

Early Vancouver

Volume Five

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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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GEORGE SCALES.

"George was not with us when the forest fire took place back of Sapperton, but he was with us when we came to live on Burrard Inlet; but he was a little fellow. I'll tell you how small he was. Avis, my sister, was chopping wood with a little axe, and George kept pushing his hand in, and snatching the chips, and she warned him not to, but he kept on, and at last the axe struck his finger, and cut it off by the thumb, and we had to take him to New Westminster before we could get a doctor; there was no doctor here then, and he nearly died before we got him there because we had to take him by boat to the 'end of the road'" (Hastings) "and then over the trail to Westminster; I told you about that before."

GLADSTONE INN.

"I'll tell you how you can find out about the Gladstone Inn because there are two boys" (men) "who used to run it living out on Welwyn Street, Cedar Cottage; Thomas and Bob Curry." (4080 Welwyn Street.)

We were becoming weary of talking, so Mr. Scales and I went down nine floors in the elevator, walked out of the great building, the City Hall, and the venerable old pioneer, today the earliest living man to see Burrard Inlet, got on the Fairview street car, and he went home, east to his home in Mount Pleasant, while I went west to Kitsilano Beach. I had been talking, across my desk, to a man who first saw this great city, spreading ten miles wide by seven long, as a towering wall of green forest lining a sinuous shore; who had seen Burrard Inlet when three small huts stood alone in the trees on the site of our busy mercantile section stretching from Carrall Street to Burrard Street. Men will not again see so extraordinary an epoch as that through which John Henry Scales has lived. I had been talking to one of "The Early Builders" of Vancouver.

J.S. Matthews
15 January 1938.

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. JOHN HENRY SCALES (SON OF JOHN SCALES, R.E.) WHO CAME TO BRITISH COLUMBIA ON THE *THAMES CITY*, 12 APRIL 1859, [ON] 28 JUNE 1938.

Mr. Scales called at the City Archives for a chat; he looks well; hair getting very white now; carried a crooked cane, smoked a pipe, and climbed to the tenth floor to see Dr. Raley's Indian curios, with agility.

ROYAL ENGINEERS SURVIVORS OF *THAMES CITY*.

Mr. Scales: (to Major Matthews) "Those who came on the *Thames City* still living. There's Hugh and John Murray, and John McMurphy, Arthur Herring, and Mrs. Wardle, and Mrs. Turnbull and myself; that's seven."

LOGGING OFF THE FOREST. NORTH VANCOUVER. LONSDALE AVENUE.

Mr. Scales: (to Miss Margaret Giles) "Father took us over to live in what is now North Vancouver for two or three years; there was nothing much to do in those days, so for something to amuse ourselves, we used to watch the logs come down a long run way where Lonsdale Avenue is now. One day while I was watching, a large log came shooting down at terrific speed and struck the water with a great splash before it got clear away; another one came down the slip, hit the first log end on as it was rising up out of the water. The speed was so great that as they hit each other, they split into pieces, and huge splinters flew in all directions. It was a wonderful sight, and not likely to happen again."

WHALES IN BURRARD INLET.

"We used to go across from 'Gastown' to the North shore in a canoe. One day my sister and myself were going across, she was pulling and I was paddling. We got half way across, when we noticed several huge whales coming towards us; she told me to pull as I could get along faster; I don't know yet how we ever managed to get across safely, but we managed to get there, but we weren't in any hurry to come back. The whales used to come up the Inlet all the time, you would see them spouting up water; they would go up to Port Moody and back."

Note: the period Mr. Scales refers to is thought to be 1873-1874, perhaps before that, not later. JSM.