

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.

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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mattress, two sheets, one pillow and two quilts. This was much better than the floor in the hotel. We got a cook stove from the relief and groceries from Mr. Templeton. He did all he could for everyone. Our table was a board nailed to the wall in front of the window and we had a bench to sit on. We were there only a short time when the tide came up so high that the water came through the cracks in the floor, so after the fire we were flooded out for awhile, but after the tide went back it did not bother us again while we were there. A neighbor gave me a rocking chair which was a great comfort to me with a young baby. She also gave me a mat to put under my feet. I never appreciated a white rag so much in my life as I did at that time. The shack we lived in was built where the street car workshops are now standing. A little while later my husband went back and built a house on the same lot we lived on before the fire. My husband being a plasterer we had the house plastered inside and out.

FIRST TRAIN. INDIAN CANOES.

I saw the first train come in to Vancouver, and had a ride on the street car the first day they ran.

Fifty years ago there were very few places to go for pleasure. We enjoyed going down to the waterfront near where the C.P.R. station is built now. We used to sit on the logs on the beach where we would watch the Indians parade with their war canoes. [*Note: Dominion Day festivities.*]

When I think of Vancouver as it was fifty years ago in its rough state without even a pretty flower to look at, and as it is today, such a beautiful city and all made by hard working men, I can hardly realize it.

I sure would love to be there this summer to celebrate in the Jubilee, but, owing to financial circumstances, I am afraid I won't be able to make it.

I am enclosing Birth certificates and Statutory Declarations as requested.

Thanking you for your courtesy,

I remain,
Yours sincerely,

Mrs. Margaret Macey
[*signed*] (Per Mrs. J.H. Macey)

P.S. There is a slight mistake on the Statutory Declaration. The age should be 79 instead of 80.

(Note: Mrs. Margaret Macey, wife of Samuel T. Macey, mother of Frederick Charles Macey, first boy born in Vancouver after incorporation as a city.)

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. WILLIAM MACKIE (WHO REACHED GRANVILLE, B.I., 7 MAY 1882) ON THE C.P.R. PRINCESS JOAN, EN ROUTE TO NEWCASTLE ISLAND ON THE VANCOUVER PIONEER ASSOCIATION ANNUAL PICNIC, JUNE 1937.

(Capt. W.J. Twiss, president, 217 present, wet day. Mr. Mackie very active despite his years, and took in most that was going.)

GENEALOGY.

Mr. Mackie said: "I was born May 12th 1858—you can remember that, King George VI's coronation day—at Leslie, Fifeshire, Scotland, a little place half way between the Firth of Forth and the Firth of Tay; so I am 79. My father was Thomas Laird Mackie (his mother's name was Laird); Father had a brother William, my uncle, an old Cariboo and Cassiar miner—I had two uncles in the Cariboo gold rush; their father—my grandfather—was Capt. George Mackie, who had a little coasting schooner on the British coast before there were railroads. I don't know who my great-grandfather Mackie was, but his uncle was John Mackie who was at Waterloo, and who cut the piece of red silk from Emperor Napoleon's carriage on the field of battle; the piece I gave you in the old silver watch. My mother and father afterwards came to British Columbia over the C.P.R. line, after it was built, of course, but I was the first of our family to come out; I

came out to my uncle William Mackie, same name as myself; the others followed later. Mother used to say to me, 'Aren't you glad you came to B.C.'; we all did well. There was John, and Tom, and Robert, the youngest; I am living with Tom now, at 8698 West Marine Drive. My first wife was a Miss Smith; she came out from Scotland, and died here thirteen months after she got here; that was in 1895. Then I married, secondly, a Miss Sinclair—no relation of Robert Wood of the North Arm, Fraser River."

AIRPORT.

"Tom, my brother, bought his place on Lulu Island from Hugh Boyd" (Boyd and Kilgour; see Kidd's *History of Lulu Island*) "who had preempted it, and he afterwards sold it to the city of Vancouver for an airport for seventy thousand dollars." (Check up *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 1, where Mrs. Campbell says "Sandy McLeod" sold for \$70,000; it must be a mistake of mine. JSM.) "Robert is working for the city of Vancouver now."

ROBERT WOOD. CHRISTOPHER WOOD. WOOD ISLAND. CHRISTOPHER ISLAND. CLAY HILL (RIVER ROAD).

"Robert Wood was brother to Fitzgerald McCleery's wife. Christopher Wood was cousin to both. Clay Hill on the River Road was just clay; you could make bricks out of it; it was on Sam McCleery's property; the other hill was sand; very hard to get up with a wagon. Jim Mackie" (note: who's Jim) "had a preemption of 160 acres next to" [blank], "but he let Sam McCleery have it for taxes."

"GASSY JACK"—JOHN DEIGHTON.

"I never knew 'Gassy Jack'; he was dead before I came, but my uncle William used to tell me about him. 'Jack' liked to talk, but he was a good-hearted man, but he was rough. He had a big mastiff; the story my uncle told me was that the day he died the big dog howled, and Jack, lying in bed, heard him howling, and exclaimed, 'You son of a bitch; there's something going to happen.' 'Gassy Jack' died that night. Down in Gastown at his own place." (Wonder where Gassy Jack is buried; where is his grave; ask Mr. Mackie.)

"Uncle told me that one day he and 'Gassy' were sitting on the verandah of the Deighton Hotel under the shade of the old Maple Tree, and 'Gassy' said to him, 'You and I may never see it, but this inlet would make the nicest of harbours; it will be a port someday.' You see, Gassy had been a sea captain; had been everywhere in sailing ships the world over, and knew the sea and what he was talking about."

PREEMPTIONS. SQUATTERS. FAIRVIEW. C.P.R. GRANT.

"You see, the way it was that the seven of us took up what we hoped would be preemptions in what is now Fairview on the south side of False Creek; we knew the C.P.R. was coming down, but we left it too late, I suppose. So we staked 160 acres each between the Indian Reserve at the mouth, and Edmond's property which is now Mount Pleasant. We just staked our preemptions and kept on working on them, improving them, but the government kept us on a string, and in the end the C.P.R. got it all in their land grant. The government gave me \$250 to get out.

"I put my stake down right about the south end of the present Granville Street bridge, close to the eastern boundary of the Indian Reserve."

GRANVILLE STREET. DONALD MCPHADDEN (SIC). JOHN BEATTY, BULL PUNCHER. JOHN SPROTT. WILLIAM MACKIE.

"Donald McPhadden" (sic) "put his stake east of mine. There was a fine spring of fresh water, and Donald and I used the same spring; his cabin was only fifty yards from mine, where there is a little hollow in the land at the foot of Hemlock Street." (Note: there was an old clearing there; it was a natural "draw" for drawing out logs; a natural hollow down from the heights above, and there was an old clearing there, under some fine maple trees.)

CHIEF GEORGE.

"John Beatty and his Indian wife lived on the reserve with old Chief George; they had a cabin on the reserve—John Sprott put his cabin by the site of the Leamy and Kyle Mill" (afterwards), "and beside one of the creeks, either between Cambie and Ash, or between Ash and Heather; there was a fine little old clearing at the latter point." JSM.

MRS. JOHN LEASK.

“George Cary is wrong if he told you Miss Hamilton lived in John Beatty’s cabin after the fire of June 1886.” (See *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 2, where Cary says he used to row Miss Hamilton across the creek; Miss Hamilton is still living [in 1937]; was L.A. Hamilton’s sister, and afterwards Mrs. John Leask, wife of first City Auditor.) “Miss Hamilton lived in Donald McPhadden’s cabin, because I remember my uncle William saying to me, ‘Miss Hamilton is living in Donald’s cabin’; it was a little bit of a cabin about twelve by sixteen.”

Approved by Wm. Mackie, 9 September 1937.

J.S. Matthews

14 JUNE 1937 – MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. WILLIAM MACKIE, WHO RESIDES WITH MR. T. MACKIE, 8698 WEST MARINE DRIVE, AND WHO VERY KINDLY VISITED THE CITY ARCHIVES AT MY INVITATION IN COMPANY WITH MR. SAM MCCLEERY, 3115 WEST 49TH AVENUE.

GRANVILLE, B.C. SPARS, LAST CARGO.

Mr. Mackie said: “I landed at Gastown on May 7th 1882. I came from Scotland to join my uncle, William Mackie also—who was an old Cariboo and Cassiar miner. There were three William Mackies on Burrard Inlet at one time in those days; ‘Black William’ (Mackie) “was no relation. I had landed in Halifax, then travelled to San Francisco, where I had an aunt, and she detained me; got me to put it off and put it off, until finally I landed at Victoria on the 2nd May 1882, and then came over to New Westminster on the *Reliance*, or *Western Slope*, I think it was, and stayed in Westminster four days until I could get down river, down the North Arm, Fraser River, where my uncle was getting out spars for Angus Fraser; A.C. Fraser’s camp; Wm. Rogers, brother to Jerry Rogers, had a tugboat getting out the last cargo of spars out on the mainland. I was a green hand, and worked there a month, doing anything, *carrying water*; I was green; just from the old country.”

PREEMPTIONS. ROAD TO GRANVILLE. FRASER AVENUE. JERRY ROGERS’S CAMP.

“My uncle, William Mackie, same name as myself, had preempted one hundred and sixty acres in Fairview, about Heather Street, 20th and 22nd Avenue—what is now known as Douglas Park—in the seventies, but he never got a deed, but his improvements were just as good. Jerry Rogers used to have an old steam tractor out there.” (See Calvert Simson, etc.)

CABBAGE AND ONIONS.

“His preemption was a little flat with a creek running through it, and he had the most of that flat cleared when I came in 1882. I wrote to him before I came and asked him what he wanted that I should bring, and he replied to bring seeds, and I sowed them there, on the site of what is now Douglas Park, on the very next day, it was a Sunday, May 7th 1882, that I sowed them. I remember it so well because that was the day I wrote my father. It may be, as you say, that I was a day out, but I was almost sure it was May 7th, and I know it was a Sunday, May 1882; my uncle told me afterwards that the seeds grew very well. The onions grew as ‘big as sausages,’ to use his words.”

GRANVILLE. GRANVILLE HOTEL. JOE MANNION. DR. MASTERS. JOHN DEIGHTON (GASSY JACK).

“One day, the day after I landed in May 1882, my uncle and I walked to Gastown; we went by the North Arm Road, they call it Fraser Avenue now, and across the old False Creek bridge, and into Gastown. There were no houses in those days on the North Arm Road all the way from the Fraser River to what is now Water Street. We stayed with Joe Mannion, he had the Granville Hotel; old Dan McNaughton was there as barkeeper. Mr. Mannion kept a fine hotel; we had lots to eat, lots of game, but the meat was mostly beef; George Black, the butcher, supplied that. Jonathan Miller was policeman, and the town was quiet enough; of course, there was the occasional logger who might get a little too much, but I saw little of that.”