

BALLARD

STILL A CITY WITHIN A CITY



ABOVE: Ballard received its first library in 1904. It was built with a \$15,000 grant from philanthropist Andrew Carnegie. University of Washington Libraries Special Collections

RIGHT: Legend, apparently unfounded, has it that Ballard's ordinances decreed that the number of saloons in the city could not exceed the number of churches. The taverns that did exist weren't always to the liking of the town's citizens. One petition requested denial of a liquor-license renewal to the Pioneer Saloon, located at 1st and Shilshole avenues, charging, "We do not think there is any question but that this saloon has been conducted as a resort for low men and women." Seattle Municipal Archives, City of Ballard City Clerk's Files, Record Series 9106-03



Ballard was first settled in the 1850s and incorporated in 1890. After it became known that the Great Northern Railway would route its trains into Seattle from the north, the land was platted as "Gilman Park" and logged off. Early residents renamed it for steamboat skipper and accidental real-estate developer Captain William Rankin Ballard, who acquired 160 acres of the future city after losing a coin toss for the "worthless" property. Boasting of being "the shingle capital of the world," Ballard with its timber and fishing jobs drew many new residents, including a large number of immigrants from Scandinavia.

When it incorporated, Ballard had 1,636 residents. By 1907, the population had grown to 17,000, which put a strain on the water supply. In 1902, the city had made an agreement with Seattle to tap into its water system and was using more than five million gallons a year. This expenditure was adding to Ballard's debt, and many citizens believed that the city was becoming unable to sustain itself.

There is no evidence to support an oft-repeated assertion that a dead horse was found in a Ballard reservoir just before the annexation election. Also apparently an urban myth is the supposed Ballard statute limiting the number of saloons in town to the number of churches.

Many Ballardites preferred to remain independent, and the annexation vote was close: 996 to 874. When Ballard was annexed to Seattle on May 29, 1907, some of the naysayers snuck into city hall, draped the building in black bunting, and flew a black flag at half-mast from the bell tower.

LEFT: After Yesler's Mill burned in the 1889 Seattle fire, the area's timber industry moved north into Ballard. Ballard's lumber mills provided hundreds of jobs, and the Stimson Mill was one of the world's largest. This 1904 photo shows logs being floated to the mill to be cut into lumber. University of Washington Libraries Special Collections, A. Curtis 04259-B.

LEFT: The small boats used by Ballard fishermen were sometimes lost at sea in stormy weather. Ballard Historical Society

BELOW: This 1902 photo, taken from Queen Anne, gives a larger view of Ballard. The early Ballard Bridge runs across Salmon Bay, lumber mills are in operation, and forested land is still visible just outside of town. University of Washington Libraries Special Collections, A. Curtis 00475



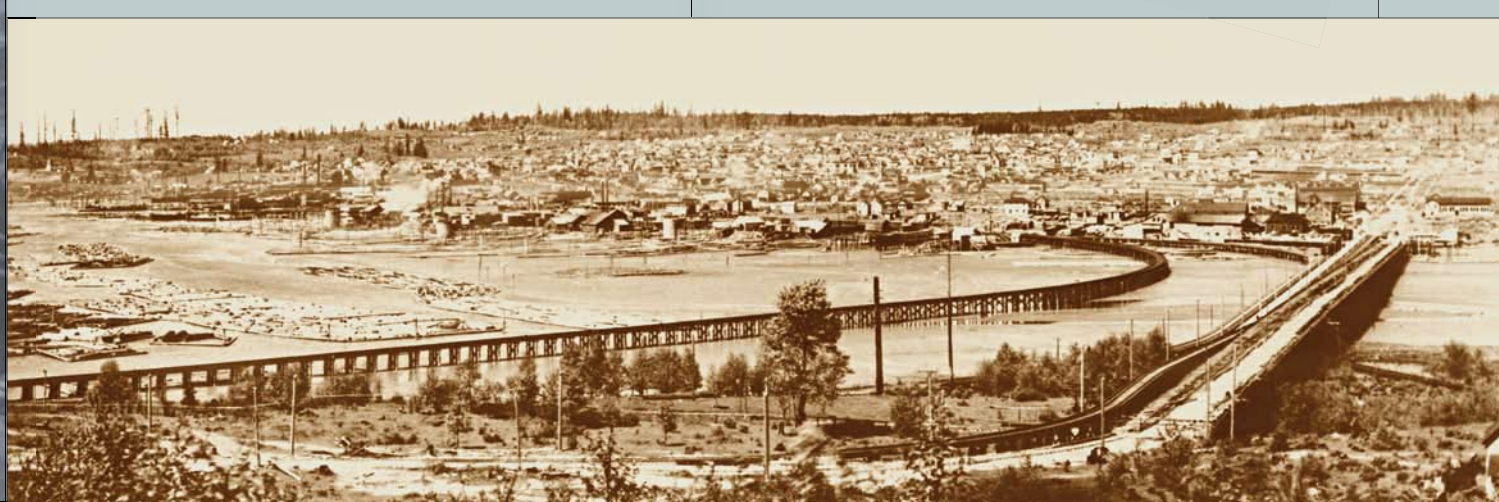
MAYORS

- Charles F. Treat 1890
- T. W. Lake 1891
- J. H. Rinehart 1892
- A. E. Pretty 1893
- Edmund Peters 1894
- Matthew Dow 1895
- George G. Startup 1896-1899
- David McVay 1900
- John Johnson 1901
- Thomas C. Reed 1902
- A.W. Mackie 1903
- J. E. Zook 1904-1905
- Justus H. Wiley 1906
- H. E. Peck 1907

ABOVE: Built in 1899, Ballard's City Hall contained a jail, the fire department, city offices, community meeting rooms, and a ballroom. The building, pictured here in 1902, was torn down in 1965. University of Washington Libraries Special Collections, A. Curtis 00881



ABOVE: Before annexation, Ballard was a city in its own right, with many thriving businesses. This photo, taken around 1890, shows a liquor store and a restaurant in the business district. Museum of History & Industry, SHS11816



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