

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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H.P. McCraney., Carter Cotton (*F.C. Carter-Cotton*), Mr Powell, Mr Hearshal [*Hersberg. Criticism, H.P. McCraney.*], Mr. Mouat, Tom Dun (*Dunn*), Mr McCraney (*H.P.*), George Pollay.

Mr Alexander handed in the books they had in use from the Hastings Sawmill. He was manager and their reading room was given up, at the Mill, and go to Cordova Street rooms.

To publish their endeavour a few lectures were given by Dr McGuigan and Rev. W. Pedley & C— and George Pollay had charge of the reading matter, & was first librarian. No salary attached to it till it was in progress two years before the City gave any help.

Truthful account

Janet S. Pollay

743 18th Ave E.

Mrs. Pollay preserves her faculties, conversed freely, and naturally, at her age, somewhat feeble. She receives the Old Age Pensions allowance of \$20 per month, but protests it is not, in her case, "Old Age," but an allowance as a pioneer. Her personal estate, she said, was almost negative.

Mrs. Pollay was born August 5th, and in 1931 was 90. She was 92 on 5 August 1933, and still residing with her niece Mrs. M.M. Nightingale, 743 East 18th Avenue, Vancouver.

A framed photograph of Mr. Pollay is in the Public Library.

26 NOVEMBER 1931 - C.P.R. RESERVE ON FALSE CREEK. CAMBIE STREET. HOMER STREET. THE IMPERIAL OIL COMPANY LIMITED.

In 1899 to 1903 (the writer was a clerk in their employ), the Imperial Oil Company Limited, a company formed on 1 January 1899 by the amalgamation of a group of Canadian oil companies controlled by the Standard Oil Company, with the old Imperial Oil Company Limited, had a warehouse at the foot of Cambie Street, where it still occupies an enlarged premises on the same site.

They had one team of horses which pulled a "gooseneck" low-hung wagon, usually loaded with cases of "Eocene," "Pearl," and "Astral" coal oil in barrels and cases, and was the only warehouse supplying oil (in Vancouver) for illuminating purposes. It was a monopoly.

Bud Mulligan, the former, made a personal arrangement with the C.P.R. Land Department for the use of all their land between and bounded by Cambie and Homer streets on the north and west, and False Creek on the east up as far as the roundhouse, for grazing the team of horses on Sundays. The charge was \$10 per year, and they were to maintain the fence, a ramshackle affair, on Homer Street and Smythe Street—the other side, where the railway passed, was unfenced.

The ground was a rough pasture, quite well covered with grass, some small trees 10 or 20 feet high, willows, elms, etc., and must have been in extent 20 or 25 acres.

Most of the area thus rented was afterwards built upon, and large warehouses with tracks now stand there. At the corner of Homer and Smythe streets, a park for recreation and baseball games was in operation for several years, and it was there that the memorial services for H.M. King Edward VII were held in May 1911, and also where the Japanese sailors from the warships *Aso* and *Soya* (captured Russian warships) were entertained. Since at least 1920, it has stood barren and bare, until 1931 when a new warehouse has been erected on Homer Street at the foot of Nelson Street.

28 NOVEMBER 1931 - LIEUTENANT COLONEL WILLIAM HART-MCHARG.

At a Canadian Club luncheon to Lord Northcliffe held in the old hall, upstairs at the southwest corner of Howe and Pender streets about 1910 or 1911, Colonel McHarg acted as president. I sat on the opposite side of the table, facing them. The following titbit was overheard:

Colonel McHarg: "How many newspapers have you now?"

Lord Northcliffe: "Thirty-four."

Colonel McHarg: "What policy do you adopt with your opponents?"

Lord Northcliffe: "Never mention them. You see, no matter what you say there is always someone who disagrees with you, and then you have helped your opponent. If you even mention his name you have given him a certain amount of advertisement."

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At the time of this conversation, Lord Northcliffe owned the *London Times*.

28 NOVEMBER 1931 - THE CANADIAN ANTHEM, "O CANADA."

Mr. J.R.V. Dunlop (Jim Dunlop) who has now been secretary of the Vancouver Canadian Club for approximately twenty-two years—almost since its inception about 1908—told me some time ago that "O Canada" (Buchan version) was composed by General Larry Buchan in the berth of a Canadian Pacific Railway sleeping coach during a sleepless night. General Buchan was returning east after a visit to his brother (manager of the Bank of Hamilton on the corner of Hastings and Hamilton streets) in Vancouver. Ewing Buchan, the brother, was one of the first presidents of the Vancouver Canadian Club.

Mr. Dunlop said that during General Buchan's visit to Vancouver the suitability of the wording of previous versions had come up, and General Buchan, being troubled with sleeplessness, took advantage of the first night after leaving Vancouver on the train to compose a new version. The manuscript was kept by him until he reached the east, and then returned to his brother who, together with one or more others, made some slight alterations, and returned the manuscript to General Buchan. The corrected manuscript soon afterwards appeared in printed form on cards before each guest or member at a Vancouver Canadian Club luncheon. It was first sung at a Canadian Club luncheon in Vancouver by three gentlemen— Captain James Sclater of the 6th Regiment D.C.O.R., Captain W. Hart-McHarg of the same regiment, and a third member of the club whose name I do not recall—this being the method of introducing it. This was the first occasion upon which it was publicly sung in Canada.

I distinctly remember the cards at the luncheon to Lord Northcliffe, afterwards, or then, proprietor of the *London Times*, held in the old hall upstairs at the corner of Howe and Pender Street West. This would be about 1910 or 1911, but it was sung long before this, because the first time I attended, I was a stranger and sat at a lower table with a friend, but when Lord Northcliffe lunched, I sat across the table, in front of Lord Northcliffe and Colonel McHarg who I think was vice-president and acting for Ewing Buchan, president, but absent.

J.S. Matthews

NOTE ADDED LATER:

O Canada

I am almost sure the third gentleman was a Mr. Milne, and I thought his name was James, but perhaps it was Andrew. Andrew Milne, who died about 7 October 1943, was a vocalist who came to Vancouver in 1907, and was for 34 years organist of St. John's (Presbyterian) Church. Captain James Sclater was very Scottish, too, and a first class vocalist. Captain Sclater and Captain McHarg were fellow officers in the old 6th Regiment