

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.

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the land above the False Creek bridge” (Mount Pleasant.) “Well, John Sprott, he located about one third way down False Creek, then came Donald McPhadden” (or McFadden), “then myself” (William Mackie, Jr.); “my property came right down to the ravine” (slightly west of foot of Ash Street), “then my uncle’s piece, and then John Beatty, he lived with old Chief George and an Indian woman on the Indian Reserve at the mouth of the creek, so my uncle had to go around the other side of the reserve, on to what we called Greer’s Beach afterwards; Uncle preempted that. My uncle built that cottage there, but there was another cottage there—about fifty years ago—Jericho Charlie, the Indian, he had that cottage, and Sam Greer bought the Indian Charlie out, and jumped my uncle’s claim.”

IONA ISLAND. RICHMOND CANNERY. CHRISTOPHER ISLAND. WOOD ISLAND.

“Dan McMillan named Iona Island in the North Arm, after the place in Scotland called Iona, where the first Christians were. He and Angus Fraser built that cannery, the Richmond Cannery, the year I came out, 1882.

“Christopher Wood was a cousin of Robert Wood. They were uncles to Greta” (Miss McCleery.)

AIRPORT, SEA ISLAND.

“My brother sold the airport on Sea Island to the city of Vancouver. Then I went to Agassiz for thirty years; farmed there; own some yet, the B.C. Hop Co. leased it from me.”

SILVER WATCH. NAPOLEON.

“I am going to give you this old silver watch; it belonged to my grandfather, Capt. George Mackie; then Father got it, and finally I got it; you see this bit of reddish silk in the back of the case; well, that was cut from Napoleon’s carriage on the field of Waterloo in 1815. John Mackie was a sergeant—he was my great-great-granduncle—and he cut it from Napoleon’s carriage for a souvenir.”

GARRIPIE (OF MARPOLE).

“Garrapie who was the first at what we called Marpole; married a half-breed.”

Read, and as corrected, approved by William Mackie, 9 September 1937.

J.S. Matthews.

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH WILLIAM MACKIE, 8698 WEST MARINE DRIVE, WHO, TOGETHER WITH MRS. MACKIE AND ANOTHER LADY, FAVOURED ME WITH A CALL THIS BEAUTIFUL AFTERNOON AT THE CITY ARCHIVES, 9 SEPTEMBER 1937.

INDIAN MURDERS. “SUPPLEJACK.” KHAY-TULK. WILLIAM MACKIE, SR.

Mr. Mackie, in the Scotch accent which, after so many years, he still retains, said: “Supplejack pretty nearly got away with my uncle. Let me tell you what my uncle told me about him. Supplejack was suspected of doing away with a good many whitemen, but they could never get the evidence.” (Uncle, i.e., also Wm. Mackie.)

Major Matthews: Well, the Scotch did away with a few Englishmen? (Mr. Mackie laughed.)

Mr. Mackie: “Well, you know, in early days there was no trail from Gastown to the ‘End of the Road’ at Hastings, and the only way to get there was to get an Indian to take you there in a canoe. Well, Uncle had just come up from California. I don’t know just when it was, but it must have been when he first came from California, because Supplejack was dead before I came in 1882; it must have been in the middle sixties. Anyway, Uncle wanted to go to Hastings and, you know, you always had to pay an Indian before he would do anything, and Uncle had some twenty dollar gold pieces in his pocket, and when he started to pay Supplejack, he pulled out the gold pieces, and Supplejack saw them, and could not resist the temptation.

“Jack’s squaw was with them; she was afterwards the squaw of ‘Jericho Charlie’” (note: Chinalset) “and Supplejack must have made up his mind to get the gold. They started off from Gastown in the canoe for Hastings. Supplejack was in the front of the canoe paddling, his squaw was in the stern steering with a

paddle, and Uncle was in the centre as a passenger; he heard them talking; the squaw was arguing with Supplejack, but of course Uncle did not know what they were talking about.”

CEDAR COVE.

“As the canoe was nearing Cedar Cove, Supplejack headed the canoe in towards the Cove, and as soon as he did that the squaw let out a howl. Uncle told me he would never forget that howl, and said, ‘That howl saved my life.’ Supplejack was angry, shook his paddle in the air, and turned the canoe out again; he was good and ‘mad.’ The squaw would not stand for it.”

FRENCH JOHN. INDIAN WIVES.

“You know about French John; he lived up above Garipee’s, above Eburne. Well, French John lived with a sister of Supplejack’s, and my uncle told French John all the circumstances, and the first time Supplejack came around to French John’s camp, French John took Supplejack by the shoulders, and gave him an awful kicking.

“French John knew what Supplejack proposed to do to Uncle, and after the trimming French John gave him, Supplejack would never look at French John again.

“That was long before I came in 1882, because Supplejack was dead when I came; it must have been in the middle sixties.” (Note: the Gastown-Hastings Road was built in 1876-7.)

“Supplejack got ‘credit’ for getting away with a lot of whites; do you know how he did it? But they never could get the evidence to convict him.”

INDIAN MURDERS.

“You know, in those days, they always travelled by canoe, and the Indians would push the canoe inshore, kill the whites, tow the bodies out, and sink them with a rock; that covered the whole matter up. At that time, men were going to the gold mines; they were strangers; no one knew who they were; where they came from; where they were going, and they were never missed. I lived with my uncle for twenty years, and every night he used to be telling me these things.”

FAIRVIEW. DOUGLAS PARK. JERRY ROGERS’ CAMP. SPARS.

“Right up here,” continued Mr. Mackie, “what you call Douglas Park on Heather Street just over there, Uncle put in a patch of potatoes in the clearing where Jerry Rogers had his logging outfit; where I sowed the cabbage and onions afterwards. He put them in in the spring, before he went to the mines or to the logging camps to work. Uncle was a tip-top hewer; he used to hew the eight-panel spars; they were all eight-panel spars; hand-hewn” (octagonal.) “In the fall, when he came home again, he got some sacks, and went out into the potato patch to dig potatoes, but there was not a potato to be found; the potato vines were all there growing natural enough, but there was no potatoes under them; the squaws had taken all the potatoes out with their fingers, and carefully put the dirt back again; the squaws went out there getting berries and roots; out there with their baskets.”

CHIEF GEORGE OF SNAUQ. SALLY OF SNAUQ.

“So when Uncle saw Sally, Chief George’s squaw, he told her that the squaws cats-swallow his wabatoes, and she said, ‘Haalo, haalo’ (no, no) ‘cats-swallow’ (take) ‘mika’ (not) ‘wabatoes’ (potatoes); ‘kully-kullys’ (blue jays) ‘swallow.’ The squaws had the earth so nicely placed back, but there was nothing there but the tops of the potatoes” (stalks) “growing.”

NAVY JACK. TUGS. STEAMBOATS.

“Navy Jack was a miner, too, you know. He was in the mines, and made a raise of money; he came out in the fall with the idea that he wanted to go steamboating, and he went to look at a boat here on the inlet, and Jack went around looking at the boat, and the boat was going to start off, and Jack was aboard of her, and while he was looking around they blew the whistle, but the water was condensed in the whistle, and they got no sound, so Jack says, ‘Call that a steam boat; that can’t whistle.’

“Afterwards he got a boat all right, and he used to dock down at one of the floats on the Gastown beach, and he was going over to Moodyville with a nurse and doctor, and the doctor said—I suppose the doctor

was in a hurry, and wanted to know if steam was up—‘How much steam have you got on,’ and Jack replied, ‘About a ton.’”

LOGGING OFF THE FOREST.

Major Matthews: Mr. Mackie. I am making a map showing where all the rollways on the beaches were, and all the old skid roads; I want to show how Vancouver was logged off. Do you recall all the old dumps? I know most of them, but I don’t want to miss any.

STANLEY PARK.

“Mr. Mackie: “Well, there was Charlie Daggett and Harry Furry; Harry’s brother discovered the copper mine on Texada Island; Daggett and Furry had a log dump by the Indian village in Stanley Park, by Lumberman’s Arch, and I think there was another down by Supplejack’s place” (Pipeline Road.)

“And then there was another I remember Charlie Daggett and Furry had out right at the tip of Point Grey; that was in 1883; it was just a bit north of the very tip here on the map; that’s where there is deep water; no use dumping logs onto a sandbar; they had great long log chutes there; I have seen the chutes three or four hundred feet long; down the side of the cliff; they had big guide logs on both sides, and smaller logs in the bottom and centre of chute, and the whole supported underneath with cross logs, and they would shoot the log ends on down the chute into the water. Yes; logging for the Hastings Sawmill; they had all the timber out there.”

MACKIE CREEK. FALSE CREEK. JOHN SPROAT. JOHN GILLESPIE.

“Then there was one beside Mackie Creek, which came down just a few yards west of Ash Street on False Creek; John Sproat’s cabin was right there, and there was another one just east a bit” (Granville Street) “of False Creek Indian Reserve, by my cabin; John Gillespie had a log shoot just about the end of the Granville Street bridge. And I told you of the one at the Lumberman’s Arch in the park.”

JERICHO.

“And then there was the dump at Jericho; you know all about that, at Jerry Rogers’ place there.”

SQUATTERS. KITSILANO BEACH.

“And there was one which Alex Johnston and George Black had in the bay, about the foot of Yew Street at the beach, because I remember we hauled a lot of lumber to build a couple of shacks back in the woods—about a half a mile back; the lumber came by scow from the Royal City Planing Mills, New Westminster—we took it up from a scow on the beach beside the log dump.”

ENGLISH BAY CANNERY.

“No, I don’t remember any dump at the English Bay Cannery; where was the English Bay Cannery? But I do remember there was an Englishman made a clearing on the Point Grey Road; just cleared a couple of lots free from stumps and roots and everything; deep in the forest.”

(Note: it was still there in 1904, a square clearing without a root or stump, covered with grass, deep in the forest at the junction of First Avenue and Point Grey Road; probably the first clearing in Kitsilano.)

SPRATT’S OILERY. HERRING. TRAIL TO GASTOWN.

“Oh, yes, and I remember, there was a place where they put logs in the water at Spratt’s Oillery, because I got hired to handle herring” (about 1884) “at the oilery.

“You could get a sackful of herring for nothing at the oilery if you wanted to bother carrying them away; there was a trail from the oilery to Gastown.”

MAGEE.

“And then old man Magee, he had a ditch right down to the river, because he had a lawsuit with Charlie Daggett over a cow that got onto the log boom and killed itself.” (Note: as was also the case in the big swamp west of Westminster on the North Arm, the logs were floated from the high land to the river by a long ditch; and there was another, with a pond into which a creek emptied, and controlled by three flood gates at intervals, which Henry S. Rowling had about foot of Ontario Street, on North Arm.)

GARIPEE'S.

"And there was another landing" (for logs) "below the bridge up at Garipee's" (Marpole); "the Garipee houses are there yet. They got the logs over the muskeg on split cedar corduroy." (Note: the exact spot is the B.C. Electric interurban line produced to river bank.)

FRENCH JOHN'S.

"And French John's. There was another place for putting logs in the water at French John's; just above the bridge" (at Marpole.)

BELL'S ISLAND. TWIGG'S ISLAND. CRIDLAND'S. JOHN BEATTY.

"They call it Twigg Island now, but Jimmy Bell preempted it; there was one rollway there; that was Fraser's camp. Cridland's owned the ground right by the river west of the road" (Fraser.) "John Beatty was there in 1882 driving oxen, at Fraser's camp, right on the river, west of the road" (Fraser Avenue.)

WM. DANIELS.

"And Bill Daniels had a camp just east of the road, now the Fraser Avenue bridge; there was a rollway there; Fraser's camp."

ROWLING.

"Rowling's was next up river." (D.L. 258.) "There was a great big grade there which came right to the river bank; high land right to the river bank; easy to handle logs there."

WOOLLARD'S.

"On John Woollard's place, Jerry Rogers had a spar camp, away up the river towards New Westminster, and floated the spars out through the muskeg in a big ditch."

FALSE CREEK. HASTINGS.

"I don't know much about logging at the head of False Creek and around Hastings. I think all that was logged off before I came out in 1882." (Note: very likely, as it would be close to the Hastings Mill, and naturally would be logged off first.)

SQUATTERS. C.P.R. GRANT.

"You know there was a lot of haggling over the 6,000 acres the C.P.R. got. The C.P.R. would not take it until they got rid of us squatters."

Major Matthews: Was that why the government paid you off?

Mr. Mackie: "Yes."

JOHN BEATTY.

"John Beatty was reputed to be worth eighteen or twenty thousand dollars; he married a white woman (had an Indian wife at first) and built a boarding house down in Vancouver by Abbott Street somewhere."

Mr. Mackie was getting tired, so Mrs. Mackie thought they had better be off home. A remarkable man, more or less deaf, but with a most astonishing memory, and excellent eyesight for reading—with glasses—a winning smile, clear complexion, carries a cane, but most active for his great age, in toto, just another of those of our virile pioneers, tall and strong.

J.S. Matthews.