

Early Vancouver

Volume Two

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

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Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1932.

Supplemental to volume one collected in 1931.

About the 2011 Edition

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AUGUST KITSILANO.

The following is a copy of a statement made by August Jack or August Kitsilano, grandson of Chief Haatsalanough of Chaythoos and Squamish, to Major J.S. Matthews, 8 August 1932.

It is a hastily drawn up paper, typewritten by Major Matthews as August Kitsilano talked.

The Archives
Old City Hall
Main Street
Vancouver, B.C.

8 August 1932

This is the way it is. Haatsa-lah-nough was born at Toktakamik [*or Tuk-tpak-mik*], Squamish River. He was dead in Stanley Park here [*died in Stanley Park*], bury him Squamish. My father was Supplejack, his Indian name was Hay-tilk, [*Tate says, "I knew a Hra-tilt," Paull says, "Hey-tulk"*] and he was died in the Stanley Park, and they had him in a, you know, it is *not* buried; that is, the way, you know, how they used to do; they make little house, all glass around it; and after that they move him to Squamish, bury him, oh, that was, may be, that was the time they were making that road, Stanley Park, and they move him. They have little house, my father was inside, [*flying in a canoe – JSM*] they have glass all around, and red blankets on top, on the top of house.

Haatsa-lah-nough did not move to Snauq, just his brother Chip-kaay-am. Haatsa-lah-nough, he died before we move to Snauq. Chip-kaay-am was the first one to go to Snauq to live. His brother-in-law Hay-not-tem go with him, I could not say how long ago, long time ago. Chip-kaay-am was buried in graveyard at Snauq. Haatsa-lah-nough was the chief at Tookparkamike. Chip-kaay-am come from Squamish and go to Snauq; my father, his brother, go to Stanley Park, just below Whoi-Whoi [*Lumberman's Arch*] to Chaysloos, means high bank, like that [*gesticulates with hand high above head*] west of where the stream comes out of the little lake you call Beaver Lake. You know where that pipe line crosses to Capilano, you see that clear place, that is the place.

My mother was Sally, Indian name Qwhay-wat, born at Yek-waup-sum Reserve, Squamish, she came with my father from Squamish. She died in Snauq, False Creek, about twenty-six years ago, and is buried at Squamish, buried at Yekwaupsum graves. Haatsalanough's wife died before I was born, don't know her name. I remember my mother telling me about my grandfather very well; he was pretty husky, big, strong, stout man, but pretty old. Haatsalanough died when I was about three years old, and that is what my mother was telling me about my grandfather.

I asked August Jack if "Capilano" was the title of the chief of the Squamish tribe, and "Haatsalanough" the vice-chief of the Squamish tribe before the white man came. (See Hill-Tout, page 476, *Ethnological Survey of Canada*, B.A.A.S. Bradford meeting, 1900, who says he was; also see Andrew Paull, secretary Squamish Indian Council, who, 1932, says this is incorrect.) August Kitsilano replied:

No. They did not make one man the big chief over a number of lesser ones; all were equal, and ruled in their own reserves only. You see, coming down Squamish River, there are four reserves. Each one had its own chief, all equal; they did not make any one bigger than the other.

So when Haatsalanough moved to Stanley Park, he did not give up his position as chief at Took-tak-mek; they simply moved back and forth, dried some smelts, salmon, clams, berries; and when the winter came on, went back to Squamish.

My father Hay-tilk [*Supplejack*] had a brother. His whitemans name was Peter, his Indian name Kee-olst [*or Kee-olch.*] He is dead, buried at Musqueam. His wife was from Musqueam, and he stayed there all the time. I don't know her name. They had children; all dead excepting two. Alex is the oldest, Lucy is the youngest. Alex lives at Musqueam; Lucy is staying at North Vancouver Mission, not married. Alex must be about 48 now.

My brothers and sisters were Louisa, the oldest; she died at Snauq, buried at Poquiosin Reserve, she married Mr. Burds, whiteman, and has two children now living: a daughter who married a whiteman who lives over by Magee Road; a son is at North Vancouver, Dave Burds.

Cecile is next; all her children are dead. She married Joe Isaacs, Indian; she is dead. Willie Jack, my brother, was next. He died. He had a big family, but all died. When my father died, my mother some years afterwards married Jericho Charlie, his Indian name Chin-nal-sut. I have a half-brother, their son is Dominic. He has children.

I am the youngest and only one living. My children are Emma, Celistine, Wilfred, Irene and Louisa; all same mother; my wife's name is Marriane [*or Marrion*], her Indian name Swanamia. She is the only one now who wears a shawl; all the other Indian women wear coats now. My first wife died; no children.

(signed) August Jack Kitsilano

Witness: J.S. Matthews

Note: this statement was read over to August—he cannot read or write—and he approved of it, and signed his name in ink—I guided his hand and pen.

August distinctly pronounces Kitsilano as Haatsalano, not Khaatsa. Hill-Tout says Khaat, Tate says “no, Haats.” Every indication is that Hill-Tout put in one too many Ks.

Letter, No. 4806 from F.J.C. Ball, Indian Agent, 822 Metropolitan Building, Vancouver, 12 August 1932:

“I regret that we have no record of birth, death or marriage of the father of August Jack, but according to our records there are no surviving children other than August Jack, whose age is shown on our books as 54 (fifty-four) but there is no baptismal certificate on file.” (The certificate is in City Archives.)

AUGUST (JACK) KITSILANO OR HAATSALANO.

Conversation with August Jack, son of Hay-tulk (Supplejack), grandson of Chief Haatsa-lah-nough of Chaythoos, Stanley Park, 7 July 1932.

“I don't know my great-grandfather's name; it was not Haatsa-la-nough, but he had at least two sons, for one was my grandfather and the other his brother Chief Chip-kaay-am, called Chief George. My mother told me my grandfather Haatsalanough's hair was quite black when he died; she remarked especially upon it at his advanced age; it was ninety or more when he died. He had lived at Tooktakamai, up the Squamish River; he was born there.

“Haatsalahnough and his brother Chip-kaay-am came down from Squamish. Chip-kaay-am was the first man to settle and build a village at Snauq” (Kitsilano Indian Reserve) “where he and his brother-in-law, Hay-not-em, the father of Chief Andrews, built a great potlatch house. Chip-kaay-am was known as a good kind man” (see Rev. C.M. Tate) “and a devout Christian. He was known as Chief George by the whitemen, and lived at Snauq all the time except when they were up the Squamish in the summertime drying salmon. He died without son or sons, but had one daughter, who married a white man, John Beatty, and they had one daughter, living in Vancouver now. I do not know when it was that Haatsalanough first settled at Chaythoos, or when his brother Chip-kaay-am settled at Snauq, but they were both young men when they settled, and they were old ones when they died. Chip-kaay-am was buried at Snauq in the graveyard close to the Burrard Street bridge at Cedar Street and First Avenue, so it must have been a long time ago. His wife, my grandmother, died before I was born” (about 1877.) “Chip-kaay-am” (or Chip-Kaay-m) “was chief of the Snauq band.

“Haatsalahnough went to Chaythoos, ‘high bank’ in Stanley Park, just east of Prospect Point, a little clear space where the water pipe line enters Stanley Park. He died, and was buried at Chaythoos. His house was close to a little creek at Chaythoos. I must have been about three years old when he died; that would be about 1878 or thereabouts. There is no truth in the story that he came from Point Roberts; these young fellows get hold of all sorts of funny stories; that is a legend of another Haatsalahnough.

“Then Haatsalahnough went to Snauq—lived at Chaythoos—it was probably to catch fish on the big sand bar on which Granville Island in False Creek now stands. The big bar was twenty or more acres in extent, dry at low tide, and the Indians had from time immemorial had a fish corral there; two converging fences of brush in the water made from hurdles of twisted vine maple fastened to sharpened stakes driven in the mud to guide the flounders and smelts in the narrow part where they were trapped.” (Note: Paull says the fine nets were made from the fibres of the stinging nettle.)

“My father was Hay-tilk” (or Hay-tulk, according to Paull, and Hra-tilt, according to Tate) “or ‘Supplejack’; that’s how I get the name August Jack—it should be Supplejack. He died when I was just old enough to cut wood—about six years old. He had two houses, one at Snauq, and one at Chaythoos. We moved from one to the other, from Kitsilano to Stanley Park, and then back again, as it suited us. He died when he was about seventy at Chaythoos, and they put his body in a little house of glass” (see W.A. Grafton, volume 3) “with red blankets on top, the way they used to do—they don’t do it now—and buried him there at Chaythoos. Then when they cut the driveway around Stanley Park our house was in the way, and we moved over to Snauq. Father’s remains were exhumed and taken to Squamish for reinterment.” (See earlier in this volume for location of grave.)

“My mother, Qwhay-wat, or Sally, was born at Yekwaupsum, Squamish River, and died at Snauq about 1906, and is now buried at Yekwaupsum graves. After my father died, she remarried.

“My step-father was Jericho Charlie. He used to work for Jerry Rogers out at Jericho, he had a big canoe, would carry a ton or more, and I remember how he used to go from the old Hastings Sawmill to Jericho with it loaded with hay and oats for the horses and oxen working at Jerry Rogers’ logging camp there.

“My wife’s name is Swanamia; she is the only one left now who wears a shawl; all the rest of the Indian women have now taken to coats. Her English name is Mary Anne. Our children are Wilfred William and Louise.” (Note: Indian Affairs office says Mary Anne, 51; August Jack, 54; Wilfred William, adopted son, 22; and Louise, 12 years, all in 1932.) “I had three sisters and a brother. Louisa, the eldest child, then Cecile, Agnes, Willie, all dead, and myself the youngest—I am 56. They left no children; I am the only one left. I had no schooling, cannot read or write—I wish I could, but Mother was a widow, and I had to look after her until she married Jericho Charlie.

“I have heard my step-father, Jericho Charlie, tell about the first whiteman the Indians ever saw.” (Note: see narrative, 26 October 1932.) “Jericho Charlie was a very old man, about seventy I should think, when he fell off the Kitsilano” (C.P.R.) “trestle bridge about thirty years ago, so that his memory would take him back to about 1840. The old people used to talk a great deal about the coming of the whiteman, but I did not pay the attention I should have. Of one thing I am quite sure, that there were white men up at Squamish before Mr. Vancouver came to English Bay.

“After my father died, we moved to Snauq, and it was from there that I saw Vancouver burn in June 1886; afterwards, as a boy, I used to go over and search in the ruins for nails. When we went to Gastown, we went by canoe down by the Royal City Planing Mills at the south end of Carrall Street and across over to Burrard Inlet on a sort of wagon trail. There was no trail which I know of from Smamchuze at the foot of Howe Street across through the forest to Gastown; what would be the use of struggling through the bush when it was so easy to paddle?” (Note: generally speaking, the Indian would never walk if he could go by canoe.)

“The name I go by is August Jack; that is, August, son of Supplejack, but according to the whitemans usage, I should be August Haatsalanough; anyway, I have assumed that name; sometimes I sign my name Kitsilano, sometimes Haatsalano.

“The Squamish Indians could not understand the language of the Sechelts, but could make themselves understood, but not converse properly. Then again, the Indians up at Powell River spoke another language to the Sechelts. The name by which the Squamish knew the Capilano River was Humultcheson; it was the whiteman who gave it the name Capilano. The ‘Old Chief’ was Capilano, then came his son, Chief Lah-wa, drowned in the First Narrows. Chief Lah-wa’s sister was Chief Tom’s wife, and she wanted Joe to be chief. At first, Joe got the cognomen of Capilano Joe, then Joe Capilano. Chief Matthias Capilano is Chief Joe’s son, but he is officially called Matthias Joe.”

“The Indians moved away from Snauq in 1911,” (The last Indian departed 11 April 1913, “Old Man Jim,” wife and son. JSM) “and the remains of those buried in the graveyard on the reserve close to First Avenue about the foot of Fir or Cedar Street were exhumed and taken for reburial at Squamish. The orchard went to ruin, the fences fell down, and the houses were destroyed; a few hops survived and continued to grow until the building of the Burrard Bridge covered them up. I received a formal invitation to be present at the opening of the great bridge as a guest of the city.”

CHULKS—KEW BEACH, WEST VANCOUVER. CONVERSATION WITH AUGUST KITSILANO, 20 DECEMBER 1932.

“This is the way it is about the big boulder at Chulks. There is a point there, and on the south side, facing south, is a big hole in the rock, and a big stone about five or six feet in diameter in the hole. When the Gods were fixing the geography of the earth, they threw this stone at the top of Mount Garibaldi, that is Chy-kai. Chy-kai is the mountain; Che-kai is the creek. The stone missed the mountain and landed at Chulks, and is there yet for you to see. Squamish Indians were very powerful.

“One of the Gods put the boulder in a sling, and then swung the sling around and around his head to work up speed and force; somehow the sling as it flew around touched something—some say a raven’s wing, others that a slave got in the way of the thrower—touched his arm, spoiled his aim, and the big stone missed the mountain, and now you see it in the crevasse, a big stone five or six feet in diameter in the crevasse facing due south at Chulks. That shows you what power the Squamish Indians had in those days; that’s power.”

Do you believe it? I asked, smiling, and expecting that he would return the smile, but to my surprise and regret at having smiled, he replied most earnestly and vigorously:

“Of course, I believe it; I tell you, it’s true. To show you: in the early days, they once cut a man open, split him down the middle from the top of his head, front to back, all the way down, so that he was open right through, and then they put him in the fire and roast him; the grease run out. Then the eight powerful men start to work to fix him up again. Squamish Indians were very powerful once; could do anything.”

Are they the same eight as those who came before the Indians and were turned into stone at Homulson? I asked.

“No,” replied August, “that’s a different lot; not the same men. These powerful men of whom I speak were Squamish. Well, they sew him up, and after a little while, after they work on him, he get up and walk.

“These eight men were just like other men, only very much power. They live just like wild, only they were not wild. They go up in the mountains, stay in the mountains ten years, wash themselves, wash themselves, good and clean. Then they get power, power to do anything.” (See Hill-Tout, Report, B.A.A.S., 1900 and 1902.) “Then, after they fix him up, they say to the man, ‘See that sawbill? You run race with that sawbill.’ Sawbill duck fly very fast, but the man they fix up run a race with that sawbill, and he won the race; that will show you how powerful those Squamish Indians were in those early days.

“When I was twelve years old, I see the last two of these eight powerful men at Jericho—all the rest dead; the two very old—catching smelts there. My mother Qwhay-wat, she show them to me, and tell me they were the only two living of the eight powerful men. When I was a child, my mother marry again; marry Jericho Charlie, his Indian name Chin-ow-sut. Chin-ow-sut come from twenty-five miles up the Squamish River; his father was the greatest hunter in the Squamish. He killed the biggest grizzly with bow and arrow.”

Comment: it was very strange to hear August Kitsilano, a splendid manly Indian full of worldly wisdom, energy and integrity in ordinary affairs, credited with sound judgment by those who know him, and well able to and does manage the difficulties of his logging business, getting logs out of the woods, down the river, a resourceful man highly regarded by the Indian agent, Mr. Ball, for his worth. August is a mild mannered man, with a pleasant smile when he smiles, and dignified when he does not. He used the telephone, has a rough idea of banking, log scale sheets, etc., but never learned to write or read. He once said to me a wisdom. It was, “Those young fellows never begin to think until the meeting has started; I lie in bed and plan the whole thing out before I get there.”