

**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**

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**MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. WALTER OSCAR MILLER, PIONEER OF YALE, PORT MOODY, AND VANCOUVER; EARLY OFFICIAL (1883) OF CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY, AND SUBSEQUENTLY SUPERINTENDENT, NOW RETIRED, WHO KINDLY ACCEPTED MY REQUEST TO VISIT THE CITY ARCHIVES, CITY HALL, VANCOUVER, 13 SEPTEMBER 1937.**

**CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY. YALE, 1884.**

Mr. Miller said: "I came from Kenora, then Rat Portage, to Yale in April 1884. After remaining at Yale as" (telegraph) "despatcher, I went to work for W.H. Armstrong" (later Armstrong and Morrison, Vancouver) "who was Master Mechanic at that time for the C.P.R. I remained with him about a year, and then went back despatching.

"I was chief despatcher there in Yale in 1886, when the road was turned over to the C.P.R., and I hear that last message at the driving of the last spike, November 1885; the message from Donald A. Smith to Queen Victoria when the last spike was driven at Craigellachie; then later, in 1886, I despatched the first train.

"You see. Soon after Van Horne's train went by, all work was closed down. It was closed down, and Haney left the work. They departed that winter between Port Moody and Savona, under the general superintendency of Geo. F. Kyle. The mountain section—east of Savona—was closed down, I think, completely. Then the following March or April" (1886), "Armstrong went up there.

"After I was married in August" (1886) "I was Chief Clerk for Superintendent William Downie at Port Moody, and in the spring of 1884 we moved to Vancouver, and I was" (the first) "Chief Despatcher, and received the first train into Vancouver."

**CANADIAN PACIFIC TELEGRAPH.**

"The first telegraph office was on the south side of Cordova Street between Granville and Seymour, opposite the present C.P.R. Station; later we moved over to the wooden building on the other side of the street where I remained until 1898; then I was transferred to be Agent at Kamloops, where I remained until August 1900; then returned to Vancouver, and was Car Service and Fuel Agent until 1908; then superintendent at Vancouver until 1910; then transferred to Nelson, B.C. as superintendent" (17 years), "end of 1926, when I was retired."

**CASCADE LODGE.**

"I was a charter member of Cascade Lode A.F. & A.M.; was Worshipful Master in 1892, and of the charter members, Stanley Henderson, James Doig and myself alone remain."

**GENEALOGY.**

"I was born at Fordwich, Ontario, 30<sup>th</sup> September 1862, son of John Miller.

"At Nanaimo, 11<sup>th</sup> August 1886, I married my wife, still surviving, Miss Anne Elizabeth Horne" (Anglican denomination), "daughter of A.G. Horne, an old Hudson's Bay factor formerly in charge of Port Simpson, later of Comox, but in 1886 resident at Nanaimo. He was the first white man to cross Vancouver's Island; Horne Lake is named in his honour. We reside now at 1263 West 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. Our children were six; the eldest son, born July 1887, died young, as did another son; the four who survive are:

1. Gladys, now Mrs. W.M. Walker, of Nelson, B.C., whose son was accidentally killed, but whose daughter, now about 19, is a stenographer, Imperial Bank, Nelson.
2. Sidney Wilfred" (Miller, Court & Manley Ltd., brokers, 475 Howe Street), "twice married. His eldest child, Elizabeth, now Mrs. Reed, and about 21 or 22, is living in Los Angeles, where her husband is one of the principals of the Westinghouse Electric Co.; her brother Joe is about 16 and going to school. Sidney's second wife is the mother of a little tot, a daughter, Sharon.
3. Olive Mabel, unmarried, resides with us at 1263 West 33<sup>rd</sup>.
4. Francis, now Mrs. E.G. Matthew, widowed, also lives with us, with her two children, a son, 14, and a daughter, 11.

Read and approved by Mr. Miller. November 1937.

J.S. Matthews.

### **SAM GREER OF GREER'S BEACH.**

Memo of conversation with Mrs. G.E. Morrison, 3321 Point Grey Road, who is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Sam Greer, 21 January 1936.

### **KITSILANO BEACH.**

Mrs. Greer (Louisa, the second wife) is 87 now, getting somewhat feeble. She lives on Trafalgar Street. "Yes, I am her daughter, was born 9<sup>th</sup> February 1887, right there at the foot of Yew Street, where the bathing pavilion is now. Mrs. J.Z. Hall" (who received the "Good Citizen" medal in 1934 from the Native Sons at a big ceremony in Stanley Park, Malkin Memorial Bowl) "is my half sister."

### **WILD ANIMALS.**

"Do I remember the wild animals? Mink and weasels used to come right in the house." (The house the C.P.R. burned down.) "Then there were some little things which scrambled over the roof at night; we never did find out what they were."

### **FIRST WHITE CHILD BORN IN KITSILANO.**

Mrs. Morrison was born, February 1885 (or 1886) in father's house on beach, foot Yew Street.

Probably earliest white birth in Kitsilano; her younger sister, Mrs. Middlemas of Trafalgar Street, also born there, 26 May 1889; younger children were born at Chilliwack.

J.S.M.

### **MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN MR. AND MRS. J.W. MORRISON, 1749 WATERLOO STREET, VANCOUVER, WHO HAVE BEEN IN VANCOUVER FOR 50 YEARS, AT THEIR HOME, 25 MARCH 1938.**

Asked to identify his store and others on Cordova Street, from a photograph showing soldiers marching "in line" down Cordova Street, between Homer and Cambie, before 1899, Mr. Morrison said that the photograph did not quite include the building in which his store was located. (See photo No. P. Mil. 23. G. N. 462.)

Mr. Morrison said: "I think my store was the first brick one in the block. It was near the southwest corner of Cambie on Cordova. When I moved into it, it was a new building, and I was so busy trying to establish myself in my new business, that I did not pay much attention to the others."

### **MASONIC TEMPLE. ODDFELLOWS HALL. SPRINGER BLOCK.**

"I remember the Springer Block across Cordova Street being built; it was under construction when I moved into my little store. As far as memory serves me, this first little store in the picture is Tapley's Candy store; they made their own candy, and had some confectionary goods, too."

### **POODLE DOG HOTEL.**

"The next one, I think, was a hotel, but I cannot remember the name of it. And then there was the Merchant Tailors; I think Mr. Mather, who later went to Pasadena, was the tailor then."

### **ARKELL HALL. GRANT AND ARKELL. WORLD NEWSPAPER. KENDALL BLOCK.**

"Next to that is the Arkell building; it was not Grant and Arkell then, only Arkell, and later, I think it was the *World* office, the newspaper. And then there is the Kendall Block, that is on the corner of Homer and Cordova.

"I joined the Masonic Lodge, but when I joined they were holding their meetings in the Springer Block, and I do not remember when they were held in the Arkell Building."

Unrevised conversation with Miss Ethel Glazier, City Archives.