

Opposite Top

This car bumper ornament, made by Henry Birks Jewellers, was one of hundreds of different 1939 royal visit souvenirs.

Opposite Bottom

RCMP Constable Crystal Shostak poses beside a 1939 Royal Tour McLaughlin- Buick, serial #1, outside the Canadian National Roundhouse facility at the West Coast Railway Heritage Museum at Squamish. The 3-ton royal maroon automobile was one of two built by General Motors of Canada for use by King George VI and Queen Elizabeth (Queen Mother of Queen Elizabeth II and Princess Margaret) during their Dominion tour of Canada in May and June 1939. The Duke of Kent, a younger brother of the king, visited Canada and drove the car in 1941. Prince Charles and Princess Diana rode in the car into BC Place Stadium to open Expo 86. Finally, Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip rode in the car for the opening of the Commonwealth Games in 1994, and their son Prince Edward rode in the car to close the games. This car has carried more British royalty than any other car outside Britain and has been in service for over 70 years.



and Queen Elizabeth were planning a royal tour of Canada in 1939 with a visit to Vancouver.

Construction was resumed on the hotel, and a joint operating agreement was worked out with the CNR rival, the CPR. Both parties realized Vancouver was too small for two grand hotels. The CPR's Hotel Vancouver was closed when the brand-new hotel opened its doors. When the Second World War broke out later in 1939, the old hotel was donated for the use of the Canadian Armed Forces. It was used by the military until 1949, when the property was sold to the T. Eaton Company and demolished. In the 1970s the site became part of the Pacific Centre development.



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Opposite

Executives of the Canadian Club and the two future Kings of the United Kingdom, 19 August 1927.

- 1 Unknown
- 2 Edward G. Baynes
- 3 James G. Todhunter
- 4 R. A. Simpson
- 5 W. O. Banfield
- 6 H. W. Long (Chief of Police)
- 7 W. J. Baird
- 8 J. Lukin Johnson
- 9 R. Marpole
- 10 William Harold Malkin
- 11 G. Farrell
- 12 Unknown
- 13 W. Dalton
- 14 J. J. Banfield
- 15 C. S. McHarg
- 16 Reverend P. T. Pilkey
- 17 F. F. Schooly
- 18 A. E. Foreman
- 19 J. H. Griffin
- 20 Captain Leckey
- 21 J. V. R. Dunlop
- 22 A. F. Lascelles
- 23 Louis D. Taylor, Mayor of Vancouver
- 24 Brigadier-General Victor W. Odium
- 25 Honourable James Horace King,
Federal Minister of Public Works
- 26 HRH Prince Edward (later King Edward VII)
- 27 William Carey Ditmars, President
of the Canadian Club
- 28 HRH Prince George (later King George VI)
- 29 Honourable Peter Heenan,
Federal Minister of Labour
- 30 F. R. McD Russell, King's Counsel
- 31 Brigadier General G.F. Trotter,
Military Secretary to His Royal Highnesses

Two Future Kings

The two sons of King George V were guests in the second Hotel Vancouver. They arrived by train on 19 August 1927 to participate in the city's celebrations for the Diamond Jubilee of Confederation. The Prince of Wales and his brother Prince George together with the Right Honourable Stanley Baldwin, the Prime Minister of England, had arrived in Montreal on 31 July 1927. Baldwin and the princes travelled in eastern Canada together before he sailed from Sydney, NS, on 18 August 1927 for England. The highlight for the royal brothers was very likely the time they spent at Prince Edward's 10,000-acre ranch in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains in Alberta.

The two men, 33 and 31 years old respectively, stepped off the train in Vancouver only to learn that Premier John Oliver had passed away a day earlier. Without so much as a moment to collect their thoughts, the two princes began what can only be described as a 24/7 tour of the city. The dignitaries' first stop was at the Pacific National Exhibition, where they were given a ride on the giant roller coaster before being whisked off to a photo opportunity on the roof top of the Hotel Vancouver that was followed by a luncheon with 1,200 Canadian Club members. They afterwards took in a game of golf, visited a military hospital, and met with dignitaries—before attending a ball and dance in their honour.

An excerpt from the older brother's short speech perhaps gave a clue to his thoughts on becoming the next King of England:

Gentlemen, as I expect you have found out, it is not a bad thing to have two strings in one's bow. I am now in that happy position today: my second string is my young brother, who, having shared with me in our wonderful tour through Canada and in the hospitality you have shown us today, is anxious to tell you in his own words how much he has enjoyed it. I must not keep him, or you, waiting any longer.

In retrospect Prince Edward's speech and the comments about having a second arrow in the bow could be taken as a premonition of what was to happen later. When King George V died in 1936, Prince Edward became King Edward VIII, but only briefly. He fell in love with an American divorcee, and Prime Minister Baldwin told him that for political and religious reasons he could not marry her and remain king. Edward decided to abdicate the throne to marry the love of his life. After stepping down, he was created the Duke



Scrunched between many Vancouver dignitaries, the two sons of King George V—The Prince of Wales and Prince George—are the youngest members of the group for a photo opportunity on the rooftop of the second Hotel Vancouver. Having just returned from a roller coaster ride at the Pacific National Exhibition and aware they would each be giving speeches to a large group, the two future kings appear most uncomfortable.

of Windsor and in 1938 toured Nazi Germany. During the Second World War Sir Winston Churchill, the new Prime Minister of England, aware that the Duke was a Nazi sympathizer, moved him "out of the way" to the Bahamas as its Governor.

His replacement younger brother George became King George VI and ruled during the tumultuous Second World War. Although Britain and its allies ultimately won the war, the United States and the Soviet Union began to rise as world powers and the British Empire declined, paving the way for the Cold War.



The Builders of Vancouver

by William H. Gallagher, last survivor of the first City Council, on the inauguration of civic government, 10 May 1886.

Vancouver Historical Journal 1966

THE FIRST COUNCIL MEETING was held in the sitting room of the Old Court House, which faced the sea, on Water Street, where the Number 1 Fire Hall was afterwards. The building stood back about ten feet from Water Street; the front door and sitting room windows faced Water Street. The interior of the sitting room was about ten feet wide and twenty feet long, was lined with plain cedar V-joint, and lighted at night by a large coal oil lamp. Four doors in a row took up most of the long side opposite the windows, and opened into four prison cells.

At the appointed hour, the Mayor and Aldermen-elect, and some others, I think in all about twenty-one—more could not have found

standing room—crowded into the small sitting room. The poll clerk, Mr. Charles Gardner Johnson, and his Worship-elect took the head of the table. Mr. McGuigan sat on the poll clerk's left; I stood at Mr. McLean's right, and was about the only person present not in some official capacity. I stood close to His Worship's elbow.

Mayor MacLean and I had met before we came to Vancouver. He had been purchasing agent for the government in the North West Rebellion, 1885; he employed "a thousand" teams. I had horse feed for sale and was buying wheat at Wolseley, thirty miles east of Qu'Appelle. Mr. MacLean had been exceptionally courteous and considerable then, so that, afterwards, when we were both in Vancouver and he was candidate for mayor, I naturally desired to return the compliment. He had little of worldly goods, scarcely a week's board, so that the opportunity was open to me to show my appreciation of past kindnesses. I had also had previous experience in the establishment of civic government at Wolseley, Assiniboia, North West Territories, and so was more or less familiar with the procedure. Thus it was that I was at Mr. MacLean's right hand when the initial meeting of the City Council of Vancouver took place.

At the head of the table sat Mr. MacLean and the late Major Charles Gardner Johnson, the poll clerk. Mr. Gardner Johnson administered the oath of office to His Worship, and then His Worship swore in the aldermen, and all seated themselves around the long table. Among the few present were Mr. John Boulton, Mr. G. F. Baldwin, Mr. J. J. Blake, Mr. John Stewart, Mr. Jonathan Miller, the jailer, and Mr. T. F. McGuigan. I do not recall the others, though doubtless there were others. I stood, as a sort of godfather, at His Worship's right.

I doubt if any of the aldermen were experienced, and after they had been sworn in and sat down, someone asked, "What do we do next?" I said, "If you wait a moment or two I will show you," and I went out, around the corner, to a little stationery and book store, Tilley's, bought a pad of writing paper and a pen, some ink, and wrote "City of Vancouver" at the top of the sheet, and then suggested that they should now appoint a City Clerk.

Someone moved that Mr. Thomas F. McGuigan be appointed City Clerk, and after his appointment passed, I took pen and pad of paper and placed it in front of Mr. McGuigan.

The second appointment was G. F. Baldwin as City Treasurer, but they had not, as yet, twenty-five cents of civic funds for him to take care of. The appointments continued. Mr. J. J. Blake was appointed City Solicitor. He was a fine lawyer of sound judgement, and never known to make a mistake. Mr. John Boulton was appointed Police Magistrate.

Opposite

In 1936, Vancouver City Archivist Major James S. Matthews commissioned John Innes to paint a 5 x 10-foot canvas depicting the first meeting of the first city council that was held in a primitive building known as "the courthouse in Granville." By doing so the Major was not only preserving early city artifacts but also creating them.

- 1 John Leask, later City Auditor
- 2 Joseph Mannion, pioneer in 1865 and colloquially known as the "Mayor of Granville"
- 3 J. B. Henderson, one of the first three School Trustees
- 4 John H. Carlisle, Chief of Volunteer Fire Brigade (after the fire)
- 5 John Boulton, first Magistrate
- 6 Malcolm A. MacLean, first Mayor of Vancouver
- 7 William H. Gallagher, Electoral Campaign Manager and later Alderman
- 8 Dr. W. J. McGuigan, Coroner
- 9 C. Gardner Johnson, Poll Clerk
- 10 John W. Stewart, first Chief Constable
- 11 Jonathan Miller, Returning Officer, Jailer, and later Postmaster
- 12 Dr. Duncan Bell-Irving
- 13 J. R. Northcott, Alderman
- 14 Joseph Griffith
- 15 Joseph Humphries
- 16 Thomas Dunn
- 17 Lauchlan A. Hamilton
- 18 George F. Baldwin, first City Treasurer
- 19 Thomas F. McGuigan, first City Clerk
- 20 J. J. Blake, first City Solicitor who drafted city charter
- 21 E. P. Hamilton
- 22 Charles A. Coldwell
- 23 Harry Hemlow
- 24 Robert Balfour
- 25 Peter Cordiner



Walter E. Graveley and E. E. Barker's Real Estate office in the 100 block of Cambie Street near Cordova Street. The top portion of the building was used as a boarding house, while the bottom floors contained the real estate offices of E. V. Bodwell and the partnership of Graveley and Barker, Dr. Lefevre and Dr. Robertson's surgery as well as the Palace Tobacco Shop, 1888.

Vancouver's Land Speculators

Opposite Top

James W. Horne's makeshift real estate office was located on the site of the future Hudson's Bay Company Store on Granville Street. The man with his arms folded beside the sign is Arthur W. Ross, while the man holding the pointer is Horne. The man seated on the top of the log is Samuel Brighthouse, one of the "Three Greenhorn Englishmen."

Opposite Bottom

James Welton Horne, another land speculator, purchased a tract of land at Mission, and in 1891 had a "Grand Land Sale," in which he sold off 300 city lots. He gave his name to three of the city's roads: Three Mission streets are named after him: James, Welton and Horne. Streets.

THE CROWN COLONY of British Columbia came into existence in 1858, and the British government immediately began to pre-empt land to white settlers without much regard for the First Nations peoples. As a result a few white settlers—for example the "Three Greenhorns"—managed to gain control of large tracts of land that would one day become Vancouver.

In 1871 British Columbia became a part of the Dominion of Canada with the understanding that a railroad would connect the west coast province with the rest of Canada within ten years. This presented a problem when the Canadian government granted the Canadian Pacific Railway builders a twenty-mile swath of land on either side of the line. In so doing, the federal government neglected the rights both of indigenous people and settlers who already occupied the land.

Malcolm Alexander MacLean, Vancouver's first Mayor, arrived in Vancouver a few months before the city's incorporation. A Scotsman, he had been born in Tyree, Argyllshire, in 1844. As a teacher, he taught school in Ontario before moving to New York to do office work for the Cunard Steamship Company. He moved to Manitoba 1878 and set up a wholesale business in Winnipeg just ahead of the railway builders. His wholesale business supplied food for the government troops that came west to put down the Louis Riel Rebellion. MacLean's sister had married Arthur Wellington Ross, a school inspector, who was a realtor in Winnipeg acting as an advisor to William Cornelius Van Horne, the President of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The two brothers-in-law started a real estate business in Winnipeg. In 1884 Ross and his family moved to Granville so he could represent the CPR interests at the "Terminal City." Ross showed fellow realtor Walter E. Graveley a letter by Van





Arthur Wellington Ross, a Member of Parliament for Winnipeg, was the real estate representative for the Canadian Pacific Railway while he resided in Vancouver. His brother-in-law was Malcolm Alexander MacLean, Vancouver's first mayor. Here Ross poses for a William Topley portrait complete with props such as a bowler hat, deerskin gloves, watch fob, and walking stick.



The E. C. Coulding Law Office and the A. W. Ross Real Estate building situated on the south side of Hastings Street between Homer and Hamilton Streets, 1886. City archivist Major James S. Matthews believed the gentleman by the chair was Malcolm Alexander MacLean, Vancouver's first mayor. The lady and the gentleman standing in the doorway were probably Jesse F. and husband Arthur W. Ross with their two sons. Mr. MacLean and Mrs. Ross were brother and sister. The sections of the two logs were cut from the famous "Real Estate for Sale" photograph. Other sections of the log were sent to Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in London, England. The "For Sale" sign offered lots on Hastings and Granville Streets for \$1,000 to \$2,000 and on Pender Street for only \$750 to \$1,200.

and insurance business. It was Hamilton who began surveying the former Gastown property into lots for resale. The first council and the builders of early Vancouver did not seem to see any conflicts with their roles as railway employees, realtors or both. John M. Browning was the CPR's first land commissioner in 1886, the city's park commissioner in 1898 to 1899, Vancouver alderman and manager of the Vancouver Opera House in 1890, and the first president of Rogers Sugar in 1891.

Immediately after the great fire land speculators realized that they needed to bring in amenities such as roads and bridges to sell real estate, and amazingly Vancouver had a street car service within two years of incorporation.



The second Sunny Side Hotel was located at 1 Water Street right on Burrard Inlet, May 1887. The fourth man from the right has been identified as William McCirr. City workers have swept refuse into piles for removal. The first Sunny Side Hotel was destroyed by the 1886 fire.

James Welton Horne was an early Vancouver realtor, and by 1891 the *Vancouver World* newspaper reported him to be "the heaviest individual property owner in Vancouver." Horne was best known for having created the town of Brandon, south of Winnipeg in Manitoba, before venturing west to Vancouver. Horne was one of the original founders of the interurban street railway between New Westminster and Vancouver. When the CPR rail line put a bridge across the Fraser River at Mission City, he purchased a large tract of land there and subdivided his property into lots to turn a quick dollar.



Brothers Dominic and Patrick Burns pose in a horse-drawn carriage in front of the Hollow Tree in Stanley Park. Pat built the largest meat-packing empire in the world, while Dominic oversaw the building of the Vancouver Block on Granville Street. Pat also purchased a huge wetland in the Municipality of Delta to graze beef cattle for meat production, but the area was unsuitable. It came to be known as Burns Bog.

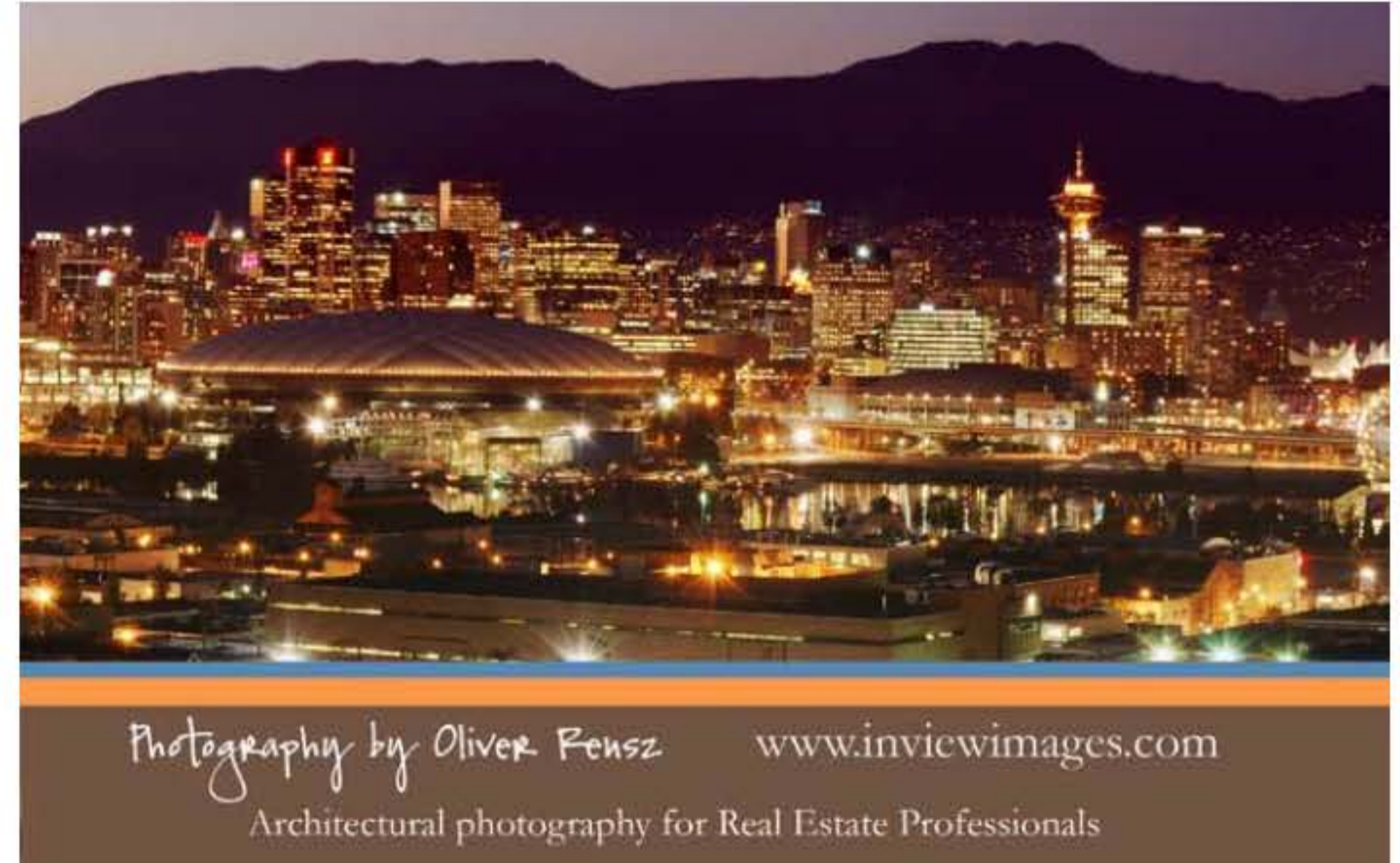
The Hollow Tree

by *Bernie Kilroe, Historian*

THERE WERE VERY FEW PLACES of sightseeing interest for visitors in Vancouver's early days, but a buggy drive around Stanley Park was a must for any adventurous globetrotter and no visitor could leave Stanley Park without having their photo taken beside the Big Hollow Tree. There were many famous local gentry that had photos taken. Here are some names from the upper ranks who visited us in Vancouver's early days: there was Rudyard Kipling in 1889 who also purchased land. He purchased two lots at the edge of town at Fraser Street and 11th Avenue. In 1890, Japanese Embassy dignitaries had their photo taken by the Hollow Tree, and writer Mark Twain visited in 1895.

In 1901, their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York, soon afterwards to be King George V and Queen Elizabeth, visited Vancouver and also stopped at the "Big Hollow Tree." The royal party formed a complete circle by joining hands around the bottom of the 60-foot girth of the tree. Sir Wilfred Laurier, the eighth Prime Minister of Canada, was there with them.

Sir Donald Smith (Lord Strathcona) visited the Hollow Tree and had his photo taken many times. Smith is depicted in Canada's most famous picture of "Driving of the Last Spike." Some of the largest trees in Vancouver's old-growth forest were in the Gastown area and on the south slopes of False Creek and English Bay.



Photography by Oliver Fensz www.inviewimages.com
Architectural photography for Real Estate Professionals



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MAYORS OF VANCOUVER

1886–1887	Malcolm Alexander MacLean
1888–1891	David Oppenheimer
1892–1893	Frederick Cope
1894	Robert Alexander Anderson
1895–1896	Henry Collins
1897	William Templeton
1898–1900	James Ford Garden
1901	Thomas Owen Townley
1902–1903	Thomas Fletcher Neelands
1904	William J. McGuigan
1905–1906	Frederick Buscombe
1907–1908	Alexander Bethune
1909	Charles Stanford Douglas
1910–1911	Louis Denison Taylor
1912	James Findlay
1913–1914	Truman Smith Baxter
1915	Louis Denison Taylor
1916–1917	Malcom Peter McBeath
1918–1921	Robert Henry Otley Gale
1922–1923	Charles Edward Tisdall
1924	William Reid Owen
1925–1928	Louis Denison Taylor
1929–1930	William Harold Malkin
1931–1934	Louis Denison Taylor
1935–1936	Gerald Gratton McGeer
1937–1938	George Clark Miller
1939–1940	James Lyle Telford, MD, MLA
1941–1946	Jonathan Webster Cornett
1947–1948	Gerald Gratton McGeer
1949–1950	Charles Edwin Thompson
1951–1958	Frederick John Hume
1959–1962	Albert Thomas Alsbury
1963–1966	William George Rathie
1967–1972	Thomas J. Campbell, QC
1973–1976	Art Phillips
1977–1980	John J. Volrich
1981–1986	Michael Franklin Harcourt
1986–1993	Gordon Muir Campbell
1993–2002	Philip Walter Owen
2002–2005	Larry W. Campbell
2005–2008	Sam Sullivan
2008–	Gregor Robertson

Father of Vancouver

by Kinley Engdahl-Johnson,

Company Historian, The Oppenheimer Group

THOUGH HIS NAME will forever be tied to Vancouver, David Oppenheimer was born half a world away in Blieskastel, Germany. The fourth son of a large Jewish merchant family with ten children, David was only 14 in 1848 when political turmoil caused the Oppenheimers to leave Germany for the US. They briefly settled in New Orleans, where David went to bookkeeping school and worked in a general store. Soon after, word started filtering across the country that gold had been discovered in California's Sierra Nevada mountains. Ever the opportunists, David and his older brother Charles set sail for San Francisco via the Isthmus of Panama. They arrived on the West Coast in February of 1851 and within a year had been joined by their youngest brother, Isaac, and were working as provisions traders in Placer County.

In 1858 the Oppenheimers heard rumours of gold being found in British Columbia's Fraser Canyon. With the California rush waning, David and his brothers saw another golden business opportunity in the making. They sent Charles ahead to Victoria, the jumping-off point for those heading to the interior and the only place to buy permits and supplies in the region. By 1858 he had opened a wholesale provisions company and was soon joined by David, Isaac, and another brother, Godfrey.

The Oppenheimers weren't content to rest on their laurels, though. Thousands had come to the Fraser looking for gold, yet returning to Victoria to stock up on supplies was both dangerous and expensive. In 1859 David and his brothers opened a second store in Yale, a natural choice, as it was the highest navigable point on the Fraser River before it entered the canyon. Their wholesale provisions store, Oppenheimer Bros., was located on Front Street and became a popular gathering place for those heading to and from the diggings.

Fortune seekers followed the Fraser north from Yale, eventually hitting the jackpot in 1861 with a strike in the Williams Creek area. Barkerville sprang into existence, quickly becoming the biggest boomtown north of San Francisco and west of Chicago. In 1862 the brothers set up another location there and in a few years had warehouses in Hope and Fisherville as well, though Yale remained

the centre of their business. David ran the Yale location and became known as a popular host and a staunch protector of local interests.

The 800-kilometre trip between the Yale and Barkerville stores was notoriously dangerous, but was also a necessary requirement for the Oppenheimers' success. Their pack train was the largest in the region at the time, with 157 mules. It took the train a month to travel from one store to the other, as it had to contend with the elements and grizzlies, and often had to double-back to evade robbery attempts along the way. Because of the Oppenheimers' familiarity with the journey, Charles was hired at one point to help construct a portion of the Cariboo Wagon Road connecting the two towns. Much of the Trans-Canada Highway follows the same route today.

Though business was booming, fire was an ever present and very real danger on the frontier. The Oppenheimers first discovered just how real in 1868, when a fast moving fire swept through Barkerville, levelling the store in minutes. Though they had lost over \$100,000 in goods, the disaster was met with immediate action from David, and he made the first of what would be many civic donations. Determined not to have the tragedy repeat itself when the store was rebuilt, he headed to San Francisco and purchased a fire wagon that he then donated to create the first Williams Creek Fire Brigade.

By 1872 business at the Barkerville location had slowed enough that David and Isaac decided to sell it, focusing their energy again on Yale. In 1874 their worst fears were realized when the Yale store burned to the ground. They quickly rebuilt the store with brick. Around the same time, David protested freight charges on the Fraser, which he deemed monopolistic. He continued his focus on improving transport in the region in 1880, and partnered with Andrew Onderdonk to raise money for the construction of several challenging stretches of the Canadian Pacific Railroad.

When fire burned through the wooden roof and gutted the contents of the Oppenheimers' store in 1881, Yale was no longer the booming town it had been. David and Isaac headed back to Vancouver Island, where they opened a second Victoria store on Wharf Street in early 1882. However, David's thoughts were focused on the mainland. He had watched the approaching completion of the CPR closely and had started to acquire premium plots of land in the Granville area as early as 1878. In 1884 he purchased even more land in what would become Vancouver, and was part of the group that convinced the



David Oppenheimer, the city's second mayor, eventually came to be affectionately known as the "Father of Vancouver."

CPR to extend the terminus west from Port Moody by donating 175 acres of their own land. Seeing the potential of the area, David and Isaac relocated to Vancouver in 1885 and decided to build a permanent brick warehouse.

When the great fire swept through Vancouver in 1886, construction was underway on the new building at the corner of Powell and Columbia Streets, and most of the city and the Oppenheims' temporary store were destroyed. Not deterred by yet another setback, the brothers continued construction, and when the store was finished in July of 1887, it was the first brick building in Vancouver.

In Yale and Barkerville David had shown his propensity for civic involvement, petitioning for local interests and playing an active role in both community and regional development. In the fledgling town of Vancouver, that interest blossomed into a passion. David turned his knowledge of business towards helping the city grow. He served as an alderman on the first city council, which held meetings in his office until the construction of the new city hall—which was being built on land he donated—was finished. He gained popularity in the community for his work as chairman of the city's finance committee. In November of 1887 he was named the first president of the Vancouver Board of Trade, and just a month later was elected as the city's second mayor.

David had a particular vision for the city he believed Vancouver could be and was determined to make his vision a reality. From 1888 to 1891 he served four consecutive terms as mayor, with no pay for his duties. He was passionate about making the city the international port of call he felt was vital to the success of the province—and the Dominion of Canada. As the first president of the Vancouver Board of Trade, he wrote about fostering trade with Japan, Australia and New Zealand, and of the fundamental need to both import and export goods. He worked with the CPR to establish direct shipping routes between Vancouver, Japan and Australia. He founded the British Columbia Fruit Growers Association in 1888 with the hope of supporting

the growers of the region so that BC-grown fruit would be exported to all reaches of the world, and the exotic fruits of the world imported in turn.

As mayor he was responsible for creating the city water works and lighting company, as well as the fire department, paved streets, sidewalks, and the sewage system. He initiated the city's first transportation system by creating the Vancouver Electric Railway and Light Company, and the Westminster and Vancouver Tramway. The first Cambie Street Bridge and the first Granville Bridge were opened while he was in office. He opened Stanley Park in 1888 and established the Parks Board.

David often invested his own money and much of his personal time on projects that benefited the community, such as the construction of a public wharf. He served as mayor without pay and donated his own land for schools and parks. He was involved in the creation of the city's YMCA, the Alexandra Orphanage, the British Columbia Exhibition Association, and the Vancouver Club.

Though English was his second language, David was a prolific and competent communicator, and he wrote extensively on his vision for Vancouver. To attract settlers to the city, he authored several pamphlets outlining the potential of the region for distribution in London and the United States. He has often been called the "Father of Vancouver" for his contributions. On his retirement from the position of mayor in early 1892 due to his failing health, the *Daily Colonist* ran the following:

Mr. Oppenheimer has been for four years Mayor of Vancouver, and he has served his fellow citizens faithfully and efficiently.... He has watched over [Vancouver's] infancy—has, as it were, superintended the laying of its foundation. He has fostered its growth, which has been unprecedentedly rapid, and has very materially aided its wonderful development. Such supervision as he has exercised required, in order to do it well, all the best qualities of an able man of business, and Mr. Oppenheimer has done it well. It is fortunate for Vancouver that it was able to avail itself of the services of such a man as David Oppenheimer at

the most critical stage of its existence. It will take time for even its citizens fully to appreciate all that he has done for them and their city.

David Oppenheimer was twice married. He married his first wife Sarah in 1857. She died at age 40 in 1880. This marriage produced no children. David married his second wife, Julia Walter of New York, in San Francisco in 1883. They had a daughter Flora. Julia died in a tragic accident in March 1897, and David, who had been sick off and on for years, died 9 months later on 31 December 1897.

To best get a sense of David Oppenheimer's dedication to the city and province, one need look no further than the following excerpt from the *Vancouver Daily World* that was published shortly after his death:

He was not all things to all men, he was the same thing to all men; genial, honest, and kind-hearted to a fault. The voice of sorrow never failed to win his keenest sympathy, and the voice of suffering had not to call twice to him for help. Yet with all his large-heartedness, he was practical to a degree and could grasp a business proposition as clearly as any man living. That he took an almost fatherly pride in Vancouver has been exemplified time and again. He saw into the future further than the ordinary eye could reach, and planned and built accordingly. Even as he lay on his deathbed and felt that the end could not be very far away, he said he had no fear of death but that he would like ... to see Vancouver enjoy the prosperity that he had always said would be hers and which he felt was now at hand.

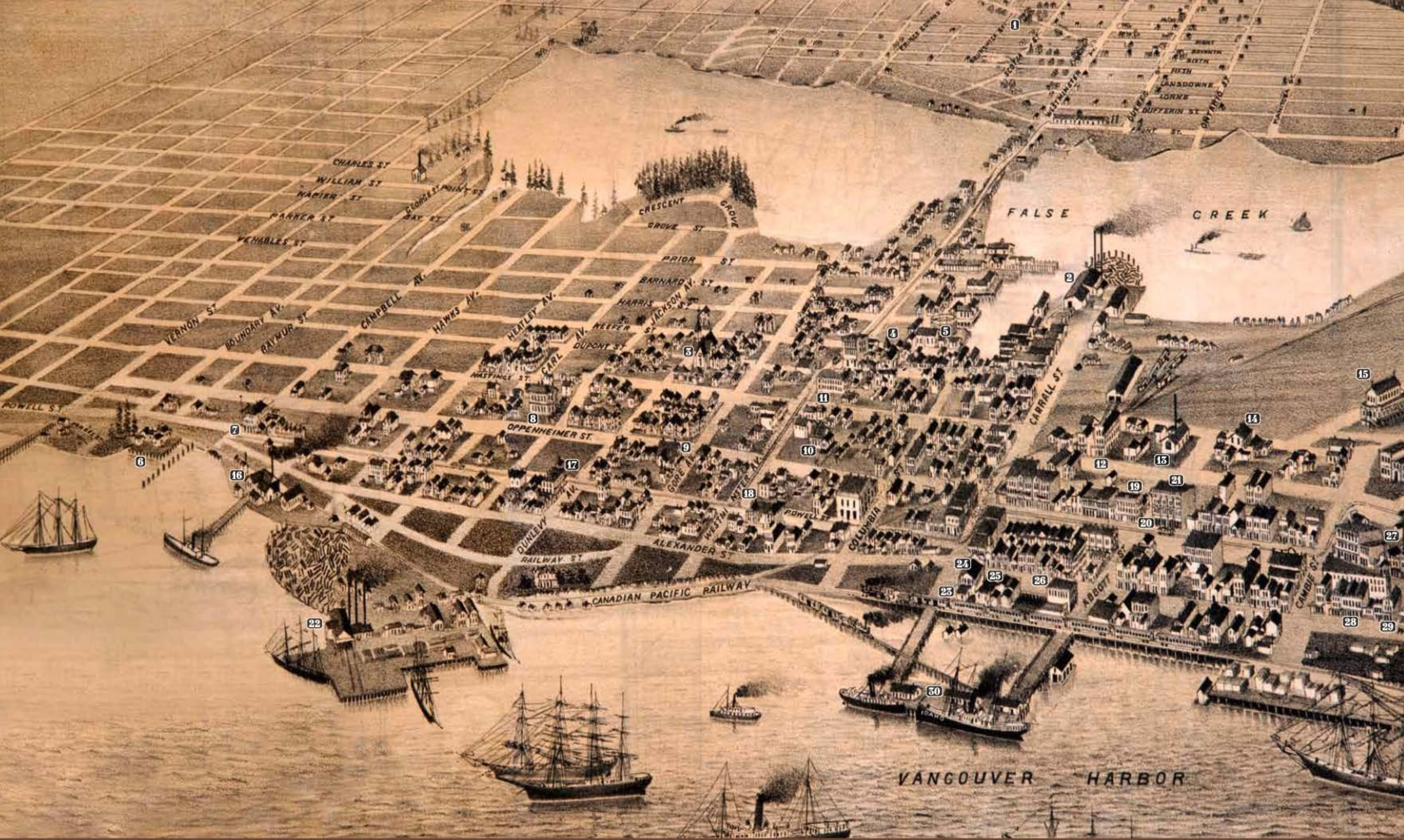
Another article called David the best friend that Vancouver ever had, but the same could be said as vice versa—that Vancouver, in some ways, was his closest and dearest friend, who he saw great things for in the future. The company David and his brothers founded in 1858 is still in business. Today it is called The Oppenheimer Group, a marketer of over 100 varieties of fresh produce grown in 26 countries to retail, wholesale and foodservice customers across North America. It has grown into a half-billion-dollar company with offices throughout the US, Canada and Chile, selling 40 million boxes of produce annually—four billion

individual pieces of fruit. Though it has grown into an international powerhouse with grower partners around the world, Oppenheimer's roots are still and always will be firmly planted in British Columbia. It has been named the oldest continually operating business in the province by the Vancouver Historical Society, and it celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2008. The 12th of July was named "David Oppenheimer Day" in the City of Vancouver. A ceremony was held to celebrate the event in Stanley Park near David's memorial statue. Members of the Oppenheimer family, as well as delegates from the city, the Parks Board, and staff of the Oppenheimer Group attended the ceremony.

Though memories fade over time, it is easy to see the legacy of David Oppenheimer today. One just has to look around oneself, at the city he loved so much, which continues to thrive more than a century after his death.



To commemorate his contributions to the city, a memorial statue of David Oppenheimer was placed at the entrance to Stanley Park in 1911.



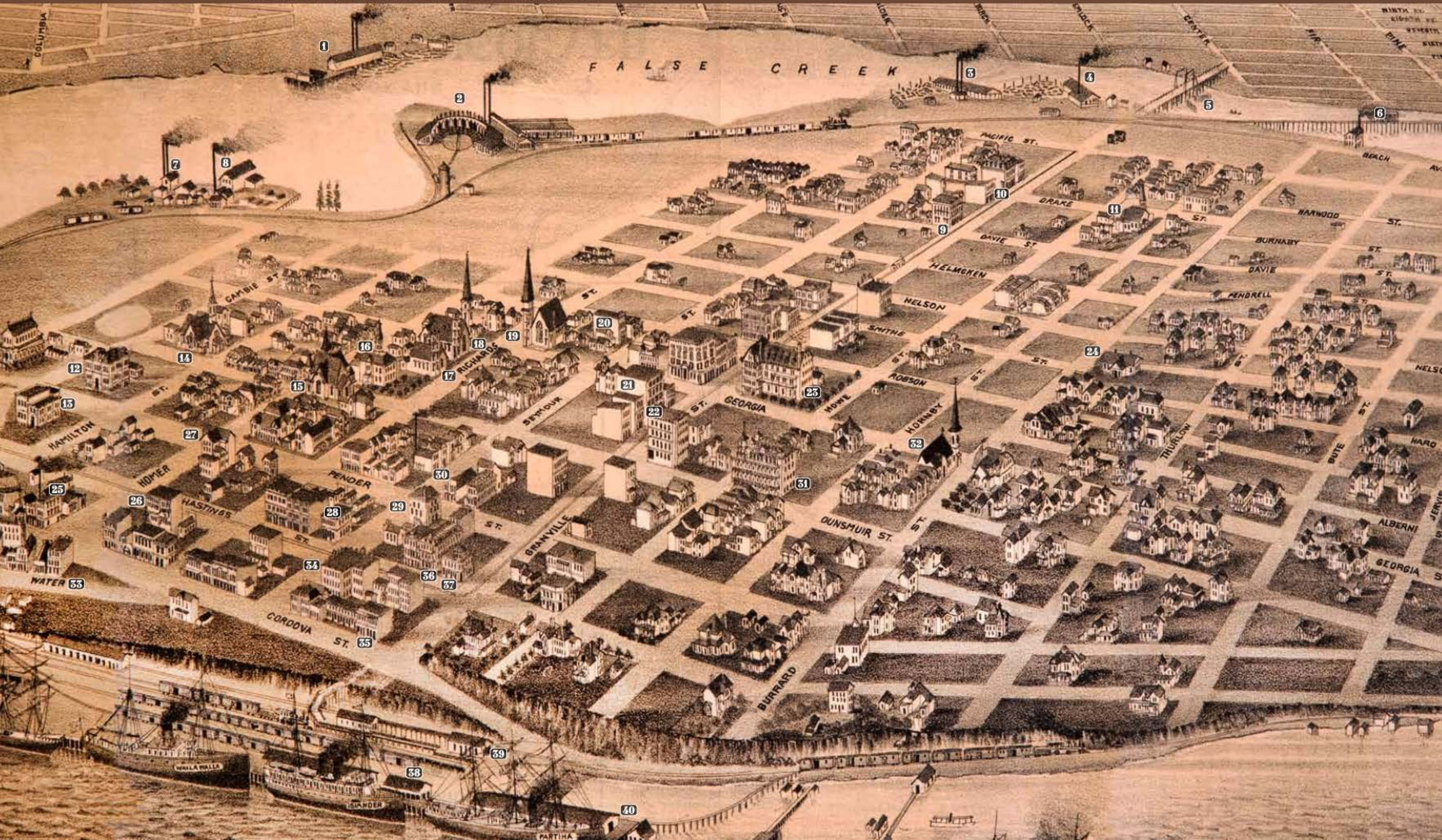
Vancouver 1890

1 Mount Pleasant School 2 Royal City Planing Mills 3 East End M. E. Church 4 Chinese Mission 5 Gas Works 6 Lime Kiln 7 Cartright's Hotel 8 East End School 9 Saint James Episcopal Church 10 First Presbyterian Church 11 Market House 12 C.P.R. Repair Shop & Car Yard 13 Vancouver Co.'s Electric Light Works 14 Imperial Opera House 15 City Hospital 16 Vancouver Foundry & Machine Works 17 Stanley Hotel 18 City Hall & Police Station 19 Dougall Hotel 20 Dr. LeFevre Residence 21 Wilson Block 22 Hastings Saw Mill 23 Atlantic Express 24 Sunny Side Hotel 25 Fire Hall 26 Gold House 27 The World Office 28 Oriental House 29 Greyhound Hotel 30 City Wharf

Vancouver 1890

1 Leamy & Kyle's Saw Mill 2 CPR Roundhouse & Machine Shops 3 Fader Brothers New Saw Mill
 4 Fader Brothers Old Saw Mill 5 Granville Street Traffic Bridge 6 False Creek Railway Bridge 7
 Cassidy's Sash & Door Factory 8 Frank W. Hart's Furniture Factory
 9 Golden Gate Hotel 10 Colonial Hotel 11 Episcopal Mission Chapel 12 Central School 13
 Court House 14 Baptist Church 15 Homer Street Methodist Episcopal Church

16 Convent of the Sacred Heart Church 17 Church of Our Lady of Rosary 18 St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church 19 Congregational Church 20 Fire Hall 21 CPR
 Telegraph Land & General Office 22 Hotel Vancouver 23 Vancouver Opera House 24 Burrard Street School 25 The World Office 26 Post Office 27 Douglas
 House 28 Bank of Montreal & Bank of British Columbia 29 Windsor Hotel 30 Irving & Strahan's Furniture Factory 31 Manor House 32 Christ Episcopal
 Church 33 Greyhound Hotel 34 Vancouver Club 35 Cordova Street Telegraph Office Building 36 Leland House 37 Customs House 38 CPR Wharves &
 Warehouses 39 CPR Temporary Depot 40 Vancouver Boating Club House



Vancouver 1898

1 Cement Works 2 East End Post Office 3 Electric Light & Street Railway Power House
 4 Crowder & Penzer's Wharf 5 Champion & White's Wharf & Shipping Yards 6 Ross &
 Howard's Foundry and Ironworks 7 Royal City Planing & Saw Mills 8 CPR Freight Yards
 9 Cambie Street Recreation Grounds 10 First Baptist Church 11 St. Andrew's Church
 12 First Congregational Church 13 Waverly Hotel 14 Merchants' Bank of Halifax East
 Branch 15 Glasgow Hotel 16 Brackman & Kerr's Warehouses 17 The Province Office
 18 City Hospital & Grounds 19 & 20 Public Schools 21 Homer Street Methodist Church 22 Academy of the Sacred Heart 23 Church of Our Lady of the
 Rosary 24 Aims, Holden & Co., Wholesale Boots & Shoes 25 John Leckie, Wholesale Twines, Cordage & Fishery Supplies
 26 CPR Co.'s Badminton Hotel House 27 Dominion Steam Laundry 28 Oppenheimer Bros., Wholesale Grocers 29 The Parson's Produce Co.
 30 Thomas Dunn & Co., Wholesale & Retail Hardware & House Furnishings 31 Sullivan Hall 32 Gold House 33 Gambrinus Hotel

34 Whetham Block 35 Sunny Side Hotel 36 Arlington Hotel 37 Court House 38 Imperial Bank 39 Merchants' Bank of Halifax (proposed)
 40 Metropolitan Club 41 The World Office 42 Evans & Hastings Printing Office 43 Bank of British Columbia 44 Merchants' Bank of Halifax
 45 Robertson & Hackett's Planing Mills & Factory 46 Windsor Hotel 47 Bank of Montreal 48 William Braid & Company
 49 McMillan & Hamilton's Warehouse 50 Police Station 51 Masonic Temple 52 East End Post Office 53 Gambrinus Hotel 54 Thomas Dunn & Co.,
 Ship Chandler 55 Manitoba Produce Co. 56 J. Y. Griffin & Co. 57 W. H. Malkin & Co. / Kelly, Douglas & Co. 58 Martin & Robinson, Commission Agents
 59 Mount Pleasant Post Office 60 Hudson's Bay Co., Offices & Liquor Warehouses 61 The Budget Office 62 Turner, Beeton & Co., Wholesale Dry Goods
 63 Chinese Immigration Sheds 64 CPR Offices 65 Bank of British North America 66 Molson's Bank / Board of Trade 67 Leland Hotel 68 Canadian
 Bank of Commerce 69 MacKinnon Block 70 Dunn Hall & Fairfield Block 71 Post Office & Public Building 72 Evans, Coleman & Evans, Shipping Office
 73 Boat House 74 Union Steamship Co.'s Offices & Shipping Wharf 75 Beasley's Boat House & Yacht Club 76 CPR Depot & General Office
 77 Vancouver Club





Canada Place and the Vancouver Convention Centre from above Burrard Inlet

- 1 Sun Tower
- 2 Beatty Street Drill Hall
- 3 Dominion Building
- 4 Hotel Vancouver
- 5 Malkin's Grocery Store
- 6 CPR Waterfront Station
- 7 Marine Building

Vancouver 2010





Vancouver's first permanent courthouse after the addition, opened in 1890 and fronted on Cambie and Hastings Streets. The courthouse was torn down in 1911, and the location became Victory Square after the Great War. The square incorporates the steps of the original courthouse.

Vancouver's Courthouses

THOMAS SORBY, who also designed the the first Hotel Vancouver, was the architect of the first courthouse built by Turnbull and Company of New Westminster at a cost of \$18,000. The upper floor consisted of a single courtroom, the judge's office and a law library, while the bottom floor housed the county registrar, the timber inspector, an assessor and a janitor.

Themis, the Greek Goddess of Justice, by sculptor Jack Harman, stands on the 4th floor of Vancouver's Law Courts. The city's third courthouse was designed by world-renowned Vancouver architect Arthur Erickson in 1973.

During the construction phase, assessor A. E. Beck questioned its size, and by completion date the new courthouse proved to be too small and had to be enlarged by more than three times its original size. N. E. Hoffar designed the new addition, which was built by J. M. Luckie and Edward Cook at a cost of \$47,000. The top of the addition was crowned with a raised cupola, on top of which stood a statue of Justice. Even with the new addition, Vancouver's first permanent courthouse had a short life span. In 1905 architect Francis M. Rattenbury won the contract to build the second courthouse.

A civic reception by Vancouver Mayor James Findlay at the new courthouse welcoming the Duke and Duchess of Connaught on 12 September 1912 proved to be a highlight in the city's pre-war era. As soon as the second courthouse opened for trials, the original building went under the wrecking ball and was torn down. At the end of the Great War the site became Victory Square, and a cenotaph was erected to commemorate the soldiers who had died in France and Belgium. By design or by coincidence, the site was directly across Hastings Street and opposite the Dominion Building. According to folklore, this beautiful historic structure, at one time the tallest building in the British Empire, was built with the Kaiser's money.

- 1 Hastings Mill
- 2 Flack Building
- 3 Inns of Court Building
- 4 First Courthouse
- 5 *The Province* Office
- 6 Victoria House Boarding School
- 7 Central School
- 8 City Hospital & Grounds

VIEW FROM THE TOP OF THE HOLY ROSARY CATHEDRAL. Looking northeast towards the intersection of Pender and Hamilton Streets clearly shows the original courthouse with the larger addition that was crowned with the cupola with the Statue of Justice, circa 1910.





Above

James Findlay was the first Vancouver mayor to wear the new gold civic chain of office at the official opening of the courthouse by the Duke and Duchess of Connaught on 12 September 1912. The ornate chain was designed by Henry Birks Jewellers. Wrought in 14-karat gold, the chain is of handsome design and splendid workmanship. It is composed of five shields that are each carved with designs depicting the five principal industries of the province: Forestry, Shipping, Manufacturing, Mining and Tourism.

Right

Mayor James Findlay welcomed the Duke and Duchess of Connaught to a civic reception at the newly-completed Vancouver Court House on 18 September 1912. The arrival of the "horseless carriage," the automobile, greatly altered the character of the royal tour. Only two teams of horses appear in this photo. The licence plate numbers on some of the cars can be clearly seen in pioneer Vancouver photographer Stuart Thomson's image, and from them one can determine that William J. Edgett of 1350 West 10th Avenue came in his Woinin automobile, and John C. Dill of 2466 West 6th Avenue came in his Hudson. Vancouver's military as well as local boy scouts turned out "in spit and polish" to welcome "The Duke," Queen Victoria's third son, who was at the time Canada's Governor General. The enthusiasm of the crowd can be measured by the 92 Union Jacks that can be counted in this picture.



Yaletown

PREMIERS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

C – Conservative Party

CL – Conservative/Liberal Coalition

L – Liberal Party

N – New Democratic Party

S – Social Credit Party

1871–1872	John Foster McCreight	
1872–1874	William Alexander Smith alias: Amor De Cosmos	
1874–1876	George Anthony Walkem	
1876–1878	Andrew Charles Elliott	
1878–1882	George Anthony Walkem	
1882–1883	Robert Beaven	
1883–1887	William Smithe	
1887–1889	Alexander E. B. Davie	
1889–1892	John Robson	
1892–1895	Theodore Davie	
1895–1898	John Herbert Turner	
1898–1900	Charles Augustus Semlin	
1900	Joseph Martin	
1900–1902	James Dunsmuir	
1902–1903	Edward Gawler Prior	
1903–1915	Richard McBride	C
1915–1916	William John Bowser	C
1916–1918	Harlan Carey Brewster	L
1918–1927	John Oliver	L
1927–1928	John Duncan MacLean	L
1928–1933	Simon Fraser Tolmie	C
1933–1941	T. Dufferin Pattullo	L
1941–1947	John Hart	L
1947–1952	Byron I. Johnson	LC
1952–1972	W. A. C. Bennett	S
1972–1975	David Barrett	N
1975–1986	William R. Bennett	S
1986–1991	William Vander Zalm	S
1991	Rita M. Johnston	S
1991–1996	Michael F. Harcourt	N
1996–1999	Glen Clark	N
1999–2000	A. Daniel Miller	N
2000–2001	Ujjal Dosanjh	N
2001–	Gordon M. Campbell	L

WHEN VANCOUVER BECAME the western terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1886, one of the first decisions Mayor MacLean and his council made was to offer to the CPR a 20-year exemption from taxes if they opted to build rail yards and repair facilities on the north shore of False Creek. As a result, the railway company agreed to move its machinery and employees from its former shops at Yale in the Fraser Canyon to the new site. Some of the railway employees at Yale loaded their homes onto flatcars and sent them to the new “Yaletown” in Vancouver. Many of the bachelor railroaders lived in rooming houses such as the Yaletown Hotel.

The railway workers built a roundhouse and other facilities on the new site for repairing the steam locomotives. The roundhouse enclosed a huge turntable with rail tracks that allowed train engines and other rail cars to be turned end for end for the return trip back east.

By 1900 an eight-block warehouse district had sprung up adjacent to the original Yaletown. Called New Yaletown, it consisted of companies receiving or shipping products by rail.

By the late 1970s much of the 175-acre CPR rail yard site on False Creek had become an industrial wasteland. It was during this period that several people came up with the idea of utilizing the area for a world exposition to celebrate Vancouver’s 100th birthday. The provincial government purchased the site from the CPR in the early 1980s and began to prepare it for Expo 86, the theme of which was transportation and communication. Prince Charles, Princess Diana, and Prime Minister Brian Mulroney opened the fair on 2 May 1986.

In 1988 most of the Expo site was sold to Concord Pacific Development Corporation, whose primary shareholder was Hong Kong billionaire Li Ka-Shing. The sale became very controversial when the purchasers complained that the site was contaminated and required a massive cleanup. In less than 25 years the Chinese development company has erected several high-rises, making the area one of the most densely populated and sought-after places to live in all of Canada.

An air photo overview to the northwest shows Vancouver during the Expo 86 celebrations.





VANCOUVER AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY.

This photograph, taken from near the intersection of Broadway and Cambie Streets, looks over False Creek to the CPR Roundhouse only 14 years after the Great Fire that leveled Vancouver. The site of the Roundhouse was ground zero for the inferno, where burning slash got out of control and destroyed the new city. A century later, after Expo 86 during the resurrection of Yaletown as a trendy neighbourhood, construction crews found historic remains, a reminder of that horrific event.

In this picture, the neighbourhood is developed with modest family homes on the slopes, just outside the industrial zone of rail yards and sawmills on the Creek. In the foreground, some homes straddle the boundary between the districts of Mount Pleasant and Fairview as part of south shore development. Living near the Creek afforded nice views of the city, but there was ongoing pollution from the mills, and log booms made dangerous playgrounds for children. Death by drowning was common place.



FIERCE COMPETITION BETWEEN STREETCARS AND JITNEYS, 1923.

A view to the east down Hastings Street at Columbia Street after the First World War shows the fierce competition between the streetcars and the jitneys. The automobiles (driven on the left hand side of the road) were undercutting the B.C. Electric's rail line by offering to transport passengers out to Fairview for 5 cents. The electric company's directors lobbied city council to have the cars banned from picking up fares and then upped the rates. At least 10 street cars are visible in the photo with twice as many cars. The sides of many of the larger buildings function as billboards advertising international brands.



A street car travels west down Cordova Street from the Carrall Street intersection during the Dominion Day celebrations on 1 July 1890. The brand-new transit system had commenced operations five days earlier.

Early Transit

TO ALLOW THE YOUNG CITY, which had been created by the advent of the railway, to expand beyond its original core developers needed a transit system. In 1889 the city decided to build a public transit system, and not only that: it was decided that the streetcars should be electric, not horse-drawn, which would make Vancouver one of the first cities in North America to have such a system.

The Vancouver Street Railways Company was set up to put a streetcar system into operation, but the company failed, and the Vancouver Electric Railway and Light Company took over, of which Mayor Oppenheimer was a director. The company purchased streetcars in New York, and in an attempt to make its passengers think that their company was larger, the owners didn't number the first cars of the new fleet 1 to 6 but rather 10 to 15.

A street car in the Old Spaghetti Factory in Vancouver's Gastown.

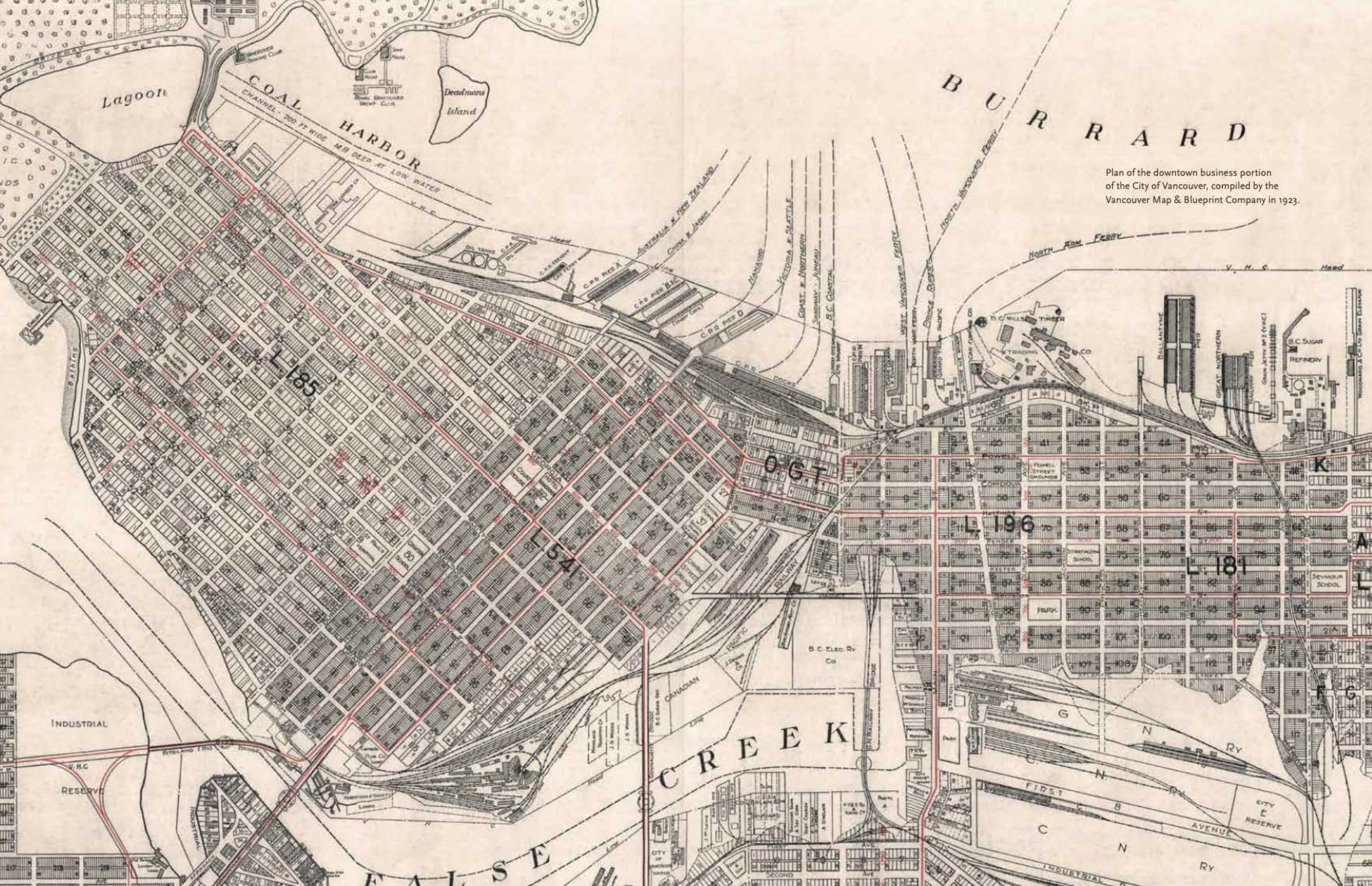


On 26 June 1890 the new transit system started operation, offering free rides to potential customers on this first day—a day later the fares would cost 5 cents. The entire system at that time was only 9.6 kilometres, but the following year it doubled in size and went south across the new Granville Street Bridge over False Creek to reach Fairview Heights. Nevertheless, it was a hard battle to keep the operation profitable, and by 1892 the company was bankrupt. The Consolidated Railway and Light Company followed, but it too failed.

Then a new company appeared: the British Columbia Electric Railway Company (BCER), backed by British money. It merged with the company that ran the Interurban service to New Westminster, so that by 1897 the entire transit system from Vancouver to New Westminster was consolidated. Ridership increased steadily until 1914, when the monthly number of passengers reached 3.5 million. But competition from jitneys—automobiles that would pick up passengers at streetcar stops and undercut the streetcar fare—and later buses were the reason that this number was never reached again. The streetcars continued to roll in Vancouver until 1955, when the system was shut down.

WAITING FOR THE STREET CAR IN MOUNT PLEASANT, 1907. Pedestrians stand at the intersection of Westminster Avenue (Main Street) and Ninth Avenue (Broadway) and await the arrival of a streetcar from downtown Vancouver. The view is to the northwest and includes the Mount Pleasant Methodist Church, H. O. Lee Grocery Store and the Mount Pleasant Pharmacy. Today the Lee Building occupies this site.





Plan of the downtown business portion of the City of Vancouver, compiled by the Vancouver Map & Blueprint Company in 1923.

Lagoon

COAL HARBOR
CHANNEL - 200 FT WIDE
14 FT DEEP AT LOW WATER

Deadman Island

BURRARD

L 185

O G T

L 196

L 181

INDUSTRIAL

RESERVE

CREEK

FAULSE

FIRST

AVENUE

CITY RESERVE

INDUSTRIAL

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Father of Chinatown

by Henry Wing Yip

Grandson of Yip Sang and Dong Shee

YIP SANG WAS BORN in Taishan County, Guangdong Province, China, in 1845: the grandson of a wealthy man but unfortunately the son of a poor father, who died when Sang was still a boy. His mother passed away when he was still a teenager, and then bandits abducted his older sister, so he was left all alone at a time when China was engulfed in the chaos of the Taiping Rebellion. During his long life he would go from rags to riches.

In 1864, at the age of 19, Sang sold his few possessions and used the money to buy a passage on a sailing junk from Hong Kong to San Francisco, a voyage that in those days lasted two months. In California he washed dishes and cooked in a restaurant, later rolled cigars, and eventually laboured at panning gold to earn enough money for a trip back to China, where, according to family lore, he saw a girl that he promised himself he would marry. He returned to San Francisco and from there departed for Montana, where he worked as a cook to save enough cash to return to his homeland and get married. His wife bore him two children. He sailed for San Francisco again, leaving his family in China, but a telegram notified him that his wife had become ill and died. He returned to China and took a second wife to raise the two children, but she was too young and flighty to run a household. Yip—as Chinese custom allowed—took a third wife. He left both wives and his family in China and again returned to California only to realize that the gold there had petered out, so he headed north to try his luck in the Cariboo gold rush.

In 1881 he passed through Vancouver en route to the diggings. He walked along the Cariboo Wagon Road with his belongings piled into a cart. When gold eluded him, he returned to the coast to New Westminster and managed to get a job selling coal door to door. Father Luck finally smiled on him: he met Lee Piu, a Chinese foreman for Andrew Onderdonk, the contractor hired by the CPR to build the rail line from Port Moody to Kamloops. This man was so impressed with Sang's quickness that he made him bookkeeper, timekeeper, and paymaster for his work gangs. According to family stories, Sang rode on horseback along the line and paid the Chinese

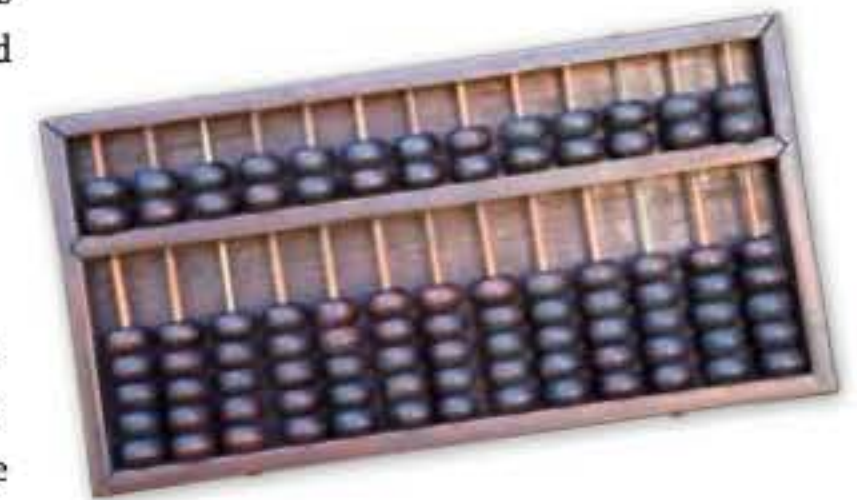
labourers from sacks of gold; once he escaped would-be brigands who sought to rob and kill him. Sang became the Chinese agent for the CPR, supplying its railway with construction labourers and its steamships with sailors. Without the Chinese labourers Onderdonk's section of the rail line could not have been built on budget or on time. Poorly paid, housed, and fed, the Chinese men were given the most dangerous projects, and of 7,000 workers some 600 died in accidents. "No one was killed," ran one account of an explosion on the line, "only two Chinese." To recruit the labourers, Sang went to the Pearl River Delta in China, and while there he married a fourth wife and fathered more children.

In 1888 Sang returned to Vancouver and established the Wing Sang Company at 29 Dupont (later 51–69 Pender) Street in Vancouver's Chinatown. The following year he supervised the construction of the Wing Sang building ("Wing Sang" meaning "everlasting") for his office and personal residence, the first brick building to be constructed in Chinatown. The building was located immediately to the west of a 20-foot-wide high-tide stream that ran from False Creek northward to Burrard Inlet. The company soon became one of the wealthiest firms in the Chinatown part of Vancouver, engaging in 14 businesses that included contracting Chinese workers for the CPR, contracting passengers for the Canadian Pacific Steamships Limited, and the importing of rice and clothing. Sang pioneered the exporting of salted herring from his cannery on Vancouver Island to China, Japan, and other points on the Pacific Rim. He acquired 16 buildings in Chinatown, including one in Shanghai Alley, where immigrants could stay until they found work.

A Wing Sang advertisement from the 6 December 1891 *Daily-News Advertiser* said the company dealt in "China silks, utensils, trinkets, curios and Japanese dry goods." At the bottom of the ad a phrase in capital letters proclaimed "Importers of Opium." Opium was legal in Canada until 1908, and Chinatown had numerous opium dealers and even opium factories like the Hip Tuck Lung Company, located across the street from Sang's store. Aside from being infamous for its opium dens, Chinatown's Dupont (Pender) Street was known as Vancouver's first red-light district. It is rumoured that some of the ladies of the evening may have rented space in the Wing Sang building. In 1903 the Wing Sang Company and the Chinese Board of Trade were listed at 51 Dupont Street, "Chinese barbers" at 57, Wing Hon On & Company at 61, and Kwong Yo Yuen merchants were

The abacus used by Yip Sang to calculate payroll for the 7000 Chinese labourers employed for the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railroad through the Fraser Canyon.

Yip recruited the labourers from the Pearl River Delta in China.



YIP SANG (1845-1927). Sang spent the first half of his life in poverty, but during the second he was awash in fortune.



Dong Shee (1866-1941) Wife No. 2



Wong Shee (1872-1957) Wife No. 3



Chin Shee (1866-1934) Wife No. 4



Yip Sang (1845-1927)



The Wing Sang & Co. Block was built in 1889 and expanded in 1901, when Sang brought his family over from China.

listed at 67. In between the Chinese businesses, Grace Hall rented 59, Carmen Hall rented 63, and “Carmelita” rented 69. Women’s names disappeared from Dupont Street in 1906, when city officials and police moved the establishments over to a new red-light district on Alexander Street.

In 1901 Sang brought his entire family over from China. He built a three-storey addition onto the Wing Sang building and ensconced his three wives and their children into one floor each. The main floor consisted

of a store where patrons could buy Chinese-style jackets and pants as well as dishes and games. Imports were hoisted up to a second-floor warehouse. Although the Sang children went to English-speaking public schools, Chinese tutors taught them Chinese subjects on the third floor. This floor also included a bowling alley and a special room that contained an ancestral altar and was used for special occasions such as weddings.

Next, in 1912, Sang built a six-storey addition onto the back of the Wing Sang office to house his growing

family. Eventually Sang had nineteen sons and four daughters, who all married and produced 67 grandchildren. In time 100 family members lived in the building. The final addition included a bowling alley and a schoolroom where both a Chinese and an “English” teacher taught. Sang was a very strict patriarch and every night after supper would sit in an armchair next to the door leading to the upstairs suites. He would sit there smoking a pipe and watching everyone coming and going until curfew at 10 p.m., at which time he locked the door with the one and only key.

Sang spent the first half of his life in poverty, but during the second half he was awash in fortune. He became a philanthropist and started the first Chinese hospital and Chinese school. He organized the Chinese Benevolent Association and even sat on the board of the Vancouver General Hospital as a lifetime governor.

Sang became a major witness for the Federal Royal Commission headed by the Deputy Minister of Labour, William Lyon Mackenzie King (later Prime Minister of Canada) in the wake of the anti-Asian riots in Vancouver in 1907. He testified that the decline of the labour contract system was the result of the increase in the head tax from \$50 to \$500 imposed on Chinese immigrants in 1903.

By 1908 Sang’s company was one of the four largest Chinese companies in Vancouver with an annual revenue of \$50,000 from its import-export businesses alone and real estate holdings worth over \$200,000.

Though Sang did not speak English fluently, he valued integration into the wider society and had many non-Chinese friends—unusual in an age when Chinese were considered a separate class, forced to pay a head tax to enter Canada, from 1923 until 1947 virtually banned as immigrants, and denied voting rights until 1947. When Sun Yat-sen and his followers toppled the Manchu Dynasty in China in 1911, Yip Sang, a firm believer in modernization, cut off his queue and assumed western dress.

Yip Sang’s death in 1927 was marked by the longest funeral procession Vancouver had yet seen, with dozens of cars of mourners, a marching band, and ranks of somber men in formal western and oriental garb. Vancouver’s premier Chinese merchant had insisted on burial in Vancouver rather than having his bones shipped back to China.

Yip Sang’s descendants sold the Wing Sang heritage building in 2001 to developer Ewen Stewart for \$850,000. In 2004 “Condo King” Bob Rennie bought the old edifice for \$1,000,000 with plans to restore it to its original state and make it his office and private art gallery.



SLIPPERS OF TEARS. The first three of Yip Sang’s four wives had their feet bound at an early age to prevent their growth. This painful procedure allowed the women to wear these tiny shoes that cost their wearers a bath (kang) of tears.

Opium Trade and Head Taxes

by John Atkin, Civic Historian

"LI HUNG CHANG AT VANCOUVER" was the headline in the 14 September 1896 edition of the *Daily Columbian*. The story continued, "Li Hung Chang, Chinese Viceroy, and party arrived at Vancouver by special CPR train yesterday at 2 o'clock. He was met and welcomed by representative Chinamen, after which he was driven around the city and Stanley Park. During the afternoon, *HMS Comus*, in harbour, fired a salute of nine guns in honour of the distinguished visitor."

The "Yellow Jacket" (bestowed upon Li by the Chinese Emperor) was concluding a North America tour and had visited Vancouver to discuss the head tax that the Canadian government had initiated against Chinese and the problems caused by the widespread use of opium.

The first Chinese labourers in British Columbia were brought in by the colonial government to build many of the early roads and trails in the colony. They soon found their welcome short-lived. Four years after British Columbia joined the Canadian confederation the legislature removed their voting rights (and that of the Natives too), and in 1885 the federal government, at the urging of British Columbia, put in place a head tax on new Chinese immigrants of 50 dollars. The tax would rise to an astounding 500 dollars in 1903—approximately 15,000 dollars in 2010.

The 7 December 1886 edition of the *Vancouver News* spoke of the "evil [that] is only beginning to shape at the foot of Carrall Street on the edge of False Creek." In the city Chinese were banned from working on municipal contracts. Despite this and other measures the population grew. If the City couldn't stop the growth of a Chinese population, they were determined to regulate it. Chinatown became a separate category of inspection for the Health Department and became the target of constant police gambling raids, because according to the 5 February 1906 *Vancouver Province*, gambling was "ingrained in the Celestial nature."

Labour unions were a loud voice in the call for a "British" or "white" province and continued to urge all levels of government to do something about the "Oriental problem." They were a major thrust behind the formation of groups such as the Asiatic Exclusion



Henry Collins, Vancouver's 5th Mayor, started out in Vancouver as a dry goods merchant before venturing into municipal politics. He served two terms as mayor during which time he hosted from Chinese statesman Li Hung Chang, Lord and Lady Aberdeen. Lord Aberdeen was the Governor General of Canada from 1893 until 1898.



ARCH OF HONOUR. Members of Vancouver's Chinese community stream through an arch in honour of Li Hung Chang on 14 September 1896. Chang is seated in the back of the coach beside Mayor Henry Collins (black Derby) while in the front seat is H. B. Abbott, general superintendent of the CPR (white Derby) and another Chinese diplomat. The two houses on the bluff overlooking Burrard Inlet stand on "Blue Blood Alley" (Georgia Street), named for the posh homes of the richest railroad families. An early Vancouver photographer stands in the middle of the crowd with his large-format camera and cumbersome tripod.

League, though in Vancouver the membership crossed all of society's boundaries. In 1907 a meeting of the League at City Hall got out of hand, and the assembled crowd marched on Chinatown, smashing storefronts and windows before turning their attention to Japantown.

The Minister of Labour, Mackenzie King, was dispatched from Ottawa to look into the matter and to assess compensation

A golden dragon adorns a street lamp in Vancouver's Chinatown.

