

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.

Copyright Statement

© 2011 City of Vancouver. Any or all of *Early Vancouver* may be used without restriction as to the nature or purpose of the use, even if that use is for commercial purposes. You may copy, distribute, adapt and transmit the work. It is required that a link or attribution be made to the City of Vancouver.

Reproductions

High resolution versions of any graphic items in *Early Vancouver* are available. A fee may apply.

Citing Information

When referencing the 2011 edition of *Early Vancouver*, please cite the page number that appears at the bottom of the page in the PDF version only, not the page number indicated by your PDF reader. Here are samples of how to cite this source:

Footnote or Endnote Reference:

Major James Skitt Matthews, *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 4 (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011), 33.

Bibliographic Entry:

Matthews, Major James Skitt. *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 4. Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011.

Contact Information

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



The general stood in front of the tablet for a moment or so, gazing and reading, and then, placing his hand on Major Matthews' shoulder, said with much feeling, "Gentlemen. Men like Matthews here are worth their weight in gold."

He then continued with some reminiscences, etc., etc.

"Men like" an archivist must naturally include all archivists.

Just why Gen. Currie expressed himself thus must forever remain unknown, but it *might* have had something to do with his then recent unfortunate experience when he had to defend himself in the courts against unjust and libellous statements that "he sacrificed his men," and that the records fortunately kept—as all military units have to keep—served in some especially useful way to vindicate his actions in the Great War.

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH JUDGE J.A. FORIN, AT BANQUET, "OLD GARRISON ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION," HOTEL GEORGIA, 15 FEBRUARY 1936.

GENERAL SIR ARTHUR W. CURRIE. HIS HONOUR JUDGE J.A. FORIN, VANCOUVER AND NELSON.

The "O.G.A.A." comprise the surviving members of the first militia units in British Columbia; membership is limited to those who served before 1898. Judge Forin has not had a uniform on for forty or more years. General Currie joined the old regiment in Victoria as a gunner.

Judge Forin to City Archivist, Major J.S. Matthews: "That reminds me. The time that Sir Arthur came through to Nelson" (B.C.) "with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, we gave them a banquet. I came in late. When Sir Arthur saw me come through the door, he rose and stood to attention, and saluted. It put me in a most embarrassing position; a crowd of gentlemen looking at me the minute I appeared in the doorway. I walked over towards him, and he came to meet me, and shook hands, and, smiling, said, 'I always salute my old officers.'"

City Archivist.

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH J.N. DAWZY, 2361 TRINITY STREET, VANCOUVER, B.C., 27 FEBRUARY 1935.

THE GREAT FIRE: NUMBER OF BUILDINGS LEFT.

"I arrived in Vancouver on June 14th, 1886, about noon the day after the fire, and of course was struck by what I saw, and was impressed; the recollection of it has remained in my mind very clearly.

"There was just five houses standing. There was the old Bridge Hotel on Main Street, or Westminster Avenue, False Creek; a frame building next to it; a little house on the southeast corner of Prior Street occupied by Harry Chase; the Regina Hotel on Water Street near Cambie; and the C.P.R. building opposite David Spencer's store, about where the C.P.R. Depot is now."

(Note: he missed one, a small shack on the edge of False Creek, in the low, wet land—on Pender Street—just at the end of Abbott Street, below the corner of Beatty and Pender streets.)

MRS. ONDERDONK. ANDREW ONDERDONK. PORT HAMMOND. ENGINES, C.P.R. ENGINE NO. 4 "THE LYTTON."

"I went to work on the building of bridges for the C.P.R. in August 1882, and then from March 1883 worked for him" (Onderdonk) "for three years at Yale, building cars in the car shops, making car repairs; also foreman wrecking car.

"A fine man was Onderdonk; I'll say so" (with emphasis.) "My wife came up in March 1883 to Yale. Mr. Onderdonk and my wife were the only two passengers on the boat from Westminster to Yale. When I went to the Yale shops in March 1883, the superintendent and master mechanic were at Port Hammond unloading engine No. 4, the 'Lytton,' which had come on a big scow from Tacoma, and the foreman of the shop would not put me to work, but sent me to see Mr. Onderdonk at the general office, Yale, a building about sixty feet long. When I gave Mr. Onderdonk my letter from the bridge superintendent, he looked at

me and asked if that was my wife who came up on the boat with him. I said, 'Yes.' He looked at my letter from the superintendent to him, and he wrote across the corner of the letter in red ink, 'start this man to work immediately,' and he never forgot to speak when he came around the shops."

CISCO BRIDGE.

"Mrs. Onderdonk I only spoke to once, on July 4th 1884. They gave us a free excursion up to the end of the track; we had flat cars with railings around and board seats. She was aboard and congratulated everybody, and hoped we'd have a nice holiday." (See *Port Moody Gazette*.) "A fairly tall lady, fair complexion and good dresser. The oldest boy was Shirley, about thirteen years old then, and the youngest girl was Eva."

DAYLIGHT SAVING.

The first person in Vancouver to advocate daylight saving was Capt. W. Hart-McHarg, afterwards Col. Hart-McHarg, who was killed in April 1915 whilst commanding the first battalion sent from Vancouver to the Great War; i.e. the 7th Battalion, (1st B.C.)

I have often discussed it with him whilst going to or fro from the Richmond Rifle Range for Saturday afternoon practices. Capt. McHarg had been to England on the Bisley team, and the daylight saving idea was being discussed, or was actually in operation. Anyway, it interested him; he thought it an excellent idea—as it is—and he advocated it. I recall he addressed some assemblies on his return; I think it was some such organisation as the Women's Canadian Club; anyway, some such body, and it appeared in the newspapers that "Daylight Saving" was the subject of his address.

No one had, seemingly, heard of it, or if they had, or had read of it previously, said nothing about it. He was undoubtedly the first to bring it to public notice, and I remember that, about 1918, after his death, reflecting how interesting it would have been to him to know that it had been adopted by the Provincial Government.

J.S. Matthews,
25 April 1938.

Note: about 1918 daylight saving was law by Provincial statute.
In 1921, a City of Vancouver plebiscite rejected it.
In 1922, a City of Vancouver plebiscite adopted it.
In 1923, a City of Vancouver plebiscite rejected it.

DEADMAN'S ISLAND—ORIGIN OF NAME.

"The Indians called the island 'Memaloose Siwash Illahie.'"

"Memelous Siwash ill-lee" – Rev. P.C. Parker. "Mameloose Siwash illa-hee" – Thos. P. Wicks. "Mem-a-loose Siwash il-la-hie" – Rev. C.M. Tate.

DEAD INDIAN LAND.

Chinook jargon: "Mem-a-loose," i.e. dead, or die. "Siwash," i.e. Indian. "Il-la-hie," i.e. the earth, land, soil. *Dictionary of Chinook Jargon*, 1914, by Rev. C.M. Tate.

Interpretation: "It means 'Indian graveyard.'" – Qoitchetahl (Andrew Paul.)

DEADMAN'S ISLAND AND INDIAN TREE BURIALS.

"One morning—he told me this—it was April, and he looked across towards what is now Stanley Park, and there was Deadman's Island before him; it looked so beautiful; he was alone; he thought he would like to have it, so he took his boat and went across there. He told me the story one day when we were walking along Stanley Park Driveway in October 1911—shortly before he died—it was a beautiful morning, and when we got near Deadman's Island he told me the story. He went on that he took his boat, went over to Deadman's Island, and tied his boat up, and as he did so, he saw a box in a tree. He said, 'I took my axe and knocked that box down, and opened it up; there was a dead Indian sitting in it, so I skipped over to my boat, and went. I came back in a couple of days, and put the box back; then I went to