

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.

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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.