

Early Vancouver

Volume Three

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Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1933-1934.

Supplemental to Volumes One and Two collected in 1931-1932.

About the 2011 Edition

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SITE OF FIRST CITY HALL.

Dr. Israel Wood Powell gave the lots on which the first City Hall stood on Powell Street. Then, when the City Hall was moved away, there was a lawsuit; he wanted the land back. He claimed he had given it for the a site for a City Hall, but the deed was not explicit, and he lost the lawsuit.

CLARK PARK.

Clark Park, dedicated as a park in 1889, was given to the city by Mr. E.J. Clark. (Woodland, Commercial Drive, and 14th and 15th avenues.)

JERICHO.

Excerpt from Genealogy Form, Jeremiah Rogers, 31 August 1934, signed by his daughter, Mrs. S.S. Monahan.

“Jericho was reserved for the Admiralty of Great Britain about 1862. J. Rogers applied to the Admiralty twenty seven (27) acres, and in due course of time received deed.”

JERICHO. JERRY ROGERS.

(According to W.R. Lord.) “Jerry Rogers was one of at least three brothers; one was William. William had two sons, William and James. The third brother’s son was Captain Perry Rogers.

“Jerry had a son, Lincoln, who, before his death, was head of the Coast Steamship Co., and had a sister who was a nun. Jerry’s sister was the late Mrs. Strang; her daughter is Mrs. Furniss, now of the Vancouver Cannery, Sea Island, a relative of J.F. Strang, 5849 Cartier Avenue.”

CONVERSATION WITH W.H. GALLAGHER, FORMER ALDERMAN AT HIS OFFICE, SOUTHEAST CORNER OF PENDER STREET WEST AND RICHARDS STREET, 28 JUNE 1933.

I told Mr. Gallagher that I was preparing material for John Innes to paint a picture of the first meeting of the City Council, and wanted more detail than he had given me previously.

THE OLD COURT HOUSE. WATER STREET. GRANVILLE.

“The old Court House on Water Street, where the voting for the first election of the City Council of Vancouver took place, and also where the first meeting of the City Council took place, was a little, low building spread all across the lot, and stood back a few feet—a foot or so, perhaps more, perhaps it was the sidewalk which was wider there. Water Street was planked; it was our only street; the planking was burned in the fire and afterwards replaced, but at the time of the election it was planked, bridged as it were over the old beach which curved in to the alley behind; I believe they have trouble even today with the water seeping into the basements of buildings there, but, as I said, Water Street was our only street. You could get along Water Street to just a little beyond Abbott Street, and you could go down Carrall about as far as where Hastings Street is now; beyond that on both streets was just a pathway. Cordova Street was not opened up, nor was Hastings Street.

“The little court house was a little, low building; there was no entrance from Water Street; a passageway ran down the east side, and the entrance to the court room was from that passageway—a door on the east side of the building and about the centre of it.” (On other occasions, Mr. Gallagher has said that the entrance was straight off Water Street; others have said same thing. The story, at present, is confusing. See other accounts—Geo. R. Gordon, W.R. Lord, H.E. Ridley.) “At the opposite end of the court room was the exit door, and another passageway to Water Street on the west side of the building. On the inlet side of the court room, which was just a bit of a room about the size of a large sitting room, say ten or twelve feet by twenty feet, were two or three small rooms, from which windows looked out over the inlet. One was where the judge robed or disrobed, and left his things; the others were offices. On the opposite side of the court room were three or four cells where the prisoners were put; the doors to these cells were not barred with iron” (?) “but I think had keyholes in them. Just how they were lighted I do not know, was never in them, nor can I just recall how the court room was lighted. The court room walls were plan V-

joint; it may have been varnished, but was discoloured with age or smoke from the stove, a long horizontal box stove with the door in one end, into which fairly long slabs of wood were pushed, a pioneer box stove, and stove pipes. Probably there were a few lumps of cord wood in the corner, I don't remember. In the centre was plain table, say three feet wide and about eight or ten feet long, and in the northwest corner of the room was tall desk on high legs, with a lift top which lifted up, and in this top beneath the lid, the court bible and police records were kept, and out of it Mr. Johnson got the bible when he administered the oath to Mr. MacLean. Above it were a lot of pigeon holes, where Constable Miller kept summonses. I forget whether the lamps were hanging or not; the whole thing was primitive and small."

JAIL.

"At the back there was a jail yard, reached by a passageway from inside the court room; a passageway at the east end, through a door."

FIRST ELECTION, VOTING. C. GARDNER JOHNSON. JONATHAN MILLER.

"On the day of the voting there was a crowd of interested men congregated just outside in the passageway by the east door. The voting was 'open.' The voters entered the court room, voted, and passed out through the west door, where there was another crowd of men gathered in that passageway too. Charlie Johnson, who was deputy returning officer, stood with his clerk at the high desk at their clerical duties all day, but for convenience had moved it to the west end of the table. Charlie Johnson attended to all arrangements himself; it was he who, in the afternoon, fixed me up with a little table on the south side of the room where I could prepare the voters' certificates of residence for submission to him. I was acting for Mr. MacLean. Jonathan Miller may have been returning officer, but I did not see him about; Charlie attended to all the details, had all the 'say.' I was there all day and saw the thing from the beginning to the opening of the ballot box. The voting went on all day, voters coming in one door and going out the other at the opposite end. Outside both doors was a crowd of men."

CITY COUNCIL, FIRST MEETING.

"The first meeting of the council took place in daylight. Mr. Johnson" (Charles Gardner Johnson) "himself swore in Mr. MacLean as mayor, not Jonathan Miller. I was there, and saw all that went on; up to that time, Mr. MacLean had been mayor-elect, not mayor; the small room was full of aldermen-elect and others; all who could crowd in, only a few in all, 15 or 20 men, a stove, a desk, a long table, and the chairs made a good room full for a room say twelve by twenty or less. How many of those assembled in the room were smoking? I expect some of them were, for in those days most of them smoked a pipe."

MAYOR MACLEAN. ALDERMEN.

"Charlie Johnson got the bible off the top of the high desk and administered the oath of office to Mr. MacLean. Then Mr. MacLean, as mayor, swore in the aldermen. The aldermen-elect were standing up on both sides of the table, lined up on both sides, with arm and hand raised; each gentleman repeated his name, and then Mr. MacLean administered the oath to them collectively all at one time.

"There were insufficient chairs. Charlie Johnson found some in the prisoners' cells and passed them out into the court room; there was some agitation, some shuffling about; Mayor MacLean was standing at the head of the table. Then he sat down, and was the only man sitting down when he called the meeting to order. His Worship was very business-like and prompt. Then all sat down. Tom McGuigan, afterwards, for many years, city clerk, took a seat on the corner of the table at the left of the mayor.

"Charlie Johnson, who up to that time had been master of ceremonies all day, whispered to me, 'What do we do next?' I was a young man, it is true, but I had once been through a similar experience in Wolseley, Manitoba, and had a general idea of the procedure. I replied, 'If you'll wait a moment, I'll show you,' and I went out into the street and around to Tilley's Stationery store, bought a pen, a bottle of ink, a pad of paper, and, returning, wrote down on the head of the first sheet, 'City of Vancouver.'

"Then I said to Charlie Johnson, 'Better elect a city clerk.' Then I wrote something brief about 'Meeting of City Council,' 'sworn in by Chas. Gardner Johnson,' and pushed the pad in front of Tom McGuigan."

CITY CLERK.

Query: Mr. Gallagher, the *Vancouver Advertiser* says that the proceedings were opened with the appointment of J. Huntly as City Clerk, pro tem, and that afterwards J. Rooney was appointed permanently at the first council meeting. (See *Vancouver Advertiser*, Vol. 1, No. 3, Tuesday, 11 May 1886.)

Mr. Gallagher: (continuing with some heat) "That's wrong. Rooney was postmaster, he resigned, and Jonathan Miller quit as policeman just about that time, and was appointed postmaster. Do you believe everything you read in the newspapers? That newspaper was the *Advertiser*; I doubt if McDougall" (the editor) "was there; he was probably drunk in any case. Get hold of the *Weekly Herald*, see what they say; you will probably find a more accurate account in the *Herald*."

"I myself wrote the resolution appointing Tom McGuigan City Clerk, and as soon as the resolution passed, pushed the pad in front of Tom McGuigan."

"The next resolution was the appointment of Chief of Police, Jack Stewart." (See Inaugural meeting, first City Council, also below and next page.)

DAVID OPPENHEIMER. CAPILANO WATER.

"I don't know about Bill Findlay's" (the late Mr. Wm. F. Findlay) "remarks re the conversation he overheard between David Oppenheimer and his uncle Lewis Carter" (see *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 2) "about bringing the water over the Narrows in a tunnel. Lewis Carter was a brainy man. The charter for the Coquitlam and the Capilano Water Works systems were granted before, or at the same time, as the city was incorporated; they all passed the legislative assembly together. Oppenheimer was heavily interested in the Vancouver Improvement Company. He built miles of sidewalk out in the east end which led to nowhere; there were no houses near them."

STATUE TO MAYOR MACLEAN.

"It is not Oppenheimer's monument which should be at the entrance to Stanley Park; it should be MacLean's. Oppenheimer was not the statesman that MacLean was."

EXCERPT FROM MINUTES IN ORIGINAL MINUTE BOOK OF PROCEEDINGS OF FIRST CITY COUNCIL AT ITS SECOND MEETING, 12 MAY 1886, AT 7.30 P.M.

(The first meeting was at 2 p.m. on the 10th.)

Stanley Park.

"Communication from A.W. Ross was read requesting the council to petition the Dominion Government to grant reserve at First Narrows for city park."

City Clerk.

"The Mayor stated that J. Rooney had declined the office of City Clerk."

"Moved by Alderman Hemlow, seconded by Alderman Griffiths, that T.F. McGuigan be appointed City Clerk. Yeas 6, neas 4, carried."

(Note: the minutes of both meetings, 10th and 12th, are in the handwriting of T.F. McGuigan; even the "signature," "J. Rooney, City Clerk pro. tem.," seems to be in McGuigan's handwriting. It would seem that J. Rooney was appointed in his absence, or otherwise, had he been present, he would probably have declined at once. The *Vancouver Advertiser*, Vol. 1, No. 3, 11th May, says J. Huntly (Jonathan Miller's son-in-law) was appointed City Clerk pro tem, and J. Rooney appointed permanently. This whole question has been investigated in consequence of the painting by John Innes, 1934, of the meeting of the first City Council.)

CONVERSATION WITH W.H. GALLAGHER IN MR. INNES' OFFICE, 10 AUGUST 1934, MR. INNES PRESENT, AND UPON ABOVE BEING READ TO HIM.

Mr. Gallagher: (with some heat) "Rooney wasn't even present. He had wanted the position, but his crowd were beaten—he was an Alexander follower. Baldwin was sent out to find him. Baldwin was a quiet, gentlemanly chap, so they sent him to find Rooney, but he came back without him. Rooney had given

some sort of surly answer. I wouldn't be surprised if it happened that the minutes in the Minute Book were not actually written up for a week after the meeting."

W.H. GALLAGHER, SEPTEMBER 1933 – OUR FIRST CIVIC ELECTION.

CHINESE.

(See *Early Vancouver*, volumes 1 and 2, etc.)

"The Victoria boat came in whistling, and the band on board playing 'Hail to the Chief'—only they played 'hail' to the wrong chief from their point of view.

"Soon after that the Hastings Sawmill people collected together their Chinese employees and sent them up to vote. It was perfectly legitimate, they were bona fide residents; there was no law against it; there was nothing you could say why they could not vote; it was open voting too, and mighty little qualification necessary; no voters list.

"The Chinamen—and their pigtailed—came on up Hastings Road, lined on both sides with bushes, came on up in twos and threes, some on the road, some on the two-plank sidewalk. Then someone shouted, 'Here's the Chinamen,' and that started it.

"There were a lot of navvies around Granville for election day; rough customers from the railroad gangs and bush fellers from the C.P.R. clearing" (West End), "and they shouted at the approaching Chinamen, and began to move towards them. Then one or two of the Chinamen decided, I suppose, that they did not like the look of things, and that they did not want to vote anyhow, and turned around; then one or two more came to a standstill, the rest came on up, until there was a little crowd of them, standing, and the white men advancing towards them. The white men shouted at the Chinamen and the Chinamen turned tail and ran.

"Charlie Queen, who drove stage and was drowned up north afterwards, was sitting on his seat on his stage—up on the driver's seat. He shouted too, then whipped up his four horse, and roars, and takes off after the Chinamen, stage horses and all, roaring as he went. There was a mighty clatter with Charlie roaring and the stage rattling down the road—a terrific noise, and the Chinamen went faster; so did Charlie and his stage. He chased them all the way to the Hastings Mill, and the Chinamen never stopped running 'til they got there."

(Then Mr. Gallagher laughed at the recollection of it—almost fifty years ago.)

FIRST COUNCIL MEETING.

"Alderman Balfour was from Winnipeg. He built the bridge over the Red River at Emerson, Manitoba. Dr. McGuigan and Tom McGuigan were also from Winnipeg. MacLean had his Winnipeg friends around him. Alexander's crowd, and the Victoria bunch, were beaten and stayed out of sight."

27 JUNE 1934 – MAYOR MACLEAN.

Geo. Bartley, printer on old *World* newspaper, remarks, "We called him 'Squire MacLean'; his hair was, well, not red; it was a brown, part grey."

Miss MacLean, his eldest daughter: "Father was a typical Highlander; light blue eyes, ruddy complexion, and his hair was white; his hair had turned white about thirty; he belonged to a family whose hair turned at an early age."

Miss MacLean, his youngest daughter: "Blue eyes, glowing complexion, not all over his face, but in parts; a Highlander's complexion, and his hair grey, went grey early, and a darker colour."

These answers made to John Innes, now painting first meeting of first City Council of Vancouver.