

Early Vancouver

Volume Five

By: Major J.S. Matthews, V.D.

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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[illustration annotation:]

British Columbia—View at Burrard Inlet.

Moodyville, 1872. This engraving appeared in the *Canadian Illustrated News*, 1st June 1872. It was made from a photograph by D. Withrow, a cabinet maker and photographer of New Westminster, and afterwards of Brighton Hotel, Hastings, 1882. Presented by His Worship L.D. Taylor, Mayor of Vancouver. See also C.V. Mi. N. 7, P. 38, also N. Mi. 7, P. 20.

City Archives. J.S.M.

JAMES BOYCE. INDIAN WIVES.

“Jimmy Boyce; his wife was Indian; she was the ugliest creature I ever saw, and one afternoon we were at tea, I’ve told you about it, and we were all sitting—twelve or fourteen of us—on the front verandah, and she came up, called, ‘Mrs. Polson, Mrs. Polson’; the Indians could not say ‘Patterson,’ and always called Mother ‘Mrs. Polson.’ Another Indian woman and Jimmy Boyce’s wife had been fighting, and the other woman had bit clean through her lip. Mother went in the back and washed it, and sent her off to the doctor.”

LOCHART (SIC) OF MOODYVILLE. INDIAN WIVES.

“Lochart, he was head machinist at Moodyville, a good man, he was a freemason, he had an Indian wife, but they were not married, and they had a little boy. Mr. Lochart was going to send the little boy to Scotland to be educated, but Mr. Lochart died, and I don’t know what became of the little boy.”

“HOG NED.” NED ACTON.

Major Matthews: Who was “Hog Ned”?

Mrs. Crakanthorp: “‘Hog Ned’? He looked after the pigs at the Hastings Sawmill; his name was Ned Acton, but in those days, they hardly ever called anyone by the proper names; they called them ‘Portuguese Joe’ and names like that; seems almost everybody had a nickname.”

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH MRS. JAMES WALKER, 721 CAMBIE STREET, WHO HAS JUST RETURNED FROM A THREE WEEKS VISIT TO HER DAUGHTER IN SEATTLE, AND KINDLY CALLED AT THE CITY ARCHIVES, 27 MAY 1940.

JOHN DEIGHTON. “GASSY JACK.” INDIAN WIVES OF WHITEMEN. QWA-HALIA OR MADELINE.

Mrs. Walker said: “I went over to the North Vancouver Indian Reserve, and found Gassy Jack’s wife, Wha-halia; she remembered me when I was a little girl. Her English name is Madeline. Madeline told me Gassy Jack was her husband, that Gassy Jack had, first, her aunt for a wife; then her aunt died, and he took Madeline, her niece, as wife. Gassy Jack and Madeline had a son, but the son died shortly after Gassy Jack died.

“Madeline must be old, about ninety I should think; her hair is snow white; she knew my father, Joe Silvey, ‘Portuguese Joe,’ and she knew me when I was little. She said her husband, Gassy Jack, was at first a captain at New Westminster on a sternwheeler boat going up to Yale, and then he built the saloon over here in Granville, and he had another little house in the bushes behind the hotel for her; that was his home when he was not in the hotel, but he was always, all the time, ill, and then he sent for his brother and his wife to come from the Old Country.”

Major Matthews: Did the old Indian woman Qwa-halia tell you all this?

Mrs. Walker: “Yes.” (Then significantly) “She should know; Gassy Jack was her husband. I remember her when I was about five years old; gee, she was a pretty lady. She told me there was money left to her and her son, but she never got it. When his brother and his wife came they took charge of everything, and she went back to her people. Then, she said, Gassy Jack died and her son died about a year afterwards. She told me that Gassy Jack left a will for her to get money, but she never got it, and they buried him in New Westminster. She got married afterwards to a Musqueam Indian, but he is dead now.”