

Early Vancouver

Volume Three

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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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When referencing the 2011 edition of *Early Vancouver*, please cite the page number that appears at the bottom of the page in the PDF version only, not the page number indicated by your PDF reader. Here are samples of how to cite this source:

Footnote or Endnote Reference:

Major James Skitt Matthews, *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 3 (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011), 33.

Bibliographic Entry:

Matthews, Major James Skitt. *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 3. Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011.

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"The first three-storey brick building on the Mainland was the Wilson Block on the lane corner of Abbott and Cordova streets. It was pulled down when the Metropole Hotel was built on the same site, of recent years in its turn pulled down when the Woodward Department Store made the addition to their store."

WILLIAM HAILSTONE.

"I used to live with Hailstone. William Hailstone told me that at the time the Royal Engineers were making their survey of Vancouver in 1863, that they offered to put Deadman's Island in the preemption for \$7.50." (See *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 2, Joseph Morton.) "There are a good many stories told about how Deadman's Island got its name. I have heard one, that before the whiteman came there was some sort of an Indian battle, and that the Northern victors killed off the men and temporarily used Deadman's Island as an internment camp for the women prisoners, and that subsequently the Squamish dead were buried on Deadman's Island; it may be just a legend. I understand it was a sort of massacre in which several score, perhaps several hundred, Indians were killed." (See F.W. Alexander and W.A. Grafton.)

"Hailstone told me that when they lived in the little cabin on what is now Hastings Street, west of Burrard, that there was a little creek, and that they used to wash their plates and dishes in it once a week."

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH WILLIAM A. GRAFTON, CITY HALL OFFICIAL IN EMPLOY OF VANCOUVER CITY FOR 17 YEARS, 24 MARCH 1934.

GRAFTON BAY. BOWEN ISLAND.

"I was born at London, England, February 6, 1868, at Hacking, and came to Canada from London, first to Toronto. My two brothers left England about March 1885, I left March 1886, mother and sister about June 1886; we all stayed in Ontario, but the other four reached B.C. before I did. I got here in the summer of '87. We wanted to get land, but they said there was no good land near New Westminster, none over where North Vancouver is, so my brother located on Bowen Island as the best place. Between my brother and myself we preempted, all told, six hundred and forty acres, paid one dollar an acre, have got twenty yet. We built a log cabin, and we all stayed there on and off for many years; the old cabin must have fallen down by this time. We all worked together on the preemption."

WILD ANIMALS. DEER, GROUSE, WOLVES.

"The deer on Bowen Island were very thick; you could go out and get one any time; and so were the grouse. We used to shoot for the market. I had the reputation of getting the biggest deer ever shot in the province; that was one in the fall of 1891; it weighed 195 pounds, but it wasn't the biggest one I ever shot; the biggest was 225 pounds. At one time there were a lot of wolves on Bowen Island; they killed Beach's dog, and they killed Bill Eaton's dog, and you could always see the deer swimming in the water after being driven there by the wolves; wolves won't follow deer into the water. We never hunted deer in boots; always in moccasins; Chief George of Sechelt taught us how to make moccasins. I have sneaked up as close as twenty-five feet to a deer."

HOWE SOUND AND SECHELT FERRY. NAVY JACK.

"In the ferry venture I was alone. I cruised about in a sloop, then started to run a ferry to Howe Sound, Squamish and Sechelt in my four-ton sloop—no engine, just sails, no name; no one was running there then. I was unmarried, did not marry until I was 37. Before I started, Navy Jack had run a sloop up and down once in a while, but when I started, no one was running a ferry up Howe Sound. Cates came a long time after. I docked my sloop at Andy Linton's boathouse at the foot of Carrall Street. I ran up and down once a week; had a contract with the brick yard, and also made special trips. There were only one or two settlers at Squamish at that time, but there were logging camps up Howe Sound; they were also logging at Sechelt then; hand loggers, French Canadians; they had jack screws, and cut the logs along the shore, and jacked them into the water, and they took out good stuff too; you had to be pretty particular what stuff you took out those days; got to be first-class stuff; the logs they take out now would never have been accepted then. The loggers used some oxen."

"I carried the men who made the bricks for the old Market" (City) "Hall up to Bowen Island; at least, when the scows came in for the bricks, that was what they said they had come for. Oppenheimer had a brick yard at Deep Cove. You see, there were two brick yards on Bowen Island. David Oppenheimer, Sam

Brighthouse, George Black and W.J. Armstrong of Armstrong and Morrison, had one yard, and it was from their yard that the bricks came to build the Market Hall. Their brick yard started with a water flume, and water wheel for power, but there was not enough water to run the wheel in the summer time, and they put in steam.” (See *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 3, Hemphill, who says some bricks came from Hong Kong.)

FIRST SETTLER ON BOWEN ISLAND. WILLIAM EATON. JOSEPH MANNION.

“A man named William Eaton—no children, but two klotches for wives, not both at the same time—was the first settler there, probably the first settler on Bowen Island. Eaton leased the waterfront to four Swedes, Johnson, Petersen, and two others, and they ran it with home-made machinery of the kind they had used in Sweden; a horse going around in a circle pulling a shaft after him made the power. Mannion used to come out from Granville in the summer, and camp there. Then Joe Mannion, in 1888, bought the place off Bill Eaton, and he furnished the Swedes with a steam plant, and ultimately took possession of the brick yard. Both brick yards ran about four years, from '86 to '89. Bill Eaton had his cabin where the hotel is now on the flat above Deep Cove; he planted that old orchard; they claim he buried both his wives back of his cabin; he was supposed to be a very old timer even when I went there.

“Beach, he was an old Civil War veteran; he had a klotch too, and four half-breed children; he came from Orcas Island; his place was on Sucker Lake; they call it Killarney Lake now; there weren't any suckers—they were those graylings; could not eat them, all bones. Beach took in half the lake, and had his cabin where the dam is. Reid squatted on the other half, and married the sister of the wife of Chief of Police Stewart of Vancouver. The people living on Bowen Island at that time were Bill Eaton, Beach, the Grafton brothers, and the two Simpson boys at the north end of the island. They sold out to J.C. Keith, and then disappeared. Then there was Davis; he had Snug Cove; he was single then, but married afterwards. He bought Snug Cove from McInnes. McInnes was supposed to be full brother to Bill Eaton; there was some mystery about that. McInnes went to Whitecliff, then known as Copper House Point, to settle. When we lived at Grafton Bay, my brother Tom, now lightkeeper at Point Atkinson, owned the Grafton Bay property, but we all lived there.”

BRICKS. DAVID OPPENHEIMER.

“Joe Mannion's brick yard was on the south side of the Creek, and Oppenheimer's was on the north; the first was where the new playground is, just below the waterfall. Chinamen made all Oppenheimer's bricks. The first brick buildings in Vancouver were Oppenheimer's warehouse at the southeast corner of Columbia and Powell streets, and the Tremont Hotel on Carrall Street. Hemphill” (or Sentell) “is supposed to have built the first private dwelling of brick on Hastings Street near Dunlevy.”

JOE MANNION'S STEAMBOAT SATURNA.

“Then Joe Mannion bought a steamboat, *Saturna*, about 75 feet long, screw propelled, and that put me out of business. Joe lasted two years or so and then Sam McDowell bought the *Saturna*; he and his brother John had a wood yard on Dupont Street. Sam ran the *Saturna* on his own business only; then we had the steamboat *Burt*, owned by Dan Mooney, and after a while a steamer called the *Sunbury*, owned in Westminster—a sidewheeler; all this was up Howe Sound, and all before Jack Cates came. Then Jack Cates got the *Defiance*, brought from the American side, I think, started, and then he built the *Britannia*, a pretty little boat, well fitted up, plush cushions and all, and she was on for some years; then he got other boats and finally sold out to the Union Steamship Company.”

NAVY JACK.

“Navy Jack was a squatter farther along towards the Narrows; he had some half-breed children too. He had the first boat that ran up Howe Sound; I had the second sloop; then came Mooney; followed Cates, and finally the Union Steamship Company bought Cates out.”

UNION STEAMSHIP CO. LTD., OF B.C.

“Captain William Webster, whom I think was about the first manager of the U.S.S. Co., came from New Zealand or Australia. They said he was a captain in the service of the U.S.S. Co. of New Zealand and lost a ship and got 'let out.' He was an auctioneer at first in Vancouver, and agent for the little steamboat *Nellie Taylor*—a little boat about 35 feet long; open boat, no deck, operating for charter before the gasoline boats. Before Captain Webster's time, the *Nellie Taylor*, owned by Tom Penny, ran on the Moodyville Ferry against Captain Hugh Stalker of the *Senator*, but there was no sufficient trade for the

two. Captain Webster was not agent for her when Captain Tom Penny, her owner, ran to Moodyville; she was on the Moodyville run for a very short time; then Johnston and Decker had a shingle mill on Gambia Island. They bought her; she went adrift at Gambia Island and they never found her again; whether she went adrift or was stolen was never known as she was never seen again.

“After that Captain Webster went with the U.S.S. Co. Captain McFadden and Van Bremner owned the *Leonora*, *Skidegate* and the *Senator*, and Webster went in with them to form the U.S.S. Co.; then when the company was formed they bought the *Cutch*.

“Afterwards they got the *Comox*, *Capilano*, and *Coquitlam*. All these three ships came here in pieces inside a sailing ship, and they were put together down in Coal Harbour. The company, when they started, named all their boats with a ‘C.’ I think they got the idea of the name ‘Union’ from Captain Webster’s old shipping company, the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand. The *Cutch* was lost and afterwards salvaged, and was sold to some South American government” (Colombia government) “and renamed *Bogota*.

“Captain Webster was well up in years, about fifty. Don’t know how long he stayed here or if he had children, or where he went to.” (See Genealogy form.) “Captain McFadden was in the company, when the organised it; don’t know just what he was, but he was always on the wharf. Immediately after arrival from India, the *Cutch* was on the Nanaimo run in opposition to Captain Rogers’ *Dirty Bob*; that was what we called the *Robert Dunsmuir*, in opposition to the *Joan*. The *Robert Dunsmuir* brought coal from Nanaimo and took passengers back. Ultimately, I sold the Union Steamship Company 160 acres, Grafton Lake, Bowen Island. They call it Trout Lake now. They dammed up Trout Lake and used it for domestic purposes. Part of the lake was on my property; I would not allow them to build a dam, so they bought the place.”

EAGLE HARBOUR. NELSON CREEK.

(See Grebe Island.)

“In early days there was a railroad reserve—until 1886; that was what made them squat; then, as soon as the railroad reserves were taken off, they preempted it. Nelson Creek was named after Nelson, who afterwards got his preemption at Eagle Harbour. He had two or three sons and a daughter. They lived on Alexander Street; he was a framer at the Hastings Sawmill in early days.”

WHYTE ISLAND. EAGLE ISLAND.

“We called Whyte Island ‘The Bird Rocks.’ An Italian fisherman lived on Eagle Island which we called Italy Island. McPherson squatted on Whyte Cliff Point, and had a little house and his family there. His house was in the little bay due north of Whyte Island.”

COPPERHOUSE POINT.

“Copperhouse Point, approximately Whytecliff, was supposed to be the site of a rich copper mine. I think Fisher, of the bank over in New Westminster, owned it.”

GREBE ISLANDS.

“The Indians placed their dead on Grebe island; there was nothing else there—the dead Indians had it all to themselves. In early days there was a tall tree—a big tree, two foot six or three feet thick—on that island, and the wind afterwards blew it down; and there was nearly always an eagle on top of it; that may have been the way Eagle Harbour got its name. We used to call it the ‘Dead Watch’ tree; watching over the dead Indians.”

ERWIN POINT.

“Erwin was a squatter; he was second light keeper at Point Atkinson, and owned Cyprus Park. He told me he went there in 1882. Erwin, who preempted D.L. 582, took in too large an area.”

LAND SURVEYS.

“You see, in them days, when you wanted land staked, there was no survey. You started your own survey by putting in the stake on the beach and measuring off the land you wanted, but it had to be a quarter of a mile wide and a mile long, or half a mile square; that made the 160 acres. What you tried to do was to

leave a half a mile or a quarter of a mile, between you and the next squatter, so that it would come out all right when it was surveyed; then you had to get a land surveyor and survey yourself, and you had to pay for the surveying too.”

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY.

“All the squatters on the north shore retained their land, but most of those on the south shore lost theirs. A reserve was put on both north and south shores of English Bay, because the railway was coming and they did not know whether it would take the north or south shore, but when it did not take the north shore, the squatters got their land.” (See Sam Greer’s case, and Judge Bole’s remark: “If the C.P.R. had not wanted Sam’s land, he would have had it yet.”)

“So when Erwin refused to alter his line to give Murray Thain, who preempted D.L. 559, his proper frontage, they penalised him by taking thirty acres off the back end of his preemption, and so created that queer shaped D.L. 583.”

CAULFEILDS. PILOT STATION. KETTLE POINT.

“Afterwards I went into the Vancouver Pilot Service, stayed there seven years, and sailed the cutter *Claymore* out of Skunk Cove in the pilot service. We used to anchor in Skunk Cove or off Point Grey, and wait for a vessel needing a pilot. Then Balfour Ker, who owned the place, gave us permission, and we built a house and the pilot station at Skunk Cove. Balfour Ker bought Skunk Cove from Frolander, a Swede, who was the original owner. Captain Westerland’s wife was a daughter of Frolander. So when Caulfeild came along and bought the place, and gave us permission to build, he charged the pilots one dollar per month rental, so they could not take the land. The pilot station is still there; at least, Captain Kettle, an old pilot, lives in the old pilot house, but the pilot service has been done away with since the government took it over.”

BRIDGMAN POINT. ROBERTSON POINT. BATCHELOR COVE. JOHNSON COVE. CLAYMORE COVE. ETTERS SHANK COVE. PATERSON COVE.

“All these points and coves are named after old pilots, but Claymore Cove is after the pilot cutter *Claymore*, used before the pilot station was built. Robertson brought the S.S. *Islander* out from England for the Canadian Pacific Navigation Company.”

NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERMEN. FISHERMAN’S COVE.

“Did you ever hear about the Newfoundland fishermen’s fishing station at Whitecliff? The Provincial Government located the Newfoundland fishermen on deeded land in the spring of 1888. They were Captain Alcock, Rich Gosse, and Andrews; they had three bays, a bay apiece, no men with them, just their families. I don’t think Rich Gosse went out there. Gosse’s place was the bay we call Kew Beach now. Pete Larson got his place in the end. Captain Alcock and Andrews each built a wharf, both in Fisherman’s Cove, Alcock to the north, Andrews to the south. Alcock took out the first sealing schooner from Vancouver, the *C.D. Rand*. There were five sealing schooners built on False Creek; all launched at once. The Provincial Government located the Newfoundland fishermen on deeded land in the spring of 1888 and then had to ‘buy them off,’ for they had put them at Copperhouse Point” (Whitecliff) “and there was a dispute about the ownership of the land.”

JAPANESE.

“The first Japanese I ever saw built a sort of boathouse on the beach between Carrall and Columbia Street, on Burrard Inlet” (see Bailey Bros. photo No. 506), “and then the next summer they were all fishing out on the Fraser River, and that brought on a lot of trouble. The whites smashed their boats in; they all had a couple of planks staved in in their bottom. What the white fishermen had done was to take an oar and pound the bottom out of the boat, then throw the oar overboard, and cast the smashed boat adrift. I was in the pilot service at Skunk Cove, and picked up four of the smashed boats in English Bay off Point Atkinson, took them to Skunk Cove, and the canneries sent two tugs to take them away.”

STANLEY PARK. INDIAN GRAVEYARDS. SUPPLEJACK.

Query: Mr. Tomlinson, who helped to dig white shells from the Indian midden in Stanley Park near Lumberman’s Arch, afterwards hauled and laid those shells as the first surface to the first park driveway. Can you tell us anything about that?

Mr. Grafton: "I remember them doing that. It's a pity they destroyed so much of the Indian features out in the park. Supplejack had a nice place out at the end of the pipe line road, board house with windows and curtains on them, not built of Indian split cedar slab, but of sawn boards; nice place." (See *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 2, Haatsalano.) "Then there was the Indian graveyard. You know Harris' house out there; the water pipe line caretaker on the Narrows shore just inside Prospect Point; the graveyard was there. Supplejack's grave was there; not in the ground, but above ground. When I first saw that Indian graveyard, there were quite a lot of graves; not graves as we know them, but graves above ground. The canoes with bodies in them were still there; the canoes were supported about level with your face; the dead were inside the canoes. Then there were a lot of boxes; boxes with bones in them lying on the ground; Indian bones; that was the way they buried them. When they made the road around Stanley Park, they took them all away to Squamish. You know those little islands off Point Atkinson." (See Andrew Paul.) "Well, there were Indian graves on top of them too; guess they are there yet; just underneath slabs of cedar to hold them down. I have often lifted the cedar slabs on top of those Seal Rocks, just around Point Atkinson, and looked at the Indian remains lying beneath."

WHOI-WHOI. STANLEY PARK.

"About the potlatch houses at Whoi-Whoi. It was a very interesting sight coming through the First Narrows at night time, when the tide was out. There, on the beach, were all the Indians with their pitch sticks alight, and digging clams; the Indians, used to go there. They used to look very pretty coming in. Being dark, you couldn't see the Indians, but you could see their pitch stick lights, and you could see their figures digging away. They could only get the best of the clams in winter, when the long run out of the tide took the water away out and they got their clams out in the deep part of the beach right where the Lumberman's Arch is."

Query: How is it that you saw so many Indians at night, when you told me the other day that there were only a few Indians at Whoi-Whoi?

Mr. Grafton: "When they came in from the outside" (English Bay) "they would all go there. I have seen over a dozen canoes on the beach there; all sizes; a big canoe would hold twelve or more persons" (probably 18 to 20 would be more correct); "the little canoes they towed behind the big ones; all made of cedar. The little canoes were light enough to carry. They were all lying about on the beach in front of their great big houses, regular barns made out of split cedar; they called them potlatch houses."

INDIAN GRAVES. SUPPLEJACK.

Query: Ever see the graveyard, just behind Whoi-Whoi? Back of the Lumberman's Arch?

Mr. Grafton: "No. The only graves I ever saw were down on the beach, just east of the lighthouse as you come through the First Narrows; end of the pipe line road, where the Harrises lived. There was a little clearing there." (It was here that the formal ceremony of the dedication of Stanley Park took place.) "Supplejack's grave there was a cabin about ten feet long, eight feet wide, and about three feet off the ground, on posts. The walls were about three feet high, a low peak roof, and windows all around, and red blinds on the little glass windows. The Indians put him in that. Supplejack is supposed to have been a 'bad actor,' supposed to have shot a lot of men coming through the Narrows. The roof of the little cabin was of lumber; I could not say whether of shingles or not. It was a pretty concern, side same as roof. Could not say if the lumber was hand-made or sawn; they *could* have cut it out of the woods themselves; they knew well enough how to do it, but I don't know whether they did or not. You could not see inside on account of the red curtains on the little glass windows, and there did not appear to be a door, as it was closed all around. I don't know how they put Supplejack in there. There were about three windows on each side, and one in each end as far as I recall; it's a long time ago."

Query: What about the red blankets which his son, August Jack Haatsalano, speaks about? (See *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 2.)

Mr. Grafton: "I saw no red blankets; all I saw was the cabin and the red blinds on the glass windows. I suppose the red blankets would be inside for the body to rest upon and be covered with, but don't actually know."

(The above was read to and assented to as accurate by A.J. Haatsalano, 31 May 1934. Also see *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 2.)

INDIAN STONE PESTLE.

“You can have this stone pestle.” (*NOTE ADDED LATER*: hammer.) “It was dug up by myself in the summer of 1919 about 150 feet west of the southwest corner of Cambie Street and 63rd Avenue; about three quarters of a mile from the North Arm of the Fraser River, and at a point which at one time must have been covered with dense forest in all directions. It was under the roots of a big stump of a cedar tree. I went to live there in November 1918, and dug it out from among the roots the following summer, and also three or four arrowheads, one of which you can have; the rest I gave away. All these relics were down in the ground about eighteen inches, and beside a root as thick as a man’s body. The land in the neighbourhood is partly soft, low, swamp. There is a big creek runs down nearby, but where this pestle was dug up it was gravelly, but there was water more or less all over that neighbourhood. It may be that a rush of water covered the pestle and arrowheads with earth; I don’t know, but it was down deep, at least eighteen inches.”

NOTE ADDED LATER:

This stone hammer is in the City Archives with an engraved brass band around it.

INDIAN WARS.

“You’ve heard the stories of the Indians sending their women and children into the woods when they were attacked by the northern Indians.” (Note: Rev. C.M. Tate—see *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 2—states that when travelling through the forest trails near Nanaimo, he once enquired the meaning of small collections of clam shells lying here and there. His Indian companion told him it was where women and children, sent into the woods for safety, when Indians marauders appeared, had been eating food brought to them from the shore by their men folk. J.S.M.) “Chief George of Sechelt used to tell me about sending their women inland when the northern Indians came, and it may be that this pestle and the arrowheads were placed beside the old cedar—you know how Indian women used cedar bark for almost every domestic purpose—when the Indian women hastened into the woods, probably following the creek for their water supply, also because of the easier route of travel, and then made their temporary abode around the folds of the cedar roots where they afterwards either forgot to remove them, or some misadventure, discovery and capture, resulted in the pestle being left behind. The ground on which it was found was a dry spot suitable for a temporary encampment, close to the creek for water and a swamp for native vegetables. The relics were sufficiently deep in the earth as to lead one to suppose they had been there for a very long time, perhaps centuries.”

NEWCASTLE, WEST VANCOUVER.

“They put down a bore about 1890 near Navy Jack’s, on the low land. We were all curious to learn what they found, but they ‘pulled out’ and said nothing.”

GRAFTON BAY. GRAFTON LAKE.

“I married Miss Margaret May Matheson at St. Paul’s Church, Vancouver, 1905, no children, but I have a brother, Thomas David, who runs the Point Atkinson lighthouse. He is married and has six children living. My sister died years ago. My brother David died about 1930, was cremated here, leaving one daughter, now Mrs. Wray. Both Grafton Bay and Grafton Lake were named after us, though they call the lake Trout Lake now, but the trout have all been fished out.”

(Read and approved by Mr. Grafton, 24 July 1934.)

EBURNE ISLAND (D.L. ?)

An island in the North Arm of the Fraser River between Twigg Island and the Marpole bridge, apparently unnamed until 1933, when, following a talk with Henry S. Rowling (see *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 3, Rowling), Major Matthews, City Archivist, began pencilling maps “Eburne Island.” Rowling suggested the name because “Henry Eburne, a well educated Englishman, a sincere Christian, owned the whole island, had a farm there; I lived there with him, before he opened the store at Eburne” (now Marpole.) (See photo of Henry Eburne.) Rowling says it was “formerly known as Eburne’s Island.” (See *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 3. Also Thos. Kidd’s *History of Richmond*.)