

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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Learn this lesson from his life—that this brave Christian gentleman had learned and practiced (as his brother G.O.C. of the Imperials, General Haig, learned it) our task as Christians is to save the decencies of life to uplift manners, to conserve moral standards, to keep the parasitic goodness of the community free from degenerating into badness. Thus we shew in our lives as he shewed in his life—the power of the consciousness of God ever guiding us:

Giving us the courage which initiates,
The sympathy which communicates,
The humility which obliterates—self.

Around earth's vagrant noises,
He caught the note sublime,
Today around his surges
From the silences of time
A flood of nobler music,
Like a river, deep and broad,
Fit song for heroes gathered,
In the Banquet Hall of God.

GENERAL SIR ARTHUR CURRIE, G.C.M.G.

A story is told of General Currie's enrollment as a volunteer soldier in Victoria. It was related to me some fifteen years ago by a gentleman whose name I think was Colbert; a Victoria man—a commercial traveller.

He said that one evening three young men, of whom he himself was one, had finished dinner, and were wondering what they would do to pass the evening. One of them said, "Let's go down to the Drill Hall."

Just what he told me followed I do not recollect in detail, but the upshot was that after they got there, all three decided to "sign up"; i.e., enroll.

One was Colbert; the other was Winsby, afterwards Colonel Winsby of Victoria who took a battalion overseas, and the third became Gunner Currie, afterwards General Currie.

J.S. Matthews.

According to General Currie, who told me the first time he visited Vancouver in uniform he came, either as a gunner or as a corporal, with the 1st Battalion, Canadian Garrison Artillery, to holiday celebration in which the 2nd Battalion of the same regiment was participating, 1897 or 1898. Arms were stacked in the old wooden drill shed on Pender Street.

J.S. Matthews.

The truth of the Colbert story could easily be verified by looking up the old rolls of the 5th C.G.A., Victoria.

J.S. Matthews, Major.

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. J.B. GIFFEN, EX-MANAGER OF R.C. DUN & CO., VANCOUVER, NOW RESIDENT 6689 VINE STREET.

WOODWARD DEPARTMENT STORES.

Mr. Giffen: "Do you know Charlie Woodward?"

Major Matthews: Of Woodward Department Stores? Yes. The first I remember of him he had a little store down on Westminster Avenue and he used to wear a big long apron of white cotton, with a bib up to his chin held up with a tape around his neck, and another tape holding it 'round his waist, and I remember him walking up and down in front of the store with a watering can, sprinkling water on the vegetables in a long box in front of the windows.

Mr. Giffen: "That's the way I remember him. When I first came here in 1908 I went over one day to get a statement for R.C. Dun" (Mercantile Agency) "from him. The store was all in confusion, things scattered

about in a regular junk heap, and he was busy with customers. But to my great surprise, when I told him who I was, he was interested in me, and my purpose; a thing not usual in such an establishment. As soon as he had served his customers, he took me back to his office; it wasn't a real office, but a sort of desk with papers scattered all around, stuck on nails. He explained to me his position very carefully; he got a rating of about five or ten thousand dollars, and I remember him making a striking statement. It was: 'I am not going to be satisfied until it is a million dollars.'

"For years after that, once a year, after he had made up his balance sheet for the year, he used to take the statement up to Mr. Godfrey of the Bank of British North America. Our office was just across the way, and after he had been into the bank he used to bring the statement up to me."

Major Matthews: Did he ever reach a million dollars?

Mr. Giffen: "Oh, yes! Years ago. I remember the last time he came up, he came up with a statement showing assets of over a million dollars. He had finally got what he wanted. I looked at the statement, and we talked about it, and presently I asked him if he remembered the remark that he had made to me years previously about not being satisfied until he had reached a million dollars. Mr. Woodward replied, 'Oh, yes! I remember it very well.' He was a smart man. He still goes to his office every day, gets down about eight or half past, and of course, they put such papers as are of importance on his desk for him to see." (Also see Mrs. Sanderson, Vol. 3.)

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH MISS ANNIE MORRISON, R.N. (REGISTERED NURSE), 2831 WEST 3RD AVENUE, 10 OCTOBER 1933.

SOUTH VANCOUVER. D.L. 652. NORTH ARM ROAD (FRASER AVENUE). MAIN STREET.

"My father, Thomas Henry Morrison, was born at Trebon" (?) "about forty miles from Québec; he was the son of, I think, John Morrison, who came from Scotland, farmed in Québec, had six sons and six daughters. My father, Thomas Henry, was married three times, all in London, Ontario, including my mother, Anne Meredith, of London, England. He died in Vancouver about 1913 or 1914, and was buried in Mountain View Cemetery.

"From his father's farm in Québec he went to London, Ontario, then for seven years as a merchant to Pembina, North Dakota, then one year in Winnipeg, where he was in the wagon and carriage business, then to Vancouver by C.P.R. where he arrived with wife and eight children in November 1888. The children were myself, born 1866, and my half brothers and sisters (whose mother's maiden name was Anna Kessack), Ethel, Florence, Homer, Stanley (twins), Chester, Gordon and Olive. I was born in London, Ethel to Chester in London, Gordon and Olive in Dakota. On our arrival here, all went to the Central School save Olive, who was too young. Ethel is now Mrs. William Goodwin and has one son, Lyle, and two daughters, Jean and Ruth; Florence, now dead, was Mrs. Wellington Bichart, no children; Homer married Miss Emily Syn, no children; Stanley married Miss Martha Thompson, two sons, Ralph and Lloyd; Gordon married Miss Eleanor Greer, Sam Greer's daughter, and has two sons, Gordon and Dale; and Olive married Robert Mills, one son, Robert. All these children were born in Vancouver. Father was in the carriage business on Hastings Street with Mr. Vicky." (?) "Miss Vicky married Dr. McAlpine of Point Grey Road."

SAM GREER. RICHARDS STREET.

"When we first came to Vancouver we went to live at 713 Richards Street—the house was torn down in 1931, and there is a parking station there now, but when we went there it was a wild sort of place; a big stump stood in the middle of the street in front of our house. Mrs. James Macaulay, who recently received the Good Citizen's medal, lived close by in the next block; a wonderful woman. Father Fay was the clergyman of the Catholic Church; a popular man; his hobby was his garden" (see photo of Holy Rosary Church); "my sister, Florence, was very clever—took the highest marks at the Central School, and Father Fay gave her a gold medal; we lost it when their house was robbed."

JERICHO BEACH. CAPTAIN AND MRS. DALGLIESH. LYNN CREEK.

"Among the incidents I recall were our picnics; sometimes we took a rowboat and went over to Lynn Creek; there was a milk ranch there. And then, another time, the Homer Street Methodist Church held a