

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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Contact Information

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



CHIP-KAY-M (CHIEF GEORGE.) BEAR. LITTLE MOUNTAIN. GUNS, FLINT.

“You see up Little Mountain there, up Cambie Street. That’s when the bear got Chip-kay-m. Chip-kay-m hunting bear, and shoot, but he’s slow reloading; he’s only got muzzle loading flint gun. Big bear comes at him, and claw all down the left side of his face, and tear his breast; hurt him very bad; but Chip-kay-m got better again.

“That’s where it was, right there, by Cambie Street just below Little Mountain.”

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH AUGUST JACK KHAHTSAHLANO, AT CITY ARCHIVES, 21 SEPTEMBER 1938.

INDIAN IMPLEMENTS.

August came carrying a long, concave, wooden platter, 18¼ inches long, 6¾ inches wide, which he had hollowed out of cedar, to illustrate the sort of table dishes used by the Indians before the whitemans came.

August said: “I make this for you, to show what the Indians put their food on. This one man” (individual) “plate.” (holding it before him) “Have some fish; have some potatoes?”

Major Matthews: (surprised) Potatoes!! Not before whitemans came?

August: “Oh, yes. Indian potatoes, fresh water potatoes; get them out of North Arm, Fraser River. This little plate; just one man help himself. They’s make great big ones, too,” (extending arms) “for the family; about three feet long, and wide, too. Make them out of spruce and maple.”

Major Matthews: Make them with stone chisel and stone hammer as good as this one.

August: “Just as good.”

Major Matthews: (showing him small sharp agate-like stone, 2½” x 1½”, shaped like an Indian axe; tiny thing, picked up by Mr. Harry E. Kent on his summer cottage property, Lot 6, Block 24, D.L. 543, near Dollarton, 1933) What for?

August: “Don’t know exactly. Maybe small axe head, but seems too small for axe. I think it’s a woman’s; just about the size woman’s fingers would want to chop up roots before cooking them. Womans hold it in fingers, press down with palm, sharp edge cut roots up in little bits so put in for cooking; like chopping knife white womans have. But it’s dull. It’s been in ground so long, edge got blunt.” (Must have been very sharp when it was sharp, for it is quite sharp now.)

CHINALSET. “JERICO CHARLIE.” INDIAN CUSTOMS. INDIAN RELIGION.

August: (following desultory conversation on the inhumanity and selfishness of man) “Old Chinalset” (Jericho Charlie), “he kind; he call me son, but I’m only stepson. He tells me, ‘old peoples, go help them; when they’s cannot make it, go help them’; these peoples not pay, but the man above” (pointing to sky), “Chinalset tell me, he pay—someday.”

GIBSON’S LANDING. SCJUNK. ROBERTS CREEK. STAWK-KI-YAH.

August: “Scjunk, that’s Gibson’s Landing; Stawk-ki-yah, that’s Roberts Creek; that beyond Squamish must not go; beyond Stawk-ki-yah is Sechelt.

“Scjunk is a little creek about 300-400 yards west of Gibson’s Landing; Stawk-ki-yah is a long way, about three miles to Roberts Creek. There’s a creek come down at Stawk-ki-yah; Indians camp there all the time; but north of that is Sechelt country.”

(Note: in *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 3, I have recorded Scjunk as a rock; there must be some error somewhere; a creek is more likely.)

August: (continuing) "These two Indians" (wood models) "just Scjunk. Scjunk was a" (legendary) "man."
"It was after the flood. Oh, that's a long time ago. I tell you about the flood the other day; about all the mountains covered with water excepting three highest."
"Well, this man Scjunk, he dance, dance, dance, dance all the time. Of course, he's got his mask on and everything, but he takes it off at night, and in the morning he puts it on again, and start dancing again."

Major Matthews: What did he want to dance for?

RAVENS.

August: "Well, that's the way he was made. But he's so old. He's got a friend in the ravens. The ravens he's friend, tell him the news; if there's anything new coming, the ravens fly and tell him. The flood is gone; all this is long after the flood."

"The man is Scjunk; same these little white models; they're in he's dress."

NARVAEZ'S MAP, 1791. ELIZA'S MAP, 1791. GREAT NORTHERN CANNERY. STUCKALE. HORSESHOE BAY. CHA-HAI.

Major Matthews: August. What do you think of this map? What does this Punta de Bodega mean here? Where's that? (Studies it.)

August: "May be the Spanish was travelling at night, at night after they left Boundary Bay. Long summer evening, early morning, June, may be they travel, not see very good. Maybe these houses" (square dots on map) "be at Horseshoe Bay, and Great Northern Cannery."

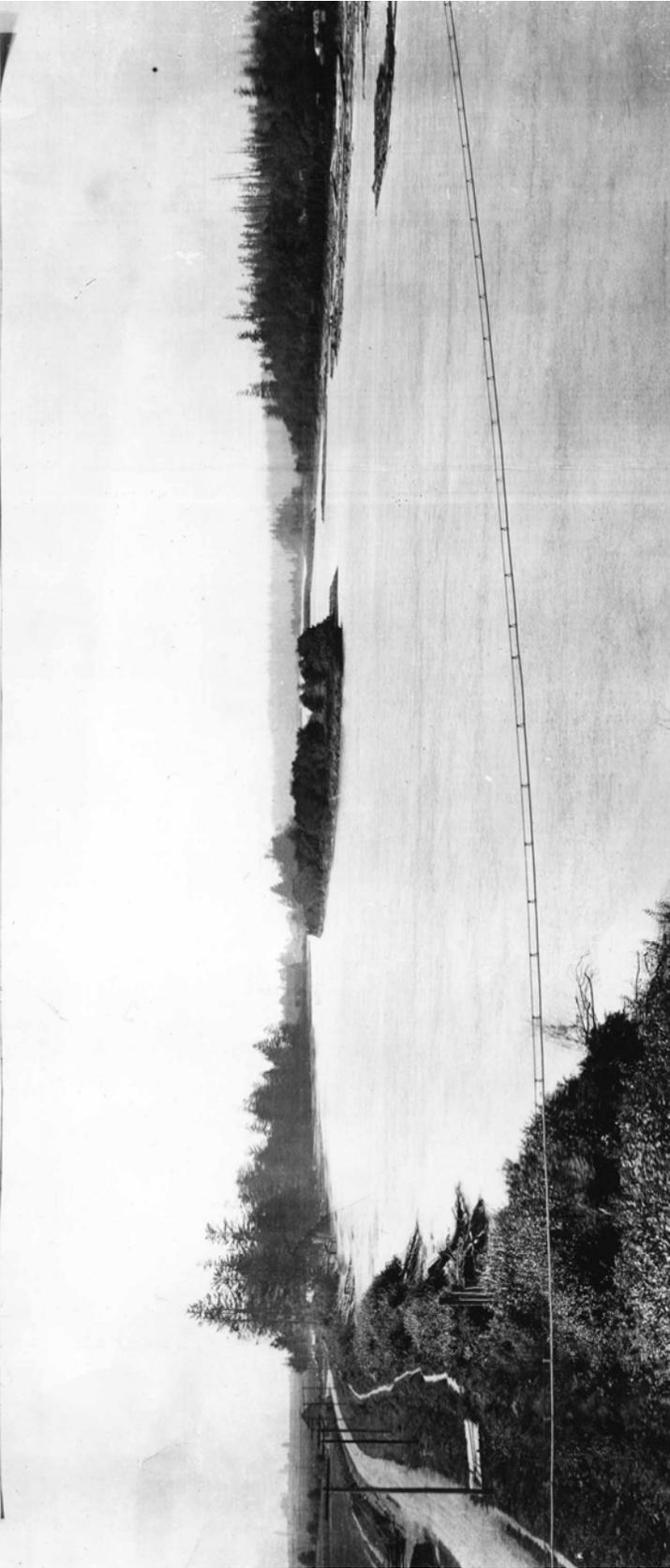
"There was always a big place" (Indian settlement) "at Cha-hai" (Horseshoe Bay); "I never seen them, but they tell me" (split cedar) "houses there one time. Indian from big village at Who-nuck" (Squamish) "go down there to troll and fish."

"Then there was cedar shake houses at Stuckale" (Great Northern Cannery.) "There's a creek there, and the salmon goes up it, and that's where the Indians goes to live. They had cedar shake houses at Cha-hai and Stuckale."

"I think those Spanish scared" (frightened) "to go in First Narrows. They's just got sail. May be go in with row boat, but not with schooner; that's why they not make map. Perhaps they travelling at night time, and not see opening at Prospect Point."

NORTH ARM, FRASER RIVER, 1911, from Eburne bridge, Narvaez, Spanish explorer, 1791, probably ascended thus far in small boat, and returned down middle arm, invisible on left, to his anchored schooner "Santa Saturnina". Fraser, British explorer, 1808, descended in a canoe to Musqueam Indian village, in distance beyond Richmond Id. This photo partially illustrates what both saw. On Richmond, or Horsehoe Id, stood Todd's Horsehoe brand salmon cannery (concealed behind bushes), and drew its fresh water by pipe under river from Garripie's Pond on north bank. River water was tidal. The distant clump of trees is on D.L. 317, farm of Samuel McCleery, first settler in Vancouver, 1862, and now Marine Drive Golf links. On right is George Garripie's, now Marpole, D.L. 118, and at foot of Granville St. Cedar, hemlock, spruce, alder, yew, crabapple, willow, elderberry, and cottonwood grew in large and small clumps of varying widths all over Iaku and Sea Island; in the peat bogs there was bull pine, blueberry, cranberry, reeds, cat-tails and tall grasses. On Sea Island a large patch of spruce timber, half a mile long, on the south side, and a smaller one on the north side--last remains shown herein on left bank of river--together with a great profusion of wild roses festooning trees to great height, obscured the vision of explorers passing beneath in boat or canoe at water level.

Photo by Dodge, Sydney, N.S., 1911.
City Archives, VSM



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[photo annotation:]

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Cedar, hemlock, spruce, alder, yew, crabapple, willow, elderberry, and cottonwood grew in large and small clumps of varying widths all over Lulu and Sea Island; in the peat bogs there was bull pine, blueberry, cranberry, reeds, cat-tails and tall grasses. On Sea Island a large patch of spruce timber, half a mile long, on the south side, and smaller one on the north side—last remains shown herein on left bank of river—together with a great profusion of wild roses festooning trees to great height, obscured the vision of explorers passing beneath in boat or canoe at water level.

Photo by Dodge, Sydney, N.S. 1911.

City Archives. JSM.

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH AUGUST JACK KHAHTSAHLANO AT CITY ARCHIVES, 13 OCTOBER 1938.

INDIAN IMPLEMENTS. INDIAN BURIAL. ARROWHEADS.

August came carrying two black stone arrowheads, one large, one smaller.

August said: "I get these arrowheads up at Yookwitz; there's lots of them there, but they's all broken; only these two good; they lying on ground in old graveyard; the graves were sitting on a rock, but the burial boxes all broken and fall to pieces, arrowheads lying around. Indian bury their dead sitting up in boxes, put box high up on rock, leave them there, just sitting same as when they's alive. But whitemans say got to bury them, so get all the bones, and put them in big box, sides six inches thick, and put them in ground, not deep, only about two or three feet down. I cleaned these two arrowheads with an old file; they's all covered with dirt; they's been with dead men. That's why they got file marks on them.

"In the box we bury the bones of Chinalset."

Major Matthews: Why is this one big, this one little?

August: "Big one for big animal, bear, deer; little one for little animal, perhaps squirrel."

CHINALSET (JERICHO CHARLIE'S FATHER.) GRIZZLE BEAR.

"Old Chinalset was not my stepfather, but my stepfather's father—my stepfather, Jericho Charlie, have same name as his father. The old man a great hunter. He shoot the grizzle bear. Everybodies from Stamish, Mamquam, all those fellows go try kill grizzle bear, but could not do it. Cheakamus people, they try, lots people try, but Chinalset, he kill him, Haxten tell me. He shoot him with bow and arrow, with stone point like this; go right through bear and out other side."

INDIAN GRAVES. BOW AND ARROWS.

"So, when we put Chinalset's bones in ground we all go up; that's about 47 year ago; we all young men then. I was there. So was Jimmy Jimmy, very old man now, and Jimmy Jimmy's father, and his uncle, and Isaac Joe, and Chief Andrews, and my brother Willie Jack, and old Bill" (i.e. Old William of Hastings Sawmill.) "My stepfather Chinalset" ("Jericho Charlie") "was the headman. They's—the whitemans—was