

Mrs. R Maynard's Photographic Gallery

An Early Victoria Business and a Female Entrepreneur

Mrs. R. Maynard's Photographic Gallery was based in Fort Victoria from 1862 to 1912.

The gallery had several locations over the course of its history, including on Douglas, Johnson and Pandora Streets in Victoria. The *R* in the name of Mrs. Maynard's business stood for her husband's name, Richard. A woman running a business was not common at the time and was sometimes frowned upon, but Hannah quickly gained people's respect. After moving from its first location, the gallery shared space with Richard Maynard's boot and shoe business.

The successful business contained popular accessories needed for nineteenth-century portraits. Some of these props included pedestals, painted scenic backdrops, and decorative chairs and tables. In 1888 the gallery is described in *The New West in Winnipeg* as having: "superior facilities for executing all orders in the promptest and most satisfactory manner."

The clientele included mostly the "upper [class] of Victoria society," including the Douglas family and Victoria's mayor John Grant. It also served the wide range of Victoria's population, including Indigenous communities, temporary visitors and residents, among them the Alexander and Spotts families.

In addition to Hannah's portraits, photographic "views" taken by her husband were also available for purchase. Photographers often sold their original glass plate negatives when they went out of business, and the Maynards acquired the works of other photographers including Victoria's Frederick Dally.

