place up in Canada and he became a hard rock miner. From there, they went...when they opened the area in...well, in the indian reservation in northern Montana...when they opened that why, they went down there and took a homestead.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: And, they lived there for a number of years and starved to death.
(Chuckles)

Mr. Runestrand: Well, when you came to Bellingham, in 1902, did you settle on the southside?

Mr. Graham: We settled on the southside. In fact, I haven't....I can safely say this, that I've lived within ten blocks of where I'm at now, all my...all the time that we've lived in Bellingham. And, we....I don't recall just exactly but when....I don't recall the dates of when we moved. I was....I was quite young. But, we lived in...we never lived in one place too awful long until we moved into this place. And, we moved into this place in....now, I've gotta go back, and remember my dates. I think, I was fourteen when we moved into this place. Fourteen, that would have to be sometime after October the 2nd. Yes, of 1914 or '15. It could be either one but I....it seems to me that it was....probably '15 by the time we got moved in here. I don't recall just exactly .

Mr. Runestrand: What schools did you go to around here?

Mr. Graham: I went to Larrabee. I started in at the old Larrabee School, now that would be where...well, Donovan and 21st...between there....and Larrabee and Donovan. There's a block....there was a block there where they're building condominiums in there now or some such thing. I don't know just exactly what;

I call 'em shoeboxes. (Chuckles) But, anyway, I went to school there until the fifth grade. Then, I went up there to the campus school in...at the college, up here. At that time, they had a campus school and also they had a highschool and I went to school there until the second year of high school. Then, I dropped out then because it was the first time I flunked a grade.

Mr. Runestrand: Is that right?

Mr. Graham: And, I flunked a grade; and that was in 1916. I can remember that, that was in 1916 because of the fact that....that was the year we had the big snow here. That was the year of the big snow: We had three foot on the level.

Mr. Runestrand: Is that right?

Mr. Graham: Yeah. And, it started in January and...I can remember the first morning that I went down to carry papers. I was carrying papers at the time and I can remember the first time I went down to.....the first morning after the big snow started, I went down to carry papers. I had to walk.....well, I lived down here then, on 23rd street. I had to walk to...down to 11th street to get my papers. And, it took me an hour to go downtown....walk downtown, I left the house at five o'clock and I walked downtown and I got down as far as 21st and Mill and, there was a man by the name of Mr. Emerson, he was a big longlegged guy and he says, "Well," he says, "Son," he says, "maybe you better let me go first and kind of break it up a little bit so we can get through."

(Chuckles)

Mr. Runestrand: (Chuckles)

Mr. Graham: So, he broke trail. He was going down to the Pacific American Fisheries and he worked down there. And, he broke trail for me then for about four or five mornings so I could get down to get my papers. Then, the first two mornings, there wasn't any papers cause the streetcars couldn't run. It was that deep.

And, after I got started carrying papers....that's a....that's the one....I was dedicated to carrying those papers. And, to hell with the classrooms. So, I'd walk....I'd start out, and my route started at 12th and Harris. That's my first paper, and then I'd come up Mill street and went out across the valley and up to 34th street; which is the last one up on the hill. Then, I came back down and if the streetcar was running, I caught the streetcar and rode back to 24th street, then I went from there up to the college, just this side of the college with the last paper I had to deliver and then I...back home in time to go to school. But, during the snow, I didn't get to school til noon; so consequently, I flunked algebra because the...Mrs. Kikenbush was the teacher and supervisor of that area and so....she felt that I...I hadn'tand then, to, I wasn't to interested in algebra anyway. So, I flunked out and so, one week before school was out, I told my dad I was gonna quit and I told my mother and she says, "Well," she says, "If you're gonna quit school; you're gonna go to work." I said, "Okay, by me." So, he told me to go down and talk to one of the watchmen down at the P. A. F. by the name of Morgan. Young man, he says, "You go down and talk to old man Morgan." So, he was the gate watchman; so I went down there and I told Morgan who I was. "Oh yeah, yeah," he says, "I was talkin' to you dad about it." He says, "Well," he says, "I'll tell ya," He says, "You go up to the can factory and talk to Douglas." So, I hotfoots up to talk to Douglas and Douglas sent me out in the cannery onto the....one of the linemen and they put me to work.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: So, that's where I started, was in the can factory.

Mr. Runestrand: The...the can factory, did they really put out an awful lot of cans in a day?

Mr. Graham: Well, I can't tell you just exactly how many there was because, you know, bein' young like that, that didn't interest me too much. But, it

seemed to me like they put out an awful enormous amount of cans because they had four.....four lines running full blast. In other words, they had four body machines they had four flangers and they had four seamers and so on down the line and...til they got to the back end. Then, they had a conveyor that, when the cannery was running full blast, they had part of those for cans were going straight to the cannery for 'em to use. So, that they had....right at their machines. Well, that conveyor was kept more or less full. But, the rest of 'em was put away and sent north to the canneries up north.

Mr. Runestrand: I see.

Mr. Graham: And, they were put in cases and loaded aboard the...well, let's see, the first one that run up there was.....ohhh, now I can't remember the name. Got the name on the tip of my tongue and I can't say it.

Mr. Runestrand: Some of the ships you mean, that...

Mr. Graham: Yeah, one of the ships that sailed out of Bellingham at that time for the P. A. F. And, it was a P. A. F. boat. A. G. Lindsey.

Mr. Runestrand: The what?

Mr. Graham: A. G. Lindsey.

Mr. Runestrand: A. G. Lindsey was the name of the boat?

Mr. Graham: Yeah. And, then shortly after that they acquired the..in a couple of years, yeah, shortly after that they acquired the 'North King'. And, she ran and took.....carried everything. She could carry about five times as much as the 'A. G. Lindsey' could.

Mr. Runestrand: Were these wooden vessels?

Mr. Graham: Hum?

Mr. Runestrand: Wooden vessels or?

Mr. Graham: Oh, the 'King' was a steam and steel vessel. That was their first steel vessel. And then, course during the war, which was...about, you know, when I was working in there why they were taking....well, sending 'em up by

other boats also; and they were building boats. In the shipyard down at the point down there. There was what they called Shipyard Point, now. They were building boats out there. They built...oh, a lot of 'em, they had the firwood and the redwood and a lot of those boats. The 'Katherine D,' she was built... if I remember right, she was named after one of the Demings, 'Katherine D.'

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum. I think it was after his granddaughter or something.

Mr. Graham: Yes. Something of that nature. I don't recall just exactly...

Mr. Runestrand: These....when they were building the ships, these were for the U. S. government, is that correct?

Mr. Graham: No, not those first ones.

Mr. Runestrand: The first ones weren't, but later on they did.

Mr. Graham: Later on they built some for the government. They built....seems to me they built some of thosewhat do they call 'em....minesweepers.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: They built a bunch of minesweepers. But, these boats that they were building of the firwood and the redwood and the.....all of those boats were....ah, they were wooden ships. And, the 'Katherine D.' and the 'Mary D.' and all of those why, they were all wooden boats. The 'Katherine D.' was... the 'King' was renamed to the 'Katherine D.'

Mr. Runestrand: I see. Were these like, for the cannery tenders, is that what they were? Taking supplies up to Alaska and back down and..?...

Mr. Graham: Yeah. Yeah, that was what they were primarily used for. Then, they sold some of 'em. The 'Hollywood' was sold and the 'Firwood' was sold and....well, they were in the business. And, they sold quite a number of 'em. After I was....went to work on the water, which was the following season after we got through in the...can factory, why they, as I told you before, I got a job workin' with one of my brothers on one of the little cannery boats. It was the 'Skylark' and in turn they kept.....well, there was other boats, there was the 'U Wandda'.

Mr. Runestrand: The...the what, was it?

Mr. Graham: The 'U Wandda'.

Mr. Runestrand: 'U Wandda', just like it sounds?

Mr. Graham: Yeah, just like it sounds; 'U Wandda'. U. - W-A-N-D-D-A. (chuckles)

Yeah, it's....it was a.....that was the boat that possibly had it's name in hist , because it...well, they used to use it quite a bit when....when it wasn't doing other things out at the traps and workin' around like that why, a lot of the times, one of those boats it wasn't always the 'U Wandda', it was one or the other. It was 'U Wandda' and the 'CeChum' and the 'Calendar' and then they had a lot of little small ones, there was the A. S. D. C. and the 'Skylark' and the....oh, what was that one that.....I can't think of the name of it; but, it was one that they bought from an oyster outfit and it had a little cabin on the back end and it had a big hold forward. It ran regular to the island besides the 'Spokane' and the 'Skylark' run to the island a lot of the time and carried the crew back and forth but this particular time there was quite a storn and they all piled onto the 'U Wandda' and got halfway across and she dumped her load. She rolled over bad enough so she lost several men off the deck.

Mr. Runestrand: And, they never recovered the men?

Mr. Graham: Oh, they never recovered any of 'em. And, that was also....she lost her skipper at the same time. He...what I understand from the mate that was on there, well, he was one of the deck hands, called him a mate. He was... he happened to be in the pilothouse and....this man, the skipper reached out of the window to grab somebody that was goin' overboard and he went with him. And they never saw him again. We searched all up and down the sound for bodies and stuff like that, but we never saw any of 'em.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum. Con, as you worked in the can factory, let's just pretend we're looking at P. A. F. in 1916; what other....if you were to tell me, what other buildings, what other...and people that were working there.

What were some of the other buildings and what was going on at P. A. F.?

Mr. Graham: Well, of course, the cannery; and at that time, they had just built a new warehouse which was called....what in the hell did they call that building?

Mr. Runestrand: The big brick?

Mr. Graham: No, the brick was over on Taylor street. And, they had...well, it's still standing there, it's a.....it was made out of this terracota tile and it was their main warehouse. Then, they had course, the cannery. Then, next to the cannery, they had the...what they called the commissary dock. And' also, they had behind the commissary dock was....in....attached to it was a warehouse for canned goods, the only warehouse they had before they built the big one and they had the one over on Taylor street. Now, the one on Taylor street...they had....it was a big brick building standing there, they tore that down and they tore the other one down too that set out on the piles out in front of it. Now, that....that building was at the foot of Taylor. A lot of their salmon was stored there, both in the brick building across the railroad tracks and the one out on the waterfront. Then, there was a single building between the two. There was a small wooden building and those were all storage places for salmon. And, course the commissary was a place where they had....now, that's where Lavalie German worked.

Mr. Runestrand: Okay. I was wondering if that might be it?

Mr. Graham: Yeah. And, also he worked for a man by the name of Lathrop.

Mr. Runestrand: Is that still the Lathrop family in town, perhaps?

Mr. Graham: Evidently, it must be; now, I don't know, I never knew but, Mr. Lathrop was a....well, I don't know, I always liked Mr. Lathrop, he was kind of an abrupt sort of a person. But, he didn't have a hair on his head. He didn't have an eyebrow. He didn't have any hair, no hair on his head at all. But, he used to...one of the salesmen and I....that's one man, I can never

remember his name; but, he was the....not a salesman, he was the buyer for the Pacific American Fisheries at the time. We used to wrangle back and..... they were very good friends, he and Mr. Lathrop and he used to rib Mr. Lathrop about not having any hair on his head. Mr. Lathrop used to come back with it and he says, "Well," he says, "You know," he says, "when I get up in the morning, he says, "I wash my face," he says, "I got my hair combed." (Chuckles)

Mr. Runestrand: (Chuckles)

Mr. Graham: That's the way he answered that question. He used to call..... oh, I can't remember that other fellows name, but,.... then, let's see.....well, we had Roy Douglas run the roustabout gang when I was there.

Mr. Runestrand: Roustabout, now, what were they doing?

Mr. Graham: They were handling any produce that came in and the produce that went out, the canned salmon came in off the boats, why they were the supplement crew and they put it where it was supposed to go. Course, they....when the boat come in and it had to be unloaded right away, they hired a lot of extra men to go to work on the roustabout gang.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: And, that was another job that I have done some of. Consequently, it's a.....there's a lot of ins and outs on this thing you know that you..... well, like I say, there's a lot of it that's kind of hazy in my memory at the present time. But, at the same time, I'm just trying to pick out the strong points.

Mr. Runestrand: The....with all the different types of machinery; running, the canning machines, the can manufacturing machine, the different types of moving equipment, conveyor belts; did they quite a mechanics crew down there?

Mr. Graham: Not necessarily.

Mr. Runestrand: Uh huh.

Mr. Graham: They had a machine shop that done the work for up north, that done the work for down here; they done the work...machine work for Eliza Island

and all of the boats and everything like that. They done all the machine work in the machine shop. And, of course, they had mechanics in there. But, they were mostly men who I knew as being mechanics over there in the plant. They were all tradesmen.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: And, then as I told you the other day, right across from that, was the Chinahouse. One of 'em.

Mr. Runestrand: What did the Chinahouse look like?

Mr. Graham: Just a big barn.

Mr. Runestrand: Is that right.

Mr. Graham: That's the closest I could come to it. It was an immense building it was probably, if I remember rightly, close to seventy-five, eighty feet across the front of it and it was probably three stories, inside it was probably three stories high. I was never to the top of it. It was a good hundred feet long something like that. It went back and then back in the back end was their cook room and stuff like that. And, the rest of it was cubbyholes for all the chinamen and their lounging areas and what have you.

Mr. Runestrand: How many chinese orientals did they have working down at the mill in the summertime?

Mr. Graham: I never knew.

Mr. Runestrand: Quite a few though, I imagine.

Mr. Graham: Oh yes, yes, and we always knew....years ago, we always knew when salmon season was coming on because you'd see a chinamen come out and through the neighborhood and buy chickens and vegetables and stuff like that and they was always around. When they'd get here, when they'd always send a crew out around, two or three of 'em would be out pickin' up chickens and whatever they could scrounge.

Mr. Runestrand: The....you're relating to me that story and I think the guy's name was, Seghuey.?

Mr. Graham: Seghuey?

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah. Tell that story about....

Mr. Graham: He was the...he was the boss here.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: Course, he worked....well, it was Goon Dip, was the big shot. He wasn't here too awful much. He was a very good friend of...I understood that he was a very good friend of Mr. E. B. Deming, in fact, he had.... I think he had shares in the company, quite a bit. He was the one that gathered the crew in the various ports along the pacific coast and shipped them in. Seghuey, was the operational boss.

Mr. Runestrand: He was the one that stayed in town and watched....?

Mr. Graham: He stayed in town and he bossed the crew there, and he was a little bit of a man. He wasn't very big. In fact, I think he was pret' near my size, and I wasn't very big either. (Chuckles)

Mr. Runestrand: (Chuckles) What was that deal that you were saying, that.. he was watching you when you were sliming fish or something? How did that go?

Mr. Graham: Well, I was....course, he was a very good friend of my brother's, that is my brother thought that, you know, he was a pretty nice guy. And, he knew him pretty well, so when I was sent down there, why he kind of watched me for awhile while I was slimin' fish and finally he come over and he says, "You name, Graham?" I said, "Yep." He said, "You brother by, Jack?" I said, "Yes." Okay. So, from then on why, when tea time come, I could have tea if I wanted it, you know they had a couple men that came around with a tea pot and carried it on a....a..what do they call 'em, one of those poles they wore across their shoulder, you know?

Mr. Runestrand: Oh yeah, yeah.

Mr. Graham: And, then they had a coffee pot on each side and they'd come dancin' down through the cannery with it you know, and all the chinamen would stop and

have a cup of tea. I could have it too, if I wanted it but I never.....I never cared for tea very much. But, when dinnertime come why, one day he said, "Well, he said, "You come along with me." He said, "We go Chinahouse and eat." So, then from then on, I pret' near alway ate in Chinahouse when I was workin' down at the cannery because.....well, we'd work all day in the can factory and then we'd eat dinner somewhere in a little restaurant across the street, there was one run by a man by the name of Easton.

Mr. Runestrand: Easton?

Mr. Graham: I think it was, Easton. I.....no, that wasn't the first one, but anyway, there was a little restaurant there and I.....I can't remember his name he was a foreigner. But, anyway we we'd go over there and eat a little dinner and then we'd come back and we'd go into the cannery with the chinamen and slime fish until the fish were all gone; if it took til midnight, if it took til morning, we was there til morning and we went back up to work in the can factory again. (chuckles) And, after that we would go....the next night, we'd go home and sleep.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: And, every other night we'd work all night, or work the ch.... work down in the chinahouse in the cannery.

Mr. Runestrand: Gee.

J. Conrad Graham
June 20, 1976

Accession No. WTC 76-37mr, Tape No. 1, Tape Side No. 2

Mr. Runestrand: Okay, when the tape snapped off, we were still talking about the oriental population. Can you....to the best of your knowledge, were they pretty well accepted within the Fairhaven community and...?

Mr. Graham: Yes, they were; as near as I can remember, there was not very much, oh, once in awhile, you'd hear somebody growlin' about the orientals and the damn chinks takin' all the work but, in those days, it seemed to me that there was an awful lot of work around. Because, I'll be frank with you, I never had a.....I never had trouble gettin' a job. And, I know that my brothers never had trouble gettin' work. They seemed to work, always and always had a job somewhere, whether it was on a piledriver or whether it was on a boat or....they always had work and.....people didn't.....the thing that roused them more or less, is when they shipped the Hindus here. That kind of.. well, then the shingle weavers rose up and they were the ones that caused the big storm there. They loaded them all into a boxcar and shipped them out again.

Mr. Runestrand: I heard that they had an incident like that.

Mr. Graham: Yeah. But, I was young then and it didn't mean an awful lot to me and I didn't care.

Mr. Runestrand: Uh huh. The....I was just wondering about the...with the orientals working down there, was there any type of union at P. A. F.?

Mr. Graham: No. No, I never even knew what a union was until in the '30's.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: After I'd gone to work up at Pride Canning Company. I a....that was the first they'd ever talked about unions as far as that particular place. Now, about the same time they unionized the cannery down at the Pacific American Fisheries, or...maybe a little before that; I can't recall just exactly.

Mr. Runestrand: I was just wondering if they might've had it early and if they had, if there might've been grievances or something?

Mr. Graham: No, I don't recall any, but the only thing being that they had quite a time unionizing the fruit industry at the time. I think, at the time that....that happened at the Pacific American Fisheries the.....oh....the C. I. O. was the one that started the union down there and they belonged to to the C. I. O. and of course, we belonged to the A. F. F. L. up here so, we couldn't inter-mingle to well.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah.

Mr. Graham: But, then that was neither here nor there because at the time that I went up there, why.....we just came.....just coming out of the depression when they unionized it. And, things were pretty well stirred up everywhere so, we worked at the cannery.....that was when I worked for.....first went to work at the cannery up there. The first several years there, oh, I think it was about....well, from the time they started trying to unionize it it was about two years before they finally got it.

Mr. Runestrand: The....getting back to P. A. F. for a second; ah, I heard the chinese that worked down there were given a plot of land and had quite an extensive garden someplace on the southside.

Mr. Graham: Yes. I don't know about....I never heard about givin' them a plot, but they let them use a piece of ground up there but there was another china-house that was up.....let's see, that would be on 6th, there was another chinahouse up there by where that water tank is there. In fact, it was.....I think it was on the property where the water tank sets now. And, they had a big chinahouse up there also, pret' near as big as this other one. They had a garden next to that. Oh, they had a beautiful garden there. Course, it was a case of where....I understood it that if they wanted to live up there and have a share in that garden, they had to help take care of it.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah. Were there many....were there any chinese families, kids and women in town?

Mr. Graham: Not that I knew of.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: Not that I knew of.

Mr. Runestrand: Primarily, just young men?

Mr. Graham: Mostly men. It was just men as far as I knew. In fact, I was never up there. Well, I was up there some, during the time when I carried papers, I carried papers for another fella that....another boy that had a route down in there that, once in awhile, I'd take his place but I didn't pay enough attention to it and I didn't have to do any collecting for him or anything like that so consequently I didn't learn too much about it. Course, there was a lot of hookers down in that area but again, I knew them by hearsay, and that's all.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah. I'd heard there'd been a....quite a number of cribs, I think about where the tennis court is, now.

Mr. Graham: Yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: The tennis club.

Mr. Graham: Yes, well, all up through there, up to 11th street clear back to Donovan. That lower area was allwas full of 'em. There was lots of 'em. In fact, right out on Harris avenue there was two or three of 'em; and.....

Mr. Runestrand: Were these just small little houses or were these really big houses?

Mr. Graham: Well, some of them were fairly good sized houses. Some of 'em were small houses. It was....well, the Commercial Hotel had quite a name for itself. And, it set right where that parking lot is that Imus¹ got there on 11th and Harris.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah.

Mr. Graham: The Commercial Hotel. And then, down on the next block there was another hotel and that was a ... quite a place for seamen. And, I understand, there was some of 'em there. Then, there was several more of 'em drifted down along there. And then right across from the gate that you go into the.. Uniflite, now there was a casino, this side of Padden Creek.

Mr. Runestrand: Gambling casino?

Mr. Graham: Yeah, a gambling casino. And, then right next to that, was the Burpee-Letson Machine Shop. Then, on the next corner, there was a draying company. It had horses and a draying company. And, I been trying to think of what...one of the fellows names was, and I can't remember what....I can't remember what the man's name was that owned the draying company. But, I knew it at the time. Then, down on the next corner, was a little eating house and then on the next corner below that, there was a little well, kind of a little cigar store and what have you and it had a.....at one time, had an eating house in it and a rooming house upstairs. And, that was right across Harris avenue from Pacific American Fisheries office.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum. The brick building

Mr. Graham: The new one.

Mr. Runestrand: That used to have the mental health clinic in it awhile ago?

Mr. Graham: Hum?

Mr. Runestrand: It used to have the mental health clinic in it? That brick building?

Mr. Graham: I don't know whether there was a mental health clinic in it or not. I....

Mr. Runestrand: I know they've got a bunch of offices in there and they used to have a clinic in there.

Mr. Graham: Yeah, it's.....it was right across from the Pacific American Fisheries new office building.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: And, it was.....well, all along there, from there back, from there back up to....well, back three or four....well, a couple blocks back here, they were pret' near all hookers and what have you.

Mr. Runestrand: As you can remember, a young guy, sixteen, seventeen years old and, was there much pressure from the public against that activity or was it just an accepted fact?

Mr. Graham: I didn't notice it. I....people seemed to accept it and forgot about it and there wasn't much conversation about it. Only, a couple of 'em had quite prolific names and some of 'em were blacks.

Mr. Runestrand: I've heard of a place called, 'Mothers'?

Mr. Graham: Mothers? I don't remember Mothers but, I remember Lucky Bess.

Mr. Runestrand: Lucky Bess?

Mr. Graham: Yeah. She lived back over in there and oh, I know the woman you're talkin' about now.

Mr. Runestrand: She was a black gal?

Mr. Graham: Oh, she lived on the next street over, from Harris street, in a big....oh, hell, there was a.....it was about a three story building. She lived in there. A lot of those buildings have been removed so.....(Chuckles)

Mr. Runestrand: (Chuckles) I know, I've heard that....that the black gal used to send lemonade down to the fellows on the docks?

Mr. Graham: Yeah. Well, Lucky Bess used to be one of 'em that did that. She was a black girl. There was a lot of 'em. Course, us kids, we heard about those guys but then, it didn't mean much to us.

Mr. Runestrand: (Chuckles) Well, Con, getting back now, after you finished your first season with P. A. F. You'd been working the can factory, a roustabout, slimin' fish, the next year, you said, you went to work with your brother on the 'Skylark'.

Mr. Graham: On the 'Skylark.'

Mr. Runestrand: Now, exactly what was your job and what did you do?

Mr. Graham: I was a deckhand.

Mr. Runestrand: Uh huh.

Mr. Graham: That's what I was called, a deckhand. I got fifty dollars a month and my board; if I done the cooking. (Laughs heartily)

Mr. Runestrand: What was the job of the 'Skylark'? What exactly did the boat do?

Mr. Graham: Well, she was primarily....she was primarily the outside superintendent's boat. What they said was their yacht. But, it was far from being a yacht. It wasn't too much of a yacht, but it was a nice boat for the outside superintendent to travel around in because she was fairly fast and she had a nice stateroom and two man crew, the skipper and the deckhand. And, at that time, she had an engineer. Oh, we'd do a lot of odd jobs, such as towing scows to Eliza Island and maybe takin' a few piles, a section of piles or something to a piledriver somewhere. And, runnin' back and forth with various things to do and sometimes we took...where they had a trap that had a crew that done the fishing right there at the trap, why.....well, they usually, like.. cattle point and up along cherry point and Lummi and all those places, they had a crew of men that operated the traps and they done the fishing. That is, they lifted the traps and they put 'em in the scow and we had no capacity for carrying fish aboard the boat. But, we did have a good engine to pull those scows in to Bellingham for processing. And, that was part of our work during the summertime.

Mr. Runestrand: How big was the boat? The 'Skylark.' What size are we talking about?

Mr. Graham: She was about sixty feet long.

Mr. Runestrand: Umhum.

Mr. Graham: And, she had an eighty horse clip motor in her that cliff motor was built down here on the waterway at the northside. The Cliff Motor Company. And, that's where the engine was built. And, she was a good powerful..... and she drove the boat along at about....oh, at about ten knots. And, then we had, like I say, we....oh, maybe on Monday morning we'd take the crew to Eliza Island and maybe we'd have to go to Eliza Island and pick up the gut scow and bring it in to the cannery and take one out and so on, and stuff like that. And, taking foodstuffs to the various camps around the sound.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: Now, there was one camp at Whidbey Island, on the lower end of Whidbey Island; what we called, Admiralty Inlet. There was....in fact, there was two crews down there for awhile. And, then there was one at Cattle Point, on the San Juan Islands.

Mr. Runestrand: Now, are these traps?

Mr. Graham: Yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: Okay.

Mr. Graham: That's what we called, camps.

Mr. Runestrand: Okay.

Mr. Graham: And, they'd have anywhere from one to three traps. Four traps some of 'em, five. And, depending on the season whether....but, by that time, the fishing had started to slack off and it wasn't so often that they'd put in all the traps. And, then to get 'em clean. Then, they had one at Cherry Point and we had one at Point Roberts.

Mr. Runestrand: What was the name of the one at Point Roberts, do you remember?

Mr. Graham: That was the....that was the Milligun.

Mr. Runestrand: That was the Milligun trap? Was the one at Cherry Point, the Johnson?

Mr. Graham: Well now, there was one at....there was two Johnsons at Cherry Point.

Mr. Runestrand: And those were owned by P. A. F.?

Mr. Graham: They were owned by the the location was owned by the Pacific American Fisheries and there was one at Whitehorn but the crew at what we called, Cherry Point which was....the Johnson traps were out in front of it. Then, they took care of the Whitehorn trap also which was only a matter of a couple to three miles up the bay. And then, I'm trying to remember....we had one on Lummi, we had two, three on Lummi; and I can't remember what the two were down next to the camp on Lummi. That was....the camp was just.... Well, we kept the boats in Legoe Bay, kept the scows and stuff like that; tied up the scows and the boats and..... And, then they had these two traps down pretty near down to where the cable crossing goes from there to Orcas Island. There was two traps down there and then they had the Olsup trap which was just a short distance out of Legoe Bay between there and the point. And, it was about twenty five hundred feet from the trap that was, Wrights owned, that was right on village point.

Mr. Runestrand: Now, Wrights was a canning company, is that right?

Mr. Graham: They were a can company. A cannery. Ah, I think his name was, George Wright. He lived in a big house there right on village point and he had his cannery down there and his crew and everything was right there so...

Mr. Runestrand: When you were,....when you'd be going by Lummi Island and taking care of the different camps as you call them, was there a lot of activity with the reef-netters?

Mr. Graham: Well, there was some; now, most of it at that time, the early time, it wasn't too many of those reef-netters in there. It was afterwards that a.....well, you see.....I don't well, there was a few in there, but not very many. The reef-netters didn't get busy in there until after they'd taken away the traps so that the fish could get in to that area.

Mr. Runestrand: I see.

Mr. Graham: Because when the traps were in there, it cut off on both sides, they were cut off on both sides from that run of fish as far as the reef-netters were concerned. After they took the traps out, then the reef-netters started comin' in to beat the band.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah.

Mr. Graham: And, a lot of men such as....well, there were some of 'em who were married to indian girls and they in turn were fishing these, their wife's rights and they were puttin' in these reef traps.

Mr. Runestrand: I see.

Mr. Graham: And, that's when they came in to be, more than any time. I never had too much to do with the reef-netters. There was a few reef-netters up in Boundary Bay, but we didn't....we didn't have much in common with them, we didn't buy very many from 'em. Once in awhile we'd go in and pick up from some reef netter that indicated that he wanted to sell some fish. There was a few reef-netters in Boundary Bay, as I say, and then out at the point, they were pret' near all in Canadian water. In around, just north of Blaine and west of Blaine. And, then out at the point, there was some reef-netters out around on the west bank of Point Roberts, there was some reef-netters out there. But, as I say, we never had an awful lot to do with them. They weren't like they were after they took the traps out. There were reef-netters everywhere and gillnetters.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah.

Mr. Graham: That was what we used to have to watch for more than anything during the time that I was on the water and going through at night, was we had to watch for gillnetters because they had quite a long lead line for 'em and oh, they had.....they had a long net out and they had a light on the net and it'd be out here and the boat would be settin' up here and there was no lights between 'em and you were right in the middle of it. (Chuckles)

Mr. Runestrand: (Chuckles)

Mr. Graham: I come awful close a couple times.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah. I imagine so, I guess that problem still exists on the water?

Mr. Graham: Well, yes. Yes, it does. And, I know that passing through there that.....I know a lot of guys that got their nets cut from boats goin' through you know, and thinking well, that net's layin' the other way and that net's layin' that way, and they.....well, you see these lights and they might be one here, one over there, one there and one there, and one over there and you're right in the middle of 'em.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah.

Mr. Graham: And, consequently, you don't know whether this net's stretched that way or that way, or which way it's stretched.

Mr. Runestrand: (Chuckles) I know. Ohh....

Mr. Graham: Especially, when I'd be in the wheelhouse by myself at night, I wasn't experienced enough at that sort of thing to really diagram it myself. It wasn't until after I'd been out there for a couple of years and run through those things, I began to realize....and then, I went down to Illwako, my home town and...one year; and, during that time, I went out with my brother-in-law down there and done a little gillnetting, helped him. And, well, went along just for the experience more than anything.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: And, then I learned a little bit about gillnetting.

Mr. Runestrand: The other side of the fence, huh?

Mr. Graham: Yeah, the other side.

Mr. Runestrand: Tell me Con, ah, when you were workin' on the 'Skylark', and later, I guess the next year, you went on the 'Spokane', is that right?

Mr. Graham: I went on the 'Spokane'.

Mr. Runestrand: You had to be dealing with Eliza Island, and the camp over there?

Mr. Graham: Yeah, and the camps.

Mr. Runestrand: Can you describe what activity was going on on Eliza Island?

Mr. Graham: Well, in the spring of the year, the first thing, in the spring of the year which started about....well, sometimes they would get started in February, and the first of March. And, they'd send a crew of men out there and there would be two crews on the island. There'd be the shipyard crew and the web crew. And, they had a big cookhouse up above, on the island and the web crew lived in a.....well, they had a building there that they lived in and the shipyard crew had another building that they lived in. Well, before that time, before I went out there, they used to build a lot of small boats out there. And, they still had what they called well, they were shipwrights, and they were men who.....well, they were building dorys and stuff of that nature. You see, they were....they were boatmen all right and that was in the boat shed. And, then they had this shipyard crew which took care of....well, they had to paint these scows, they had to clean off the ways in front, where logs in the wintertime rolled up on the beach and covered up in the sand and be over the top of the ways and everything like that and they had to clean up everything of that nature, paint the boats that was on the island and paint what...there was always one boat that was....stayed in the water all winter long, sometimes two. And, we'd have to go on the island and clean those boats and paint all of them, both top and bottom and usually their crew was along with 'em, was part of the crew that was on Eliza Island. But, they usually done most of the work on their own boat above the water line and above up on the deck and painted the cabin and stuff like that. And, the interior painting, they done that work. We, who were the.....I was in the island crew part of the time, only when I went out there for a specific boat, and then I helped to get that particular boat ready to go. Other wise we worked on the island and done anything and everything that had to be done, such as cleaning the ways and repairing the boats and.....

Mr. Runestrand: Cleaning the ways? What exactly is a way?

Mr. Graham: Well, now, the ways were ah.....well, on a boat when you bring it in, you have, what we called a cradle, and it was on rollers and up in the powerhouse they had a donkey engine and a long cable that went down through block and tackles that pulled this cradle up and pulled the boat out of the water after you get it in and get it situated, and get the blocks chucked under it so that it wouldn't tip over either way and just so....then, your boat came up the ways and if it had been in the water all winter, then you had to scrub it down and the underparts and repaint it probably, it would just be up for a day, for repairs. There might be a little machine work or something like that they had to do on it or little repair work they had to do somewhere, then it might be up for two or three days but normally it would only be up for one tide; until the next high tide. And, we would have to ... regardless of what time of day or night it was when it got a chance to come up on the tide; we'd go out there and the first thing we'd do is scrub it down. Take scrubbing brushes and scrub all the stuff down, then we'd scrape the barnacles if there was any and accumulation of dirt and stuff, we'd scrape it off and clean it. Then, we'd have to get busy and paint it right away quick before the next tide and put it back in the water.

Mr. Runestrand: Were you using that copper paint?

Mr. Graham: Yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: Uh huh.

Mr. Graham: And, that was hard stuff to handle because you had to keep stirring it all the time to keep it from settling. And, we used....then they used a marine paint on the hulls, the upper part; we used to have to do that painting too, but, they used to get, oh, about four guys busy and put the copper paint on right quick and then get busy and paint the hull up as far as the deck.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: And, she was ready to go back in the water again, as quick as that

would dry and then probably the next tide, she'd be slipped back in the water.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum. This, we're talking about now, is early spring?

Mr. Graham: Early spring.

Mr. Runestrand: Now, as the season progressed, the salmon started coming in, other activities would happen on the island, is that correct?

Mr. Graham: Oh yes. But, now taking other than the shipyard crew, I just told you about the shipyard crew.

Mr. Runestrand: I see.

Mr. Graham: Now, over in the web crew, they had a big webhouse that was, oh, it was two or three hundred feet long, two hundred, I think it was. About two hundred feet long and about eighty feet wide. It was a big building. And, then they had another little webshed off to the side, it was probably about the same length, but it was only one story. But, at the same time, they were getting all of the web ready to go. Such as, there would be probably two big scowloads of wire web come to the island and these, the web crew would start puttin' that together for each trap and make it just the right size to fit each trap. They had all the specifications there and they got busy and put all this stuff together and then they would go and take down these nets that were dry and they'd put 'em through a tar....tar coating and they'd take those out and spread 'em out on the grass to let 'em dry and they'd get everything like that ready to go for the season. Well, then as I say, when we went on to the island, we had piledrivers to get ready to go out; they'd be settin' up on a.....what we called, well, they were sided off to one side of the ways on each side, there was places where they were skidded off to one side of either way. They had rollers that skidded 'em off.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: And, then we'd have to take those and get those ready, get 'em painted and get 'em all ready to go and put 'em in the water. Well, when I was workin' on the piledrivers that was part of our job, we went to the island

and got those ready to go. And, we put those in the water and then we were through on the island when we got that done. We'd come to Bellingham and then we got our rig all ready, we got it.....well, the cook would come aboard and he'd start gettin' his galley ready to go and we'd do the bricking of the boilers and takin' water aboard and all of those things, get all of our equipment aboard.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: And, then one the boats that came off the island would probably pick us up and take us to the first trap that had to be driven, the first trap we usually went to was down at Whidbey Island.

Mr. Runestrand: Admiralty Inlet?

Mr. Graham: Admiralty Inlet.

Mr. Runestrand: Okay, just one sec.-..

J. Conrad Graham
June 20, 1976

Accession No. WTC 76-37mr, Tape No. 2, Tape Side No. 1

Mr. Runestrand: Okay, we're back again. Ah, after you got your boat prepared, you said, the first place you'd head for, would be Admiralty Inlet?

Mr. Graham: Yeah. That's where I would go but the first boat....the first piledriver that went out, there was usually three of us, that is, three rigs that went out first thing; and one of 'em always went to the Olsup and following that one then, there was one usually went up on Cherry Point and after the....then, the third one which was us, old number five, we usually went to Admiralty Inlet. And, those were the first traps that went in. Then, there was one rig, that quick as we'd get one place done, we'd have to go to another and one rig always went to Cattle Point. Now, Cattle Point was at the southend of the San Juan Islands and they always went down there. Well, we had to go there one or a couple of times but usually if somebody had to go and repair a trap, the one that was free, went to repair that trap.

Mr. Runestrand: I see.

Mr. Graham: And, oh, we went....well, then we'd....as quick as we got done down there we'd fill in for where, somebody had'nt caught up, we'd go ahead and fill in. And, it was that way, they all had to work together in order to get these traps in on time. As quick as we got one trap, all the piles driven on it, then the web crew come in and hung the web on it. And, they took care of that part of it. We didn't have to worry much about that part of it; we didn't have anything to do with that, they hung up the wire and everything; they had what they called rigging scows and of course, on the 'Skylark', that was one of our jobs too, was to take the riggin' scows out there and probably take the scow load of web to 'em and stuff like that. Little jobs like that, we could handle.

Mr. Runestrand: On Eliza Island, later on, now, you talked earlier about running the 'Skylark', you'd take the gut scow in to the main plant and bring another one back, the fertilizer plant is what was running over on Eliza too?

Mr. Graham: Right. Right.

Mr. Runestrand: Can you describe that just a bit? What they'd....what exactly it did, and what it operated from?

Mr. Graham: Well, it was all the entrails, the heads and the tails and the fins and the entrails of the salmon that came out of the cannery, came out on a conveyor and dropped into the scow. And, when it got full, why then, that scow had to be taken to Eliza Island and it was tied up there where they..... now, how they emptied that scow, I couldn't tell you, because I was never there when one was emptied. And, but, they emptied the scow with some kind of an elevator that they had that took all this stuff up and it was all ground up and it was made into a fertilizer fish meal. It was sacked up and we always said that.....well, you could smell one of those guys coming before you ever saw him.

Mr. Runestrand: (Chuckles)

Mr. Graham: But, nevertheless, they had quite a crew workin' there. And, it was quite a lucrative business for several years. Then, in later years it kind of went by the wayside because there was other fertilizers coming in that were taking the place of it. And, I don't know whether you could buy fish meal now, because there was one processing plant in Anacortes and I think there was one in Everett. I don't know where they put it in Everett or anything about it because I never smelled it. (Chuckles)

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah. During the summer, I imagine that place really stunk.

Mr. Graham: It reeked.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah. Well, how many guys worked in the fertilizer plant? Have you got any estimate?

Mr. Graham: I have no idea.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah.

Mr. Graham: There was about....as near as I can remember, there was a crew of about eight or ten.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum. During the very busiest season on Eliza Island, might we be lookin' at a hundred guys runnin' around?

Mr. Graham: Oh yes. Usually in the neighborhood of between eighty and a hundred.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum. And, that's including the fertilizer guys, the shipwrights, the webmen, the piledrivers...?...

Mr. Graham: That's right. There was usually about eighty men in the....I would say, in the shipyard and the web crew, there was eighty men. And, then probably, the rest of 'em would be over there and also the watchmen and this and that and the other.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, they....these fellas stayed on the island?

Mr. Graham: Yeah, they stayed on the island.

Mr. Runestrand: Did they get to come off every week-end or so?

Mr. Graham: Yes. There was a boat came in at the island shortly after noon, usually about two o'clock and everybody was ready to pile aboard and go to town.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: On Saturday afternoon we'd get into....we'd get into town Saturday afternoon in....well, before things got too busy. We was usually about.... well, it was about forty-five minutes, for some boats it was an hour's run from Eliza Island in; for a couple of the boats, it was an hour's run from the time they left the dock at Eliza, until they got tied up in Bellingham; But, normally, a couple of the boats used to make it a little faster than that.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum. The experience.....how did you get hired on the pile-driving crew, Con?

Mr. Graham: Well, I was working on.....well, when I first got acquainted with that idea, I was working on the 'Skylark' yet and a man by the name of Jim Leer was running the was the outside assistant, the outside superintendent.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: And, one of the boats taking the piledriver crew down to Whidbey Island, Admiralty Inlet, lost a boom of piles. And, they went up on the beach at west beach on Whidbey Island. So, they took a.....one of the boats pulled a piledriver down there to pull those piles off the beach because they were.. at that time, they were payin' seven cents a foot for them piles. And, they were worth money. And, there was a lot of hundred and ten foot piles all the way from sixty foot piles all the way up to a hundred and ten foot piles layin' on that beach that was....a lot of money laying there. So, they sent up a crew down there to pull 'em off. Well, we took Jim Chivalier down, he was gonna halfway mastermind the job down there; he was the assistant superintendent, outside superintendent and they sent him down there to kind of mastermind the job. And, went down there....I'd set around the boat and I'd get my work cleaned up and get the brass polished and get everything cleaned up on the boat and I didn't have anything to do but sit there. Well, that was no good for a kid of my age, so I'd go ashore and work with the men on the beach. And, Jim never said an awful lot about it, he never said much. So, when I left the 'Spokane' I had a disagreement with the engineer and the skipper. The engineer and the skipper on the 'Spokane' were brothers. And, I got in an argument with the two of 'em and finally, it wound up that I left the boat. And, so, the following spring I went down to P. A. F. and I thought, well, I'll go down and talk to Jim Chivalier and maybe he'll give me a job. He used to take quite an interest in me, when he was riding around on the boat because we'd set out the back when we was goin' someplace, sit out on the stern deck and...he'd show me how to tie all the different knots there was; he was a master with a piece of rope. And, so, that's what I done, I'd.....and, so, I went down there and asked

him for a job this particular day and he was in at the P. A. F. then and I went down and asked him. He said, "Well," he says, "I think," he says, "I got a full crew, but" he says, "if one of 'em don't show up," he says, "they get another job or something," he says, "sometimes they do that." He said, "I'll give you a ring." Well, I didn't have no telephone, so he went on, they were there about a week, I think it was about Thursday or Friday, my brother came up, he was.....came up home here and I.....he said, "Jim says for you to roll your sugcons and your blankets and your clothes and he says get you a pair of calk boots he says and be down to the boat Monday morning at eight o'clock. I was there." So, he told me to throw my stuff in the.....and the first job I got was breakin' up the boiler. Because, I was the smallest one on the crew and I was the only one that could go in there through the fire door.

Mr. Runestrand: (Chuckles)

Mr. Graham: So, I got....they stood outside and showed me how to do it. Well, so....he told me afterwards, he told me he said, "Well," he says, "you know, I always did think anybody that was damn fool enough to get out there on those piles and dance around without even calk shoes on," he said, "down on west beach," he said, "could work for me anytime!" (Chuckles) Especially, when they didn't have to.

Mr. Runestrand: (Chuckles) Ohhh.....

Mr. Graham: So, that's how come I got started on the water. I worked for Jim for three or four years; three years.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum. What was your title working the...?...

Mr. Graham: I was a.....I was a boom man.

Mr. Runestrand: Boom man, huh?

Mr. Graham: Yeah. I was a boom man. I was told after I'd been there..... well, we went over to Eliza Island and start takin' stuff aboard, he sent me up to get everything I'd need. I needed a couple of saws and some peevees and

a couple of pike poles and a couple of axes and stuff like that. So, I went up there to get it and then, I found out, I was goin' to be on the boom, that's the first I'd knew that I was goin' to be on the boom. He figgered I was.... if I could get out there and dance without any calks on.....dance around on those piles down at west beach that I was pretty good on my feet, that I'd make a good boom man.

Mr. Runestrand: (Chuckles) How....now, on these piledrivin' crews, now we talked a bit about 'em; how many guys on a crew?

Mr. Graham: Well, we had....we had a cook. He was the main guy by the way, there was an engineer and a fireman. We had two loftmen, two deckmen and the boss and two....two boom men.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum. So, we're lookin' at, just about ten guys?

Mr. Graham: Yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: Uh huh. The outfit that you were on? Now, was this one long barge? What type of outfit did all this work happen on?

Mr. Graham: You mean, on the scow itself?

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah, on the....it was a scow of some sort, huh?

Mr. Graham: Well, it was about sixty feet long I'd say, something like that; sixty, seventy feet, but, I never did take the exact measurement of one, and on the afterdeck of it, there was a great high derrick like rig and it was called the 'gins'; and it had four progressive platforms on it and the total sum of the heighth of the one I was on, old rig five, was eighty four feet to the head block. And, the 'gins' as we called 'em, the hammer rode up and down in the gins and also the follower and the cotter. The cotter was between the follower and the top of the pile, you see, it set down over the top of the pile, the cotter would set down around the pile and go clear....down maybe ten, twelve feet below the top of the pile and then, above that, there would be an iron follower which would....normally, when it was lifted up, the whole works was lifted up and....when it was lifted it was hooked onto the hammer and lifted

as a piece.

Mr. Runestrand: I see.

Mr. Graham: And, the hammer was usually a pretty good sized piece of steel. Oh, probably a ton and a half or something like that. Maybe, I couldn't say exactly. I presume maybe I heard it sometime, but it never mattered much to me.

Mr. Runestrand: The follower itself was sort of a cap for the piling and something for the hammer to hit on?

Mr. Graham: That was the cap that set on the.....on top of the pile, it was the cap that set on top of the piling. It had a wooden core in the top of it for the hammer to hit on, because two pieces of iron coming together so many.. that many times would.....something would have to give. And, course the cotter was below the two of 'em and it held the pile in the gins so that it was always in position. And, then the follower set on top and then the hammer could raise up and down.

Mr. Runestrand: I see.

Mr. Graham: And, that was the engineer's job, he was the hammer man, that's what they called him; he wasn't called an engineer, he was called a hammerman.

Mr. Runestrand: You mentioned having two loftmen?

Mr. Graham: Yeah, we had two loftmen.

Mr. Runestrand: These were the guys that would get the piling lined up?

Mr. Graham: They'd get the piling into the gins and watch it to see if it broke off, if it started to splinter bad, and break off at the top then they had to stop everything and saw that pile off up there in the gins. They'd put off their stuff and one guy would go out around the outside and they'd saw the top of that pile off right quick.

Mr. Runestrand: I see.

Mr. Graham: And, of course, down on the boom, we had to try and cut that pile back far enough to that we got to good solid wood or where it wasn't soaked with water so that it wouldn't split that way, if it was real watersoaked, it would split pretty easy and break off. And, they had to watch that up there to keep one from.....you know, keep it from breaking, they had to watch it, you see, that it didn't break. That was part of the loftmen's work.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, for individuals that.....like, I didn't realize this, every trap that you drove almost, you'd drive it in the early spring and at the end of fishing season, you'd pull 'em out?

Mr. Graham: Well, what heppened with your trap, it was driven in the spring and it depended quite largely on where it was and what kind of driving it was; whether it was hard formation to drive it into, how long it would take to build that trap, and some traps would take as high as twenty-eight days to drive that many piles; or a month, you might say. And, then along with that, then the web crew come along and put the web on it and then the fishing crew came along to fish it and when the season was all done, late in the fall after the fall fishing was all done, then, they had a rig with a wanigan to it, what we called a pile puller, it in turn had a wanigan behind it.

Mr. Runestrand: A wanigan, huh?

Mr. Graham: A wanigan. That was the place where the men slept and eat and... it was a house on a scow. And, it was a regular scow with a house built on it and it was what we called a wanigan. And, that went out with the pilepuller. And, the men that were on the pile crew which was a regular crew. They had two boom men, and...well, they didn't have loftmen aboard there. They had.. they did have loftmen too because they had a guy that put the cables down around the top of it and then they had their two deck men and then their firemen and their cook. Cook was on the wanigan. And, the fireman and the engineer. And, they would go out and they would start in, and they would rip all the ... one crew would go along...the web crew when they were through fishing it, they'd

go along and strip all the web down and drop it off and then the cotten web, with the spiller and the pot, they would gather that up and take it to..... and then it would go to Eliza Island and taken up on the island and hung up and dried.

Mr. Runestrand: I see.

Mr. Graham: And, then we'd go in and start pullin' these piles on these traps and droppin' these pieces off and boomin' them up; that was one of my jobs, was boomin' up the piles.

Mr. Runestrand: This was part of the problem then, when you were driving them, after so long in the water, they'd become water logged and they wouldn't be good anymore after awhile, is that correct?

Mr. Graham: Well, some of them would be splittin' and maybe they'd break. Now, I have seen it happen, where they would put the chokers onto a pile and then they'd start to pull it up onto the ground and they'd get to bouncin' it like that and they'd break the top off of it. Well, a lot of times they just run over it and break it off and let it go because it wasn't any good anymore, depending on how deep the water was and how much there was left of it of course.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: But, once in awhile, you'd have to do something like that or, if they got to one that they couldn't pull, sometimes they'd call on the boat to come in and put a line around it and take a run at it and break it off close to the bottom.

Mr. Runestrand: I see.

Mr. Graham: And, then that was just taken off and sometimes it was just taken out and let go and other times, it would be pulled up alongside and we had to put a some kind of a fastening on it to take it into the island and it'd be reshaped.

Mr. Runestrand: The boom....I mean, the piledriving crew, you had to work in all types of weather because of the necessity of getting the traps built isn't

that right?

Mr. Graham: Well, there were times when we had to run for cover.....because nobody down around Whidbey Island could stay out there when a storm comes up there. They.....even the boats run for cover. And,.....oh, there would be... but, it wasn't usually very long, maybe a.....about the longest I can remember ever bein' off, was a day and a half.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: We had to run for cover. And, I seen the time when we had to go out and pick up the anchors. What we called, pickin' up the hook. And, we had a head line that went out and it had a.....about a.....well, I think the head line had about a hundred pound anchor. And, the stern line had a five hundred pound anchor. And, then the two brest hooks were anywhere from two-fifty, three hundreds.

Mr. Runestrand: Those are the one's that go off to either side?

Mr. Graham: That's your two brest hooks. And, they were good big anchors. Well, the brest hooks was usually around about two hundred pounds and we'd have to go out and pick 'em up and if there was a storm come up, we'd go out and pick these hooks up and sometimes it was quite a problem. We'd get out there and you couldn't even.....you'd get down in the trough of the sea, you couldn't even see the driver. Couldn't see the top of it. (Chuckles)

Mr. Runestrand: Geez!

Mr. Graham: Course, you were....there was probably....oh, you were probably off the beach...away from the driver maybe, four or five hundred, six hundred feet.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: Quite a ways from it anyway and see, you had about a.....each one of those deck lines was about twelve hundred feet long and we usually run 'em down to where they were probably only maybe a couple of hundred feet left on deck.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: And, we had to take those out the first thing in the morning, every morning. You start out across and you watched the boss and if he wants you a little further, he'd wave his hand like that to take it that way or take it that way and when he got out as far as he wanted to go, why, the engineer would "TOOT!" on the whistle and that's the way you.....

Mr. Runestrand: That's where you'd drop it, huh?

Mr. Graham: And, then you'd drop the hook.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: And, sometimes that was a lot of fun too; I've seen guys get clobbered with a float. (Chuckles) All of it would be coiled up in a line, you see, they had to have a float line on the hook and they'd....it was all coiled up so it didn't tangle up when it went overboard. Well, you drop that.. you drop that....you drop the hook overboard, well that thing was feedin' out, well, this float on the end of it was about two feet long and maybe....oh, I'd say, nine, ten inches in diameter. And, it was painted red, and when that thingusually, one guy would pick it up and hold it over the side of the boat so that when the line flipped out, it didn't jump out of the boat and clump somebody on the side of the head. (chuckles)

Mr. Runestrand: (chuckles) Talking about working the anchors and having to pick 'em up in the storm, did P. A. F. supply you with say, a life preserver of any sort?

Mr. Graham: No. No, we didn't take time to put life preservers on.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah.

Mr. Graham: We just went out the way we were, we were in a boat and we....we were expected to stay in the boat.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah. Tell me,.....ah, you had a little cabin on the pile-driving unit too, didn't you? Living quarters?

Mr. Graham: Uh?

Mr. Runestrand: Living quarters on the piledriver?

Mr. Graham: Oh yes. Yes, you had a living quarters. They had a.....we had a galley. And, I didn't.....I never slept very often.....no, I never slept in the cooking area. Most of the boys slept in the cooking area. There was two bunks, one on each side of the engineroom up above that had a ladder go up to 'em. Well, there was really four bunks; and I usually slept in one of those. And, because I usually had wet clothes and I liked to hang 'em outside the door over the boiler you know, when the heat from the boiler would dry my clothes before morning.

Mr. Runestrand: Oh, I see.

Mr. Graham: And, I usually slept in one of those and the rest of the crew, slept down in the galley. It was a....well, there was a deck about four or five feet, and four feet on each side of the galley where you went around and.. oh, I would say that the galley was probably sixteen, eighteen feet wide, and about that, for length or something like that. And, the engine room....the boiler and the donkey set just outside of it under a housing.

Mr. Runestrand: Was the grub pretty good?

Mr. Graham: Depending on your cook.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, did a cook last very long if he wasn't good?

Mr. Graham: Well, sometimes yes, it depends if you could get another one right away or not. And, sometimes you had....well, you'd get a good cook and some times he wasn't so good. But, you had to like it or lump it.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah.

Mr. Graham: And, when you got out there drivin' piles, you'd eat most anything.

Mr. Runestrand: (Chuckles) Did you ever get thrown in the drink, Con?

Mr. Graham: Get thrown in the drink?

Mr. Runestrand: When you were workin' the booms out there?

Mr. Graham: Well, it was said about me, I I don't recall it too closely, but, the crew used to say if I didn't fall overboard once a week, that I was sick.

Mr. Runestrand: (Chuckles) The areas that your rig, number five, the traps you worked, the first one was Admiralty Inlet?

Mr. Graham: That was the first one we started on.

Mr. Runestrand: Okay, what was your next two, three, four, however you kept track of....?...

Mr. Graham: Well, we usually wound up....we'd usually, depending on what trap was behind; and like if they wanted the Milligan, we'd go straight to the Milligan; if they wanted the White Horn trap, we used to drive the White Horn trap second because one of the other trap drivers would usually pick up the Ollsup and the two traps there at Lummi and then we'd go....usually go to White Horn and pick up those three. Then one of the....if, nobody else got to it, if the boys at the Cattle Point didn't get through in time to get up to Milligan up at Point Roberts.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum. The....what was your rate of pay, being a boom man, do you remember?

Mr. Graham: Well, the first year I was out there, it was fifty dollars a month and above board.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: And then, by the time I left there, after three years I was getting a hundred and five, and my board.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: And, if we were in town and there wasn't any cooking aboard the driver why we'd eat in a restuarant and we got so much, a meal. Usually, well, the first year or so that I worked down there on the water and like, the 'Skylark', if we ate in town why, it was fifty cents a meal. And, the last experience we had in that sort was, we got one dollar a meal.

Mr. Runestrand: Would that get you a pretty good meal?

Mr. Graham: Oh yes, at that time, it'd get you a good meal.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum. The.....were there many injuries? Guys really gettin'

bunged up, workin' the pile driving unit?

Mr. Graham: Not so many.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum. What were some of the.....if a guy was to get hurt, how would he get hurt?

Mr. Graham: Well, sometimes it might be a case of where an accidental slip with an axe or something like that, he might get hurt or a time or two, a pile has split and a splinter fly off of it and hit somebody, ah, something like that....or a line break and snap him; and I often laughed about young... he was a nephew of Jim Chivalier's, he was my second....he was the second boom man for awhile, he was just a kid at the time he come aboard, well, I wasn't much better, but, anyway, I was head boom man and.....well, he was standing on the deck and he was quite a hand to stand and watch the engineer work, he was quite a hand, if he had a few minutes to spare, he'd stand watch... but, we had a....that year, we had an engineer that wasn't too sharp with the hammer either and they used to catch it every once in awhile when it was dropping; see, what they'd do....he had a lever that he jammed down that way and he'd pull the steam....the hammer would go up and he'd throw off the steam and let the hammer drop and sometimes he'd catch it before it hit the pile.....

J. Conrad Graham
June 20, 1976

Accession No. WTC 76-37mr, Tape No. 2, Tape Side ilo. 2.

Mr. Runestrand: When the tape snapped off you were talking about the boom man, I mean the engineer and his problem running the controls?

Mr. Graham: Yeah. He caught it one day and this young fella that was workin' with me was standin' right next to the jims where the...where the ladder went up to the head block; and I turned around and he said.....I said, I told him once before not to run on the afterdeck. A lot of time, it'd lay right over the top of the house and you might get hurt, and this particular time, he was standing on the deck and he was lookin' up and he looked around for something and this hammerline broke and when it came down, he was standing on the deck, and it just dropped and coiled right around him as it fell and never even touched him! (Chuckles)

Mr. Runestrand: Ohhh gee!

Mr. Graham: Never even touched him. I was.....I was out on the piles, I wasn't even worried about it, but, I was standing there and I watched him and I watched this damn big cable down and just coil right around him, never even touched him. (Chuckles)

Mr. Runestrand: Boy. That was probably an inch and an eighth cable or something like that, too?

Mr. Graham: Hum?

Mr. Runestrand: An inch and an eighth, probably?

Mr. Graham: Oh, it was.....oh, about as big as your finger.

Mr. Runestrand: Oh, not real big then? ... The actual setting up to drive the trap, you had certain regulations, statewise that you had to run by?

Mr. Graham: Yes.

Mr. Runestrand: What were some of the regulations that you had to observe?

Mr. Graham: Well, we...the first thing we had to do was to drive the king pile,

which was out at your greatest depth. And, you were allowed sixty four feet.

Mr. Runestrand: Sixty four feet of...?...

Mr. Graham: At low water.

Mr. Runestrand: Low water?

Mr. Graham: Yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: Low water, okay.

Mr. Graham: And, you usually got out there to drive the king pile and get your position at low water. And, then on the in-shore end, the trap could be any distance but there should be, there had to be room for a boat to pass between the end of the lead of the hook on the lead and the shore. There had to be room for a boat to pass around the in-shore end of the trap.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: And, now your trap could be, up to twenty-five hundred feet.

Mr. Runestrand: Twenty-five hundred feet in length?

Mr. Graham: Length.

Mr. Runestrand: From the end of the float to.....

Mr. Graham: From the king pile to the hook.

Mr. Runestrand: Okay.

Mr. Graham: And, those were about the only real regulations that I come across anyway. And, some of them were made with.....one setting would be....maybe your hearts would be.....just a little variation in the hearts. The big heart and the little heart and so on that....there might be a little variation there but, not very much.

Mr. Runestrand: Who was the fella that now, you had to consider the way that the tide was to flood and ebb, to set up your trap because the way the fish...

Mr. Graham: Right. Right.

Mr. Runestrand: Ah, let's say you've got a special little current where maybe you need a side spiller, you know, or put your spiller on a.....?

Mr. Graham: Your spiller was usually either on one side or the other of the pot.

Mr. Runestrand: Right.

Mr. Graham: And, it was usually looking out the length of the trap, looking out, it was usually on the left hand side because the way the trap was set, they usually set them in such a way that the fish would be coming down with the tide and go in and once they got in to the trap, then they invariably turned and went against the tide so that this tide flowing down would put them against the lead, and then they'd go out and they'd go in to the pot and then they'd turn and find out they were trap and they'd turn and go into the spiller.

Mr. Runestrand: Uh huh.

Mr. Graham: And, they always went against the tide. Well, there was just a cone shaped rig web....cone shaped rig like this, well, it was about that wide at the mouth....

Mr. Runestrand: About twelve inches wide at the mouth?

Mr. Graham: About twelve inches wide, maybe fourteen. And, they'd go in through there, well then when they'd swim around to try to find a place to come out again, they'd come around and this piece....oh, it was about...I would say, six feet long that stuck into the spiller.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: And, it was collapsible, so that when they got ready to lift the spiller, they collapsed that thing and then they started pickin' their web up to dump the fish into a scow or to braille 'em out, whichever might be the case.

Mr. Runestrand: Uh huh. The reason I was wondering that is, who's job was it to determine the place for the king pen, how the area should be set up...?

Mr. Graham: That was usually your driver foreman, he usually knew where his location was. And, he knew the markings of that particular location. Now, the man I worked for, knew all of 'em. I think he must've had a photographic mind because I don't know how anyone could remember which rock he was lookin'

for.

Mr. Runestrand: (Chuckles) They used points of reference on the shore, then?

Mr. Graham: Yes. Yes, they used points; some of 'em were a long ways off and some of 'em were close. Now, the one that I can remember very distinctly, used the lighthouse that was....I think it was....well, either it was....I think he figured that lighthouse just a certain distance from his pile when he put his king pen down and a point that was on an island somewhere; and that was one of 'em and then another one, there was a big old stump on the beach and, why somebody didn't come along and burn it down, I don't know, but, it was a marking. And, another one was a big white rock on the beach, maybe it was on either one end or either on the in-shore end, it could be anywhere, but, they had something there that they knew what to look for.

Mr. Runestrand: When you drove these traps, did you have to file the location with the state?

Mr. Graham: The company done that.

Mr. Runestrand: The company did it?

Mr. Graham: Yeah, that was company property.

Mr. Runestrand: I see. You don't know what the fee was for say, running a trap?

Mr. Graham: No. No, I don't have any idea what the fees were.

Mr. Runestrand: Did they ever consider the value of a trap, say, one was a real killer and really got the salmon and one didn't?....

Mr. Graham: Yes.

Mr. Runestrand: Did they maybe charge more or less, did you ever hear anything like that?

Mr. Graham: I couldn't say that either but, the Ollsup was always considered the...the best trap they had.

Mr. Runestrand: Uh huh.

Mr. Graham: And, White Horn, I think, was next. And....well, the Milligan was a pretty good trap too, during....but, it was for summer fish.

Mr. Runestrand: Uh huh.

Mr. Graham: And, the Johnsons, they weren't so great, they were one of the first ones they dropped away from. Well, not the first ones but they dropped a lot and now, they.....they did have a location at Lummi rocks and they dropped that but that was a spring salmon trap. That was good for spring. And, Jim always told me that was a son-of-a-gun to drive because there was a lot of tide there. It was a bad one to drive and he says.....but, he said,. he always told me that....going to the fact that it was good for spring salmon, it wasn't much good for anything else. They'd get a few but they wouldn't get anything worthwhile. Finally,.....they either gave it away or sold it to some one, sold the location; see what they consider, they owned the location, you might say, see, they owned all these locations. I understood that at one time, they had more than a hundred locations in the Puget Sound.

Mr. Runestrand: Is that right?

Mr. Graham: But, I never....I didn't know where they were.

Mr. Runestrand: Now, by owning it, that doesn't mean there's a fish trap operating on that site?

Mr. Graham: No. No, but they owned the locations and nobody else could build there.

Mr. Runestrand; Right; uh huh. The running of the traps and everything, did you see the owners of P. A. F. very often? Did they ever come around and meet you and stuff?

Mr. Graham: Oh, once in awhile, they'd come out and take a survey around but, now, the Demings, they had a yacht of their own. They had a yacht....and it was, they had a crew aboard it, two men and he usually, they took them around and we never saw much of 'em. Once in awhile, Art Deming would.....A. W. Deming would ride around with us a little bit but, not too much. It wasn't.....well, once in awhile, we'd take him out to Eliza Island or something like that. He'd

be out there a little while. He was in charge of the outside work, but he usually set around in the office more than anywhere.

Mr. Runestrand: For the most part, were the bosses good? Were they all right?

Mr. Graham: The bosses?

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah, the owners, did you?.....

Mr. Graham: Yes, we always thought that Mr. E. B. Deming was just about the greatest man there was.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: Art Deming wasn't so well thought of, because he was more of a gruff, and he really didn't know his business quite like Mr. Deming did, the president of the company.

Mr. Runestrand: E. B.?

Mr. Graham: Yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: What did "E. B." stand for?

Mr. Graham: I don't know.

Mr. Runestrand: (Chuckles) I've often wondered what those initials stood for. Well, why did you finally quit driving pile for them.....for P. A. F.?

Mr. Graham: Well, I think what stopped me, more than anything, I had a siege of stomach trouble. The last year, we worked down here at the P. A. F. rebuilding the docks and puttin' new piles under the docks and stuff of that nature and eatin' greasy foods and stuff like that. I had kind of a case of an ulcerated stomach pretty badly and.....I don't know, I was quite sick for awhile and I went to several doctors and finally, I decided to work ashore. And,... that's when I went into the sawmills. I went to work for Bloedel-Donovans at that time. And, then after that, I worked in the sawmills quite a long time and I couldn't see any future in it. So, in the '20's.....I was in the mills about two, maybe three years I guess, I got up to be....where I was grading lumber and I decided that that was for the birds, that I wasn't getting

nowhere fast; so, I took an I. C. S. course and studied electric light and power. Then, I went to work for the Puget Sound Sawmill Company, down here... it sets down here now, where the Uniflite used to set.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: And, I went from there, I went to Anacortes and worked down there for awhile and I worked here and there as an electrician and finally, I came back here to town and I went out and electrified the Lake Mill, which was the old Larsen Mill. We @lectrified that. And, well then the depression hit, and there was an electrician behind any bush you wanted to look behind.

Mr. Runestrand: (Chuckles)

Mr. Graham: So, my wife was working up and Pride and Companies, and there was a gentleman up there that...well, I knew him pretty well also, and I went up and worked up there one spring and...for a little while...before I quit the mills. But, anyway, I went up one morning, one day and I was waiting for my wife and he came out and he says, "What are you doin', Con?" He was a big Scotchman; I says, "I'm not doing anything, Alec." He says, "Take your coat off." That's the way he put me to work and I stayed there for twenty years; well, I...in that particular plant, I stayed there a little over ten years, pret' near eleven years and then I went..from there, I went down to...I went down and was superintendent at the freezer plant. And, I had been loaned out a couple times to a...freezing plants, and I'd learned a little bit about what took place in a freezing plant and consequently, when the company started the company here...started the..Stokely's took over, and they started the freezer down on the waterfront, I was the only one that had ever been in a freezing plant, so I got the job of goin' down there and runnin' that.

Mr. Runestrand: Uh huh.

Mr. Graham: So, I went down and put that all together; got a crew and put the place all together and then went into the freezing business.

Mr. Runestrand: When you got the job at Pride and Companies, this was Pride's Cannery, otherwise known as....?...

Mr. Graham: It was Pride's Cannery, at that time.

Mr. Runestrand: This was about what, say...1935?

Mr. Graham: Somewhere along that line and it was in a little bit of a litigation, and a man by the name of Morris was running it. He'd taken it over and Pride had gone broke. They a...Pride and Company had gone in for the idea of raising their own fruit and it just didn't work out, having these various managers out in the country that...well, they didn't care whether they got a good crop or they didn't. They were gettin' paid for bein' there that's all. That's what it amounted to. And, Pride went broke and I think, if I remember rightly, it was somewhere in the neighborhood of 1933 or '34 that he really went broke and then, Morris, kind of run it for the bank. And, he ran it for several....well, he ran it for two or three years and then finally, Stokely's took an option on it and I had been there about a year when Stokely's took an option and then the following year, they bought it outright.

Mr. Runestrand: Where exactly, was Pride's Cannery?

Mr. Graham: Well, it's still there.

Mr. Runestrand: The old buildings?

Mr. Graham: The old building is still there and when they built the....when they built, I-5, they took one piece off of the end of it for right-of-way, and that sets up there on well, it's the next street north of Alabama. And....let's see, what was the street that run down through there? Connecticut? I think it was.

Mr. Runestrand: Right. Yeah. As I recall, some buildings are old gray things.

Mr. Graham: Yeah. Big gray buildings.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah.

Mr. Graham: Yeah. And, then the warehouse behind it...set behind it, it was a kind of a yellow color. That was the warehouse.

Mr. Runestrand: Pride's Cannery, processed fruits and vegetables?

Mr. Graham: Fruits and vegetables, and that's where they first run a bunch of frozen strawberries through....through that plant and they took 'em down and froze 'em in the co-op. Darigold, they froze 'em in that place down there.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: And, incidentally, the guy that was kind of the....well, he was a foreman there then, and he was kind of a manager around the Darigold, now he's sellin' property out in the country, his name is, Jardi, John Jardi, and he was workin' there at that time and I....I didn't know where he'd gone to until after I retired....after I retired, I went out for the company and was pickin' up raspberries for the company and they were sendin' 'em down.. to Mt. Vernon to be processed. That was after they stopped this plant over here. And, I happened to look on my list, I was sent out there and I was given a list of the various men who had contracted to send berries in to the plant, so, I got to lookin' at it and there was no addresses on it. I had to go out and hunt 'em up. There was no addresses, and I started in out....I knew where Cowan lived, he was one of 'em. I knew where he lived, he lived out on the other side of Custer. So, I went out there and I got started from him and I kept...each one I'd go to, I'd ask if they knew where this guy and that guy and where this guy lived and where that guy lived and well, I finally tracked 'em all down in about....I think it was about a week, I tracked 'em all down. And, on this list, was a man by the name of George Jardi..

Mr. Runestrand: How do you spell his last name? J-A-R-D something?

Mr. Graham: D-I.

Mr. Runestrand: Um hum.

Mr. Graham: And, I I noticed that name, Jardi, Jardi, where did I ever see that name before? So, I kept thinkin' about it, finally, I said, "Well, there's a John Jardi, but this is George Jardi." So, finally, I found out

where he was so, the first thing I asked him was, I said, "Well," I said, "Are you a brother to, John Jardi?" He said, "Yeah." He says, "I'm a twin brother." (Chuckles) So, anyway, I went around and picked up from those guys and he....now, he's out there sellin' property there. Sellin' real estate.

Mr. Runestrand: The Stokely Company taking over Pride's cannery, they kept the name, Pride's?

Mr. Graham: They kept the name and the brands.

Mr. Runestrand: Uh huh.

Mr. Graham: And, then of course, they were the one's who instituted....now, I'm not sure about this, but, I don't know how...they built a pea plant up there, that is, for processing peas. Now, that was after I went to work there. I helped to build it.

Mr. Runestrand: The fruits and vegetables, this was a....primarily again, a seasonal type work, or all the year, but not quite?

Mr. Graham: Well, it....it runs from....depending.....in this area, it would start **with** strawberries and run through raspberries. When I first went up there, we were running strawberries, we was canning strawberries and then followed raspberries and prunes and plums, Damsen plums and various colored plums and as I say, we canned peas and carrots, beets....

Mr. Runestrand: Corn? Any corn or...?..

MR. Graham: Corn? Well, we didn't run any corn up here. But, we did run apples. And.....

Mr. Runestrand: Cherries?

Mr. Graham: We ran cherries, sour cherries and sweet cherries, both. And, we took in.....at that time, they still owned some of these farms out there and they were still picking up a lot of that stuff and getting it. And, they were contracting a lot of it.

Mr. Runestrand: Did a lot of the stuff, say, the fruits, come in from eastern Washington?

Mr. Graham: Only apples.

Mr. Runestrand: Only apples?

Mr. Graham: Well, apples and pears. We ran pears also and the apples and pears came from.....then, we had some local pears. And, one year, the last year that they ran, I understand that they ran....well, they ran some local peaches in some of the other plants down the line here. There was a plant out here close to Ferndale that started running....started raising peaches. I understand they were processed in Skagit county. And, I don't remember what company. But, then Kelley-Farquarh set up a line to run a few but, I don't know whatever they did with it. I don't have no idea.

Mr. Runestrand: Did you a.....well, you've been in the food processing business, in some aspects for quite awhile with P. A. F.....

Mr. Graham: About thirty years.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah. P. A. F. was canning salmon, that was seasonal, but, you weren't in the actual canning end of it. And, then the Stokely's, and Pride, the freezer plant?....

Mr. Graham: Yeah. Yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: What were some of the big changes you saw within the canning industry, the fruits and vegetable end?

Mr. Graham: Well, the primary big change, came with the freezing process. That's where your major change come because you were not only changing methods of doing it, you were changing the fruit itself from one kind to another. In fact, peas, when they went into a tin can, where they were....went into a tin can and they were processed and cooked and went on into the storage and that stuff, were totally different kind of a pea, than what they froze.

Mr. Runestrand: Oh, I see.

Mr. Graham: They were....they were what we called, a field pea. The canning pea was a field pea, we used to call 'em honey pods because there had to be sugar added to make 'em sweet, where the freezer pea, was a sweet pea. In fact, there's a multitude of sweet peas, there's a multitude such as, 'Gratis' and Laxton and....oh, there's a lot of 'em, I can't name all of 'em off. There's a great quantity of 'em, in fact, we used to get some names pret' near every year where they was tryin' some kind of a new sweet pea. Some of 'em were the low variety, some of 'em were ... well, very seldom did they go in to the high variety because of the fact, there was too much trouble in the fields. They used....the lower they could get them and the less vines they got from 'em the better they liked them for freezing. As long as they were a good sweet pea. And, there's some of them, if you look in your....your catalogs, your vegetable catalogs, you'll find some of them that don't grow anymore than eighteen inches high.

Mr. Runestrand: Huh. Well, the reaction to say the....if I understand it, most of your produce came from the west side of the mountains.?...

Mr. Graham: Local. Local.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah. And, was there much adverse reaction to the new process, meaning, people had to change their type of....?

Mr. Graham: Not necessarily, there didn't seem to be too much adverse comment. I know that I thought it would be quite a change, in fact, people used to think it was great to be able to go to these field viners and buy a box of peas from the farmer. And, they thought they were doin' wonderful until I....I don't know, I was talkin' to one person and they was talkin' about going out and buyin' em and I said, "Well, what kind of peas do you get?" "Oh, I don't know," he said, "they were just peas that were goin' into the cannery." I said, "Those are cow peas." And, he was highly insulted. And, finally, I explained to him, what the difference was. That they would be better peas when he canned them if he added some sugar to them. So....and then, well, he says, "What

do they do with 'em in the freezer plant?" And, I told him, I said, "Those are sweet peas." I said, "Those are the kind like you raise in your garden." I said, "They're just the same kind of a pea as you.....they're a sweet pea, they're all together a different kind of a pea than what you'd get as a..... as the field peas." He couldn't understand that. He didn't know there was two different kinds of peas available.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, you retired from the business in '65, is that right, Con?

Mr. Graham: That's right. In October...well, the last day of October.

Mr. Runestrand: That's a....makes quite a long working life?

Mr. Graham: Yes.

Mr. Runestrand: And, you keep active today. Well, I just.....I appreciate you for taking time out of...out of your busy schedule. I know you're trying to paint your house and stuff. And, I appreciate you for giving me this information. I really do.

Mr. Graham: Well, you're perfectly welcome.