

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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CAPILANO CREEK. WATER WORKS. CAPILANO RANCHERS.

“When they started to build the water pipe line up the Capilano Creek, a man named Gilley, and his Indian wife, towed the workmen backwards and forwards in a Columbia River fishing boat from Andy Linton’s float at the foot of Carrall Street, and he would sail, or row, right up the creek—he could get up far enough to land them.

“If they ever did built a wharf for the Capilano Ranchers” (see *News-Advertiser*, 25 March 1890, page 8) “then I do not know where they built the float or wharf; the only place I can think of would be up at Tom Turner’s or at the present ferry wharf at North Vancouver; I don’t recall the landing anywhere down towards the First Narrows.”

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH MRS. W.A. BAUER (NÉE MISS RUBY SPRINGER OF MOODYVILLE) AT CITY ARCHIVES, 12 APRIL 1940.

MRS. JONATHAN MILLER. COL. BENJAMIN SPRINGER. COL. TRACY.

Mrs. Bauer said: “This photograph, which I will present to the City Archives, is of Mrs. Jonathan Miller, in her early sixties. She was the daughter of Colonel Benjamin Springer, one of the first civil engineers in Canada—Col. Tracy, formerly, City Engineer, Vancouver, was one of his pupils—Col. Springer served in the Riel Rebellion.

“Mrs. Miller’s two sisters married; one to Dr. Tufford, and the other, Dr. Flood. Of her brothers, one was Dr. Frank Springer, and the other, Rev.” [blank] “Springer, of Grace Church, Philadelphia, who died on the steps of his church.”

MRS. BENJAMIN SPRINGER OF MOODYVILLE, B.C. MRS. RICHARDS OF HASTINGS MILL. MISS FRANCES NIAS.

“This card, which I will also present to you, is what you see; let me read what it says:

THE GOVERNOR REQUESTS
THE PLEASURE OF MISS NIAS’S COMPANY
ON TUESDAY EVENING, THE 24TH
INSTANT AT 9 O’CLOCK

Government House
14th May 1890.

An answer is requested.

“Well, Miss Frances Nias was married at the age of 17 to Mr. Richards, and was a widow at eighteen, with one child, Louis, afterwards legally adopted as Louis Springer. The Nias family came to Victoria in 1858 when Frances, or ‘Fanny’ Nias, my mother, was five years old; they were English people, came from California, where Mr. Nias had been the editor of one of the first newspapers in San Francisco. I am told that, in 1859, he started a newspaper in Victoria, but I do not know the title it went under. Mr. Nias’s brother was Rear Admiral Sir Joseph Nias, and lived on Park Lane, London, England.

“I am giving you this card as from the Springers; that is, Mrs. Watkin Boulton (Miss Mabel Springer), “Miss Eva Springer; Herbert” (Bob) “M. Springer, my brother, and myself” (Mrs. W.A. Bauer, née Miss Ruby Springer.)

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH MRS. JAMES WALKER, ELDEST DAUGHTER [OF] JOSEPH SILVEY (“PORTUGUESE JOE NO. 1”) AT CITY ARCHIVES, 22 APRIL 1940.

EIHU. KANAKAS. COAL HARBOUR.

Mrs. Walker said: “Eihu was a Kanaka, looked Hawaiian, and talked that language, and he had an Indian wife. He lived down at the little ranch in Coal Harbour. They had a lot of vegetables, and apple trees, and my stepmother, Lucy Silvey, Indian, used to go there to buy vegetables and took me with her. I heard the women say she had two husbands; one week she stayed one house, and the next week she stayed at

the other. I heard the women talk.” (See F.W. Alexander conversation, *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 3.) “She had a daughter, they called her Lucy, and she had other children. We were living over at Brockton Point; that was before we went to Reid Island. Lucy, the daughter, was married at that time; married to a white man; she had a kind of St. Vitus dance; shook her head every once in a while.

“You know, there were a lot of Kanakas about, not just one or two, and they would talk in their language; it was queer to hear them, and they would go out where the lighthouse is at Brockton Point and fish with a line.”

PETER PLANT. ADDIE PLANT. FIRST MARRIAGE. CHIEF KI-AP-I-LA-NO.

(See *B.C. Historical Quarterly*, April 1937, page 111.)

“Lena Myers married first Harry Page; she divorced him; then second, Capt. George Myers, steamboat captain, now at New Westminster; before she married Harry Page, she was Miss Lena Plant; her mother was Addie Plant, a half-breed; I know her, and her Indian mother too.

“Addie’s mother was an Indian woman, and sister to my grandfather, ‘Old Man’ Kiapilano, and the Indian woman’s Addie, half-breed daughter, married that Frenchman who had a big farm out Marpole, because one time Father and my stepmother” (Lucy) “and myself were going to New Westminster by row boat; Mr. Ewen, the cannery man, had sent for Father; I was about six years old then, because there were three of us in the row boat, and Father” (Joseph Silvey, “Portuguese Joe”) “said he would call at a nice farm and get some butter and eggs, and he said that she, Addie’s mother, was my grand-auntie; she was sister to my grandfather, the old chief. Old Mrs.” (probably Supplien Guinne) “was a pretty Indian woman, and could talk French as good as a French woman.

“Mrs. George Myers is my second cousin; my mother and her mother were full cousins, only her mother was a half-breed, mine was full blood Indian. Get it clear. Lena Myers was originally Miss Lena Plant, daughter of Peter and Addie Plant, then Lena married Harry Page, and then Capt. George Myers.”

“GASSY JACK.” JOHN DEIGHTON. WHA-HALIA.

“‘Gassy Jack’s’ Indian wife is living at the North Vancouver Indian Reserve, in the village. I don’t know what her English name is” (Madeleine) “but her Indian name is ‘Wha-halia.’ I have not seen her, but my cousin Christine Jack tells me Wha-halia says she had a son by Gassy Jack. She must be very old. She wants me to go over and see her as she says she remembers me when I was a little girl, and Father lived at one end of the Gastown beach and Gassy Jack at the other.”

THOMAS COLLINS. SLOOP *MORNING STAR*.

“Tom Collins? He married an Indian woman. He had a sort of ranch in the bay at Plumper’s Pass, on the Mayne Island side, on Mayne Island. My father was anchored there in our sloop, the *Morning Star*, and I was about five years old. Collins had an Indian wife and some boys and girls; one of the children was Lizzie, and the boy was Tommy, but I have forgotten the other children’s names. Collins was a great big tall man; wore size twelve shoes. He was an Englishman. I think there were two children besides Tommy and Lizzie; one was Melville.”

Major Matthews: How do you remember so well?

Mrs. Walker: “I’ve got a good memory” (note: she cannot read nor write) “and there was not much to remember those days, and we were there for two or three days. I was born on July 4th, what year I don’t know, but officially for Old Age Pensions, I am supposed to be going on 71, so that the time we saw the Collins ranch must have been, what did you say it was, 1874?” (Probably 1872.) “And, too, that was when we lived at Brockton Point, long before we went to Reid Island” (note: Joseph Silvey preempted on Reid Island in September 1881) “and then, after we went to Reid Island, we heard about them. Mrs. Collins, Indian woman, told my stepmother Lucy Silvey, that she was a Sumas woman. I think Mr. Collins was ‘something’; Justice of the Peace or something. She was a nice looking Indian woman; tall lady.”