

Early Vancouver

Volume Four

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

2011 Edition (Originally Published 1944)

Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1935-1939.

Supplemental to Volumes One, Two and Three collected in 1931-1934.

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.

Copyright Statement

© 2011 City of Vancouver. Any or all of *Early Vancouver* may be used without restriction as to the nature or purpose of the use, even if that use is for commercial purposes. You may copy, distribute, adapt and transmit the work. It is required that a link or attribution be made to the City of Vancouver.

Reproductions

High resolution versions of any graphic items in *Early Vancouver* are available. A fee may apply.

Citing Information

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. 4 (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011), 33.

Bibliographic Entry:

Matthews, Major James Skitt. *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 4. Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011.

Contact Information

City of Vancouver Archives
1150 Chestnut Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3J9
604.736.8561
archives@vancouver.ca
vancouver.ca/archives



19 MARCH 1936 – “THE MERRY PRIEST,” FATHER PATRICK FAY OF HOLY ROSARY CHURCH.

REV. FATHER PATRICK FAY.

Wm. Mashiter, pioneer of Granville, burned out in the Great Fire, 13 June 1886, writing at the age of 87 from Squamish, B.C., 14 March 1936 to Major J.S. Matthews, says in part:

“What a lot of faces your letter brought to mind ... Father Fay, the merry priest.”

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH MRS. A.M. MCGOVERN, 1727 MACDONALD STREET, KITSILANO, VANCOUVER, MEMBER, TOWN PLANNING COMMISSION, ETC., ETC.

Mrs. McGovern said: “Father Fay was well liked; he died on the road to Bellingham, Washington; he was walking along from Vancouver to Bellingham, and just dropped.

“I was down in Montréal with my husband, and going outside of the hotel I met Father Fay. He asked me if I could do anything for him, so I went upstairs and told my husband, ‘Who do you think I met outside,’ and told him I had met Father Fay, and Mr. McGovern gave him ten dollars. Then I met Lord Shaughnessy, and I told him about Father Fay, and he answered, ‘Poor Father Fay,’ and I told him that I expected he would be in to see him. ‘Yes,’ said Lord Shaughnessy, ‘I expect he will.’ So I heard that Lord Shaughnessy gave him one hundred dollars, and a pass to Vancouver. He came west, and soon after died on his way to Bellingham as I have told you.”

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH W.F. FINDLAY, 12 APRIL 1932.

VANCOUVER (WEST END). WILLIAM HAILSTONE, SAM BRIGHOUSE.

“I understand William Hailstone parted with his half interest in the West End, or what interest he had with Sam Brighthouse, for a twenty dollar gold piece, several sacks of flour worth about five dollars, and a cayuse with a string halt, worth perhaps \$25. You could buy lots of them for \$10 or \$15. Hailstone logged off the West End, or anyway, sold some logs off his place, got tired of the game, and ‘pulled out.’” (Ask McCraney or W.E. Graveley.)

“I have read your narrative of conversations with me; they seem correct enough, and I confirm them.”

VANCOUVER ROADS IN 1887.

“My first impression of Vancouver was one in the form of a big bump on the back of my head. I arrived on the train October 22nd 1887, and Uncle’s (Lewis Carter) “hotel bus from the Carter House met the train. I got into the bus, an open express sort of conveyance, with seats longwise on both sides and drawn by two horses. There was a covering supported by iron stanchions, and canvas flaps for the sides to be let down in wet weather. The roads were very poor, and on our way up the incline to Cordova Street or else down Water Street as far as Cambie to the hotel, the bus gave a big bump, my head banged a stanchion, and left a big bump on the back.”

EARLIEST RECORDED NAVIGATING AID TO FIRST NARROWS. A ROOSTER.

In April 1937, the bell on Prospect Point Lighthouse was being replaced by a siren, as more efficient.

MEMO OF CONVERSATION, 10 JUNE 1931, WITH JAMES A. SMITH.

Mr. Smith is now retired, 1937. Moving picture censor, Court House, Vancouver, who came to Vancouver 5 April 1888.

Mr. Smith said: “On May 24th, 1888, I came from Victoria on the old side wheeler *Yosemite* with a shipload of excursionists expecting to spend the Queen’s Birthday in Vancouver; it was a very foggy day. We were due in Vancouver for breakfast, but it was getting on past nine o’clock, and we had not got through the First Narrows; everyone was getting anxious; it looked as though our holiday was ‘gone.’

“Then, as we neared what was supposed to be the entrance to the Narrows—outside Prospect Point—the master stopped the steamer, and ordered the anchor out. The chain was not long enough, so they

attached a rope and let the anchor down. Things looked 'bad'; there we remained—in the fog—an impatient, nervous excursion crowd off on a picnic, annoyed at the delay and the loss of our holiday.

"Presently, out of the silence and mist, we heard a rooster crow; the master ordered the anchor up; rang for 'slow ahead.' He knew where he was; we passed in to Burrard Inlet.

"It was Navy Jack's rooster which had crowed; 'Navy Jack' was, at that time, the only inhabitant of what we call West Vancouver. That rooster was one of the first navigating aids to mariners of Vancouver."

Excerpt: Mayor David Oppenheimer's address to City Council, 18 January 1892, as he retires after four years as Mayor of Vancouver: "A lighthouse is contemplated on Observation Point."

Note: Observation Point, i.e. old name of Prospect Point.

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH A.W. FRASER, 3614 TANNER STREET, OFF JOYCE ROAD, 4 MAY 1939.

[He] came to Vancouver in the fall of 1888, and who was one of the first members of the first militia in Vancouver, old No. 5 B.C.B.G.A. His signature is on the first page of the first roll, and shows as 21 years old; actually he was 19 at that date.

S.S. PREMIER. S.S. CHARMER. SMALLPOX. "BATTLE OF THE HOSES."

Mr. Fraser said: "I saw the trouble the time the *Premier* tried to land her passengers when we had the smallpox scare. I did not see the start; the news soon spread, and by the time I got there, there was a big crowd down on the C.P.R. wharf. The news soon spread through the little city.

"It was this way. Capt. O'Brien was in command of the *Premier*, as she was then; afterwards the *Charmer*, and the *Premier* was an American ship; flew the American flag, and had been down at Seattle and of course, when she came in she had to pass the customs, and the health officer went on board and he found smallpox, and would not allow the passengers to land, and Capt. O'Brien was determined to land his passengers. So Capt. O'Brien mustered his passengers, and said he would land the whole crowd of them, and then the fun started."

FIRE BRIGADE. RIOT. POLICE.

Major Matthews: Who started the fun?

Mr. Fraser: "The *Premier*. The news spread like wildfire, and in those days we had only three or four policemen in town, and they could not handle the situation, so they called out the fire brigade. The fire brigade was all volunteers then, and I don't know just all about it, because I was not there at the start, but the *Premier* turned her steam hose on to drive the crowd of onlookers on the wharf further back, and some of the crew on the *Premier* started to throw lumps of coal, and then the fire brigade turned on the" (cold water) "hose, and someone cut the ship's line, and she drifted off into the harbour, and hung about for a while, and then she turned and headed for Port Moody, and of course there was no road to Port Moody then, and she went to Port Moody quicker than they could, and she went up to Port Moody and there was no one there to stop them landing the passengers."

Query: Port Moody or Hastings?

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. W.H. GALLAGHER, FORMER ALDERMAN.

Now the only person living in Vancouver—Alderman L.A. Hamilton now in Toronto is the other one—who was present at the first meeting of the first City Council, May 1886. I finally persuaded him to go to Steffens-Colmer Studio and have his photograph taken.