

**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 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the City's founding. The project was made possible by funding from the Vancouver Historical Society.

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### **[LETTER FROM OTWAY WILKIE.]**

Mr. Wilkie, whose narrative follows, reached George Black's Hastings Townsite, in time for Christmas dinner, Christmas Day, 1884, after having spent all day in a snowstorm hastening to complete the survey for proposed C.P.R. line from Port Moody to Hastings Townsite, (eastern) boundary. Having finished as dusk fell, the survey party embarked in a work boat and rowed to George Black's for Christmas dinner.  
J.S.M.

(Note: important date at end of letter.)

629-8<sup>th</sup> Street,  
New Westminster, B.C.  
Dec. 13/35.

Dear Major Matthews:

#### Re Rogers Pass and Walter

#### Moberley, C.E.

In 1912 I was Secretary of the Fraser Valley League Development, sharing offices with the late Doctor Rowe, publicity Agent for City of Vancouver, at N.E. corner of Hastings and Richards Streets, Vancouver City.

The late Walter Moberley, C.E., knowing I was on the surveys of locations of the C.P.R.R., often used to come to see me and discuss the surveying and engineers and survey parties employed in the old days.

One afternoon we were talking of Rogers Pass and I said to him, "How is it that Rogers pass is called after Major Rogers and not after you; was it not you who discovered the pass and condemned it?"

He answered, "Yes, Major Rogers gets the credit, but he never discovered it. Major Rogers was lost in the Pass, and was high up on the mountain, and looking down he saw what he thought was a log cabin; he went down to investigate, and found my cabin, which I had built and had wintered in. That is how Major Rogers discovered the pass and today he gets the credit for my work. I condemned the pass and still do. I wanted the Howe or Yellowhead Pass but Sir Sanford Flemming wanted the shortest route from sea to sea, and wouldn't back me up. But now the greatest satisfaction I have had in life is that Sir Sanford Flemming has at last acknowledged that Walter Moberley was right in condemning that Pass."

We had many conversations about the locations surveys as we both knew many of the members of the survey parties.

### **VANCOUVER'S FIRST WEDDING.**

The first wedding to be registered in Vancouver was that of E.H. Coleman, proprietor of the Dominion restaurant and barber shop on Water street, to Miss S. Currie, of Moodyville, which took place at the old Methodist parsonage, on May 19, 1886, the ceremony being performed by Rev. Joseph Hall. A.W. Sullivan was best man, and Miss N. Currie, bridesmaid. A wedding supper was served at the Dominion restaurant at which C. Simson, then postmaster, who is still here and is believed to be the only survivor of the party, made the speech of the evening. According to the *Weekly Herald*, he condemned the Methodist custom of having the ladies on one side of the table and the gentlemen on the other. He thought they should be mixed up and he was certain more marriages would be the result.

The groom on this occasion did not long enjoy connubial bliss as he died suddenly of appendicitis on September 29 of that year. Mr. Coleman, who was a native of Belleville, Ont., and who was highly popular with early residents, had a somewhat striking appearance. His clean-shaven face was of ashen hue, its whiteness being accentuated by a mass of jet black hair. One day he was