

Early Vancouver

Volume Three

By: Major J.S. Matthews, V.D.

2011 Edition (Originally Published 1935)

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

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

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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CONVERSATION WITH H.S. ROWLING, 23 JUNE 1933.

RIVER ROAD—A TRAGEDY, 26 DECEMBER 1889.

“One Christmas there was a dance at our place; snow was on the ground. After the dance was over the guests departed, of course, in sleighs. About half a mile” (is this right?) “to the west of our place, a Mr. Saint, a settler with a family—one of them, Margaret, married Steve Madison, an early foreman of the Water Works—was clearing his land and was burning. As the sleigh conveying six persons was passing his place, a tree which was burning, and which stood beside the narrow mud road, fell of its own weight, and the marvel of it was that it fell directly on to the passing sleigh. I suppose such a thing might not happen again in a thousand years. Four of the six persons were killed. Those who escaped were Mayo Lawson, now Mrs. Tibbs of Port Kells, and William Mashiter, still living at Squamish. Those killed were Jasper Locke, 24, James D. Bodwell, 24, James B. Lawson, 16, and Clarence D. Campbell, 22. Mr. McRae and I were delegated to break the news to Mrs. Lawson. It was a hard duty to perform, but she took it stoically, and asked to be told the worst. Old Mr. Lawson, in his anguish at the loss of his son, was unreasonable, and wanted to prosecute Mr. Saint.”

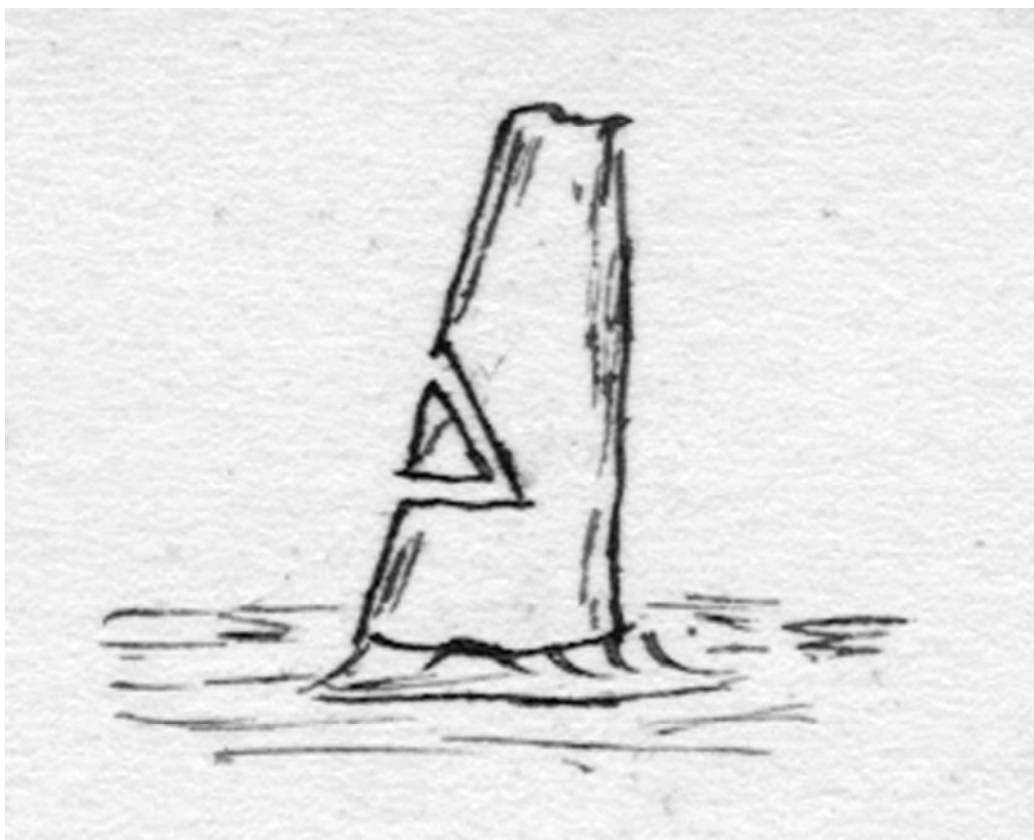
(River Road Tragedy: see *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 5. William Mashiter or his docket.)

Mrs. Campbell, [in] *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 1, says, “It killed one of them; it happened just a short way up Granville Street from Eburne.”

Mr. Rowling: “That was another instance. That was a Steve, one of the Steves of Steveston.”

CLEARING LAND. BURNING TREES.

“It was less labour to start a fire in a tree, and burn it down than to do so by chopping. The way the fire was started was to bore a horizontal hole into the centre of the tree, and then bore a slanting one down to meet it—that made a sort of a chimney for draft.”



Item # EarlyVan_v3_023

Vancouver, B.C.

September 11/33.

Major J.S. Matthews.

Dear Sir: Am enclosing herewith memorial card etc. re accident on Marine Drive (then known as River Road). The only other information I can give you is that this accident took place about ¼ mile east of what is now the corner of Marine Drive S.E. and Argyle Street.

Yours truly,

(Miss) E.J. Rowling.

IN MEMORIAM

of

Jasper Locke, T., age 24,
James D. Bodwell, M., age 21,
James B. Lawson, age 16,
of Golden Rule Lodge, No. 13, I.O.G.T.
and
Clarence D. Campbell, age 22,
of Harmony Lodge, No. 18, I.O.G.T.

Who were killed by a falling tree at North Arm
of the Fraser River on December 26, 1889.

Golden Rule Lodge, No. 13, I.O.G.T.

Where it has pleased Almighty God in his mysterious workings to remove from our midst four of our much beloved brethren, viz: Jasper Locke, T., James V. Bodwell, M., and James B. Lawson, of Golden Rule Lodge, No. 13, I.O.G.T., and C.D. Campbell, of Harmony Lodge, No. 18, I.O.G.T., who were killed by a tree falling on a sleigh containing six of our order and while we mourn the loss of the above-named highly esteemed brethren we cannot but praise God for the miraculous escape of Bro. W. Mashiter, P.C.T., and Sister Mayo Lawson, V.T., of Golden Rule Lodge, No. 13, and in view of this terrible calamity, we cannot but admit that

“God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform.”

Therefore, be it Resolved that our Charter and Regalia be draped in mourning for the period of three months in memory of our departed brethren.

Resolved that Golden Rule Lodge, No. 13, I.O.G.T., tender to the relatives of our deceased brethren our warmest sympathies in this their great affliction, and that a copy of these resolutions be forwarded to the parents of the deceased.

Resolved that these resolutions be spread upon the minutes of the Lodge, and that copy of them be furnished to the “Good Templar of Canada.”

J.W. Rowling, C.T.
P.A. Rowling, Sec.

Dec. 26, 1889.