

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.

Copyright Statement

© 2011 City of Vancouver. Any or all of *Early Vancouver* may be used without restriction as to the nature or purpose of the use, even if that use is for commercial purposes. You may copy, distribute, adapt and transmit the work. It is required that a link or attribution be made to the City of Vancouver.

Reproductions

High resolution versions of any graphic items in *Early Vancouver* are available. A fee may apply.

Citing Information

When referencing the 2011 edition of *Early Vancouver*, please cite the page number that appears at the bottom of the page in the PDF version only, not the page number indicated by your PDF reader. Here are samples of how to cite this source:

Footnote or Endnote Reference:

Major James Skitt Matthews, *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 5 (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011), 33.

Bibliographic Entry:

Matthews, Major James Skitt. *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 5. Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011.

Contact Information

City of Vancouver Archives
1150 Chestnut Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3J9
604.736.8561
archives@vancouver.ca
vancouver.ca/archives



MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. ARTHUR AUSTIN LANGLEY, 1769 ROBSON STREET, WHO CAME TO GASTOWN IN SEPTEMBER 1882; WHO WILL BE 80 IN FEBRUARY 1939, AND WHO CAME THIS AFTERNOON BY STREET CAR, UNAIDED, TO VISIT ME FOR A COUPLE OF HOURS AT THE CITY ARCHIVES, 13 SEPTEMBER 1938.

STAGES. BUGLE HORNS. LEWIS STAGE.

Mr. Langley said: "I don't remember the stage drivers blowing a horn on the stage; may have been something of the sort 'After the Fire,' but I was at Gastown, or Hastings, more or less all the time from September 1882, and I don't recall stage horns, or four-horse stages. The stage was drawn by two horses in my time; may have had four horses after things began to get lively in the early days of Vancouver."

BURRARD INLET-WESTMINSTER STAGE LINE.

"When I came here a man by the name of Palmer was driving Lewis's stage; two horses; no bugle. And then there was Harry Frieze. He left Gastown in the morning, about 8 a.m., for New Westminster, and got back in the evening about five or six. Palmer left New Westminster in the morning, and got back there in the evening; each stage made a round trip each day. That would be about 1882, and for a year or so after that."

PORT MOODY STAGE. GEORGE RAYMOND.

"George Raymond was, at that time, driving the Port Moody-Westminster stage; Port Moody was getting lively with the construction."

NAMING OF VANCOUVER. GEORGE BLACK.

"I worked for George Black at Gastown first, when I came here in September 1882, and slept in the room over the butcher shop; John Murray, of Port Moody, had slept in the same room before me; I succeeded him as Black's helper. I slept in that bedroom for about a year.

"There is an awful lot of historical rot talked by people about early days in Vancouver. I went up to one of the Vancouver Pioneers' Association monthly meetings once, and there was a man named Silverman speaking; everybody had to tell a short yarn. Silverman had a little tobacco shop near the Sunnyside Hotel; little bit of a place; then afterwards he had a little jewellery shop on Cordova Street. It was amusing to hear him tell how Vancouver got its name.

"He got up, and he told how there had been a big meeting on Water Street, in front of the Sunnyside, or somewhere near there, to decide on a name for the city. This was when they were applying for incorporation. Silverman told the Pioneers' meeting that there were several names submitted to the meeting to decide upon a name, and that, finally, he got up and suggested the name of Vancouver, and that that was the name which was adopted, and that was how Vancouver got its name.

"I go up to these pioneer meetings and listen to them telling a damned lot of lies."

RUSTA PLEACE. SMALL POX. CEMETERY. DEADMAN'S ISLAND.

"Rusta Pleace took the small pox. He was a well-educated man, and he was walking along the street—Powell or Cordova, or somewhere down near Carrall—and he met a Chinaman who was all up with the small pox, so Pleace took him to the Police Station. Then he took the small pox himself, died in town, and was buried on Deadman's Island. I knew him very well; he was an elderly man; tallyman at the Hastings Sawmill; he had a brother in Nanaimo. If he had not touched the Chinaman he would not have died."

WAH CHONG. MINNIE WAH CHONG. MINNIE MCCORD. JOSEPH MANNION. BILL EATON. BOWEN ISLAND.

"Wah Chong was a fine old Chinaman; he moved up from Gastown to Hastings afterwards. He had a daughter; she was 11 or 12 or 13 in 1882; nice little girl. I met her years afterwards at the Chinese theatre, and she was so glad to see me.

"I knew Minnie McCord when she was a little girl; part Indian.

“Joe Mannion, of the Granville Hotel, was father of Mrs. Dr. H.A. Christie. Well, he sold the Granville Hotel, and bought the property on Bowen Island from Bill Eaton; then he moved up there. He had two boys by his second wife, and they started out in a row boat from Deep Cove for Vancouver; never heard of again. Joe Mannion was a well-educated man; very decent fellow; he was educated for the ministry.”

“HOLE IN THE WALL.” PETE DONNELLY. JOHN A. ROBERTSON.

“Pete Donnelly ran away from the Navy; that is, when he first came. Then he went away, and got married, and came back John A. Robertson.”

ISAAC JOHNS. CUSTOMS HOUSE. LOUIS GOLD.

“In 1882, Ike Johns lived on what is now Carrall Street, next to Angus Fraser and Simon Fraser. Ike Johns had a family; they all had families; all three of them together. Then he moved over somewhere back of Water Street.

“The Customs House was next door—at that time—to the ‘Hole in the Wall,’ next door towards the east; Louis Gold’s store was next east again; Sullivan’s was still further eastwards.”

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. A.A. LANGLEY, WHO KINDLY CALLED FOR A FEW MOMENTS CONVERSATION AT THE CITY ARCHIVES, 20 FEBRUARY 1939.

He is getting feeble, and his eyesight very poor.

HAND-SPLIT SHINGLES. HASTINGS, B.I. MAXIE’S.

Mr. Langley said: “At the time I was at George Black’s at Hastings, there were four separate men working in the woods near there making shingles. All shingles were made by hand in those days; it was before the shingle machine came.

“They cut their shingles right in the woods where the cedar tree fell; drew them with a draw knife, and sat on a ‘horse’ while drawing the knife; sixteen inch shingles, and got a dollar a bundle for them. They were better shingles than the sawn shingle; the sawn shingle roughens up the grain; cuts through it; sawn shingles are not as good as hand-split.

“George Black afterwards bought the other hotel, Maxie’s old place, and there were hand-split shingles on that which were twenty-five years old, and as good almost as the day they were made.”

LACROSSE, FIRST IN VANCOUVER.

See *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 1, W.H. Gallagher, re naming of “Salmonbellies.”

See *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 2, Jas. A. Smith re organisation of lacrosse in Vancouver.

See photo of lacrosse team at Brockton Point, June 1899.

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH JAS. A. SMITH, 5826 SPERLING AVENUE, NOW RETIRED MOVING PICTURE CENSOR, 29 MAY 1936.

VANCOUVER LACROSSE CLUB. “SALMONBELLIES.” “GREYBACKS.” COLOURS, SENIOR AND JUNIOR TEAMS.

“The original lacrosse team wore a blue sweater with the word ‘VANCOUVER’ in white block letters across the chest; the letters were sewed on for us by Mrs. Alexander Godfrey” (Godfrey and Sons, early sporting good firm.) “But the blue sweater looked so badly after we had been rolling around in the mud, that we changed it to grey; I forget what the trimmings were.

“As you know, the Westminster men were known as ‘Salmonbellies,’ and they, in retaliation, nicknamed us ‘Greybacks’” (cooties) “on account of the colour of our sweaters; irritating ‘little insects.’

“Ask Billy Templeton, or George Matheson.”