

**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 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the City's founding. The project was made possible by funding from the Vancouver Historical Society.

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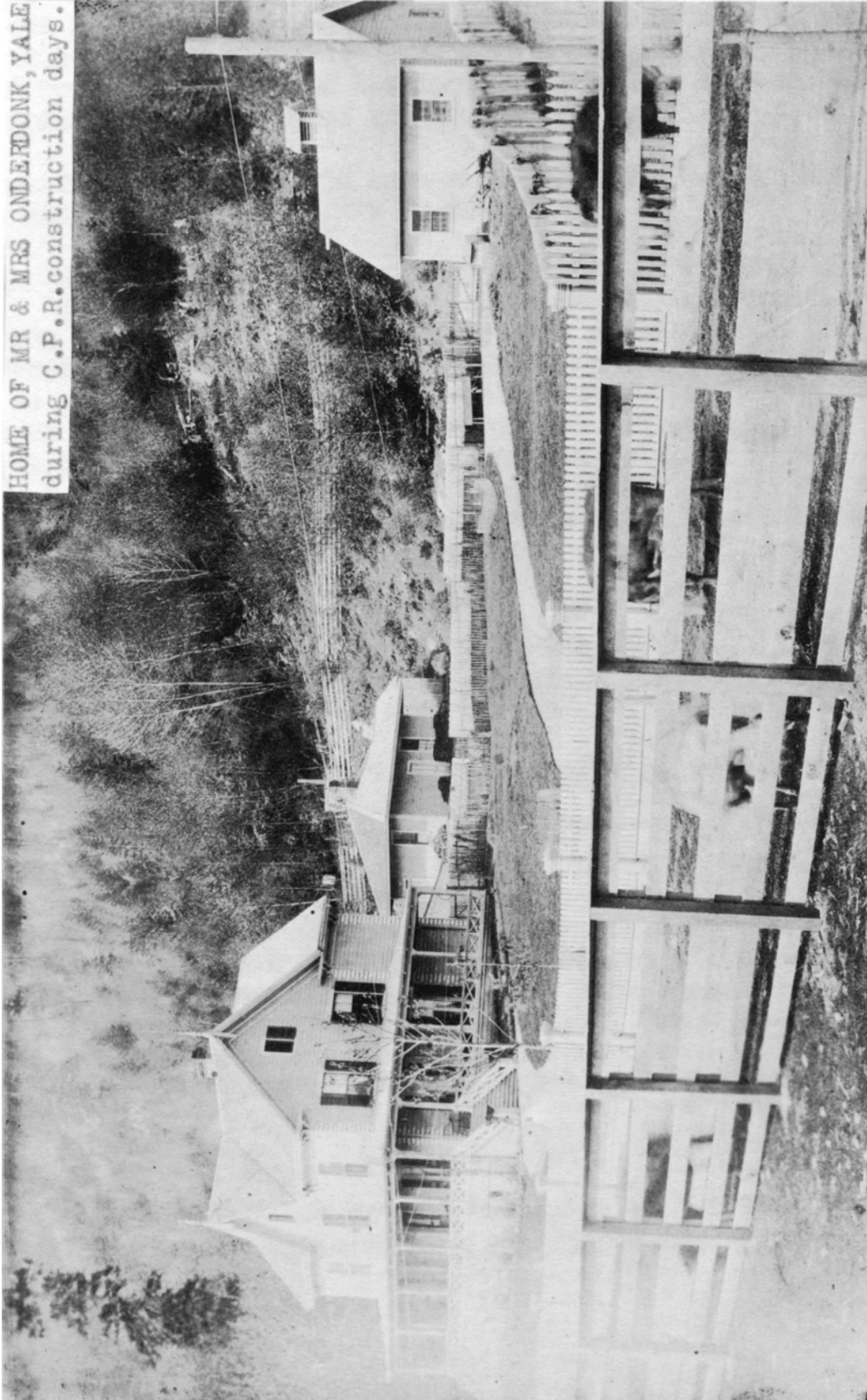
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**MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. D. McDUGALL, 1149 BEACH AVENUE, 12  
FEBRUARY 1934.**

Mr. McDougall is a very elderly gentleman, bent with age, and walks with two sticks, and does not leave his home. Of his two sons who served overseas, one was decorated with a military cross, but lost a leg while serving with P.P.C.L.I. [Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry] and the other fell from a Union Steamship Company's boat while crossing a plank to the dock, fell thirty feet to the rocks, and has been confined to his bed for six years.

Mr. McDougall says jokingly, "I know more about the C.P.R. than President Beatty; I started at Fort William in 1871."

**THE LAST RAIL.**

Mr. McDougall: "I was shop engineer at the Yale shops from 1883 to 1887, when the Yale shops were destroyed by fire. One day, Mr. W.H. Armstrong, afterwards Armstrong and Morrison, well-known contractors of Vancouver, who was master mechanic for Onderdonk at Yale, came to me with a piece of steel rail about two feet long, which had been cut from the last steel rail which bridged the east and west ends of the C.P.R. at Craigellachie, and which he wanted cut into one-inch lengths for souvenirs. I locked the steel bar up in a cupboard in my boiler room and kept it locked up. It was hard work cutting steel with steel; I could not keep the tools sharp, so I cut off a few inch lengths and let it go at that.

"One of those lengths I must have given to Dan Sheehan, I forget, and this is the one his daughter, Miss Lottie, has given you. I gave another to Bill" (W.H.) "Evans.

"Afterwards, as I had a shaper, I made some tiny souvenirs out of the pieces such as would be suitable for brooches. The brooch lengths were about one and one half inches long and an exact miniature of a rail with two tiny bolt holes at each end. I made a handful of them, and gave them to Mr. Armstrong, who insisted that I take payment for them, and gave me \$10. Mrs. Onderdonk got the first one, and they used to wear them on their watch chains. I also cut one-eighth inch lengths off this tiny rail and they were used as ornaments on finger rings. Miss Sheehan has one, and I gave another to Frank Brown's father, druggist, Davie Street. I polished them with a file and burnished them with an agate. Altogether I must have made \$100 pocket money. I used to sell the brooch lengths for \$2 a piece."

Comment by Judge Forin: "You can see the length which was cut off lying on the trunk." (See photo of Sir Donald Smith driving the last spike.)

**THE LAST SPIKE.**

Editor, *Province*.

Regarding "The Last Spike" on the editorial page this evening, I send you the following extract from "The Days Before Yesterday," by Lord Frederic Hamilton: "The last spike, which was driven in at a place called Craigellachie, by Mrs. McKenzie, widow of the Premier under whom the C.P.R. had been commenced, was of an unusual character, for it was of eighteen-carat gold.

"In the course of an hour it was replaced by a more serviceable spike of steel. I have often seen Mrs. McKenzie wearing the original gold spike, with 'Craigellachie' on it in diamonds."

J.S.M.