

## **Early Vancouver**

### **Volume Two**

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

**2011 Edition (Originally Published 1933)**

*Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1932.*

*Supplemental to volume one collected in 1931.*

### **About the 2011 Edition**

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### **MANUAL TRAINING IN SCHOOLS.**

Mrs. Reid writes, 6 March 1933: "About 1898, I saw through the daily papers, that Sir William Macdonald, the tobacco king, a native of P.E.I." (her husband was a P.E.I.-er) "was endowing a manual training school in the capital cities of each province. I being a native of P.E.I. and on the school board, wrote him saying that Vancouver was much bigger than Victoria. He replied and sent a pamphlet saying that he would be very pleased to give it to Vancouver."

### **AFFILIATION WITH MCGILL UNIVERSITY.**

"About the same time, a number of our High School students" (old High School on Dunsmuir Street) "were ready for university, and their parents could not afford to send them away. So I, as school trustee, along with my other colleagues, started arrangements with McGill which was very shortly completed, and enabled the students to take two years course at home. This was the time that the late Dr. McGuigan and myself were appointed governors."

Christina Reid.

### **EARLY LACROSSE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.**

Conversation with James A. Smith, moving picture censor, and Mrs. Smith, at their residence, 5826 Sperling Avenue, Vancouver, 14 May 1932.

"It must have been about the 21<sup>st</sup> or 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1888," said Mr. Smith. "We, that is, my brother David and I, had arrived in Vancouver from Winnipeg on the previous 5<sup>th</sup> April, and had started a little store where we sold carpets on Water Street, north side, opposite the Carter house—the back part of the store was over the water of the inlet—the rats used to climb the piles at the back and reach the platform—when Mr. A.E. Suckling, sobriquet 'Bony,' now of the Vancouver Breweries Limited, and Mr. J.B. Simpson, sobriquet 'Simmy,' came and asked if we would play lacrosse. I had known Mr. Suckling, had played lacrosse with him in Winnipeg, and he knew that both Dave and I could play; all three of us were keen lacrosse men in Winnipeg. Mr. Suckling had been arranging a game with some men in Victoria, and on the Queen's Birthday that year we went over to Victoria and played, to my belief, the first game of lacrosse played in British Columbia. Mr. Suckling was undoubtedly the father of lacrosse in British Columbia. The game was played on Beacon Hill, and we won.

"At the time the Victoria people were without a lacrosse team, and it was as a result of Mr. Suckling's endeavours that this game was played; he had been in correspondence with Mr. W.G. McKenzie, at that time of Victoria, afterwards manager of the old hardware firm, Wood, Vallance and Leggat Ltd., here.

"On Dominion Day that year the Victoria team came over from Victoria to Vancouver, and played a return game. This time they won, but sometime in the fall we again went to Victoria, and by winning that game, became the first lacrosse champions in British Columbia.

"At that time the Westminster people took little or no interest in lacrosse, at any rate, they had no lacrosse team. I forget the exact date but sometime the following spring we went over to New Westminster and played against a team gathered together somehow on a couple of lots; I don't just know but it was near a judge's residence. I doubt if the 'field' was larger than 100 feet by 100 feet, and there were a number of small stumps scattered about it. We had to loan the Westminster team two or three men so that they could play, and also some equipment. From that time on, lacrosse prospered in New Westminster; the Westminster boys took to the game; the thing grew. Among those whom I recall was Jack Whyte, afterwards Lt. Col. J.C. Whyte and warden of the Penitentiary; and W. Cullen, the King's Printer; whole families took to it, for instance, there were the Peele boys, the Giffords, and the Rennies."

Query: What killed it?

"Professionalism; lacrosse thrives as an amateur game only."

Query: Is there any truth in the story which A.E. Beck tells that the New Westminster lacrosse team got the nickname "Salmonbellies" on the Cambie Street grounds?

"Well, we named them that, and I presume that was how it was; very likely."

### **LOST IN THE KERRISDALE FOREST.**

“It must have been a week, perhaps ten days after we arrived, that I decided that I would do a little shooting, so I took my gun and started off across False Creek, crossing the False Creek bridge at Westminster Avenue, went towards Mount Pleasant a little piece, and then turned west on a trail going towards the Leamy and Kyle Mill, just west of Cambie Street. The trail was just a trail through the forest; it was all trees, forest everywhere at that time, why, over in the ‘West End’ there was a quarter of a mile of it from Coal Harbour to English Bay which was cut down a year or so later. Anyway I followed the trail, from Westminster Avenue down as far as the mill—I think the trail led on to Jericho; I think it crossed Granville Street about 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and then went down to Kitsilano Beach and Point Grey Road—anyway, after I got to Leamy and Kyle’s mill, I took a logging road up the hill into the woods. I shot a grouse, and kept on, and the first thing I knew I was lost. You know how logging trails vanish into nowhere, and you cannot locate them again. The trees were high above me; I could not see; then it began to rain, and I could not tell by the sun which was north or anything else. It occurred to me that if I went downhill I must ultimately come to the sea, so I started to head downhill. Unfortunately for me—so I have since conjectured—the ground must have sloped west, for after considerable travel I came to a very steep slope, and slid down it for a good many yards. There is no such slope that I know of, and I know Vancouver well, which exists other than the one where the B.C. Electric interurban tram twists and turns past Strathcona, above Quilchena Golf Links on its way to Kerrisdale. I kept on, and soon struck a small rill with about two inches of water in it, and I followed that. I had to take to the middle of it, for both sides were lined with thistle. I kept on, and about five that evening struck the sea on English Bay near what is now the foot of Balaclava Street, about where Mrs. J.Z. Hall of ‘Killarney’ now lives; there was a cannery on the shore there. I had left Vancouver at 8 a.m., and it was getting on towards dusk. I was tired.”

### **GREER’S BEACH.**

“Once I struck the sea, of course, all was easy. I struck out along the shore, passed Sam Greer’s cottage, a bit of a cottage which stood back of where the Kitsilano Bathhouse is now, and took to the C.P.R. tracks. A few yards from the beach, perhaps 100 yards, there was a sort of natural pond in the muskeg.” (Note: between Maple Street and Laburnum.) “It was dusk, and in it were five fine ducks; I got three of them. I kept on, crossed the trestle bridge, and finally got to our house on Hastings Street, a few feet west of the present temporary City Hall in the Holden Building; that was when my eldest son Arthur was born.”

### **SPERLING AVENUE AND 41ST AVENUE, KERRISDALE.**

“It is difficult to credit, but it’s fact just the same, that this avenue, Sperling, now with splendid residences, superb lawns, flowers, shrubs, concrete street with concrete curbs and walks, cannot be more than half a mile from where I was lost and slid down that slope. When we first came to Sperling Avenue, No. 5826, seven years ago, there was nothing more than a trail in the clearing from 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue southwards. Building proceeded at a great pace for a year or several years; now it has practically ceased; one reason of course the lots are all built upon; another the difficult financial conditions. A little town has sprung up quite recently at 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Granville Street; anyway, the corner lots are built upon, and recently the bus has started to run from there down Granville Street to the south.”