

## **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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**SQUAMISH. MOODYVILLE SAWMILL. CATTLE. PEMBERTON MEADOWS.**

“The land on which I have my place was preempted in 1874 by Van Bremner of the Moodyville Sawmill. There was a shortage of cattle; the sawmill wanted beef to feed their loggers, and they drove cattle out from the Pemberton Meadows, and when they got to Squamish, turned them out in the fine grass meadows; it was a fine place, high grass, so Sue Moody decided to preempt the place, and got 410 acres. Sue Moody went down in the *Pacific*, and after that the place went to pot; the 410 acres lay vacant; then George Magee bought it, dyked it, and made a hay ranch; he was logging too, and wanted beef; then he sold it, and I have a portion of it.

“He gave me ten acres to stop on it and look after it, and I have it yet. It is a bit too big for what I want, but too small to cut up.”

**NORWEGIANS.**

“Squamish ought to have done better. There has been a lot of bungling. They settled a lot of Norwegians there, but they put them in an impossible place, and when the water came, there was four feet of water in their houses. Then they moved the Norwegians to Plumper’s Pass, and finally they went to Bella Bella, and are there yet.

“There was a time when we got 300 tons of timothy at Squamish, and some people wanted to start a creamery; they had 60 head of cattle, and plenty of money, \$10,000 or \$12,000, and they wanted a lease of the Indian Reserve from the Indian Department, but the Indian Department would not give it to them, and that industry was lost, too, to Squamish. There has been a lot of bungling by the government.”

Mr. Mashiter died January or February 1938 and at Squamish. The exact date is 10 January 1938.

**[LETTERS FROM R. MATHISON.]**

Kelowna, B.C.  
June 9, 1936.

Dear Major:

I ought to sell this to the highest bidder, but I’ll give it to you.

**DOMINION DAY, 1886. ROBERT KERR.**

This is the only copy in existence, and is a proof of the first page of the program that was to have been gotten out for Vancouver’s Celebration of Dominion Day, 1886, but which was prevented being held on account of “The Fire” of June 13, that year. Later on, when in business for myself, I printed raffle tickets for the “Robert Kerr” but it did not take place either, as the vessel was sold to the C.P.R. for use as a coal hulk. There was no numbering machine in town then, and I changed the form on the press to number each ticket. The official program for this year should incorporate this (1886 proof) in miniature with an imprint “Weekly Herald Job Department,” and a short note of explanation.

**DAILY NEWS. LIQUOR LICENSES.**

If the “Sun” want to be up-to-date, they should reproduce the “Daily News” of June 20, 1886, a copy of which I sent you, and two pages of three columns each with the name of the paper, names of proprietors, the date line and forty-one applications for liquor licenses. Bob Harkness rustled the copy for it on Saturday, and it was printed in the “Columbian” office that night as no Sunday work was allowed in that office, and to comply with the law they had to be published by 20<sup>th</sup>. Fifty copies were printed, but most of them, Bob put under a log.

Sometime when I’m in Vancouver ask me for a fish story on him. Bill Lewis was foreman of the “Columbian” at that time, but for years past has been a “bee” man out from New Westminster. If he is still alive, and I think he is, you ought to meet with him as he should be able to give you some old time stuff.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,  
[signed] R. Mathison.

Kelowna, B.C.  
June 25, 1936.

Dear Major:

Hell is just a few doors away from me too but some air stirring helps a lot.

Thank you for the photo of 1886 proof and year of "Telegram" being issued, and for several copies of the "Province" with the 1886 program.

I'll try some of these days and give you something for your "Telegram" file.

**J.W. HORNE. TELEGRAM.**

J.W. Horne was the first financial backer, the others came in later on. My father was in Toronto when the order for type, etc., was received by Bob Patterson of Mitter and Richard, and he said it was wanted by express, and that would amount to over \$600.00. My father told him to send it, and anything else Horne wanted up to \$300,000.00, as he was good for it. As a matter of fact Horne at that time had property in Ward two alone amounting to \$320,000.00 as I jotted down the various amounts he mentioned to me in talking on Sunday evening.

I was "ad" man on the "Telegram" when it quit.

Yours sincerely,  
[signed] R. Mathison.

**MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH DR. ROBERT MATHISON, DENTIST, OF KELOWNA, B.C., WHO IS IN VANCOUVER ATTENDING CONVENTION OF PACIFIC COAST DENTISTS, HOTEL VANCOUVER, AND VERY KINDLY CALLED AT THE CITY ARCHIVES, 4 JULY 1938.**

**FIRST BICYCLES.**

Dr. Mathison said: "I came to Vancouver in March 1886, and worked on getting out the first newspaper, the *Herald*. In 1887, the first bicycle in Vancouver was sent out to me; one of the old-fashioned type with one big wheel and one small wheel. An article was published once saying that Mr. Piper had the first bicycle, so I wrote to Mr. Piper, and he conceded that his bicycle was the first one with pneumatic tires—Dunlop tires, we called them—and that he had brought his out after mine."

**THE FIRST MONTHLY CALENDAR.**

"I got out the first calendar in Vancouver; you have one of the originals of them in my file. There were no calendars in Vancouver in the early part of 1886, so, after I went into the job printing business—that was after I left the *Herald*—I sent to Toronto to the firm where I had formerly worked as a job printer, and told them to get me out something for the rest of the year; the year was half over, 1886, so they prepared a calendar with six months on it, July to December 1886 only."

**MAYOR TEMPLETON'S DEATH. MAYOR OPPENHEIMER'S GERMAN ACCENT.**

"William Templeton lost his first electoral contest for mayor with David Oppenheimer; he made a bad mistake. There was a meeting, and he was last to speak; he imitated Mayor Oppenheimer's German accent; you could just feel the meeting grow cold; he tried to recover himself later, and did, but it was too late, he lost the election over that. Mayor Templeton's death was due to the excitement and disappointment of his defeat, in the election, and an overdose of sleeping potion."