

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

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they skinned him in Victoria, you could tell how many times the rope was around his body. He was fat, and the rope left its mark in his fat.”

LEG IRONS.

“There was no leg irons in the melee, or whatever you call it, at all. That story about the leg irons is all ‘bunk.’ I have told you the correct history of the bear, and you can sign my name to it, if you like.”

ANOTHER BEAR STORY. DUCKS. HENS. PIGS.

“One day, R.H. Alexander, Ainslie Mouat, George Black and myself came over with some cattle, and when we got to the slaughter house, there was no poultry, pigs, ducks or anything to be seen; everything was as silent as a graveyard. The bear had got loose, and there had been a general slaughter; chickens, pigs, ducks; you could see pieces of them all over the place—and the bear was up a tree.”

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH JOHN MURRAY (THE SON) OF PORT MOODY, WHO CAME TO B.C. IN 1859 WITH ROYAL ENGINEERS ON *THAMES CITY*, 10 NOVEMBER 1938.

STAGES. STAGE BUGLES.

Mr. Murray said: “This is all nonsense about the Westminster-Burrard Inlet stage blowing horns or bugles.

“I have seen stages leaving for the Cariboo, and the stage leaving Victoria for Esquimalt, and the Westminster stage leaving for Burrard Inlet. W.R. Lewis, who operated the Burrard Inlet stage, was the only man who ever sounded a note, and he blew on a bugle, a military bugle, I suppose it was—never a horn—on the departure of the stage for Burrard Inlet, to warn the passengers the stage was about to leave.

“That was the only horn or bugle of any description in connection with stages I ever saw in British Columbia.”

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH JOHN MURRAY (JR.) OF PORT MOODY, WHO WAS BORN AT SEA ON THE *THAMES CITY*, 14 MARCH 1859, WHILST EN ROUTE TO BRITISH COLUMBIA WITH HIS FATHER, JOHN MURRAY, ROYAL ENGINEER.

He is now almost 79 years old.

Mr. Murray has served his city of Port Moody well. He surveyed the forest into streets, has been an alderman, police commissioner, and is now police magistrate, and has never taken a cent of remuneration for his public services. He is quick, active despite his age; walks with agility, clear of eye, and has quite a lot of grey, almost white, hair; in appearance and movement he appears to be ten years younger than he is. JSM.

FOREST FIRES. GASTOWN.

Mr. Murray said: “About this letter you wrote me about early forest fires. Well, I’ll tell you. The first fire of any account around Gastown was in the middle June 1880, and it was between what is now Pender Street and what was then False Creek shore, down where the C.P.R. yards are on Pender Street, and it ran up the hill we now call Beatty Street towards the Cambie Street grounds, etc. It did no property damage, but it burned for several weeks. I was working for George Black, butcher; he had a lot of cordwood stored in there in the forest, but we got it out before it was burned. I got out the last load, and then took ill with typhoid, and went home to my parents in New Westminster, until I got better. That is how I know it was in June 1880.”

FALSE CREEK ROAD.

“In the same month there was a bush fire on the old False Creek Road—what is called Kingsway—it burned several weeks too; just an ordinary bush fire; no damage done; it ran all over the country about Central Park, this side of Royal Oak, straddled the False Creek Road, and went down in the hollow towards Deer Lake; it was two miles wide, at least, across the road, or trail, as we called it.”

FOREST FIRES, 1865. THE BIG FOREST FIRE, 1865.

“But the big fire was in 1865. I don’t know where it started; I was too young to recall much, but I know it burned all about Burquitlam, Coquitlam, Burnaby Lake, and burned the North Road bridges; in fact, the whole country was on fire for weeks.”

NORTH ARM ROAD. MAGEE’S. RIVER ROAD. FRASER AVENUE.

“I came to Gastown in 1875; I was then about 16, and worked for George Black, and it was that year that they cut the North Arm Road, now Fraser Avenue, from what is now Kingsway, to what is now Marine Drive; right down to the river, and then west to Magee’s. They started at about Carrall and Hastings Street, repaired the road as far as False Creek, then up the hill of Mount Pleasant, and then on to the junction, and cut the new North Arm Road we now call Fraser Avenue, and then west to Magee’s. Billy Thompson had the contract, Carrall Street to Magee’s.”

HASTINGS-GRANVILLE ROAD.

“Herring had the contract to build the road from Hastings to Granville, along the Burrard Inlet south shore; that was in the summer of 1876, but Herring failed, and his bondsmen had to finish it. Thomas Kidd of Lulu Island—he wrote the history of Lulu Island—was the foreman for the bondsmen, and they finished it in 1877, but you could ride over it with a horse in 1876, but the bridges were not put in until later.”

EBENEZER BROWN. GRANVILLE HOTEL. JOSEPH MANNION.

“Ebenezer Brown started a hotel or saloon in Gastown called the ‘Granville’; he sold out to Mannion; to Jones and Mannion; Billy Jones.”

JOHN HENRY SCALES. HUGH MURRAY. JONATHAN MILLER.

“John Henry Scales is undoubtedly the oldest living man today of Gastown; I come next, and Hugh, my brother, next. I shall be 79 next 14th March” (1938.) “Hugh has been talking about Ada Miller being the first child born in Gastown, but Hugh is all wrong; I came here in 1875, and Hugh came after I did; he says Ada Miller was born here in 1871; that couldn’t be. She was a big girl when I came in 1875.”

JOHN HALL, PREEMPTOR. BELCARRA, NORTH ARM.

“There was John Hall” (see D.L. 195, 229 and 200A) “here in Colonel Moody’s time; he used to go around exploring; I think he did a lot of exploring for Colonel Moody. I think he settled up the North Arm at a place” (D.L. 229) “that they call Belcarra, once called ‘Bole’s Ranch,’ where he shot his klootch. That was how Judge Bole got his ranch; took it in payment for defending Hall for murder of his klootch; Hall was not a Royal Engineer.”

ROYAL OAK HOTEL. COLLINGWOOD HOTEL. JUNCTION INN. GLADSTONE INN. PIG AND WHISTLE.

“The roadhouses on the Westminster Road, as I recall them, were the Royal Oak, then the Collingwood on the left hand side, then the Junction at the junction of Fraser Avenue and Kingsway, and the Gladstone Inn.”

After tea and toast—Mr. Murray had just come from Major Mill’s, mayor of Port Moody, funeral, and was cold—I escorted Mr. Murray around the new City Hall, its Council Chamber and offices; a somewhat remarkable experience for a man who first saw the site of this metropolis as an almost impenetrable jungle of forest, and a few simple buildings arranged around a crescent shore of mud and boulders—Gastown.