

Early Vancouver

Volume Five

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Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1936-1945.

Supplemental to volumes one, two, three and four collected in 1931, 1932 and 1934.

About the 2011 Edition

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MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH EDWARD WARNER, PIONEER, 1888, NOW OF 453 EAST 30TH AVENUE, WHO CALLED AT CITY ARCHIVES THIS AFTERNOON ACCOMPANIED BY MR. GEORGE GREEN, 200 SOUTH GROSVENOR STREET, 6 SEPTEMBER 1939.

EDWARD WARNER.

Mr. Warner said: "I was born in Birmingham, England, and left there with Father and Mother, Edward and Charlotte Warner, for Toronto; Father was pretty well 'fixed,' and took a notion to migrate; he was a bricklayer; I was their only son, my age seventeen. We stayed in Toronto; I came on to Vancouver in the spring of 1888; Mother died in Toronto about 1900, and Father went back to England. In Toronto I worked with Phillip Oben, of Central Park; he was a plasterer; then I came west; C.P.R. tourist; coal oil lamps in the coaches those days."

YALETOWN, 1888. CLEARING FIRES.

"I got to Vancouver with about five dollars in my pocket, and put up at a private home down in Yaletown, and had to fight clearing fires all the first night; the fire was somewhere around Davie Street, west of Granville Street. There were only a few men around, but such as we could get hold of helped fight fire; it was the first night I was in Vancouver, and I don't know just exactly where the brush fire was; we fought with buckets, but where the water came from I don't know; must have been a well nearby; there was no Capilano water then."

D.B. CHARLESON. C.P.R. STEAMSHIPS. COURT HOUSE. MULES. C.P.R. STABLES. C.P.R. TOWNSITE.

"Next day I went looking for a job. Went to a real estate office on Water Street, and they sent me to a job washing dishes for Jones, next to Greyhound Saloon, right at the corner of Water and Cordova Street. I washed dishes for quite a while and then I got a longshore job, stevedoring the *Parthia* and *Batavia*. D.B. Charleson had the contract loading and unloading the C.P.R. trans-Pacific liners; all ship's tackle in those days; no cranes; there were lots of Chinese coming, going all over Canada; we put them in the immigration shed. Then I got a job handling the rock for the Court House, built on what is now Victory Square; it came on scows from the C.P.R. quarries up the North Arm, and there was a sort of float for the scows to tie up on the shore between Columbia and Carrall streets; then I broke my elbow. I drove two mules with the rock; we stabled them where the Hudson's Bay Co. warehouse is now on Water Street; here I am in this photo" (No. C.V. P. Bu. 193, N. Bu. 118) "holding the two mules, one in each hand; those two mules helped to clear the right of way from Port Moody, and helped clear the 'C.P.R. Townsite,' too."

ALDERMAN ALEX CLELAND.

"You can see Alderman Cleland, seated on wagon, clean shaven, holding reins, centre team, in this photo."

WEST END. CLEARING THE FOREST. PHILLIP OBEN.

"I was walking along Georgia Street—going towards the park anyway- one day, when I heard a noise, and, coming out of the forest, driving about six oxen hauling logs, came Phillip Oben, whom I told you I worked with in Toronto; he was dumping the logs in Coal Harbour at the junction of Pender and Georgia. He looked at me and said something about, 'What are you doing here,' and I replied, 'Looking for a job,' but he had all the men he wanted."

GRANVILLE STREET-THIRD AVENUE BRIDGE. ELECTRIC STREET CARS, FAIRVIEW. CHAMPION AND WHITE.

"Then I hauled piles for the electric railway bridge, opened in 1891, at Granville Street, beside the wagon bridge. And next I got a job with Champion and White, down on Dupont Street; scavengers."

GEORGE STREET. ST. GEORGE STREET. SALMON IN MOUNT PLEASANT. 28TH AND 30TH AVENUES.

"I owned a home at 309 Barnard Street, now Union, and I traded that for an acre of land out in South Vancouver, on St. George Street; it was old George Road or George Street; they named it after George Godfrey; he had owned the acre, and cut the road to it; it is now Saint George Street. And we used to catch salmon in the stream between what is now 28th and 30th Avenue; my dog, a big bulldog, used to

stand beside the pool and pull the salmon out of the stream; there were no beaver there then; I never saw any, anyway.”

MULES. PRINCE EDWARD STREET. 24TH AND 25TH AVENUES. HORNE ROAD AND 28TH AVENUE.

“I had a span of mules; I paid two hundred dollars for them; then I traded them for two and a quarter acres bounded by what is now 24th and 25th avenues, Prince Edward Street and St. George Street; it was standing timber; I had to make a road to it; I owned then three and one quarter acres in two parcels. The first road cut through was the Horne Road, now 28th Avenue East. I let a contract to some Chinamen to fell the trees, clear the logs, and I hauled the cordwood they cut to town; I was in the wood business. It was nothing but cordwood in those days; no mill wood. I sold the cordwood to everybody for three dollars a cord for wood, and four dollars for bark.

“After I got the two and one quarter acres cleared, I sold it, just before the real estate boom, for fifteen hundred dollars to Grimmett Bros., real estate firm, and I suppose they subdivided it; anyway, it is all in lots now and built over; you see there is double frontage on 24th and 25th avenues.”

HEMLOCK. TAN BARK. MAIN STREET. LOGGING THE FOREST. TANNERY WORKS.

“About tan bark; I hauled tan bark from away down what is now Main Street. There was no road down Main Street then; I was the first man who ever crossed Main Street south of the Bodwell Road, now Thirty-third Avenue, with a horse and buggy.

“To get the tan bark I had to drive the wagon down Cemetery Road, now Fraser Avenue, a long way—past the cemetery—until I got somewhere about Sixtieth Avenue, and then turned west into a logging road until I got somewhere about Sixtieth and Main. There was an old man by the name of Morrison” (note: for account of this family, see *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 3; the property was part of D.L. 652, see Vol. 1, and is now a civic park, Sunset Park, Main Street at 51st to 53rd Avenue) “he owned all that land, and he cut the hemlock bark off the trees, it twisted itself, in the sun, into little bundles, and I hauled it to the tannery on the corner of Twelfth Avenue and Westminster Avenue, on the edge of the Brewery Creek ravine.

“I was married in the Anglican Church in Toronto to Miss Agnes Gibson from Belfast, Ireland; she is still living, but not in good health. Our children are, in order of age:

1. Edward, married, two daughters, lives in Los Angeles.
2. Jane, now Mrs. P.D. Stewart, one daughter, lives 28th Avenue East.
3. Florence, now Mrs. Richard English, no children, but adopted one, lives 30th East.
4. Samuel, killed in logging camp about 1929.
5. William, married, two sons, lives 26th Avenue East.