

Charles Whetham

A Remarkable Resident of Ruskin



by Fred Braches

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Also available: Records of the Whonnock Community Association's Historical Project, 1985.

Introduction



Charles Whetham.
Watercolour rendition of a photograph taken in 1890 for publication in a special edition of the *Vancouver Daily World*. (see page 9). This watercolour is part of the J. Ross Robertson Collection of the Toronto Reference Library, T.P.L., Toronto, Ontario.

The original letter by Reverend Dunn remained in the family's possession until this summer. It came back to Whonnock through the kindness of Janet Alexander, one of Charles Whetham's great-granddaughters. She also sent me a copy of the obituary and many other items marked with her name or the initials JA on the following pages. Janet lives in Portland, Maine and we met online through Ancestry. Since last spring we have exchanged information by e-mail about the Whethams— all of them! She has been an inspiring companion on my quest and am deeply indebted to her. fb

WHONNOCK AND RUSKIN, the two communities that form the eastern part of Maple Ridge remember Charles Whetham as an unusual, prominent and respected settler who lived in their neighborhood for a decade or so around 1900. He was unusual in that he did not have to live by manual labour as others around him did, and also because of his scholarly background. He and his family lived in a commodious house with a beautiful garden and an orchard so different from the humble homes of his fellow settlers. As Justice of the Peace Charles Whetham was a prominent resident in the small community, but the respect the residents felt for him goes beyond prestige. Robert Manzer, writing about the early years of the Ruskin school said it in a few words: “[Charles Whetham] was the councillor and friend of all settlers wise enough to seek his advice.”

That side of Charles Whetham was exposed by the recent discovery of two documents. The first is a farewell address written by the Reverend Dunn in 1903 expressing the “deep disappointment and genuine regret” of the community at Whonnock and Ruskin where “through uniform civility, evenness of temper, and unselfish and considerate deeds” he had acquired a large circle of loyal friends. He was, as the letter shows, public-spirited and always ready to support any movement to advance the well-being of the community. “Whatever you put your hand to,” says Dunn’s letter “you have executed in a masterly way.”

Thirty-five years later another community, this one across the continent in the State of New York, said farewell to Charles Whetham with a tribute in their newspaper about his passing in 1938. From that obituary a few words:

But his real love was given to his fellowmen, and it was in association with them that he was at his best and happiest. Only those who really came to know the man, knew to the full his lovable qualities—his genial comradeship—his delicious humour which the twinkle in his eyes betrayed—his wide knowledge—his kind willingness to counsel and to give. The many who enjoyed his garden and his flowers which he so generously shared, the farmers who came for counsel and went away friends, the man in the store and on the street who enjoyed his conversation, all these knew his worth.

The similarity in feeling, admiration and regret between Dunn’s letter and the obituary is striking. Manzer’s comments, the letter and the article make clear that Charles Whetham was indeed “unusual,” but not because of his possessions or his knowledge. He was an exceptional human being, deserving to be remembered by more than just the words “respected” and “prominent.”

Fred Braches



Mrs. George Whetham (née Mary Ann Grumett) and her family.

From left, sitting: John Whetham, Mrs. George Whetham and Charles Whetham. Standing: George Stephen Whetham, James Whetham and Mary Jane (Mrs. James McQueen).

Mary Ann Grumett's husband George Whetham was born in England and died in Sheffield, Ontario, in 1863, aged 45. Photo was taken in Cambridge, Ontario, probably in the early 1880s. James became a resident of Vancouver, BC, in 1887. His brother Charles joined him there not later than 1889. The other brothers, George Stephen and John, remained in Ontario. When James died in 1891, Charles and his brother-in-law James McQueen were executors of his will and the McQueens moved to Vancouver.

Timeline

CHARLES WHETHAM, born and raised in Ontario, married Fannie Nearing from Vermont in 1886. How and where they met is not known. That year Charles started to work as Modern Language Master at Upper Canada College, Toronto after two years at Johns Hopkins University.

The couple moved to Vancouver BC in 1888 or 1889 where they joined Charles's brother James Whetham, a successful businessman. Charles started by opening a real estate and insurance company, C. Whetham & Co., probably in partnership with his brother who had made his fortune in real estate. At this time Charles bought a 68-acre property in Whonnock.

In 1891 the Whetham brothers started Whetham College, an English-style private school for boys, with Charles Whetham as principal. Tragically James died suddenly within a month of its inauguration.

Early in 1893 Charles relinquished his position as principal and the college that carried his surname faded away later that year.

Charles and Fannie and their two daughters, Katherine and Hilda moved to Toronto where Charles taught at the University of Toronto where he held the position of Fellow in the French department in 1894. In February 1894 Fannie gave birth to a son, James.

As he had in previous years, Charles spent the summer of 1894 on his property in Whonnock, probably building a house there. The family moved to Whonnock in 1895.

The Whethams sold the land in 1903 and left the community that now, on Charles's suggestion, was known as Ruskin. The family returned to Ontario but not to a teaching position for Charles. They lived for some years in Wentworth County where Charles had been born and grown up and where his mother still lived.

In 1908 the family moved to Westfield, NY, where Charles and Fannie stayed the rest of their lives.



The two daughters of Charles and Fannie Whetham were born in Vancouver on the same day, 30 October, but a year apart: Katherine Nearing (b. 1889) and Hilda Louise (b. 1890). Although her birth certificate shows the name of the oldest as Catherine, she preferred the spelling Katherine and that is the spelling used in this booklet. Photo courtesy Janet Alexander.

Whonnock and Ruskin are neighborhoods of the District of Maple Ridge, British Columbia. The name Ruskin for the eastern part of the original Whonnock neighborhood became official in 1898 with the opening of a post office with that name at a settlement called "Ruskin Mills" at the mouth of the Stave River. One could say that the Whethams moved to "Whonnock" in 1895 but left "Ruskin" in 1903. Whonnock Creek, always a natural divide between the communities, became with time the border between Whonnock and Ruskin.

Biographical Dictionary of
Well-known British Colum-
bians:

By J. B. Kerr, 1890

Whetham, James, M. D., (Vancouver), was born in Wentworth county, Ontario, on the 1st of February, 1854, and passed his boyhood years in that county. He received his early education at the public school of his own district and subsequently at Waterdown, N. S., and Hamilton Collegiate Institute. His father George Whetham, was, as a young man, a member of the long established firm of S. Whetham & Sons, extensive flax and hemp manufacturers in England, but moved by the same restless and enterprising spirit which afterwards characterized his son, he emigrated to America, selected Wentworth county as his home, there married and started business as a general merchant but unfortunately died, while his family was still young—the subject of the present sketch being then only eight years of age. The English branch of the family is numerous and some of its members have been highly honored by their countrymen. Sir Charles Whetham, Dr. Whetham's uncle, was for many years alderman and director of various corporations in London, and was elected sheriff and finally in 1879 was Lord Mayor of London. Dr. Whetham while still at school was attracted by the glowing accounts of the Canadian Northwest and after teaching school for some time in his native county he started for Manitoba in 1878 and invested a few hundred dollars there in farm lands. But his eyes were still turned westward and he soon set out through the Western and Pacific States. Of all points visited, Spokane Falls consisting then of only a few houses impressed him most favorably and he located some desirable corners there, transferring his Manitoba interest to that city a year before the disastrous boom. Meanwhile he was spending his winters in the study of medicine. Three sessions were passed at Trinity Medical School, Toronto, another session at the Medical School in Portland, Oregon, during one of his visits to the Pacific Coast, and subsequently two sessions at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York. With the exception of a short time in Spokane Falls Dr. Whetham has never practised his profession, his attention since graduation being directed mainly to real estate and kindred interests. He was one of the earliest visitors to the future site of Vancouver and soon decided to take a substantial interest in its development. For a time his interests were about equally divided between Spokane Falls and Vancouver, but in 1887 he resolved to make Vancouver his home and both his heart and his treasure are now located there permanently.

Biographical Dictionary

—OF—

WELL-KNOWN

BRITISH COLUMBIANS

WITH A HISTORICAL SKETCH

By J. B. KERR.

MINNAPOLIS, M.C.
PUBLISHED BY KERR & BROS.
1890.

Vancouver

STARTING IN 1886 Charles Whetham worked for two years as Modern Language Master at Upper Canada College in Toronto starting in 1886. It is not certain when he and his wife Fannie arrived in Vancouver, BC. The earliest confirmation of their presence in Vancouver is the birth of their daughter Katherine Nearing on October 30th, 1889.

That year, according to a city directory, Charles's brother James was a boarder at Hotel Vancouver. Although this is the first time James's name appeared in a directory, he had made Vancouver his home in 1887. He was by then a major real estate owner in the young city and that year he became a charter member of the Vancouver Board of Trade. James Whetham was also one of the city's business pioneers who founded the Vancouver Club in 1889. He probably was also an alderman on the young city's council.

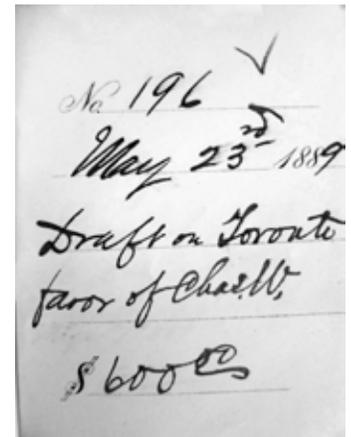


Henderson's Directory of 1890 for Vancouver (estimated population 12,890) shows Charles in charge of a real estate office: C. Whetham & Co. at Cordova and Cambie. His partner no doubt was his brother James who is listed in the directory as "Whetham Jas., M.D." with his office also at Cordova and Cambie. Although James Whetham was a physician by training, he did never practice in Vancouver. His interest remained focused on real estate and investments.

The 1890 directory shows the brothers living at West Georgia "near Bute" and the 1891 issue lists their home address as 1144 Georgia, halfway between Bute and Thurlow. The Henderson's directory of 1891 does not list C. Whetham & Co. or the professions of the two brothers—just their names and home address.

Rather than a career in real estate the brothers may have had a different future for Charles in mind. Using James's financial strength and with the backing of some of the most prominent businessmen in Vancouver, James created Whetham College where Charles would be the head master.

The inauguration of Whetham College took place on Saturday, 28 February 1891 but James could not attend. He had fallen ill a week before the inauguration and on Sunday, 22 March 1891, he died, aged 37, of what was diagnosed as typhoid fever.



James Whetham signed a draft on his Toronto account in favour of his brother Charles which suggests that Charles and Fannie did arrive in Vancouver some time between the date of the draft, 23 May, and the birth of their daughter Katherine on 30 October 1889.

On Charles Whetham's teaching capabilities: "In my opinion he is not in danger of making elementary courses too learned, but he is able to guide apt students in advanced work also and he can hardly fail to interest both classes of students with the example of his quiet but constant enthusiasm."

Handwritten reference letter dated 11 April 1887 by Henry Hood, Associate Professor, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore.

Souvenir Edition Vancouver Daily World

April 1891

Educational Institutions

WHETHAM COLLEGE

Though so young a city, Vancouver has already a flourishing educational institution which in many of its essential features is probably without a peer on the continent. Whetham College, under the distinguished patronage of His Honor the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, is designed especially for secondary education of gentlemen's sons.

Its strongest features may be best described as a happy combination of the principle of private tuition, with all the advantages of college life. Experience has shown that it is impossible to exclude evils even of the most disastrous kind from boarding schools formed on the English model. Aside from the moral influences of such schools the tendency is necessarily to reduce all to the same mental level.

Classes and subjects are arranged to suit the average boy while the individual drops out of sight. The promoters of Whetham College have recognized that while the numbers of boys must be sufficiently large to admit of a healthy rivalry in studies and sports the limit must be fixed somewhere. Classes must be so small that every boy's wants may receive careful and constant attention.

Masters must be sufficiently numerous to admit of such subdivision of work that no master shall attempt to present a subject in which he is not an acknowledged specialist. The minimum number of masters necessary to deal with ordinary academic subjects was fixed at four, exclusive of directors in workshops, garden and gymnasium.

The maximum number of boys in each class was next fixed, thus giving a maximum number of sixty as a full school. Another special feature of the college is the recognition of the value of mechanical and physical training from a psychological point of view. The workshop, garden and well-equipped gymnasium are important adjuncts of the school. Swimming, fencing, military drill and the study of industrial processes are amply provided for.

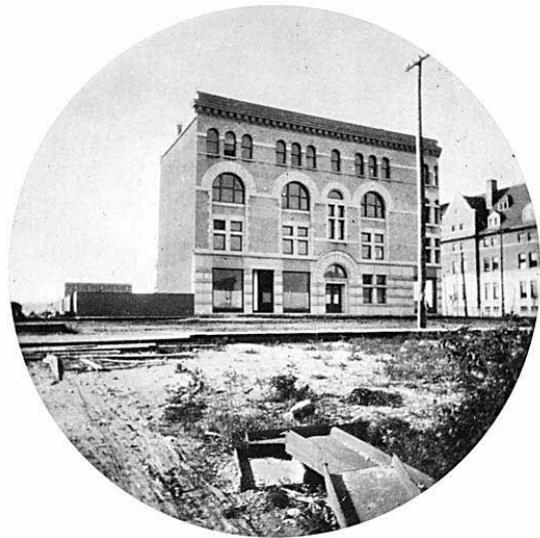
Every boy is carefully examined from time to time, by the regular medical adviser of the college, and excessive work or play is guarded against, while bad habits are observed and corrected. Boys are prepared for civil service examinations for the army and navy; for entrance to the army, technical school or university, and for first and second year examinations in art leading to the degree of B.A. in any university. Arrangements are being

made by which boys may write an examination papers for entrance to the leading institutions of Canada and the United States without leaving the city. Boys will thus be spared a long and otherwise unavoidable, to say nothing about the expensive, journey.

No expense has been spared in securing a staff of masters eminently qualified not only as scholars, but as experienced and successful teachers. The principal, Mr. Chas. Whetham, is a Master of Arts of Toronto University, late Fellow of Toronto, and also in John Hopkins University, Baltimore, and for two years master in Upper Canada College and examiner in Toronto University.

Mr. H. Rushton Fairclough, classical master, is also an honor graduate of Toronto University; he is still a regular member of the faculty and an examiner in the University of Trinity College, Toronto. Mr. Alfred T. DeLury, mathematical and physical master, is also an honour graduate and medallist of Toronto University, and late Fellow in Clark University—the wealthy New England rival of John Hopkins University in post graduate work. He is also an examiner in Toronto University. The other members of the staff are equally eminent in their departments.

The building (an illustration of which appears in this publication) is situated on the highest point of the Vancouver town site, and is admirably adapted to the purpose. The patrons of the college are among the most prominent and influential men of the Province. We bespeak for the institution the most brilliant success. A detailed calendar may be had on application.



Whetham College occupied quarters in the Sir Donald Smith (Strathcona) block, at the southeast corner of Granville and Georgia. Photo taken in 1889.



These images of “Dr. J. Whetham” and “C. Whetham” are included on two pages with similar photos of “Representative men of Vancouver” in the Souvenir Edition of the *Vancouver Daily World* of April 1891.

Charles is mentioned in the story of Whetham College (opposite), but aside from James’s picture there is no word about him following his sudden death only weeks before publication.

2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Dr J Whetham	36	33	m	-	0	-	Prof	Prof	Presbyt												
F	31	m	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
K	1	-	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
H	1/2	-	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Smith A	47	m	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Robinson W	29	-	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
DeLury A.T	25	-	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Fairclough H.R	25	-	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Johnson B	23	-	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Johnson M	26	-	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Ross Ellen	84	-	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Willis J	2	-	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-

Canada Census. Enumerated 8 May 1891

Whetham C.E. male 33 yrs principal college

Whetham F. female 31 yrs

Whetham K. female 1 yr

Whetham H. female 1/2 yr

Smith A. female 47 yrs matron college

Robinson W. male 29 yrs teacher college

DeLury, A.T. male 25 yrs teacher college

Fairclough, H.R. male 25 yrs teacher college

Johnson, B. female 23 yrs domestic

Johnson, M. male 26 yrs domestic

Note that there are no boarding students enumerated in the household.

The Colonist.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1891.

On Saturday evening, Whetham College will be formally inaugurated at the college building, corner of Georgia and Grenville streets, Vancouver, under the presidency of Mayor Oppenheimer, when addresses will be delivered by prominent visitors and patrons. The musical programme will be under the direction of Mr. Alfred Oldbruck.

"My uncle James had extensive interests in and about Vancouver; he was quite wealthy.

His brother Charles, Charles Whetham, M.A., of Toronto University, was principal of the first private school for boys, the 'Whetham College,' which occupied quarters in the Sir Donald Smith block, at the southeast corner of Granville and Georgia, where Birks jewellery store is now; It was the first private school for boys in Vancouver.

Dr. James Whetham is a wealthy man, and it was he who financed the school."

Kate Hewitson McQueen (interviewed by Major Matthews ca. 1950)

Whetham College

THE SPECIAL EDITION of the *Vancouver Daily World* of April 1891 (transcription on page 8) and the advertisements for the summer and autumn terms (left) mention that there was a detailed 16-page calendar available for Whetham College's first year, but no copies have survived.

What did survive is the *Whetham College 1892-3 Calendar*, probably issued at or before the start of the winter term (January-April 1892). It shows the names of 38 students (far below the maximum of 60) as "boys in attendance 1891-1892."

The college was, according to the article in the *Daily World* and the advertisements, designed for the education of "gentlemen's sons." The *1892-3 Calendar* shows it as a school for "boys of all creeds in Western Canada and the Pacific States." Not that this made much difference because only a selected few could afford paying the college fee of \$35 for each of the three terms. Another \$65 for board and lodging would have put the total cost at \$100 for each student for each of the three 14-week terms. Although advertised as a "residential" school board, lodging was optional. The names of 38 students are shown as attending in the 1891-92 year.

Whetham College started as a privately owned school but the *1892-3 Calendar* presented the college as a "Public Institution" under trusteeship of David Oppenheimer (former mayor of Vancouver), James Cooper Keith (former manager of the Bank of British Columbia), and Henry John Cambie (chief engineer CPR, Pacific Division). Those trustees represented a "Convocation" of almost 100 "governors" who created a "guarantee fund" to assure "ample equipment and a full and efficient staff. In February 1892 the trustees presented a petition to the provincial legislature to incorporate Whetham College, but for some reason that did not happen. Legally the college remained therefore a private school and the property of Charles Whetham.

The advertised change to a public institution seems to have happened in January 1892 at the time St. James Church School amalgamated with Whetham College. Charles Whetham continued teaching English, modern languages and literature, but the other first "masters" of Whetham College are no longer listed as teaching at the college in 1892.

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WHETHAM COLLEGE
VANCOUVER, B. C.

SUMMER TERMS OPENS APRIL 16TH,
Under the distinguished patronage of
His Honor the Lt.-Governor of B. C.

The college is designed especially for the education of gentlemen's sons. Staff already includes four well-known specialists. Number of pupils limited strictly to 60—a maximum average of 15 for each master. Send for calendar. ap5-1m

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Victoria Daily Colonist Tuesday, April 7, 1891

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Whetham College,
VANCOUVER, B. C.

Under the distinguished patronage of His
Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of
British Columbia.

Autumn Term Opens September 21.

WHETHAM COLLEGE is designed especially for the Education of Gentlemen's Sons, and is already patronized by leading families of the Province.
Maximum number of boys to each master, fifteen—Average number, under ten.
All masters are thoroughly experienced and successful teachers—well known as specialists in the Eastern States and Canada.
Boys prepared for Matriculation Examination in any University or Technical School, and for 1st and 2nd year Examinations in Arts in any University.
Send for detailed 16-page Calendar. jly25

Victoria Daily Colonist Wednesday, July 29, 1891

At the close of 1892 the staff included six “masters” including female teachers for “elocution” and “drawing.” The total number of students of 42 students attending the Autumn Term also included five girls in the “Teaching Class” and two in the “University Class.” No calendar for 1893-1894 seems to have been published.

In January 1893, Charles Whetham, still principal of the college, was reported to be making arrangements for the examination of the three “University Class” students with the University of Ontario.

In February 1893 the Trustees of the college petitioned the government in Victoria again for incorporation of Whetham College; the act was passed in March of 1893.

Early in 1893 Charles Whetham relinquished his position as principal and probably stopped teaching at the school as well. The 1892-3 *Calendar* had warned that for a year or two college fees would not be sufficient to cover the working expenses. Without a growth in attendance the college would have become financially unstable and unattractive for investors.

For a short time Charles Hill-Tout took over, identifying himself as “Acting Principal and Housemaster, Whetham College, Vancouver” in a letter dated April 13, 1893, addressed to the Superintendent of Education.

At some time later that year Whetham College, the first post-secondary teaching institute in British Columbia, closed its doors, passing the torch to the Columbian Methodist College formed in New Westminster in 1892, also incorporated in March 1893.

After the demise of the college, Hill-Tout opened his own school, Buckland College, probably taking some of the Whetham College students with him.

Charles Whetham and his family moved from Vancouver to Toronto where, in 1894, Charles held the position of Fellow in the French department of the University of Toronto.

References

CITY OF VANCOUVER ARCHIVES: Whetham College 1892-3 Calendar.

UBC LIBRARY RARE BOOKS AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS: Inauguration programme, February 28th, 1891, course of public lectures, winter term 1892, staff list and class in attendance, autumn term, 1892. The 1891 calendar known to have been part of the collection could not be found anymore.

Victoria Daily Colonist 13 January 1892

The St. James' Church school has been amalgamated with Whetham College.

Victoria Daily Colonist 21 February 1892

J. F. Lang, professor of classics in Whetham College, lectured, last night, on the Greek system of education.

Victoria Daily Colonist 5 March 1892

An interesting illustrated lecture was given, last night, at Whetham College, on the telephone, phonograph and photophone. Papers were read by J. E. Kerr and Viggo Gandil.

Victoria Daily Colonist 15 May 1892

The Corrigan college recently sent a challenge to the captain of the Whetham College Cricket club, Vancouver, inviting him to bring his team to Victoria on the 24th inst., to play against Corrigan college for the college championship of British Columbia. An answer was received yesterday from the president of Whetham college accepting the invitation, and the game will commence at Beacon Hill at 9 a.m. on Queen's Birthday. In the afternoon the Whetham cricketers will be taken out to see the Regatta, and in the evening will be entertained at a banquet at Corrigan college.

Victoria Daily Colonist 7 January 1893

Whetham College and the University.
TORONTO, Jan. 16.—Charles Whetham, M.A., principal of the Whetham College, Vancouver, B.C., has written to the Senate of Toronto University asking it to hold a first year examination in the Arts course at Vancouver, B.C., three candidates having expressed a desire to write on it at that place. The communication has been referred to the committee on examinations.

Victoria Daily Colonist 30 March 1893

WHETHAM COLLEGE BILL.
The House went into committee on a bill to incorporate Whetham college, Mr. Smith in the chair.
The bill was reported complete with amendments.

Charles Whetham took an active part in the effort to establish a university in British Columbia as is evident from the following, published in the *Daily Colonist* of 17 January 1892. He must have been frustrated about the lack of success.

THE UNIVERSITY OF B. C.

All sectional Differences at an End—Informal Meeting of the Senate.

Sectional feeling, as regards the coming University of British Columbia, happily, appears to be a thing of the past. Last evening's informal meeting of the Senators, held in the parlors of the Driard, was one of unbroken harmony. Dr. I. W. Powell, the Chancellor, presided, and there were present: Rev. P. McP. Macleod, Hon. D. W. Higgins, Mr. J. P. McLeod, Rev. Mr. McLaren, Mr. F. Schofield, Mr. Charles Whetham, Dr. Tunstall, Mr. J. M. O'Brien, and Mr. H. F. Clinton.

It was resolved, at the outset, to let the past be past, and, consequently, no dead issues, or questions that were the cause of bitterness in previous meetings, were touched upon. The discussion was upon the difficulties which have arisen about the University project, and the debate had for its object the devising of some plan which would remove the obstacles in the way of the University becoming an actual reality.

Energetic speeches were made by the Chancellor, who spoke at some length, by Rev. Mr. McLaren, by Mr. Whetham, by Hon. Mr. Higgins, by Rev. Mr. Macleod and by others, and it was finally decided to insert a further amendment in the present Amendment Act, providing that the University shall be, for the present at least, an examining and a degree conferring body only. Any further arrangement, looking towards its becoming a teaching body can

towards its becoming a teaching body can only be accomplished by a two-thirds vote of the Senate. With the existing educational facilities provided by the High schools and colleges, it is thought that this arrangement will meet all present requirements of the Province.

It will be remembered that at a meeting of convocation held in Westminster last week, a committee was appointed, consisting of Rt. Rev. Bishop Sillitoe, Rev. Mr. McLaren, Mr. Whetham, Mr. Clinton, Mr. Schofield and Mr. O'Brien to wait upon the Government by appointment this morning at 11 to discuss with them the necessary legislation to legalize the University Act—practically an enabling bill. In view of the amicable spirit displayed at last night's meeting and the decision arrived at, it was decided that as many of those present as possible wait upon the Government with the mainland delegation, and explain matters as at present existing.

After the meeting with the Government to-day, the representatives of the University will call upon Mr. Eberts who introduced the bill and saw it safely through the legislature. Mr. Eberts will be advised as to the further amendments considered, and the Senators hope to have him father the amendments in the House this session.

Last evening's meeting closed with many expressions of interest in higher education in British Columbia, but none of the sectional feeling which means death to those interests.

The History of the University
N.A.M. McKenzie, UBC President
"President's Report for 1957-1958"

The provincial University was first called into being by the British Columbia University Act of 1890, amended in 1891. Under this Act a Senate of twenty-one members was constituted and a McGill medical graduate, Dr. Israel W. Powell of Victoria, was appointed Chancellor. Regional jealousy between the Island and the Mainland killed this Act after several ineffectual attempts had been made to put it into

operation. The Universities of Toronto and McGill then took the lead in promoting higher education in the Province.

The Columbian Methodist College in affiliation with Toronto was formed in New Westminster in 1892 to give work in Arts and Theology. The College was soon entrusted by Toronto with all four years' work, though the records show that very few students ever availed themselves of these facilities.

Executing James Whetham's Will

CHARLES WHETHAM and his brother-in-law James McQueen were the executors of James Whetham's will: a daunting task. One of the properties offered for sale was the Whetham Block, still there "situated on the North-East Corner of Cordova and Cambie Street," on a "small triangle" fronting Cordova and Cambie Streets and a "corner frontage," according to the description of the executors. This was prime property in what was then the civic centre of the city.



The Whetham Block today. (Google map photo)

DAILY WORLD, 25 March 1891

A VALUABLE ESTATE

Dr. Whetham's Will Decrees that His Property is to be Equally Divided.

By the will of the late Dr. Whetham, executed by him some years since, his entire estate is left to be divided equally between his mother, two brothers and two sisters. [sic]

The estate is a considerable one, as it embraces some of the most valuable properties in this city, productive as well as unproductive. At the period of his death he owned property in Spokane Falls, and was associated with others in the ownership of valuable property in the interior of this Province, which includes mineral, pastoral, timber and farming lands.

Some six weeks since the deceased increased the insurance on his life by the sum of \$30,000 in a leading New York Company. The estate, irrespective of the insurance of his life, is estimated to be worth in the neighbourhood of \$275,000.

It is probable that his heirs, who, with exception of his brother Prof. Chas. Whetham of this city, are all residents of the east, will visit Vancouver in order to arrange about a settlement of the property.

The deceased amassed his wealth in a few years and in a quiet, unostentatious manner. He was generous to a degree and every deserving cause or movement received substantial assistance at his hands. Now that he has gone from amongst us his real worth and merits are being appreciated and the great loss the city has sustained fully felt.

He was arranging to build a large five-story block on the corner of Cambie and Hastings streets and another on Granville street opposite the new Dominion public buildings. It will not be known for some time yet whether the heirs will carry out his intentions or not. The localities will prove to be safe as well as judicious investments.

EXECUTORS' SALE

—OF—
CHOICE BUSINESS AND RESIDENCE PROPERTIES

—IN—
VANCOUVER, B. C.

The Executors of the Estate of James Whetham, deceased, invite whole or separate tenders for the purchase of all or any of the following properties, comprising the Choicest Business Properties in the City of Vancouver:

1. Subdiv. 185, Block 2, Lots 33 and 34, 132x132 feet, corner of Burrard and Melville streets.
2. Subdiv. 541, Block 32, Lots 13 and 14, 50x120 feet, Granville street, near Post Office Block.
3. Subdiv. 541, Block 33, Lots 1, 2, 3 and 4, 129 feet (Granville) by 101 feet (Pender), corner Granville and Pender streets, opposite new Post Office and Customs House.
4. Subdiv. 541, Block 33, Lots 5 and 6, 52x120 feet, Pender street, near new Post Office.
5. Subdiv. 541, Block 35, Lots 1 and 2, 52 feet (Hastings) by 120 feet (Homer), corner of Hastings and Homer streets.
6. Subdiv. 541 (O.G.T.), Block 4, Lots 9 and part of 10, 132 feet (Cambie) by 105 feet (Hastings), corner of Hastings and Cambie streets, opposite Court House.
7. Subdiv. 541 (O.G.T.), Block 4, Lots 15 and 16, 132x132 feet, corner of Hastings and Abbott Sts.
8. Subdiv. 541, Block 5, Lots 9 and part of 10, 107x132, corner Cordova and Cambie streets, less small portion of south-west corner; improved; pays good interest; can easily be made to pay 15 per cent. by further improvement; unquestionably the choicest business corner in Vancouver.
9. Subdiv. 194, Block 6, Lots 21, 25 and 26, 75x120 feet, cor. Columbia Ave. and Oppenheimer St.
10. Subdiv. 196, Block 4, part of Lots 9 and 10, 45x7 feet, corner Powell St. and Westminster Ave.
11. District Lot 126, overlooking East Park and city, containing 200 acres, more or less.

ALSO FOR THE FOLLOWING STOCKS:

1. Okanagan Land and Development Company, Limited, 95 Shares.
2. Crow's Nest Coal and Mineral Company, Limited, 400 Shares.
3. British Columbia Iron Works Company, Limited, 20 Shares.
4. Vancouver City Foundry and Machine Works Company, Limited, 10 Shares.
5. Pacific Coast Fire Insurance Company, 50 Shares.
6. Vancouver Shipbuilding, Sealing and Trading Company, Limited, 10 Shares.
7. Burrard Inlet Sealing and Trading Company, Limited, 5 Shares.
8. Seattle, Lake Shore and Eastern Railway Company, 5 Shares.
9. Carbonate Mountain Mining Company, Limited, 7,000 Shares.

Tenders for the above will be opened at 12 o'clock NOON on MONDAY, the 6th day of June, 1891. The highest or any tender not necessarily accepted. Marked cheques for 5 per cent. of the amount of tenders must be deposited with the Vancouver Branch of the Bank of British Columbia before the hour above fixed, subject to the order of the executors, if tender is accepted.

TERMS.—On Unimproved Real Estate, one-fifth cash; on Improved Real Estate, one-third cash; balance in five equal annual instalments, with 7 per cent. interest per annum, or all cash if preferred. Interest payable half-yearly. Stocks, cash.

It is the intention of the executors to close out the estate definitely on the day specified.

For maps and further particulars address

CHAS. WHETHAM and } Executors.
JAMES McQUEEN, }

ap22

P. O. Box 356, Vancouver, B. C.

Charles Whetham joined John M. Lefevre and Stephen Tingley in a petition for an act to authorize construction and operation of a railway from Spences Bridge to coal deposits near Merrit.

The Nicola Valley Railway was chartered in 1891 but Charles Wetham's name does not appear in later records related to the NVR.

John M. Lefevre, surgeon, was one of Vancouver's prominent businessmen, member of the first council (1886) and alderman (1887-1889).

Stephen Tingley, stage-coach driver, was at that time the sole owner of Barnard's Express.

54 VICT.

NICOLA VALLEY RAILWAY CO.

XXV.

PETITION

To the Honourable the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia, in Parliament assembled:

The petition of John M. Lefevre, Stephen Tingley, and Charles Whetham humbly sheweth :—

That your petitioners believe it to be desirable that a line of railway should be constructed and operated, commencing at some point at or near Spence's Bridge, on the line of the Canadian Pacific Railway ; thence running in a south-easterly direction and following the valley of the Nicola River and terminating at a point at or near the western extremity of Nicola Lake, with a branch commencing at or near the junction of the Coldwater and Nicola Rivers, and extending in a southerly direction along the valley of the Coldwater River to a point at or near the junction of the Voght and Coldwater Rivers.

Your petitioners therefore pray that your honourable body will be pleased during the present Session to pass an Act to authorize the construction and operation of the said line of railway by your petitioners as a company, to be known as "The Nicola Valley Railway Company."

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Dated this 30th day of January, 1891.

JOHN M. LEFEVRE,
STEPHEN TINGLEY,
CHAS. WETHAM.

VICTORIA, B.C.:

Printed by RICHARD WOLFENDEN, Printer to the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty.

What Ruskin remembered about Charles Whetham

ALTHOUGH The booklet *Diamond Jubilee of Ruskin, B.C., Canada (1824-1976)* mentions the Whethams as one of half a dozen named “well-known families,” it is questionable how well the residents of Ruskin remembered Charles Whetham, the man who gave their community its unusual name. Local historian Charles A. Miller did not even bother mentioning Charles Whetham in his *Valley of the Stave*.

Maple Ridge, A History of Settlement allocates the epitaph “An unusual settler” to Charles Whetham and mentions that he was a magistrate and a respected figure in the community. The book also notes that “Charles Whetham organized a club for the discussion of Ruskian socialism, and at his suggestion the group chose the name Ruskin for their settlement....” The book recognizes that the Whethams donated a corner of their land to build the school for the community.

Another mention of Charles Wetham is found in an article by Arthur A. Gee published in the *Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows Gazette* of 3 June 1938 with the title “Ruskin History.” Mr. Gee has nothing more to say than that “Mr. Wheatham [sic] [was] a prominent settler,” and that he had donated dynamite for the extension of what is now 96th Avenue from Whonnock school to near the Ruskin school.

An unpublished and undated story about the early years of the Ruskin school written by Robert Manzer (ca. 1950?) contains a little more about Wetham’s Ruskin years. The following quotations are the sum total of what Mr. Manzer wrote about this forgotten Ruskin settler:

Mr. Whetham moved to the eastern part of Whonnock, developed a farm there, and soon became the councillor and friend of all settlers wise enough to seek his advise.

Ruskin school was fortunate...because of the residence and influence of one Mr. Charles Whetham.

Mr. Whetham was a trustee of Ruskin school during the years 1900 to 1901. Possibly he served in the above capacity prior to the above dates, and it is almost certain he served a second term after. During his term of office he was most conscientious in school affairs.

When the Ruskin Co-op Society [Canadian Co-operative Society] brought an influx of people interested in socialism, Mr. Whetham, by no means a socialist politically, assisted in the organization of a club for the study of Ruskin’s philosophy and other aspects of socialism. These meetings rotated but many of them were held at Mr. Whetham’s commodious home.

Starting in the right-hand column and on the following pages is new material about Charles Whetham and his stay in Whonnock/Ruskin.

John Williamson, father-in-law of L.C. York, shopkeeper and post-master in Whonnock kept a diary mainly for the year 1897. Following entries mention visits by Yorks and the Whethams.

FEB. 28. 38 F. Rain this morning, fine all afternoon. Mr. and Mrs. Whetham & 3 children, 2 girls, 1 boy, were here for dinner. Mr. Whetham sang & played Mrs. Whetham sang alto, I sang bass, she plays nicely, and sings sweetly.

SUNDAY MAY 2 1897. Warm and dry, 42 above. Mr. and Mrs. York, the children and I went to Mr. Whetham’s today, Mr. York carried Cecil [b. 1895] Mrs. York changed and carried Cecil and Mr. York carried Gwendolin [b. 1894]. Miss York (Adele) [b. 1892] walked with me, she complained of having a sore foot, that had no effect, then she said she was tired. We had a good time. When we came away Mr. Whetham carried Gwendolin to the Rancheree [Whonnock Indian Reserve]. [The distance to walk was about 1.5 km.]

SATURDAY OCT. 30. 64. Fine weather. Mrs. York and Adele, and Gwendoline are visiting Mrs. Whetham where they have a birthday party. [The birthday of the two Whetham daughters.]

The front page of the "Indenture" of the sale of the land to Fannie Whetham was signed on 1 September 1890 by John James Armour in the presence of Justice of the Peace William Curtis Sampson. Donald Gilchrist was the witness.

17748

This Indenture

Made the First day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ninety

In pursuance of the "Real Property Conveyance Act, 1874"

Between John James Armour of the Municipality of Maple Ridge in the Province of British Columbia and Dominion of Canada, Farmer, hereinafter called the Grantor

of the First Party.

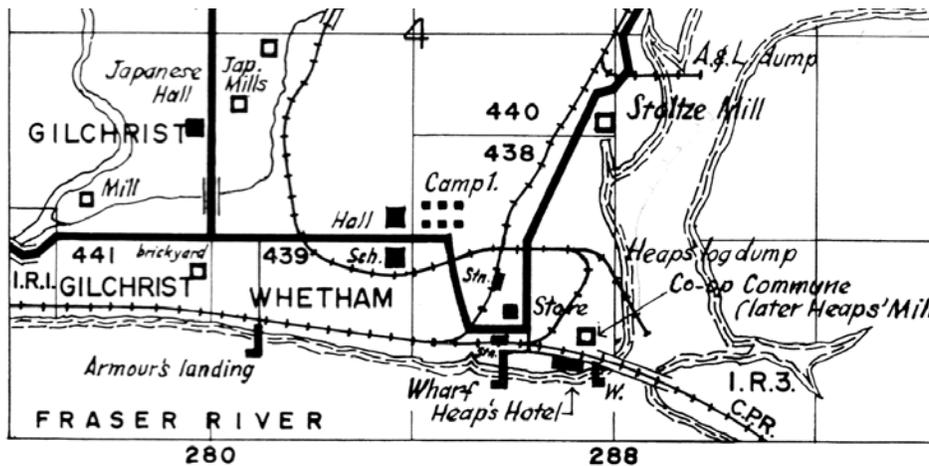
And Fannie Whetham of the City of Vancouver in the Province of British Columbia aforesaid, (being the wife of Charles Whetham of the said City of Vancouver), hereinafter called the Grantee

of the Second Party.

Witnesseth, that, in consideration of Two Thousand Eight Hundred Dollars of lawful money of Canada now paid by the said Grantee to the said Grantor (the receipt whereof is hereby by him acknowledged), he the said Grantor Do Grant unto the said Grantee her heirs and assigns FOR EVER:

All and Singular that certain parcel or tract of land and premises situate lying and being in the fourteenth Township east of the Coast Meridian in the New Westminster District in the Province of British Columbia aforesaid, and being composed of Lot numbered 439 (Four hundred and Thirty-Nine) in Group I (One) of the said District, saving and excepting thereout for the right of way of the Canadian Pacific Railway a portion of land

Ruskin Property



Left: a detail of a Ruskin map showing Lot 439 owned by the Whethams. When the Whetham's arrived in 1894, there was nothing here but their landing (Armour's Landing) at the river.

The complete map is shown on page 55 of *Maple Ridge: A History of Settlement*.

THE 68-ACRE LAND where Charles Whetham and his family settled in 1894 had been granted by the Crown to John James Armour in 1882. The property is registered as District Lot 439, Group 1, New Westminster District.

Fannie Whetham, wife of Charles Whetham, purchased the land from James Armour in September 1890 for an amount of \$2,800. Charles may have been made aware of the property through his real estate business in Vancouver, C. Whetham & Co. At first Charles's position as principal of Whetham College made moving to the country not an option. That changed when Charles's involvement in Whetham College came to an end and after his brother's inheritance made him financially independent.

in February 1903, in a "Farewell Address," (see page 32) the Reverend Alexander Dunn refers to Whetham's "residence of 12 years," which means counting from the year of purchase of the land. A letter written by Charles to his brother-law dated 11 June 1892 (see page 45) confirms his presence in Whonnock that summer.

Evidence of Whetham's presence in the following summers comes from a letter by Mrs. Sampson, a Whonnock resident, to the Superintendent of Education dated 25 June 1894. Mrs. Sampson writes that Mr. Whetham "... was east from September [1893] up till the 1st of June... [1894]" and would go back to Toronto. Whetham's house on the property was completed in 1894. In July 1895 Charles Whetham was elected a member of the Board of Trustees of the Whonnock school which confirms his as a permanent resident. In all likelihood his family was with him as from that time.

The Whethams sold their property to the Gilchrist brothers (Donald, Alex and George) in 1903.

"Can not say when I will be down. Have no man at all -- though next week we have plastering on hand and soon after that haying--when I shall have to have help again, but my time will be fully occupied just the same."

Charles Whetham to James McQueen,
9th June 1897

Walden



SIMPLE LIVING and self-sufficiency may have been on his mind when Charles Whetham decided to call his new house in Ruskin “Walden” after Henry Thoreau’s famous cabin in the woods in Massachusetts.

This home was certainly not a cabin. “It was,” said daughter Katherine in an interview with Daphne Sleight in 1972, “a beautiful home—a mansion with stone terraces, lovely gardens and a small lake.” Katherine also mentioned that there was a good orchard, which her father probably had planted by the Gilchrist brothers, who worked for him. Katherine Whetham was about 14 years of age when she left Ruskin.

Ruskin old-timers may remember the house, the grounds and the gardens as they were in the years when the Gilchrists lived there, but few if any would have remembered the place as it was in the years the Whethams called it home.

The house Charles Whetham built in 1894. After the Gilchrist brothers bought it in 1903 they called it “Kildonan,” perhaps after the township on the Isle of Skye.

The three Gilchrist brothers moved in: Donald, who was single, and George and Alex with their wives Mina and Anna (shown in the photo). Also living in the house, according to the Canada Census of 1911, were a boarder and a servant. Photo courtesy Shirley Ryan.

Whonnock School

The Whonnock elementary school was administratively known as the Stave River school until 1897 when its official name became Whonnock school.

The name Stave River school was passed on to the new school at Ruskin. Only around 1910 was its name changed to Ruskin school.

June 18, 1897
William Rosenberg
John Connor
Chas Whetham
Kate Whetham
Hildie Whetham
H.M. Sutherland
J. Gilbert
J. Owen
Clady Pomeroy

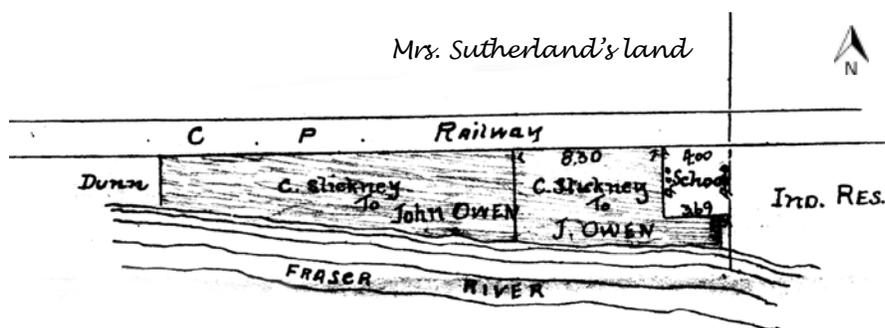
Entries in Whonnock school visitors book for June 18, 1897 including the names of Chas Whetham and his two daughters.

AT THE ANNUAL SCHOOL MEETING of June 30th, 1895, Charles Whetham was nominated as school trustee. On July 13th the board nominated him its secretary-treasurer. Most of the meetings of the board in 1895 and 1896 were held at the Whetham home.

The last meeting entry in the minute book of the Board of Trustees by Charles Whetham is dated 26 June 1897. Whetham submitted a draft for the annual report and a statement of expenditures. He is absent from a following meeting a few hours later, the first for the school year 1897-1898, when H.M. Sutherland was appointed secretary-treasurer for the board. Curiously the minutes give no reason for the change.

The following selection from the minutes of the annual meeting held on July 4th, 1896, shows the progress made and positive outlook of the board whose only complaints are about the apathy of parents and taxpayers in school affairs. That would be different in the new school.

During the year the school property has been much improved at a very small outlay. Painting cost in all only \$2.00 – all materials and part of the painter's time having been donated. The easy flight of stairs cost absolutely nothing. The outlay on grounds alone amounted to \$30.00. The improvements to grounds and building have consequently cost in all only \$32.50 and are worth at a moderate estimate from \$65.00 to \$70.00. The department of education has supplied a new map of B.C. and a valuable historical chart. The year has therefore been one of decided material progress. Money and labour are still necessary, however, to put the grounds in good condition. New fences are required. The roof of the school building should be cleaned and painted. The walls and ceiling should be brightened up and the windows reglazed. The front doors should be replaced by new ones. Let us hope that the department seeing that we are doing something to help ourselves may this year be willing to grant us something for special repairs.



"The school grounds are bounded on the north by the CPR beyond which lies the farm of Mrs. Sutherland – On the east by the Whonnock Indian Reservation – on the south by the Fraser River – on the west by John Owen's fruit farm.... The children reach the school by means of the railway or by crossing Mrs. Sutherland's property. The path through this property is almost impassable in the rainy season. The only remedy that the board can suggest is the construction of a road through Mrs Sutherland's land." Letter by Charles Whetham, secretary, Board of Trustees, to the Superintendent of Education in Victoria, December 28th 1895 asking for a road through Mrs. Sutherland's land or for moving the school.

327
 Whonnock B.C.,
 (1) Feb 13th 1897
 The Supt. of Education 327
 Victoria B.C., 97
 Dear Sir—
 Your inquiry of
 the 10th inst. I rec^d today.
 - A school at Stave River
 would not materially affect
 the attendance at Whonnock
 school. Of those pupils
 who have hitherto been in
 actual attendance at Whonnock
 school only one will be
 included in the proposed
 new district and he travels
 three miles every morning to
 reach our school. To the

new school
 he would have a mile and
 a half to go. 2 ✓ ✓
 A new school at the point
 proposed would undoubtedly
 meet the wants of a new
 group of pupils.
 In the handbook sent out
 to trustees by the Department
 the old boundaries of Stave
 River School district are
 retained as the limits of
 Whonnock School district.
 The description obviously
 should be amended by cutting
 off that portion of the old
 district now included in
 the Glen Valley district.
 I am, Sir, your obedient servant
 Charles Whetham
 Sec^y of Trustees Wh^o S. D.

Whonnock B.C, February 13th '97
 The Supt. of Education, Victoria B.C,

Dear Sir,

Your inquiry of the 10th inst. I rec^d today. A school at Stave River would not materially affect the attendance at Whonnock school. Of those pupils who have hitherto been in actual attendance at Whonnock school only one will be included in the proposed new district and he travels three miles every morning to reach our school. To the new school he will have a mile and a half to go.

A new school at the point proposed would undoubtedly meet the wants of a new group of pupils.

In the handbook sent out to trustees by the Department the old boundaries of Stave River School district are retained as the limits of the Whonnock school district. The description obviously should be amended by cutting off that portion of the old district now included in the Glen Valley district.

I am, Your Obedient Servant, Charles Whetham, Sec^y B^d of Trustees Wh^o S. D.

Note: In 1897 Glen Valley, across the Fraser from Whonnock, opened its own school. Previously the children had to cross the river to attend school at Whonnock. The new Stave River school district (Ruskin) was bordered by today's 280th Street to the west (the western border of the Whetham property) and the Stave River to the east as per the minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Whonnock school of June 10th, 1897. This new school district was also part of the original Whonnock school district.

Charles Whetham & the Ruskin Co-operatives

Members of the Canadian Co-operative Society, formed in Mission, BC, in 1895, bestowed the name “Ruskin Mills” to a sawmill and to the settlement at the mouth of the Stave River.

Charles Whetham, a scholar, respected justice of the peace and school trustee, had proposed the name after John Ruskin, the prominent British art and social critic of the time.

The choice of this name for the venture at the Stave is a surprise, for the goals and objectives of the society did not emphasize the common good and well-being of its members, as would have been expected of a co-operative inspired by the writings of Ruskin. But what was perhaps not reflected in the wording of the constitution and bylaws of the Canadian Co-operative Society was nonetheless the spirit of the society: Ruskin’s social ideas were frequently discussed at length at discussion meetings, in which Whetham, an amiable and gregarious man, took an active part.

At first the Canadian Co-operative Society was a success. In 1897 the Society counted 54 members, most living close to the mill. There they had built homes and barns and a boarding house. Aside from the sawmill and a logging operation, the members had set up a general store, a smithy, and a shoemaker’s shop. They also ran a dairy and a vegetable farm. Not less than 30 children attended the first school when it started in the spring of 1897. A post office opened on New Year’s Day 1898. “Ruskin” was a company town, but in this case its residents owned the company. Unfortunately in the course of another year the society failed to meet its financial obligations and disbanded.

There is a little-known and so far unpublished follow-up to this story. As the Ruskin experiment at Stave River came to an end, some of the former members were obviously not ready to let go of their dream and decided to form a new Ruskin-inspired co-operative. On February 4th, 1899, nine men and women gathered at Charles Whetham’s home to sign in his presence as magistrate and witness a letter of intent to establish a new society named “The Industrial Union” with headquarters at Ruskin, BC. Whetham may well have been the author of the letter of intent as well as its constitution and by-laws. The object of the society was “to engage in any and every branch of industry on the principle of association.” First and foremost among the purpose of the society were the welfare of the community and its individual members.

Shortly after incorporation, in March of 1899, the secretary of the Industrial Union reported to the famous Ruskin Colony in Tennessee: “We have but a small organization and are as yet homeless, but we are harmonious beyond my fondest hopes and are doing well financially.” The members on the Industrial Union moved to the Boundary Bay area and now focused on farming and raising livestock. However, after efforts to purchase the land at an acceptable price failed, the economic viability of the enterprise became questionable. Then members started to disperse and some of the leaders even drifted back to Ruskin.

The co-operative emitted its last gasp on Vancouver Island at Turgoose (Saanichton), where Henderson’s Directory of 1900-1901 lists the Industrial Union and the names of three of its members. Surprisingly Charles Whetham was there as well, perhaps in an effort to keep the dream of a Ruskin-inspired commune alive. Nothing more was heard about the Industrial Union.

In 1903 Charles Whetham sold the house in Ruskin that he had built and where he and his family had lived for 12 years. They moved to farmland in the United States not far from Niagara. In the words of Rev. Dunn, Whetham’s departure left the local settlers with “a feeling of deep disappointment and genuine regret.”

Maple Ridge News
March 27, 2012
by Fred Braches

“...and, by the way, if they are aching for an argument on any subject, they only need to wait until after work hours...for every “isu” known to man appears to have its advocate here.” *The Daily Columbian* May 12th, 1897

The School at Ruskin Mills

Originally the name Ruskin Mills was given to the saw and shingle mills of the CCS at Whonnock.

Ruskin became the official name of the community with the opening of a post office on January 1st, 1898. As from that year the directories started to include Ruskin in their listings.

"...this period was, perhaps the liveliest in the history of the [Ruskin] school. The socialists were fun and aggressive about their experiment, and this spirit carried over to the children in the school."

Robert H. Manzer, "History of Ruskin School" 1950 (?)

Ruskin Mills, March 25th [18]97

S.D. Pope, Superintendent of Education, Victoria. Dear Sir: We have appointed Miss Laura E. Moss to teach our school for the balance of the present year. J. T. Wilband

Warnock, April 1st 1897

S.D. Pope Esq. L.L.D. Superintendent of Education, Victoria

Dear Sir: In compliance with the request of the trustees of Stave River school, by whom I have been engaged as teacher for the remaining of the term. I opened school this morning with an enrolment of ten. Would you kindly send a register, mark book & together with a copy of the annual report and the rules and regulations if convenient. It is probable the average of the Stave River school will be over twenty, when all children have started to attend. I am, yours truly, Laura Moss

Ruskin Mills, Whonnock BC, April 2nd 1897

S.D. Pope Esq. Superintendent of Education, Victoria BC

Dear Sir: I beg to inform you that the Stave River school was opened April 1st. Would you kindly send us the necessary maps, blackboards etc. Yours truly, J. T. Wilband

THE CO-OPERATIVE built their school, and the provincial government paid the teacher. In one classroom Miss Moss had to take care of the education of 30 children ranging in age from 5 to 14 years.

Most of the pupils were children of CCS, members and when the co-operative disbanded the exodus caused a dramatic drop in the number of registered pupils to an average of around 16 in the following years. A few of the CCS children were still present in 1899, notably the six Wilband children, but they also left, and in 1900 new names appear on the list, including the two Whetham daughters, Katherine ("Katie") and Hilda. They attended school in a new building, away from the mill, at the location where the Ruskin school would stay until it was closed down in 1999.

It is said the racket of the mill machinery, disturbing for teacher and class, was the reason for the relocation of the school. That seems not to have been a problem during the time the CCS operated the mill, but with the change in ownership came probably increased production and new, noisier, machinery. Besides, also the school building changed hands and the new owners would have had no use for a school in the middle of its operation. Moving the school closer to where now the majority of the children live also made sense.

Thanks to the generosity of the Whethams a new location for the school was offered and accepted. In September 1899 Fannie Whetham donated 1 acre of land in the north-east corner of D.L. 439 to the Crown to build a new school.

As long as the CHC and particularly John T. Wilband had been in charge, there had been no need for Charles to be involved with the school's affairs, but in 1901 and 1902, after Wilband left, Charles Whetham became school trustee of the Ruskin school.

Registration of the transfer of land by Fanny [sic] Whetham to Her Majesty the Queen, 25 September 1899.

*
 25 September 1899
 2 a.c.
 26 September 1899
 11 a.c.
 14 July 1897
 Fanny Whetham to Her Majesty the Queen
 Grant and Surrender
 in fee.
 Transfers see A.V. Book
 vol. 18. fol. 337. No. 15,345
 1899
 No. map C.G. to copy
 Top. map edge filed with
 map C.G.
 Conceded 5.3.71. J.H.H.C.
 W

Stave River School	Douglas, Wallace	Dixon, Edwina
<i>From transcripts,</i>	Martin, Kenric	Donnelly, Harry
<i>Original lists not</i>	Martin, Margaret	Kenny, Alvin
<i>available.</i>	Ostrom, Darwin	Kipp, Gladys
	Owens, Richard	Manzer, Robert
	Robinson, Frank	Matheson, Alex
1897	Selby-Hele, Henry	Owens, Richard
Ball, David	Selby-Hele,	Parker, Stanley
Donnelly, Harry	Rispah	Whetham, Hilda
Donnelly, Mamie	Watson, Allan	Whetham, Katie
Douglas, Edgar	Watson, Arthur	
Douglas, Thomas	Watson, John	1901
Douglas, Wallace	Watson, Lewis	Ball, David
Douglas, Mable	Watson, Mary	Cairns, Addie
Downie, Hannah	West, George	Cairns, Harold
Downie, Lancelot	West, Lena	Cairns, Harry
Downie, William	Wilband, Bellamy	Cappello, Nick
Fancher, Gladys	Wilband, Burns	Donnelly, Harry
Farrington, Stanley	Wilband, Hesson	Farrington, Richard
Martin, Kenric	Wilband, Jennie	Farrington, Stanley
Martin, Margaret	Wilband, Seward	Kennie, Alwyn
Meorn, Arthur		Manzer, Howard
Ostrom, Darwin	1899	Whetham, Catherine
Smith, Lillian	Ball, David	
Watson, Allan	Bishop, Grace	
Watson, Arthur	Dixon, Edwina	
Watson, John	Donnelly, Harry	
Watson, Mary	Donnelly, Mamie	
Watson, Lewis	Martin, Kenric	
West, George	Martin, Maggie	
West, Lena	Owens, Richard	
Wilband, Bellamy	Selby-Hele, Henry	
Wilband, Burns	Selby-Hele,	
Wilband, Hesson	Rizpah	
Wilband, Jennie	Wilband, Bellamy	
Wilband, Laura	Wilband, Burns	
Wilband, Seward	Wilband, Hesson	
	Wilband, Jennie	
1898	Wilband, Laura	
Ball, David	Wilband, Seward	
Boissevain, Edward		
Boissevain, Harry	1900	
Boissevain, Merritt	Ball, David	
Donnelly, Harry	Cairns, Adele	
Donnelly, Mamie	Cairns, Ernest	
Douglas, Edgar	Cairns, Harold	
Douglas, Laura	Cairns, Harry	
Douglas, Mabel	Cairns, Harry	
Douglas, Thomas	Cappella, Nickie	

Henderson's BC Gazetteer and Directory, 1898

RUSKIN.

A post settlement on main line of C.P.R. at Stave River bridge, three miles east of Whonnock, 8 miles west of Mission.

Postmaster, J. A. Tingley.

Anderson, John, logger.
 Bishop, James William, farm mgr. for Ruskin Mills Co.
 Canadian Co-operative Society, Ltd.
 Caver, John, blacksmith.
 Davenport, Wm. Henry, logger.
 Deacon, John, mill-hand.
 Douglas, Robert, carpenter.
 Downie, Wm., logger.
 Fraser, Alex. McDonald, logger.
 Haycock, John Henry, watchman.
 Hele, Selby Henry George, logger.
 Hawthorne, Robert William, carpenter.
 Jackson, Henry John, mill-hand.
 Maxwell, Robert Erskine, mill-hand.
 Ostrom, William Darwin, saw-filer.
 Pevice, George, fireman.
 Pyne, Wellington, shingle sawyer.
 Parslow, George Henry, engineer.
 Robertson, Alexander Donald, mill-wright.
 Robinson, Thomas, bookkeeper Ruskin Mills Co.
 Ruskin Hotel.
 Ruskin Mills Co., saw mill, and general store.
 Thompson, Walter, farmer.
 Thurston, George, mill-hand.
 Thurston, James, mill-hand.
 Tingley, Hallie Bruce, carpenter.
 Tingley, James Anderson, postmaster.
 Topham, Aaron, mill-hand.
 West, Byron Holmes, shoemaker.
 Wilband, George Salathael, teamster.
 Wilband, John Thaddeus, mgr. R. Mills Co.

Visitation of the Stave River (Ruskin) school by Inspector Cowperthail in February 1898 shows 29 pupils enrolled of whom 13 were present on the date of the visit. Miss Tingley was the teacher.

General tone of the school was assessed by the inspector as "fair." Grammar and Canadian history were "subjects of special defects."

The inspector gave the school a "C" and added a note: "Rather a hard task for this young girl." Low attendance was not unusual for rural schools.

Extracts from Maple Ridge Council Meetings

Roads in Ruskin, where they existed, were mere tracks in need of constant repairs. To move between Ruskin and Whonnock the settlers relied on the river until around 1893 when settlers started what they called a “highway” along the “Correction Line” (a surveyors term) [96th Avenue] between the two communities. It failed to meet the requirements of a waggon road until the time Whetham left Ruskin. Aside from this east-west connector the settlers to the east, not having property alongside the rivers demanded roads going west to reach the water by crossing other properties. Although some of the by-laws published in the BC governments weekly survive, the reference points are unclear and the original sketch maps are missing.

“... to see Mr. Whetham re road...” This suggests that Charles Whetham was on his property in Ruskin in 1892.

4 JUNE 1892 — That Road Committee of Ward 1 see Mr. Whetham re road running through his land.

2 JULY 1892 — From Mr. C. Whetham making two propositions to the Council re the road crossing his property at Whonnock.

That the Clerk notify Mr. Whetham that the Council does not see proper to accept either of his propositions and that they have to ask him to remove his fence from the present travelled road, or otherwise open the gazetted road, or they have to open the gazetted road at his expense.

2 SEPTEMBER 1892 — That the gazetted [road over] Mr. Whetham’s land at Whonnock be changed to the old travelled road and new gazette made.

1 October 1892 — Also that the deviation in the Calder road leading through the Whetham property is 2 chains and 25 links east of direct line and recommending bylaw for gazetting the same be prepared to accommodate therewith.

4 MARCH 1893 — From Chas. Whetham asking if road notice had yet been inserted in BC Gazette of appropriation of road allowance through Lot 439 near Whonnock and asking for numbers on Gazette; also for tax bill for 1892 on lot 439 and for blank voucher for refund of taxes overpaid on same lot in 1891.

1 APRIL 1893 — From Mr. Beattie asking for a grant on the gazetted road through Whetham’s property.

From Chas. Whetham stating that if the measurements of the road as gazetted through his property is taken from the centre of the road, it brings it only 1’ 5” east of his most easterly row of trees and asking the Council to have some corrections made.

6 MAY 1893 — Road Committee Ward 1 had examined Whetham’s road and recommended that the distance be exempted to 2 chains and 40 links, as that was the original intention in making the road and further recommended that the bylaw be amended or revised accordingly.

That the Whetham road be left to the full road Committee to report as early as convenient and that no action be taken on the committee report for Ward 1.

5 MARCH 1894 — From Chas. Whetham reporting that James Mulvey had taken the declaration of path master.

3 DECEMBER 1898 — That a vote of thanks be tendered to Mr. Whetham for the great interest he is taking in the matter of a trunk road through the Municipalities.

15 APRIL 1899 — Court of Revision. That Mr. J. Williamson and Mr. Chas. Whetham be notified to show cause why their names should not be struck of Assessment Roll (cause if owners or not of land assessed in their name) at the adjourned Court of Revision.

3 JUNE 1899 — From Chas. Whetham stating that Mrs. Fannie Whetham was the registered owner of Lot 489 Tp 14 and himself the owner of the improvements, and requesting to be assessed for the same.

That declaration taken before Charles Whetham as Justice of the Peace. A path master was responsible for the maintenance or building of public roads, culverts, and bridges on behalf of the municipality in an assigned area.

That the application of C. Whetham to be assessed for improvements and Mrs. Whetham for the land cannot be allowed as far as assessing the improvements to Mr. Whetham.

6 JANUARY 1900 — That C. Whetham be appointed Deputy Returning Officer for Wharnock sub-division in place of R. Fletcher. [Fletcher ran for and became Councillor]

From Chas. Whetham stating that he found that his name was not on the Voters List for Ward 1 and shall be glad to give reasons why my name should be there.

That in justice to Mr. Chas. Whetham this Court of Revision of the Voters List regret that he has not been placed on the assessment role for the improvements and therefore cannot be placed on the Voters List at present and that a copy of the motion be sent to Mr. Whetham.

15 JANUARY 1900 — The following accounts were received from Chas. Whetham for boat charges on ballot boxes 25¢; from Wharnock and return 70¢; allowance for Dept. Return Officer \$5.00. Total \$5.95. (Voucher issued).

3 MARCH 1900 — From Moses Ball objecting to any changes being made in the road leading from the river through Mr. Whetham's gulch and objecting to the gazetting of a new road across Wharnock Creek, and also to any change of road from the Ruskin School. Also from Charles Peterson and Michael O'Kosh also objecting to the changing of three roads until the people interested are given a chance to express their opinion.

Ward No. 1: ...having been requested by some of the ratepayers we examined the road leading to the Ruskin Mill and proposed changes through Mr. Twigg's property; the road leading to Mr. Whetham's property [and] also the proposed changes over Wharnock Creek and beg to report favourably on the changes asked for.

That the Clerk request Mr. Devlin [Indian Agent] to call on Mr. Whetham the first time he is in Warnock who will show him over the proposed change in the road across Warnock Creek through the Indian Reserve.

6 JULY 1900 — From Chas. Whetham re a crossing to river under trestle No. 34(6?) and stating that the Railway Cy. were willing to allow same on condition that the municipality pay part of the cost viz. \$125.00 either in lumpsum or in 10 payments of \$13.50 each and offering to give in his part of the road now built through his property.

That the request of Mr. Whetham re road through his property and under CPR right-of-way be granted provided Mr. Whetham furnish the full right-of-way to the river free from all cost to the Municipality. Owing to the present lack of funds this is the best Council can do at present. That the present Council is both willing and desirous to refund to Mr. Whetham the cost of opening the CPR trestle bridge if at any future date it lies in its power to do so.

5 APRIL 1902 — That the following be pathmasters for Ward No. 1: Alex Ritchie and Charles Whetham. The Whonnock Creek to be the dividing line.

12 APRIL 1902 — That the name of Chas. Whetham be struck off the assessment roll as owner of improvements on Lot 439 Tp. 14.

1 NOVEMBER 1902 — From Chas. Whetham asking for a full description of new road through their property and stating that they would be pleased to give a formal consent.

6 DECEMBER 1902 — From Fannie Whetham and Chas. Whetham giving their consent to the changing of roadway through their property and enclosing telegrams from the Supt. of CP Ry Co re same road crossing their right of way.

That the Clerk communicate with the CPR Co. as to crossing at Whonnock through the Whetham property and under the track and ask if their consent is for a public crossing as Council desires to gazette a road leading to said crossing and cancelling the crossing nearby on the track, if consent is given.

24 DECEMBER 1902 — From Mr. & Mrs. Whetham giving free right-of-way for road (By-law 156)

6 AUGUST 1904 — From George Gilchrist re road through the old Whetham property.

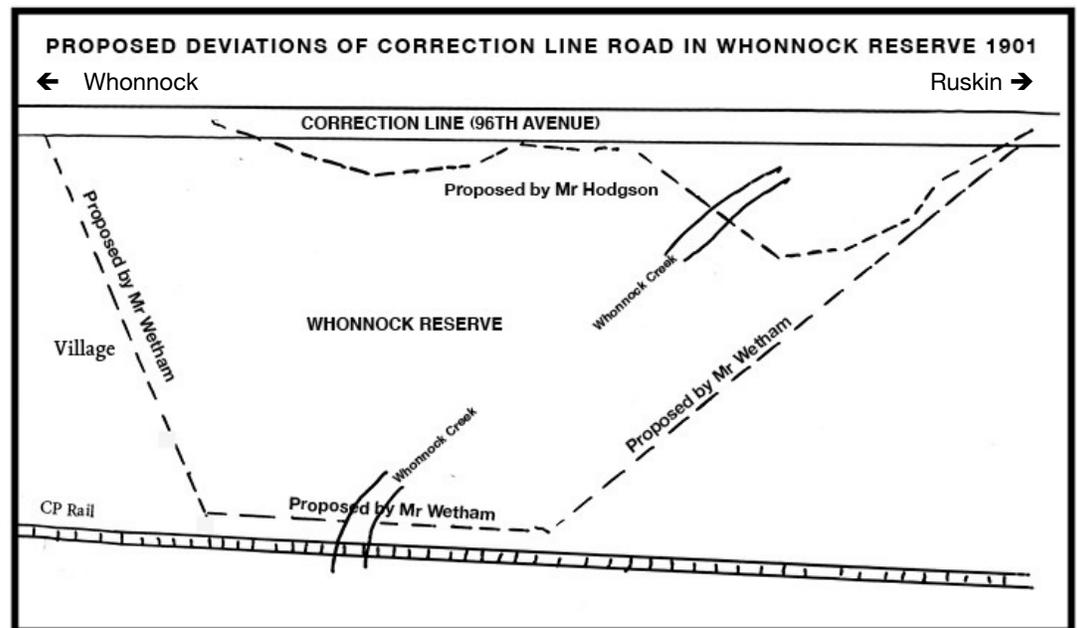
That the Clerk notify Mr. Gilchrist that the road mentioned in his letter is a Gazetted road and on being Gazetted Mr. and Mrs. Whetham agreed in meeting to build fences. And request Messrs. Gilchrist to have free access to such road as the old road is cancelled.

Since Fannie was the landowner, Charles could not vote in municipal elections, and women had no vote.

See "Building a Bridge over Whonnock Creek" on next page.

Building a Bridge over Whonnock Creek

Maple Ridge News
25 May 1911
by Fred Braches



Two proposed deviations of 96th Avenue in the Whonnock Reserve (1901). The residents of the reserve vehemently rejected Mr. Whetham's proposal but accepted Mr. Hodgson adjustments of the road.

Imagine Maple Ridge around 1900 without Lougheed Highway and without motorcars. People were living in isolated communities, walking for miles, carrying loads, some riding on horseback, others occasionally driving a carts or wagon, all using the unpaved roads, muddy in winter, dusty in summer. For most the Fraser River was still the highway, and the train, available for the last 15 years, was growing in popularity to reach the new city of Vancouver. Stretches of River Road connected only some of the communities on the Fraser River. Dewdney Trunk Road, when it came in 1906, connected the hinterland communities.

“Whonnock and Ruskin, although not more than three miles apart, are as effectively isolated as if on separate islands,” writes Mr. Beckett, Clerk Municipal Council to Mr. Devlin, Indian Agent. The letter written by Mr. Beckett concerned a plan to move the Correction Line road (96th Avenue) down from the upper part of the Whonnock Indian Reserve. The present road crossed Whonnock Creek at an “extensive ravine” with steep grades on both sides of the creek that made it “a steep pull for a team of horses,” and “quite impracticable.” A proper bridge could be built at that spot, but the cost, estimated at \$2,000, was considered prohibitive. By building an alternative road with a crossing of the creek at a better spot, money could be saved. The Municipality therefore endorsed a proposal by Charles Wetham of Ruskin to construct a new road through the Indian Reserve. The deviation would start from 96th Avenue in the north-west corner of the Reserve going down to the railroad, where the road would follow the tracks for a short distance and cross Whonnock Creek over a simple trestle bridge. Then the proposed road would climb up again to meet to the 96th Avenue in the northeast corner of the Reserve.

It was assumed by the planners that such a road would be as beneficial to the people on the Reserve as it would be to the white people. In reality Chief Fidelle's people would have less use

for it than suggested, and the new road would encroach on the lives of the residents of the Reserve as it would run straight through the centre of the village and pass their church and a few of their houses by within a few feet. Then there would be the required fencing. The new road would also take away from what little land Chief Fidelle's people had left that could be used for growing crops.

Taking for granted the consent of Chief Fidelle and his people and without making a formal request to the Indian Agent, arrangements were made to survey the road. Civil Engineer Hill and an assistant arrived by train at Whonnock from New Westminster. Accompanied by Messrs. Whetham and Spilsbury, they entered the Reserve and started work. Everything went all right until they reached the houses and the church and started driving stakes in the ground. As an article in the *Columbian* put it: "This the Indians objected to. They [the surveyors] were ordered to desist, and finally the Indian women pulled up the stakes and assumed such a threatening attitude, that the surveyor and those who accompanied him, were forced to leave the reserve." After hearing Chief Fidelle's people, the Indian Agent recommended and Indian Affairs agreed that this plan be dropped, its only object being some money savings for Maple Ridge at the detriment of the residents of the Reserve.

A few years later, the people of Ruskin and Whonnock did get the desired improvement of the road connecting the two villages although not the new road promoted by Council in 1901 and rejected by Chief Fidelle's people. From the beginning Councilor T.J. Hodgson had voiced his objection to Mr. Wetham's plan. He had proposed only a slight deviation mainly away from the steep ravine, thus reducing the grades and allowing the construction of a smaller bridge. Council had first rejected Hodgson's plan as impractical, but in the end Hodgson's deviation found approval by all parties concerned.

In the 1930s, after the construction of the Lougheed Highway, 96th Avenue (Correction Line Road) lost its importance as a through road between Ruskin and Whonnock, and the part of the road on the Reserve was closed off for public use. It is now overgrown, and the bridge is long gone.

Daily Columbian 29 March 1901

WHONNOCK INDIANS IN ARMS
Local Civil Engineer, Ratepayers to
Survey Road Through the Reserve and
Meet Opposition.
Indian Women Pull up Stakes and
Assume Such Threatening Attitude That
Men Leave
Indians Are Determined the Road Shall
Not be Built Through the Reserve—
Agent Notified

Wharnock March 28 [1901]

Yesterday Mr. Hill, C.E. and his assistant from New Westminster arrived here to survey a new road through the Indian Reserve. Upon their arrival they were met by Coun. Hodgson, School Trustee Gilchrist and Messrs. Whetham and Spilsbury, who accompanied them to the survey. They at once commenced operation and everything went all right, until they reached the "Indian Rancheree" when they started to drive stakes in the ground without having first obtained the Indians' consent. This the Indians objected to. They were ordered to desist, and finally the Indian women pulled up the stakes, and assumed such a threatening attitude that the surveyor and those who accompanied him were forced to leave the reserve. The Indians are determined that no road shall be put through the reserve.

Indian Agent Devlin was telegraphed for but did not arrive by this Eastern train, so Mr. Hill and his assistant returned by the Whatcom train to New Westminster.

"I regret very much that some of the white people appear to be stirring up the Indians against said road, however if they object we will drop the change."

Letter from Reeve Ferguson to Frank Devlin, Indian Agent, May 8th 1901

British Columbia Elections 1898 and 1900

CHARLES WHETHAM could not get his name placed on the municipal voters list because he did not own land but no one disputed his credentials to vote provincially or federally.

He ran for two years consecutively against the very popular Richard McBride for the position of a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) and, although McBride won, Whetham took an impressive second position in his local riding.

Note the solid support he received from the citizens of Whonnock in both elections.

1898

WESTMINSTER-DEWDNEY.		
	McBride.	Whetham.
Port Moody	27	8
Coquitlam	30	15
Port Hammond	26	14
Port Haney	45	25
Wharneck	5	58
Mission City	46	42
Westminster Junction	30	15
Douglas	6	1
Total	215	178

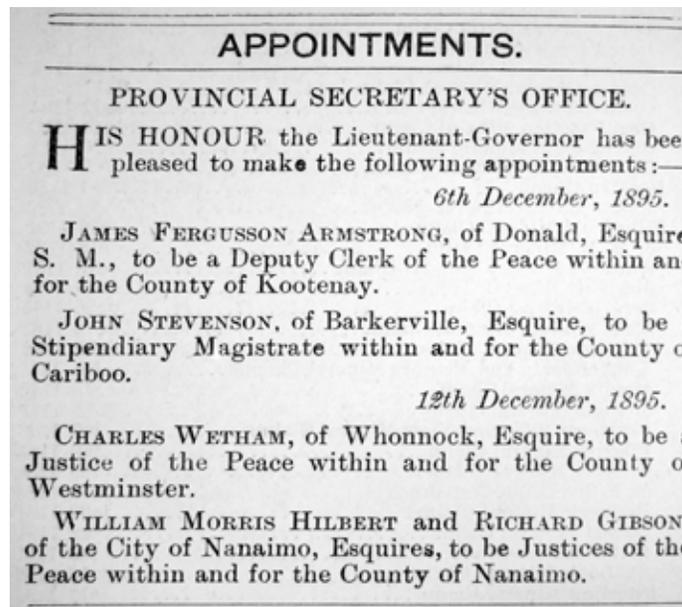
Victoria Daily Colonist July 12, 1898

1900

DEWDNEY.		
	McBride.	Whetham.
Port Moody	46	32
Agassiz	20	21
Port Hammond	37	41
Port Haney	38	24
Mission City	72	37
Wharneck	14	42
Harrison	22	9
	249	206

Victoria Daily Colonist June 10, 1900

Justice of the Peace



The British Columbia Gazette December 17th, 1895

IN DECEMBER 1895 Charles Whetham was appointed Justice of the Peace.

His predecessor in that position was William Curtis Sampson, whose name is shown as the magistrate on the “Indenture” on page 6.

Sampson moved away to the interior and sold his property, District Lot 441 between the Whonnock Indian Reserve and the Whetham property to the Gilchrists.

Patents

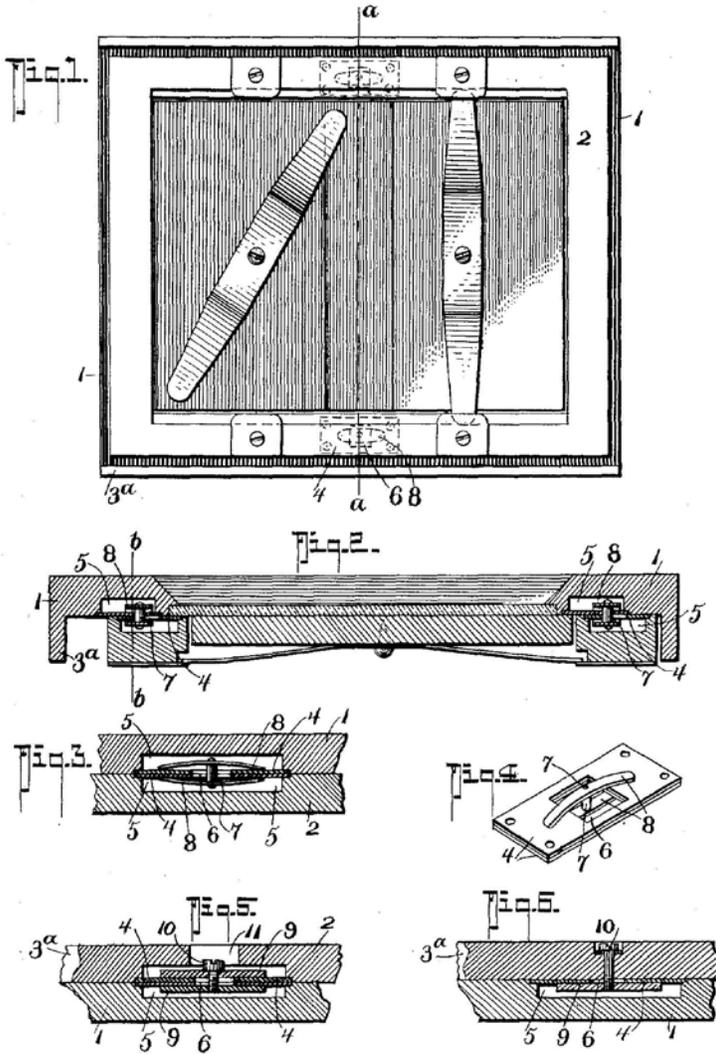
No. 688,274.

Patented Dec. 3, 1901.

C. WETHAM.
PHOTOGRAPHIC PRINTING FRAME.

(Application filed Mar. 13, 1901.)

(No Model.)

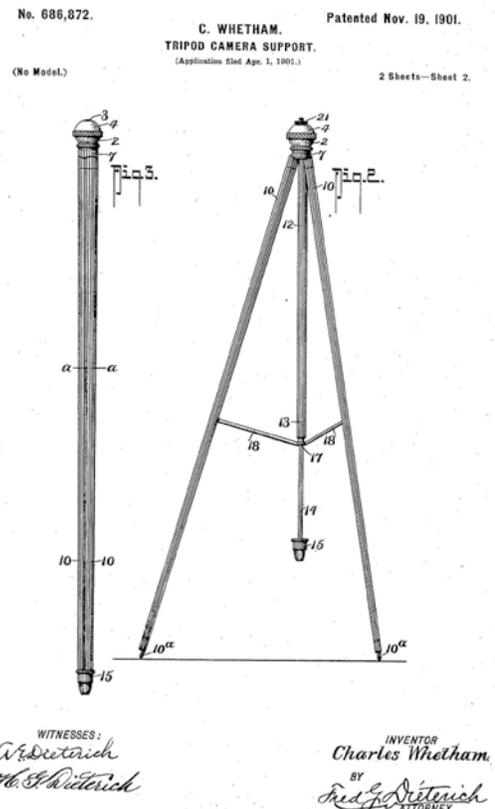
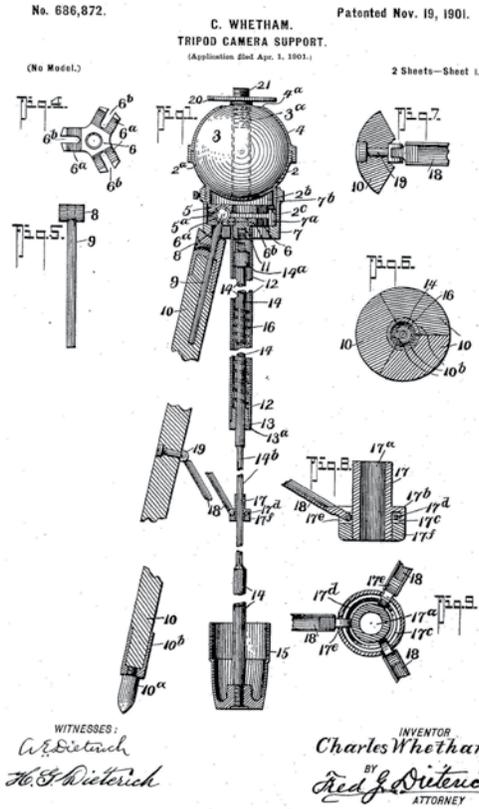


WITNESSES:
A. D. Dietrich
H. G. Dietrich

INVENTOR
Charles Whetham
 BY
Fred L. Dietrich
 ATTORNEY

THE MORRIS PETERSON CO., PHOTO-LITHO., WASHINGTON, D. C.

CHARLES WETHAM had several patents to his name. Two of those, for a “Photographic Printing Frame” and “Tripod Camera-Support” are from 1901 when he was “...residing at Ruskin.”



UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

CHARLES WETHAM, OF RUSKIN, CANADA.

TRIPOD CAMERA-SUPPORT.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 686,872, dated November 19, 1901.

Application filed April 1, 1901. Serial No. 53,982. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, CHARLES WETHAM, a citizen of the Dominion of Canada, residing at Ruskin, in the Province of British Columbia, Canada, have invented a new and useful Tripod Camera-Support, of which the following is a specification.

My invention relates to improvements in camera-tripods; and its object is to so im-

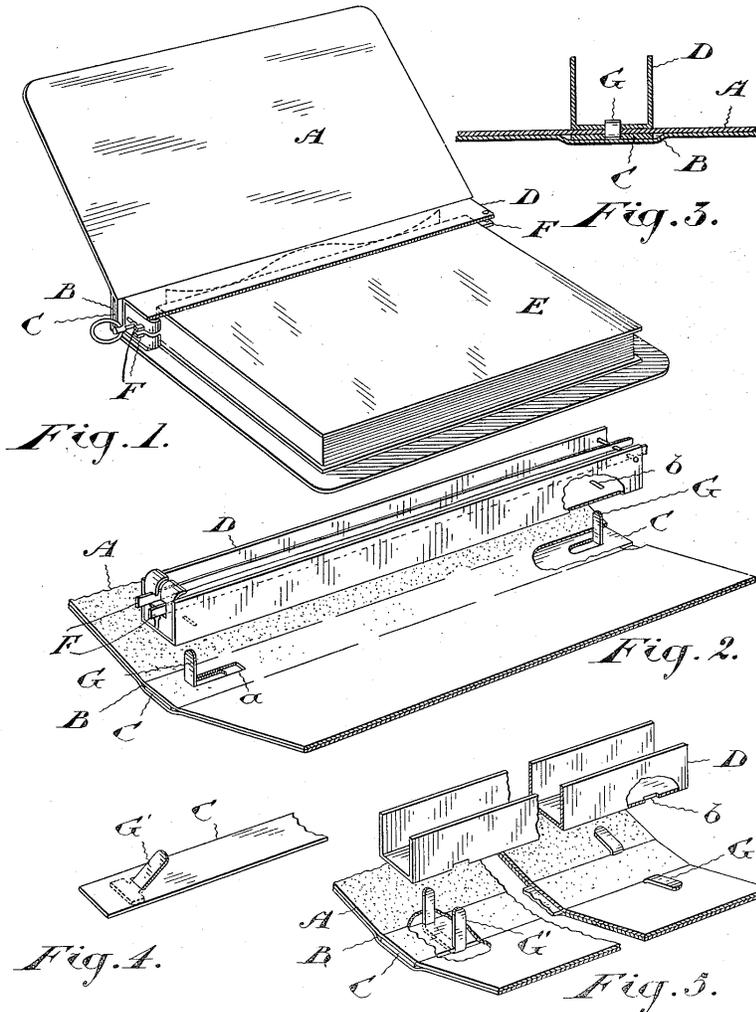
sphere. By reason of this ring 4 being threaded to the rim of head 2 it may be clamped upon the sphere to prevent it turning too easily, and the opening 4^a in the ring 4 provides access to the threaded aperture 3^a in the sphere for the purpose of connecting a camera thereto.

In the lower end of the head 2 is a recess 2^b, the rim of which is provided with an an-

No. 840,979.

PATENTED JAN. 8, 1907.

C. WHETHAM.
TEMPORARY BINDER.
APPLICATION FILED NOV. 8, 1904.



WITNESSES:
P. Jones
A. M. M. Row

INVENTOR.
Chas. Whetham
BY *Robert M. Mayhew*
ATTORNEYS

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

CHARLES WHETHAM, OF SHEFFIELD, ONTARIO, CANADA.

TEMPORARY BINDER.

No. 840,979.

Specification of Letters Patent.

Patented Jan. 8, 1907.

Application filed November 8, 1904. Serial No. 231,896.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, CHARLES WHETHAM, of Sheffield, in the county of Wentworth, Province of Ontario, Canada, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Temporary Binders, of which the following is a specification.

The object of my invention is to devise simple and cheap means for changing the cases of temporary binders; and it consists in the construction described in the specification, illustrated in the drawings, and more

I show a spring pressing on the back of the book to hold it in proper engagement with the rods F.

Further details of construction are set out in my application, Serial No. 228,431, filed October 14, 1904.

Detachable connections are provided whereby the holder may be secured to the metal strip C. In Figs. 2 and 3 I show metal tongues G, formed integral with the strip C. The case over these tongues is provided with long slots a, through which the

CHARLES WHETHAM filed an application for this design for a temporary binder on 8 November 1904 when the Whethams lived in Sheffield, Wentworth County, Ontario, after they left Ruskin.

They stayed in Sheffield until 1908, when they moved to Westfield in Chautauqua County, NY, on the shore of Lake Erie.

Ruskin's Farewell to Charles and Fannie Whetham

The typewritten original of this extraordinary document (here in transcript), clearly cherished by Charles Whetham, came to us courtesy of his great-granddaughter Janet Alexander.

Whonnock B.C., 13th February 1903

Dear Mr Whetham,

When it became known that you had sold your property here and were about to return to the East, a feeling of deep disappointment and genuine regret pervaded the District.

During a residence of twelve years in Whonnock, you have continued to grow in the esteem and confidence of the people.

By uniform civility and evenness of temper, by many unselfish and considerate deeds, unostentatiously performed, you have won, in uncommon measure, the loyal attachment of a wide circle of friends.

Enterprising and public-spirited to a degree, you have been ever ready to give the weight of your influence and your enlightened support to every movement having for its object the material, intellectual, and moral advancement of the Community.

To Whonnock you have been a benefactor indeed. Whatever work you put your hand to—whether planting an orchard, or writing out deeds and other documents to accommodate your neighbours—you have executed in a masterly way, leaving no room for corrections or amendment.

If, leaving at the present time, you do not reap the full profits of your investments and industry; you will always have satisfaction in remembering that you left behind much work well done that you had a pure and unspeakable pleasure in the doing of it; and that in reclaiming and improving your property, you gave employment to, and circulated money among many struggling settlers, who invariably found you fair and reasonable in your demands, and prompt and cheerful in your payments.

Whether you have gained or lost, we have gained much in every way by your sojourn in Whonnock; and, if we have not valued you as we ought while you were yet with us, we feel sure that in dark perplexing days we shall miss your friendship, as well as the benefit of your wisdom and intelligence.

Perhaps there is nothing which we, men and women, each with some burden to bear or some trial to endure, shall miss so much as your calm, kind, soothing words and manner.

In parting with you in perfect health, and in the full vigor of your mental facilities, we sincerely wish that your next ventures may turn out well; that they may bring profit and pleasure to yourself, and be the means of diffusing benefits among others.

And if, in the good Providence of God—having attained the ends for the accomplishment of which you now leave us—you should return to Whonnock: those amongst us, who may be here, will extend to you, as a tried and valued friend, a most cordial welcome.

MRS WETHAM—No less sorry we are to see you leaving us.

In every good work undertaken by your husband for the welfare of the District, you have nobly aided and encouraged him.

As Organist at our Sunday meetings in the School-House your efficient services will be missed.

In our social gatherings also we shall miss your genial presence and hearty co-operation.

Wise and prudent, a lover of peace and hater of discord: you ever did what you could to allay bitterness, to discourage backbiting and slander, and to promote unity and goodwill.

But much as we shall miss you, we hope that the change from the Fraser Valley to the scenes of your childhood, from your beautiful home in Whonnock to the homes of your relatives in the far East may prove to be, as you anticipate, a source of high enjoyment, and conducive to your health and happiness, and that of your family.

(SIGNED.) . . .

Alex. Dunn, Minister.
 Alex. Gilchrist - Farmer
 L.C. York Postmaster
 E.M. Heaps, Mgr. Ruskin Mill
 A.W. Spilsbury, Farmer
 H.J. Percy, Farmer
 A. Knudtson Farmer
 M. Kushoc Farmer
 A. Andersen Fisherman
 T.H. Moore Shopkeeper, Ruskin
 Victor Fontaine
 Tom Warner
 S. Farrington
 Arthur Coldrick, Farmer
 Edward Watson Butcher
 C.A. Pelletier Saw filer
 Alice Dijon Teacher, Ruskin
 H. Grace Marshall, Teacher, Whonnock
 Wm. Eakin Farmer

Signatures attached to Reverend Dunn's letter.

Alex. Dunn, Minister
 Alex. Gilchrist, Farmer
 L.C. York, Postmaster
 E.M. Heaps, Manager Ruskin Mill
 A. W. Spilsbury, Farmer
 H. J. Percy, Farmer
 A. Knudtson, Farmer
 M. Kusha, Farmer
 A. Andersen, Fisherman
 T. H. Moore, shopkeeper, Ruskin
 Victor Fontaine
 Tom Warner
 S. Farrington
 Arthur Coldrick, Farmer
 Edward Watson, Butcher
 C.A. Pelletier, Saw filer
 Alice Dijon, Teacher, Ruskin
 H. Grace Marshall, Teacher, Whonnock
 Wm. Eakin, Farmer

Farewell Address
 to
 Mr. & Mrs. Whetham
 by
 Rev. Alex. Dunn

WHEN THE REVEREND DUNN referred to Charles Whetham's "next venture," he probably did not know what that would be.

Charles may have developed doubts about his life in Ruskin. The results of his farming in Ruskin may have been disappointing. In addition the commune at the Stave River folded in 1898, and that brought an end to the lively debates and thoughtful discussions that often took place at Whetham's home.

A position as MLA would have provided him with a new stimulus but it did not materialize in the elections of 1898 and 1900.

In 1899 he had stood at the cradle of a new co-operative, the Industrial Union that started in the Boundary Bay area and he had witnessed it fading away on Vancouver Island around 1901. Perhaps he toyed with the idea of

farming in Saanichton, but in the end he chose to return to Ontario, not to take up a teaching position, but to return to his rural roots in the farming community where he grew up and where his relatives lived.

After five years at Sheffield, Ontario, the Whethams moved to Westfield, NY, on the shore of Lake Erie where agricultural conditions allowed Charles to grow grapes. He had an orchard there and a garden with flowers and vegetables.

In Westfield, he also found the kind of social and intellectual life that he would have missed in Ruskin after the departure of the members of the co-op.

The Whethams: Tried and Valued Friends

Today the name of Charles Whetham is not heard very often, but around 1900 he was a respected figure and Justice of the Peace in Whonnock and in the community that at his suggestion was named “Ruskin.” As Robert Manzer put it, he was the “councillor and friend of all settlers wise enough to seek his advice.” We know that he called his home “Walden” after Thoreau’s famous cabin in the woods of Massachusetts—perhaps in jest, because it was a mansion by local standards. We also know that in 1899 the Whethams donated part of their land to build a school in Ruskin when the old one near the Stave River could no longer be used. Charles Whetham was an invaluable member of the Ruskin school board during the construction and the first years of the new school bringing with him influence and experience in education and in serving as secretary of the Whonnock school board a few years.

What was not known before is that Charles Whetham ran for the position as MLA in the 1898 and 1900 provincial elections. He did not win, but the results, published in the newspapers of the day, show that an astonishing percentage of residents of the Whonnock area supported him: 92% and 75% respectively. (The drop in percentage between the two years may be attributed to the 1899 departure of the members of the commune in Ruskin, where he was also held in high esteem.)

How much the community respected Charles Whetham is also shown in a farewell letter to him written in February 1903 by the Reverend Alexander Dunn. The news of Whetham’s departure from Ruskin, writes Dunn, pervaded the community with “a feeling of deep disappointment and genuine regret.” Over time Whetham had grown in the esteem and confidence of the people and through his “uniform civility, evenness of temper, and unselfish and considerate deeds” had acquired a large circle of loyal friends.

Dunn continues to say that Whetham, enterprising and public-spirited, was always ready to give his support to and use his influence for any movement to advance the wellbeing of the community. “Whatever work you put your hand to,” says Dunn’s letter, “whether planting an orchard, or writing out deeds and other documents, you have executed in a masterly way, leaving no room for corrections or amendments.”

The letter goes on to tell that in reclaiming and improving his property Whetham “gave employment to, and circulated money among many struggling settlers.” The settlers found him “fair and reasonable” in his demands and “prompt and cheerful” in his payments.

Dunn writes that Whetham’s “calm, kind, and soothing words” would be missed, and he assures him that should he ever return he would be given a “most cordial welcome” as a “tried and valued friend.”

The Reverend Dunn then turns to Mrs. Whetham who, he writes, always “nobly aided and encouraged” the good work of her husband. She would be missed as organist of the Sunday services and for her “genial presence and efficient services” at social gatherings. To that Dunn adds: “Wise and prudent, a lover of peace and hater of discord, you ever did what you could to allay bitterness, to discourage backbiting and slander, and to promote unity and goodwill.”

Few of our residents will ever have received the praises Charles and Fannie Whetham received from the people of Whonnock and Ruskin. The original letter, signed by the Reverend Dunn and other settlers, remained in the family’s possession until this summer, when it came back to Whonnock through the kindness of one of Charles and Fannie’s great-granddaughters, who lives in Portland, ME.

Maple Ridge News

22 August 2012

by Fred Braches

The article appeared under the title “He called his home Walden, gave area the name Ruskin.”

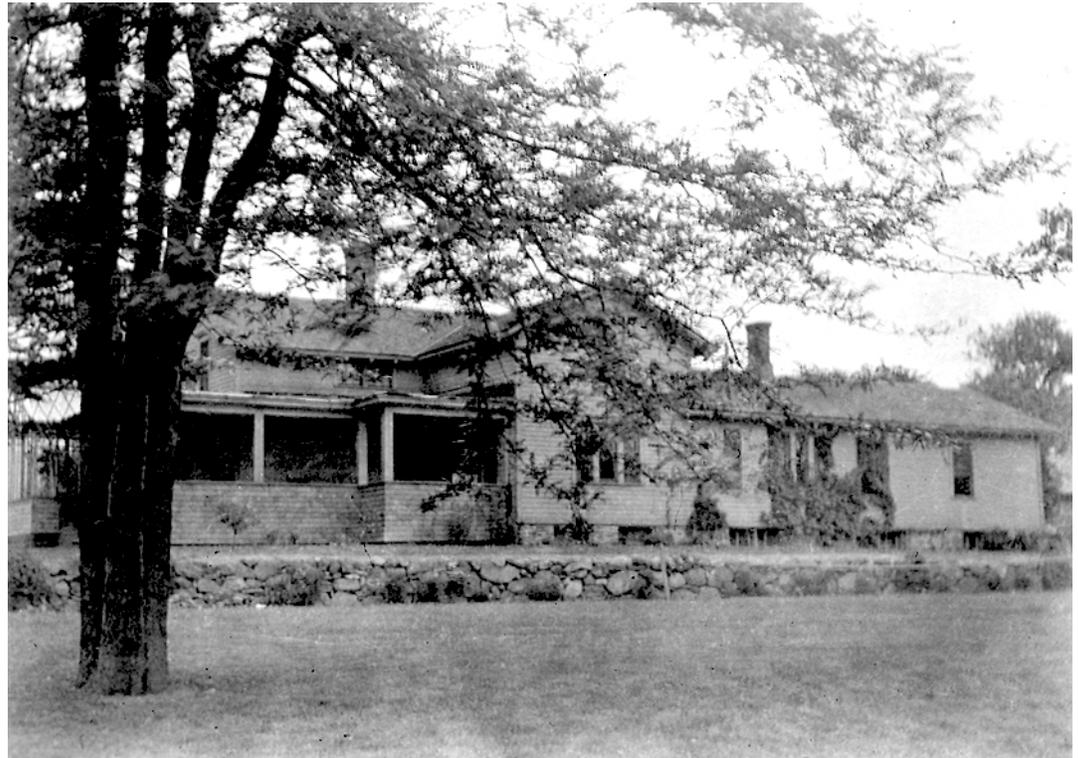
“The Farm” at Sherman Road, Westfield, Chautauqua, NY

THE REASON behind the move to Westfield may have simply been that it offered a better climate for grape and fruit tree growing than Sheffield, Ontario.

There were many grape growers and processors in the area. The largest processor was Welch’s historic grape juice factory built in Westfield in 1897.



“The Welch Grape Juice Company, Westfield, NY”
Advertisement 1921



Charles and Fannie bought the “The Farm” 1908.

E-mail from Janet Alexander, 14 March 2012.

The Whetham property in Westfield [at Sherman Road, Chautauqua, Westfield, NY] is not nearly as grand as Walden. I’ve never heard that Charles ever had a name for it. We always referred to it as “The Farm.”

It had a greenhouse, although not in my time. This view is from the lawn-tennis court and the greenhouse would have been on the opposite side. I keep wanting to scan to the left to see if the little pond is there. At the very end of the wall were perhaps three steps. The pond was in the lawn nearly across from them. It was very small—big enough for a few frogs and several water lilies.

There was a good-sized garden to the right. Marvelous asparagus and strawberries. Orchards too, although those had been sold off before I was around. Charles sold produce and flowers I gather from one of Fannie’s recipes written on the back of a scrap of stationery. There are vineyards all around and Charles also grew grapes.

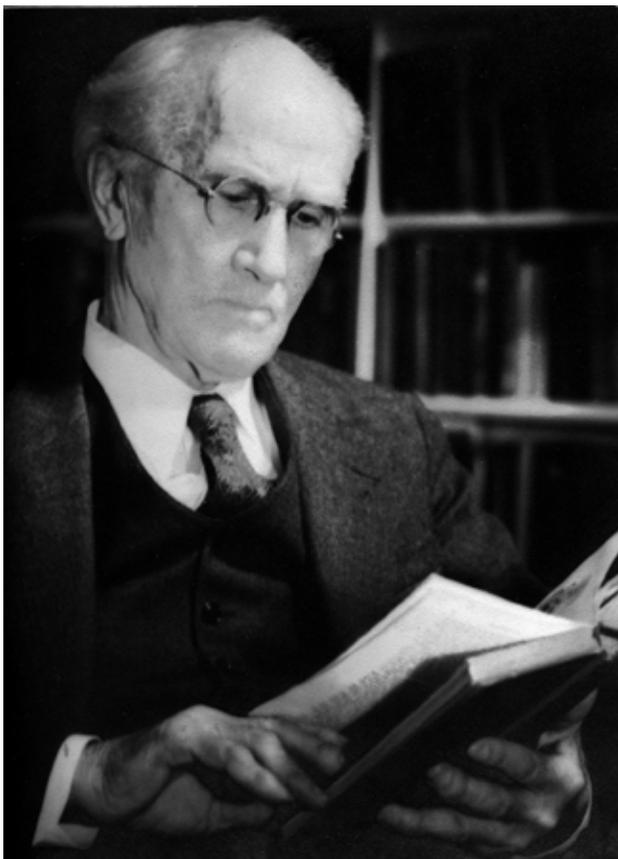
E-mail from Janet Alexander, 19 August 2012

Charles and Fannie added to their land holdings by buying acreage from a neighbor A. Elmer Allen in 1925.

Daughter Hilda and her husband Wayne Belden started living permanently at “The Farm” some time after 1943, when the ownership was transferred from Fannie to Wayne and Hilda Belden.



Fannie Whetham née Nearing ca. 1950.
b. 2 January 1860, Rutland, Vermont
d. 23 May 1951, Westfield, Chautauqua, NY



Charles Whetham ca. 1936.
b. 8 October 1857, Ontario.
d. 2 October 1938, Westfield, Chautauqua, NY



E-mail from Janet Alexander, 6 March 2012

Mummy [Hilda Whetham's daughter] says [Charles and Fannie's son] Jimmy started to stumble when he was playing and running around age 5. He had some kind of neuromuscular decease. By the time he was in his early teens he was totally bedridden. When they were in Westfield he must have been getting around at least a little bit because she remembers a wheelchair. He may have been totally paralysed by then and was lifted into the chair to be transferred from one place to another. It must have been terribly difficult for Fannie to provide total care for him for years. [He died in 1913.]

Charles had his leg broken late in life and was incapacitated for quite a while. He and my grandfather [Wayne Belden, Hilda Whetham's husband] were bringing a log from a tree cut down on the property to the barn. Charles was walking on the downhill side of the horse dragging the log that slipped down the slope and broke his leg and thigh. Mummy remembers her father [Wayne Belden] carrying Charles into the house with the leg dangling awkwardly and Charles being laid up in the downstairs bedroom for a long time.

Grampie [Wayne Belden] was extremely bright and graduated from high school very young—14 or 15 I think—and valedictorian. I think he had some college, however he said he had learned more from “the old gent” while pruning peach trees and trimming grapes than he ever did at school.

Charles died [1938] before I was born but my sister remembers his honing the knife before slicing the Christmas roast at the table at “The Farm” on Sherman Road in Westfield.

Charles Whetham married Fannie Nearing
24 June 1886, Brandon, Rutland, Vermont
Children:

Katherine Nearing, born 30 October 1889, Vancouver BC
Hilda Louise, born 30 October 1890, Vancouver BC
James, born 14 February 1894, York (Toronto), ON

Tribute to Charles Whetham

In the passing of Charles Whetham this community has sustained a loss of an outstanding, all-around citizen, who left his influence upon all with whom he came in contact, and whose presence will be sorely missed.

Mr. Whetham was privileged to enjoy a varied life. He was not a native of the United States, but was born in Ontario 81 years ago. He received his degree from the University of Toronto and then the honor of a Fellowship in his university, which he held for several years. Later a similar honor was given him by Johns Hopkins University where he pursued post-graduate work. He spent one summer in Germany and visited Heidelberg and other German universities.

Soon after his return to Canada he went to the Pacific coast and became head of a boys preparatory school in Vancouver called Whetham College, which position he held for several years. There he associated with himself as teachers scholarly friends from his university groups. His own special teaching interest was modern languages.

He came to Westfield thirty years ago, and purchased the home which he occupied until his death, and farming and flower growing became his later vocations.

Mr. Whetham was a student and scholar, with world-wide interests. Modern languages—history—literature—psychology—and above all the affairs of men at home and afar, these were his familiar topics and he knew them all. No worthwhile movement was started in Westfield but had his support. He was one of the founders of the Men's Club, a discussion group whose influence felt in the whole community. He joined the Presbyterian Church in Canada in early life but loyally supported the local congregation. He was a member of the Patrons of Husbandry and served as Master of the Westfield Grange for several years and of the county Pomona for a year. He was in demand as speaker—in many organizations.

But his real love was given to his fellowmen, and it was in association with them that he was at his best and happiest. Only those who really came to know the man, knew to the full his lovable qualities—his genial comradeship—his delicious humour which the twinkle in his eyes betrayed—his wide knowledge—his kind willingness to counsel and to give. The many who enjoyed his garden and his flowers which he so generously shared, the farmers who came for counsel and went away friends, the man in the store and on the street who enjoyed his conversation, all these knew his worth.

For the past five years Mr. Whetham's health gradually failed and he withdrew from active participation in affairs. The end came on October 2nd, his funeral was held on October 4th with the Rev. J. Manley Spencer of the Presbyterian Church officiating. Burial was in the Westfield cemetery. He would have been 81 years old on October 8th.

Mr. Whetham leaves his widow and two daughters, two grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. The elder daughter, Miss Katherine, is at present in England. The younger daughter, Hilda, is married to Wayne Belden. Mr. and Mrs. Belden have resided with her parents for several years.

Charles Whetham has come to the end of the trail. He could say with the poet.—

“So be my passing!

My task accomplished and the long day done,

My wages taken, and in my heart

Some late lark singing,

Let me be gathered to the quiet west,

The sundown splendid and serene,

Death.”

But his work and influence are not gone. They will live on in the hearts of the people in this community.

Westfield Republican,
October 12, 1938

Poem by William
Ernest Henley
“I.M.: Margaritae
Sorori”

Hilda Louise Whetham
 b. 30 October 1890,
 Vancouver BC.
 d. 23 February 1956,
 Westfield, Chautauqua NY.

Married Wayne Isaac
 Belden 5 September 1911,
 Niagara Falls, ON

Wayne Isaac Belden
 b. 20 August 1891, West
 Spring Creek, Warren, PA
 d. 4 February 1956,
 Westfield, Chautauqua NY



"Grammie" Hilda Belden. *ja*

E-mail Janet Alexander 19, August 2012

A local trader, Ace Hall, used to make regular treks west and bring back horses to train and sell. He bought Dulcie for his daughter, but the horse proved too spirited for her and, indeed, almost anyone else in town. Grammie, on the other hand, could ride anything, according to Mummy, and Charles must have bought the mare.

Only Ace and Grammie ever rode Dulcie and one of them always participated in the annual Memorial Day, 4th of July, or other parades that always started in the park (corner of S. Portage, now Rt 374, I think, and Main Streets, Rt. 20) and usually ended at the cemetery. Both were able to convince Dulcie to "dance" sideways down Main Street.



Katherine with the Belden children, ca. 1920. *ja*



Wayne and Hilda Belden. *ja*

Katherine Whetham

b. 30 October 1889, Vancouver BC

d. 24 January 1982, Vancouver BC

In 1972, historian and author Daphne Sleight made the following notes about an interview with Katherine Whetham

[Katherine Whetham] lives at 301-878 Gilford Street, Vancouver 5. Phone: 682-1056. My interview took place at her place of work in Vancouver, and as she had only allowed a very short time for this in her lunch break, the interview was disappointingly brief. I was surprised to find her so hard at work at her age -she seemed amused by this. She works as the organizer of the Child's Own Theatre at 318 Homer Street, Vancouver. [Community Arts Council]

Katherine was educated largely at home, since the Ruskin school had a limited curriculum. Her younger sister, [Hilda] who was not so studious, attended school more, as she worked harder there.

IN 1982, after Katherine Whetham died in Vancouver's St. Paul Hospital at the age of 92 a "Public Trustee" registered her death and made arrangements for cremation. The Funeral Director's report of the Vancouver Crematorium shows instructions to hold her cremated remains at the crematory. Lined through on the report are the words "Please scatter Ashes on Lost Lagoon by Stanley Park." That would not be allowed by the city. No one knows what happened with her remains after that.

At some time Kate McQueen, Katherine's cousin, called Janet Alexander's mother from Vancouver to let her know about her aunt's death.

Kate McQueen herself died only a few months later, age 98. She was the last of that generation of the Whethams.

Katherine used Fannie's piano in the front room of "The Farm" to teach when she was at home in Westfield. ja

The *Yearbook of the Royal Conservatory 1920-1921* shows Katherine name as of a teacher for piano and organ.



Katherine's portrait taken at a Toronto studio ca. 1920. JA She may have given a few concerts even in Europe but never became a well-known concert pianist. In 1957 she was representing musical artists and arranging their Canadian tours.



Text of a talk given by Charles Whetham ca. 1930

Courtesy Janet Alexander.

Date, place, occasion, and audience for this talk have not been recorded, but it was obviously intended for a small group of neighbors and friends.

The report came to me recently that practically all the farmers on Hardscrabble and Sherman roads were on the verge of bankruptcy and that any one could take his pick of the farms there at his own price and on his own terms. The information was so startling that I at once took steps to verify or disprove it. ¹

In dealing with a matter so serious as this I determined, at the very outset, to accept no hearsay or second hand reports but to interview each family head individually and personally – not forgetting that the heads of most families in this locality, or in any other, for that matter, are female. Even in those cases where the men habitually put up a brave front as if they controlled the whole works, I took especially care to have the wife present during the interview, because I long ago learned that few men are entirely trustworthy out of the hearing and without the moral support of their wives. The time to be devoted to this important work was very limited, and if, in my hurried round I failed to call on any families here represented, I must ask their indulgence, and I shall be glad if any such would mail me at their earliest convenience, postage prepaid, a statement of their reasons for wishing or not wishing to dispose of their holdings, as I wish to make this record as full and complete as possible. This work is entirely voluntary and gratuitous on my part and, though it is a labour of love, I cannot afford to incur any exorbitant or unnecessary expense in connection with it. Therefore, if your communication requires a reply, kindly enclose a stamped and self-addressed envelope.

My first call was at the extreme western limit of the club constituency. Mrs. Ticknor received me graciously. Will, she said, was feeding the pigs. “Why, if it wasn’t for the pigs and cows I don’t know how we’d ever pull through.” “Here is Will now.” “Well, how are the pigs coming?” I asked. “Coming is right,” said Will, “that’s the one encouraging thing about pigs, they do keep

¹ Hardscrabble Rd. in Westfield is just off the Sherman Rd. which is where “The Farm” is. Families with many of these same names still live there. Janet Alexander, March 2012.

coming – ten, twelve, fourteen, sixteen at a lick, and twice a year at that. Now with other critters, including humans, the best you can count on is one a year. That may be addition but it’s awfully discouraging if you want all right raise a family but pigs have got past addition – they multiply the sooner you come to a division of dividends.” Would you sell your place if you got a good offer? “Sell, well I should say not,” said Alice. “What do you suppose we have been building a house for the last four years? Why, Will plans to make the steps in 1930 and hang some of the doors in 1931 and we’re going to move some time in 1932 and finish the rest. And believe me, when we once get in there we’re going to stay.” That seemed to indicate that they were not on the market, so I went to Flagg’s. I hear you want to sell out Mr. Flagg. “Nothing to it,” said Flagg, “you must have noises in your head. Now’s the time for every farmer to sit tight. There never was a brighter outlook for grapes than right now. We lost not more than \$13.39 a ton on our grapes this year. We have just taken out a few of the worst, so I figure we’ll come out even next year. By that time the grape-pop bottles will begin to pop and after that we’ll get a higher price for our grapes than we ever had. No, we’re not for sale.

Coming to Brummagen’s in the evening in order to catch Merle in the bosom of his family, I put the question bluntly: “Would you sell or not.” “No,” said Merle, “I would not. In the first place it is a desirable place to live, and secondly, my wife and family are attached to it. It’s true we don’t make much out of it. That’s not what we have it for. When it comes to that, what city gentleman ever expects his country residence to pay him in hard dollars and cents? Then the

question arises: Where should I spend a considerable part of my large city income if I could not use it here? Very shortly, as my business interests grow, I shall establish a winter residence in town, and then this will become in fact what it should be – simply a summer home. So, as you can readily understand, I would not think of selling.”

Coming to Tenpas’s I inquired: “would you sell your farm if you got a chance?” “No,” both of them said at once, “we don’t think of it. We like the place and we like the neighbors. We haven’t made a fortune here, but we haven’t starved yet either. We’re here to stay.”

When I reached Trump’s, although it was long after dark, Leonard was just bringing in a hatful of eggs. “Leonard,” I said, “would you accept a good offer for your place and throw in the hens?” “It would have to be a mighty good offer,” said Leonard. “Indeed it would,” said Clara. “We just love this place and then it makes us feel so superior, you know, when we can look down on the Herrons every morning.” “Some people keep complaining of hard times,” said Leonard, “but we don’t feel that way at all. I don’t want to boast or anything like that, but when we got all our bills paid up before Christmas, we had \$27,38 left.” “And you can imagine,” Clara said, “what a feeling of security that gave us for the long winter ahead.”

My first call on Sherman road was at Smith’s. “And how much do you want for your place, Mrs. Smith?” I asked. “We don’t want to sell,” said Myrtle.” “Why, I understood you had already sold several parcels and wanted to sell the rest.” “Well, we’ve sold all we’re goin’ to and we’ve all the money we want for a good many years. Henry always used to say if we didn’t sell out soon we’d wake up one morning after a thaw and find the hole show slid down into Colburn’s back yard, but now we’ve got Nichol’s dyke at the foot of the vineyard I guess we’re safe.” Just then Charlie came in, and it occurred to me that I might be doing a valuable service to the town by finding out why the eligible young men of the neighborhood often fail to marry. “Chaliee,” I said, “you are old enough to get married.” “Guess that’s right,” said Charlie, “who’s been tellin’ you anything about it?” “Oh, I only assumed that any right-minded you man would do his duty before it is too late.” “Well,

gosh, I was always willin’ to try anything once,” said Charlie,” and if the girl is willin’ I guess it’s a go.” That was certainly more satisfactory than I could have expected, and when Dutch came in a moment later, I said: “when are you going to get married Louie?” “It’ll be a long, long time, I tell you right now,” said Dutch, “I like to look at a pretty girl and they make me feel like I’ve drunk a part of hard cider, but—and here follow several dashes which I hesitate to interpret in the mixed company. Look what it’s done to Jim Nichol. If gettin’ married makes a fellow run off into the ditch every trip he makes then I don’t want no wife.”

So I went on to Charlie Nichol’s. “How much will you take for your farm?” I asked. “Not for sale,” said Charlie, “now we’re on the main road with a spur all of our own, and the kids are out for themselves, me and the wife are just goin’ to sit pretty and enjoy ourselves. I guess you have to pay us two or three times what the ranch is worth to jolt us off the hill.”

Next place was Herman’s. “Herman,” I said, “would you rather sell out or get married?” “I don’t have to do either, do I? And what’s more, I wont.” I confess that nettled me and perhaps I spoke a bit harshly. “You big bum, you ought to be heartily ashamed of yourself. Living here like a tramp, all alone at your time of life, when there are noble and deserving women all over the town who would be only too glad to leave the turmoil of the busy world and retire to a spot so delightfully secluded and with a view so magnificent. Be ashamed of yourself, Sir.”

And with that I left him and went on to Colburn. “Your place is on the market, I believe?” “Well, then I guess you’d believe most anything,” said Frank. “I used to say if I got my price I’d sell anything I had and try something else. But just now I can’t, for the life of me, think of anything I haven’t tried already, except preaching and bootlegging. Besides I’ve got a summer’s work ahead of me scraping my roadway.”

“And how about you,” Mr. Wood, “would you sell your farm?” I haven’t a farm left, said Mike, “I never intended to sell out, but when it was too late I found the town and county had most of it. If there is anything left when the steam-shovel

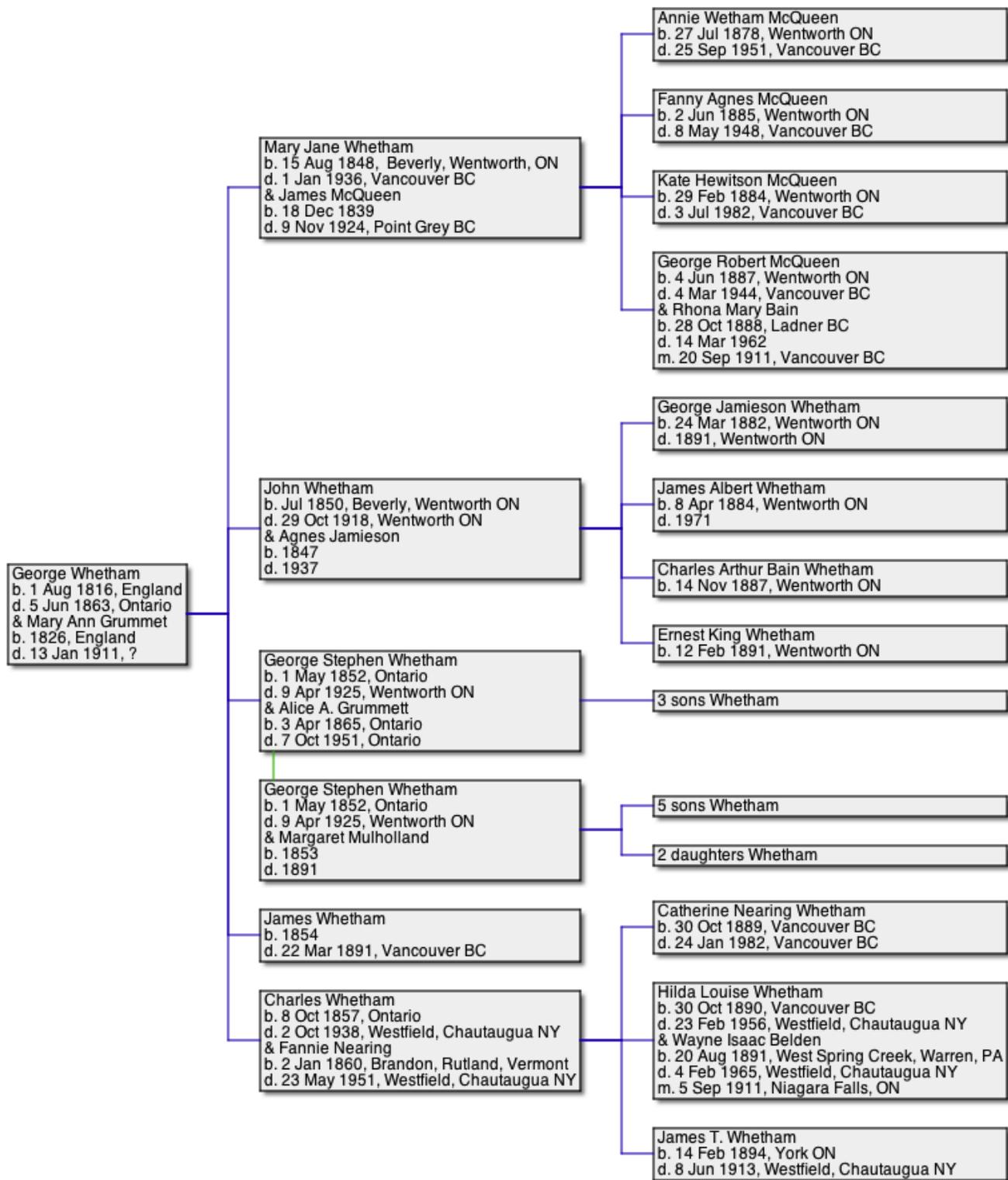
gets through, I'm going to keep it to show the world what one road outfit can do to a farm. A Florida cyclone isn't in it with Fitch's road-gang." "Would you sell out?" I asked Mary, as I went into Minton's. "Oh, no. We wouldn't think of such a thing. For the last year and a half we have been planning a 5-year program ahead, and really it will take every acre of land we have – probably much more. We are going to enlarge our kennels until we have 1000 females. These, George estimates (and the dogs will be his part of the business), will give an output of 6247 pups annually. This, we know, is a very modest estimate. All the chances favor a much larger production, which, of course will be pure velvet. These at an average of \$35 each will give us a yearly income of \$218,547 from the kennels alone. Then \$35, you know, is a ridiculously conservative average, because as we improve our strains and our stock becomes better known, and we carry off the prizes at national shows, many pups will bring \$100, \$200, \$500 and even \$5000, so we are certainly playing safe. My specialty is going to be pigs. My goal in 5 years is also 1000 females, which, I figure, will give from four to five times as many young as George's dogs. I have a standing bet with George that my swine income will equal his dog returns. But George says, 'What's the difference? You'll hog the whole income anyway, so what we take is hog income.'" "And what breed of hogs are you choosing?" "The O.I.C.s. And I'm going to call my improved type the O.I.C.U strain. I think that sounds so much more intimate and personal." "And what will Hiller do?" "Oh, he's already started off on chickens. He is planning to dot the entire landscape with chicken coops like an Esquimau igloo, and if George and I make more than he does we'll have to hump some. These, of course, are only the main projects. There'll be side lines as well. For instance, now we have that tile pipe line along the grove, I am sure every spring freshet and after every thunder storm, half the village would be glad to come up and pay 25 cents admission to see the water squirt out of the end and down into the gulf." As I left, I felt convinced that Minton's would not sell.

On my way to Allen's I overtook Stratton. As we walked along I asked: "How does it come that, Herm, that you never got married? A big, husky, prosperous chap like you ought to make an ideal husband for some good-looking, domestically disposed woman?" "Who? Me?" said Herm, "you don't catch me gettin' married. Look what a fix Elmer's got himself into. If he goes along like this for 20 years he'll have 16 kids – and that aint counting any twins neither. What would I do with 16, 17, 18 kids? I guess I know when I'm well off." Well, that seemed quite a reasonable view for a prudent man to take, so I didn't urge the matter any further.

Elmer was carrying Junior from the car to the house. "I hear you want to sell out," I said. "I guess," said Elmer, "you're not hearing so well as you used to, are you? I would have sold out two or three years ago but Florida's gone a little flooie. Westfield winds look better to me than Florida tornadoes, so I guess we'll just jog along here." "And how does the future look to you?" "Well, we expect to contract our grapes for \$50 or more, then I am going to take on one cow for every acre of grapes and, in order that the tribe of Allen may not grow less, we plan an addition of one to the family for every two cows, so very soon we'll have all the pickers, packers, tiers, milkers and teamsters we need right here among ourselves, without hiring a dollar's worth. As I figure it, it isn't what you take in but what you hang on to that makes an income. Then we'll have cherries and berries and peaches and chickens. So altogether things don't look so worse."

Coming home from my round, I was in a much more cheerful frame of mind than when I set out, and I have come to the conclusion that all the communities I have had the pleasure of living in, this is surely the most optimistic.

Whetham family descendant tree based on information by Janet Alexander and others on Ancestry.



James McQueen, who was married to Charles Whetham's sister Mary Jane, was a businessman and served as an alderman on Vancouver City Council, 1897-1900 and 1902-03. Their daughter Kate graduated from McGill University (BC branch) in 1908 and taught English at King Edward High School until her retirement in 1944. She was active in many women's groups, serving as President of the University Women's Club, 1912-13. Kate McQueen was also an avid hiker. Her brother George Robert McQueen was a barrister and served for several years as a police magistrate in Vancouver and as a member of the Police Commission. George Robert McQueen had one daughter, who still lives in Vancouver. She had four sons one of whom died. The others three still live in BC.



The home of Mrs. George Whetham (née Mary Ann Grumett) in Sheffield, Beverly Township, Wentworth County, Ontario. In the group are: Mary Ann Whetham, seated on the verandah and her son George Stephen Whetham, standing on porch. In front are six of George Whetham's children.

After his wife, Margaret Mulholland, died in 1891, George went to live with his mother who bought this cream brick house shortly after 1891. It was sold after her death in 1911.

Charles and Fannie Whetham and their three children may lived here for some time or perhaps for years after they left British Columbia in 1903.

Wharnock B.C.
June 11th 92

My dear brother,

The telegram on Friday no doubt surprised you all. There was to be no Tourist Car on Friday's train at all and George's only way was to go Colonist. He preferred to wait till Tuesday which we found is the only day of the week that the Tourist makes connection with the boat even as closely as Winnipeg. We hope to get him safely off on Tuesday. The tickets are extended— even the berth ticket without extra charge.

The Agent in Vancouver evidently got mixed up on "Tourist" days and load days— and we have him to blame for all the trouble—

A letter written by Charles Whetham to his brother-in-law James McQueen.

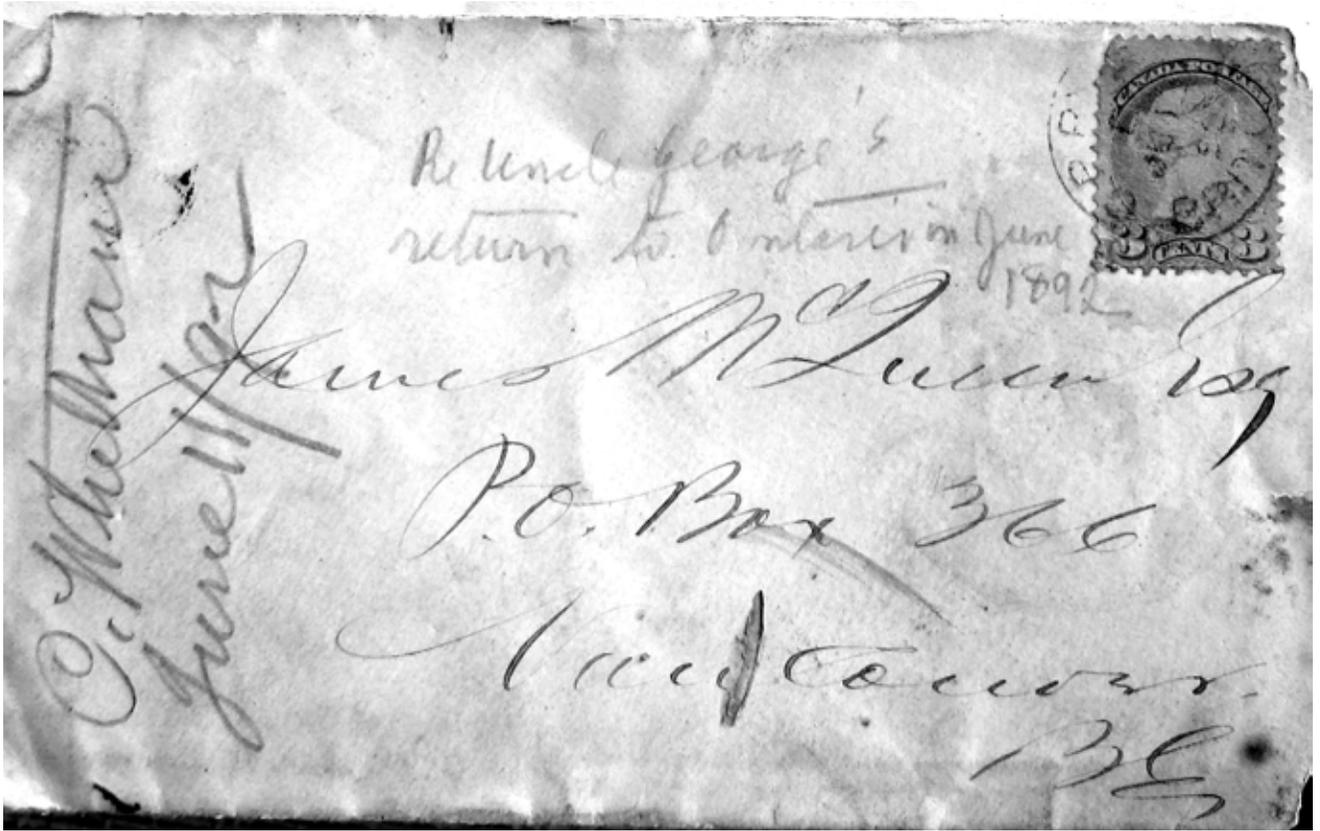
In the early days some residents choose to write the First Nation's name "Whonnock" as "Wharnock," the spelling of the familiar Scottish surname.

Wharnock B.C.
June 11th [18]92
My dear brother,

The telegram on Friday no doubt surprised you all. There was to be no Tourist Car on Friday's train at all and George [Charles's brother] only was to go Colonist. He preferred to wait till Tuesday which we found is the only day of the week that the Tourist makes connection with load even as closely as Winnipeg. We hope to get him safely off on Tuesday. The tickets--even the berth ticket—are extended without extra charges. The Agent in Vancouver evidently got mixed up on "Tourist" days and load days, and we have him to blame for all the trouble.

I enclose Customs' notice
Please present as soon as
convenient and have parcel
forwarded to me. I'm afraid
some of the things may suffer.
The cost price of the foods (seeds
and plants) was \$1.00 for which
I presume they will collect
20 or 25 cents. Please pay for
me -
Weather is more promising
for us now but still not warm
enough for the tomatoes.
Affectionately Yours
CWhetham

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Affectionately Yours
CWhetham



Note that this letter is not cancelled at the Whonnock post office but on the train.

MORE WHONNOCK NOTES

1. Transcripts from the Fraser Valley Record (1908-1912)
News about Whonnock in the Mission newspaper
2. Cemeteries in Whonnock
The history of Whonnock's cemeteries
—includes cemetery records and transcriptions of the grave markers
3. The Trondheim Congregation
Our Norwegian settlers—minutes of the Lutheran Church in Whonnock
4. Through the Eyes of Brian and other Friends
Interviews, notes, and stories dating back to 1913
5. Whonnock 1897 —John Williamson's Diary
One of the oldest records of daily life in Whonnock
6. Ferguson's Landing: George Godwin's Whonnock
A look at George Godwin's novel: The Eternal Forest
7. Robert Robertson and Tselatsetenate
Whonnock's Scottish first settler and his family
8. A Name Index of the Whonnock Notes Series No. 1-7
Compiled by Eleanore Dempster
9. A Name Index of the Whonnock Community Association
Historical Project Summer 1985 Records Compiled by Eleanore Dempster
10. The Family of Catherine & Edward Julius Muench
Catherine was the sister of the wife of Robert Robertson
11. It Was a Wonderful Life, Brian and Isabel Byrnes
Brian and Isabel gave all to Whonnock
12. Whonnock's Post Office
A history of the Whonnock post office, postmasters and assistants.
13. John Williamson's Diary Revisited
Now the complete text of a diary kept in Whonnock in 1986 and 1897.
14. The Case of Private Cromarty, a Soldier from Whonnock
The story of a mixed identity
15. A Dream Come True
The Story of Whonnock Lake Centre
16. The Ladies Club: Minutes 1911-1919
Whonnock women built and operated the first
Whonock community centre
17. Enumeration Maple Ridge 1917
This survey is a great resource for historians.