

Early Vancouver

Volume Two

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Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1932.

Supplemental to volume one collected in 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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was 'flat broke,' had not a cent in the world, but kept on going for a week or two. Just then the superintendent of missions from Toronto came along, and he said to the Rev. Mr. Crosby who was in charge of Nanaimo, 'Why not start a school, do you think you could find a teacher?' Mr. Crosby replied, 'Yes, one right here, one who has been teaching them voluntarily.' I got the appointment, at \$300 a year and paid my own expenses.

"My directions I got from the Mission Board at Toronto; my salary gradually rose until it reached \$500, always without travelling allowance, and out of which I had to find my own horse, or canoe, or steamboat fare and expenses; pretty hard going at times with sugar at 25¢ a pound and other things in proportion.

"How did I obtain my ordination? Well, I can best explain that, perhaps, by relating the story of a question which was once asked me when travelling in eastern Canada. A gentlemen enquired of me what college I had been in. I replied that I had been in most of the colleges of Canada and the United States, but that my collegiate training I got mostly in a canoe or on horseback; that was where I did most of my studying.

"When it came to the actual ordination which was in Victoria at the time of the Methodist Conference of 1879, I had already passed my examinations, but as a final test, was required to preach a sermon before three examiners. My examiners and I repaired to the Indian church on Herald Street and with the three examiners and Indians as my congregation, I preached a sermon in the Ankameenum Indian language, that is, the language of the Indians on the east coast of Vancouver Island; not one word of which my examiners understood.

"Next morning, to my astonishment, I listened to a most glorious report upon my preaching given by my examiners to the conference, and"—here Mr. Tate smiled—"I was ordained."

THE GREAT FIRE. REV. JOSEPH HALL.

"The Rev. Joseph Hall succeeded the Rev. Thos. Derrick in 1884, and it was he who was in charge when the Great Fire destroyed church, parsonage and stable. The stable for the two cows had been built in 1885, and, together with the cows, was owned by Mr. Hall. During the fire one cow escaped along the beach; the other was burned to death. I was in Chilliwack at the time of the fire; a good deal of smoke passed over the valley, some ashes, and small pieces of burned shingles.

"After the fire, neither parsonage nor church was rebuilt, but instead on the same lot there was erected the well-known Methodist Hall, which good service for our devotional exercises as well as for church services for such organizations as the Orangemen, for concerts, indeed I believe it was there that the first band concert of Vancouver's first brass band was held. Previous to the erection of the Methodist Hall, we held our services in the Hastings school house, together with the Anglican clergy, and an organ was purchased by public subscription and used by both denominations."

HOMER STREET METHODIST CHURCH

"As the city began to assume proportions, the old building and the lot were sold for \$8,000, and the money formed the nucleus of a fund with which the Homer Street Methodist Church, erected on the northwest corner of Homer and Dunsmuir, was built. The Rev. Ebenezer Robson was then minister; his son is in Vancouver.

"The old Methodist Hall was, after sale, used as a grain and feed store, first I think by Mr. Arkell, then by Mr. Fred Allen, and just before it was torn down in February 1924 by Rainsford and Co., wholesale fruit warehousemen."

Note: there was burned church, parsonage, stable and hall. The hall was new, had been opened on 23 May 1886 by Rev. Ebenezer Robson; the hall only was rebuilt, in the fall, after Fire; same shape, same size.

Marginal note by Prof. Hill-Tout in reviewing manuscript: "Mr. Tate is wrong in saying the 'Ankameenum,' otherwise called 'Malkomalem,' is the language of the West Coast. It is the tongue of the River Indians from Yale downwards, otherwise know as the 'Cowachin' tongue."

"I was told that the Musqueam Indians did not speak the Squamish tongue, but the River dialect."

THE INDIAN CHURCH AT GASTOWN.

Dick Isaacs, Indian name Que-yah-chulk, North Vancouver Indian Reserve, 14 October 1932.

"I remember old Indian Church over Gastown quite well. Little bit of place on shore. Not sideways to shore; one end nearest water. No tower like over here North Vancouver, but just little bit tower and bell. Inside not fixed up like Catholic fix up church, just plain, 'bout thirty feet long, wide enough for three benches for us to sit on, all in a row across church.

"Lots Indians go there from Whoi-Whoi" (Lumberman's Arch, Stanley Park). "Big settlement Indians Whoi-Whoi. Mr. Daylick" (Derrick) "was first minister I remember, then Mr. Bryant, Mr. Tate come sometimes too.

"I remember old chief Capilano. I don't know how old I am, may be 60, may be 70. When old Capilano die his son Lah-wa be chief. Lah-wa get married in little Indian Church in Gastown to Fraser River Indian woman. Lah-wa get drowned, then Joe Capilano chief, he some relation old Capilano's wife." (Incorrect.) "Chief Joe was good Catholic, that's why they make him chief.

"'Portuguese Joe' was the first whiteman to keep store at Gastown. He had store by Indian church. When Portuguese Joe go there first just one white man, just Portuguese Joe. He build store by Indian church before Indian church come; Ben Wilson he build store just behind Portuguese Joe place.

"My sister Aunt Sally, Stanley Park" (a famous character) "Puchahls name place where C.P.R. Dock now; lots big trees, lots bushes, lots shade, not much sun at Puchahls."

NOTE ADDED LATER:

February 1935, August Jack Haatsalano: "The little church was, I should say, 32 feet by 18 feet." JSM. See above.

THE INDIAN CHURCH AT GRANVILLE.

Theo. Bryant.

Copy of letter from Theo. Bryant, son of the Rev. Cornelius Bryant, minister of the Methodist congregation, Granville:

Ladysmith, B.C.
27 August 1932

I remember the Indian Church quite well; it was built and finished when we moved there—about June or July 1878, I am not looking up records on date. The parsonage for the Methodist Church was facing the waterfront, and at the rear of the lot a narrow sidewalk passed along it towards the Coal Harbour end; the Indian church faced this sidewalk, and next to that was a cottage occupied, I think, by Archie (Isaac) Johns, who was customs officer—past that, towards Coal Harbour, was mostly cabins, and then Indian huts and camps of a temporary nature.

St. James Church was built while I lived there—remember the first clearing of it—a narrow sidewalk, or rather walk was between Hastings Mill and Granville along the waterfront—should say thirty or forty yards from the shore; the wagon road going to New Westminster ran nearly parallel to this; would say about 200 or 300 feet further from the shore, and this clearance for the church was made between these two highways; the men made the shingles right on the spot from cedar trees cut there—I remember watching them shaving the shingles with big drawing knife—those shingles would last for fifty years.

Perhaps originally the Indian church was open to the back so that the Indians came to the shore to go to church, but my father had lot cleared between the church and the shore, and fenced in—can remember meeting at this church of Indians, but don't think it was used often in my time,