

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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FIRST CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY ENGINE TO REACH VANCOUVER, 23 FEBRUARY 1887.

Memo of conversation, 27 November 1937, with Mr. Fred J. Rolston, of Mutual Life of Canada Insurance Co., Vancouver.

"Mrs. Rolston, my wife, was born the day the first C.P.R. construction engine reached Vancouver; she was Miss Tilly Jean Cameron, and was born on the site of the present Letson-Burpee machinery firm, on Alexander Street, just west of Main Street, south side Alexander Street.

"There was so much excitement that day a new baby, and the arrival of the locomotive on construction of the railway, that the two incidents, and the fact that they coincided, have been talked about in the family ever since."

WATERCOLOUR OF BURRARD INLET PRESENTED BY MRS. J.H. SENKLER.

Memo of conversation with Mrs. J.H. Senkler in 1933.

HASTINGS SAWMILL.

"Mother" (Mrs. A.H. Richards, wife of Lieutenant-Governor Richards) "painted it while staying with Capt. J.A. Raymur at his house at Hastings Sawmill; it was while she was the Lieutenant-Governor's wife.

"She came up on a tug. Father did not come with her. Mother told me she walked through forest to Granville. It was the occasion of the first Dominion Day Celebration on Burrard Inlet, I think 1880—anyway before 1881."

LACROSSE.

Memo of conversation with Geo. Matheson, 6 June 1936, Land Registry Office, Court House, Vancouver, and a former "star" member of the Vancouver Lacrosse Club in and about 1900.

WESTMINSTER LACROSSE CLUB. "SALMONBELLIES."

"At first they wore red sweaters and navy blue short trousers, not maroon sweaters, but a sort of dark red; barn red. Then, after a year or two, they had a salmon across the chest, but it was only for one year; then they took it off."

THE DAILY NEWS-ADVERTISER, NEW SERIES – VOL. 1, NO. 46, VANCOUVER, B.C., TUESDAY MAY 24, 1887. WHOLE NUMBER 281.

OCEAN TO OCEAN PASSENGER COACHES FROM ATLANTIC SEABOARD TO TERMINAL CITY—VANCOUVER ARRIVAL OF OFFICIALS—REGULAR TRAIN SERVICE ADOPTED ADVENT OF PROSPERITY

From early morning yesterday it was easy to see that some unusual occurrence was about to take place. The streets were covered with people, many in holiday costumes, walking around watching the work of decorating that was being proceeded with on all sides. The buildings in many cases along the principal streets were decorated with evergreens, flags, bunting, etc., while from every flagmast [*sic*] in the city a flag of some nationality was flying out before the breeze. Horses and vehicles were decorated with small flags, bright coloured ribbons, and evergreens. From Alexander Street right across the railway track, a string of ship colours was stretched over, the bright colours and variety of shape and kind presenting a very pleasing effect. All the ships in the harbour were decked out in all colours especially the "Duke of Abercorn" which presented a gorgeous appearance. Business was partially suspended for the time being, although few establishments were closed up. The first train from New Westminster arrived at 9:08 a.m., bringing over about forty citizens of the Royal City to witness the arrival of the first train. A number of our citizens were present on its arrival and gave the visitors a hearty welcome.

AT THE STATION

The scene at the station was a very lively and enthusiastic one. The roadway, wharf, platform, and bank above were covered with people waiting the arrival of the train. The arch across the track was arranged in a very tasty manner; on the side facing the roadway was the legend 'Labor Omnia Vincit' and over the track 'Orient Greet Occident' and 'Confederation Accomplished.' It was ... [etc.]

CANNON SHOT.

On August 25th 1936, Mr. A.A. Scott came to the City Archives, City Hall, and exhibited to me a small cannon shot, iron, slightly rusted, weight 16½ ounces, with the ring of the moulding around the circumference, diameter about 1½ or 1¾ inches, which he said had been picked up some years ago on the site of the Rat Portage Lumber Co.'s barn at the foot of Fir Street, Kitsilano Indian Reserve, which would be on the site of the old Indian village. He did not know the history of it, said that Dr. G.H. Raley, Indian missionary, had a similar one.

This is the smallest cannon shot I have ever seen, as being picked up around Vancouver. There is no reason to believe it was ever fired at Indians; British warships did not shoot at our Indians; never; it was probably given to them by some British sailor (perhaps filched), and kept in the old Indian lodge by the Indians, and when that was dismantled, or destroyed when they built the new one, it was lost or misplaced by them, and fell to the ground where, years after, it was picked up by some white man.

FROM PROVINCE, 20 OCTOBER 1938.

“‘FORTY YEARS AGO,’ OCTOBER, 20, 1898.”

MOODYVILLE CANNON (EPITOMISED).

“For years it was the custom to discharge a cannon at Moodyville Mill on the North Shore when a ship finished loading. But the cannon will be held no more. Apprentices of the ship ‘Tamar’ stole it as a prank, and it is now bound for Australia. How they got it on board is a mystery.”

2 OCTOBER 1936 – “OLD CHIEF” CAPILANO. PAYTSMALK. MRS. MARY CAPILANO.

The solution, if any, of the extraordinary story so frequently printed in Vancouver, and also in the Canadian Geographical Journal, July 1936, attributable to Mr. Noel Robinson, a well-known Vancouver journalist, and, by repetition, becoming, unfortunately, accepted as fact, seems to be the following:

“Old Chief” Capilano, as a boy, lived at Musqueam, where his descendants of the same name still live, one of them Ayatak Capilano, now a man of 65 or 70, stating that his grandfather, the “Old Chief,” told him that he saw the first white man come down the Fraser (1808). The “Old Chief” seems to have had two sons, one of them afterwards succeeded him as chief, that is, Chief Lahwa, uncle to Ayatak. The “Old Chief” is mentioned by Capt. Richards of the H.M.S. *Plumper* as going on board, in August 1859, whilst in Burrard Inlet. Chief Joe, Mary’s husband, succeeded Lahwa.

“Old Chief” Capilano had a half-brother, Paytsmalk. Paytsmalk had more than one wife, and several children. One of the sons was Ska-kul-tun, and Ska-kul-tun (or Kha-kul-tun) was the father of Layhulette, or Agnes, commonly called Mrs. Mary Capilano.

It is claimed that Mrs. Mary Capilano is very aged—over 100. Report is that “Old Cronie,” who died in 1935, aged 88, always said she was younger than he was. Mrs. Harriet George, or Haxten, a very aged Indian woman, says she is younger than she is because she recalls Mrs. Mary Capilano as a little girl. Mrs. R.M. Bower, daughter of Ben Springer, manager, Moodyville Sawmill, states that “Old Mary used to wash for us; I don’t think she is 90.”

Another point is that the name of the river which enters in the First Narrows is not Capilano, but Homulcheson, and never was known as Capilano to Indians until the white man named it thus. Capilano is a Musqueam name, and the family still resides there. But “Old Chief” had two homes, one at