



Source: www.artnet.com, watercolour on paper, 27.6 x 38.1 cm, painting by [Emily Carr \(1871–1945\)](#).

“Gore Avenue Slip” — painting by Vancouver artist Emily Carr, circa 1909.

History of the Gore Avenue Wharf

By Ralph Drew

*Author of **Forest & Fjord: The History of Belcarra***

*Awarded the **Lieutenant-Governor's Gold Medal** for historical writing.*

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BOOKS PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR

Terminus Town: Port Moody's Transition Through Time (2023)

Coquitlam Chronicles: Historical Crossroads on the Fraser River (2018)

Townsite Tales: The History of Ioco, Anmore Valley & North Shore (2017)

Ferries & Fjord: The History of Indian Arm (2015)

Forest & Fjord: The History of Belcarra (2013)



Source: SFU Library, Digital Collections, B.C. Postcard Collection, Identifier [MSC130-3004](#).

**'Gore Avenue Wharf' — Vancouver Harbour, 1909 —
'New England Fish Company' wharf and warehouse at right.**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ralph Drew was active in municipal politics for 40 years. In 1979, he chaired the 'Village of Belcarra' incorporation committee and following Belcarra's incorporation referendum, Ralph was appointed by the provincial government to Belcarra's Inaugural Council on August 27th, 1979, and was subsequently elected Alderman in November 1979. Ralph was Mayor of Belcarra for 35 years (from December 1983 until November 2018) and was a member of the Metro Vancouver Board of Directors for 36 years — the longest serving Metro Vancouver Director. In 2013, Ralph was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal "for his on-going dedication to public service".

In 2014, Ralph was awarded first prize in the 'B.C. Historical Federation' annual book competition, receiving the 'Lieutenant-Governor's Gold Medal' for historical writing for his self-published history, 'Forest & Fjord: The History of Belcarra'.

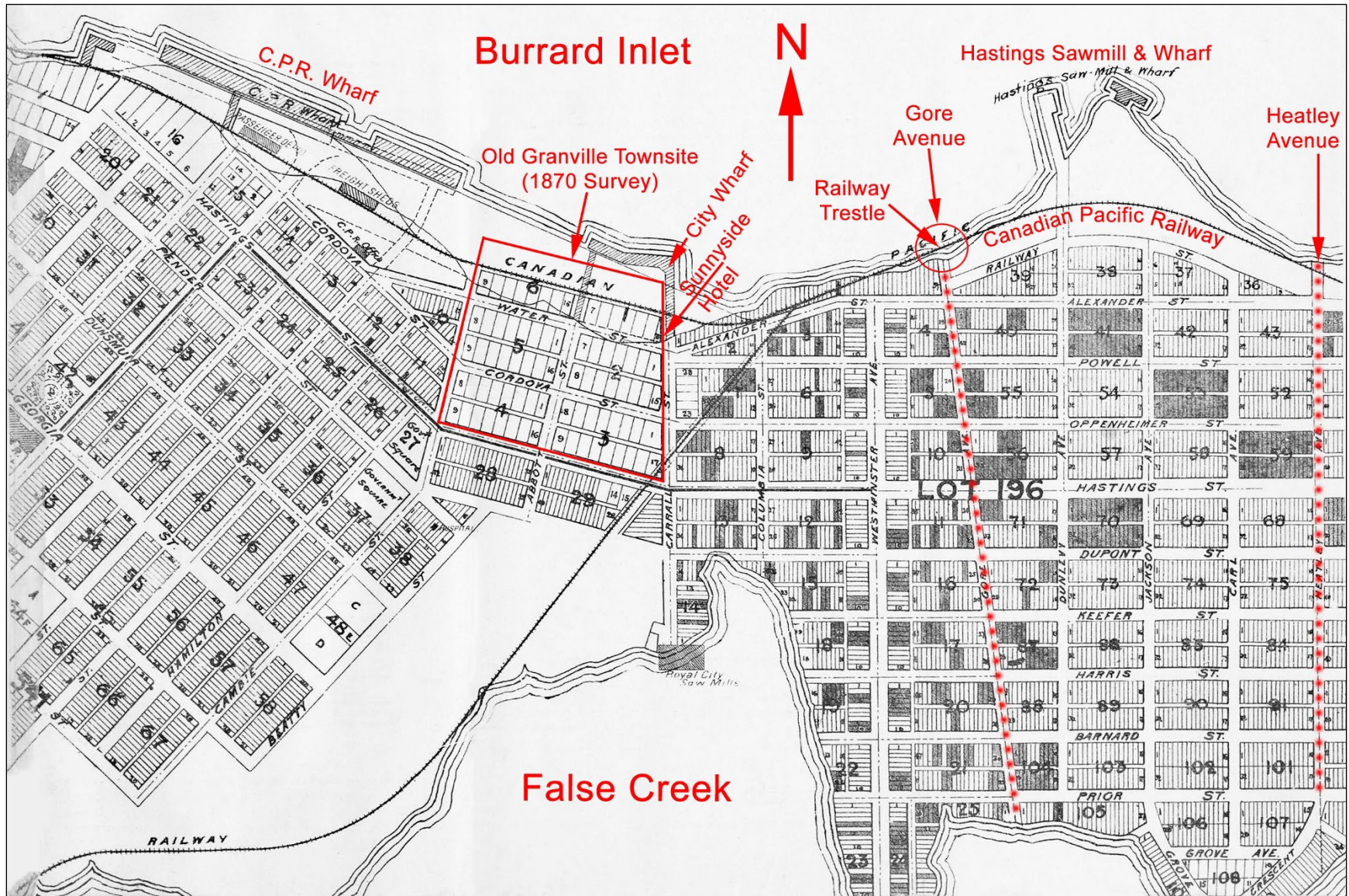
In 2016, Ralph was awarded second prize in the 'B.C. Historical Federation' annual book competition for his self-published history, 'Ferries & Fjord: The History of Indian Arm'.

Ralph previously worked for Canadian Fishing Company (Canfisco) from January 1986 until December 2006, when he opted to semi-retire. During his tenure as Canfisco's Director of Technical Services, Ralph was Chair of the Industry Advisory Committee for the BCIT 'Fish Harvesting and Processing Program' from 1991 to 1998, served three terms as Chair of the 'Fisheries Council of British Columbia' Technical Committee, and in 2004–2005 was President of the Association of 'Pacific Fisheries Technologists'. Ralph's background also includes 10 years as Chemistry Section Supervisor of the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) Fish Inspection Laboratory.

Ralph was born in Mission, B.C., grew-up in North Burnaby, and has lived in Belcarra since 1974. Ralph received his Bachelor of Science (Honours Chemistry) in 1971, and his Masters of Science (Inorganic Chemistry) in 1973, both degrees from Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, B.C. Ralph was married to his wife Carol for 53 years, and they have one daughter and three grandsons.



Ralph Drew



Source: UBC Library, Rare Books & Special Collections, [F5849.V3 R56](#).

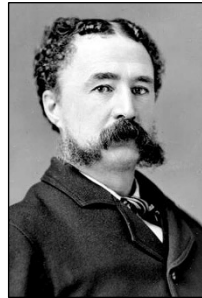
Plan annotated by Ralph Drew.

1877 survey plan for 'Vancouver City' — "the Pacific Coast Terminus of the C.P.R." — showing a portion of 'Vancouver Harbour' and the future location of the 'Gore Avenue Wharf'.

History of the Gore Avenue Wharf

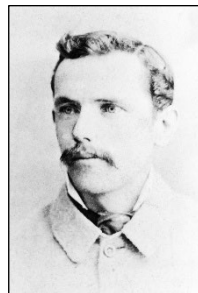
Gore Avenue Name Origin

Gore Avenue in Vancouver is named after William Sinclair Gore (1842–1919), Surveyor General of British Columbia from 1878 to 1891. ⁽¹⁾ The street was named by Lachlan Alexander Hamilton (1852–1941) when he conducted the survey of “the Pacific Coast Terminus of the CPR”. Gore Avenue was located near a skid road from False Creek to Burrard Inlet which may have influenced the surveyor to place the street at an angle to the north-south oriented grid. ⁽²⁾



W. S. Gore
[\(RBCMA G-03588\)](#)

L. A. Hamilton was the ‘Canadian Pacific Railway’ (CPR) land commissioner and surveyor who, in 1883, surveyed and named several streets in the new townsite of Vancouver, B.C. ⁽³⁾ In 1885, he surveyed the area from English Bay to Hastings Street in the townsite and, in 1886, he surveyed the ‘Liverpool’ area after great fire of 13 June 1886. Hamilton proposed ‘Stanley Park’ and laid-out the perimeter for the park. Hamilton Street in Vancouver was named for and by him.



L. A. Hamilton
[\(CVA Port P147.2\)](#)

The CPR Arrives at Burrard Inlet ⁽⁴⁾

In the 1880s, at the height of construction on the transcontinental railroad, the CPR railway syndicate had

no intention of buying land; they expected to be given the land free of charge. In secret, the CPR entered talks with the provincial government and, in 1884, BC granted the CPR 6,000 acres of land along the Burrard Peninsula in and around the townsite of ‘Granville’.

With the land secured, the CPR announced that their Pacific Terminus would have to move further west by 14 miles (22 km) as Port Moody was too shallow for their fleet of ocean-bound ships. As a result, the railway would end in ‘Granville’, close to Coal Harbour. On April 6th, 1886, ‘Granville’ was renamed ‘Vancouver’ and incorporated as a city. A year later, on May 23rd, 1887, the first passenger train pulled into the city’s new train station.

The young city exploded. From 1884 to 1891, the population jumped from about 400 residents to almost 14,000. It attracted businesses and banks, eventually overtaking Victoria as the industrial and commercial centre of the province. Vancouver’s commercial success owed no small part to the inner workings of the CPR itself. Directors of the railway syndicate also sat on the boards of institutions like the ‘Royal Bank of Canada’, the ‘Bank of Montreal’, and various international oil companies.

The city was the CPR’s sandbox. It drew the street layout, determined where the most affluent neighbourhoods would be and had streets named after its officials and board members. CPR money also paid for a hotel, an opera house, and the new city centre built around Georgia and Granville streets. But the dominance of the CPR had consequences for the city of Vancouver.



Source: City of Vancouver Archives ([CVA Wat P39](#)), photograph by [Lachlan Alexander Hamilton \(1852–1941\)](#).

‘Sunnyside Hotel’ float at the foot of Carrall Street, 1885 — this was the only float fronting the ‘Granville Townsite’ prior to 1886 — the only wharf for large vessels was at ‘Hastings Mill’.

The City Wharf ⁽⁵⁾ A Few Facts About Its History

As the question of the purchase of the 'City Wharf' [was] agitating the city generally, it [would] be interesting ... to learn briefly of the history of that structure since it was first constructed. The first occasion on which a wharf was built-out as an extension to Carrall Street was in August 1886 ... The "approach", as it was called, was only built out a short way. The necessary agreements between the city and the CPR were drawn-up by [City Counsel]. Later on, towards the spring of 1887, the "approach" fell down, giving way entirely, on account partly to being over-loaded with brick, and partly because it wasn't properly braced in the first instance. It was then that an injunction was served by the CPR on the city to prevent it from [proceeding] with the reconstruction. The CPR ... claimed control of the land which was its [water] frontage. Eventually, the railroad company agreed to lease the [water] frontage to the city at a yearly rental of \$5 [about \$150 today].

Applications were made by private individuals to the Dominion Government for use of the [water] frontage. Antoine Gobeil, Secretary of Public Works at Ottawa, who came out [to Vancouver], gave his advice to the effect that the Dominion Government would not like to deal with private parties, but a company with proper standing should be formed. This advice was taken and permission was granted to organize a company, which resulted in the 'Vancouver Wharfage and Storage Company' being established. The agreements [between the city and CPR] were drawn-up but ... they were never signed. Although the question of securing the wharf and [water] frontage by the 'Vancouver Wharfage Company' ... [was] under consideration ... the 'Vancouver Wharfage Company' claimed that they [were] not at all anxious whether they sell or not. The wharf itself, though in a very dilapidated condition, [was] held at a good valuation, whilst the city claimed that the [water] frontage belonged to the Dominion Government and not the CPR. The west side of the wharf [was] merely rented by the company from the CPR, the rental being \$100 per month [about \$3,000 today]. The Sheriff was placed in possession ... for back payments still due the company.

In the meantime, the latter furnished a bond to the Sheriff that the sum claimed, \$1,000 [about \$30,000 today], would be paid within a certain time. Hence, the sale [had] not yet been paid. It is a debatable question whether the city [would] be taking a right step in purchasing the wharf or not in its [then] state, especially as the matter of the title to the [water] frontage [was] so questionable.

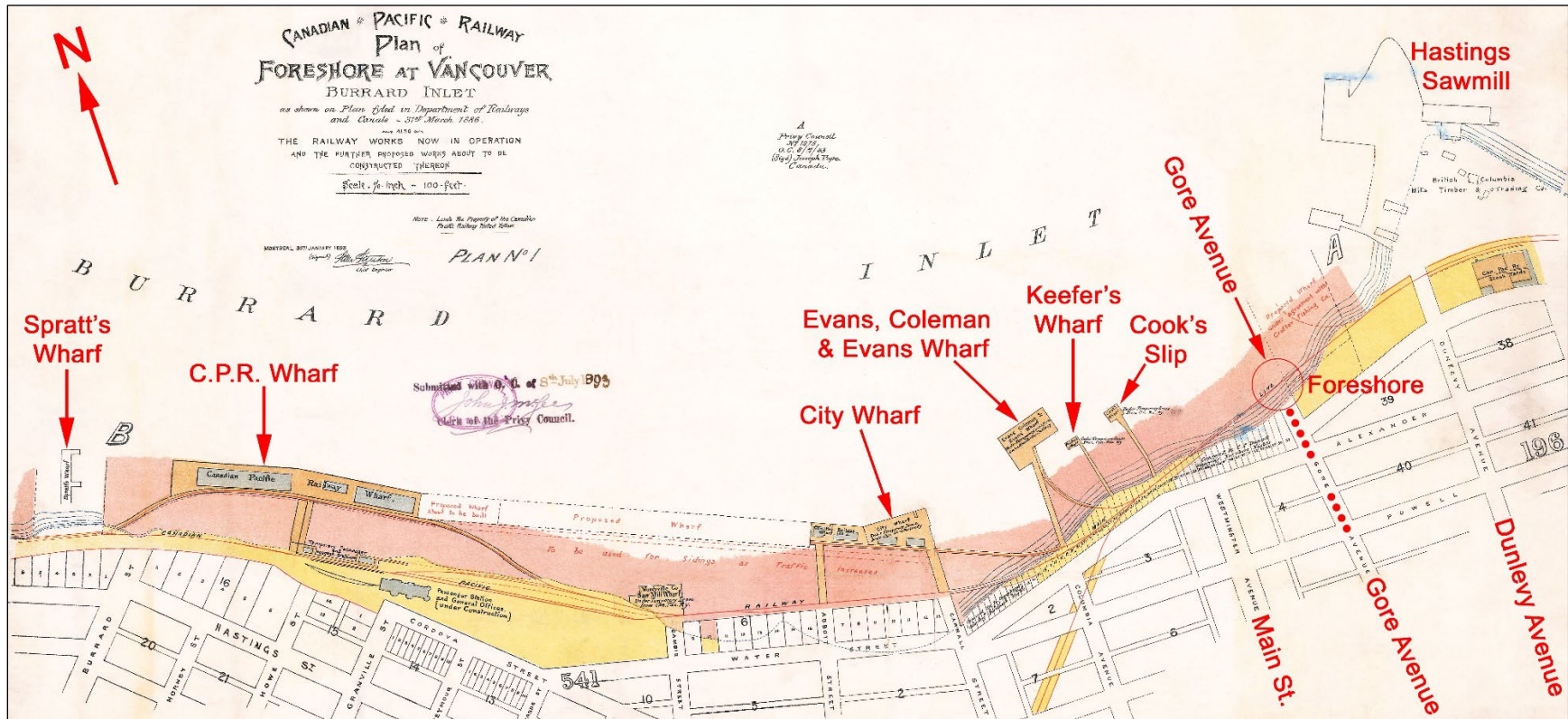
As stated by Malcolm A. McLean in 1887, while then Mayor of Vancouver, an agreement was made between the CPR and the city, whereby the former agreed to hand over the property to the city whenever they were asked for it, and the city recognized the outlay and expenses entailed. Whatever the upshot of the matter, the [water] frontage [was] deemed a valuable asset which it would be an advantage to the city to control.

Vancouver's Burrard Inlet Street-Ends

The foot of Carrall Street was the heart of 'Gastown', but the epicentre for discord on the Burrard Inlet foreshore: ⁽⁶⁾

"The arrival of the 'Canadian Pacific Railway' in Coal Harbour in 1887 challenged the traditional public water access to the Burrard Inlet, as the street-end location at the foot of Carrall Street was the longstanding water access to the preceding community of 'Gastown'. Vancouver 'City Wharf', the would-be public dock ... was sold to 'Union Steamships' in 1889, which was a company that understood the meaning of being at this critical historical node." – **Trevor Williams**

Before 'Vancouver' became a city in 1886, the foot of Carrall Street was the central waterfront access point used by the residents of 'Gastown'. In 1887, however, Carrall Street became separated from Vancouver by CPR's railway tracks. What followed, according to maritime historian Norman Hacking, was nearly sixty years of intermittent litigation related to the Burrard Inlet waterfront concerning who owned the foreshore rights. ⁽⁷⁾



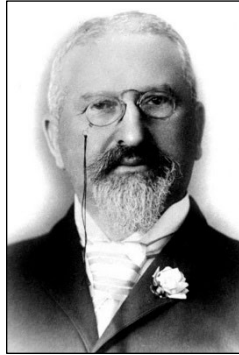
Source: City of Vancouver Archives ([CVA Map 648](#)).

Plan annotated by Ralph Drew.

“Canadian Pacific Railway plan of foreshore at Vancouver, Burrard Inlet, as shewn on plan fyled in Department of Railways and Canals, 31st March, 1886” published in 1893 — left to right: Spratt’s Wharf, C.P.R. Wharf, City Wharf (foot of Carrall Street), Evans Coleman & Evans Wharf (foot of Columbia Street), Keefer’s Wharf, Cook’s Slip & Hastings Sawmill.

Gore Avenue Slip

In April 1891, Mayor D. Oppenheimer and Council voted to instruct the City Engineer to survey the actual boundaries of the northern ends of Cambie, Abbott and Carrell streets, and also Columbia, Westminster (today 'Main Street') and Gore Avenues, and that he prepare a plan showing said streets and avenues extending to deep water. ⁽⁸⁾ In June 1891, Vancouver Council introduced a bylaw to provide for the extension of Gore Avenue, Westminster Avenue, Columbia Avenue, Carrall Street and Cambie Street to deep water. ⁽⁹⁾ The gauntlet had been thrown-down.



Mayor Oppenheimer
[\(RBCMA A-02386\)](#)

In May 1892, the CPR was granted an interim injunction to restrain the city from filling-in the trestle work at the foot of Gore Avenue. ⁽¹⁰⁾ On July 6th, 1892, the CPR motion to make permanent the temporary injunction placed on the city's opening of Gore Avenue to the waterfront went before the court in New Westminster. ⁽¹¹⁾⁽¹²⁾ However, a permanent injunction was not granted.

On July 22nd, 1892, Vancouver Council decided to call for tenders to construct a slip (floating wharf) at the foot of Gore Avenue, ⁽¹³⁾ and the tender notice was posted on July 26th, 1892. ⁽¹⁴⁾ The tender period was very short, being only two days after the initial advertisement.

Construction of the floating wharf at the north foot of Gore Avenue commenced on Monday, August 22nd, 1892, and was to be 300 feet (91.4 m) long from the low water mark and 66 feet (20.1 m) wide. The wharf was to be used for unloading material from scows or small tugs. ⁽¹⁵⁾

On September 9th, 1892, it was reported that the city's slip at the foot of Gore Avenue was nearly completed, ⁽¹⁶⁾ and

Vancouver Council decided to notify Edward Cook that his wharf (see plan on page 9) would no longer be required by the city after September 30th, 1892. ⁽¹⁷⁾

Edward Cook (1854–1940)

In the 1891 census, Edward Cook was shown aged 35, (although other records suggest he was actually 38) born in Ontario, with a wife from Quebec, and four children under 8: Edna, May, Winifred and baby Wallace (listed as Douglas in 1901, and known as Edward in later years).



Edward Cook
[\(CVA Port P1464\)](#)

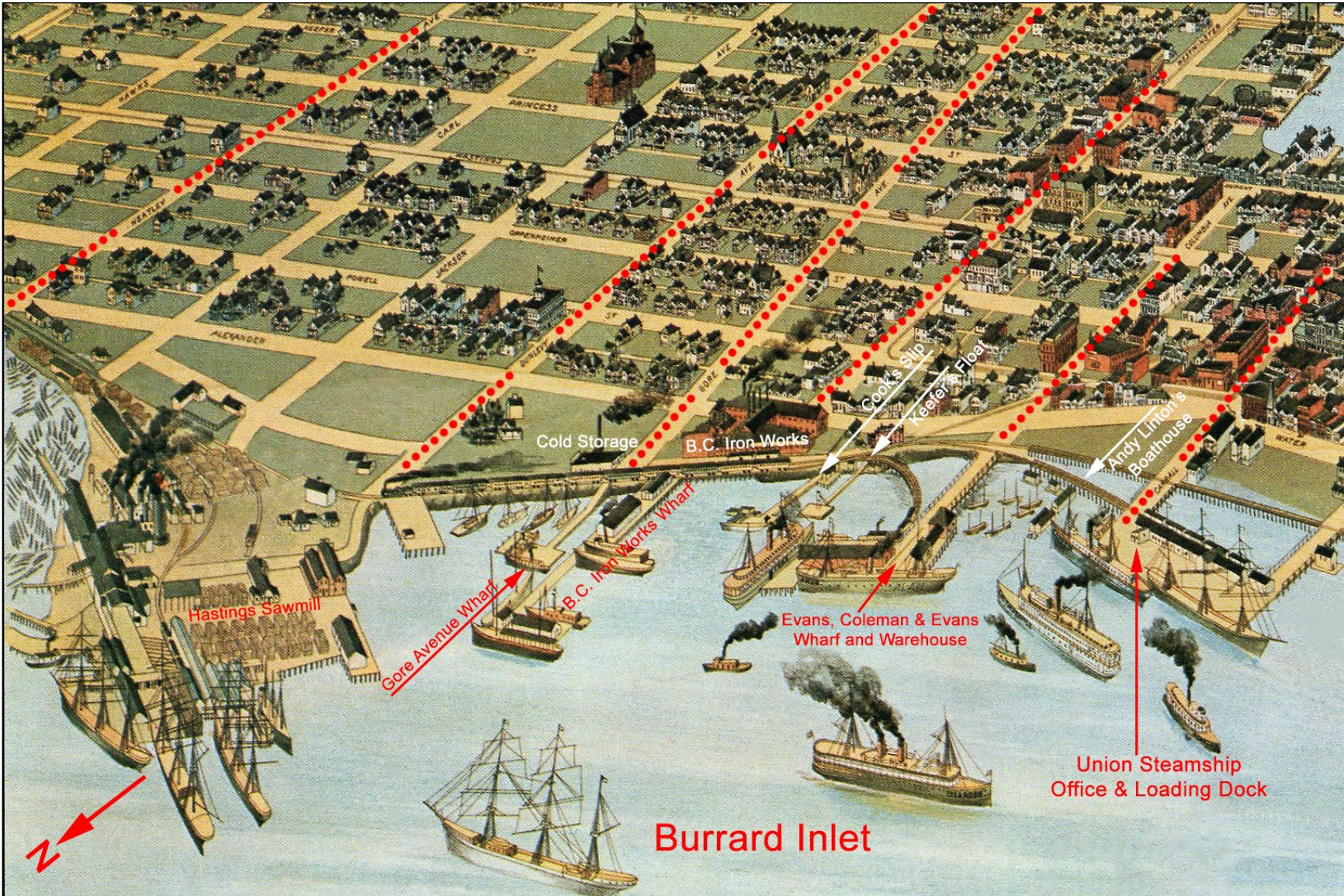
In 1901, his wife is recorded as Miri, (actually she was Maria) and the four children now had three younger siblings: Beatrice, Francis and Elsie. His wife's sister Elizabeth Douglas, and son-in-law, Thomas Forman were shown living with the family.

Edward arrived from Manitoba (where he was involved in the 'Cook Brothers Trading Post' in the settlement of Newdale), in 1885, and built a house for his family, that burned down in the great fire before they could arrive. They were travelling from Quebec, overland through Chicago, Portland and Tacoma, and then by steamer to Victoria and then Vancouver. They arrived days after the fire and their first home in Vancouver was a tent on Carrall Street, near this location.

Edward was elected an alderman from 1901 to 1905, and was an active member of several of the city's institutions. He lived on Nelson Street, adding the role of Manager of 'Otis Elevator Co.' as well as his contracting business. It is uncertain when he retired, as his son, E. Douglas Cook, took over the business. In retirement, Edward moved to Burnaby, having been married for 53 years. Maria died at their home in the spring of 1940, and Edward died four days later.

References:

1. "Changing Vancouver" website: [E Cook | Changing Vancouver](#)
2. "[Edward Cook – Obituary](#)", Province, May 3rd, 1940, page 30.



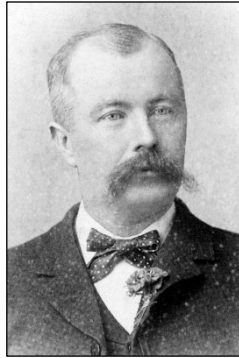
Source: City of Vancouver Archives ([CVA Map 547](#)).

Map annotated by Ralph Drew.

1898 panoramic view of 'Vancouver City' showing a portion of 'Vancouver Harbour' — note the locations of 'Hastings Saw Mill Co.' (left) and 'Gore Avenue Wharf' (centre).

CPR Obstructs Access to the Foreshore

In December 1892, the CPR appealed to the BC Supreme Court to reverse the May decision of the lower court not to grant an injunction to the CPR to restrain the 'City of Vancouver' from opening Gore Avenue through to the waterfront. This case was significant in that it would determine ownership of the shoreline and foreshore where several streets are terminated by the water's edge. ⁽¹⁸⁾ The Supreme Court found that the CPR had the "right to take the whole of the foreshore, to use it, and build upon it, and Vancouver had no right to interfere." ⁽¹⁹⁾ Mayor Fred Cope and Council promptly passed a resolution to appeal the judgement. ⁽²⁰⁾



Mayor Cope
([CVA Port P425](#))

In July 1893, the CPR applied to the Governor-in-Council for a patent for the foreshore of Burrard Inlet from the East of Spratt's Wharf to Dunlevy Avenue (see plan on page 9). Such a patent would have superseded the city's appeal to the BC Supreme Court and "would seriously interfere with the future trade and commerce of the 'City of Vancouver' by placing the whole of the foreshore available for wharves and docks in the hands of one company." As a consequence, Vancouver City Council resolved to urge Gordon Edward Corbould, MP, New Westminster District, ⁽²¹⁾ "to resist such a patent being granted, and that the Governor-in-Council be urged not to issue such a patent until the question is decided, as to the rights of the public to the foreshore, and then only such right being properly protected." ⁽²²⁾



G.E. Corbould, MP
([NWMA IHP0902-02](#))

In October 1893, the City of Vancouver's appeal involving the right of the city to build a wharf at the end of Gore Avenue went before the Full Bench of six judges at the BC Supreme Court and occupied two full days, resulting in a reserved judgement. ⁽²³⁾

In February 1894, the BC Supreme Court dismissed the city's appeal regarding the right of the city to build a wharf at the foot of Gore Avenue. ⁽²⁴⁾ The city's next step was to take the case to the UK Privy Council which, at the time, was the court of last resort. ⁽²⁵⁾ This recommendation was based on the wording of the Act empowering the CPR to use the foreshore for the purposes of the railway; however, the CPR was not empowered to defeat the public right to use the foreshore to obtain access to harbour. ⁽²⁶⁾ On March 30th, 1894, it was resolved that the case be appealed to the UK Privy Council. ⁽²⁷⁾

Although the city continued to use the Gore Avenue Slip, a potential resolution to the foreshore access issue remained unresolved until a special workshop between officials of the CPR and Vancouver City Council was held on October 22nd, 1897. ⁽²⁸⁾ At the meeting, the CPR outlined their need for an extensive addition to their wharf system in addition to the construction of a passenger station. Sir William Van Horne (1843–1915) ⁽²⁹⁾ explained that the CPR wanted exemption from taxation on the proposed extensions and improvements but not on the right-of-way or station grounds. Regarding waterfront access at Gore Avenue, Sir William thought "it would be very simple to have a road overhead across the track" and "a wharf could be run out there if thought desirable." Sir William also stated that "the company would give the city what would amount to the same as a deed to the foreshore rights."



William Van Horne
([LAC C-008549](#))

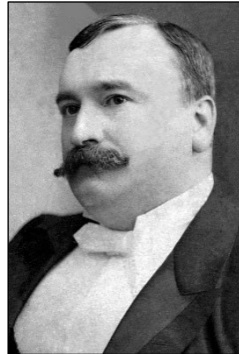


Source: City of Vancouver Archives ([CVA 677-466](#)).

North Vancouver ferry wharf (left), Cook's Slip and 'Billingsgate Fish Co.' (centre), and 'Gore Avenue Slip' (right), circa 1905 — view looking north — see painting on page 28.

CPR's Proposition

On November 24th, 1897, the CPR submitted to Vancouver City Council for consideration its written proposition “regarding the erection of a passenger station at the foot of Granville Street, and the construction of permanent wharves, yards, etc.”. ⁽³⁰⁾⁽³¹⁾ As part of the proposition, the CPR stated: “in the event of a satisfactory agreement being reached ... [and] on construction by the city of an overhead bridge ... crossing [the] company’s tracks at the foot of Gore Avenue, the company will permanently yield to the city the free and unrestricted right-of-way for such bridge on a prolongation of Gore Avenue northwards...” to Burrard Inlet. On the same afternoon, the City Council held a special meeting chaired by Mayor William Templeton during which concern was expressed by some Aldermen regarding the provision by the city of an eight-year property tax exemption.

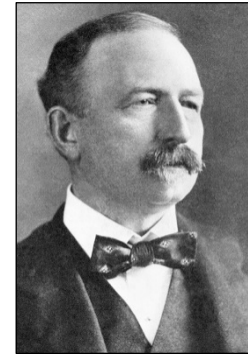


Mayor Templeton
([CVA Port P134.2](#))

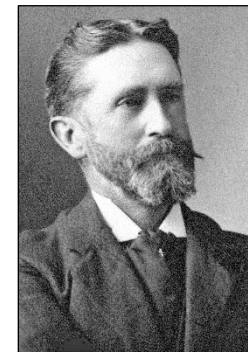
On December 30th, 1897, City Council met to review the draft CPR agreement regarding exemption from taxation on the right-of-way and buildings used exclusively for railway and steamship purposes. ⁽³²⁾ The agreement was considered clause-by-clause and numerous changes were made. In return for exemption from taxation, the city asked the CPR for the right to cross the track at Heatley and Gore Avenues and Thurlow Street, and use the waterfront at the end of those streets.

On May 20th, 1898, the Provincial Government amended the ‘Vancouver Incorporation Act’ of 1886 “to allow Vancouver City Council to pass a bylaw granting the ‘Canadian Pacific Railway Company’ exemption from taxation of certain of its property...” ⁽³³⁾ Final negotiations could then proceed.

Six months after the CPR submitted its written proposition, a follow-up conference was convened between officials of the CPR and City Council on June 14th, 1898. ⁽³⁴⁾ Sir Thomas Shaughnessy (1853–1923) ⁽³⁵⁾ stated that the company could not consider allowing the city to have a wharf at Cambie Street as it would interfere with company operations, but advised that the company was willing to consent to the extension of the wharf from the end of Gore Avenue, which was part of the general plan in which the city had agreed to pass the bylaw. Sir Thomas Shaughnessy also thought it a good idea for the City Engineer to prepare plans for the proposed Gore Avenue Wharf. CPR General Superintendent Richard Marpole ⁽³⁶⁾ also remarked that Gore Avenue would be a more practical location than anywhere else. ⁽³⁷⁾



T. G. Shaughnessy
([CU187674](#))



Richard Marpole
([CVA Port P946](#))

On November 13th, 1898, the ‘Board of Trade’ met to discuss the CPR exemption bylaw. At the conclusion of the meeting, the ‘Board of Trade’ resolved “that, having heard the explanations of George McLaren Brown ⁽³⁸⁾ [CPR Executive Agent] ... [held] the opinion that the passing of the said exemption bylaw would be of advantage to, and in the best interests of, the city...” ⁽³⁹⁾

Finally, at a special meeting of Vancouver Council on December 15th, 1898, and following further amendments to the proposed agreements, the respective documents between the city and the CPR were adopted and the CPR tax exemption bylaw was given third and final reading. ⁽⁴⁰⁾



Source: Vancouver Public Library ([VPL 5250](#)), photograph by [Philip Timms \(1874–1973\)](#).

'Cook's Slip' (foreground) and 'Gore Avenue Slip' (middle), 1908 — note 'New England Fish Company' (upper centre) and the 'Brown & Howey' feed company warehouse (upper right).

Gore Avenue Slip Develops

From the time that construction of the 'Gore Avenue Slip' was completed in late 1892 until the end of 1898, the slip was primarily used by the city to unload building materials such as pipes, bricks and rock from scows and small tugs for the city's public works. ⁽⁴¹⁾⁽⁴²⁾ The slip was also used by residents and local fishermen as public water access to the city. ⁽⁴³⁾

With the CPR agreement concluded in December 1898, the city was further able to facilitate and manage the commercial activities at the 'Gore Avenue Slip'. The firm of 'Lee & Williams' was one of the first contractors to obtain a lease to use the slip. ⁽⁴⁴⁾⁽⁴⁵⁾ However, in response to an increasing number of applications from private parties to lease the slip, the city decided that the best way of dealing with the matter was to put the slip up to competition ⁽⁴⁶⁾ on the following terms: ⁽⁴⁷⁾

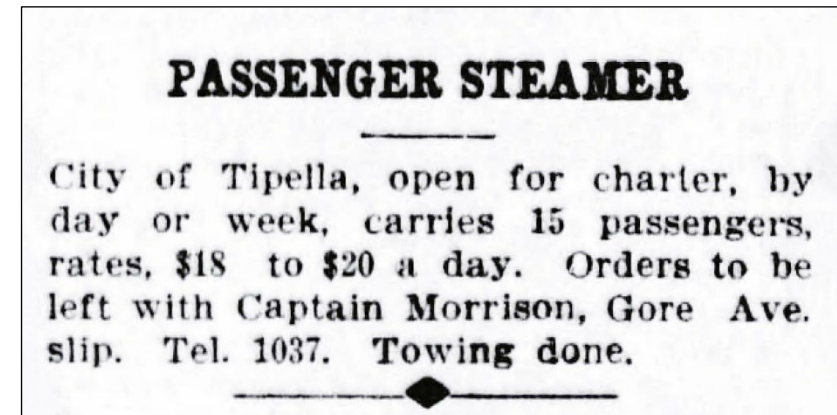
- Term of lease – five years;
- Lessee to put slip in repair and keep it in repair;
- Lessee to have the right to erect and remove buildings;
- Stone and materials for the city to have free access at all times, and way [access] to be made for the same;
- Fishermen and settlers to have the right to tie-up small boats and transport fish, farm products or supplies free.

At the end of March 1903, the city awarded the 'Gore Avenue Slip' lease to William R. Brown and Wesley Howey, constituting the firm 'Brown & Howey', at the tendered rent of \$365 per year (about \$3,000 today). ⁽⁴⁸⁾ Brown stated that his firm had no intention of establishing a public market or anything of that kind; rather, they planned to build a feed and produce warehouse. ⁽⁴⁹⁾

In July 1903, negotiations were concluded between Captain John Bonser of the sternwheeler 'SS Hamlin' and Captain M. K. Morrison, one of the lessees of the 'Gore

Avenue Slip', for wharfage facilities in connection with provision of a 'Chilliwack Landing' to Vancouver direct ferry service. Captain Morrison stated that if the proposal to provide wharfage facilities for the 'SS Hamlin' was favourably received, then he was prepared to make considerable improvements to the slip at Gore Avenue. He planned to extend the slip out another 60 feet (18.3 m) in order to provide the steamer plenty of room to berth. He also planned to erect a large warehouse for storing produce and build a large shed in which to keep livestock while awaiting delivery. ⁽⁵⁰⁾ However, this wharfage arrangement only lasted until December 1903. ⁽⁵¹⁾

In September 1903, it was reported that the lease had not proved particularly remunerative, and 'Brown & Howey' wrote to Vancouver Council giving notice of their intention to transfer the lease to Captain Morrison who was wharfinger on the 'Gore Avenue Slip'. ⁽⁵²⁾ It was also learned that the 'Albion Iron Works Company' located on the west side of Gore Avenue had decided to significantly increase the size of its wharf (see map on page 19).



Source: [Vancouver Daily News-Advertiser, July 12th, 1903, page 8.](#)

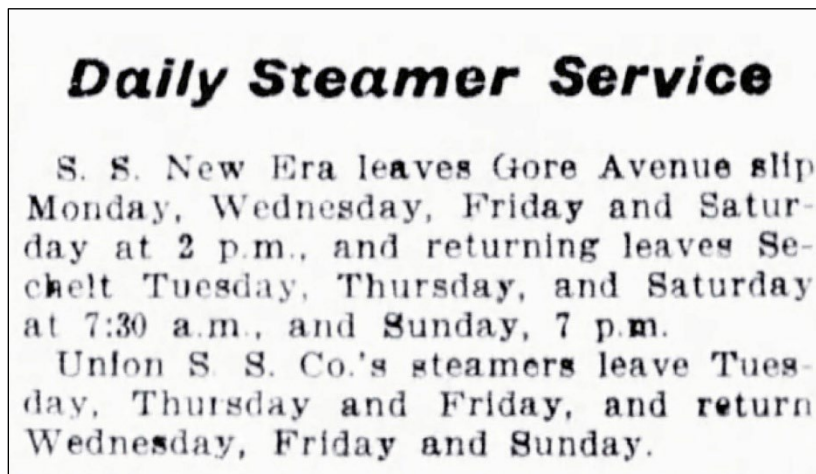
**1903 Newspaper Advertisement —
'Gore Avenue Slip' & 'MV City of Tipella'.**



Source: City of Vancouver Archives ([CVA SGN 11](#)).

'Gore Avenue Slip' (foreground) and 'Grand Trunk Pacific' wharf (background), circa 1912.

In December 1903, it was reported that the 'Canadian Pacific Railway Company' was to build a large wharf for the 'New England Fish Company' on the east side of Gore Avenue commencing early in 1904. ⁽⁵³⁾ The wharf was to run 400 feet (122 m) out into deep water. The outer most part of the wharf was to be occupied by the 'New England Fish Company', their section being 150 feet in length and 140 feet in width (45.7 x 42.7 m) on which a warehouse 130 feet by 120 feet (39.6 x 36.6 m) was to be built. The shore end of the wharf for a distance of 100 feet (30.5 m) outward was to be occupied by the 'International Ice & Cold Storage Company' and the section of wharf between the two companies was to be used by 'Brown & Howey' for warehouse purposes. Provision for handling freight cars between the CPR main line and the 'New England Fish Company' warehouse at the outer end of the wharf was via a trestle running out from the shore from a point east of the wharf (see map on page 19).



Source: [Vancouver Daily News-Advertiser, August 28th, 1904, page 1.](#)

1904 Newspaper Advertisement — 'Gore Avenue Slip' & 'SS New Era'

Vancouver Street-Ends Case

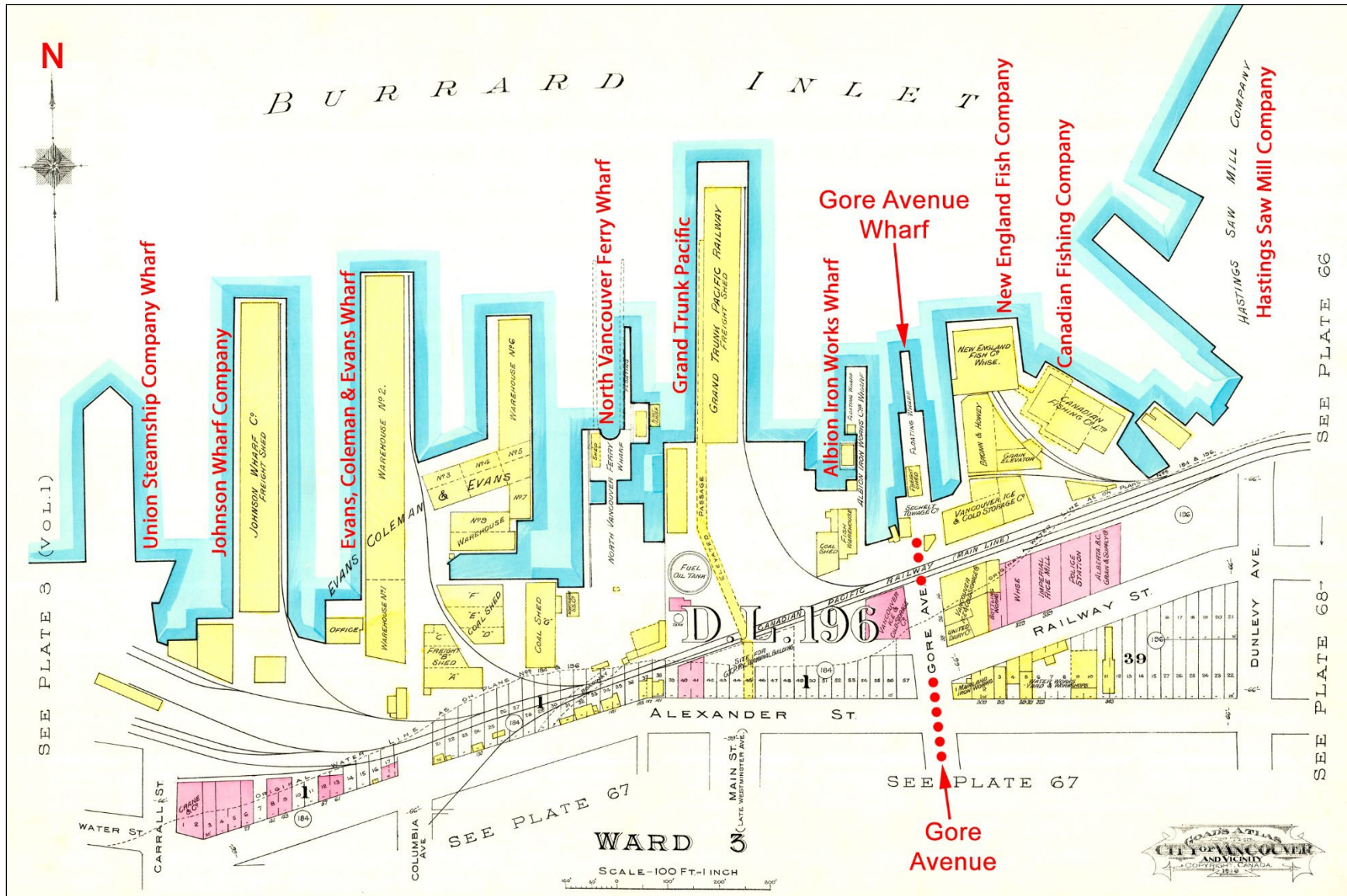
On July 30th, 1904, Mr. Justice Lyman Duff ⁽⁵⁴⁾ gave judgement against the 'City of Vancouver' in the case of the Attorney-General of British Columbia versus the CPR, better known as the "Street-Ends Case": ⁽⁵⁵⁾

"I find, as a fact, that the works constituting the obstruction complained of are necessary to meet the reasonable requirements of the company [CPR] in respect of terminal facilities; and that the exercise of public rights of passage at the places in question is incompatible with the effective use of the railway and other works of three places for the purposes for which they are required." – **Mr. Justice Duff**

On April 15th, 1905, the 'City of Vancouver' lost its appeal to the Full Court of British Columbia in the "Street-Ends Case". This was an appeal on the action instituted by the 'City of Vancouver' against the CPR for the recovery of the ends of Cambie, Abbott and Carrell Streets where those streets approached the Burrard Inlet waterfront: ⁽⁵⁶⁾

"...the Dominion [Government] had the power to expropriate lands for a right-of-way for a railway built under federal authority. The CPR was to be built to the seaboard. It was not limited to stop at any particular point, and therefore the right to land was established at whatever point was selected." – **Chief Justice Hunter**

"...could not find one ground for disturbing the decision of the trial judge. The Dominion parliament had the power to take the necessary lands and no province or corporation had any power to stop it. Municipal or provincial lands could be taken for federal railways. If it were otherwise, a railway could not acquire all the lands intended. It might be blocked at any point. The CPR further was a great national work, undertaken at the request of British Columbia, and therefore it is doubly clear that the province could not interfere with the right to acquire lands." – **Mr. Justice Martin**



Source: City of Vancouver Archives ([CVA Map 342b.01](#)).

Map annotated by Ralph Drew.

1912 fire insurance map of 'Vancouver City' showing a portion of 'Vancouver Harbour' — note the locations of 'Gore Avenue Wharf' (centre right) and 'Hastings Saw Mill Co.' (right).

In July 1905, the BC Attorney-General decided to appeal the BC Supreme Court decision to the UK Privy Council⁽⁵⁷⁾ and in August 1905 took the appeal to England.⁽⁵⁸⁾

On February 27th, 1906, judgement was rendered by the Judicial Committee of the UK Privy Council on the appeal in the case of the Attorney-General of British Columbia versus the 'Canadian Pacific Railway':⁽⁵⁹⁾⁽⁶⁰⁾

"It is enough to say that the language of the 'C.P.R. Act' must prevail over that of the 'Consolidated Railways Act', which applies only in so far as it is not inconsistent with the special act; and it is clear, in their Lordships' opinion, that the power given the company to appropriate foreshore for the purpose of their railway of necessity includes the right to obstruct any rights of passage previously existing across the foreshore. The appeal should be dismissed." – **Sir Arthur Wilson**⁽⁶¹⁾

The Gore avenue slip presented a busy appearance this morning with nearly its full fleet of tugs getting ready for today's service. There were thirteen tugs in the slip: Hattie Hansen, Bermuda, Autolicus, Dolphin, Takara Maru, Halifax, Lottie, Victor, Hustler, Stella, Victor, Gypsy, Reliance, Aradana and Swan; also three SCOWS.

Source: [Vancouver Daily World, August 8th, 1907, page 31.](#)

**1907 Newspaper Article —
'Gore Avenue Slip' — 13 steam tugs at the slip.**

Gore Avenue Slip Lessees Change

In July 1906, 'Morrison & Watson', lessees of the 'Gore Avenue Slip', dissolved their partnership. Captain M. K. Morrison retained his interest in the business and Watson was succeeded by Captain W. H. Hind. Both Captains Hind and Morrison were well-known in marine circles on the coast. Captain Hind was the owner of the tug 'Stella' and Captain Morrison was charterer of several tugs used in local towing.⁽⁶²⁾

Twin Screw Steel Tug

“TOPAZ”

(Licensed to Carry Ten Passengers)

Open for Short Time Charters.

**Berth: GORE AVENUE SLIP,
VANCOUVER, B. C.**

Apply to the Captain, or the B. C.

General Contract Co., Ltd.

Source: [Vancouver Daily News-Advertiser, February 22nd, 1907, page 11.](#)

**1907 Newspaper Advertisement —
'Gore Avenue Slip' — Twin Screw Steel Tug 'SS Topaz'.**



Source: City of Vancouver Archives ([CVA LGN 1040](#)).

The 'Mosquito Fleet' (small steam tugs) at the 'Gore Avenue Wharf' (centre), July 1913 — note the sailing ships at 'Hastings Mill' (centre) and 'New England Fish Company' (upper right).

In October 1907, Captain Morrison, who was in charge of the towing business at the 'Gore Avenue Slip', severed his connection with that concern and took charge of the towing business at Heatley Avenue for 'City Wharf Company'.⁽⁶³⁾

In August 1908, an application for a renewed lease of the 'Gore Avenue Slip' was presented to City Council by Messrs. 'Hind & McKeen' who held the lease previously granted to Captain Morrison in October 1903. The lease was due to expire on October 1st and they wished to secure a lease of the slip for another five years.⁽⁶⁴⁾⁽⁶⁵⁾

In September 1908, tenders were called for lease of the slip.⁽⁶⁶⁾ On November 3rd, it was reported that a survey showed that the float encroached on private property to the east by approximately 15 feet (4.6 m) which required rectification before renewal of the lease.⁽⁶⁷⁾ The proposed lease renewal also drew a petition from 15 tug boat owners asking that control of the slip be given to parties who would not occupy it with their own vessels to the exclusion of the "mosquito fleet" of the harbour.

In November 1908, the 'Gore Avenue Slip' lease was awarded to the highest bidder, 'Sechelt Trading Company' (see page 24), for \$82.50 per month (about \$2,200 per month today)⁽⁶⁸⁾ who had also stated their expectation of using the wharf for landing gravel and servicing the needs of the "mosquito fleet" as in the past. The 'Sechelt Steamship Company' initially leased 'Ward's Wharf' for two years at the foot of Abbott Street in August 1907 — renamed it 'Sechelt Wharf' — from which it operated the vessels 'SS New Era' and 'SS Sechelt'.⁽⁶⁹⁾⁽⁷⁰⁾

On December 8th, 1908, it was reported that the 'Gore Avenue Slip' was being moved to its proper position 17 feet (5.2 m) to the west at the order of the 'Sechelt Steamship Company'.⁽⁷¹⁾ In March 1909, the 'Sechelt Steamship

Company' proceeded to reconstruct the 'Gore Avenue Slip'.⁽⁷²⁾ The slip and float were pulled-out and a solid wharf built-out with a bridge connecting a new float. (The 1924 plan on page 51 outlines this construction as well as showing the proposed 250-foot (76.2 m) float extension outlined in red.) At that time, the steam tug 'SS Tartar' was in the process of being converted into a passenger boat (see photograph on page 23), and the intention was to operate that vessel from the new 'Gore Avenue Wharf'.

SECHELT STEAMSHIP Co.
LIMITED

STEAMERS

Leave Vancouver (Gore Avenue Slip)
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, 1:30 p.m.

Leave Sechelt Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, 7:30 a.m.; Sunday 10 a.m.

For Bowen Island (West), Keat's Island, Gibson's Landing, Gower Point, Robert's Creek, Harris' Camp and Sechelt.

Connecting at Sechelt with S.S. "New Era" for Jervis Inlet on Monday, and for Narrows Arm on Tuesday.

H. WHITAKER,
Managing Director.

Source: [Vancouver Daily News-Advertiser, May 22nd, 1907, page 9.](#)

**1907 Newspaper Advertisement —
'Gore Avenue Slip' & 'Sechelt Steamship Co.'**



Source: City of Vancouver Archives ([CVA Bo P456](#)).

The passenger vessel 'SS Tartar' at 'Gibson's Landing' on the 'Sunshine Coast', circa 1910 — the steel ocean-going tug was built in 1906 at Swansea, Wales, UK, and converted to a passenger vessel in 1909 — she was 90.2 feet long, 17.1 feet wide, with a draft of 9.2 feet.

Sechelt Steamship Company

Herbert Whitaker was owner and general manager of the 'Sechelt Trading Company', established *circa* 1894, which was the umbrella company for his various businesses which included a hotel, general store, sawmill and logging camps on the Sechelt peninsula. One of Whitaker's companies was the 'Sechelt Steamship Company' which was incorporated in April 1907 to bring tourists to his hotels and cottages, supplies to his stores and workers to his logging operations.

In January 1906, it was reported that the 'Sechelt Trading Company' steamer 'SS New Era' had sailed from the 'Evans Coleman & Evans' wharf on its regular run to Sechelt. ⁽⁷³⁾ In May 1907, a newspaper advertisement indicated that the 'SS New Era' was operated by 'Sechelt Steamship Company'. ⁽⁷⁴⁾

In 1906, the 'Sechelt Trading Company' purchased the vessel 'SS Hattie Hansen', ⁽⁷⁵⁾ rechristened her the 'SS Sechelt' in July 1907, ⁽⁷⁶⁾ and immediately placed her on the Vancouver to Sechelt run. ⁽⁷⁷⁾ In January 1910, while *en route* to Sechelt, she struck a sunken rock which stripped off her wheel. ⁽⁷⁸⁾ In August 1910, she ran into the cliffs at First Narrows near Prospect Point lighthouse. ⁽⁷⁹⁾ In November 1910, the 'SS Sechelt' was blown against the rocks and grounded while making a landing at Cowan's ranch on Bowen Island. ⁽⁸⁰⁾

In 1907, the 'Sechelt Trading Company' purchased the ocean-going tug 'SS Tartar' ⁽⁸¹⁾ and in February 1909 converted her into a passenger vessel for the Sechelt run (see photograph on page 23). ⁽⁸²⁾ In August 1910, she lost her propeller off Scow Bay while *en route* from Bute Inlet to Vancouver. ⁽⁸³⁾ In 1913, she was owned by the 'Sechelt Towing Company'. ⁽⁸⁴⁾

In January 1910, the 'Sechelt Trading Company' purchased the steamer 'SS Belcarra' from the 'Terminal Steamship Company' for use on the Vancouver to Ladysmith run. ⁽⁸⁵⁾ In September 1910, the 'SS Belcarra' hit rocks in Jervis Inlet and sank in deep water and was a total loss. ⁽⁸⁶⁾

In December 1910, the 'Sechelt Steamship Company' filed for liquidation of its assets due to the several vessel accidents and total loss of the 'SS Belcarra'. ⁽⁸⁷⁾⁽⁸⁸⁾

SUNDAY EXCURSIONS

S. S. Belcarra

Leaves Gore avenue wharf Sunday at 9 a. m. for Tunstall Bay, Gibson's Landing and Howe Sound Beach. Returning, leaves Gibson's Landing at 6 p. m. This allows the passengers about six hours to spend at different points. Return fare \$1.

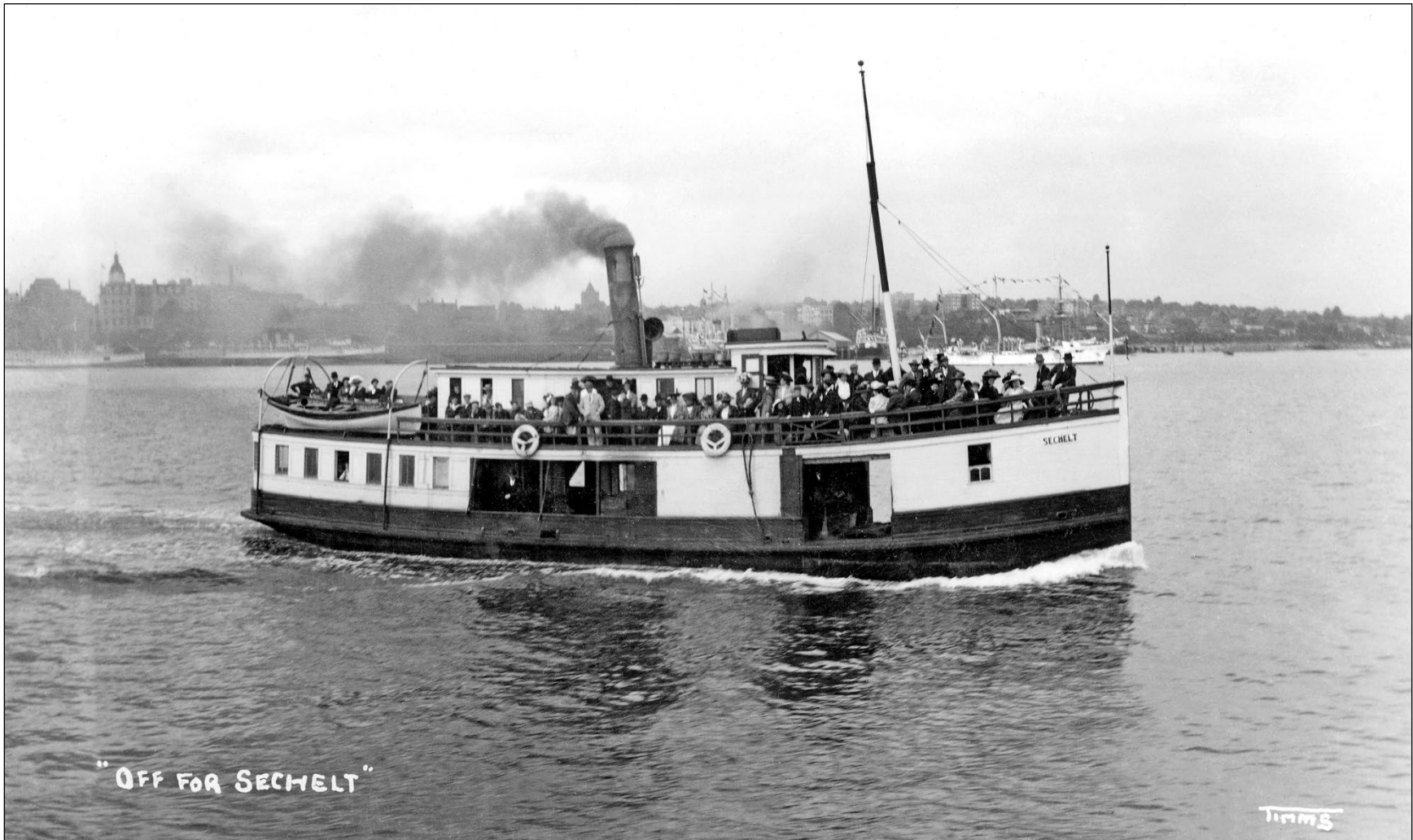
S. S. Tartar

Leaves Gore avenue wharf Sundays at 9 a. m. for Sechelt and Buccaneer Bay. Returning, leaves Buccaneer Bay at 4:30 p. m., and Sechelt at 6 p. m. Return fare, Sechelt \$1, Buccaneer Bay \$1.50.

SECHELT STEAMSHIP CO., LD.

Source: [Vancouver Province, July 6th, 1910, page 28.](#)

**1910 Newspaper Advertisement —
'Gore Avenue Wharf' — 'SS Belcarra' & 'SS Tartar'**



Source: Vancouver Public Library ([VPL 2985](#)), photograph by [Philip Timms \(1874–1973\)](#).

The shelter-deck steamer 'SS Sechelt' en route to the 'Sunshine Coast', 1910 — originally christened 'SS Hattie Hansen', she was built in 1893 at Lake Washington, Seattle — the 'SS Sechelt' was 80 feet long, 15.2 feet wide, with a draft of 7.4 feet.

Following liquidation of the 'Sechelt Steamship Company', Herbert Whitaker attempted to maintain steamer service on the Howe Sound run which included calling at Gibson's Landing, Tunstall Bay and the popular seaside resort of Sechelt. In May 1911, steamer service from the 'Gore Avenue Wharf' by a new company called 'Vancouver Steamship Company' which operated the 'SS Tartar'.⁽⁸⁹⁾ In November 1911, it was announced that the 'Union Steamship Company' would take over the Howe Sound run and that the steamer 'SS Tartar' would be indefinitely laid-up for lack of a replacement run.⁽⁹⁰⁾

The Next Chapter Begins

In January 1911, the 'Grand Trunk Pacific' (GTP) company purchased the site of the 'Albion Iron Works Company' located immediately west of the 'Gore Avenue Wharf'. The site had been owned by the 'Vancouver Wharf Company' who had leased the foreshore from the CPR. The GTP gave notice to the 'Albion Iron Works Company' to vacate within 90 days.⁽⁹¹⁾⁽⁹²⁾ The new GTP pier was planned to be 550 feet (167.6 m) in length and 100 feet (30.5 m) in width, and the wharf 340 feet (103.6 m) long and 280 feet (85.3 m) wide, or almost 100,000 square feet (9,290 m²) — see maps on pages 19 and 41.⁽⁹³⁾

In clearing the 'Albion Iron Works Company' waterfront, Andy Linton, pioneer boat builder, towed his float from the foot of Main Street to a temporary location in North Vancouver, and the old fishing floats (*a.k.a.* 'Cook's Slip') owned by Edward Cook, contractor, were relocated.⁽⁹⁴⁾

In February 1912, the 'Grand Trunk Pacific' steamship department began moving their operations to their new dock at the foot of Main Street. The principal entrance to the dock for vehicles and drays was via the Gore Avenue crossing. The next development under consideration by GTP was construction of another cargo pier for ocean

going ships on the eastern side of the property with a passenger terminal building facing Main Street.⁽⁹⁵⁾

The clearing of the waterfront in 1911 and contemplated expansion by GTP brought appeals to Vancouver City Council from both the news media⁽⁹⁶⁾ and the 'Vancouver Shipmasters Association' strenuously objecting to the potential "give over" of the Gore Avenue street-end to any company or person:⁽⁹⁷⁾

"The float at Gore Avenue has for over twenty years been a great convenience to all small craft, both business and pleasure, and why should it not so forever remain? If this wealthy railway [GTP] wants more waterfront let it buy it in the ordinary way."

"We tug and small craft owners want suitable accommodation. There will also be shortly fire and water police boats on the inlet, and where are they supposed to get accommodation if this street-end is given away, as it is the suitable central place on the waterfront for this protection service to have its headquarters. Gore Avenue is the most central street-end open to the public, and serves the centre or business portion of the city as well as a large portion of the east end."

"Mr. Editor, I trust that your good offices be extended to support the maintenance for all time of this little 'ewe lamb' of waterfront for the use of all citizens and not allow it to go to the trusts." — **Captain J. L. Anderson, President, Shipmasters Assoc., Dec. 15th, 1911.**

In November 1913, the 'City of Vancouver' granted a two-year lease to the GTP. The old lease, which was transferred from the 'Sechelt Steamship Company' to GTP, was for five years and was about to expire. It was thought, however, that five years was too lengthy an interval given the development of the waterfront. The stipulations that were in the old lease would continue to apply. Captain Nicholson was the local manager with GTP.⁽⁹⁸⁾



Source: Vancouver Public Library ([VPL 2928](#)), photograph by [Philip Timms \(1874–1973\)](#).

Passenger vessels ‘SS Defiance’ (left) & ‘SS Belcarra’ (right) and steam tug ‘SS Kildonan’ (centre) at ‘Evans, Coleman & Evans’ wharf, circa 1908 — view looking west from the ‘Gore Avenue Slip’ — Cook’s Slip (foreground) and ‘Billingsgate Fish Co.’ (centre right) — see map on page 9.

Public Dock Not Meant For More Than One Vehicle and Horse at a Time ⁽⁹⁹⁾

“Vancouver’s ‘Panama Canal’ wharf at the foot of Gore Avenue was the scene of another near-accident yesterday [June 1912] when a horse and wagon narrowly escaped an immersion in the brine and sewage which keeps it afloat. A couple of cases of eggs went adrift, but were finally brought to a mooring by the fishermen who hibernate in the vicinity. The horse and wagon were prevented from going overboard by Phillip Robinson, a bystander, who exhibited unusual strength.”

“The wharf at Gore Avenue is a narrow affair which floats with tide. It is attached to the land by a runway which is tilted at an angle of nearly ninety degrees when the tide is out. The whole affair represents an outlay by the city of almost \$500 [about \$14,000 today], and is the only connection to the harbour, owned by the city, which is used to any extent. Although it is a frail structure, an immense amount of business is transacted from it, the principal business being the handling of supplies for small commercial boats, fishing craft and visiting yachts. On many occasions, horses and wagons have been prevented from falling off the structure by a very narrow margin.”

“The wagon which nearly went overboard yesterday ... had safely reached the float with a load of groceries. The horse was facing the incline to the shore as a fishing boat started out. The explosions from the engine exhaust startled the horse, which started to rear backward. As the float is quite wide enough to hold one wagon and horse at a time, bystanders were somewhat astonished to find that the rear wheels of the vehicle had entered the water, with a fine chance of the front of the wagon and horse following suit. Two cases of eggs dumped out and joined the flotsam from the shore. It was at this point that Phillip Robinson stepped forward and grabbed the excited horse by the head. Exerting his strength, the rescuer hauled the horse and wagon from danger, after which the eggs were collected from the brine.”

“About four times per week, the same thing happens to different vehicles that deliver merchandise at the wharf for various boats. It is at this same wharf that the city police boat is berthed.”

“As there is not much chance of interesting Ottawa authorities in putting up funds to improve the structure, the indications are that the float will be used to handle the overflow Panama Canal traffic when the big ditch is completed.”

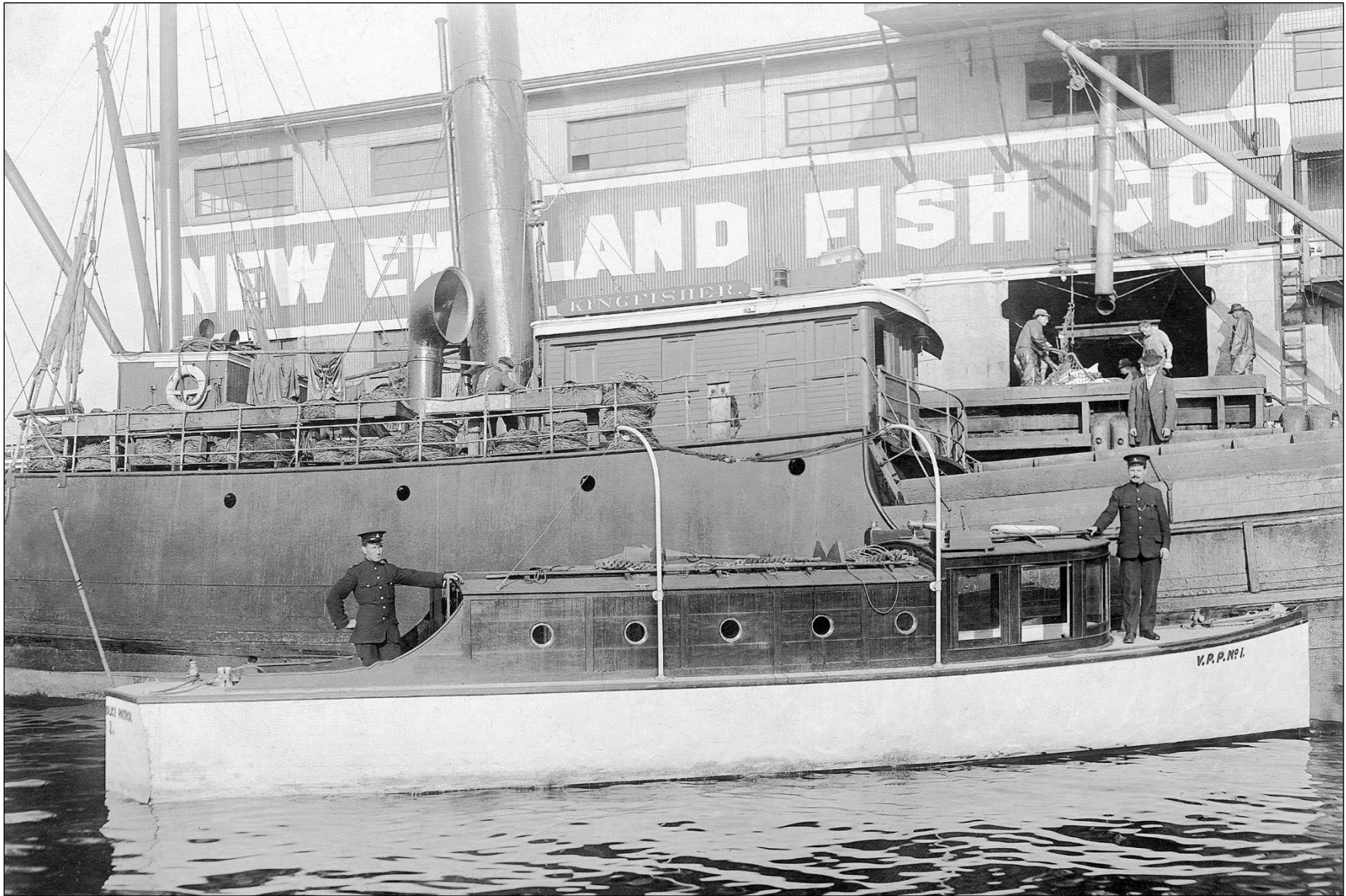
“While it is probably the smallest wharf — or float — along the waterfront, it takes care of the largest amount of general traffic of any structure owned by the city. It is also located at the most odiferous point on the water front, half a dozen streams from the sewers providing the liquid which keeps it afloat.”

“At present, it is leased to one of the local fishing concerns which charges a nominal sum to the small boat owners for the use of the wharf. The latter are glad to use it at the price, as it is the only place on the waterfront owned by the city which is near the business section. Visitors declare that there is no seaport on the whole coast which has anything remotely resembling the city’s wharf at Gore Avenue.”



Source: The collection of watercolour sketches titled: ‘Canadian Pictures’.

“The Fish Market, Vancouver” — circa 1910
— watercolour painting (12”x18”) by [Harold Copping](#). ⁽¹⁰⁰⁾



Source: City of Vancouver Archives ([CVA 480-201](#)).

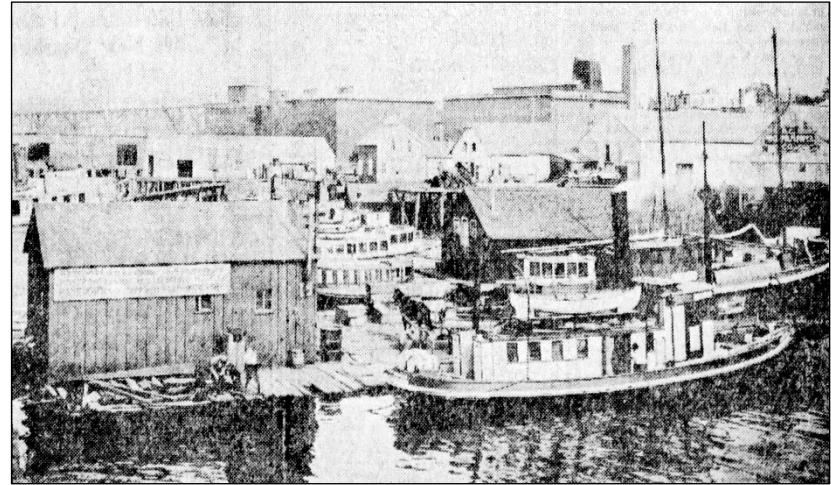
**Vancouver Police 'Patrol Boat No. 1' at the 'Gore Avenue Wharf', circa 1910
— 'SS Kingfisher' and 'New England Fish Company' in the background.**

In June 1912, it was announced that Captain George Cates (1861–1936) ⁽¹⁰¹⁾ was opening his new ‘Seaside Park Hotel’ located at Rainy River, Howe Sound, with transportation provided by the new passenger boat ‘MV Christella’ ⁽¹⁰²⁾ based at the ‘Gore Avenue Wharf’. ⁽¹⁰³⁾ The ‘MV Christella’ was owned by the ‘Inland Transportation Co. Ltd.’ ⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ and was subsequently destroyed by fire in ‘Coal Harbour’ on July 13th, 1913. ⁽¹⁰⁵⁾⁽¹⁰⁶⁾

Inland Transportation Co., Ltd.
FOOT GORE AVENUE
 S.S. Christella leaves Gore Avenue wharf every morning at 9.00 o'clock, calling at Gibson's, Hopkins and Port Mellon, Seaside Park Hotel and all way points. Gambier Island route Tuesdays and Fridays. Return trip \$1.50, good till September. Sundays and holiday excursions \$1.00 return, good for day of issue only. For full information apply Sey. 4984.

Source: [Vancouver Daily News-Advertiser, June 30th, 1912, page 39.](#)

**1912 Newspaper Advertisement —
 ‘Inland Transportation Co.’ at ‘Foot Gore Avenue’.**



Source: [Vancouver Daily World, March 10th, 1911, page 21.](#)

**‘Gore Avenue Wharf’ (centre) — view looking east —
 ‘Billingsgate Fish Co.’ and ‘Cook’s Slip’ (foreground).**

The earliest advertisement for ‘Harbour Shipping Company’ passenger vessels based at ‘Gore Avenue Wharf’ appeared on Saturday, October 4th, 1913: ⁽¹⁰⁷⁾

Indian River Park
AND WAY POINTS
 Harbor Shipping Company's boats leave Gore Avenue Wharf daily at 10 a.m. Saturdays at 2 p.m.

Source: [Vancouver Province, October 4th, 1913, page 26.](#)

**1913 Newspaper Advertisement —
 ‘Harbour Shipping Company’ at ‘Gore Avenue Wharf’.**



Courtesy of Royal B.C. Museum & Archives ([RBCMA D-06747](#)).

'Harbour Shipping Company' passenger ferry 'MV Sadie Hiltz' in Burrard Inlet, 1912 — the motor launch 'Sadie Hiltz' was 38.7 feet long, 10 feet wide, and carried 38 passengers.

Harbour Shipping Company

In 1908, Captain Herbert Stilson Hilton (1874–1969) ⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ started the 'New Brighton Ferry Company', which operated small ferry boats on the Fraser River. The 'New Brighton Ferry Company' was the predecessor of both the 'Harbour Shipping Company' and, subsequently, the 'Harbour Navigation Company'. ⁽¹⁰⁹⁾



Captain H. S. Hilton
[\(VPL 81215\)](#)

In 1911, Captain Hilton changed the name of the 'New Brighton Ferry Company' to 'Harbour Shipping Company'. The company's wharf and offices were on Burrard Inlet at the foot of Gore Avenue in Vancouver.

In 1912, Captain Hilton purchased the passenger launch 'MV Sadie Hiltz' ⁽¹¹⁰⁾ which operated on the run to Lake Buntzen on Indian Arm, where the 'B.C. Electric Railway Company' was building its hydroelectric power plants.

In 1913, Captain Hilton purchased the 'MV Lo'Olbee' that was formerly a private yacht owned by R. P. McLennan and built at Vancouver in 1911. ⁽¹¹¹⁾ The wood vessel was 65 feet (19.8 m) long, 12 feet (3.7 m) wide, with accommodation for 75 passengers. ⁽¹¹²⁾

In 1914, Captain Hilton had the 'MV Lake Buntzen' built for the North Arm run. ⁽¹¹³⁾ The wood vessel was 44.2 feet (13.5 m) long, 12.2 feet (3.7 m) wide, with a draft of 4.9 feet (1.5 m) and accommodation for 65 passengers. ⁽¹¹⁴⁾

In 1915, Captain Hilton purchased the 'MV Enilada' which added a second launch on the North Arm run. ⁽¹¹⁵⁾⁽¹¹⁶⁾ The wood vessel 'MV Enilada' was built in 1909 in Vancouver and was 64 feet (19.5 m) long, 16 feet (4.9 m) wide, with a draft of 7.8 feet (2.4 m) and 44 passenger capacity. ⁽¹¹⁷⁾

In 1915, Captain Hilton leased Wigwam Inn and operated the chalet from 1915 until 1919 in conjunction with his excursion boat business.

In June 1916, the 'Harbour Shipping Company' applied for a lease of 'Gore Avenue Wharf' stating "that it was prepared to carry-out the terms of the lease as laid down in the proposed agreement with the 'Grand Trunk Pacific'" and also stating "that it would be a distinct hardship if the company were compelled to leave the wharf". ⁽¹¹⁸⁾ However, a two-year lease was again granted to the GTP.



Source: [Vancouver Province, December 31st, 1913, page 13.](#)

**1913 Newspaper Advertisement —
'Harbour Shipping Company' at 'Gore Avenue Wharf'.**



Source: City of Vancouver Archives (CVA Add MSS 44, Location 502-C-7, File 9, 801-56), photograph by 'Canadian Photo Co.'

The sternwheeler 'SS Alluvia' at 'Wade's Landing' on 'Turtlehead' in Belcarra August 4th, 1914 — the wood freight and passenger vessel was built in 1911 at New Westminster — she was 100 feet long, 23.3 feet wide, with a draft of 3 feet.

Sternwheeler 'SS Alluvia'

The sternwheeler 'SS Alluvia' was built in 1911 at New Westminster, BC, was 100 feet (30.5 m) long, 23 feet (7m) wide, with a draft of 3 feet (1 m), ⁽¹¹⁹⁾ and was licenced to carry 200 passengers.

In 1912, the 'SS Alluvia' was operated by the 'North Arm Steamship Company', and was purchased in the spring of 1912 by 'Alvo von Alvensleben Ltd.'. ⁽¹²⁰⁾⁽¹²¹⁾ The sternwheeler made daily trips to Wigwam Inn, which Alvo owned, from the 'Grand Trunk Pacific' wharf. ⁽¹²²⁾



**Spend Your Holiday at the
WIGWAM INN**

The scene of the recent International Rowing Regatta. Unique and picturesque hostelry at the head of the North Arm of Burrard Inlet. Ideal place for quiet holiday for the business man and for visitors and tourists. Easily reached from Vancouver by two hours non-stop run on S.S. Alluvia, leaving G.T.P. wharf every morning at 10 a.m. Saturday's 2 p.m. Returning same day.

The Inn is now under new management, and every comfort is provided for guests who are made to feel far more "at home" than in the majority of hotels. The cuisine is unexcelled, the kitchen being in charge of an expert European Chef.

All rooms have hot and cold water, electric light, and call service. They are bright, clean and airy, each window commanding magnificent views of mountain or water.

The attractions of Indian River Park include the famous falls of the Spray of the Pearls (200 feet high), Cathedral Canyon, and the beautiful valley of Indian River, all easily reached by good trails from the Inn.

For Wigwam Inn rates, steamer schedules, etc., telephone Seymour 2480.

CITY AGENTS

Alvo von Alvensleben, Ltd.
Pacific Building 744 Hastings W

Source: [Vancouver Daily World, July 25th, 1913, page 4.](#)

1913 Newspaper Advertisement —
Sternwheeler 'SS Alluvia' & 'Wigwam Inn'

The 'SS Alluvia' continued to make daily trips to Wigwam Inn on the North Arm run until 1915 when she was sold ⁽¹²³⁾ and rebuilt as a barge. ⁽¹¹⁹⁾

From 1912 through 1914, the 'SS Alluvia' was the principal mail ship ('Travelling Post Office') on the Indian Arm run. During the period from 1914 to 1919, Captain Hilton of the 'Harbour Shipping Company' became postmaster of the Burrard Inlet 'Travelling Post Office'. ⁽¹²⁴⁾⁽¹²⁵⁾



**40 Glorious Miles on the
Salt Water**

\$1.00
Round Trip

All aboard this week end for up North Arm to Indian River, Wigwam Inn and all way points. Three boats, big roomy, powerful launch "Enilada," "Lo-Oblee" or "Lake Buntzen."

Every mile a masterpiece of scenic grandeur. Huge snow-covered mountains; roaring, rushing, tumbling cataracts; giant cedars and firs; every diversion, dancing, swimming, fishing, boating—and the cost is but \$1.00 round. Daily boat service 10 a.m. On Saturday also at 2 p.m. Way point fares on application. Boats leave at Gore avenue wharf. Phone or call for further particulars. Seymour 9590.

HARBOUR SHIPPING CO.
Foot of Gore Ave.

Source: [Vancouver Province, July 17th, 1915, page 14.](#)

1915 Newspaper Advertisement —
'Harbour Shipping Company' & 'MV Enilada'.



Courtesy of Royal B.C. Museum & Archives ([RBCMA D-06743](#)).

'MV Enilada', circa 1915 — 44 passengers — the vessel was 64 feet long and 16 feet wide.



Courtesy of Royal B.C. Museum & Archives ([RBCMA D-06739](#)).

'MV Lake Buntzen', 1914 — 65 passengers — the vessel was 44.2 feet long and 12.2 feet wide.



Courtesy of Royal B.C. Museum & Archives ([RBCMA D-06746](#)).

'MV Lo'Olbee', circa 1912 — 75 passengers — the vessel was 65 feet long and 12 feet wide.



Source: City of Vancouver Archives ([CVA 72-63](#)).

'MV Harbour Princess' at Belcarra dock, 1950 — the vessel was 100 feet long and 18.3 feet wide.

Vancouver City Retail Fish Market

In February 1918, Vancouver Mayor Robert Henry Gale (1878–1950) presented a proposal to construct a new dock and fish market at the foot of Gore Avenue. As the wharf was in a bad state of repair, the scheme included construction of a substantial wharf on which would be built eleven stalls fitted with proper facilities for handling and storing fresh fish. The shops would be leased to dealers who had to agree to sell their fish at a reasonable price, thus giving the city a measure of control on the maximum selling price via the wording of the leases. The proposal also included a new floating slip for the accommodation of fishing boats and other small craft. ⁽¹²⁶⁾



Mayor Gale
([CVA City P37](#))

In March 1918, Mayor Gale submitted to City Council the results of negotiations for a municipally controlled fish market. The lessee was identified as the 'Defiance Packing Company' and the company's manager, Alfred Sherman, who offered to take a lease of a portion of the 'Gore Avenue Wharf' for a term of five years providing the city undertook to rebuild the wharf. The company was prepared to spend \$10,000 (about \$180,000 today) in erecting plant and buildings on the wharf to provide a sanitary and up-to-date fish market which would be under civic control and inspection. ⁽¹²⁷⁾⁽¹²⁸⁾

The terms of the lease of 'Gore Avenue Wharf' to the 'Defiance Packing Company' were: ⁽¹²⁹⁾

- The city would put the wharf in a good state of repair and extend it 50 feet (15.2 m) and give the company the exclusive right to deal in fish on the premises.

A black and white newspaper advertisement for the Harbour Shipping Company. The top part of the ad features a woodcut-style illustration of a large steamship, the MV Enilada, docked at a wharf. The ship has multiple masts and funnels. Below the illustration, the text reads: "TAKE AN OUTING THIS WEEK-END". The main body of text describes a trip up the North Arm of Burrard Inlet to the Wigwam Inn and the famous Indian River Region, 20 miles each way, as a "voyage through a veritable wonderland." It mentions that the commodious and fast passenger launch, the Enilada, leaves the Gore Avenue Wharf every day at 10 a.m. Reasonable rates can be arranged for a week-end stay at the Picturesque Wigwam Inn, which is steam heated, electric light, and modern as a city hostelry. On Sunday, the Enilada stays at the Inn for three hours, leaving there at 4 and back to town at 7 p.m. The round trip fare is \$1. Full particulars are available from the Harbour Shipping Co. Ltd., Office Gore Avenue Wharf, Phone Sey. 9590.

Source: [Vancouver Province, May 12th, 1916, page 20.](#)

**1916 Newspaper Advertisement —
'Harbour Shipping Company' & 'MV Enilada'.**



Source: UBC Library, Rare Books and Special Collections, Open Collections.

Photograph annotated by Ralph Drew.

‘Gore Avenue Slip’ (centre) and ‘New England Fish Company’ (upper centre), circa 1915 — view looking north — note the Gore Avenue access (upper right) at the railway tracks.

- No fishing boats other than those trading with the company would be allowed to tie-up to the floating slip.
- The 'Harbour Shipping Company', which had an office at the shore-end for some time, would also dock its North Arm (Indian Arm) and other boats on the float.
- The general public would be able to make use of the float leased to the 'Harbour Shipping Company'.
- Boats other than fishing boats could be tied-up to the float at a daily charge of 25¢ (about \$6.75 today).
- The city's own boats would have the right to use the float without charge.
- The company would pay \$150 per month rental (about \$2,700 today) and the 'Harbour Shipping Company' would pay \$125 per month rental (about \$2,250 today).
- The 'Defiance Packing Company' would construct wholesale and retail fish stalls on the wharf at a cost of \$7,500 (about \$135,000 today) and allow free use of the fish stalls by fishermen who wished to sell direct to the public if they sold at the prices fixed by the lease schedule.

The city wanted no time to be lost in getting the refurbished 'Gore Avenue Wharf' built and ready for the municipal fish market. ⁽¹³⁰⁾ The plans for the wharf were quickly finalized (see plan on page 51) and specifications required that the successful tenderer was to complete the work in one month from award of the contract. ⁽¹³¹⁾ Approval of the project was also obtained regarding compliance under the federal 'Navigable Waters Protection Act'. ⁽¹³²⁾⁽¹³³⁾

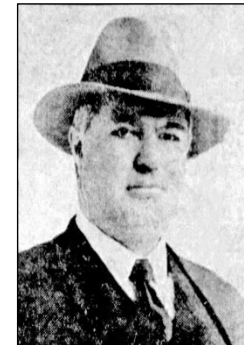
In May 1918, Mayor Gale announced that the original contract with the company had been completed, but requested that City Council approve some changes in the construction of the wharf which would not cost the city anything extra. Mayor Gale explained that the company now proposed to combine its retail fish market with a cold storage plant, the combined or adjoining buildings to cost

between \$30,000 and \$35,000 (about \$550,000 to \$630,000 today) which would necessitate heavier piling under a section of the wharf which the company was willing to install at its own expense. ⁽¹³⁴⁾ In June, however, Sherman had decided to build a much larger cold storage estimated to cost between \$50,000 and \$60,000 (about \$900,000 to \$1,080,000 today). The foundation for the larger structure would need some substantial and extra piling, and Sherman suggested that the city should bear a portion of the added cost. ⁽¹³⁵⁾

In June 1918, a small warehouse at the eastern end of the wharf was used as a temporary quarters for the fish market which opened on Monday, June 3rd. ⁽¹³⁶⁾⁽¹³⁷⁾ The temporary quarters were closed on Saturday, August 17th. ⁽¹³⁸⁾

Alfred Henry Sherman

In 1912, Alfred Henry Sherman ⁽¹³⁹⁾ came to Canada from England as managing director of the 'Scottish-Canadian Canneries Ltd.' salmon cannery located on the Fraser River near Steveston. ⁽¹⁴⁰⁾



A. H. Sherman

In 1915, 'Defiance Packing Company' and its President, Alfred H. Sherman, acquired the 'Great Northern Cannery', ⁽¹⁴¹⁾ and operated the cannery for a short period. In 1919, the cannery went into liquidation. ⁽¹⁴²⁾

In June 1915, Alfred Sherman, his wife and daughter Cecilye moved into their home in West Vancouver. ⁽¹⁴³⁾ The 'Sherman Post Office' in the Sandy Cove Store in West Vancouver was named after Alfred Sherman. ⁽¹⁴³⁾

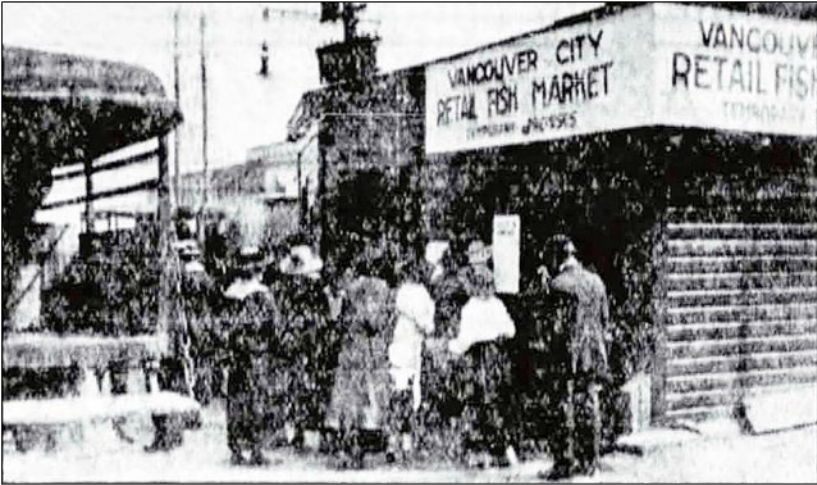
Sherman is said to have been granted the 'Freedom of London' in recognition of services rendered during the Boer War in connection with transportation. ⁽¹⁴³⁾



Source: City of Vancouver Archives ([CVA PAN N235](#)), photograph by [William John Moore \(1887–1963\)](#).

Photograph annotated by Ralph Drew.

**‘Gore Avenue Wharf’ (centre) view looking north from the foot of Columbia Street, 1920 —
 — note ‘Harbour Navigation Company’ vessel ‘MV Fort Langley’ at the end of the wharf (centre)
 — also note the location of the new ‘Vancouver Retail Fish Market’ (centre).**



Source: [Vancouver Sun, June 17th, 1918, page 7.](#)

**‘Vancouver City Retail Fish Market’ —
temporary quarters at ‘Gore Avenue Wharf’.**

The cold storage plant proposed by Sherman was a three-storey structure sheathed with corrugated iron and would house, in addition to the freezing plant and storage rooms, the fresh fish store which would serve the public at prices agreed upon with the city. The structure would cover an area 170 feet (51.8 m) by 70 feet (21.3 m) on the ground floor, and 100 feet (30.5 m) by 52 feet (15.8 m) on the upper floors. A driveway would penetrate the main building for the whole length, giving access to the wholesale market and cleaning and sorting room. On the second storey would be located the storage rooms, while the freezing would be done on the top floor. The capacity of the plant was to be 2,000,000 pounds of fish. ⁽¹⁴⁵⁾ The City Council gave their approval of Sherman’s proposal. ⁽¹⁴⁶⁾

On Saturday, August 18th, 1918, the new ‘Vancouver City Retail Fish Market’ (see plan on page 51) was officially opened for business by Mayor Robert Gale; the real father of the “good fish at small cost” scheme. ⁽¹⁴⁷⁾

In the midst of the redevelopment of the ‘Gore Avenue Wharf’, a dispute developed between Sherman and Captain H. S. Hilton regarding their respective rights on the wharf. ⁽¹⁴⁸⁾ The City Council listened to the complaints from both parties and, after discussion and consideration, the following resolution was approved: ⁽¹⁴⁹⁾

“...that the rental to be paid by Captain Hilton should be reduced from \$125 to \$100, and that only boats owned or chartered by the ‘Harbour Shipping Company’ should tie-up at the section of the wharf used by him.”

“The ‘Defiance Packing Company’ will pay the \$25 deducted from the ‘Harbour Shipping Company’ rental and will have the right to say what boats shall tie-up at the wharf, an undertaking being given that berthing room shall always be found for Captain Hilton’s own boats.” – **Vancouver City Council, June 5th, 1918.**

CURED FISH

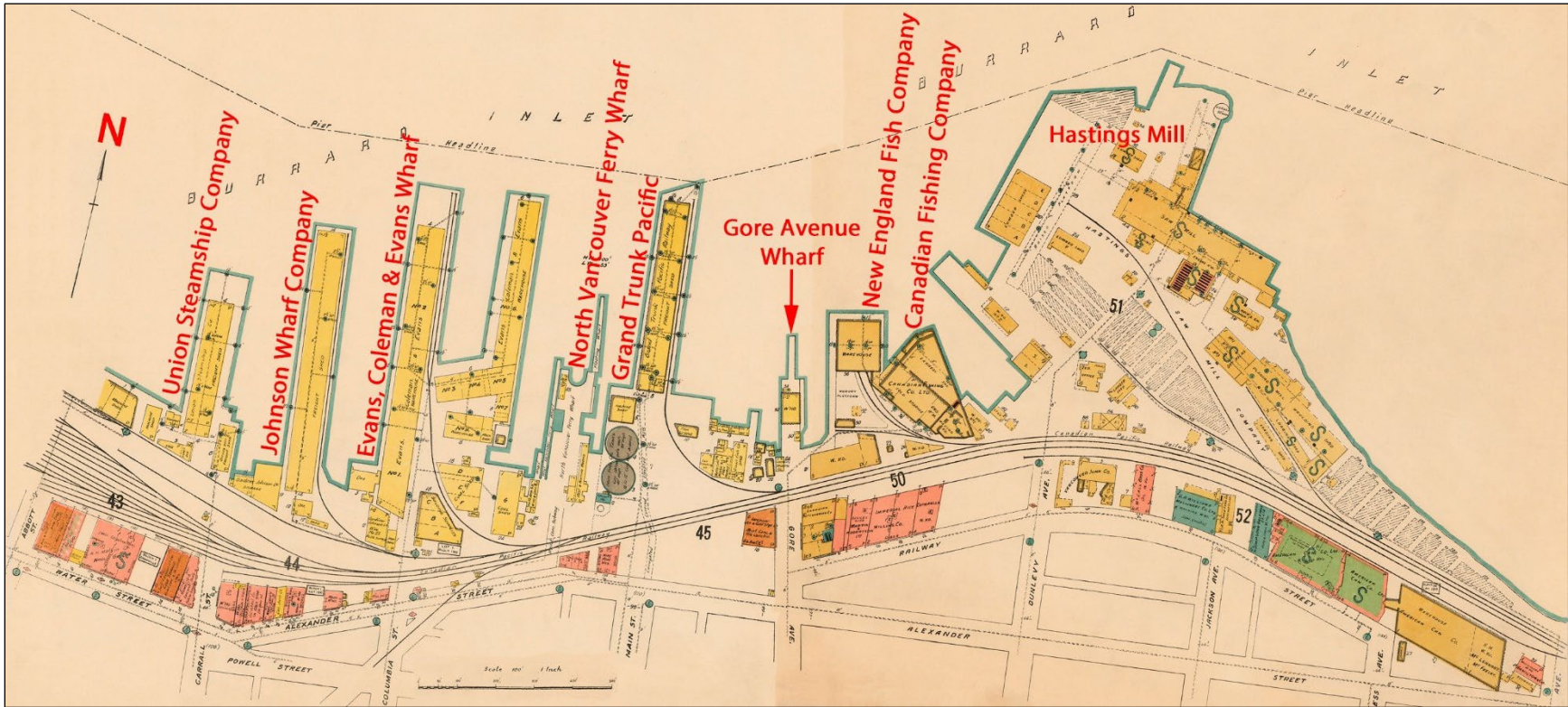
Kippered Herring, 3 lbs. for 25¢	Kippered Salmon, per lb. . . . 20¢
Smoked Black Cod (sable fish), per lb. 15¢	Bloaters, per lb. 5¢
Kippered Black Cod (sable fish), per lb. 17½¢	Fancy Scotch Cured Herring, 3 fish for 5¢

More Pilchards are expected Tuesday and will be placed on sale a **5¢** per lb., 6 lbs. for **25¢**.

Vancouver City Retail Fish Market
FOOT OF GORE AVENUE

Source: [Vancouver Province, July 22nd, 1918, page 11.](#)

**1918 Newspaper Advertisement —
‘Vancouver City Retail Fish Market’.**



Source: City of Vancouver Archives (CVA [1972-581.05](#) and [1972-581.06](#)).

Map annotated by Ralph Drew.

1919 fire insurance map of 'Vancouver City' showing a portion of 'Vancouver Harbour' — note the locations of 'Gore Avenue Wharf' (centre) and 'Hastings Saw Mill Co.' (right).

In 1919, Captain Hilton returned to commanding deep sea vessels ⁽¹⁵⁰⁾ and sold the 'Harbour Shipping Company' to Captain John Douglas Stalker (1884–1976), ⁽¹⁵¹⁾ who changed the company's name to 'Harbour Navigation Company'. ⁽¹⁵²⁾

In July 1920, the 'Gore Avenue Wharf' lease held by 'Harbour Shipping Company' was officially transferred to 'Harbour Navigation Company'. ⁽¹⁵³⁾ At the time of the sale, Captain Hilton held the lease of Wigwam Inn and also operated the vessels 'MV Lo'Olbee', 'MV Enilada', and 'MV Lake Buntzen'.

Wigwam Inn

This delightfully situated Summer Hotel at the head of Burrard Inlet is now open.

Rates: **\$3.00** per day, or **\$18.00** per week
Our boats leave Gore Ave. Wharf daily at 10 a.m. A delightful day's outing, 20 miles of perfectly smooth water amid beautiful scenery, giving sufficient time at the Hotel for lunch and returning arrive at Vancouver 4:30 p.m.

For further particulars phone Sey. 9590.

HARBOUR SHIPPING CO., LTD.

Source: [Vancouver Sun, April 30th, 1919, page 13.](#)

1919 Newspaper Advertisement — 'Harbour Shipping Company' & 'Wigwam Inn'.

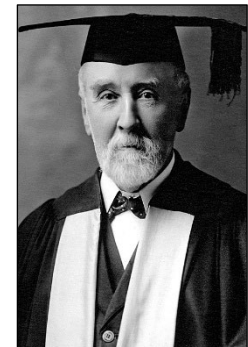
'Vancouver Harbour Commission' Street-Ends Policy

In April 1913, the Hon. Sir John Douglas Hazen (1860–1937), ⁽¹⁵⁴⁾ Federal Minister of Marine and Fisheries, introduced legislation ⁽¹⁵⁵⁾ to create the 'Vancouver Harbour Commission' with jurisdiction over the shores and waters of English Bay, Burrard Inlet, the North Arm (*a.k.a.* 'Indian Arm') and False Creek. ⁽¹⁵⁶⁾ The Commission was given wide-ranging powers that included control of revenue from the harbour. ⁽¹⁵⁷⁾



Hon. J. D. Hazen
commons.wikimedia.org

In August 1913, three commissioners were appointed with Frances Lovet Carter-Cotton, M.L.A., (1843–1919) ⁽¹⁵⁸⁾ named as chairman of the commission. ⁽¹⁵⁹⁾ [The 1913 'Board of Harbour Commissioners' was often referred to as the 'Vancouver Harbour Board' which is somewhat confusing given the 'National Harbours Board Act' was not created until 1936. ⁽¹⁶⁰⁾]



F. L. Carter-Cotton
[CVA Port P1138](#)

In March 1914, Minister Hanzen requested amendments to the legislation implementing the 'Vancouver Harbour Commission'. ⁽¹⁶¹⁾ The amendments affirmed that the 'Board of Harbour Commissioners' had full power to deal with all matters pertaining to the foreshore and could recover past delinquent rentals as well as secure future rentals of water lots. The 'Vancouver Harbour Commission' could also change the basis upon which future rentals of water lots would be fixed. ⁽¹⁶²⁾



Source: City of Vancouver Archives ([CVA PAN N229](#)), photograph by [William John Moore \(1887–1963\)](#).

Photograph annotated by Ralph Drew.

**‘Gore Avenue Wharf’ (centre) view looking north from the foot of Columbia Street, 1923
 — note the location of the new ‘Vancouver Retail Fish Market’ (centre) —
 ‘New England Fish Company’ and ‘Canadian Fishing Company’ (upper centre).**

In June 1914, a federal order-in-council was passed approving the bylaws drawn-up by the 'Vancouver Harbour Commission' for the management and regulation of harbour matters including harbour dues for vessels. ⁽¹⁶³⁾

In February 1918, the issue of managing street-ends once again became a topic. The existing arrangement was that the city would lease the street-ends from the Federal government and sublet them, collecting the money and paying the Dominion Government its portion. The 'Vancouver Harbour Commission' insisted upon a new arrangement wherein "they would collect the money and then hand over to the city what they consider to be the share to which the civic treasury was entitled." The city wanted the issue to be settled as soon as possible. ⁽¹⁶⁴⁾

In July 1918, the question of water lot rentals at street-ends came into focus regarding who had responsibility for furnishing fire boats to protect harbour assets. The city maintained that it was the Dominion Government that had the responsibility, while the Harbour Commissioners maintained that they did not have the necessary funds to purchase fire boats. ⁽¹⁶⁵⁾

In January 1920, a partial resolution was achieved when the city agreed to turn over the 'Heatley Avenue Wharf' to the 'Vancouver Harbour Commission' for a nominal sum, as the wharf was located on Federal Crown land and the city could then settle with the lessee; in return, the 'Vancouver Harbour Commission' would return to the city two or three other street-ends. ⁽¹⁶⁶⁾

In February 1920, the city was informed that the status of both 'Gore Avenue Slip' and 'Heatley Avenue Wharf' were the same; that is, the titles of both properties were vested with the Crown, although given by the CPR in trust to the city, and then only to the low water mark. ⁽¹⁶⁷⁾

On February 27th, 1920, the city was advised by the 'Vancouver Harbour Commission' as follows: ⁽¹⁶⁸⁾

"Our policy is a simple one... You own the streets and we will treat you as any other property owners. We will give you first calls on these street-ends on the waterfront for municipal purposes and you pay us a nominal rental. If these street-ends are sub-rented, then that is a different thing. You must not sub-rent at a higher rate than you pay to us. Furthermore, as soon as you sublet, you must pay us one-half the rental."

– **Guy Hamilton Kirkpatrick, Harbour Board Chair** ⁽¹⁶⁹⁾

The Harbour Board further signified its willingness to cooperate with the city in the case of leasing street-ends for more than five years which was the allotted time within the power of the city, but which could be increased by the board agreeing to the lease for a period of 21 years. ⁽¹⁷⁰⁾

In May 1920, the city was advised by the Dominion Government that it was hesitant to issue either a Crown grant or a long-term lease at the Gore Avenue street-end given the Harbour Board's contemplated expansion along the Burrard Inlet waterfront from Heatley Avenue to the 'Grand Trunk Wharf' at the foot of Main Street would, in time, absorb the Gore Avenue street-end. However, it was pointed-out that the city already, with the cognizance of the Harbour Board, had for some years been operating for the public service, proper slip, floats and dock, and that the wharves and floats, as the property of the city, were there without recognized authority on the part of the federal 'Department of Marine and Fisheries'. As a result, a long-term lease of Gore Avenue street-end was granted. ⁽¹⁷¹⁾

In September 1920, the city challenged the 'Harbour Board' rights to remove the city's claim to track-crossing privileges to the 'Gore Avenue Wharf', and produced files that showed the CPR had conveyed rights to the city in 1898, establishing means of ingress and egress. ⁽¹⁷²⁾

What are 'Street-Ends'?

Street-ends are public spaces where a municipal street meets a shoreline, often found in waterfront cities. These spots were originally intended for transportation or utility access, but many have been reclaimed and enhanced for public use and enjoyment. Street-ends provide public access to waterfronts that might otherwise be blocked by private development.

Street-Ends and 'Gore Avenue Wharf'

'Gore Avenue Wharf' was located on the Burrard Inlet foreshore where the Gore Avenue street-end meets the shoreline. This location was an important access point for the nascent 'City of Vancouver'. The wharf was primarily used by the city to unload building materials for the city's public works, and was also used by residents and local fishermen as public water access.



Source: UBC Library, Rare Books and Special Collections, Open Collections ([UBC Photo ID BC-1532-1301-18](#)).

Photograph annotated by Ralph Drew.

**Vancouver waterfront and 'Gore Avenue Slip' (centre), circa 1925 —
'New England Fish Company' and 'Canadian Fishing Company' (left).**

Towboat Wharf Dispute

In September 1920, the 'Harbour Board' began searching for suitable accommodation for the many towboats — also known as tugboats — that were being forced to leave the 'Heatley Avenue Wharf' due to construction activities on the site for 'Ballantyne Pier'. A survey of the Burrard Inlet waterfront led to the conclusion that the 'Gore Avenue Wharf' was the logical place for a 'Towboat Wharf'. The towboat owners suggested the construction of a wooden pile pier about 600 feet (183 m) long, about 30 feet (9 m) wide, 4 feet (1.2 m) above high water for the exclusive use of the towboat fleet. ⁽¹⁷³⁾

The Harbour Board decided to proceed with the plan and initiated negotiations with the city to secure possession of the necessary foreshore frontage. ⁽¹⁷⁴⁾ Following a meeting between the Harbour Board and the city, it was decided that the long-term 'Gore Avenue Wharf' lease would revert to the site owner ('Dominion Government of Canada') for use of the port's "mosquito fleet" (see photo on page 21). The 'Gore Avenue Wharf' was to be extended 500 feet (152.4 m) and the wharf handed over to the Harbour Board. The 'Harbour Navigation Company' and Sherman lease-hold interests would carry-on until their leases expired in 1923, paying their rents to the city. ⁽¹⁷⁵⁾

By mid-November 1920, follow-up action was still pending. ⁽¹⁷⁶⁾ The stumbling block was a provision in the proposed draft lease that the rental for the existing two leases was to be paid to the city by the Harbour Board rather than by the existing lessees. By agreeing to such a term in the draft lease, the city representatives considered that the lease would acknowledge that the Harbour Board had some right to the property. ⁽¹⁷⁷⁾ After months of negotiations, the city informed the Harbour Board that the latter's proposition for the 'Gore Avenue Wharf' was not satisfactory, and according to the Harbour Board, this action by the city

once again brought to the fore the question of the city's rights, and the Harbour Board would have to take action through the Federal 'Department of Marine and Fisheries' to provide accommodation for the towboat fleet. ⁽¹⁷⁸⁾⁽¹⁷⁹⁾

In December 1920, Mayor Gale arranged for a meeting with the Harbour Board regarding the rights of the city and Harbour Board above and below the high-water mark at the Gore Avenue street-end. ⁽¹⁸⁰⁾ The city was agreeable to leasing the wharf for a term of five years and the Harbour Board was agreeable to extending the wharf at a cost of \$30,000 (about \$420,000 today), but neither agreed to the course of action to be taken following expiration of the lease. ⁽¹⁸¹⁾ Finally, a draft lease was approved that carefully avoided any direct reference to the disputed question of ownership of the wharf, but simply provided that the Harbour Board, in leasing the wharf for five years, was to pay the city a sum equal to the rent being paid to the city by the existing tenants. ⁽¹⁸²⁾

In January 1921, however, the city learned that the Harbour Board had applied to the Federal 'Department of Marine and Fisheries' on December 15th for a grant covering the foreshore rights at Gore Avenue. The city protested the move and contacted its elected Members of Parliament to oppose the Harbour Board's application. ⁽¹⁸³⁾ The city Council also endeavored to have the 'Gore Avenue Wharf' lease "adjusted". ⁽¹⁸⁴⁾

In February 1921, it was reported that a complete deadlock had been reached in connection with the establishment of a towboat wharf at the Gore Avenue street-end, and that the city Council had notified the Harbour Board that all negotiations regarding the proposed arrangement were off as far as the city was concerned. ⁽¹⁸⁵⁾

In April 1921, the city received a legal opinion from Ottawa that title of the city as derived through the conveyance from the CPR was perfectly good and valid. ⁽¹⁸⁶⁾



Source: Vancouver Public Library ([VPL 10557](#)), photograph by [Leonard Frank \(1870–1944\)](#).

‘Canadian Fishing Company’ (upper centre) and ‘Gore Avenue Wharf’ (lower right), June 1931 — note ‘Harbour Navigation Company’ passenger vessel ‘MV Scenic’ at the wharf (foreground).

Harbour Navigation Company

In 1919, Captain John Douglas Stalker (1884–1976) ⁽¹⁸⁷⁾ purchased 'Harbour Shipping Company' from Captain Herbert Stilson Hilton and changed the company's name to 'Harbour Navigation Company'. ⁽¹⁸⁸⁾

In 1921, 'Harbour Navigation Company' was using three ships: the 64-foot 'MV Lo'Olbee', the 51-foot 'MV Fort Langley', and the company's flagship, the 64-foot 'MV Enilada'. ⁽¹⁸⁹⁾

In 1922, the 'Vancouver–Port Moody Ferries Ltd.' company was amalgamated with 'Harbour Navigation Company' with Captain G. W. Brewster as president and Captain J. D. Stalker as manager of the company. ⁽¹⁹⁰⁾

From June 2nd, 1925, to December 31st, 1929, 'Harbour Navigation Company' leased and refurbished Wigwam Inn for the use of its holidaying passengers. ⁽¹⁹¹⁾

On April 21st, 1927, the company also bought 12 acres of land at Belcarra Bay from the 'Bidwell Bay and Belcarra Company Limited' where it developed the 'Belcarra Park' resort facilities including a large wharf, picnic grounds, ten rental cabins, a dance pavilion, and a store. ⁽¹⁹²⁾

In 1930, 'Harbour Navigation Company' purchased the 'MV Scenic', and put the ferry on the run to Wigwam Inn to deliver mail along Indian Arm. ⁽¹⁹³⁾ At the time, the 'MV Scenic' was the only floating post office in the British Empire delivering the mail between 1932 and 1968. ⁽¹⁹⁴⁾ In the 1930s, 'Harbour Navigation Company' moved to Coal Harbour and began operating a small fleet of tour and



Capt. J. D. Stalker
([CVA Port P1222](#))

charter vessels. In 1945, 'Harbour Navigation Company' purchased the 'MV Hollyburn' (built in 1936) which served on the Indian Arm run to Wigwam Inn. ⁽¹⁹⁴⁾



Source: Langley Centennial Museum ([Photo #0215](#)).

Passenger vessel 'MV Fort Langley', circa 1915.

Wigwam Inn Hotel Now Open
RATES \$3.50 PER DAY
FIRST CLASS MEALS SERVED
BOATS LEAVE GORE AVENUE WHARF DAILY AT 10 A. M.
SATURDAYS, 10 A. M. AND 2 P. M.
SPECIAL SERVICE FOR WEEK-END
Sunday, May 23rd—Boats Leave at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
May 24th—Boats Leave 9 a.m., 10 a.m., and 2 p.m.
RETURN FARE, \$1.50 (Including War Tax)
Harbour Navigation Co.
PHONE SEYMOUR 9590

Source: [Vancouver Daily World, May 20th, 1920, page 21.](#)

1920 Newspaper Advertisement — 'Harbour Navigation Company' & 'Wigwam Inn'.



Source: City of Vancouver Archives ([CVA 99-2537](#)), photograph by [Stuart Thomson \(1881–1960\)](#).

‘Gore Avenue Wharf’ (left) and ‘Canadian Fishing Company’ (right), April 1931 — note the ‘Harbour Navigation Company’ vessels ‘MV Harbour Princess’ and ‘MV Scenic’ (centre left).

In 1951, 'Harbour Navigation Company' was sold to Louis Lawson, Fred Mitchell and Peter Cowan, the company manager. ⁽¹⁹¹⁾

In 1960, 'Harbour Navigation Company' was sold again to 'Belcarra Park Resort Ltd.' — Peter Cowan (President) and Louis Lawson (Secretary). The vessels owned by the company at the time were the 'MV Hollyburn', 'MV Harbour Princess', 'MV Lady Rose', 'MV Scenic', 'MV Uchuck No. 1' and the 42-foot long 'MV Thunderbird'. ⁽¹⁹⁵⁾⁽¹⁹⁶⁾

In 1965, the new owners of 'Harbour Navigation Company', Doug Emery and Don Clark, commenced work on the 'Granite Falls Resort', a \$250,000 (about \$2.4 million today) marina and lodge development to replace the derelict Wigwam Inn. ⁽¹⁹⁷⁾⁽¹⁹⁸⁾ The 'Harbour Navigation Company' vessels 'MV Hollyburn', 'MV Harbour Princess' and 'MV Scenic' made daily cruises to 'Granite Falls Resort' during the summer months. In 1972, the lodge and staff bunkhouse at the 'Granite Falls Resort' was destroyed by a fire of unknown origin. ⁽¹⁹⁹⁾

In 1976, 'Harbour Navigation Company' expanded with a new owner under a new name, 'Harbour Ferries Ltd.'. ⁽²⁰⁰⁾ In 1996 the company was renamed 'Harbour Cruises Ltd.'



Source: City of Vancouver Archives ([CVA 294-077](#)).

'MV Scenic', circa 1925 — 65 passengers — the vessel was 68.7 feet long and 14.6 feet wide.



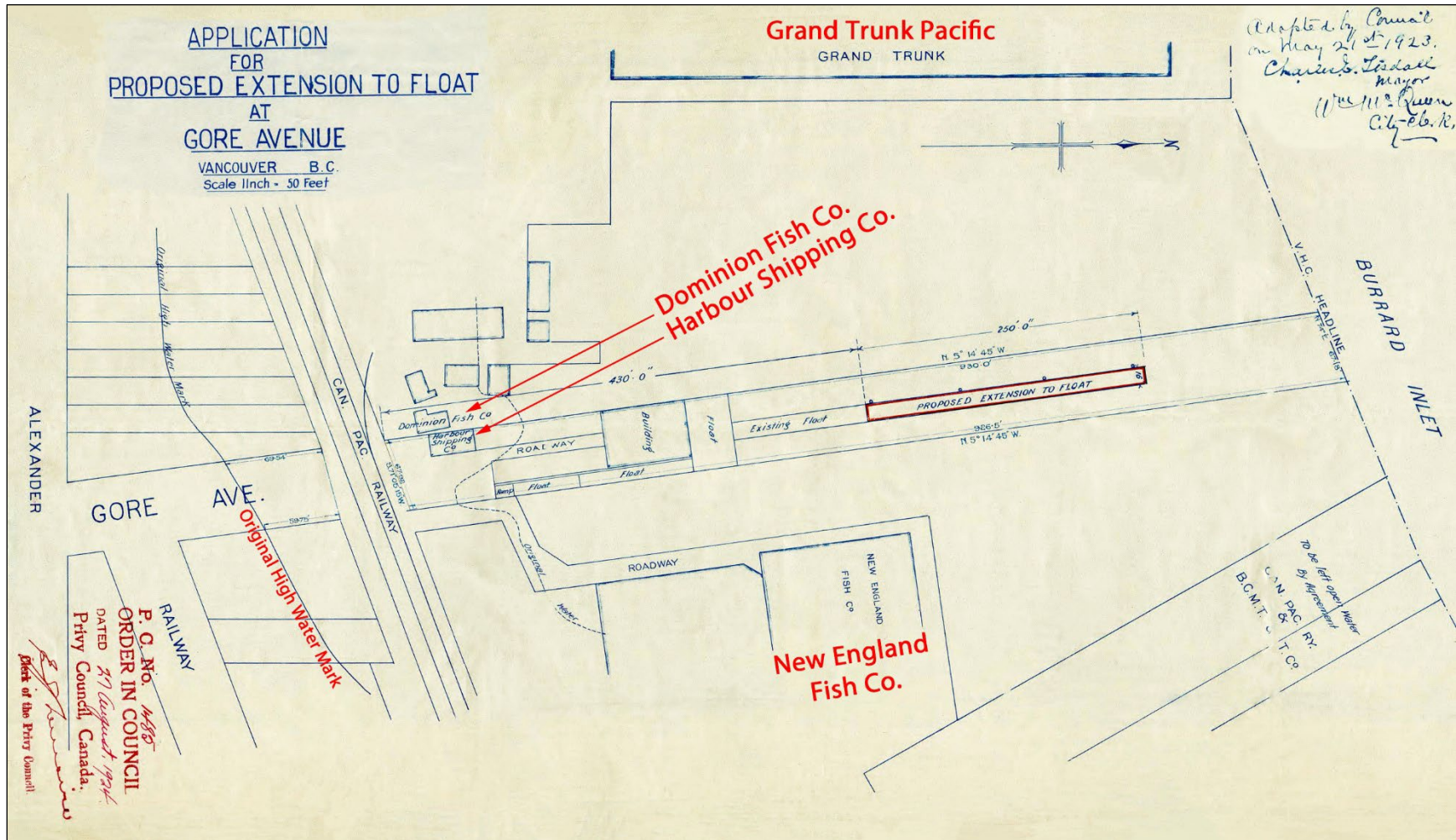
Source: [Museum & Archives of North Vancouver](#) (MONOVA 6428).

'MV Lady Rose', circa 1940 — ~200 passengers — the vessel was 100.7 feet long and 21.5 feet wide.

Famous Wigwam Inn---Indian River Park
Unequaled Scenic Water Trip—Return Fare \$1.50
 Boats leave Gore Avenue Wharf daily 10 a.m. Leave Wigwam 4 p.m.
SPECIAL SATURDAY AND SUNDAY SERVICE
 Leave Vancouver 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Leave Wigwam 4 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.
OLD ORCHARD PARK Return Fare **80c**
 Arrange your party and let us take you to this ideal picnic ground.
 Boats leave Gore Avenue Wharf 9:45 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.; leave Old Orchard at 11:30 a.m. and 4:45 p.m.
 Special boats leave Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday 7:30 p.m.; leave Old Orchard 9 p.m.
HARBOUR NAVIGATION COMPANY, LTD.
 Phones: Sey. 9590-6168 and 3777-O

Source: [Vancouver Sun, June 25th, 1922, page 41.](#)

1922 Newspaper Advertisement — 'Harbour Navigation Company' & 'Old Orchard Park'.



Source: Library and Archives Canada, Ref. No. RG2, Privy Council Office, Series A-1-a ([Order-in-Council 1924-1485](#)).

Plan annotated by Ralph Drew.

1918 plan for the existing (rebuilt) wharf & float at the foot of Gore Avenue, and the 1924 approved plan for the proposed 250-foot extension to the float (red outline) — note the location of the original ‘High Water Mark’ (lower left).

Gore Avenue Wharf Extension

In January 1923, the 'Harbour Navigation Company' applied for a lease of all of the 'Gore Avenue Wharf' which, at the time, the company shared with A. H. Sherman who sub-let to a number of other parties. In its application, the company asked for a ten-year lease to facilitate extension of the existing float by approximately 250 feet (76 m) beyond the northerly end out to the harbour line. The company also planned to re-equip the main part of the dock with proper sanitary fish-house, stores, *etc.*, to make it clean and attractive for the public. ⁽²⁰¹⁾⁽²⁰²⁾

In February 1923, A. H. Sherman wrote the city applying for renewal of his lease at the 'Gore Avenue Wharf'. Sherman's letter stated that if a renewal was granted, he proposed to extend the retail fish market facilities and wharfing space, and offer free berthing to the police patrol boat and a municipal fireboat if acquired by the city. Both the 'Harbour Navigation Company' and the 'Fish Dealers Association' (located near to the property) were opposed to Sherman's application. The fish dealers believed that the city might build a wholesale fish market for them and rent them portions of it. ⁽²⁰³⁾⁽²⁰⁴⁾ While the lease applications were being considered, the City Council decided to make application to the 'Department of Marine and Fisheries' in Ottawa to extend the wharf to the harbour line, and the City Engineer was instructed to draw-up tentative plans for a wharf extension. ⁽²⁰⁵⁾⁽²⁰⁶⁾

In March 1923, the City Council granted 12-month renewals to the leases of both the 'Harbour Navigation Company' and A. H. Sherman. ⁽²⁰⁷⁾⁽²⁰⁸⁾

In May 1923, the City Council granted a five-year lease of the 'Gore Avenue Wharf' to 'Harbour Navigation Company' given that it proposed extending the wharf facilities. ⁽²⁰⁹⁾ City Council also approved plans for the extension of Gore Avenue Wharf costing \$4000 (about \$70,000 today). ⁽²¹⁰⁾

In August 1923, the 'Harbour Navigation Company' applied to City Council for an extension to its lease given that the company planned considerable extensions. Since the lease was dated from April 1st of 1923, more than half the working year would be gone and the company could hardly recover the cost of the improvements over the remaining 2½ years. It was decided to date the lease October 23, 1923, giving the company three clear years from the end of the season, ⁽²¹¹⁾ with a two-year renewal option. ⁽²¹²⁾

On August 27th, 1924, the 'City of Vancouver' received approval under 'The Navigable Waters Protection Act' for the extension proposed for the existing 'Gore Avenue Wharf' — see plan on page 51. ⁽²¹³⁾ Consequently, the 'Gore Avenue Wharf Company' was able to proceed to accommodate the increasing number of fishing boats by extending the dock a further distance of 250 feet. The dock was already known along the waterfront as "Fisherman's Wharf", there being as many as 60 fishing vessels tied up to it at one time. ⁽²¹⁴⁾

In September 1924, the City Council was advised that the Dominion Government would accede to the City's request for an untrammelled 21-year lease of the Gore Avenue waterfront, including the buildings, in return for the exemption of Government property from civic taxation. The City Council took the position that, if exempt from civic taxation, some arrangement should be made to reimburse the City for services rendered by its civic departments. ⁽²¹⁵⁾

PICNIC PARTIES!
SPEND THE WEEK-END AT
OLD ORCHARD PICNIC GROUNDS
Good dance hall, good music, lots of hot water, refreshments
RETURN FARE 80 CENTS
Boats leave Gore Avenue wharf daily 9:45 a.m., 2:30 p.m.;
Saturdays and Sundays 9:45 a.m., 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.
HARBOUR NAVIGATION COMPANY LIMITED

Source: [Vancouver Sun, May 29th, 1924, page 11.](#)

1924 Newspaper Advertisement — "Picnic Parties!"



Source: City of Vancouver Archives ([CVA 99-2538](#)), photograph by [Stuart Thomson \(1881–1960\)](#).

Fish boats at ‘Gore Avenue Wharf’ (left), April 1931 — view looking south — note ‘Harbour Navigation Company’ vessel ‘MV Harbour Princess’ (upper left).

Gore Avenue Wharf Company

The 'Gore Avenue Wharf Company', formally known as 'Gore Avenue Wharf Limited', was a BC-based company incorporated in 1924 by the 'Harbour Navigation Company' ([Company Number: BC0007390](#)) to manage docking facilities near the Gore Avenue waterfront, supporting marine operations and waterfront commerce. The company became inactive at the end of 1961.

Gore Avenue Wharf Re-Built

In March 1925, City Council gave the 'Harbour Navigation Company' a lease of six years on its 'Gore Avenue Wharf' interest. In exchange, the company would construct buildings on the property valued at \$6,000 (about \$105,000 today) and the City would not be required to pay compensation at the end of the lease period. ⁽²¹⁶⁾

In December 1925, City Council adopted a committee report which recommended that action be taken to have the buildings on the west side of 'Gore Avenue Wharf' torn down. The report noted that as far back as 1917, there were objections to the existing conditions. The recently completed market wharf at the foot of Gore Avenue was not large enough to accommodate the tenants on the west side, who were located on property in which the 'Canadian National Railway' (CNR) was interested. Because the CNR had taken no action to provide better quarters, and appeal to the Harbour Board had not brought results, the wholesale fish dealers at the 'Gore Avenue Wharf' appealed to the city. They stated that the premises were "dangerous, insanitary and quite unfit for further use as fish markets". ⁽²¹⁷⁾ The Harbour Board offered to find temporary quarters for all those dealers who were located on the city wharf at Gore Avenue. The Harbour Commissioners also

proposed to provide accommodation on property that they controlled, just west of the sugar refinery. ⁽²¹⁸⁾ Amazingly, the city took no action during the following three years.

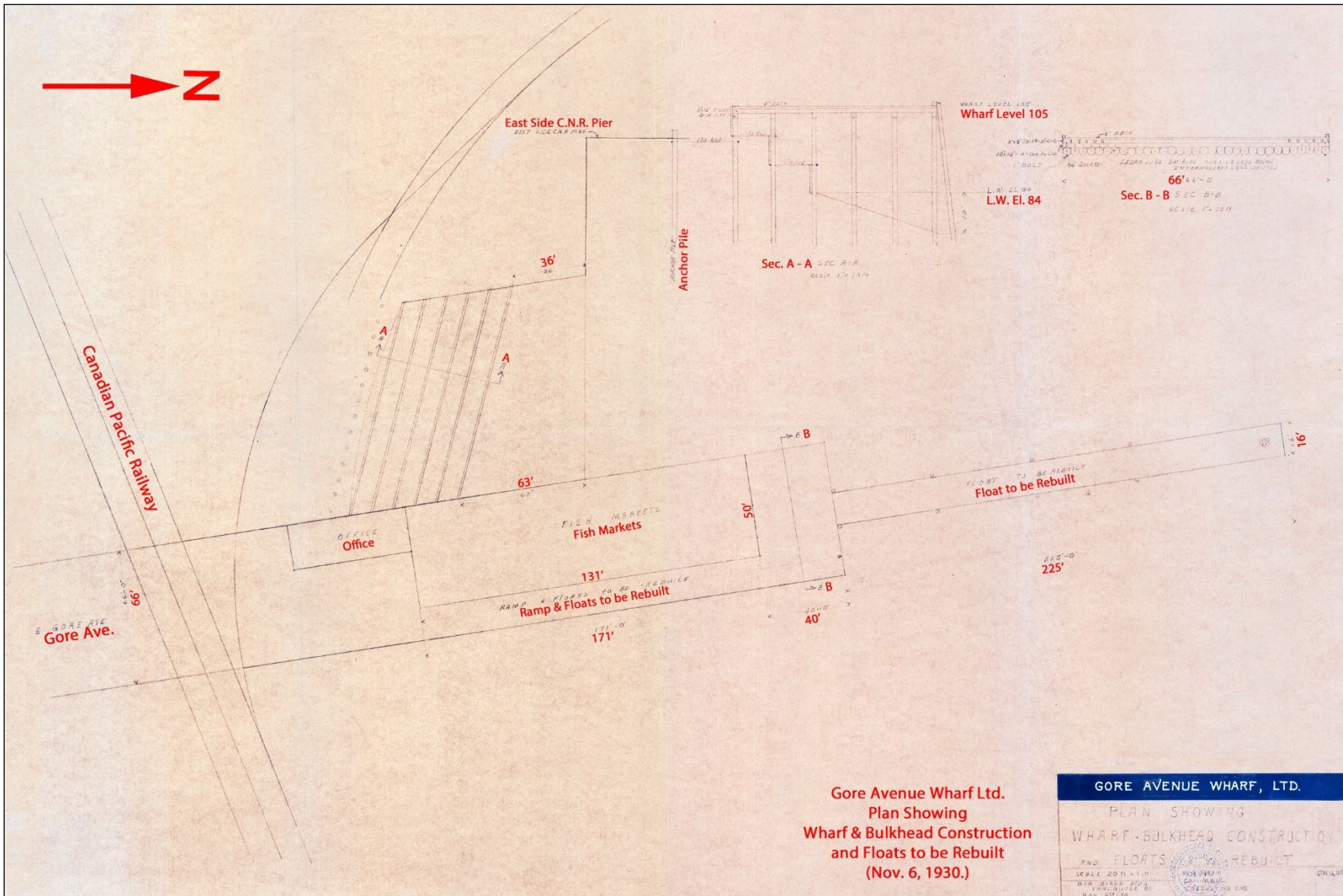
In January 1929, the 'Town Planning Commission' submitted a report stating that "...there is no feature of the [existing] fish wharf which can be recommended". Rather, the report stated that "...instead of the [existing] wooden equipment, a new pier should be built with proper refrigeration and easy access for [horse] teams and trucks. A packing and storage plant should also be part of the equipment..." ⁽²¹⁹⁾

In November 1929, it was announced that in order to provide ample berthing space at the proposed new 'Canadian National Steamship' dock, nearly 175 feet of the city's docking facilities at the foot Gore Avenue would be removed. It was also announced that the CNR would give the city a ten-year lease to property west of the 'Gore Avenue Wharf', adjacent to the shore, on which the city could construct wharfage to replace the portion of the old facilities which would be sacrificed. ⁽²²⁰⁾⁽²²¹⁾

Spend Sunday or Labor Day at either of these
Delightful Picnic Grounds
BELCARRA PARK
Return Fare 70¢
Boats leave Gore Avenue Wharf at 10 a.m., 2 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.
OLD ORCHARD PICNIC GROUNDS
Return Fare 80¢
Boats leave Gore Avenue Wharf at 10 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.
Harbour Navigation Company Limited
Sey. 6163

Source: [Vancouver Province, September 6th, 1925, page 16.](#)

**1925 Newspaper Advertisement —
'Harbour Navigation Company' & 'Old Orchard Park'.**



Source: City of Vancouver Archives ([CVA COV-S299--](#)).

Plan annotated by Ralph Drew.

**‘Gore Avenue Wharf’ — 1930 Lease Plan —
showing the wharf & bulkhead and floats to be rebuilt.**

In January 1931, the lease of property at the foot of Gore Avenue by the 'Gore Avenue Wharf Company' — owned by 'Harbour Navigation Company' — was renewed for a period of ten years. The company had an expiring six-year lease at \$3300 a year (about \$57,700 today). Because the lease area had been reduced by the 'Canadian National Steamship' wharf construction, the rental for the first year would be \$1800 (about \$31,500 today), for the second \$2100 (about \$36,700 today) and for the remainder of the term \$2400 (about \$42,000 today). The company would expend \$20,000 (about \$350,000 today) to reconstruct the wharf; the city was authorized to berth its fire and police boats at the company's wharves when required. ⁽²²²⁾⁽²²³⁾

In February 1932, the 'Gore Avenue Wharf Company' deposited plans with the Federal Minister of Public Works and the 'Vancouver Land Registry' a description of the site and plans of building, wharf, ramp and floats constructed in June 1918 (see plan on page 51) with the objective of requesting retroactive approval of same under the 'Navigable Waters Protection Act'. ⁽²²⁴⁾

In June 1932, the Harbour Board offered City Council a ten-year lease to the area occupied by the 'Gore Avenue Wharf'. For some time, the city had been seeking a 21-year lease, but, until the ten-year lease offer, the Harbour Board had previously only offered an indefinite privilege of occupation. City Council refused to consider the ten-year lease offered by the commission on the grounds that such a short term would not justify the City's sub-tenant making needed wharf improvements. The City Council decided to carry its fight with the Harbour Board to Hon. Henry Herbert Stevens (1878–1973), ⁽²²⁵⁾ Federal Minister of Trade and Commerce. ⁽²²⁶⁾⁽²²⁷⁾



Hon. H.H. Stevens
commons.wikimedia.org

In November 1932, Ottawa again offered a ten-year lease to the water lot at the foot of Gore Avenue. However, the area covered by the offer extended only 680 feet (207 m) into Burrard Inlet. The city had asked for 900 feet (274 m), but that request was opposed by the 'Canadian National Steamship' company which feared that lease of such an area might hamper vessel movement at the dock. The city representatives felt that the offer was unfair, but decided to accept the ten-year lease if Ottawa agreed to extend the area to 900 feet. ⁽²²⁸⁾

Finally, in January 1934, it was announced that improvements to cost \$6,000 (about \$105,000 today) by the lessees within two years under terms of a new lease granted by the city to the 'Gore Avenue Wharf Company'. The lessees proposed to make repairs to the floating wharf and ramp, deck of the pile wharf and building. The work included rebuilding the existing floating wharf which was 382 feet (116 m) long and 16 feet (5 m) wide, except that the outer 165 feet (50 m) would be reduced to a 10-foot (3 m) width to give additional water space. ⁽²²⁹⁾

Spend This Week-End or July 1st on Beautiful Burrard Inlet

WIGWAM INN

INDIAN RIVER PARK

The most beautiful spot in B. C. Two hours' delightful sail.
Meals served at Inn on arrival of boats. Return fare \$1.50.

BELCARRA PARK

Return fare 70c, which admits you to Dance Hall. Six-piece orchestra.
Boats for both places leave Gore Avenue Wharf, Sunday and
Holiday, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Harbour Navigation Company Limited Phone Seymour 6163

Source: [Vancouver Sun, June 27th, 1931, page 30.](#)

1931 Newspaper Advertisement — 'Harbour Navigation Company' & 'Wigwam Inn'.



Source: City of Vancouver Archives ([CVA 99-2536](#)), photograph by [Stuart Thomson \(1881–1960\)](#).

Fish boats at 'Gore Avenue Wharf' (right), April 1931 — view looking south — photograph taken from the railing of the 'MV Scenic' (lower right corner) — note the railway track crossing at the top of the ramp (upper right).

Japanese Training Squadron

VANCOUVER HARBOR, FEB. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11

Open to Public from 1:00 P.M. to 5 P.M. Daily

Boats Leave Gore Avenue Wharf Every 20 Minutes

HARBOR NAVIGATION CO. LIMITED

Phone Sey. 6163

Source: [Vancouver Province, February 6th, 1925, page 26.](#)

**1925 Newspaper Advertisement —
‘Harbour Navigation’ & “Japanese Training Squadron”.**

Pacific Navigation Co. Ltd.

In April 1934, the ‘Pacific Navigation Co. Ltd.’ relocated its offices from the ‘Canadian National’ pier at the foot of Main Street, to new quarters at the foot of Gore Avenue, East of the CN pier, from which the passenger vessel ‘SS Cruiser’ made regular sailings to points on East and West Howe Sound. ⁽²³⁰⁾ The ‘Pacific Navigation Co.’ acquired the former private yacht in 1933 ⁽²³¹⁾ to serve the Howe Sound way points of Keats Island, Gibsons Landing, Granthams Landing, Hopkins Landing, New Brighton, Port Mellon, Seaside Park and Longview. ⁽²³²⁾

In December 1934, the ‘SS Cruiser’, while creeping through First Narrows in fog, ran aground on the north shore near ‘Capilano Light’, but suffered no damage. ⁽²³³⁾ In February 1935, the ‘SS Cruiser’ went aground in heavy fog near Siwash Rock, ⁽²³⁴⁾ refloated at high tide, ⁽²³⁵⁾ and subsequently sold to ‘Howe Sound Navigation Co.’. ⁽²³¹⁾

In March 1936, the ‘Pacific Navigation Co. Ltd.’ relocated its offices from ‘Gore Avenue Wharf’ to new quarters at the ‘Evans, Coleman and Evens’ dock. ⁽²³⁶⁾



Source: [City of Vancouver Archives \(CVA 447-2134\).](#)

**‘Pacific Navigation Co.’ vessel ‘SS Cruiser’, 1935
— 75.8 feet long, 18.5 feet wide, 8.2 feet draft —
passenger service to East & West Howe Sound.**

ALL-DAY CRUISES
THROUGH BEAUTIFUL
WEST HOWE SOUND
With Stopover From 4 to 8 Hours on Sundays
SS. CRUISER Leaves GORE AVENUE WHARF EVERY WEEK-END
Saturday, 2:00 p.m., Sunday, 9:30 a.m.; Arrive Vancouver, Saturday,
8:45 p.m., Sunday, 9:30 p.m.

ROUND TRIP **\$1.50** CHILDREN HALF FARE

PHONE FOR RESERVATION—TRINITY 3115

Pacific Navigation Co. Limited
Foot Gore Avenue

Source: [Vancouver Sun, May 26th, 1934, page 25.](#)

**1934 Newspaper Advertisement —
‘Pacific Navigation Co. Ltd.’ & ‘SS Cruiser’.**



Source: UBC Library, Rare Books & Special Collections, [BC-1532-1377-3, 1.0013741](#).

Fish Boats at 'Gore Avenue Wharf', seiners (background) & gillnetters (foreground), circa 1940 — note the undeveloped 'British Properties' and 'The Lions' mountain on the north shore.



Source: City of Vancouver Archives ([CVA 78-062](#)), 46 x 54 cm oil painting by [Henry Harry Hood \(1876–1956\)](#).

“Gore Avenue Wharf”, 1940 — oil painting by Vancouver artist Harry Hood.



Source: Deep Cove Heritage Society ([DCHS 0356](#)).

'Harbour Navigation Company' vessel 'MV Hollyburn' at 'Belcarra Park' dock, circa 1945.

Gore Avenue Wharf War Years

Vancouver was home to several remarkable auxiliary groups during 'World War Two' when Vancouver's "shop girls and stenographers" raised a considerable amount of money in aid of war work. One of those auxiliaries was the 'Famous Staff Auxiliary' who held raffles, hosted dances, and sponsored "moonlight dance cruises".⁽²³⁷⁾ In June 1940, 50 staff of the 'Famous Cloak and Suit Company', located at 623 West Hastings Street in Vancouver, formed the 'Famous Staff Auxiliary'. Amongst the first events sponsored by the auxiliary was a moonlight cruise in July to 'Belcarra Park' for an evening of dancing. The cruise sailed from the 'Gore Avenue Wharf' on a 'Harbour Navigation Company' passenger vessel.⁽²³⁸⁾

NOTICE

—◆—

A MOONLIGHT CRUISE
IN AID OF WAR WORK
**Moonlight Cruise and Dancing at
Belcarra Pk. 2½ Hours' Sailing.**
Tues., July 23, 8 p.m.—Tickets \$1.00

Buy your tickets at the Famous or Harbour Navigation
Co. Ltd., Gore Avenue Wharf.
Sponsored by the Famous Auxiliary in Aid of War Work

Famous — 623 —
W. Hastings St.

Source: [Vancouver Province, July 22nd, 1940, page 18.](#)

**1940 Newspaper Advertisement —
'Famous Staff Auxilliary' — "In Aid of War Work".**

Scenic Boat Trip

\$1.50 WIGWAM INN

THURS., FRI., SAT. — JULY 1, 2, 3

Visit picturesque Wigwam Inn at the end of a delightful two-hour sail through sheltered Indian Arm. Luncheon or dinner served at the Inn. Boats leave GORE AVE. DOCK (1 block East of Main), Thurs. and Sat., 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.; returning leave the Inn 4 and 6 p.m. Friday leave 10 a.m. only; returning leave Inn 3 p.m.

HARBOUR NAVIGATION CO. L^T MA 3832

Source: [Vancouver Sun, June 30th, 1943, page 22.](#)

1943 Newspaper Advertisement — 'Harbour Navigation Company' & 'Wigwam Inn'.

In June 1945, 'Harbour Navigation Company' purchased West Vancouver's flagship ferry 'MV Hollyburn' for the sum of \$29,000 (about \$520,000 today), to provide passenger service on the Indian Arm run to Wigwam Inn.⁽²³⁹⁾⁽²⁴⁰⁾ The 'MV Hollyburn' was built in North Vancouver in 1936 and was 99 feet (32.2 m) long, 21 feet (6.4 m) wide, with a draft of 8.4 feet (2.6 m).⁽²⁴¹⁾



Source: [Museum & Archives of North Vancouver \(MONOVA 6428\).](#)

**'MV Hollyburn', circa 1940 — 245 passengers —
the vessel was 99 feet long and 21 feet wide.**



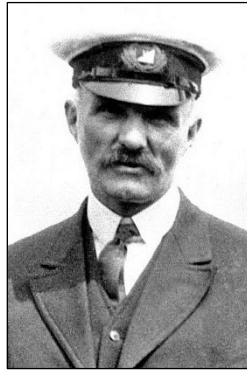
Source: Vintage Air Photos ([Photo #59-278](#)).

Photograph annotated by Ralph Drew.

‘Canadian Fishing Company’ and ‘Gore Avenue Wharf’ (left), 1959.

Inlet Skipper Delivers Anything Everywhere ⁽²⁴²⁾
Vancouver Sun, Saturday, July 16th, 1949, page 25.

"The pioneer tradition of old river boats is being kept alive in Vancouver harbour by a tough little ship and gentle captain. For seven days a week this summer [1949], as he has done for upwards of 30 summers before, Captain [John Charles] 'Andy' Anderson is guiding the nose of the 'MV Scenic' into private landings on the harbour's North Arm [a.k.a. 'Indian Arm']. He is milkman, breadman, postman, florist, moving man, old friend of everybody who helps in spirit to pilot the little diesel-powered 'MV Scenic' through the tricky currents of the harbour."



Capt. J. C. Anderson
[\(RBCMA D-06748\)](#)

Floating Post Office

"A bluff and cheerful Yorkshireman, with ample but carefully trimmed moustache, Capt. 'Andy' Anderson dispenses from his wheelhouse the services of a community shopping centre to the summer and winter population of 20 'landings' up the North Arm.

"In the wheelhouse with him is a Post Office, making the 'MV Scenic' the only floating post office in the British Empire. The wicket of the post office is the open window of the wheel house, out of which Capt. Andy delivers the mail to the residents waiting on their floats, collects the return mail, makes change and delivers stamps."

"From his vantage point, the captain is usually able to see over the top of the freight deck. The freight deck is the forecastle, a postage-stamp space that carries enough freight for a small tramp steamer. It is piled high with cans of milk, baggage, lumber, food, furniture and small boys who like to be on the business end of a boat."

Sailing Man

"Somewhere among the chairs and baggage is First Officer Fred R. Springall, another cheerful man who came to B.C. around the Horn in a sailing ship. The First Officer is usually a little worried about the milk. The 'MV Scenic' carries about two dozen bottles of milk each day, and First Officer Springall marvels at the number of grades and brands that he has to leave at the right stop. 'We've got to be experts', he explains. It's all different grades. There is one grade for two-year-old babies, another grade for the three-year-olds and four-year-olds, can't leave the three-year-olds' milk where the two-year-olds' should be."

Lots of Cargo

"The milk is one small problem. The summer crew of four have to look after canaries and lovebirds, dogs and cats, small children travelling alone and furniture. When one of the engineers moves from the Buntzen power plant, it means a two-way move of furniture for a six-room house. 'One comes up and the other goes down,' philosophizes the first officer. 'Sometimes you can't see the boat. We even carry pianos on the deck.'"

"Unruffled by it all, Capt. Andy collects the tickets and pilots his ship expertly. He has brought food and furniture to the pioneer residents, has carried shoes and toys for their children, and is now bringing the mail for their grandchildren."

"One more bottle of milk or a piano is nothing new."

SCENIC BOAT TRIP
INDIAN ARM
THURS., FRI., SAT., AUGUST 3, 4, 5
SPECIAL FARE **\$1.75**
This delightful four-hour cruise takes you through magnificent island-studded waters right to the Head of Indian Arm. Enjoy your stop-over at beautiful Belcarra Park, with ample time to lunch or dine there. Also snack bar service aboard.
Boats lv. GORE AVE. DOCK (1 block E. of Main) 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Ret. arr. Vancouver Thurs. and Fri. 5 and 8 p.m., Sat. 6 and 8 p.m. (D.S.T.).
RETURN
HARBOUR NAVIGATION CO. LTD., MA. 3832

Source: [Vancouver Province, August 2nd, 1950, page 10.](#)

**1950 Newspaper Advertisement —
'Harbour Navigation Company' & 'Indian Arm'.**



Source: Vancouver Public Library ([VPL 42685](#)), photograph by 'Vancouver Province' newspaper.

**'Canadian Fishing Company' (centre) and 'Gore Avenue Wharf' (right), 1965
— note the two 'Harbour Navigation Company' passenger vessels
'MV Scenic' (near ramp) and 'MV Harbour Princess' at the long floating dock (right).**

**“Floating Post Office Pioneer Dies at 92” (243)
Vancouver Province, April 2nd, 1976, page 20.**

“The man who was owner, skipper and postmaster of the only floating post office in Canada, Captain John Douglas Stalker [1884–1976], died in Vancouver at age 92, after a career of nearly half a century running to the North Arm of Burrard Inlet.”



Capt. J. D. Stalker
[\(RBCMA D-06748\)](#)

“The floating post office was the old steamer [*sic.* ‘Motor Vessel’] ‘Scenic’ which, for many years, maintained the regular mail and passenger run to the various isolated communities in the North Arm, operating until 1971 [*sic.* October 30th, 1970] as ‘Burrard Inlet Post Office’. Stamp collectors from all over the world used to write to Captain Stalker to get him to stamp their mail.”

“Born in Bruce County, Ontario [in 1884], he first came to B.C. in 1904 because of ill-health. He remained to become a timber cruiser, timekeeper and surveyor during construction of the C.N.R. In 1910, he became a partner with the late Col. W. G. Swan in the little passenger ship ‘Mina W.’, which carried men and supplies up the Fraser River to the railway camps. [Note: Col. William G. Swan later became chief designer for the engineering firm ‘Swan Wooster Engineering Company Ltd.’]”

“In 1920, he purchased the ‘Harbour Shipping Co.’, which had been started in 1913 to run to the North Arm [*a.k.a.* ‘Indian Arm’] of Burrard Inlet. He renamed the company ‘Harbour Navigation Co. Ltd.’, and during the next 30 years he operated a fleet that included the ‘Scenic’, ‘Fort Langley’, ‘New Delta’, ‘Lo’Olbee’, ‘Hollyburn’, ‘Lady Rose’ and ‘Harbour Princess’.”

“He built the ‘Harbour Princess’ in 1924 which was one of the first ships on the coast to be powered with full diesel engines.”

“In addition to running excursion services to the Indian Arm, Captain Stalker also operated the ‘Wigwam Inn’ resort at the head of the Inlet, the picnic resort at ‘Belcarra Park’, and the ‘Gore Avenue Wharf Co. Ltd.’”

“During the heyday of the excursion trade, a flotilla of small boats used to leave the ‘Gore Avenue Wharf’ every day in the summer months, carrying crowds of tourists and picnickers up to the beauty spots of Indian Arm.”

“Captain Stalker sold his interest in the company in the early 1950s [*sic.* 1951], but he continued to command the ‘Scenic’ until he was well into his 80s [age 85 in 1969]. He never had an accident, and retired only because he didn’t want to break his long record of successful ship handling.”

“After the memorial service his ashes were taken aboard the ‘Harbour Princess’ and cast into the waters of Indian Arm. Friends were invited to join the boat trip, which left ‘Harbour Ferries Ltd.’ dock at the north foot of Denman.”

In May 1950, Capt. J. C. ‘Andy’ Anderson retired after more than 30 years with ‘Harbour Navigation Company’. (244) In 1951, Captain J. D. Stalker sold his interest in ‘Harbour Navigation Company’, which included ‘Wigwam Inn’ and ‘Belcarra Park’, to Louis Lawson, Fred Mitchell and Peter Cowan, the company manager. (245)

In March 1960, ‘Harbour Navigation Company’ was sold again to ‘Belcarra Park Resort Ltd.’ — Peter Cowan (President) and Louis Lawson (Secretary). The vessels owned by the company at the time were the ‘MV Hollyburn’, ‘MV Harbour Princess’, ‘MV Lady Rose’, ‘MV Scenic’, ‘MV Uchuck No.1’ and the 42-foot long ‘MV Thunderbird’. (246)(247)



Source: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:PortOVan.jpg>.

Photograph annotated by Ralph Drew.

‘Vancouver Harbour’ view looking east from ‘Harbour Centre Lookout’, March 2007 — note location of ‘Canadian Fishing Company’ and land-filled area at the foot of Gore Avenue.

In June 1965, the new owners of 'Harbour Navigation (1965) Ltd.', Doug Emery and Don Clark, commenced work on the 'Granite Falls Resort', a \$250,000 (about \$2.5 million today) marina and lodge development to replace the derelict 'Wigwam Inn'. ⁽²⁴⁸⁾⁽²⁴⁹⁾ The 'Harbour Navigation' vessels 'MV Hollyburn', 'MV Harbour Princess' and 'MV Scenic' made daily cruises to 'Granite Falls Resort' during the summer months.

In January 1966, 'Harbour Navigation (1965) Ltd.' had its three vessels seized due to financial difficulties on its Indian Arm run. ⁽²⁵⁰⁾ The receiver ('Royal Bank') invited offers for the purchase of 'MV Hollyburn', 'MV Harbour Princess' and 'MV Scenic'. ⁽²⁵¹⁾⁽²⁵²⁾



Source: [Vancouver Province, June 3rd, 1966, page 1.](#)

**1966 Newspaper Advertisement —
‘Harbour Ferries Ltd.’ & “Granite Falls Lodge”.**

In October 1972, the lodge and staff bunkhouse at the 'Granite Falls Resort' were destroyed by a fire of unknown origin. ⁽²⁵³⁾⁽²⁵⁴⁾

In January 1976, 'Harbour Ferries Ltd.' was listed on the stock exchange under a new name, 'The Ardiem Industrial Corporation', which was an amalgamation of three listed companies and three unlisted companies, one of the latter being 'Harbour Ferries Ltd.'. ⁽²⁵⁵⁾⁽²⁵⁶⁾

In May 1967, 'Harbour Ferries Ltd.' took a three-year lease on the 'Vancouver Tug Boat Company' wharf at the foot of Denman Street in Coal Harbour which would provide a centrally located base of operations with parking accommodation for nearly 500 cars. At the same time, it was announced that 'Harbour Ferries Ltd.', formerly known as 'Harbour Navigation Company', would vacate the old 'Gore Avenue Wharf' which it had occupied for more than 50 years, but which had minimum parking facilities. ⁽²⁵⁷⁾

Harbour Ownership Debate Concluded

In May 1965, the legal tangle that had retarded Vancouver waterfront development for half a century, a dispute over property rights between the CPR and 'National Harbours Board' (NHB), came to a head. Specifically at stake was the ownership of the south shore of the waterfront stretching from Gore Avenue west to Cardero Street, which was part of the land grant to the CPR when it extended its main line from Port Moody to Coal Harbour in 1887. It had been legally established that the section of track west of Port Moody was in effect a branch line, and did not enjoy main line privileges. Necessity for final settlement of the problem was so obvious that it had been taken out of the hands of the lawyers for resolution by the respective chairmen of the CPR and NHB. ⁽²⁵⁸⁾⁽²⁵⁹⁾⁽²⁶⁰⁾

In June 1966, the NHB signed an agreement with the CPR that settled one of Canada's longest property disputes, involving ownership of some of the most valuable waterfront land on the continent. The key to the settlement came when lawyers discovered that under the 'British North America Act' tidewater foreshore lands were vested with the Crown, and could only be alienated by order-in-council. The provincial government had the right to make its (1884–1886) land grants to the CPR, but didn't have the right to cede the adjoining federal waterfront. ⁽²⁶¹⁾



Source: ['Port of Vancouver' website](#).

Photograph annotated by Ralph Drew.

'Vancouver Harbour', view looking west from Heatley Avenue, circa 2025 — note location of 'Canadian Fishing Company' (lower centre) and land-filled area at the foot of Gore Avenue.

Gore Avenue Wharf Removed

In January 1977, the 'National Harbour Board' began the process of cleaning-up the waterfront between the foot of Gore Avenue and 'Pier B-C'. First to be demolished was Vancouver's oldest pier, the delapidated 'Western Water Terminal' at the foot of Carrall Street. The 'Western Water Terminal' chief claim to fame was its long career as the 'Union Wharf', home of 'Union Steamships Ltd.' Next on the demolition list was the old 'Evans, Coleman & Evans' wharf, then known as 'Ocean Wharves'.⁽²⁶²⁾

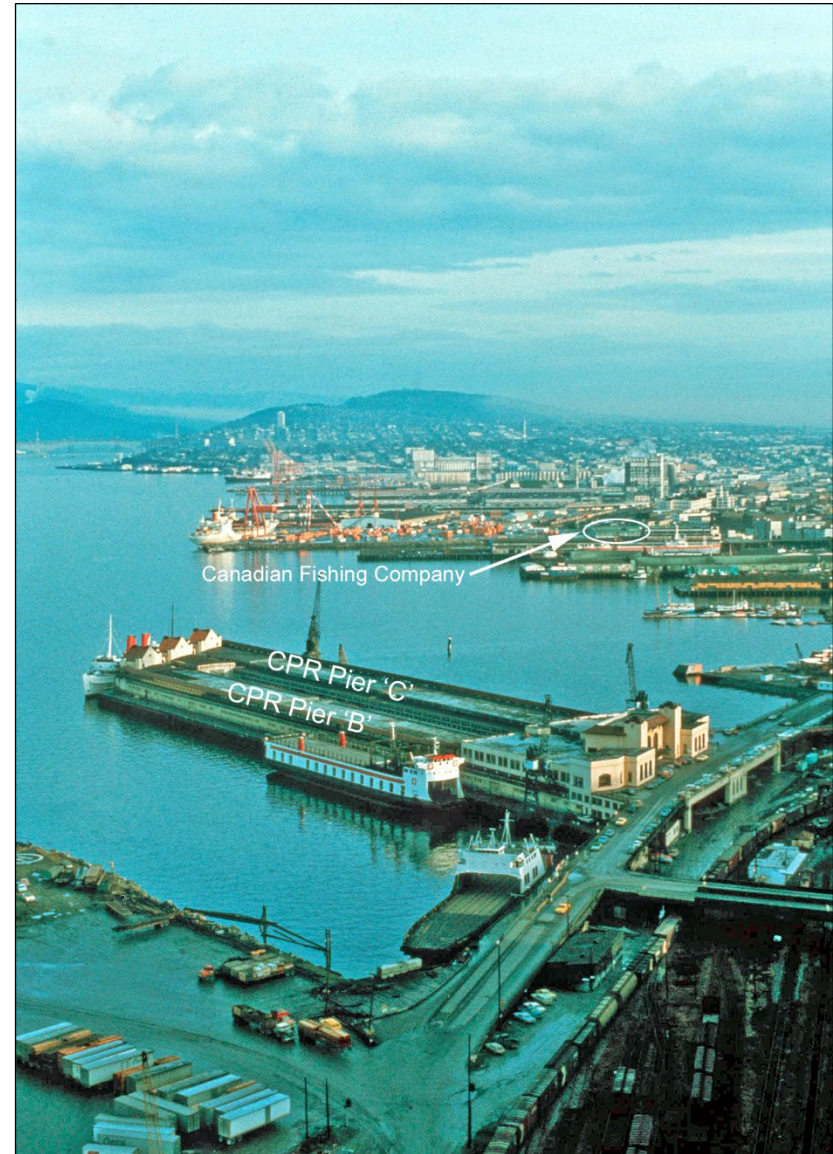
In May 1983, the 'Port of Vancouver' published a tender request for the demolition and removal of the Main Street overpass and 'Gore Avenue Wharf' at the north foot of Main Street.⁽²⁶³⁾

In February 1985, City Council approved a design for a new 4.2-metre-high (13.8-foot-high) cloverleaf overpass linking Main Street with the waterfront. The overpass was to be built near a planned 2.5-hectare (6.2-acre) waterfront park (now known as 'Crab Park') between Carrall Street and Main Street.⁽²⁶⁴⁾

Howe Sound EXCURSION or DANCE CRUISE?	
This weekend YOU have a choice!	
SATURDAY DANCE CRUISE	SUNDAY EXCURSION
to Granite Falls Lodge Live Music \$8.00 per couple Group rates on request Leave Gore Ave. Terminal 7:30 p.m. July 30	Cruise Islands in beautiful Howe Sound. Adults \$3.00 Children \$1.50 Leave ft. of Gore Ave. July 31, 1:30 p.m., return 5 p.m.
HARBOUR FERRIES LTD.	
Foot of Gore Ave.	683-7696

Source: [Vancouver Province, July 29th, 1966, page 2.](#)

**1966 Newspaper Advertisement —
'Gore Avenue Wharf' & 'Harbour Ferries Ltd.'**



Source: [City of Vancouver Archives \(CVA 1135-7\).](#)

**Vancouver waterfront, December 1976
— view looking east from Burrard Street —
note the two railway ferries (centre foreground).**

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- (5) [“The City Wharf”](#), Vancouver Daily World, Wednesday, August 14th, 1889, page 4.
- (6) Trevor Williams, 2021, [“Foot of Carrall: The Historical Maritime Gateway of Gastown”](#), The Northern Mariner, Vol. 31, No. 4 (Winter 2021), pages 409–430.
- (7) Norman Hacking, [“Old Wharf Goes”](#), Vancouver Province, January 8th, 1977, page 21.
- (8) [“Motion to survey and prepare a plan to Deep Water”](#), Vancouver Daily World, Tuesday, April 21st, 1891, page 3.
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