

Early Vancouver

Volume Five

By: Major J.S. Matthews, V.D.

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Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1936-1945.

Supplemental to volumes one, two, three and four collected in 1931, 1932 and 1934.

About the 2011 Edition

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MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH DR. ROBERT MATHISON, D.D.S., KELOWNA, WHO IS VISITING VANCOUVER IN CONNECTION WITH THE DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS, 1 JULY 1946.

He is now, 1946, the only living founder of the Vancouver Board of Trade. He was employed in 1886 on the *Vancouver Weekly Herald*, the first newspaper in Vancouver.

VANCOUVER WEEKLY HERALD. VANCOUVER NEWS. THE NEWS.

Dr. Mathison: "I did not have anything to do with the *Herald* until March 1886. Then, after the 'Fire' (13 June) "I printed the *Herald* and also the *News* at New Westminster; I was the only one that could do it. That was the issue of *The News*, 20th June."

THE FIRST NEWSBOY.

"It was hard work printing the *Herald*. Hard work turning the handle to turn out two hundred copies an hour. Then I went out on the street and sold them."

HARKNESS AND ROSS.

"Harkness was from Picton, Ontario, about thirty-five miles from Belleville where Ross came from. Harkness did not stay; he went to San Francisco, and I never heard of him again, except that I met a brother once. I went to Kelowna in 1905."

CONVERSATION WITH GEORGE H. KEEFER OF COBBLE HILL, B.C., WHO IS IN VANCOUVER FOR THE DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATION, AND CALLED AT THE CITY ARCHIVES, TO RENEW OLD ASSOCIATION, AND TO LOOK AT HIS BOOK, *THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF GEORGE H. KEEFER*, WHICH WE COMPILED FOR HIM IN 1936, THE GOLDEN JUBILEE YEAR, 5 JULY 1946.

He is now eighty-one.

VANCOUVER, 1886-1946. S.S. MAUDE.

Mr. Keefer: "I landed in Victoria sixty-one years ago today; an old sloop which came across in the night from Tacoma, Washington. I slept on her all night, no bunks on those ships, sleep where you could on a coil of rope.

"Then, on June 30th this year, 1946, I was astounded as I saw from the deck of the S.S. *Princess Marguerite*, out in the gulf" (Gulf of Georgia) "as I was coming from Victoria, what used to be forest and timber was now laid out streets and high buildings. I could not help but think back to a former trip across the same waters on the old steamer *Maude* in the winter of 1885 and 1886. I came over with George A. Keefer's survey party to survey the Capilano Water Works."

CAPILANO WATER WORKS.

Major Matthews: Where are you living while in Vancouver this time; where did you live the last time, 1885-1886?

Mr. Keefer: "I'm living on Walnut Street, corner house, 1304 Walnut Street, with my brother Charles E. Keefer. I can hardly find words, I am so surprised at the growth and development of the once old Granville; Deighton's Hotel and the Sunnyside Hotel, run by Harry Hemlow, over the water on piles, and the Deighton House run by Ben and Harry Chase; and Joe Fortes, whose monument is out at English Bay, was porter and shoeshine and general roustabout." (Captain) "Tom Jackman was bartender."

Major Matthews: Where you in the "Fire"?

Mr. Keefer: "I should say I was, I told you all that before; it's in my autobiography, but there's one thing I was reminded of as I came into this magnificent City Hall, and that is the little imitation tent City Hall, with '1886' in red electric light on it, outside there on the lawn at the corner of Cambie and Twelfth."

TENT CITY HALL, 1886. CARRALL AND WATER STREET. VICKERS WALLACE HAYWOOD. POLICE FORCE, 1886. POLICE STATION IN TENT. JOHN W. STEWART.

"I saw the original tent shortly after it was erected. There were a few old chairs in it and a table; I didn't see much else, but I walked around behind, and I think there were, I think, three prisoners there, and I don't know whether they were chained together or not, or if they were chained to a post, but they sure couldn't get away, and they were sobering off in the sun. The only thing they were suffering from was a headache; the aftermath. I don't know where they got their booze from, but there was an awful lot of it around; I heard they threw all the barrels they had time to" (of liquor) "out of the Sunnyside into the inlet, and they floated here and there and all over. I heard that lots of fellows got good and drunk on the beach from the barrels drifting up on the beach. I heard the fellows who found a barrel on the beach, stove the head in with a rock and used a sardine can to dip it out There were lots of drunks around the night after the Fire; everyone was so excited after what they had been through, and took a little to steady their nerves, and I suppose some of them overrated their capacity. With the result that Jack Stewart and Wallace Haywood, who is here in this picture I am holding, having his photo taken in front of the imitation 'City Hall' tent out there on the lawn, sixty years after he had his first photo taken in front of the original tent, gathered these fellows in for their own benefit, and then gave them a caution when they got sober and let them go. There was no place to put them; what was the use of holding them, and, I don't know of course, but I imagine if Jack Stewart, who was Police Chief, had any work he wanted done, these fellows would be pressed in to do it."

THE GREAT FIRE.

"It sure was a queer looking place after the fire. People who had owned lots would be running around looking for their corner lots and could not locate where they were; the whole place looked black as the ace of spades, and black stumps, and you could not touch anything but your hands were black."