

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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THE PASSING OF THE BEARD.

Corp. J.Z. Hall, the first soldier of Vancouver, 1885—husband of the well-known public spirited lady, Mrs. J.Z. Hall, née Jessie Columbia Greer, daughter of Sam Greer—wore a dark bushy beard in uniform—see photograph—as also did many other volunteer soldiers. Most of our pioneers wore beards.

“Ah, those were before the days of bare faced bishops,” mused the late Archbishop Matheson, Primate of All Canada (Anglican) when speaking in a reminiscent mood at a banquet the evening of the opening of the Anglican Theological College at Point Grey. The banquet was attended by many bishops from near and far, east and south, all of whom were “bare faced.”

A venerable old gentleman with enormous flowing white beard and shiny bald head spoke a kindly word to a little fairy girl of about four, “Fuffy Koko,” alias Frances Schofield, second daughter of Dr. S.J. Schofield, professor of Geology, U.B.C., whilst summering at Salt Spring Island about 1928. The little tot looked up quizzingly and said, “Did God make you?”

“I rather think he did,” graciously replied the sage.

“Then why did he put all your hair on your face instead of your head?”

Apropos of the Anglican Church. Above the entrance to the synod office of the Diocese of New Westminster, Province Building, Hastings and Cambie streets, a huge fiery red ball, always illuminated, hangs; large painted letters announce “FIRE ESCAPE,” and just below, “SYNOD OFFICE, DIOCESE OF NEW WESTMINSTER.”

THE FIRST VOLUNTEER SOLDIER. CORPORAL J.Z. HALL, NO. 1 BATTERY, B.C.B.G.A.

The first volunteer soldier resident in Vancouver was Corporal J.Z. Hall, afterwards a well-known citizen, a prominent real estate agent, an ardent churchman—he had much to do with the establishment of St. Mark's Church, Kitsilano. His first wife was Miss Eliza Jane Greer, his second wife her sister, Miss Jessie Columbia Greer, daughters of Sam Greer of Greer's Beach. (See *The Fight for Kitsilano Beach*.)

“Father,” (her husband) said Mrs. J.Z. Hall, “worked in Granville before the Fire, and used to go over to New Westminster to attend drill parades. He told me that he ‘never missed a drill.’ I think he belonged to the B.C.B.G.A. in New Westminster as early as 1883.”

The old photograph shows him in the dark blue uniform of the artillery; head dress of a dark busby with scarlet flap and white plume in front centre, beard, sidearm. It was loaned by his widow, Mrs. J.Z. Hall, in 1932 for copying, and was marked on the back, “Dad, 1885.” At the unveiling of a memorial tablet to commemorate the site of the first Drill Hall in Vancouver—Sunday, 13 November, 1932, Christ Church Cathedral; present Brig.-Gen. J. Sutherland Brown, C.M.G., D.O.C., M.D. No. 11 and the Vancouver Garrison—his two granddaughters occupied the front pew side by side with Sergeant Major (Master Gunner) J.C. Cornish, the first sergeant major of the first Vancouver unit of volunteer soldiers.

An enlargement (coloured) of this is in Artillery Officers' Mess, Bessborough Drill Hall.

102ND BATTALION, “NORTH BRITISH COLUMBIANS,” C.E.F. LT. COL. J.W. WARDEN, D.S.O., O.B.E., V.D. PRIVATE FRANCIS GOTT OF LILLOOET, INDIAN.

The manner in which the 102nd Battalion received its territorial designation was as follows:

On Captain Warden's return, wounded, from the 2nd Battle of Ypres, he was promoted to lieutenant-colonel, and authorised to raise in the electoral district of Comox-Atlin, a battalion of men. He chose as the training camp site a spit of sand at Comox, B.C., called Goose Spit, an old British Admiralty target practice camp site and rifle range, long since discarded. The battalion was given the number 102nd, and called the “Comox-Atlin Battalion” locally. The small units of the battalion were collected together all over northern and eastern British Columbia, and in February and March 1916, assembled at Goose Spit.

One evening, the company from Prince Rupert arrived by boat, marched from Comox to the camp. Captain Matthews was the senior officer on the Spit, and saw them coming over the sandhills. He