

Early Vancouver

Volume Four

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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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W.H. Gallagher, ex-alderman, explains with joyful glee, "I know; I know what it was; he" (Alderman Coldwell) "dyed his hair, dyed it black; look at his photographs." (See John Innes' painting of first City Council; also "City Hall in Tent," photo.)

Alderman Coldwell built, before the Fire, a fine wooden building on the north side of Water Street between Abbott and Carrall, but at the Abbott Street end, and it was nearly finished when the Great Fire of June 1886 came along and destroyed it. It shows in the Devine panorama photo of Vancouver "Before the Fire," a three-section panorama extending from beyond the Hastings Mill burner to about Abbott Street. It is a two-storey structure.

The Coldwells are related to the famous Mrs. McGregor of Fort Rupert; see photo C.V.P. Port. 160, No. Port. 63, showing four generations of them, and in which I think Mr. Coldwell, of the Union Steamship Co., appears as the great-grandchild.

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH EX-ALDERMAN EDWARD COOK, 5937 SPERLING STREET.

Alderman 1901-2-3-4-5; arrived in Vancouver per S.S. *Maud*, 5 March 1886; voted at first civic election, May 1886, and, 30 September 1901, as an alderman of Vancouver, received the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York, on the dais in front of the old Court House on Victory Square.

S.S. ABYSSINIA. "SPRATT'S ARK."

Mr. Cook said: "I saw the *Abyssinia* dock here on her first trip. In those days everybody went down to 'meet the boat'; it was more customary than going to church; she was afterwards coaled by 'Spratt's Ark'; I think the coal the 'Ark' carried was enough for one trip of the *Abyssinia*." (See narrative in "Over the Foreyard, *Province*, Saturday 25 April 1936, page 6.)

"As for her docking at Port Moody. That was one of the things we were never quite sure of; steamers passed up the Inlet to Port Moody, and then came back to Vancouver—even the Victoria boats—and that was the first we would know about it. The old Canadian Pacific Navigation Co. were not a bit strong on Vancouver, and preferred running from Victoria to New Westminster. That made Port Moody an important place because the passengers got on or off at Port Moody and proceeded to or from Westminster. I have crossed over that way lots of times."

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH EX-ALDERMAN EDWARD COOK, WHO WAS VISITED IN THE MAYOR'S OFFICE THIS MORNING, 12 MAY 1939.

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL. ALDERMAN EDWARD COOK.

Mr. Cook said: "Did you see that Christ Church Cathedral has got out a little history book of the 'First Fifty Years'?"

Major Matthews: I see it mentions you built the "root house" (basement.)

Mr. Cook: "I laid the stones of that foundation with my own hands."

THE "MAD COUNCIL" OF 1935.

Street car conductor (to passenger with whom he was acquainted, getting off at temporary City Hall): "Going to the madhouse?"

A term applied to the City Council of 1935 and 1936. The expression went, "The Mad Council with a madder mayor at the madhouse" (City Hall.) The mayor was variously termed "paranoiac," "megalomaniac," etc., and several aldermen gave cause for astonishment; they were an extraordinary and eccentric body with two or three only of the twelve who seemed to have a conception of the responsibilities and duties of their office.