

1859

This year I was induced to seek election as Member of the Legislature for Sooke. Mr. Naylor, then sheriff, and myself proceeded to Sooke in an Indian canoe for the election. A hasty proclamation was made before election day. The few electors, the sheriff and myself went to the harbor front, and used the deck of a small steamer, then building, as a hustings. Mr. Muir proposed me as a fit and proper person to be member for Sooke. Another Muir seconded the motion, carried and I became member without opposition. We had a stormy return trip, so much so that we landed at Gordon Head, the Indians camping for the night. We walked on in the face of rain and wind to Belmont, where Mr. Cameron gave us supper and a boat to ferry us into Esquimalt harbour, from there we walked to Victoria, wet and tired. This year I sat for the first time in the Legislature of the colony. Dr. J. S. Helmcken, Speaker; G. H. Carey, Attorney-General, and Mr. A. G. Young, Colonial Secretary. Dr. Tolmie, A. R. Green and others were members, and Dr. Kennedy, Member for Nanaimo.

1860

An uneventful year. Not much trade on account of the Fraser River mines not turning out well. The Hudson's Bay Company purchased the American steamer Enterprise, to run between Victoria and Westminster, commanded in turn by Captains Swanson and Lewis.

1861

This year my second daughter, Edythe Mary, was born. A Captain Owens, with propeller steamer, Sea Bird, attempted the navigation of the Fraser from Victoria to Yale, making the up trip against stream successfully, but in coming down river was wrecked or driven on a sand bank. No appliances within reach for hauling off or launching. She remained there until winter, when the water was low, and was then launched, coming to Victoria to be refitted. Captain and Mrs. Owens lived in our home for months, and their young sister, Emma, while the steamer was aground. Her first trip was to Port Townsend, on pleasure, in which my wife and I joined. The second trip, with passengers and freight, was from Victoria to Westminster. When off Trial Island fire was discovered. Not being able to extinguish it, or save the ship, she was ran ashore on Discovery Island, where she burnt up beyond repair. The Owens returned to San Francisco. Mrs. Owens was a charming, bright woman. We liked her very much.