

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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MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH AUGUST JACK HAATSALANO, AT CITY ARCHIVES, 14 SEPTEMBER 1936.

August came bringing with him a length of cedar bark rope which he had made especially to attach to a heavy stone, 9 lbs, 10 oz, used to steady speed and wandering of canoe when catching sturgeon in English Bay, which he recently dug up on Kitsilano Indian Reserve, and which he had presented to City Archives. He attached it, and we sat down to talk.

Major Matthews: August, listen to this. (Reading) from item published in the *Province* during exhibition week, early September, 1937, captioned "Indians' Work Draws Praise."

Joe's Priceless Coat.

Some of Chief Joe's exhibits are priceless. He refused hundreds of dollars for an old buckskin coat he wore when he interviewed King George on behalf of the Squamish Indians many years ago. The coat has been in the tribe for seven generations, and the chief says that on account of its associations \$1,000 would not induce him to sell.

August Jack: (astonished and smiling) "Seven generations? Where does he get" (emphatically) "that?" (Sits silent for a long time, thinking, and continues.) "I think he's house went afire, and then he had nothing; it's not very long since he's house went afire; not quite sure when, but before the war. The coat Capilano Joe, he's father, wore when he see King Edward" (VII) "was in a trunk, and burned in fire. I think Matthias made the one" (coat) "he's got now himself."

Major Matthews: Have you got an old coat?

August Jack: "I've got a coat; I got two coats. Old coat I get from Cariboo; buy him from cowboy that time whitemans had a potlatch" (note: some recent celebration) "in Stanley Park; the other one, the one I had my photo taken in, I made myself; it's new, almost."

Major Matthews: What about that old mask you have; where did it come from?

August Jack: "That? It's in the box. Where come from? My uncle at Musqueam had it; then my brother he had it; my uncle not like it, give it to my brother; my brother not like it, give it to me. Then I get it. Very old mask; that's sw'hoi-sw'hoi" (ceremonial mask); "may be my great-great-grandfather have it; it's a long time anyhow" (very old.)

Major Matthews: What about Matthias' mother, Mary; how old is she?

August Jack: (smiling) "Haxten" (note: the oldest Indian in North Vancouver) "says she's" (Mary) "a young woman. Haxten says Matthias' mother about eighty-nine. Haxten says she" (Haxten) "was married and going to have a baby when she" (Mary) "be a woman, that's about 16." (Note: ceremony of becoming marriageable.)

Note: in 1937 the official age of Chief Capilano Joe's widow, as recorded by Indian Department, Vancouver, is 80.

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH AUGUST JACK HAATSALANO, 6 NOVEMBER 1936.

August Jack Haatsalano: (who lives on the Indian Reserve just east of Capilano River.)

FIRST NARROWS BRIDGE.

"Three men, just three men, started this morning with axes to clear away the logs and trees on the other side" (west) "of the river; suppose it's a start on the new bridge."

J.S. Matthews.