

THE FRANCIS MILLERD PAPERS, 1921-1977

arranged and described by

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INTRODUCTION

The Francis Millerd Papers span the years 1921 through 1977, and are divided here into four series. The Somerville Cannery Company Records relate to Millerd's first independent business. The Francis Millerd and Company Limited papers, beginning in 1929 and having a mainly financial focus, form the bulk of the material. Personal papers relating to Millerd's activities in various fisheries associations, and documents produced by and for other agencies, form the other two series.

About 250 items in five volumes and nine Hollinger boxes comprise this body of papers.

The fonds was donated by Francis Millerd Jr., who had inherited his father's business and his papers, in September of 1986. The fonds arrived at the repository in large cardboard boxes with papers laid flat over others upright. Papers were loose or in envelopes, but never contained in file folders. In short, no filing system was discernable. Millerd intends to make a further deposit in 1988.

The term "item" is used here to refer to the single document, volume, or group of documents which appear to comprise files in this fonds. Original arrangement is discernable only at item level, where several papers are often folded together or placed in a labelled envelope. Series and subseries have been established in attempt to reflect the functions of the creating agency. Within these, items are arranged in chronological order. The only other possible arrangement would be by personal or vessel names, but since there is not always a central name for each item, this is not practicable. The items were all numbered before arrangement, and a concurrence between these and the numbers established in the given arrangement will be included.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH: FRANCIS MILLERD

Francis (Frank) Millerd was born in County Cork, Ireland, in 1884.¹ He came to Canada via South Africa -- where he served in the Boer War -- in 1908. Upon arrival, he took a job in a cannery at Steveston, British Columbia, and thereafter remained in the fishery business of the Fraser River area of British Columbia for the rest of his life. In 1909 he married Annie Findon of Ontario, and they subsequently parented five children. By 1937 he was a member of the prestigious Vancouver Club. Millerd's home and place of business were both located in West Vancouver, although exact addresses varied over the years.

Early in his career, Millerd entered into employ and eventually partnership with Captain Gosse, forming first the "Gosse-Millerd Packing Company" and later "Gosse-Millerd Limited". In 1922 he dissociated himself from Gosse, and in 1924 established the "Somerville Cannery Company Limited", building and purchasing several canneries. At some point he also formed "Millerd Packing Company Limited," which was either concurrent with or subsequent to his other company. By 1942 he had established "Francis Millerd and Company Limited" with himself as president.² This appears to have subsumed earlier companies, although at some point a subsidiary company called "Millerd Great Northern Fisheries Limited" was formed.

Around 1935, Millerd's sons Frank and Don began working for his company. Millerd never actually retired, but his sons gradually assumed more business responsibility and by 1965, when he was 84, he was working only a few hours a day.

In the meantime, Millerd became involved in various fisheries-related organizations. Most notably, he acted as president of the Fisheries Council of Canada in 1951-52. This

¹ For further information concerning the history of this fonds, consult The Canadian Who's Who (1936-1970) and Cecily Lyons' Salmon: Our Heritage (Vancouver: Mitchell Press, 1969).

² See agency history of this company below.

umbrella organization was aimed at consolidating the activities of groups involved in the fishing industry, and representing them to government. In 1953 Millerd was appointed a member of the Fisheries Prices Support Board, aimed at preventing price collapses in the fisheries. In 1964 he was appointed to the International Pacific Halibut Commission, a Canada-US body whose purpose was to maintain local halibut stocks.

Francis Millerd died in 1976.

AGENCY HISTORY: FRANCIS MILLERD AND COMPANY LIMITED

The Francis Millerd & Co. Ltd. of West Vancouver was established circa 1942 by Francis Millerd.³ Officially under Millerd's presidency until his 1977 death, in practice his sons Don and Frank were running the business by the early sixties. By the mid-eighties the company became inoperative, and there are plans to formally close it in 1988.

The two primary functions of Francis Millerd & Co. Ltd. were the processing of fish and the contracting of fishermen to supply these fish. The fish processed were mainly varieties of salmon, as well as herring, clams, bloaters, sardines, dog fish, kippers, and silvets. Processing mainly took the form of canning, but smoking, curing, and freezing were also used. Until the late thirties at least, the company made its own cans from sheets of tin. Some fishermen merely sold their fish to the company, while others used company gear or vessels, or else purchased the same, often on mortgage plans or with promisory notes. Still others worked for hourly wages. The company possessed at least one cannery, the "Great Northern Cannery," which Millerd had purchased in 1923. There were one hundred employees at the time of its sale in 1968. A packer vessel named "Great Northern 8" was associated with this cannery, probably preceeded by similarly named vessels.

³ See biographical sketch above.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Francis Millerd Papers span the years 1921-1977, with a fairly even, if not continuous, spread of records whose main bulk is 1930-1970. The material mostly relates to the Francis Millerd & Co. Ltd., and within this, to its commercial relationships with fishermen. There are a few log books and papers relating to property, but a lack of comprehensive records for the canneries administered by this company. Only one record, a ledger, from Millerd's career previous to the Company is included. A few papers deal with his involvement with fisheries associations during the 1950's and early 60's. Plentiful fisheries publications, many of them generated by government agencies, accompany and complement the Millerd Papers.

The forms of documents included in this body of material are mostly financial records. Within the Francis Millerd & Co. Ltd records, promisory notes, as well as documents relating to particular vessels and the fishermen who used them, have been grouped together by the company; ledgers were also compiled and in some cases indexed. Other series were formulated by the archivist, and are: mortgages, purchasing transactions, other contracts and agreements, log books, documents concerning company property, and miscellaneous. Within these series, common forms are vessel licences, bills of sale, letters, rough notes, receipts, blueprints, and property appraisals. Other records include a scrapbook, a series of photographs, journals, research papers, yearbooks, and government-produced acts, regulations, journals, releases, and reports.

Future deposits are expected, and may well fill in the gaps in this fonds.

INVENTORY

[Note: FM & Co. Ltd. + Francis Millerd and Company Limited. Upper Case letters indicate series, the numbers following them indicate subseries, lower case letters indicate sub-subseries, and the final number in each label indicates an item.]

A. Somerville Cannery Company Records, 1921-1924

1 item.

A.1 Ledger recording debits and credits of persons acquiring foodstuffs and drygoods from a store, and working, especially fishing, for the company. Includes index for 1924 by fishermen's names.

B. Francis Millerd and Company Limited, 1929-1977

140 items. (Bulk dates: 1942-1970)

B.1 Lists relating to Financial Matters, 1968-1971.

9 items.

B.1.1 List of non-current bills of sale and vessel licences. 1968.

B.1.2 8 lists regarding conditional and current mortgages, promisory notes, conditional sales agreements, vessel licences, and fisheries loans. c. 1970-1971.

B.2 Ledgers, 1929-1977.

5 items.

B.2.1-5 Volumes recording fish caught by given fishermen; company credits and debits with other companies and fishermen; canned salmon sales of the company. Some are alphabetically indexed by subject and /or name, others being in roughly chronological order.

B.3 Fishermen and Vessel Papers, 1942-1977.

85 items. (Bulk dates: 1948-1973)

B.3.1-85 Vessel licences, transfers of licence, bills of sale and conditional bills of sale, vessel mortgages, promisory notes, letters, rough notes, receipts, agreements of purchase and rental, and sundry forms occurring once only. Mainly arranged in sets of papers related to one fisherman and the vessel he uses, the vessel being bought, sold, mortgaged, or licenced by FM & Co. Ltd.

B.4 Mortgages held by the Company, 1938-1969.

10 items.

B.4.1-10

B.5 Promisary Notes held by the Company; Lists, 1968, 1975.
2 items.

B.5.1-2 Lists provide names, dates, and amounts owed, and enclose the notes themselves.

B.6 Transactions of Purchase by the Company, 1943-1963.

5 items.

B.6.1-5 Bills of sale and receipts for fisherm-related equipment.

B.7 Other Contracts and Agreements, 1939-1962.

10 items.

B.7.1-10 Leases, conditional bills of sale, boat building agreements, a contract for mail conveyance, and correspondence and bills concerning sundry payments by and to the company.⁴

B.8 Log Books, 1966-1975.

3 items.

B.8.1-3 2 volumes recording crew work, and 1 recording movements and activities of packer vessel "Great Northern 8".

B.9 Company Property, Present and Projected, 1940-1977.

8 items.

B.9.a.1-3 Construction approvals and plans, Federal Department of Public Works approvals for construction at the Great Northern Cannery Ltd.; blueprints for a vessel, a fish pump, and a flight elevator. 1940-1973.

B.9.b.1-5 Appraisal reports prepared by appraisal companies, concerning property belonging to the company or under consideration for purchase. 1950-1977.

B.10 Miscellanea, 1956-1968.

3 items.

B.10.1 Promisary note guaranteed by J.F.R. Millerd. 1956.

B.10.2 Binder labelled "lot records", containing documents to do with fish packaging standards. 1964-c.1968.

B.10.3 File folders printed with company name, address, and "'Great Northern" Ocean Products'.

C. Francis Millerd Papers, 1937-1969.

22 items.

⁴ Including a set of correspondence and bills related to a dispute over payment of fees to the Neon Sign Company.

C.1 Fisheries Council of Canada, 1951.

1 item.

C.1.1 "Fisheries Council News Releases and News Clippings re; trip to Maritimes." Scrapbook compilation regarding Millerd's September tour of the Maritimes and Newfoundland, as President of the Council.

C.2 Pictures, 1937-c. 1953.

16 items. (Bulk dates: 1950-1953)

C.2.a.1-15 Black and white photographs, mostly framed, of men in suits, usually including Millerd. Labels and contents sometimes indicate that these are taken in context of Fisheries Council affairs. Circa 1950-1953. Size range from 113 x 85 mm to 205 x 353 mm.

C.2.b.1 Framed political cartoon depicting government neglect of the fishermen's viewpoint. 1937.

C.3 Fisheries Price Support Board, c. 1963.

1 item.

C.3.1 "Sixteenth Report of the Fisheries Prices Support Board for the Year 1961-1963."

C.4 Papers concerning Seining, 1969.

4 items.

C.4.1-4 Correspondence, reports, and a d i a g r a m collected by Millerd in relation to a special interest of his.

D. Documents Produced By and For Other Agencies, 1928-1970.

106 items.

D.1 Fisheries Publications, 1928-1970.

102 items.

D.1.a.1-80 Journals, research papers, newsclippings, and yearbooks published in Canada, and especially in British Columbia. 1944-1969.

D.1.b.1-22 Government publications related to the Fisheries -- acts, regulations, releases, statements, propaganda, journals, and reports issued by the relevant government agencies. 1928-1970.

D.2 Miscellanea, 1923-1950.

4 items.

D.2.1 Code book for cable messages, and supplement. 1923, 1932.

D.2.2 Patent grants to Dougald McPhee for "devices for gripping and removing milk bottle caps" for Canada and the USA. 1928.

D.2.3 Letter from B.C. Packers to H.G. Casperson, re. price of fish. 1948.

D.2.4 Address of President at Annual Meeting of Canadian Salf Fish Exporters' Association. 1950.