Early days of Wharf and Front Streets with the intersection of Bastion Street, Nanaimo

Transcribed by Jennifer Bolstler, Vancouver Island University – July 13, 2015.

[Beginning of recording is heavily distorted. Remainder is of poor quality.]

William Barraclough: [unintelligible] ... presented before Nanaimo Historical Society, dated April the 18th, 1972, entitled "Old days of Wharf and Front Streets, with the intersection of Bastion Street, Nanaimo."

Introduction: No part of Vancouver Island has a more interesting history than Nanaimo, and in particular the strip of land along the harbour frontage consisting of Wharf, Bastion, and Front Streets.

In preparing this article I have gathered together items of historic interest from many sources. As the years go by the task of collecting and reviewing the events and life as it was of former times becomes more difficult to obtain.

Realizing with the passing of our pioneer citizens a wealth of valuable information, but have not been written of former times, is constantly being lost as part of our historic treasure source, I commenced several years ago to make written and tape recorded interviews with some of our senior citizens as "living memory" for the purpose of eliciting information concerning their remembrances of early Nanaimo as social life, outstanding events, and general workaday conditions, etc.

I'll be using quotations from some of these interviews. Already several of those with tape recorded voices have passed on as, Mrs. Martha A. Kenny, Mr. William Lewis, Mr. Joseph E. L. Muir, Mr. Hiram Gough, Mr. Victor B. Harrison, and Mr. Joseph Kneen.

Valuable information was gathered from the files of the Nanaimo Free Press; letters and documents from the Provincial Archives, per Mr. Willard E. Ireland; Andrew Muir's diary; Mr. Mark Bates' notes of early Nanaimo; Mrs. Martha Kenney's [writings on] Early buildings and historic sites of Nanaimo.

Recognition is extended to the following for inspection for their valuable early pictures and general information: Mr. Arthur Martin, Mr. Philip J. Piper, Mrs. F. McGirr, Mr. Ronald Norris, Mr. John [Greene?], and to my wife Ethel for assisting materially on dates and other items.

The title of this article "Wharf and Front Streets, with the intersection Bastion Street, Nanaimo," covers the central location along the harbour frontage of Nanaimo. It was in this area that the first development was made by our transplanted society, which replaced the
ancient way of life and culture of the Native Indian peoples, and will be called the birthplace of the city about 120 years ago.

The history of Nanaimo and the harbour has evolved throughout time periods. First, for ages the Native Indians have built around the shoreline and fringes of the primeval forest that surrounded these named streets. Living in their particular environment, the several bands and family groups carried out their general activities according to their ancient customs near the shoreline of the harbour. The Indians were an intelligent people in the ways of survival, making the best use of any natural material available for food, clothing, shelter, canoes, tools, etc.

The second period commenced with the coming of the Spanish explorers, who cruised around these waterways and the islands in the harbour in 1792. The visitors worked with two small ships, the brig *Sutil*, under command of Sr. Don D. Galiano [Dionisio Alcalá Galiano], and the schooner *Mexicana*, in charge of Sr. Don C. Valdés [Cayetano Valdés y Flores], both officers of the Spanish Navy. They were under the command of Lieutenant Commander [Francisco de Eliza?], who had made an expedition in the previous year - 1791 - to parts of this [immense?] sea.

During this time, a few Spanish names were entered on their charts. The journal of Galiano and Valdés states, "Descanso Bay, or Small Bay of Rest, on Gabriola Island was named June the 15th, 1792, where a meagre supply of fresh water was acquired." The next three days - June 16th, 17th, and 18th - were spent exploring around the present Nanaimo area.

The main Bocas de Winthuysen, or Inlet, was entered in their charts, which included the Nanaimo Harbour, the terminal in Departure Bay. Also noted in this item, quote "The sailors continued to replenish the fresh water and to make repairs to all boats." At this time we can only conjecture where such convenient place to find ample fresh water and repair their boats was. Millstone River would be one of the most likely places.

In connection with the name Winthuysen it will be mentioned that one of the Spanish officers killed at the Battle of [Cape] St. Vincent on the 14th of February, 1797, off the coast of Madagascar Island was Rear-Admiral Xavier Winthuysen whose flagship San Josef [San José] was one of the two ships captured by [Horatio] Nelson.

Nothing more was heard about this inlet until about 60 years later, or 1852, when the third period was established by the occupational development by the Hudson's Bay Company when they commenced working the coal deposits around the banks of the harbour. They built a warehouse on the upper side of what is now Wharf Street and constructed the high picket fence enclosing a work yard with a landing dock at the shoreline, and other suitable buildings to develop their business interests.
The fourth period commenced when the Hudson's Bay Company sold out their interests to the Vancouver Coal Mining Company in 1862. The production of coal continued to increase in volume until about 1923, after which a general decline in the tonnage was mined as oil became extensively used as a fuel.

While this paper is more than a history of coal mining here, the following information may be of interest. The decline of coal production was reflected in many mines around Nanaimo; they closed down in turn. Nanaimo's greatest Number One/No. 1 Mine ended when the last mining equipment and steel rails were hoisted to the surface in October, 1938.

I was advised by Mr. Parker, the museum has recently received some original charts and maps of the harbour. Also records of the Hudson's Bay Company era concerning the early coal mining. We are looking forward to hear this article on the subject, at which time many of those debatable questions may be cleared up.

Now, Nanaimo's prosperity and industrial growth is supported by a good variety of commercial businesses.

The writing of history is always open to question. Many articles have been written concerning the first miners to work here, and as to where the first workings were located. There is a divergence of supposedly factual information which often turns out to be erroneous.

A story has been told and re-told countless times about an Indian making the first discovery of coal here by knocking off a piece of black rock while digging for clams. He would have been working on the tidal grounds, while all the early findings and records of coal were located on the harbour banks higher above the water. The story must be discounted as factual.

Another story, which is a favourite in history, concerns John McGregor. He's reported to have discovered a rich seam of coal on Newcastle Island in 1850. There is also an article in the Colony's magazine section for July the 4th, 1971. The improbability of the story can be summed up by the following research:

According to Andrew Muir's diary, John McGregor was working with Muir's at Fort Rupert in 1849, and the first half of 1850, as shown in these selected entries. Quote, "April the 18th, 1849. McGregor and I are blasting rock."

"Monday, April the 29th. McGregor and I went to [borrow?] guns, etc."

"Tuesday, April the 30th. McGregor and his wife and three children got a canoe with two Indians to paddle over to an island." end of that quote.
And numerous other items.

After the trouble with the Hudson's Bay Company officials over working conditions at Fort Rupert, most of the miners quit work there. John Muir Sr. stayed on for a short time. The miners and families, which included John McGregor and his family, were picked up by the ship *England* about the 10th of July, arriving at San Francisco the 20th July, 1950.

The Muir's returned to Victoria and took up large tracks of land at Sooke; application was made in April, 1851.

From hand down family history by Mrs. Thomas Watson Glaholm - Margaret was her name, a daughter of John and Mary McGregor - after the McGregor's arrived at San Francisco, teh 20th of July 1850, the family went by horseback to the California gold fields; the three children sharing horses with their parents. The children were bathed when crossing warm streams. The family returned to Victoria and took up land at Sooke in 1851, where McGregor built the house and other farm buildings. Later McGregor farmed at Metchosin.

From the Hudson's Bay Company official letters, quote, "The three miners arrived at Nanaimo in the *Cadboro* on September 3rd, 1852, and John McGregor arrived the following day, September 4th, in the *Recovery.*"

As stated, McGregor finding coal on Newcastle Island in 1950 [1850?] is a fable.

We have on file a written family tree history of the McGregor's which covers most of the period from leaving Scotland in 1849, to early 1900's. John McGregor died at Sooke in 1866, age 55. His wife Mary died at Nanaimo in 1905, aged 85.

What is factual is a document written by James Douglas, dated Fort Victoria, the 18th of August, 1852, to Archibald Barclay, esquire, of the Hudson's Bay Company headquarters, London. A copy of the letter was secured through the courtesy of the British Archives. The Douglas letter referred to contains five pages of text where he informs the London office of the thickness and the various layers of formation of the soil: sandstone, clay, slate, coal, bituminous shale, etc.

For our purpose here, a few selected paragraphs are quoted: "Fort Victoria, the 18th of August, 1852. I returned last night from an exploratory excursion through the Canal de Arro and along the east coast of Vancouver's Island, undertaken for the purpose of examining the beds of coal reported to exists in that quarter, and I rejoice to see that our journey has been productive of very satisfactory results." End of that quote.

Again, "I was accompanied in that journey by Mr. Pemberton; Mr. Muir, the Company's late overman at Port Rupert; and Mr. Golledge; with six men and a few Indians in two canoes;
while the *Cadboro* was dispatched with a small supply of goods by the Gulf of Georgia to meet us in Winthuysen Inlet, which was appointed the general rendezvous.

13:21

"In the course of that excursion we discovered three beds of coal. The first, an upper bed measuring three inches; the second, immediately under it measuring 20 inches; and at the distance of about 3/4 of a mile nearly due west, a third bed measuring 57 3/4 inches in depth of clean coal from which, with the assistance of the natives, we procured about 50 tons in a single day at a cost of 11 pounds, paid in goods.

"I have resolved, until I received the Governor and committee's instructions on the subject, to take possession of the coal district for the Company, and to employ Mr. Muir and his two sons in opening a shaft at high water mark, over the thick seam, from whence they will work the bed inwards towards the land."

Continuing, "A few of the common servants will also be sent there at the same time to assist in that work, and as a protection against the natives. They will also put up few temporary buildings to shelter the workmen and purchase coal from the natives. I will not go to too much expense until we see our way clearly, and have ascertained that the coal beds may be worked to advantage.

"In that case, it may be desirable to remove Mr. Gilmour and his party of miners from Fort Rupert, should no discovery in the meantime be made there, to this new coalfield, and to commence permanent establishment on the spot by withdrawing a part of the officers and servants now employed at Fort Rupert. I remain, Sir, your most obedient servant, James Douglas." End of quote.

I can't conceive that any one Indian can be credited with the discovery of coal here at Nanaimo. As mentioned previously, the natives were wise to all natural materials for their usefulness. They'd have thrown pieces of the black rock on their fires years ago for its warmth. However, the long period of the Indian's self-determined way of life was shattered when Coal Tyee arrived at Victoria with his canoe load of coal, making the Hudson's Bay Company cognisant of the coal deposits at Nanaimo.

Note here, "To this date, I have not definitely established the date that Coal Tyee went to Victoria."

Six days after writing the aforesaid letter to London, Douglas wrote another letter of great historical importance to Nanaimo. Since the message contained therein is generally well known, I will only quote the first paragraph. Quoting, "Fort Victoria, the 24th of August, 1852. Mr. Joseph McKay, Sir, you may proceed with all possible diligence to Winthuysen Inlet, commonly known as Nanaimo Bay, and formerly take possession of the coal beds lately discovered there for, and on behalf of, the Hudson's Bay Company." etc. "I remain, Sir, your obedient servant, James Douglas." End of that.
Joseph McKay arrived at Nanaimo three days later - the 27th of August, 1852. McKay had a long record of executive ability with the Hudson's Bay Company. He instituted procedures here on a business basis as recording events; accounting; good relations with the Indians; directing construction of suitable buildings, stores, and shipping facilities. Also, supervising the building of the Bastion which was completed in 1853. McKay may well deserve the distinction of establishing the first law and order of modern society at Nanaimo. He was transferred another assignment during 1854.

From the time of McKay's arrival at Nanaimo - the 27th of August, 1852 - a good amount of coal was being produced from the drifts into the banks of the harbour, for 14 days later - September the 10th - it is recorded the ship *Cadboro* loaded the first shipment of coal to leave the harbour, which measured 450 barrels. This could be part of the 50 tons of coal mentioned by Douglas in his letter three weeks earlier - August the 18th, 1852.

There would not be weigh scales here at the time of the Cadboro loading. Filling barrels from canoes brought alongside the ship, then hoisting aboard to dump in the holds would be the most practical method of estimating the amount of the cargo.

From here on, hoisting machinery and other improved devices would be installed to facilitate production. An early picture shows the small head rigging, hoisting wheel, and air shaft located near the corner of Wharf and Commercial Streets, known as No. 1 Shaft.

Apart from the official journals of the Hudson's Bay Company, I consider items written by Mr. Mark Bate a most reliable source of information. Mr. Bate arrived at Nanaimo the 1st of January, 1857. He was appointed accountant for the Hudson's Bay Company. This time of 1857 was almost from the beginning of modern history here.

Quoting Mr. Bate, “Commencing with a few white men and Indians, coal was first gotten out by an open cut or trench at the foot of Front Street, about where Mrs. Anderson's boat house is stationed. The names of these white men should be recorded. They are, John Muir, (overman), Robert Muir and Archibald Muir, and John McGregor.

“While coal was being mined or quarried from these surface works, No.1 Shaft was sunk, perhaps 40-50 feet across from Jackson's Fish Market on Wharf Street. Coal six feet was struck at a depth of 70 feet. Mining was at once started underground to the rise, of as far and above Bastion Street, to a depth as low as the level of the pit bottom would allow. Mine openings followed at Newcastle Island and Park Head. At both these points coal cropped out on the surface”. End of quote.

Park Head was near to the old fire hall on Nicol Street, and Jackson's Fish Market continued in business for many years on Wharf Street.

A man little known about in the early mining days here was Ovid Allard. Quoting B. A. McKelvie in his book “Fort Langley” states, “Ovid Allard was transferred to Nanaimo and
become superintendent of Indian labour there. Allard had been the right hand man of James Murray Yale”.

Here is an item by the late Mr. Joseph E.L. Muir which was recorded on tape in the Bastion on May 15th, 1963. Quoting, “John Muir, Robert Muir, and Archibald Muir (my father), came to Nanaimo when they opened the Muir Shaft right where the Bank of Commerce stands today.” That is on Wharf Street. "Then at the Douglas Mine, my father was employed by contract to mine out coal and he hired two boys, one named [Billy Wall?] and one named [Joe Malpass?] as trapper boys to trap doors, and they were paid 50 cents a day." End of quote.

While coal was being extracted from the shallow mines, the Hudson's Bay Company established a base of operations during 1852. A warehouse and stores were built on the upper side of Wharf Street railroad tracks, which was built on pilings.

From a picture, the rail house appears to be located where the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce parking lot is today. It was a good sized building with well-spaced windows, and a window in the gable. The building appears to be whitewashed like most of the old ones.

Adam Grant Horne was the first storekeeper; a young man of 22 from Scotland. I will refer to Mr. Horne again.

From the warehouse an under-passage, or travel way, went under the railway to a large enclosure having a high, whitewash picket fence. At the waterfront, below the pickets, two heavy timber doors gave access to the yard. In front of these doors was a long, log wharf extending across the pickets.

The picture was taken at low tide, as a piece of bare beach is showing. At high tide barges and light draft boats would be able to moor at the wharf for loading and unloading. This enclosure has been referred to as the Hudson's Bay Compound.

Near this waterfront doorway the first trial by jury in the colony was conducted by James Douglas on the quarterdeck of the steamship Beaver, on a frosty day, January the 17th, 1852, between the hours of 10:00 AM and 3:00 PM, as recorded in the Hudson's Bay Company's Nanaimo journal by a Lieutenant John Moresby and J. W. McKay.

Summary justice was carried out on two men convicted of murder. They were hanged at Gallows Point, Protection Island. Protection Island was formerly called Douglas Island. This is from Walbran's "Place Names".

The late Mr. William Lewis recorded on tape, "As children we played in and out of Hudson's Bay Company's warehouse. I remember seeing two barrels of flints inside the door. We held competitions to see who could throw the flints furthest over the water." Mr. Lewis was born July the 17th, 1863. He arrived at Nanaimo November 15th, 1875, and lived for the rest of his life here. He died February the 25th, 1968, at the age of 104 years.
As stated previously, the Hudson's Bay Company closed down their stores here in 1862 when they sold out to Vancouver Coal Mining Company.

Before featuring the many old landmarks and place names that were connected with Wharf and Front Streets of former days, I will give brief attention to the early miners who took part in the formative days and customs of the city.

Few of the early miners kept diaries to record daily happenings in their lives. Some have left valuable hand-down history which must always be considered. They are mostly young men who possibly did not realise that they were making history of the period. The usual daily round was to work ten hours a day at their various duties; after that, the primary interest of the married men was to build a home and bring their families here to settle.

Another important project was to clear land and create a garden. Fruit and vegetables were not so easily available as today. To walk around parts of the south end of the city several of these original miner's cottages can be seen, exteriorly unchanged from 100 or more years ago, with the present occupants proud of their gardens and the rich soil cultivated over a century ago.

Part Two

Part two recalls the location of older buildings and business houses, historical events, and general developments from the corner of Wharf and Commercial Streets across Bastion and around Front Street to Comox Road. Also information supplied by pioneer citizens both past and present.

Commencing our tour of Wharf Street, there is no Wharf Street as seen today. The only part that could be built on was the south end adjoining Commercial Street. Wharf Street was at first a delivery route built up on piles to carry coal trains from the small mines that operated to the south of the area. The railway tracks came over the long bridge on Commercial Streets, then along Wharf to the coal docks below the present old stone warehouse, or, the Harbour Commissions Building.

Quoting from Mr. Mark Bates, [A Stroll Around Nanaimo?], in 1874, Nanaimo Free Press. Quote, “There was a bridge the length of Wharf Street built as a portion of the colliery's railway system to the coal docks, long known as Hirst's Wharf. Filling and raising the street to its present grade was accomplished partly by dumping there the mud - always plentiful in season - scraped from other streets.

The first building on entering Wharf Street from the south, on the right hand side, was the Royal Hotel. A two storey structure with an overhanging veranda. It was not the first hotel in Nanaimo, but one of the early ones. On August 13th, 1886, this hotel catered to some
important guests. Sir John A. Macdonald and Lady Macdonald had attended the historic occasion at Shawnigan, where Sir John had driven the last spike of the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway. The Royal Hotel was the scene of a civic reception. Also present were Mr. Mark Bate as mayor, and the council members consisted of W. H. Webb, John Hilbert, W. Wilson, James Knight, A. G. Horne, G. Bevilockway, and Charles Wilson.

The late Mr. William Lewis recorded, quote, "I saw Sir John A. Macdonald walking back and forth on the veranda of the Royal Hotel. Robert Dunsmuir, Sir John, and some of their male friends were somewhat dismayed by the ladies keeping too close a tab on their actions. Arrangements were made for them to visit No. 1 Mine. They descended to the bottom of the 600 foot deep shaft to celebrate the event in their own style. No report is available about the stag party." End of quote.

The Royal Hotel was built by Richard Watkins in 1878. Later it was owned by L. Lawrence and [Beveridge?]. It was burned down together with other buildings nearby, September the 28th, 1894.

Adjoining the Royal Hotel to the north was the first [regular?] built fire hall. On November 21st, 1878, an offer was made by J. Hirst and J. W. Stirtan to donate a site for the structure, and this was accepted. A picture shows the front of the building as a rather ornate style with a wide, overhanging porch, which in turn supported a second porch. Rising from this second porch were two columns supporting the front of a high hose tower, the only part of the building that looked like a fire hall.

A brief account of the first fire department may be of interest. At a public meeting near May the 4th, 1878, held at Institute Hall, Nanaimo's first fire company was organized. Officers were, foreman, Walter Wilson; first assistant, William Guillion; secretary, J. H. Pleace; and treasurer, George Norris.

The first machine used was a hand pumper operated by four men. Fortunately this machine has been preserved; it was mounted as an historic item in Piper Park. This machine was replaced by a ten-man hand pumper; in this case no consideration was given to preserve it. Both these hand pumpers were serviced by hand drawn hose reels as part of the equipment. The machines and wheels were housed in conveniently located sheds, and hose reels were also placed in the new fire hall. A picture shows a hand reel competition in 1894.

On August the 15th, 1878, it was decided to purchase a used Burton and Blake steam engine from the Portland Fire Department at a cost of $1,100, and to buy up 500 feet of hose for $250. A committee was appointed to canvas the town for subscriptions.
In 1885, a Merryweather steam engine was purchased from London, England at a cost of $2,500. The Provincial Government gave $1,000 and Mr. Samuel Robins and the citizens donated the balance.

A group picture taken on a gala occasion, presumably to show off the Burton and Black steam engine in front of the fire hall. In the picture about 26 fireman and 20 members of the Silver Cornet [Coronet] Band can be counted. The assembled group filled the end of Wharf Street. The firemen are dressed in pullover, open neck vests and are wearing peak type caps or hats, with a bulge up front. Some of the men are standing on the steam engine. The rest are holding the rope lines which appear to be attached to hand drawn hose reels. The vests were of red flannel with black velvet trim, according to Mrs. McGirr, whose father owned one of these vests.

The fire hall burned down together with the Royal Hotel in September, 1894.

The next building was Jackson's Fish Market. This I have mentioned previously. The last building on that side of the street was a blacksmith's shop, and the last person to work the shop was Mr. John Johnson.

On the opposite corner from the fire hall was a two storey, V-shaped, wooden building owned by George Williams. And old picture shows the corner squared off, with an attractive bay window occupying the whole wall, and this first floor window was part of Ben [Shearing's?] cigar shop. Below the window is a stairwell leading to a semi-below-ground business area, and over the stairway entrance is a sign announcing "Eureka Soda Works, L. Lawrence, Prop.".

And parked across the street end is a horse-drawn, four wheel, three-deck vehicle, with lettering on the side "Eureka Soda Works". Mr. L. Lawrence is in the driver's seat. The three young men at the rear are, from the top to bottom, Fred Vater, [Rube/Reub Langell?], and Burt [Cridge?]?

Mr. W. H. Philpott's first restaurant was situated in the lower level of the William's block, previous to L. Lawrence's Soda Works. Mr. Philpott came to Nanaimo in 1882 and was engaged as cook by Mr. George Shaw, who later became Governor of Alaska. Mr. Phillpolt became owner of the business, known as the Criterion Restaurant. A Free Press item from Monday, June the 18th, 1900, states, "Mr. Philpott has thrown away the key and the restaurant is open day and night."

There are other stores in this building facing Commercial Street. On the second floor were rooms. An article from the Free Press of 1924, Anniversary Number, states, "One of the most attractive and cozy tea rooms on Vancouver Island is the Tea Kettle Tea Room"
conducted by Mrs. Charles Meek. The interior decorations of the room is done in blue, green, and ivory, while the high French windows and comfortable appointments are ideal for those wishing for a restful quiet. There is also a cozy with an open fireplace, and the Tea Kettle Tea Rooms are open on Sunday."

This completes the buildings that were originally located at the south end of Wharf Street. Before giving further attention to the development of Wharf Street, let us look in retrospect to the historic aspect of this area.

Few places in the province can record such an interesting evolvement from tribal days to the present city of Nanaimo. This part of the harbour covers several periods of time. First, the Indian peoples had occupied for ages past. The second period began with the coming of the Spanish explorers who cruised the islands in the harbour in June 16, 17, and 18, 1792 when they entered a few Spanish names on their charts.

Quoting an item from the journal of Lieutenant Francisco de Eliza of the ship San Carlos when he named the inlet Winthuysen, "The sailors continued to replenish the fresh water and make repairs to their boats." End of quote.

Nothing more was heard about this inlet until about 60 years later when the third period was established by the occupation and development of the Hudson's Bay Company when they commenced working the coal seams along the banks of the harbour; when they built a warehouse on the upper side of what is now Wharf Street, and constructed a high picket fence enclosing the work yard; with a landing dock at the shoreline; and other suitable buildings to develop their business interests.

The fourth period commenced when the Hudson's Bay Company sold out their interest of the coal mining business to the Vancouver Coal Mining Company in 1862. Now lumber and wood products have replaced coal mining.

During the years 1858-1861, Captain George H. Richards and his officers in HMS Plumper were occupied in surveying the coast lines. They made frequent calls at Nanaimo during that time. In 1861, Captain Richards and his crew were transferred to HMS Hecate of 850 tonnes to continue their work. During this time, some of the Spanish names were changed. A chart of Nanaimo Harbour was published at London in 1862. I'll relate more fully to these items near the end of this paper.

After the Coal Company filled in some shallow waterways at another site and built better coal loading facilities, the railway tracks and bridge along Wharf Street were removed. The street became usable for general traffic with the filling up as stated previously by Mr. Bate.
An item appeared in the Free Press for April the 14th, 1880, stated, "The Hudson's Bay Company's trading post, erected when Nanaimo was but a primeval forest, was demolished." End of quote.

After the street was built up the water side has remained much the same; no improvements at street level. On the shoreline where a few floating boat landings, including Walter Campbell's boat rentals and Harry Shaw's boathouse. There were also a few fisherman's cabins perched on props; these have all been cleared away.

With the removal of the railway tracks, and filling and levelling of the way, an entrance to the west side of Wharf Street was created to this wedge-shaped property. The area had [prominently been?] occupied by stables, barns, and carriage sheds, the access being from Commercial and Bastion Streets.

An early picture shows a large elderberry shrub or tree growing where the parking lot is today at the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce. I was told by one who remembers, "This property being in the centre of town, farmers would tie their horses to the spreading branches of the tree. I have often seen the place fully occupied with horses." End of quote.

Commercial establishments began to be erected facing Wharf Street, which catered to a variety of businesses, trade supplies, and entertainment. A few of the earlier building sites were later rebuilt on and some of the old stables were renovated as small shops, the rest were demolished. With information supplied and pictures available of the early period, a reasonably good description of the street can be drawn.

A rare picture shows the first business premises were erected at the foot of Front Street facing Wharf Street. The site is now a parking lot. It was a two storey frame building with display windows at street level. Here Louis McQuade [and the Son of Victoria?], ship chandlers, conducted a branch house for a few years. At the very corner was a small storage shed used by McQuade.

The premises were later occupied by George Beattie and George Slater, who operated a printing press. Afterwards Joe [Filmer? Filmer?] carried on with the same line of business. The second storey had four windows; here, A. G. Day specialized in picture framing.

Adjoining to the south was a building, half the width, with two windows upstairs. The premises were occupied by Joseph Booth, a well-known pioneer in Nanaimo, who manufactured his famous [Cuban Blossom?] Cigars. It was one of the shops that had been renovated from John Hilbert's stables. At the south end of the property, near to the old Williams block, a square shaped building with a flat roof - possibly a carriage shed.

Built after this early picture, and situated on the back portion of the present Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, Henry Wilkinson and A. E. Hilbert conducted a billiard hall and
bowling alley. A lane alongside let up to Commercial Street. The business was afterwards owned by William Thorn and William [Burnip?], and Mr. [Burnip?] also held auction sales there. At a later date Mr. George Merryfield operated the premises as a sportsman's club.

The last building to be constructed in this block was the John Cowie['s] Machine Shop, with a two storey office in front facing Wharf Street, built in 1924. A lane ran along the south side from Wharf to Bastion Streets. This building was also the last to be removed on the whole street.

No reference has been made here concerning the modern structures situated in the area now.

Crossing over to the foot of Front Street on the harbour side to the stone warehouse built in 1875 by John Hirst, an enterprising merchant. The warehouse occupies the site of the former Hudson's Bay Company platform scales that weighed the cars of coal passing along the tracks to the coal loading facilities at the waterfront. Mr. Hirst also built the general shipping wharf along the south side of the Hudson's Bay Company coal jetty. It was known as Hirst's Wharf. The Hudson's Bay Company steamship Beaver was the first steamer to moor at Hirst's Wharf, March the 28th, 1876.

Over the years several improvements were made. Noting two items - the Victoria Weekly for December 8, 1878, quote, "Workmen commenced to construct a large addition to Hirst's Wharf." And from the Nanaimo Free Press for October 26, 1906, "A new building had been erected at Hirst's Wharf to accommodate cattle shipments." end of quote. Quoting Mr. William Lewis, "Cattle and other farm animals at times cause some excitement when being driven through town."

So many items of interest were centred around this wharf that only brief mention can be made of a few. The Union steamships operated from there three times weekly, and sailing time for Vancouver was 5 PM. A side-wheeler bringing the circus to town was delayed docking owing to a low tide. People gathered nearby could hear the restless animals voicing a protest for the delay. A long building last used as a herring saltery for shipment to Japan, and the wharf was demolished during the summer of 1966.

Stone for Hirst's warehouse came from Newcastle Island quarry. The original service lane to the wharf is still in use along the side of the warehouse. With the change of occupancy John Mahrer used the upper floor as a liquor merchant, and Frank Stannard carried a flour, feed, and produce business on the lower floor facing the water. Afterwards, Mr. Stannard took over the upper floor for his business. During the Second World War, the lower floor or basement was used as emergency storage.

The date 1875 was cut in relief on the front gable. This fine example of the stonemason's
art was destroyed when renovations were being made to house the Harbour Commission. I saw a workman knocking the figures off with a hammer.

Mr. John Hirst died a comparatively young man, September 1882, age 52.

Moving up to the intersection of Front and Bastion Streets, where much of our early history was made. On the southwest corner John Hilbert, who came to Nanaimo in 1873, erected the building which now stands there. He established a furniture making shop and undertaking business, later disposing of the furniture making. He continued the undertaking business for about 30 years, and he advertised “Coffins made to measure”.

Mr. Hilbert was elected alderman seven times during 1877 and 1892, then elected Mayor of Nanaimo in 1890 and by acclamation in 1891. Served as school trustee and trustee on the first hospital board. Appointed magistrate.

A quote from the paper, “He was active in the contracting line, many of the most substantial buildings being built by him. Mr. Hilbert built the Methodist church at Wellington, and one of Nanaimo’s schools.”

A few people remember a Chinese store in the building facing Bastion Street as a game, fish, and produce shop. A picture shows display tables out in front.

Mr. John Hilbert was a public, spirited man to a great degree. He was interested in many projects, in gasworks, bottleworks, [tannery?], and social events. He died at Nanaimo, July the 24th, 1936, age 83 years.

[Portion of presentation missing?]

Mr. Kitchen had an option to purchase the land whereon the Bastion-

[recording cuts out]

-at the intersection of Bastion and Front Streets, and was the Hudson's Bay Company's fort, or Bastion, on the [northwest?] corner, built by Leon Labine and Jean Baptiste Fortier, complete in 1853.

Mr. Mark Bate wrote, "The Bastion, which stood on the rocky eminence at the corner of Front and Bastion Streets was completed in 1853. Between the Bastion and Dallas Square, four small hewn log houses 26x15 feet with a lean-to in the rear, and one of them with an annex at the rear." End of his quote. These cottages I will refer to later.
The Bastion was moved by Mr. John [Coulson?], a teamster, to the northeast corner of the intersection, 12th September, 1890, while Mr. John Hilbert was mayor. As of the beginning of 1972, preparations are being made to move it to the Bastion Square nearby.

On the 24th of May each year, Chief Constable William Stewart had a 21 gun salute fired. Pictures show his team in action. Governor James Douglas, when visiting here, received a salvo of 17 guns.

The history of the Bastion has been written about countless times. It is so well known there is no need to pursue the subject here. However, there is one item not generally known, and it is interesting and worth telling.

As stated by Mr. Victor B. Harrison on a tape recorded at his home, the 16th of September 1868 [i.e. 1968?]. Quoting, "Mr. Harrison became legal advisor for Mr. Thomas Kitchen, a person who had large land and mortgage holdings. Mr. Kitchen had an option to purchase the land whereon the Bastion stood, and all he wanted was an agreement from those using the old fort to pay $1.00 ground rent per year, and this was refused. So, Mr. Kitchen ordered them to move the Bastion off the land, and this was done as stated.

"Mr. Kitchen went on to say the timbers for the Bastion were brought to the shoreline, and first fitted together there and then packed up the hill in segments, and built on the rocky knoll of its first location."

I spoke to the late Mr. Hiram Gough about this story and he remembered his father telling him along these lines of the story.

Quoting another reference on the subject from a publication by the Nanaimo Herald, 1903, page three. In part, "During the building of the fort the snow was several feet deep on the ground, and the ice thick enough for men to walk on across the harbour. Logs were brought in by the Indians who wore no other covering but a blanket - bare feet and bare headed. They brought the logs over the ice to Commercial Inlet." End of that quote.

The Native Sons purchased the Bastion in 1906.

Referring back to those four square log cottages on Front Street. The one nearest the Bastion was built for the Muir family, who arrived here the 3rd of September, 1852. The cottages were each 25x15 feet and built before the Bastion.

Quoting in part a letter from Joseph McKay to Governor James Douglas, dated Winthuysen Inlet, September the 9th, 1852: "Lazard and gang have most of the wood on the site for a house 25x15 and have commenced building. The Indians have brought 1,000 pieces of cedar bark." etc.
A sequence of pictures records the stages these four cottages were disposed of. The most northern cottage was removed to make way for the three storey brick and stone Green Block, built about 1871, supposedly by the Reverend [N. P. Green?]. It filled the corner of Front and Church Streets.

The adjoining dwelling - the largest of the four - it had been the home of Robert Dunsmuir and family. Mr. Victor B. Harrison stated, as a young man he would often see the Dunsmuirs there, and that there is a picture around showing Mrs. Dunsmuir standing on the veranda in her bare feet.

A few years ago Mr. Harrison recorded on tape that he saw the next cottage being taken down; it was built of squared logs. A picture shows it with an inside chimney. The veranda with corner brackets could have added later from originally. Mr. and Mrs. L. Lawrence occupied this cottage in 1884 when they first came to Nanaimo. A later tenant was Mr. Al Davis, a well-known citizen who made the "Enterprise Cigar" at the shop on Bastion Street.

These last two mentioned cottages were removed when additions to the former Green Block by Mr. Joe Fox, who named it the Windsor Hotel. Mr. Thomas Kitchen had an mortgage and an option to purchase the property; he brought a suit against Mr. Fox for removing the two cottages without his consent, as he wished to preserve them for historic reasons.

Mr. Fox next built the Windsor Hotel Annex, completely occupying the site of the two cottages. After modifications, the Windsor Hotel became the Plaza Hotel, operated by Mr. T. Wells. Afterwards, the original corner section was rebuilt along more modern lines when it became the Shoreline Hotel, and in recent years it goes by the name Villa Hotel.

The cottage nearest to the Bastion was built for the Muir family in 1853 before the Bastion was built, and the late Mr. Joseph Muir stated on tape recording, May the 15th, 1963, in the Bastion "This cottage was first roofed with cedar bark. Pictures show this cottage with an outside fireplace chimney. The other three cottages had inside chimneys. The Muir cottage, had a lean-to at the rear, and being of a duplex type with two front doors facing Front Street, as shown on a picture."

The Muir cottage was the last standing of the four. The picture shows it along the side of the new Windsor Hotel Annex in a state of disrepair. The site is now vacant property. On the tape recording, Mr. Muir referred to a second cottage that had been built for the Muirs, and this was located a little behind the Bastion.

When the ship Oscar blew up outside the harbour, January the 15th, 1913, at 1:55 PM, great damage was done to the windows of the Windsor Hotel - even doors on the inside of the building were blown off the hinges!
From the Free Press, quote, "The little ship <i>Oscar</i> had crept into the harbour the night before, unknown to Mr. Knarston the harbourmaster, to take on 15 tonnes of bunker coal at the Western Fuel Company's loading wharf. She carried, in excess of her general cargo, 1,860 cases - or 50 tonnes - of dynamite, and 50 bags of black powder, secured under canvas on her foredeck."

The <i>Oscar</i> had left the harbour on her way to Vancouver when near the Entrance Lighthouse, fire was discovered near the [barrels?]. The ship put about and when nearing Protection Island the crew abandoned ship, then made for the island. Shortly afterwards the terrific explosion took place.

Crossing over to the Bastion on its present site since 1890. The area below the Bastion is a sloping bank ending in a rocky formation at the shoreline. The site is known as Pioneer Rock. This rocky foreshore was the landing place of the 25 passengers on November 27th, 1854, at 11:00 AM. We are told the sun came out to welcome the new arrivals.

These pioneer citizens left England June the 2nd, 1854, for this far-off land. The <i>Princess Royal</i> ship arrived at Esquimalt, and after a brief stopover the passengers were transferred to the Hudson's Bay Company's ships, <i>Beaver</i> and <i>Recovery</i>. Arriving at Nanaimo as stated above, November 27th, 1854, at 11:00 AM. This event in history is well recorded.

On the sloping bank from the waterfront are two fine specimen of oak trees that merit particular attention. Early pictures show these trees growing there. When Mr. P. J. Piper became chairman of Nanaimo Parks Board in 1948 he was advised by Mr. Joseph E. L. Muir, a member of the Native Sons Society, that these two trees had been named many years ago. The one near Pioneer Rock below the Bastion was named the Samuel Gough Tree, and the one near to and below the old post office was named the Mark Bate Tree. These two trees should be well protected, and suitable markers placed there to perpetuate the historic connection.

This is recent history.

On the centenary of the <i>Princess Royal</i> passengers arriving at Nanaimo on November 27th, 1954, Nanaimo Historic Society organized a great celebration of the event. The Yellow Point Theatre staged a dramatic pageant of the landing. The waterfront area was a mass of people gathered around to witness the spectacle. Descendants of the <i>Princess Royal</i> passengers received special recognition, many of them coming from faraway places. A registry is preserved with the signatures of the descendants who attended the ceremony.

On this Pioneer Rock a stone cairn is erected to commemorate the place of the landing. Inside the cairn is a sealed lead container to be opened 100 years later, on November 27th, 2054. A plan, together with a photograph showing where to open the cairn, are deposited at City Hall. Mr. Ed [Gezerkier??], a local stonemason, built the cairn.
Since 1954 Nanaimo Historical Society have conducted remembrance service on each November 27th, commencing with the ringing of the Bastion bell, the service lasting about half an hour.

The next building to the north is, at the present time, the studio of Schwarze photography, built in 1897 or '8 and used first as a two-lane bowling alley owned by a Mr. Pike. Some time later, the south part of the building and the lower floor was used as an auto repair. The north part was the studio of Mr. King, a photographer. Afterwards, 40 feet was cut off the back of the building. At this time the hardwood floor must have been removed and replaced with the present fir floor. Schwarze Studio was opened in 1912 by the grandfather of Peter Schwarze, the present owner and photographer.

A building that is worth special historical mention was the first to be built in that block on Front Street. It was built by Adam Grant Horne as a general store in 1863. It was situated near the slope that lead down to the former C. P. R. Wharf. Several pictures show the building. Mr. Horne had been the storekeeper for the Hudson's Bay Company until they sold out their interest to the Vancouver Coal Mining Company in 1862.

The building became Nanaimo's early courthouse, about 1865. Here, Judge Matthew B. Begbie held court. Later it served as a local police station and detention jail. There are several pictures which show the high picket fence at the side the rear. The building was taken down in 1916. Near the front of the building was a public weigh scales.

Dallas Square is next. The small island in the centre that divides Front Street to east and west sides. The island originally had a higher base surrounded by a tubular iron railing, a favourite place for people to lean on while watching the ships and small craft movements in the harbour. The square was named after Alexander Grant Dallas, the Hudson's Bay Company representative on the Pacific Coast, 1857-1861, with headquarters at Victoria. Dallas was a son-in-law of Governor James Douglas.

Today the island is surrounded by a granite curving. On the island is a granite shaft about seven feet high. A bronze plaque states, "Historic Sites and Monument Board of Canada." This monument stands between the point of discovery and the pithead of the first commercial coal mine in British Columbia, erected 1927.

There is also an ornamental gas lamp about ten feet high. Plaque states, "This constant burning Welsbach gas lamp, which lighted the streets of Baltimore about 1880, was presented during the British Columbia centennial year of 1858 to the City of Nanaimo." Also a block of coal with the date stating 1849.

On the west side of Front Street is St. Paul's Church. This is the third church to occupy this site. Foundations for the first church was laid by the manager of the Hudson's Bay
Company, Mr. C. S. Nicol, on Christmas Day, 1869. The site had been conveyed to the church by Alexander G. Dallas earlier that year on behalf of the Hudson's Bay Company.

The history of St. Paul's Church has been well recorded in a booklet by Archdeacon A. E. Hendy, 1859-1952, while rector in 1953.

By Mr. Mark Bate, quote, "There was also, a little south of the church, St. Paul's School House, a handsome, tastefully designed structure much used in the 1860's and '70's for concerts, lectures, and literary gatherings." End of quote. And nearby St. Paul's Rectory, this was taken down in 1967.

At this point, please turn the tape over to continue the story.

An early picture shows an attractively designed bandstand, having eight pillars which supported a conical roof. It is situated midway between the first St. Paul's of 1862-1907, and the Rectory. According to those who remember, the bandstand was removed during 1918 to make was for the cenotaph. This was not the first bandstand on Front Street. I will refer to the previous one later.

Approximately on the same site as the former bandstand is the imposing granite cenotaph, with its bronze tablets recording the names of two World War victims. The monument is surrounded with lawns and gardens.

Another occupant of this triangular lot was A. C. Wilson, florist, with a shop facing Front Street, and the greenhouses behind, situated on the north side of the lot, now a rose garden.

As we enter this section of Front Street, both sides are so richly laced with historic interest of former times. It was along here the first dwellings were built by the Hudson's Bay Company, followed soon afterwards by the pioneers and their families. The first church was established, cultural and social activities engaged in, small speciality businesses promoted, and for recreation and water sports there was a natural viewing bank along the whole waterfront. Indeed, Front Street was the very heart of Nanaimo.

On the west part of lot 19, block 55 - which was composed of three lots - was the site of Nanaimo's first church. It was set well back from Front Street, almost to Chapel Street. The late Mrs. Martha A. Kenny, who came to Nanaimo in April 1876, wrote in part, "Colville Town's first church was built in 1860, the site conveyed by trustee to the Wesleyan Methodist Mission by Alexander G. Dallas on behalf of the Hudson's Bay Company in June, 1860, hence the name given to Dallas Square in the near vicinity. The church was dedicated November 27th, 1860. The interior was beautifully finished in California redwood. The original had four gables. The north and south wings forming transepts. Even at this
early day, the church had beautiful stained glass windows, and four, ornate bronze chandeliers."

The church was built by Ebenezer Robinson, a shipbuilder. A frontal pictures shows it as having a pleasing appearance. The double doors and window headings are of a round type. The belfry is a most outstanding feature made of redwood fashioned after classical miniature temple. The bronze bell came from Truro, Cornwall, and the coloured glass came from Belgium.

With the growing membership of the church, more accommodation was required. A new site was secured at the corner of Wallace and Franklyn Streets. The cornerstone of the new church was laid by Mr. Samuel M. Robins, June the 4th, 1889, and dedication took place January the 12th, 1890. It was described as, quote, "A more commodious edifice".

The old church, together with the three lots, were sold January 29th in 1889, for $3,500. The old church was converted into a schoolhouse for a few years, and then a dance hall. It is stated the floor was in a wonderful state of preservation. It was next occupied as a furniture store, followed by a garage. In 1919, Dendoff Springs took over the building, at which time structural changes were made to accommodate their business. In 1941, Dendoff's vacated the property and moved on to Terminal Avenue.

Dendoff's kindly supplied us with pictures of occupation of the building, and many items of historical interest of the old church. Also a picture of [Abner Griffith's?] grave, dated 1861, with a small headstone on the property on Chapel Street. When calling at Dendoff's shop in the old church, it was a striking site to see the beautiful coloured glass in the north transept and other windows.

Quoting Mrs. M. A. Kenny, "Perhaps the most attractive place of all, amongst the otherwise plain, whitewashed buildings along Front Street in the early days was Mrs. Raybould's millinery and dressmaking establishment, situated in a front corner of the Wesleyan Church property. The large show windows revealing the latest in millinery imported from England were a perennial source of interest to the ladies of the community." End of quote. The site is now occupied by the Elks Club. I will refer to this item again.

67:55
A rocky ridge ran along the centre of this block, north to south between Front and Chapel Streets.

Nearby the church, and also situated on the westerly part of lot 19, block 55, was a stone building erected by the Hudson's Bay Company as an office and residence for Captain Charles Stuart, officer in charge. That would have been built in 1854.

On a chart of Nanaimo Harbour, #573, British Admiralty, by Captain G. H. Richards and his officers of HMS Hecate, dated 1862, the old church is marked as such, and nearby,
northerly, a graph delineates the site of the stone building. This location has been attested to by Mrs. M. A. Kenny who as a young person lived nearby. Unfortunately no picture is available of this stone building at the present time, not even from the Provincial Archives.

We have three excellent references concerning the building. First, by Mr. Mark Bate, in part, quote, "Back from Front Street the old stone house, a curiously constructed tenement. Said to be the first stone building erected in the colony. As strongly built as a fort; walls, three feet thick. Ought, like the Bastion, to have been preserved as a relic of the Hudson's Bay Company regime."

By Mrs. Kenny, on tape recorded March the 14, 1962, when she was 90 years of age, quote, "Another building on Front Street of more than ordinary interest was the courthouse, situated a little north of the first church. It was constructed with stone, plastered on the outside with mortar made from lime from the vicinity of the Biological Station. It was originally constructed as a residence for Captain Charles Stuart of the Hudson's Bay Company. It was taken over for use as a courthouse, and later it served as our City Hall until 1886 when the Literary Institute was purchased by the City." End of her quote.

The stone building was used by City Hall from March 19, 1875 to 1886.

Mr. Hiram Gough, also on tape recording, March the 14th, 1962, I will quote in part: "I was born on Skinner Street, July the 3rd, 1884. My father was city clerk and I can remember one day, while playing in the window of the stone building on Front Street used as the first City Hall, I would be just over two years of age. Some years later while ringing the bell for morning service at the church on Front Street, I noticed many people skating on the harbour. I also saw a load of hay being hauled across the harbour, drawn by two horses." End of Mr. Gough's quote.

Now moving to the frontage of lot 18 on Front Street. An excellent picture shows a double log dwelling on the northerly half of lot 18, in the course of being taken down. This dwelling had two doors facing the street. It had been the home of James Miller Brown and family, a smaller addition to the north side of his tailor shop. He was known as Tailor Brown, and enjoyed considerable business from navy personnel when calling here, and when American ships were in port there was a great demand for imported cloths.

The Bank of British Columbia took over part- or the whole of the Brown dwelling, and opened a branch office on March the 7th, 1887. The bank next acquired the southerly half of lot 18. A contract was let for the erection of a two storey brick building, September the 12th, 1887. They occupied the premises December 18th, 1888, with a Mr. Williams as manager.

The Bank of British Columbia ceased to exist in January, 1901. It's assets were sold to the Canadian Bank of Commerce for $2,000,000. When the Nanaimo branch closed, the premises became the Nanaimo City Club. It was known as a rather exclusive club. The steward/custodian was a Japanese gentleman who knew all the foibles of certain members;
he became noted for his diplomatic actions. The Elks Lodge were the next occupants of the building, and they moved in October 8th, 1917. The brick building stands today and is numbered 55 Front Street.

Going back to Church Street. A prominent businessman of Nanaimo was Joseph Miller Brown, the second son of James Miller Brown, who was born at Ashlar Farm near the city. Joseph Miller Brown began his career as watchmaker in 1883. He opened his first shop on Church Street in 1886, located near the old Canadian Bank of Commerce building.

Mrs. A. E. Planta wrote a lengthy article in Nanaimo Free Press for Saturday, July 31st, 1948, concerning Mr. Brown's inventions and accomplishments. He received many awards as a watchmaker and related lines, amongst which was a gold medal from the Royal [A & I?] Society of London, England, in 1903.


Before proceeding with other persons located on Front Street, here is a selected item from a tape recording by the late Mr. Joseph Kneen. Quote, "I arrived at Nanaimo in 1907 at Gordon's Wharf. Walked up a steep hill to Front Street. On our left, the old jail with its whitewash fence; on our right, the old post office. The plans are dated 1883 and 1884. Going north on our left, a rock bluff, and then a brick building. More rock bluff. Three old Hudson's Bay Company houses standing on top of it. Then the courthouse, and next the Globe Hotel. On our right, stretching from the old post office north, about 800 feet of vacant lots belonging to the Western Fuel Company. It had a bandstand and several benches. This was where you would meet your friends on a fine summer evening." End of his quote.

This was the first bandstand I referred to previously. It was situated about the space between the Federal Building and the Malaspina Hotel. This bandstand may have been moved and erected again on the plot in front of St. Paul's Church. Near this waterfront bandstand was a spiral slide, a great joy to children. A small charge is made, sliders sat on mats, and it was owned by Alex Baxter. A gentleman told me recently of listening to music floating over the harbour from this early bandstand, while paddling a canoe.

The next building northerly from the stone house was the old frame constructed Provincial Offices and Courthouse. It was not an imposing structure. An interesting picture in "Scenes from the Past" shows the cramped general office arrangements. The six men around the room were well known personages in those days. They were Mark Bate, assessor; George Thompson, assistant assessor; Marshal Bray, government agent; Herb Stanton, deputy
government agent; Samuel Drake, the sheriff; and [Archie Dick?], inspector of mines. The building was erected in 1881.

In August 1887, work commenced to clear the site of the present stone edifice as Provincial Offices and Courthouse. In December 1894 the legislature brokered $25,000 for the new courthouse. In February 1896 the interior work was completed. The date 1895 is recorded in the frontal stonework, making an eight year period for completion.

The wooden structure was purchased by a Vancouver coal company and presented to the City of Nanaimo, courtesy of Mr. Samuel Robins. It was moved back across Chapel Street in late 1897. The building became occupied by the Nanaimo Athletic Club for some years, and afterwards it served a variety of public functions as, general meetings, flower shows, library, emergency hospital for flu patients in 1918, and a Red Cross carnival. The last occupants were the Canadian Legion, up to 1950 when they moved to Wharf Street. The building was then demolished.

On the lot now occupied by the Globe Hotel, a French Canadian named 'Cote' built a log cottage. Cote appears in many Hudson's Bay Company expeditions; he was known as "a good canoe man who knew the coastline well". He accompanied A. G. Horne in his adventures across the Island to Alberni Inlet in 1856. This 'Cote Cottage' became the birthplace of the Nanaimo Free Press, with George Norris as publisher. The first edition is dated Wednesday, April the 15th, 1874. Shortly afterwards George Norris built a new home and printing office on the present site of the Free Press building.

The Globe Hotel was owned by Alex Henderson. The date 1887 is on the cornice. It was not used as a hotel at first; Henderson occupied the ground floor for his Nanaimo Marble and Monumental Works for some years.

On the lot adjoining the Globe Hotel were two large frame houses. Both had verandas with roofed over observation captain's deck walk atop the third level, where the occupants could survey the outlook.

In early days, two of Nanaimo's best known bachelors resided in one of the dwellings, Mr. John Rudd and Mr. John Doyle; Mr. Jeff Davison lived in the other one. Davison was City Alderman in 1895, then Mayor of Nanaimo in 1896 and '97. The houses were part of Mr. John Rudd's estate.

From the end of Chapel Street was a rising rocky bluff, part of the barrier across Front Street. As Mr. Mark Bate's notes quote "That bluff was a great barrier to vehicle traffic, until cut away bit by bit by the corporation. Before being being built upon, the land in this locality was a most uneven jumble of disruptive rocks. Along the face of the cliffs the dogwoods flourished." End of his quote.
As improvements were made to the property now occupied [by] Seacrest Apartments, two large houses were erected. The first was known as Dr. Praeger House, the next one the home of Judge F. McBain Young for several years, and at the corner of the block was a rambling one story dwelling; it had been a boarding house and the last tenant was [Harry Carroll?].

Moving over to the east side of Front Street. It was along here the earliest housing development was made for the miners and the Company staff members. Mr. Bate continued, quote, "Crossing Dallas Square, there was a range of houses built in 1852, extending to the bluff at the corner of Comox Road. On the extreme end of the rock bluff, or ridge, a building tenanted by Jesse Sage, which had been erected by the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1862, a billiard, chess, reading rooms etc., where one could pass the tedium of a wet day or evening. This same building was subsequently used as the printing office of the Nanaimo Gazette, Nanaimo's first newspaper." End of his quote.

An excellent picture loaned by Mr. Arthur Martin, a great-grandson of Jesse Sage, shows these log cottages stretching along the bank of the harbour. At the museum is a framed chart of Nanaimo and the harbour, approximately 22x36 inches. It is headed, "Plan of Colville Town, showing improvements made previously to May the 8th, 1854".

This is the earliest chart we have. There is no information who authorized it to be drawn, nor is there a signature [on it?] of the surveyor. It can be considered reasonably correct as locations of various items, including dwellings, are in keeping with the same items on Captain G. H. Richards' chart of 1862.

Later amendments were made, identifying some features, in ink. The row of cottages along Front Street, facing the harbour, are numbered in sequence with ink. Also shown are seven cottages on the west side of the street, and the four cottages situated near the Bastion.

Amongst other items shown is the Hudson's Bay Company's water powered sawmill on Millstone River. The Methodist Church on Front Street of 1860 (but the old Hudson's Bay Company's stone building adjoining the church is not shown). Thought to be built in 1854, the same year as the chart is dated, there are a few dwellings shown on Wallace and Skinner Streets. A rectangle is marked off with the notation, "Intended shaft". This site became No. 3 Shaft, situated at the rear of the Malaspina Hotel today.

I wish to pay special attention to Lieutenant Richard Charles Mayne, RN, who was first Lieutenant and Chief Surveying Officer under Captain Richards, doing the work of surveying these coastal waters. First in HMS Plumper, 1858 and on, and thence the crew were transferred to the HMS Hecate, 850 tonnes, in October, 1861.

On Mayne's return to England he was elected to the F.R.G.S. Then he wrote his book,
"Four years in British Columbia and Vancouver Island", which was published in 1862 and containing 450 pages. Mayne's book contains an amazing account of his difficulties encountered, no only along the coastal inlets, but all through the vast interior of British Columbia. He had recorded extensively on the customs and social life of Indian peoples, and noted valuable accounts of natural history.

On page 35 of Mayne's book he gives a forthright assessment as Nanaimo was in 1854, while he was engaged in the *Plumper*. Quoting, "We visited Nanaimo for the purpose of coaling. The town, such as it is, stands upon a singular promontory which seems to have been severed from the mainland by some violent volcanic eruption which twisted the strata of which it is composed most curiously. Along the shore are the colliery buildings and about a dozen remarkably sooty houses inhabited by the miners and the few Hudson's Bay Company officers here. There is a resident doctor in place who inhabits one of these houses, and to the left of them stands the Company's Bastion, from which are mounted four or five honeycombed 12-pounders."

As a final item for your inspection, a copy of a conveyance document concerning the acquisition of the harbour frontage and land area from the local Indian peoples by the Hudson's Bay Company for the consideration of a stated number of blankets.

The conveyance is headed "A singular conveyance of country extending from Commercial Inlet, 12 miles of Nanaimo River ... made by the Sarlequun [or Saalequun, incorrectly Parlequun] Tribe, and signed Squoniston and others." There follows the names of 159 Indians with an "X" as his mark, including seven chiefs, acknowledging the transfer of ownership.

The document bears witness as follows, quote, "Done at Fort Nanaimo, or Colvile [sic?] Town, this 23rd day of December in the year of our Lord, 1854, in presence of us, who in the presence of each other, have hereunto affixed our names. They are,
Charles Edward Stuart - Hudson's Bay Compy in charge [of Fort Nanaimo]
Richard Golledge - Hudson's Bay Compy Service
George Robinson - Manager of the Nanaimo Co.
and,
James Douglas - Governor Vancouver's Island

This is William Barraclough speaking, who presented the article "Wharf Street and Front Street and the Intersection of Bastion Street" before the Nanaimo Historical Society, Tuesday, April the 18th, 1972.