

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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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.

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The bedrooms all had a washbasin and jug, and the water was carried there every day, and a big tub for bath. And, all dry earth toilets outside the house. Until the sewers were built, there were no water toilets, or bathrooms with running water.

Then, I may say here, that my husband, the late J.J. Nickson, built the first septic tank in Vancouver—at Coal Harbor, which was very successful.

What became of the wells? Some had them properly filled in. Mostly, everyone threw all their rubbish in; tin cans, ashes, until they got filled up. I believe, some of the wells, rats and even cats got in, but mostly the wells were covered with boards; some had pumps, and others, buckets and rope.

The well water that I have tasted came from Mrs. Grant's place on Robson st; a little yellow in color, but very cold and very good. Mrs. Grant was Mrs. Phil Oben's mother.

Hoping this account will help you.

Yours sincerely,

to Major Matthews,
City Archivist
City Hall,
Vancouver.

Jane Nickson

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH ALFRED JOHN NYE, OF LYNN CREEK ROAD, LYNN VALLEY, NORTH VANCOUVER, WHO VERY KINDLY CALLED AT THE CITY ARCHIVES, CITY HALL, 26 MAY 1939—HIS SIXTY-FIRST BIRTHDAY.

JERICHO. SMELTS (FISH). DALGLIESH OF JERICHO.

Mr. Nye said: "One of the prettiest things in nature I ever saw was out at Jericho beach once. I was out on the beach one summer morning very early, and a cat with six kittens came from somewhere; there were logging camps nearby; it was close to Dalgliesh's place, now the site of the Jericho Golf Club house.

"The cat went down to the edge of the water—over the sand—and fished out a smelt with its paw, and took it to the six kittens, who enjoyed fresh fish for breakfast. The cat went to the edge of the water, and fished out a smelt with its claw. That will give you an idea, too, of the quantities of smelt there at that time."

EAGLES. TROUT.

"I was up the Cheakamus River, Squamish, once, and saw an eagle soaring around about four hundred feet above me; then it dropped like a stone, splashed into the water; a splash of water about twenty feet high went up, and the eagle rose with a large trout in its talons. He carried the trout in its talons, fore and aft, like the fuselage of an aeroplane."

DAISY LAKE. SWANS.

"Again, I was at Daisy Lake, and a flock of fourteen white swans were out on the ice; that was the winter of 1920. I got to within about three hundred yards of them, and then they arose and flew away, and being such a heavy bird, the angle was quite low before they could rise.

"A few days afterwards I counted them again, and there were thirteen; one was missing. I reported it to the game warden; it was investigated, and it was found that an Indian had killed it. Wild swan are protected. I think the culprit was punished.

"This day, 26th May, is my sixty-first birthday."