

Early Vancouver

Volume Five

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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

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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MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH GEORGE F. UPHAM AT CITY ARCHIVES, 10 MARCH 1937.

OPERA HOUSE. GRANVILLE, B.I.

Mr. Upham said: "The 'Opera House' which Mr. Hedley Otton of San Rafael, California, sends you an account of, was a rough two-storey shed on what is now Trounce Alley, but then the lane to the stables at the back of the Deighton House and Jonathan Miller's court house on Water Street. It was between and behind Miller's and Johnston's house, which was between Miler's and the 'Deighton.'

"It was a place with bare bunks on the ground floor, and if you had your blankets, they would let you sleep in it at fifty cents a night. Upstairs was a dance hall, just a roughish sort of room; hold about twenty-five couples; coal oil lamps, wood stove and cord wood; dance there in anything you liked, boots, moccasins, logger's caulks; anything you liked to, it was all the same. Ask Harry Chase; he knows."

JOSEPH MANNION.

"Joe Mannion's first wife, of course, was an Indian, but his second wife was white, and a fine good woman, too, she was. She brought up those stepchildren well; she looked after them wonderfully and properly; no woman living could have done it better; one is now Mrs." (Dr.) "H.A. Christie."

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH GEO. F. UPHAM, 1125 WEST 12TH AVENUE, VANCOUVER, 7 APRIL 1937.

FOWLS AND THEIR EGGS. EARLY STREET CARS.

Mr. Upham said: "What do I know about chickens in the early days of Vancouver? Well, they were the usual barnyard variety; mostly Plymouth Rocks, or Black Minorca. The Minorcas were wild birds. Everyone had hens in their back yards; sometimes they got out.

"I remember one time Alex Struthers told me someone had moved out of a house down on Haro Street near Bute Street, and that a couple of hens had been left; the hens were 'sitting' out in the clearing. So I got a box that night and went down and I got a hen and thirteen chickens; it gave me a bit of a start in life. I did not look for the other one; thought I had done well enough. Then soon after, my mother-in-law gave me a Plymouth rooster and twelve Plymouth hens; that would be about 1891.

"The first Black Spanish I ever heard of in Vancouver, or ever saw here, was one that Dr. Fowler brought here. He came up from San Francisco in 1886, and two or three years after he was living in Sedro-Wooley, or Bellingham, and he and his wife brought a pair of Black Spanish hens here from some place in Washington."

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. JAMES EDWARD SMITH, 1630 CHARLES STREET, VANCOUVER, 3 MAY 1935.

STREET CARS.

"I was the first baby to ride on the street cars of Vancouver. The story goes that when the first street car came out of the Prior Street barn, that Mr. Snyder, our next door neighbour, grasped me from my mother's arms, and said as he did so, 'He's going to be the first baby in Vancouver to ride on a street car.' Mother is said to have protested that my face was dirty, and that I was not dressed. But Mr. Snider said 'that did not matter. Car was coming; no time to wait,' jumped on the car in the middle of the block—it stopped for him—went a short way, and got off.

"The car in question was out for a trial spin from Prior Street as far as Hastings Street; Westminster Ave. was a bit of a rough thoroughfare then." (He may mean Front Street barn; don't think Prior Street barn was built; the Vancouver Street Railway's Carhouse was on Front Street early in 1890. The *World* panorama map of 1890 shows no buildings on Prior Street, but does show a siding turning in there.)

YALETOWN.

"My father came to Vancouver about 1887, and first went to live in Yaletown. Then he squatted where the B.C. Electric Railway Company located their first barn, but the Vancouver Electric Railway Company