

Early Vancouver

Volume Three

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Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1933-1934.

Supplemental to Volumes One and Two collected in 1931-1932.

About the 2011 Edition

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31 DECEMBER 1933 – MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. AND MRS. HUGH MURRAY.

Who are now living on the south bank of the Fraser River, fifty yards west of the Fraser River Bridge, South Westminster, and on land rented from the B.C. Electric Railway Company; the building is the old school house.

Mr. Hugh Murray is of the *Thames City*, having been one of the children who came out with the Royal Engineers in April 1859; a well preserved man of 78 years, grey, almost white hair and moustache, talks vivaciously, enjoys a smoke, and is most active for his age. Mrs. Murray, a tall, gracious lady of vigour, lesser age, possesses those more practical charms so common in our pioneer women. I was most graciously welcomed.

Mr. Murray said: "So far as I know, all the Royal Engineers are now deceased; the children of the *Thames City* alone survive. Those whom I know to be still living are:

"Thomas Deasy of Marigold, Saanich." (Not of *Thames City*, but *Euphrates*.)

"John McMurphy, two years older than I am, New Westminster.

"Arthur Herring, New Westminster.

"John Murray of Port Moody, my brother, who was born one month before we reached British Columbia, and

"Myself, Hugh Murray, of South Westminster."

He omits John Henry Scales, Vancouver.

HASTINGS. "END OF THE ROAD." NEW BRIGHTON. "MAXIE'S."

Query: How did Hastings townsite get its name, Mr. Murray?

Mr. Murray: "I don't know exactly. It was not called Hastings at first; it was called the 'End of *The Road*.' George Black's hotel was called the Brighton Hotel, but I don't think it was called Brighton before it was named Hastings." (A postmaster was appointed at New Brighton in May 1869.) "The first man I recall living there was Maxie; Maximilian Michaud. Maxie was a Frenchman; came from France." (Wrong—it should be French-Canadian.) "Before he went to the Hastings he tended bar for Joe Arnaud, who ran the Old Colonial Hotel, New Westminster, the one which was burned down. As you neared the 'End of the Road' you went down a bit of an incline, then turned to the left and crossed a bridge; Maxie's place was just up on the rise above the stable where, afterwards, Lewis, who drove the stage for years, used to put up his horses."

HOCKING. DEP. REVENUE OFFICER, 1869.

"Just who Hocking was I don't know. You say his name appears on the old map of 1869 as living there? I imagine, mind you, if my memory serves me rightly, he was a man who came from Cornwall to work in the mines at Nanaimo, and brought his wife and three sons with him. I'm not sure; ask Mrs. Chas. Hughes of New Westminster."

TOMPKINS BREW. REVENUE OFFICER AND CONSTABLE, BURRARD INLET, 1869.

"I don't know what became of Tompkins Brew's children; he was married to, anyway he was living with, a Kanaka woman; they left for Barkerville afterwards, and he was a constable or something; he was, I think, one of three brothers; Chartres Brew was one; George Brew, who purchased a lot in Granville in 1870, was no relation—he was a cook at Hastings Sawmill." (See Fred W. Alexander.) "There was a Judge Brew too. I think the children married into the family of Green at Barkerville, but what became of them I don't know."

HASTINGS ROAD. DOUGLAS ROAD.

"The reason the road was from Westminster to Burrard Inlet—it was not known as the Hastings Road then—was because Colonel Moody wanted access from his base at New Westminster in all directions. Stanley Park was at first a military reserve. First of all he cut the North Road, then he cut the road to

Hastings, and the reason it took the direction it did, was because that was the easiest route, and only nine miles.”

(Note by J.S.M. The route was easiest for these reasons:

1. The easy levels along the sides of Burnaby Lake and the bottom of the valleys. August Jack Khaatsalano says it was an Indian trail before the whitemans came.
2. The height of the hills east of Hastings; their precipitous sides, i.e., cliffs, on the shore of Burrard Inlet.
3. Burnaby Lake obstruction.
4. The creek at the “End of the Road” gave water.)

CENTRAL PARK.

“The reason Colonel Moody reserved Central Park was because he knew there was going to be a big population here; he left Queens park, and Moody Square too.”

GRANVILLE AND HASTINGS BOUNDARY.

“The diving line between Granville and Hastings was the Hastings Sawmill flume; it may not have been a legal boundary, but it was the one commonly recognised.”

ROYAL ENGINEERS.

“When the R.E. were working, they wore white canvas pants.”

SIMILKAMEEN. OSOYOOS. HOPE.

“In 1868 I made a trip over the Hope Mountain trail. There were only four persons living in the Similkameen when I went through. After leaving Hope the first place you reached was Allison’s, then Frank Richter’s, Keremeos, then Manwell’s—Manwell was a Mexican, and a good sort—then on to Haynes and Lowe at the Boundary Line at Osoyoos Lake. Lowe got leave of absence to return to England to be married, but an accident injured his arms and the doctor sawed both hands off, but his sweetheart married him just the same, and I took him back to Osoyoos over Hope Mountain.”

CARIBOO. PEACE RIVER.

“I left the Lower Mainland in 1872, and did not come back until the railway came along in 1884. I went all over everywhere in the Cariboo, and was in the Peace River when there was no one there at all, and then came back, and among other things was working for George Black, the butcher, at Hastings.”

GEORGE BLACK. SLAUGHTER HOUSE.

“George Black was killing his cattle at Hastings, then one day he said to me, ‘I think we’ll move it to Gastown,’ and he built his slaughter house on False Creek” (see John Murray), “where Brackman Ker’s place is now, by the Gas Works, under the Georgia Street viaduct, and for six months we packed the meat out on our backs to Westminster Road, hauled it to his butcher shop on the shore of Water Street and took it by boat, twice a week, first to Hastings, then on to Moodyville and the ships. That was how we came to kill the two bears on about Pender Street, near where the *Sun* newspaper office is now.”

BEAR ON PENDER STREET.

“We had a pet bear; we kept him on a chain in the slaughter yard; we caught him as a cub, and he grew up and got strong enough to break his chain; he was a pet. He wandered off, now and again, and we had to go after him. One time we found him over by where the *Sun* office on Pender Street is now; we saw his chain dangling from a stump before we saw him and we brought him in, and two other bears followed him; so we shot them. Bears were no particular use; not worth anything, not then.”

FALSE CREEK ROAD. KINGSWAY.

Query: Mr. Murray, the Lands and Works Map of 1876 shows False Creek Road and False Creek Trail; just what do they mean?

Mr. Murray: “The Central Park Road, now Kingsway, was built because the road to Hastings did not go on to Granville; the road was not completed to Granville; there was no way to get cattle to Granville. I have

driven cattle over the False Creek Road lots of times; we used to drive cattle all night so as not to meet anyone; we used to start at one a.m. in the morning, and reach Granville about six a.m.; we did that so as to avoid meeting anyone on the road. Cattle will always follow a horse leading them; but if we had a buggy or anything on the road, it would have been awkward on a road no wider than a narrow hallway; or the cattle might have scattered in the woods.”

FALSE CREEK BRIDGE.

“There was a bridge at the head of False Creek, where Main Street is now; it was built on piles, but the deck was poles laid crosswise, and you bumped across it. Many a time I have swum my horses across False Creek at that place.”

FALSE CREEK TRAIL.

“The False Creek Trail” (from Main Street to Marpole) “was built so that the farmers out Lulu Island way could get their produce to market, and save them the water trip around Point Grey; not always practical in bad weather. Those farmers were Brighthouse and Scratchley, Mole, Magee, McCleery, and Kilgour, etc.; that was why False Creek Trail was cut, so that they could get their produce in to the Hastings Mill and Granville.”

POST OFFICE. FIRST ROYAL MAIL.

“Bill Bristol used to take the mail from New Westminster up river to Fort Yale in a canoe. Then, when the first mail came in by railroad to Port Moody, Bill brought the mail by train to Port Moody and I met him there, and brought the mail on to New Westminster and gave it to Postmaster Tait.”

Before leaving, Mrs. Murray treated me to a glass of her own exquisite home made blackberry wine, and, as it was New Year’s Eve, the cordial felicitations of Mr. and Mrs. Murray sent me on my way with those happy recollections of their generous hospitality, so commonly found among our real pioneers. It was my last visit for 1933. J.S. Matthews.

EMIGRANT SOLDIERS GAZETTE.

Mr. Murray told me that, in the *Emigrant Soldiers Gazette*, published on the *Thames City*, there is a fine poem about the object of their trip and the land they are bound for. He says this poem is sung to the tune of “Bonnie Dundee.”

A sister, Mrs. Sarah Kyle, died 6 May 1934. An account of her life appears in the *Province* of 7 May 1934.

COPY OF MEMO FROM OTWAY WILKIE, JULY 1931 – “IN VANCOUVER BEFORE FIRE.”

“Hugh Murray in Vancouver, Gastown, in 1872. Only four families there then. Came to B.C. with Royal Engineers, a child. Otway Wilkie.”

19 SEPTEMBER 1934 – MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH EDWARD EVERETT AUSTIN OF 980 WEST 20TH AVENUE, VANCOUVER, WHO UNLOADED THE FIRST C.P.R. LOCOMOTIVE UNLOADED AT PORT MOODY, OCTOBER, 1883.

“I was born September 17th 1859, at Richland Center, Wisconsin, the son of Hiram and Mary Austin. Father was born in Vermont in 1824; Mother in Tennessee, an old American family, farmers; I was educated at a rural school of a sort; no railways in that part of the United States then; wagon transportation only. I left Richland Center just after the great Chicago fire, about 1872, and went to Iowa to learn the machinist’s trade” (Burlington railroad), “then went to the I.O.U.X.” (Soo City Line), “then on Kansas Pacific as machinist, then to Marshall, Texas, braking, then to Houston-Texas Central, also braking, then back north about 1878 as machinist on St. Paul and Pacific, now Great Northern Railway, then down on Milwaukee Line, and then to San Francisco, and up the coast to Yale seeking adventure.”

“OLD CURLY.”

“‘Old Curly,’ all shot to pieces, came up to Emory’s Bar on the deck of a river boat, I think the *Western Slope*, and I repaired her in the Yale shops; not much of a machine shop at that time, but I got her repaired and ran her. She had been operating on the building of the sea wall at San Francisco for the same people who were building the C.P.R. western end, i.e., D.O. Mills, Stanford, Huntingdon, and