

Early Vancouver

Volume Five

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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.

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days, and then George Black got me to drive cattle, and he would keep me at Hastings three or four weeks.

“The only elk I ever saw was on the Coquitlam Road at an old point known as ‘Cape Horn’—that’s the bluff on the road about a mile past Fraser River Mills—and I was on horseback, and he just ran across the road and went down onto the flats. Johnnie saw him several times, too. I was then about 15 or 16 years old, so it must have been about 1881 or 1882. I knew there were elk in the country, but I had never seen one before, and it interested me to see what they were like.”

(Note: the first mention made to me by a person who has actually seen elk on Coal Peninsula. JSM.)

CHARLESON’S LOGGING CAMP. ELK.

(See photo Bailey Bros. No. 679.) “Charleson’s had a logging camp back of the Fraser River Mills, Millside, beyond Sapperton, and there were lots and lots of elk horns to be found all over the woods near the logging camps; they are probably there yet.”

SALMON CANNERY. JOHN MURRAY. STAMP AND HOLBROOK. FIRST SALMON CANNERY.

“Johnnie and I made the first fish boxes to put salmon in on the Fraser. Father had a little mill run by water from ‘Government House Creek’ by the present penitentiary; the penitentiary put in a dam to get water from, and Father put up the little mill which had a little water wheel for power, and cut the lumber—not logs—they delivered the lumber to us, and we cut the lumber into bottoms and sides, and we got eight cents a box for making. Stamp and Holbrook had the first salmon cannery.”

SURVEY OF PORT MOODY, ETC.

“I helped to lay out the site of the town of Port Moody for my father and Capt. Clarke, who both had 160 acres of land crown grant. The Royal Engineers who stayed had a chance to take up land where they wanted it, but I don’t know for what particular reason Father selected Port Moody. A man named Stevenson surveyed the town into streets and town lots; there were eight of us in the survey party including my two brothers; we lived on a scow at Rocky Point where we afterwards made our home.

“Father and Capt. Clarke named the streets after members of our family. There was one logging camp there then, I think belonging to the Moodyville Sawmill, right at the head of the bay, about a mile away, but there was absolutely no other house or shack, nor was there a trail. If there was a trail from Port Moody to Sapperton it was never used; we always went to Bonson’s at the end of the North Road.”

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. PATRICK J. MYERS, 1840 EAST SIXTH AVENUE, GRANDVIEW, 30 DECEMBER 1937.

FOREST FIRES. CENTRAL PARK. SHAUGHNESSY. WEST END.

Mr. Myers is a very old logger in and about Vancouver. He came here in the spring of 1884, and has been married sixty-four years; Mrs. Myers answered the phone in a clear voice, and called Mr. Myers; both enjoy the best of health.

Mr. Myers said: “All that timber around Central Park, and out Grandview—along the ridge towards Shaughnessy—was burned over centuries ago. I have been in the woods all my life, all over Canada; I know what I am talking about; those University men” (forestry) “don’t know what they’re talking about; they don’t go out into the woods; no man alive can tell you the age of those trees out at Central Park; well, I came through there in 1884, and those trees haven’t grown two inches diameter in fifty-four years. Those University men try to count the rings; they can’t count the rings; the growth is so small the rings don’t show.”

LIGHTNING.

“All that country out Burnaby way was burned over three or four hundred years ago; that’s what made those trees out there so small; no humus, all burned off; we never got any big logs out that way; that’s all second growth, except in the hollows where the fire missed. Lightning started those forest fires.” (Note: confirmed by Indian tradition.)

"All the good timber, magnificent trees, was in the West End, out Shaughnessy way, and there was a good patch down about George Black's" (Hastings.) "It was fine timber; nothing better in the world. But no man on earth can tell how long it was since some big fire ran through all that area east of the head of False Creek; might be two or three hundred years ago."

HOLLOW TREES.

"Do you know how those big hollow trees start? There's a famous one out in Stanley Park, and another in Central Park. Why, I have seen trees three or four feet thick growing straddled over a dead log. The wind blew over the trees killed by fire; then the log all rotted out, and got covered with moss and rotten stuff, and a seed fell on top of the log and took root, and of course the tiny roots couldn't go down in the wood, so they straddle each side of the old long, like a prong; that was how the big hollow tree in Stanley Park got started, and that might have been before the birth of our Saviour."

(See photos—C.V. P. Tr. 7, N. Tr. 9, and C.V. P. St. 11, G. N. 104.)

"CUT" NAILS.

"Cut" nails were used in all the early buildings of Vancouver. Just when wire drawn nails superseded them is hard to say, but when the St. Andrew's Church, corner Richards and Georgia streets, was pulled down in July 1937, both kinds were found, although the preponderant number were "cut."

"Cut" nails had the disadvantage of being a little brittle; they broke instead of bending as a wire drawn nail bends. Samples of some are in the City Archives. It is stated that after boiling them in tallow, pioneers used them, with quite good success, for boat building.

At first "cut" nails were cast iron, but afterwards they were made malleable.

They were sold as "penny" nails.

1"	two, or tuppenny
1¼	three penny
1½	four penny
1¾	five penny
2"	six penny
2¼	seven penny
2½	eight penny
2¾	nine penny
3"	ten penny
3¼	twelve penny
3½	sixteen penny
4"	twenty penny
4½	thirty penny
5"	forty penny
5½	fifty penny
6"	sixty penny

THE NAMING OF VANCOUVER.

Note: W.E. McCartney, son of A.E. McCartney, of McCartney Creek, North Vancouver, pioneer of Granville, Burrard Inlet, asserts that claims to have been the "first (or second or third) child born in Vancouver" do not take into consideration that Vancouver was "*Vancouver*" weeks and months before the mere approval of a name, already in common use, changed "Granville" into the incorporated "City of Vancouver."

JSM

The earliest appearance we have seen of the name "Vancouver" is in the magazine *West Shore*, published in Portland, Oregon, September 1884, Vol. 10, No. 9, page 304, which says: "investigate the merits of Vancouver on Coal Harbor," etc.