

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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I asked Chillahminst about the Indians Swillamcan, Kanachuck and Mrs. Salpcan, who sold their "improvements" at Greer's Beach to Sam Greer. (See *The Fight for Kitsilano Beach*.)

"Will-ahm-can was Chief Jimmy Jimmy's father. Kanachuck, not sure, but I think brother to Chief Chip-kaay-am of Snauq; maybe Mrs. Salpcan was his wife, don't know. We leave Skwayoos, go Hastings Mill to work; peoples at Snauq sell 'improvements' to Greer.

"Jericho Charlie my uncle; Frank Charlie" (Ayatak) "of Musqueam my cousin. Jericho Charlie die long time ago; fell off C.P.R. bridge cross False Creek; he live Jericho, just by slough, on bar in front of slough; Jerry Roger's camp there. May be Jericho Charlie have place Skwayoos; don't know." (August Kitsilano says, "Yes, he did.") "Frank Charlie live Musqueam now; old man. Frank Charlie is same as Capilano; his name Capilano too. Indian come down Squamish, marry Musqueam woman; by and by Musqueam give Squamish man place to live down by Mahly, by beach, Musqueam up by slough, Mahly down by sea, way down. Old Man Capilano live Mahly too.

"Old Man Capilano, I just remember him; very old man when I see him. I was about 20 or 21 when Vancouver burn; must be about 67 or 70 now. Old Man Capilano died long ago, don't know when. Lah-wa come next, but he drink too much booze, fall out of canoe in First Narrows. Priests say too much booze must stop; Joe good Catholic; priest say Joe to be chief, to get Indians to come to church. Joe some relation Chief Lah-wa.

"I had fourteen children; all die. Some live two three months, then die, cough up blood; my wife sick."

Assuming that Chillahminst (Jim Franks) was born in his father's hut on Kitsilano Beach about 1870 or earlier, as he claims to be older than 62, then this bears out Mrs. J.Z. Hall's (née Greer) statement that there had been several houses located on the site of her father's pioneer cottage prior to the one burned down by the Canadian Pacific Railway officials. Sam Greer bought the Indian "improvements" (see *Fight for Kitsilano Beach*) some time on or before November 1884. Robert Preston of New Westminster was interested in the preemption of the property in October 1871, and Samuel Preston preempted it in April 1873. As recently as early years of 20th Century, even as late as 1918, smelts could be raked ashore at Kitsilano Beach. (See *Early Vancouver*, Matthews.)

THE SPELLING OF CAPILANO.

Kleoplannah: in a letter to the Colonial government at Victoria, February 1860, A.J. Julius Voight, pioneer, 1858, educated Prussian, spells it "Chief Kleoplannah." Voight afterwards preempted land on False Creek at the foot of Mount Pleasant.

Ki-ap-a-la-no: Captain Richards, R.N., of H.M.S. *Plumper*, in a letter to Governor Douglas in 1859, spells it Ki-ap-a-la-no.

THE NAME CAPILANO.

Hill-Tout says, "The Skqomic at that time had a courageous and resourceful leader in their head chief Kiapilanoq." *Ethnological Survey of Canada*, B.A.A.S., Bradford meeting, 1900, page 490.

"The supreme Siam of the tribe was known by the title Te Kiapilanoq, and had his headquarters at the mouth of the Homultcison Creek now called Capilano by the whites." Same report, page 476.

Andrew Paull and Chief Matthias Capilano contradict. (See below.)

Hill-Tout, 1932: "Pronounce it Kee-yapee-lah-nogh."

Tate, 1932, "Pronounce it Kype-al-lah-nough."

On an old linen map marked "Plan No. 1, Skwawmish Indian Reserve, surveyed by W.S. Jemmett, 1880," the word Capilano is spelled "Kahpillahno."

Frank Charlie (Ayatak) of Musqueam: "Capilano a Musqueam name, not a Squamish name. Squamish people not belong English Bay or Burrard Inlet. Squamish people belong Howe Sound, way over mountains" (West Vancouver.) "Squamish not belong North Vancouver; just camp there; whitemans bring

them to work in Hastings Sawmill. Before that they just come from Squamish to English Bay to get food. All English Bay belong Musqueam. 'Old Chief' Capilano my grandfather live Mahly, sometimes stay Homulcheson" (Capilano River.) "'Old Chief' Capilano tell me he see first white man come down Fraser River, just one man, come down river from east; he big boy then, 'bout five feet. 'Old Chief' Capilano live to be 'bout one hundred, then die. 'Old Chief' first home at Mahly; then he marry Musqueam; afterwards he go to Homultcheson to live. All Ulksen belong to Musqueam, not Squamish," concluded Ayatak, with emphasis.

Andrew Paull: "Frank Charlie" (Ayatak) "of Musqueam is quite entitled to use the surname Capilano. The Capilanos of Capilano and Frank Charlie both acknowledge descent from the same blood."

Frank Charlie: "My name Capilano too; my grandchildren Capilano. Indian come down from Squamish, marry Musqueam woman, by and by Musqueam give Squamish man place to live down by Mahly, by beach; Musqueam up by slough, Mahly down by sea, way down. 'Old Chief' Capilano father of Chief Lahwa of Capilano; Chief Lahwa my uncle; he die, no son."

Chil-lah-minst (Jim Franks): "Old Man Capilano, I just remember him; very old man when I see him. I was about 20 or 21 when Vancouver burn; must be about 67 or 70 now. Old Man Capilano died long ago, don't know when. Lah-wa come next, but he drink too much booze, fall out of canoe in First Narrows. Priests say too much booze must stop; Joe good Catholic; priest say Joe to be chief, to get Indians to come to church."

Chief Matthias Capilano, 1933: "Old Chief Capilano was stone blind when he died. The 'Old Chief' was fighting before the white man came; his last fight against the northern Indians was with guns. Chief Lah-wa died in 1895; I think he had been chief about twenty years."

Rev. C.M. Tate, Methodist Indian Missionary: "Lah-wa was chief when I came in 1875; I never knew Old Chief Capilano."

The Chief Capilano, the first one personally known to white men of which there is a record, would seem to have been born (see Ayatak, his grandson) at Mahly, and to have told Ayatak that when he was "a big boy" he had seen the first white man, Fraser, come down the Fraser River. He is reputed to have been a warrior, orator and statesman, to have been very old—some say one hundred—when he died, stone blind then, and to have been succeeded by one of his many children, Lah-wa. (See "Genealogy of Capilano" now being prepared.)

[JSM's note on following two paragraphs:] Delete all nonsense.

Chief Lah-wa, according to most accounts, died childless; his children predeceased him. He was baptized and married in the little Indian (Methodist) Church on the shore of Water Street; he was drowned in the First Narrows, and is buried at North Vancouver. He was succeeded by Joe.

Joseph married Agnes, commonly called Mrs. Mary Capilano, born about 1838 and still living, 1933—she saw New Westminster before the first house was built there. Her Indian name is Layhu-lette; [she] is a daughter of Kah-kail-tun, son of Pat-sa-mauq, half brother of "Old Chief" Capilano, who were both the sons of Sclapchp-ten, who had five wives and—so it is said—over one hundred children. He (Joseph) was succeeded in 1910 by Chief Matthias Joe, commonly called Chief Matthias Capilano.

Andrew Paull says, "Joe was formally given the name Capilano by the Squamish at a ceremony on the Cambie Street grounds just prior to proceeding to England to lay before H.M. the late King Edward the matter of the Indian Land grievances. It was considered that it would give him additional prestige if he bore the name of the land, or reserve, of which he was chief."

Prior to this, custom had given him the sobriquet of "Capilano Joe." (See August Kitsilano's statement to Indian Agent Ball.) Rev. C.M. Tate adds, "given him by whites and Indians alike." Ultimately, he became known as Chief Joe Capilano, and this surname has been assumed by his relict, Agnes, usually called Mrs. Mary Capilano, and by his son Chief Matthias Joe, commonly called Chief Matthias Capilano.

In connection with the visit of Chief Joe Capilano to Buckingham Palace (in 1906 or 1907) the story is told that, during the audience with His Majesty, Joe said to the King,

"Then, there is another matter I wish to enquire about. My people sometimes do wrong, policemen fine them, policemen say they do it for you, that you want the money. What I want to know is, 'Do you want the money?'"

King Edward is reported to have replied very graciously, "Yes, I do, and thank you very much."

Hill-Tout says that there was a "supreme Siam" (chief) known as Te Kiapilanoq and "next in rank" Te Qatsilanoq (Kitsilano). See *Ethnological Survey of Canada*, B.A.A.S., 1900.

Paull says, "No; all chiefs equal; there are now ten chiefs of the Squamish tribe; there is supposed to be twelve. I am secretary of the Council. Chief Matthias Joe is one of the chiefs, but holds no higher rank than others, nor have I ever heard that formerly it was otherwise. On their own reserves, rather, in their own precincts, all chiefs were supreme."

August Kitsilano, 8 August 1932: "No. They did not make one man the big chief. All were equal and ruled over their own reserves only. You see, coming down the Squamish River there are four reserves; each one had its own chief. They did not make any one bigger than the other."

Chief Matthias Capilano, 19 January 1933: "'Old Chief' Capilano was stone blind before he died. He was a fighting warrior who had fought with both bows and arrows and with guns; his last fight was with guns.

"'Old Chief' Capilano's mother was a Musqueam Indian, sister to Chief Semelano." (See page 490, Hill-Tout, *Ethnological Survey of Canada*, 1900, B.A.A.S.) "His father was Sclapchp-ten who had five wives and, so they say, over one hundred children.

"Payt-sa-mauq was a half brother to 'Old Chief' Capilano, and was full Squamish. 'Old Chief' Capilano was only half Squamish for his mother was sister to Chief Semelano, a Musqueam. 'Old Chief' Capilano married a Squamish woman from Chuckchuck.

"One of Paytsamauq's sons was Kahkailtun, and his wife came from Nicomen; they were the parents of Agnes, my mother, wife, of course, of my father Chief Joseph Capilano, and now of course, his widow, and more commonly known as Mrs. Mary Capilano. Her Indian name is Layhu-lette. I think she is now about 95, so that I estimate that my father, Chief Joe Capilano, who died in 1910 when I—at the age of 23—succeeded him; must have been about 70 or 75 when he died.

Andrew Paull, secretary of the Squamish Indian Council of Chiefs, says that a Mr. Rhodes, grandfather of the famous runner Percy Williams, told him that the name "Capilano" was of Spanish origin.

According to Mrs. Rhodes, his wife, Mr. Rhodes was not a Spaniard, but the son of a large English ship owner trading to Spain, and that her husband lived for several years at Alacante, Spain, acting as interpreter for his father's business. She said, "I have heard him say that Capilano is derived from Capelin" (spelling doubtful), "the Spanish word for a small fish of the smelt species."

Paull says Mr. Rhodes told him that when the Spanish explorers of 1792 anchored in Spanish Banks, English Bay, they sent ashore daily for water, and on such occasions were presented with a supply of smelts by the Indians, and that neither being able to understand the other's language, the Indians mistook, or mixed up, "the smelts" and "the chief man" who presented them.

Andrew Paull: "Very doubtful story."

Professor Hill-Tout: "Impossible. There is Khates-ee-lan-ogh, Kee-ap-ee-lan-ogh, and Ka-lan-ogh, the latter meaning 'the first man.' And we have Thit-see-mah-lan-ogh and Semelano. And Nanaimo and Eyalmo."

If there is a legend associated with Capilano, as there is with Haatsalahnough, then, so far, it has not been told to me. JSM

Paull: "Chief Matthias Joe is not really entitled to be called Chief Matthias Capilano; the 'Capilano' is assumed only, but generally is accepted by all. The Indian Affairs office calls him Chief Matthias Joe. The appellation 'Capilano' was bestowed by the Indians on Chief Joe Capilano, his father, but it is not hereditary—only so far as custom has made it so."