

JAPANESE PIONEERS

EARLY SEATTLE SCENES

Henry Yester built his sawmill, in the 1850s, roughly where First Avenue and Yester intersect today, and ran a log skid off the wooded hill to the east down to the mill. The terminus of the skid became a favorite gathering place of sailors, loggers, and sawmill hands, and the area of saloons and cheap lodgings which followed became known as Skid Road.

Before 1906, the area south of King Street was tidelands, that is, the shoreline curved eastward from Skid Road and then followed the base of Beacon Hill southward. Also, First Hill and Beacon Hill were connected by a high ridge such that Jackson, King and Weller streets rose to the east more steeply than they do today.

The Chinese immigrants of the 1870s and the Japanese immigrants of the 1890s found that Skid Road was where they could settle with least objections from whites. As the Asian communities expanded, they moved eastward up such streets as Weller, King, Jackson, Main and Washington.



On the map to the left, note that the street which today is Dearborn was at one time known as Mikado Street.

At right, the map indicates Japanese lodgings on Fifth and Sixth Avenue.



JACKSON ST. REGRADE

In 1906, the Seattle city engineers ordered it to be regraded to create a high industrial site, and it is today the high ridge between Fifth Hill and Beacon Hill.

The Jackson Street Regrade of 1906, by which all from the "Old Hill" section of houses left to the low lands, today seen adjacent.

The photos below show the regrade work as a deepened roadway, a concrete curb, and the steep Jackson Street, and the regrade work, showing the regrade from the level of Weller Street.



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