

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

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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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH AUGUST JACK HAATSALANO, 23 NOVEMBER 1934.

Query: How many Indians do you suppose lived around Burrard Inlet and English Bay before the whitemans came?

INDIANS, NUMBER BEFORE WHITEMEN CAME.

Mr. Haatsalano: (exaggerating) "About a 'million.' There was a settlement at E-yal-mough" (Jericho), "another at Snauq" (Burrard Bridge), "at Ay-yul-shun" (English Bay Beach), "at Stait-wouk" (Second Beach), "at Chay-thoos" (Prospect Point), "at Whoi-Whoi" (Lumberman's Arch), "at Homulcheson" (Capilano), "at Ustlawn" (North Vancouver), "at Chay-chil-wuk" (Seymour Creek) "—there was nothing at Lynn Creek—and more settlements up the inlet besides the one at Kum-kum-lye" (Hastings Sawmill.)

MUSQUEAMS.

Query: How is it that the Musqueams claim that English Bay and Burrard Inlet is their territory and that it did not belong to the Squamish? All the names for the places on English Bay and Burrard Inlet are Squamish names, but the Musqueams say that the Squamish did not live down here until the Hastings Sawmill started, and that gave them work.

Mr. Haatsalano: (smiling) "Musqueam's got no claim. They claim Snauq, but they've got no rights. They not build a house there; Squamish build house there. Musqueams just come round from North Arm to fish on the sandbar" (Granville Island) "and up False Creek, and then they go away again, but Squamish build house."

POTLATCH.

"Jericho Charlie (Chen-nal-set), my stepfather, he build big house, thousand feet long, cedar slab sides, cedar shake roof, out at E-yal-mough; he hold big potlatch, great big potlatch, that before my time. That house could be there yet, but the gun boats come and take it away, load all the timber on the gun boat. Chen-nal-set, he was working, he was away, working for old Jerry Rogers, freighting big canoe, hay and supplies from Hastings Sawmill to Jericho; gun boat just come, anchor, load lumber on gun boat, and take it away. Chen-nal-set and Toe-who-qwuam-kee and two other Indians give the big potlatch at Jericho.

"Then they hold potlatch at Stait-wouk;" (Second Beach) "Qual-kin give that potlatch, and there was another potlatch, a great big one, at A-yul-shun" (English Bay Beach.) "My grandfather, Chief Haatsalanough, he gave one potlatch at Chay-thoos, and after that another one at Whoi-Whoi.

WHALES.

"Peter Smith, white man, used to live at Brockton Point, and made a living spearing whales. He used to catch them off Bowen Island and take them to Swis-pus-tah-kwin-ace," (Worlcombe Island) "and cut them up and make oil to sell to the Hastings Sawmill and in Westminster and Victoria. When the white man come, he did the same as Indians had done before. When white man go to Bowen Island he find lots whale bone lying on the beach, and call it 'Bone Island.'"

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH AUGUST JACK HAATSALANO, ON A SPECIAL ALL-DAY TRIP FROM VANCOUVER TO SQUAMISH ON THE UNION STEAMSHIP CAPILANO FOR THE PURPOSE OF HAVING HIM POINT OUT LOCATION OF INDIAN PLACES OF INTEREST, 28 NOVEMBER 1934.

Query: Why did the Squamish make their home at a point like Squamish? Squamish is not as nice a place as Whoi-Whoi, Staitwouk or Eyalmo, anywhere on English Bay or Burrard Inlet.

Haatsalano: "Squamish their home; lots salmon, deer, beaver. In the summer time they go down English Bay and Burrard Inlet to get small fish, smelts, herring, oolichans, and dry them, and get clams, get berries, lots summer food down Burrard Inlet. Duck easier to get at English Bay than Squamish. Indian catch duck at night, spear them; go out in canoe, put cedar slabs across canoe, mud on top, then put fire, pitch stick so not make noise when burning" (crackle) "on top mud; when duck see light of fire in dark, he get curious, come nearer canoe, see what it is. Man in bow have spear on end pole twenty feet long; man

in canoe paddle as hard as he can. Canoe for" (hunting) "duck especially built; very narrow, very swift. Paddler in stern not raise his paddle; keep it in water as much as he can, so as not to scare duck; he make canoe go fast; that's way get near duck at night with fire in canoe.

"When Indian want go somewhere he use different canoe, wider canoe, but to catch duck he use canoe made to go swift.

"When Indian smoke salmon he use hemlock or alder for smoke. Salmon keep about two year if kept in good place, hard as a bone. Soak in water, then eat. If gets damp goes mouldy. But Indian only keep salmon one year; when spring salmon come next year, throw all old salmon away. May be have one hundred salmon when winter come, only ten when spring salmon come again; throw ten away.

"One time long ago when I was fishing salmon about five miles out in gulf off Bowen Island, a deer pass me swimming; don't know where he was going; may be lost his way; guess he drowns."

Query: Was there a principal chief in the Squamish tribe? When the chiefs of the Squamish tribe met together there must have been a chairman or principal chief.

Haatsalano: "Not one man big chief; each head of a family supreme in his section; call his friends together decide what to do.

"One time, before my time, Yucklataw Indians come down Point Grey, kill three Indians; six others ran off in trees and get away. Indian chiefs hold council, decide what best do; whether to get revenge. The chiefs all meet. Somebody say, 'Our good friend has been killed, we go get revenge.' So they all decide to go; ten canoes, twenty men in each canoe.

"It was your Christmas time; lots snow up Yucklataw. When they get near they see smoke coming out of houses, so they hide until it gets dark; then they creep up. They have pitch wood with them, cut up very fine," (and) "in bundles; they light bundles and throw on roof. Then they get big stick, lots men, left ridge pole off house, roof fall in, kill people inside; lots snow; peoples inside could not get out, only one outlet out of house, kill them as they come out, kill eighty or ninety; only one man escape; he creep into snow and hide; they miss him. Then Squamish come back."

SQUAMISH TERRITORY.

According to Haatsalano, the boundary of the territory of the Squamish people extended over the entire area of Howe Sound and Burrard Inlet. On the west, their territory commenced near the point known as Gibson's Landing; to the north of Gibson's lived the Sechelts, in whose language the Squamish could not easily converse.

The Squamish Country extended sixty miles up the Squamish River to the Shovel Nose Indian Reserve (Spring Salmon Creek). Eastwards it included all English Bay and Burrard Inlet up to Indian River and Port Moody. Haatsalano says its southern extremity ended at the tip of Point Grey (Chit-chil-a-yuk) but others say at Mahley, just west of Musqueam. The probability is that Haatsalano is correct.

August Haatsalano does not read or write. He complains that the speech and pronunciation of the present day Indian is affected by speaking constantly in English, and says "Andy Paull" (Qoitchetahl) "spoils things." Mr. Paull uses the English language constantly and is fluent. Haatsalano, being older by perhaps 20 years, habitually speaks in the Indian tongue excepting when talking to white men.

He says, "Capilano whitemans word; not Squamish; no 'cap' in Squamish; whitemans say 'cap'ilano. Indian word 'Kee-ap,' i.e., Kee-ap-ee-la-nogh.

"Squamish peoples not wear feather hat like prairie Indian; just band for hat; like hat band inside whitemans hat; made of buckskin, may be one feather in band, at front or back—generally front—pull band down over head; keep hair in place.