

Early Vancouver

Volume Four

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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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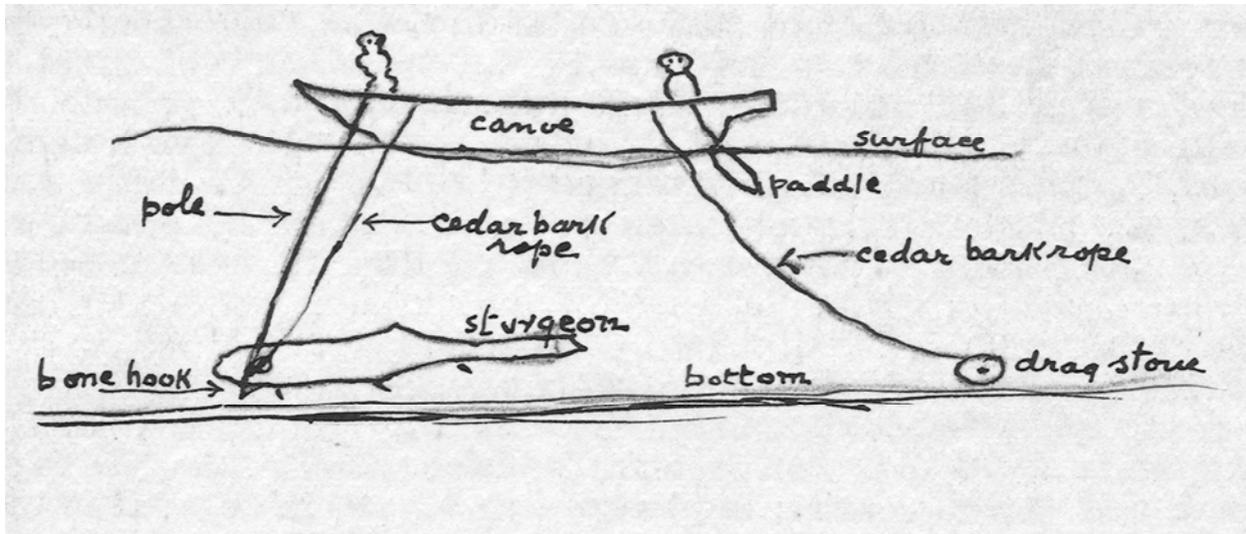
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Item # EarlyVan_v4_010

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH AUGUST JACK HAATSALANO, IN MY GARDEN, 23 AUGUST 1937.

(He is still camping on the Kitsilano Indian Reserve.)

Mr. Haatsalano brought another stone, much larger than the last, of sandstone; probably originally from Sim-sah-mulls (Bayswater Street beach), or perhaps from near Siwash Rock; pierced by some primitive abrasive stone tool, with a good sized hole in the centre large enough to pass a half-inch rope through. The stone is 7½ inches by 7½ inches by 4 inches, and weighs nine pounds, ten ounces. It was dug up on the Kitsilano Indian Reserve by Haatsalano, about one foot beneath the surface, and about one hundred yards east of the corner of Chestnut and Ogden streets, on the site of the old house of Chinalset (Jericho Charlie) and To-who-quam-ki.

STURGEON.

Mr. Haatsalano: "Here's that other stone I promised you." (See conversation, 14 August.)

Major Matthews: Do you suppose it was anchor for canoe?

August Jack: "Nooo. It would not be sharp in front if it was."

INDIAN DRESS. INDIAN HAIR.

Haatsalano: (handing over three more crude drawings on writing paper, made with coloured crayons such as school children use) "Indians heads" (laughingly.) "These green feathers all right in he's hair; may be not coloured right" (not correct hue), "I's got no good paints, but they's" (Indians) "take white feather and dye them so they's" (feathers) "same as grass; then put them in their hair."

"Indians not cut their hair short long time ago; long time ago let it grow down to he's middle; only since whitemans come cut it short." (Note: by short he does not mean as whitemen cut their hair, but cut off about the nape of the neck, which is very long for whitemen.) "Chinalset and Tom-who-quam-kee cut hair short, but not before that" (Indians did not); "before that Indians wear it long, down to he's breasts. They's braid it. Mans wear it in front; womans hang it down back. Mans have one braid on each side; it hang down in front; he ties ends together so's it not go over" (his head), "just like I draw you here."

CHIEF HAATSALANO.

Major Matthews: What's that yarn about Chief Haatsalahnogh coming up from Point Roberts, or about Haatsalahnogh being a very ancient historic title first at Point Roberts; woman break the moral code; they all leave her and come to Snauq?

August Jack: "No, that's not it. Chief Haatsalahnogh not come from Point Roberts; he come from Lillooet; anyways he's father did; 'old' Haatsalahnogh, my great-grandfather.

"My mother Why-wat, she tell me. My great-grandfather Haatsalahnogh he come down Squamish from Lillooet, and he sit eight days, all the time, nothing to eat, in the door, without eating."

INDIAN CUSTOMS. INDIAN MARRIAGE.

August Jack: "He sit eight days without eating; maybe he go away for a few minutes, but he come back again and sit down; sit in the doorway, just inside.

"He's got lots goat skins; they's expensive, hard to get; shoot with bow and arrow, but he's got fifty all together; he get them up in the mountains; take long time to get them; shoot with bow and arrow; take long time to get fifty skins; he bring them to house with him when he sits in the door. He wants to marry the girl in the house."

Major Matthews: How did he know about the girl? He must have met her before?

August Jack: "No. He just hear the news, he just heard about girl; he hears the news; the girl is good, and her peoples rich, got lots of everything; got canoes, got blankets, old fashioned stuff" (note: meaning unlike the modern idea of wealth.) "He never see her before. He just leave Lillooet and come down Squamish.

"At the end of the eight days, her father says, 'Put them together.' So her father goes out and gets a man to put them together" (marry) "so's my great-grandfather's going to marry that Squamish girl, and then he stays at Squamish about a year, and then there's a baby, and that's my grandfather Haatsalahnogh."

CHIEF KHAHTSAHLANO.

August Jack: "Then 'old' Haatsalahnogh he's not old then; he's go back to Lillooet again to show them he's wife and boy, and then he comes back to Squamish, and stays, and he's boy grow and grow and grow, and that's Chief Haatsalahnogh, my grandfather, and then he come to Chaythoos, and his brother Chip-Kay-m go to Snauq."

Major Matthews: Did you say "old" Haatsalahnogh from Lillooet sit outside for eight days without anything to eat?

August Jack: "Not sit outside; inside door, inside doorway; nothing to eat for eight days. You see they got big name in Squamish" (proud family name.) "They's" (the girl's family) "punish him; they find out what sort of a man he is. Lots of man he sit four days, then he's go away, he's give up, he go away, he not come back; he not want girl very much.

"When he" ("old" Haatsalahnogh) "was leaving Lillooet, he's father tell him, 'If you not man enough to sit eight days, you *never* get a wife.' So he's" ("old" Haatsalahnogh) "come to Squamish from Lillooet, and sit down eight days."

Major Matthews: Did you say the girl's father got a man to put them together?

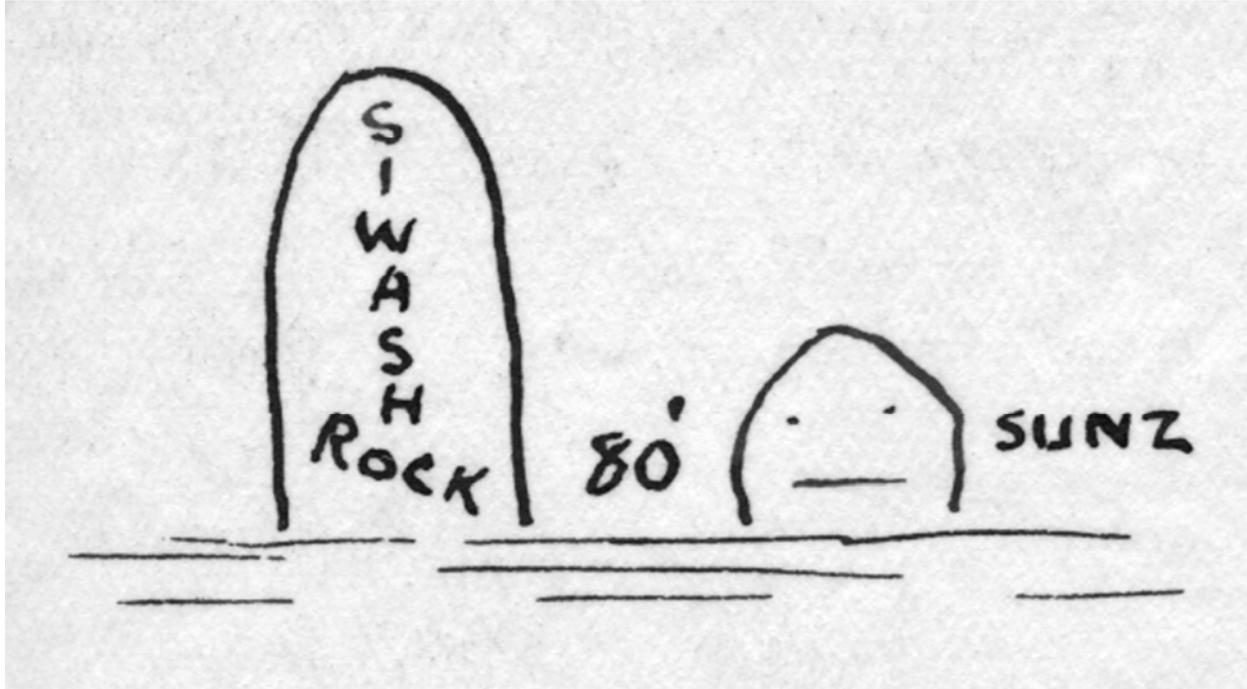
August Jack: "Yes, they have to. The girl's father cannot do it. You see, they's got a big name in Squamish; they cannot take the man's word; they's got to have witness. That's Indian style."

SIWASH ROCK.

Major Matthews: Where did you say Siwash Rock's second wife was; just by him; how far away?

August Jack: "Just this side" (southeast from Siwash Rock) "about eighty feet from Siwash Rock; perhaps more, this way" (towards Kitsilano Beach.) "It's a rock, sharp shape on top, peak, high at top, like a womans got peak hat; it's got mouth and eyes, looks like a woman."

Note: Siwash Rock's other wife, Sunz, is below Prospect Point, near lighthouse.



Item # EarlyVan_v4_011

It is my old Indian friend, Haatsalano, who neither reads nor writes, speaking:

"Me!" (astonished) "Stone age man? May be, too." (Long pause, then smiling.) "You're 'relief age' man.

"Long time ago, Indian boy's father just" (as) "anxious he's boy have good education as white boy's father like he's boy go university, but he's got no pencil; nobodies know how to write. So he's *tell* him.

"When he's go out in canoe fishing young Indian paddle, old Indian fish; canoe not go fast, canoe go slow past places; lots time talk about things, tell what happened there as canoe go by. Old Indian fish and talk; young Indian paddle and listen; old Indian make young Indian say it back so's he get it right; then old Indian tell him again; that's way teach him about Squamish. Some boy no good; he not listen. Good boy he listen; by 'em by he grow up, be wise man; he know lots. Indian" (who) "knows most 'bout history most educated; he's best man; peoples ask him 'bout things; maybe make him chief."

J.S. Matthews
6 October 1937.