

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



Mrs. J.Z. Hall once told me that the road (Hastings Road) from Gastown to Hastings Mill was “just a crooked road.” It is referred to in “Vancouver Celebrates her First Dominion Day” (*Province*, 28 June 1931), as being lighted with coal oil lamps at night. After the survey of 1885 of Townsite of Vancouver by L.A. Hamilton it is known as, in part Alexander Street, and still later, in part as Railway Avenue. R.H. Alexander, after whom it is named, was manager of the Hastings Mill, and one of the “Overlanders of ‘62” from Canada. Hastings Road was evidently, in very early days, a track along the shore, above high water mark, from John Morton’s trail to Hastings Mill, perhaps before that an Indian trail.

J.S.M.

18 JUNE 1931 - VANCOUVER’S FIRST REGIMENT. THE DRILL HALL. SERGEANT MAJOR BUNDY. SCHOOLS.

The militia of Vancouver owes a great deal to Major A.C. Bundy, who died on 17 June 1931, aged 63, while at his desk in the Vancouver School Board offices.

In 1898 the first company of artillery in Vancouver had grown so rapidly, a second was created, and then both re-created as the Second Battalion, Fifth Regiment, Canadian Artillery, the First Battalion being in Victoria, and both battalions forming, at that time, the largest regiment in Canada. The organisation of the Second Battalion in Vancouver necessitated the establishment of a school of military instruction. Captain Barnes, Sergeant Major Porter and Corporal Bundy were sent over from the Imperial forces at Esquimalt to take charge and instruct. Corporal Bundy remained permanently. Soon afterwards the artillery was changed into rifles—the Sixth Regiment, the Duke of Connaught’s Own Rifles, for many years the only garrison in Vancouver. The new Drill Hall on Beatty Street was built and it needed a caretaker; the regiment needed an instructor and sergeant major; the first school of military instruction was over; Corporal Bundy was appointed to both positions.

Up to about March 1903, the Sixth Regiment D.C.O.R. consisted of four small companies of about 45 officers and men with headquarters staff at Vancouver. A and B Companies were at New Westminster, and C, D, E and F at Vancouver; Lieutenant Colonel C.A. Worsnop retired, time expired, Lieutenant Colonel J.C. Whyte assumed command, two more companies—G and H—were added to the strength of Vancouver. Sergeant Major Bundy continued as caretaker and instructor, and lived with his wife and family of three small children at the top of the Drill Hall.

He was a tall, soldierly figure, straight as a ramrod, and to his efficiency was largely due the remarkable efficiency of the regiment; thoroughly competent, earnest, sincere, a dignified personality; it was a fortunate thing for Vancouver that such a man was appointed instructor of the militia at a time when the tide of military endeavour was rising. He was a specialist in gunnery, a good rifleshooter, well informed on military procedure and etiquette for officers, N.C.O.s and men, a somewhat silent man: just what was wanted to inspire the keen, undisciplined citizen soldiers, who were willing and anxious to excel if only shown how to excel.

About 1907–1908, he organised the first detachment of machine gunners in Vancouver. Their arm was a single Maxim Gun mounted on a limber, drawn by a horse, the limber also carrying eight boxes, each box containing one belt of 250 cartridges. They annually practiced at Second Beach at a floating target.

He was largely responsible for the promotion of that splendid cadet unit, the first in Vancouver, the 101st Vancouver High School Cadets, and was their first instructor. This unit made a trip to Australia, and it is asserted that, of the forty-five boys or cadets who made that trip, forty-four received commissions as officers during the Great War.

It has been stated that Sergeant Major Bundy became the first instructor of physical drill to the schools of Vancouver in 1898. This cannot be exactly correct, for the writer well remembers the day, about 1904, when Sergeant Major Bundy told him that he had that afternoon been instructing

the schools, and we conversed about it at length. At first it was in a very small way—one afternoon per week.

Mr. Bundy dabbled a little in real estate in the boom days, and made a little. He retired as sergeant major of the Sixth D.C.O.R. some years before the Great War, about 1910–12, to devote his whole time and effort, an onerous duty, to the rapidly increasing numbers of school children throughout Vancouver and, after 1928, Greater Vancouver. He lies buried in Ocean View Cemetery, and to his memory we can, with one accord, exclaim, “Well done; thou true and faithful servant.”

18 JUNE 1931 - UNION JACK, CANADIAN ENSIGN (FLAGS.)

It will be noted that, in many of the earlier photographs of Vancouver scenes, indeed even as recently as 1910, and perhaps still more recently, that the most common flag flown in Vancouver on holidays and ceremonial occasions is the Canadian naval ensign, and not the Union Jack.

The practice dates back to Dominion Day, 1887, and has a connection with the earlier history of Vancouver, its association with the Canadian Pacific Railway, and the “Confederation Terms,” all of which are insolubly linked with the establishment of Vancouver as a city. In Vancouver, there was a distinct “Canadian” atmosphere, as opposed to the “British” atmosphere of crown colony days, and the older cities of Victoria and Westminster.

As an instance of the extensive use of the Canadian merchant vessel ensign (red field) there is cited a brochure entitled *Educational Institutions of Vancouver—VANCOUVER CITY SCHOOLS* issued in 1910 by the Board of School Trustees of Vancouver, showing the Canadian merchant vessel ensign being hoisted by school boys on the school flagpole. The Union Jack is now used.

Today probably three quarters of the flags used are Union Jacks, and one quarter Canadian ensign. A campaign, sponsored by the Canadian Club and other patriotic institutions before, during and after the War, together with numerous articles explaining the structure of the Union Flag, and editorials and letters pointing out that the ensign was not the national flag, gradually turned the scale of sentiment in favour of the use of the Union Jack. The Elks, a fraternal organisation, did splendid service; they annually distributed thousands of small Union Jacks at their great Children’s Picnic in Hastings Park. Ignorance, more than anything else, of what was the national flag of Canada, was responsible for the earlier use of the merchant ensign; many thought it was the especial flag of the Dominion. Major C. Gardner Johnson presented one, purchased at his own expense, to fly over the Court House. The court registrar, Mr. Beck, declined to accept the Canadian ensign.