

Early Vancouver

Volume One

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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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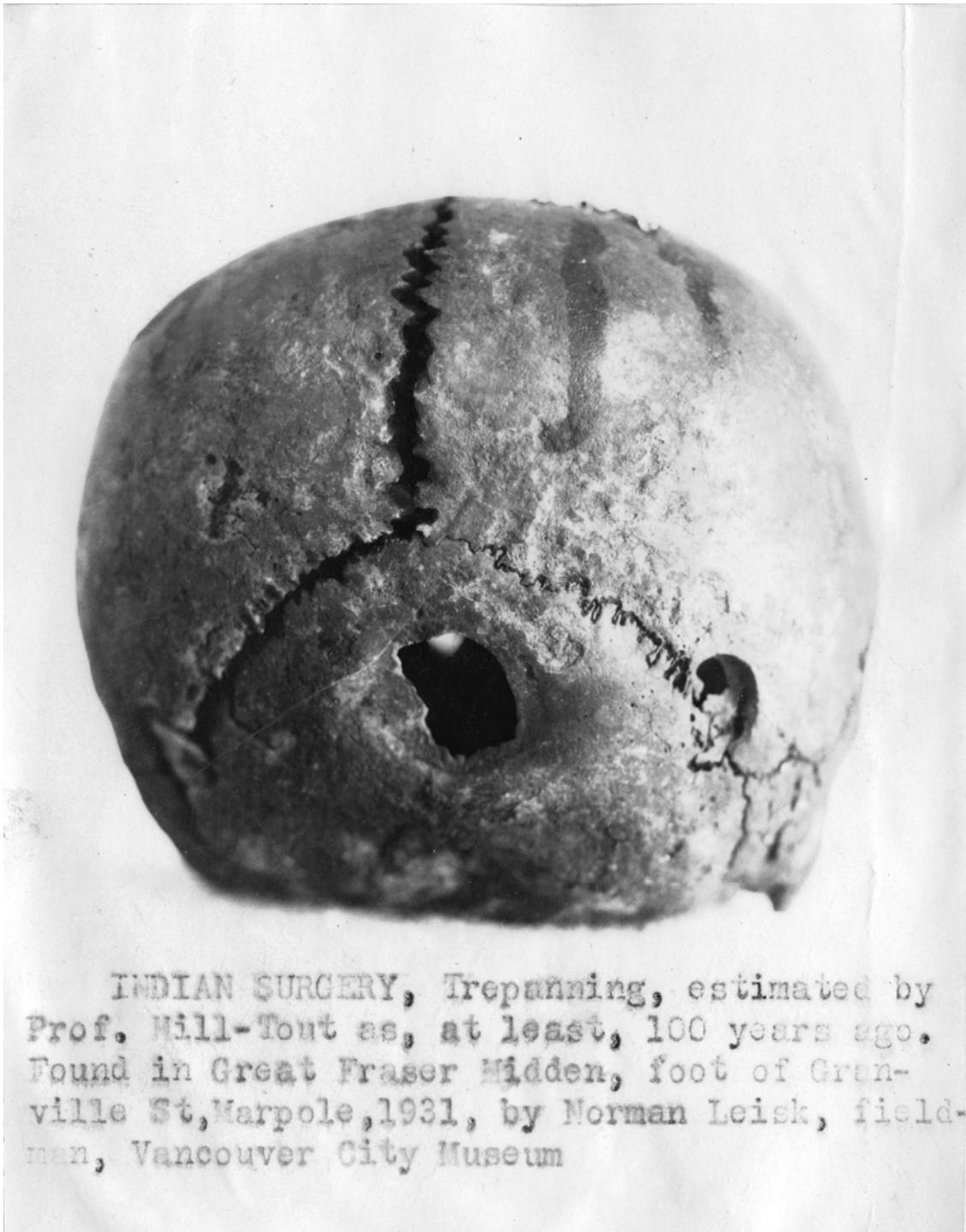
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Item # EarlyVan_v1_0029



Item # EarlyVan_v1_0030

22 JUNE 1931 - ANCIENT VILLAGES OF VANCOUVER. INDIANS. KITSILANO.

The Callands, of Point Grey Road and Trafalgar Street, are very old residents of Kitsilano; they went there some time after 1902; it was Mr. Calland who changed the names of the old streets to those of five famous battles.

Mrs. Calland told me that when Mayor Bethune built his house on Point Grey Road—it was on the waterfront side, halfway between Bayswater and Balaclava streets, about where J.W. Hobbs lives now—they uncovered an enormous clam shell midden. So far as she recalls, it was just levelled off, and much of it may be there, undisturbed, yet.

She said that there was another clam shell midden where Felix Smith—now in the Marpole Home for Incurables—built his home, almost exactly at the foot of Macdonald Street. When Mrs. Calland went to first live in Kitsilano, it was a wilderness of forest; she is a highly intellectual woman, a life member of the Art, Historical Society, so that she *knows*. These were, she said, the only two middens she knew of as being along the Point Grey Road.

I have sometimes thought that the triangular, low heap of fertile ground upon which Mr. Sam Greer built the first house in Kitsilano—it was an acre or more at the foot of Yew Street—a little to the east of the foot, was an old clam shell heap. A small forest rill formerly entered the sea at almost the exact spot where the street car crosses Yew Street, and it would be natural for the Indians to camp there. Along near the middle of the beach was a larger creek, but all near and behind it was muskeg, damp and wet.

Professor Hill-Tout, one of the greatest living authorities on Indian middens, once told me that in early days the Indian villages all the way from Point Grey to Point Atkinson must have been so close together that the occupants ought to have been able to almost shout from one to the other. It is presumed that very early settlements of Indians on English Bay found the district most fruitful of supplies of food, and that consequently it was more densely populated than less favourable districts to the north and south on account of its proximity to the mouth of the Fraser River, and

the consequent superabundance of salmon; probably the most favoured location in hundreds of miles.

As an early resident, thirty years, at the mouth of False Creek, so far as I know, there were no middens between the C.P.R. tracks on Yew Street, and the Indian Reserve boundary, on the False Creek shore. A few clam shells, broken bits, could be found almost anywhere, but nothing more. Behind the beach was an extensive muskeg, along the cliff north of Ogden Street there was no trace of middens; all the higher land was clothed in heavy timber. But between the western boundary of the Indian Reserve there was a wide flat of sand running almost as far as the Burrard Street Bridge; beyond that the usual mud of False Creek. The Indian village was, in 1898-1907, *exactly under* the present Burrard Street Bridge. There may be some remains of middens along that shore, but I have never noticed any.

J.S. Matthews

Extract, *Daily News-Advertiser*, 9 July 1887, page 4.

"The Siwash rancherie below the Hastings Mill was the scene of another disgraceful disturbance on Thursday night. About a dozen Indians amused themselves by getting drunk," etc., etc.

The rancherie was cleared out about a week later. They had built themselves a number of shacks there, and became a nuisance.

JUNE 1931 - FIRST DOMINION DAY CELEBRATION, 1887. SEYMOUR BATTERY. WESTMINSTER RIFLES. SERGEANT MAJOR J.C. CORNISH.

In checking over my article on "Vancouver Celebrates Her First Dominion Day," published in the *Province*, 28 June 1930, with Sergeant Major J.C. Cornish, now of White Rock, where he was formerly a customs officer, he said:

"I was only eighteen when I joined the new Canadian permanent force just after Confederation. You will see me in my winter uniform in the photograph in my album, first page, in the Vancouver City Museum. There is also a photograph of C Battery, R.C.A., the first permanent unit of Canadian forces to arrive in B.C.; it has something about 'wish you a Merry Christmas' on a big notice.

"The uniform of the Seymour Battery of New Westminster, afterwards amalgamated with the B.C.B.G.A. as No. 1 Battery, was modelled on that of the Royal Artillery, a so-called bearskin busby, but actually made out of some other animal's fur. They had blue tunics, with red facings, and yellow braid.

"Lieutenant Chas McNaughten, the rifle shot" (see Laurie Bugle team photo, 1884, in Archives), "died in 1889. I was at his funeral, a military funeral, in New Westminster. A Mr. Fiennes-Clinton was one of our officers, perhaps it was Reverend Father Clinton."

Query: In the Sixth Regiment D.C.O.R. souvenir book, 1907, it reads that the Seymour Battery had the same uniform as the Royal Artillery, minus the red shoulder straps and monogram 'VRI'?

Answer: "The Royal Artillery never had red shoulder straps; they had blue shoulder straps with an edging of red. I don't know about the 'VRI.'"

"The old records of the Westminster militia were not destroyed in the old Drill Hall on Clarkson Street. We moved over to the new Drill Hall, the one they now use, several years before the fire of 1898. The old Drill Hall on Clarkson Street must have fallen down, I suppose.

"The uniform of the New Westminster Rifles," said Captain F.R. Glover, formerly of the 72nd Seaforth Highlanders, later of the B.C. Electric Railway Company, and an officer of the Rifles in the early days, "was supposed to be exactly the same as the Rifle Brigade of the British army. I don't know that it actually was, or that all of us had it. Some of us, I had, served in the East" (eastern Canada) "before we came out to B.C., and so had our uniforms; perhaps others did, so