

Adv. 1459.189

THE BRITISH COLUMBIA HOP COMPANY, LIMITED

SARDIS, B.C.

an inventory of its records held by the

CHILLIWACK MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY

compiled by

JIM BOWMAN

November 1987

The growing of hops, the flowers of a perennial vine used for flavoring beer, has been part of the diverse agricultural economy of Chilliwack since 1893, when a small acreage of hops was planted by Theophilus Dunville.

In 1903, the E. Clemens Horst Co., a large agri-business based in San Francisco, purchased the Dunville hopyard, added to it, and later established another hopyard or "ranch" in Agassiz. Incorporated as the British Columbia Hop Co., Limited, these two operations comprised 540 acres by 1912. The Sardis ranch was located at the present location of the Chilliwack Mall, and was apparently the largest hopyard in Chilliwack until 1954 when it was purchased by the John I. Haas Company.

The surviving records of the B.C. Hop Co. were found in an old Haas Co. building and donated to the Chilliwack Museum in 1980. They are essentially samples of routine office records: receipts from 1920 and 1941-1946; shipping bills from 1919-1920, and routine correspondence (mostly with the San Francisco office of the Horst Co.) from 1922. The records have value in that they reveal something of the business practices, technology, and the labour relations practices even of this important large-scale agricultural enterprise.

