

Early Vancouver

Volume Two

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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

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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to get the property. Bridges did die, but the will could not be found, and finally a man named T.B. Spring, he was up at Port Moody and had a scow which he brought down to Vancouver and anchored it to the shore about the foot of Columbia Street and lived in it. He is said to have gone down to Seattle, or somewhere, and found the will—some say he forged it—anyway, Tom Turner got the property and sold it to Captain Power, who, they say, had put up the money to help him prove to the judge that he was entitled to it. Captain Power ran the Moodyville hotel. Turner sold the property for a 'song,' and with the proceeds went to Lancashire, England, where he had come from and started in the coal business; he had a coal yard and carts and horses. Tom Turner was delivering milk to us in 1884, so that William Bridges must have been dead then, I suppose."

Note: Duncan McDonald got to Burrard Inlet in 1873, and lived here until he died in North Vancouver, 1 March 1933. It is queer that he should have said Tom Turner got worse and died. Perhaps I misunderstood him. JSM. I wonder if he meant William Bridges.

HERRING IN BURRARD INLET.

"In those days Vancouver Harbour was full of herring; that was what Spratt's Oilery, just east of the foot of Burrard Street, a few steps west of the Marine Building, was started for: to extract the oil. But after extracting the oil, they took the refuse and dumped it outside the Narrows, and they say that drove the herrings away. The herrings used to be very numerous, thick in the water. We used to get a pole and drive a lot of nails in it so that the sharp ends stuck out like spikes, then get into a boat or canoe, go out in the harbour, and sweep it through the water. The pole would be, say, twenty feet long, with the nails clustered at one end, then you sat or knelt in the bottom of the canoe, and swept it from bow to stern. You had to be quick and keep the pole going or the herrings would wriggle off, but you would always get four or five herrings each sweep. Anyway, whatever it was, the herrings migrated from English Bay; before that they came here to spawn, along by Swywee, the West Vancouver lagoon just west of the Capilano River; they were thick in the water there."

WEST VANCOUVER.

"All I can recall of West Vancouver in the early days was a deserted log hut at the lagoon Swywee; the rest was just trees. My wife died in 1897," (presumably an Indian woman, for his granddaughter Mrs. Gus Band is the wife of Chief Gus Band) "and was buried in the North Vancouver Indian Cemetery; there was no other cemetery in North Vancouver in those days."

Among his descendants are granddaughters Rita Lumly, now Mrs. Harris White; Olive Lumly, now Mrs. Gus Band; Harriet Lumly, now Mrs. Bennie Cordicittel. Great-grandson Ralph Band and daughter Florence Cordicittel.

BIG TREES. DUNCAN McDONALD. TOM TURNER. NORTH VANCOUVER.

Duncan McDonald continued, "The biggest tree I ever saw, and I have [been] following the logging 'game' all my life, since 1873, all in North Vancouver, Moodyville and thereabouts, was one time when we went for a timber cruise about ten miles up Lynn Creek; we went over a big hill and down the other side, and came across a great fir. I guess it is there yet, or the stump. It was nine feet diameter; we measured it carefully. Of course, cedars grew bigger at the stump, but then, cedars when big are nearly always hollow in the centre."

He died at North Vancouver, 1 March 1933.

WHITE ROCK.

Master Gunner J.C. Cornish, first sergeant major of the first military unit in Vancouver, No. 5 British Columbia Brigade of Garrison Artillery, and now a resident, retired customs officer, at White Rock, November 1932.

"There is no doubt the large glacial rock on the beach was the origin of the name White Rock; *it still carries* on parts of its surface some of the old lime wash with which it was coated in the early days as a beacon for vessels entering the bay," (Semiahmoo) "but I find that it was at the expense of the American government, and for the use of vessels entering the harbour of Blaine, Washington. In those days there

were few vessels carrying our flag in this locality, a few small boats carried on between Bellingham, then Whatcom, and Blaine, and to the path or road leading to the mining camps on the Fraser River.”

CLOTHES LINES. CHESTER S. ROLLSTON, SON OF J.C. ROLLSTON, FIRST GASOLINE STATION ATTENDANT IN CANADA.

The inventor of the clothes line commonly used throughout at least North America, and which consists of two galvanized iron sheaves through which an endless wire passes, was Chester S. Rollston, a hardware clerk in the employ of Messrs. Wood, Vallance and Leggat, who absorbed Thos. Dunn Hardware Co., pioneer hardware store, on Cordova Street near Carrall. The idea was suggested to him by the working of chain hoists. He sold the patent, so he told me, for \$1,000 and royalties, but was terribly disappointed with the royalties he received, and was bitter in his comments of the returns he received. He was afterwards manager, about 1932, of the very large wholesale hardware firm of McLennan, McFeely and Prior.

This invention must have saved the women of the world billions of steps. Previously all clothes lines, either rope or wire, were a single line strung tightly between two supports, and the wet clothes were pegged to it, and in the case of numerous wet clothes to be dried, a laborious process of dragging a heavy basket load along the ground, or carrying them, followed. As a result of the invention, the line slides by, the washer stands still, and pegs the clothes as it passes; a very much less laborious proceeding.

Chester's father, Mr. J.C. Rollston, was the first gasoline station attendant in all Canada, perhaps in all America, perhaps in all the world. The makeshift station was started by C.M. Rolston, J.S. Matthews and J.C. Rollston, all employees of the Imperial Oil Co. Limited, and at the foot of Cambie Street, near Smythe. It consisted of a corrugated iron shed with roof, about four feet by ten feet dimensions, entirely open one side next to the street, a concrete pedestal 12" x 12" tapered and three feet high, a 13 gallon kitchen boiler, a steam gauge glass, and ten feet of garden hose without nozzle. A barroom chair and a cushion for it completed the outfit, which was connected with the gasoline tanks by iron pipe. (See elsewhere.)