

Early Vancouver

Volume One

By: Major J.S. Matthews, V.D.

2011 Edition (Originally Published 1932)

Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1931-1932.

*A Collection of Historical Data, Maps, and Plans Made with the Assistance of
Pioneers of Vancouver Between March and December 1931.*

About the 2011 Edition

The 2011 edition is a transcription of the original work collected and published by Major Matthews. Handwritten marginalia and corrections Matthews made to his text over the years have been incorporated and some typographical errors have been corrected, but no other editorial work has been undertaken. The edition and its online presentation was produced by the City of Vancouver Archives to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the City's founding. The project was made possible by funding from the Vancouver Historical Society.

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Contact Information

City of Vancouver Archives
1150 Chestnut Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3J9
604.736.8561
archives@vancouver.ca
vancouver.ca/archives

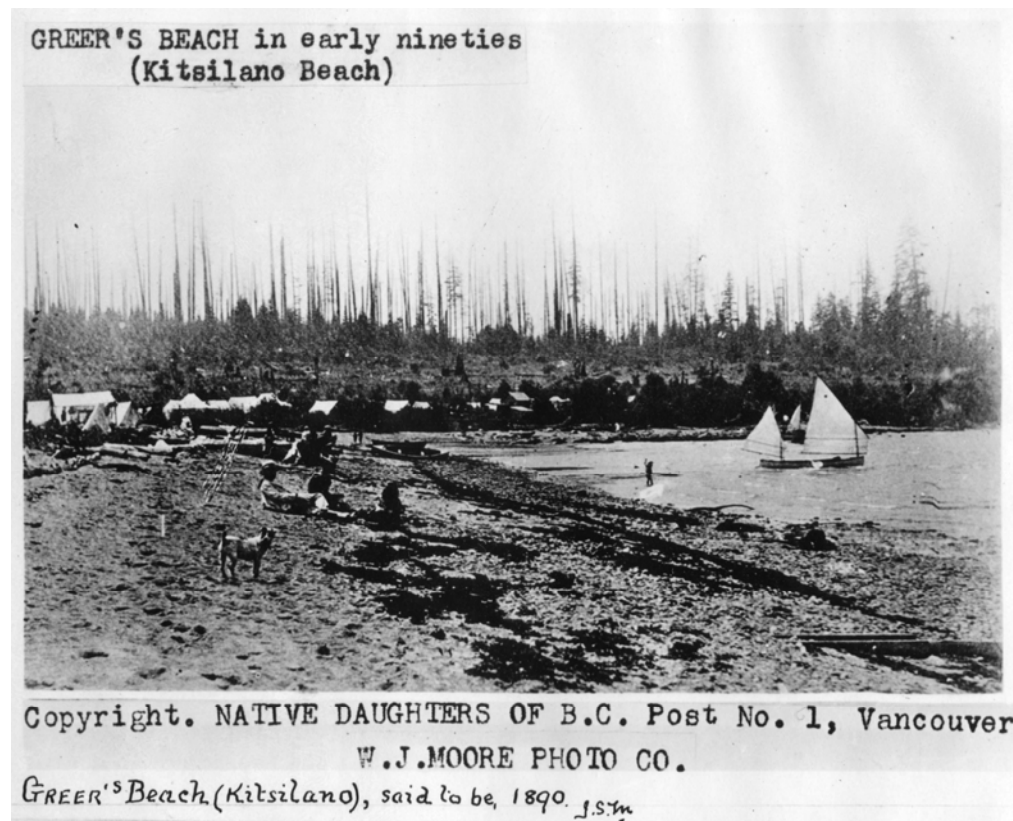


Squamish people, namely *Kates-ee-lan-ogh*, and modified it after the manner in which *Kapilano* has been modified by dropping the final guttural. We thus got the word *Kates-ee-lano*. This Mr. Miller or the C.P.R. authorities further modified by changing the long "a" in the first syllable into an "i," and thus we have *Kitsilano*.

You may be interested to know that the Indian pronunciation of *Kapilano* was *Kee-ap-ee-lan-ogh*. This also was an heredity name (*not quite correct; hardly "hereditary," but conferred much as the title of a Royal Duke is*) of the chief who lived near the mouth of the river which we know by this name. Both names have the same ending, *lanogh*. This suffix signifies *man*. We find it also in another of their names; thus, *Kalanogh*, meaning the *first man*.

I could not learn what the significance of the first part of the other two hereditary names was; the Indians did not appear to know it themselves. The terms are very ancient.

(Signed) Chas. Hill-Tout



Item # EarlyVan_v1_0016



Item # EarlyVan_v1_0017

17 MAY 1931 - GREER'S BEACH. KITSILANO. MRS. J.Z. HALL OF "KILLARNEY."

"The house which I lived in as a girl was not the first one on the site," said Mrs. J.Z. Hall of "Killarney," Point Grey Road, and a daughter of Mr. Sam Greer of Greer's Beach, the first settler of Kitsilano. "They told me there had been one there previously. I don't know what happened to it, but they told me it was just the same as the one we lived in.

"Our home was just a small affair, I should think about thirty feet wide by twenty, no, eighteen, no, not more than fifteen feet deep, bedrooms on both sides and living room in the middle. There were two windows in the front, the door was just a plain door, old style, no glass in it. There was a nice little verandah, very comfortable; the roof was shakes, cedar shakes. On the south side next where is now the track there was a log milk house, dirt floor, white washed inside, and at the back, a lean-to, full length of house, thirty feet, part woodshed, part kitchen. The house was painted; no, I do not remember what colour. There were posts to hold the verandah up.

"In front was a nice garden, lots of flowers, and some fruit trees, protected by a shake fence, cedar shakes with points, and a nice little gate to the beach. I remember it very well; the path from the front door went straight to the gate, and the path from the gate went straight to the beach.

"I think we moved it" (the house) "once, when they put the C.P.R. track down. They moved the stable from the creek when they put the track down, and I think they must have moved the house too sometime or other; it seemed to me that we were always moving.

"At the back there was a nice kitchen garden, and an orchard, and a path curved off from the back door into the swamp, southeast, leading up to the C.P.R. track after that came in. It was out of the bedroom window that my father shot the wolf that night; and, in the morning, we found him dead in the garden. We had two cows and a horse, and some chickens. The house was papered

inside; I think it must have been over the shiplap; it was built of boards. Tom Greer, now living at Central Park, helped to build it. He was father's half brother. Foster, of Tom Foster Fur Store, I think he helped too. We very nearly lived in the boats.

"Of course, all around at the back there were very few trees; too much swamp. Along the beach, and behind, there was small bushes, and small hemlocks. Once or twice the skunks came in," and here she laughed, "and we had to get out. There was a little creek along the beach—about half way." (See Map of Vancouver 1886 in Archives.) "Another small stable, which also had spring water, and a small one, a creek, over by the present 'hotel site.' All flowed over the beach. The whole place was very pretty.

"We wanted for nothing. If we wanted any trout, we just took a boat, and came along the shore for a quarter of an hour. There were lots in the sea and streams," and Mrs. Hall pointed in the direction of Tatlow Park, through which runs a small stream, once much larger, before the sewers were put in; another was still larger, a little farther west, now entirely disappeared.

"The smelts, oh, the smelts? We did not bother with them. The smelts were there in shiploads, yes, shiploads, you could fill a boat in fifteen minutes. As a girl, I have myself filled three or four sacks; potato sacks, and towed them behind the boat. You could almost tip a boat over, and fill it with smelts. But they have all gone now. Now, where do you suppose they went to?" (See conversation with William Hunt.)

"Of course, when we went to live on the hill on Nelson Street we used to cut right through the clearing and climb the hill. We cut right across from where the Hotel Vancouver is built. We could see everywhere, and we used to watch the ships coming in; crawling in. Sometimes warships; one a Russian warship. The C.P.R. steamships were the *Parthia*, *Batavia*, and *Abyssinia*. Funny boats they were. No cabins or such on deck. I remember the first time we went over them we walked all over, and went into all the little cubby holes; everything was below deck.

"Of course, the sidewalks on Granville Street were three planks, and you had to watch out. At the Hotel Vancouver they were four or five feet above ground, and we had to be careful when wheeling the baby carriages—we wheeled our babies then—or you would tip baby and all, over. We used to hide our things under the sidewalks. Go to church on Sunday, and leave all your stuff under the sidewalk, and pick it up when you came out. You could not do that now; it would be gone.

"The race track was on Howe Street; it must have started about Nelson Street and ended about the Hotel Vancouver; I think the grandstand must have been where the hotel stands; it was a long affair. Everybody went to the races. When there was a procession, everyone who had anything put it in. You see, Victoria had the Queen's Birthday; the big day at New Westminster was May Day; we had Dominion Day. We had great times Dominion Day. The celebrations used to last two or three days sometimes. We had a wonderful fire brigade. At first they had only the hose reel; but afterwards they got an electric (?) engine. Electric (?) engines were just coming out, and we got the best; we were one of the first." (Steam engine is probably what was meant, or electric light was meant.)

"Mr. Hall" (J.Z.) "used to board with the Reverend Joseph Hall of the Methodist Church; same place Mr. Geo. Schetky of the fire brigade boarded. The Halls kept boarders; they used to sell milk, too. I forget just what they used to call his church; it was down on Water Street, north side, just west of Abbott Street, afterwards used as a feed store; what was that man's name? He was Frank Wright's uncle" (perhaps Arkell.) "Allan had a feed store there long after.

"My husband told me he has going to Sunday school—he used to teach in Sunday school—and was carrying his bible, but went back, and said to Mrs. Hall, Reverend Hall's wife, 'I think I will just go and take a look at the fire first,' and put his bible on the table. When he came back the place was afire, and nothing could be done. I said to him, 'how long were you gone?' He replied, 'only a few minutes. It all happened so quick.' So quick they could not get the cows out, the two cows, they were both burned. Mr. Hall helped Mrs. Ben Wilson to get her sewing machine out; he hauled or dragged it out into the harbour for her, and she went with it and him; afterwards, a boat

came and took her to Moodyville. But the most people went off in the direction of Hastings—up the road; and they had to get out quick.

“Another wonderful thing was the canoe parades; they never have them now. It was the prettiest thing you ever saw. The Indians used to come from everywhere; the Tsimpsons and all of them; that was for Dominion Day. And at night the illuminations were simply wonderful. They used to have lanterns in their canoes, and go ‘sailing’ up and down the harbour; it was really beautiful.” (See A.E. Beck, etc.)

“It seems to me that you must be wrong about the parade on Dominion Day, 1887, coming up Granville Street; I don’t think Granville Street was open then.” (Note: Granville Street was graded in the early summer of 1887.) “It might have been.” (A newspaper account of the parade says it was.) “I thought Water Street came as far as about Seymour Street, and we went up that way to Hastings Street. It might have been though. You see, the town was away down towards Carrall Street, and it seems to me that we went some way—just how I cannot remember—from the C.P.R. Depot along the bottom.” (See H.P. McCraney, and the Great Fire.) “Of course, in those days there was nothing on Hastings Street.

“My daughter has a photograph of Mr. Hall, my husband, in the uniform of the New Westminster Rifles. He used to walk over from Vancouver to New Westminster to drill, and come back after drill. Used to get home early in the morning. I don’t think Captain Scoullar was his captain. It must have been before Captain Scoullar’s time, perhaps Captain Pittendigh.”

J.S.M.



Item # EarlyVan_v1_0018