

Early Vancouver

Volume Five

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

2011 Edition (Originally Published 1945)

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

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. 5 (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011), 33.

Bibliographic Entry:

Matthews, Major James Skitt. *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 5. 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



was wealthy—he did not make his money by ‘graft’—and we were going to ask him to defray the cost of raising the regiment.

“There was quite a colony of United Empire Loyalists living down by the Hastings Sawmill; he was one, and they took quite a pride in themselves; we were going to get John Hendry to raise the regiment, but there was a meeting about a forthcoming dance, and after the details of that were done with, the questions of organising the regiment came up, and Henry Bell-Irving—you know how important he thought himself—he took it upon himself, much to the disgust of many, to ‘steal the whole show,’ and, you know, he just ‘rode right over’; was very domineering. Well, the end was there were three Scottish battalions formed: the Camerons at Winnipeg, the Gordons in Victoria, and the Seaforths in Vancouver.

“The nucleus of the 72nd Seaforth Highlanders of Vancouver was the Vancouver Pipe Band of January 7th 1904, actually functioning in 1903, and formally organised into the Vancouver Pipers’ Society, 22nd September 1904, as you see by this printed constitution of the society.”

72ND REGIMENT, SEAFORTH HIGHLANDERS.

Major Matthews: But why did they select the name “Seaforth” for the Vancouver regiment?

Mr. MacKenzie: “Because of MacKenzie, that’s me. I was the prime mover in getting the thing started. You see, there were a lot of Scotch people who did not know anything about the history of the clans, and highland regiments, and I used to teach them. The knowledge I had acquired in the Scottish Volunteers—I was in the Highland Artillery for fifteen or sixteen years—and that came in useful to me; and of course I could play the pipes.

“You see, in the Highlands, the chiefs have their followers, and when they became militarised, the government then granted each chief permission to raise his own regiment; the Earl of Seaforth was the head of the MacKenzie clan, and his regiment was called the Seaforth Highlanders, like the Gordon Highlanders were raised by the Duchess of Gordon. And Colonel Davidson, he knew I was a Mackenzie, and that’s how the Vancouver regiment became the Seaforth Highlanders.”

Note: so far as memory can be relied on, Mr. MacKenzie’s statement regarding the playing of the 6th Regiment D.C.O.R. to church is correct; I was a member of that regiment, and marched behind the pipe band. The brass and bugle bands of a rifle regiment play a quick step; the pipers played a longer, swinging step, and I recall that—it was the first time we had marched behind pipes—how it was remarked upon, and how easy and agreeable pipes were to march to. The pipers wore green coats. The whole thing was an innovation, and remarked upon.

J.S. Matthews.

Hector MacKenzie, 13 October, 1939.

COPIES OF LETTERS.

His Worship M.A. MacLean, first Mayor of Vancouver, tendering thanks and gratitude to people of Moodyville for help to the distressed citizens of Vancouver following the Great Fire, 13 June 1886.

Vancouver, June 18th, 1886.

Mrs. Thain,
Moodyville

Dear Madam:

As Mayor of the City of Vancouver I wish on behalf of its inhabitants to tender to yourself and the kind ladies of Moodyville, our sincere thanks for your liberal contributions of money and clothing in aid of the sufferers of the late fire here. Also allow me to express my sense of our deep obligation for the generous hospitality extended by the people of your village to our suffering citizens on the evening of Sunday last, and even up to the present time. The assistance thus afforded will, I assure you, be not soon forgotten but its memory will always remain with us side

by side with the remembrance of our great calamity. Again thanking you, and those ladies who have so kindly assisted you,

I am, dear Madam,

Yours very gratefully

[signed] M.A. MacLean.

Mayor.

Vancouver,
June 19th, 1886.

Miss M. Thain,
Moodyville

Dear Miss Thain,

Your very kind gift of pillows from "The Little Helpers" of Moodyville was received by me and distributed according to your instructions.

In addition to the other aid offered to our destitute citizens by the inhabitants of your village, in the way of shelter, food and money, your contribution for their benefit proves you to be worthy children of worthy parents.

The assistance thus given to us in our hour of need will not soon be forgotten, I assure you. Thanking you in the name of our citizens.

I am very gratefully,

Yours,

[signed] M.A. MacLean.

Mayor.

MEMO OF CONVERSATION OVER THE PHONE WITH LIEUT.-COL. JOHN McMILLAN, FORMERLY QUARTERMASTER, 6TH REGIMENT D.C.O.R., VANCOUVER, AND 7TH BATTALION C.E.F., 3 NOVEMBER 1936.

Following an item in "Over the Foreyard," 10 October 1936, *Vancouver Daily Province*, asking if any person knew where the wrecked hull of the McLean schooner *Rob Roy* lay in the Pitt River.

ALEXANDER MCLEAN, SR. ALEXANDER MCLEAN, JR. SCHOONER ROB ROY. LIEUT.-COL. JOHN McMILLAN. STURGEON.

Col. McMillan: "Did you have any answer to your query in the *Province*, Matthews?"

City Archivist: Not a word.

Col. McMillan: "Well, I'll tell you. I came up from the Columbia River in the winter of 1894; I was working for Wallace Bros. at their 'Bon Accord' plant on the Fraser River, and we used to go up the Pitt River every day collecting sturgeon, and so we passed the MacLeans' place almost every day.

"The wreck of the *Rob Roy* was lying in the mud on the west bank of the Pitt River opposite Donald McLean's farm house below the Pitt River bridge. The rigging was gone, so were the top masts, but the two masts were still standing, just the main spars, and the hull was down in the mud, and the tide ebbed and flowed in and out of it. I have not been there for many, many years, and don't know if there is any remains left now or not.