

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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MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. AND MRS. JOHN FIELDEN STRANG (PRONOUNCED STRANG, NOT STRANGE), 4554 WEST 4TH AVENUE, WHO VERY KINDLY CALLED AT THE CITY ARCHIVES THIS AFTERNOON, 17 APRIL 1946.

JOHN STRANG, PIONEER, 1873. JOHN FIELDEN STRANG, 1880.

Mr. Strang: "You know, I always understood that my brother, Nelson, was the first white child born in Granville, or Gastown; he died in 1879 of scarlet fever, and is buried in New Westminster; his grave is in the old, old cemetery, and Father is buried there too. John Strang, both in the same grave. I have often heard my mother speak of it, and also I will see what my sister, Mrs. George Newman" (she lives in New Westminster), "I must see what she says; she is eight years older than I am. She, Amanda Newman, my sister, was born in New Brunswick.

"Mother was a Miss Helen Carlow, daughter of John Carlow of St. Andrew's, New Brunswick; Mother and Father came to Vancouver in the very early days, and my grandfather, John Carlow, followed, and went to Victoria, where he died. There were two girls and three boys in the Strang family; all born in British Columbia excepting Mrs. Newman. One brother, Claude Strang, of mine, is living in Agassiz, and the second brother, Wesley, died from the effects of the war 1914-1918; he served in the Engineers in France. Mrs. Newman is one sister in New Westminster, and Mrs. Furness in New Westminster is my other.

"I was born in Granville, 15 May 1880. We moved away from Burrard Inlet in 1882; Father was with Jerry Rogers at Jericho. We lived in New Westminster for about a year or so before the Westminster fire in September 1898, and then we came back to Vancouver and have lived here ever since. Father died in New Westminster about 1934 and is buried there; Mother died in Vancouver in 1931 and is buried in Mountain View. I can just remember there was a fire in Vancouver in June 1886; then I went to the old Central School in New Westminster."

HOMER STREET METHODIST CHURCH.

Major Matthews: Where were you at the time of the flood?

Mrs. Strang: (interjecting) "I was on Lulu Island, on No. 2 Road; my father was Capt. Richard Gosse, and I remember he tied a row boat to the front door, and we children were wishing the water would come in the house so we could go and visit my aunt on the North Arm, Mrs. Thomas Alcock. I went to a little school on Lulu Island; we walked there up the dyke; lots of snakes; and took our lunch, and played in the school yard; Mr. Atkinson was the teacher; I have one of the school books in which he drew corn and signed his name. We belonged to the old Halcyon Club, dances, we used to in early days; Father moved to Vancouver, and then we came in and lived on Richards Street; he owned those two little houses between Holy Rosary; the Archbishop's Palace stands next door to them; the old houses are still there. Then we came to Broughton and Nelson Street, and that was where we, Mr. Strang and I, were married; corner of Broughton and Nelson. We were married in the old Wesley Church on the southwest corner of Georgia and Burrard Street. We had a two-horse hack, and according to the custom of those times, white ribbons on the whip.

"Our son is Alen, born Vancouver December 28th 1910. He is married, and has one little girl, Carol Jean; Alen married Jean Forester, daughter of Howard Forester, M.L.A., about 1939."