

## **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 125<sup>th</sup> 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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**MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH WILLIAM MURRAY, SON OF JOHN MURRAY, ROYAL ENGINEER OF 1859, BROTHER OF HUGH AND JOHN, ALL LIVING.**

He has just arrived back from California after a residence there of 25 years, 1910-1936, has remained a British subject, and is now temporarily staying at the St. Regis Hotel with his wife, having entered Canada again on April 5<sup>th</sup> last.

**MURRAYS OF PORT MOODY.**

Mr. Murray: "I was born in New Westminster on March 8<sup>th</sup> 1866 at 'The Camp,' and left B.C. for Los Angeles in 1910; got back April 5<sup>th</sup>, 1936. Married Miss Kate McFarland from New Brunswick; she is still living; our children are:

William George, eldest, born in New Westminster;  
John Henry, born in New Westminster;  
Frank Percival, living in Seattle, born in New Westminster;  
Charles Howard, living in Victoria, born in New Westminster;  
Laura Mabel Belle, born in New Westminster;  
Vivian Hugh, youngest, in Los Angeles, born in Kamloops.

"All living; five boys and one girl.

"I am seven years younger than Johnnie" (brother) "who was born on the *Thames City*. Hugh was born in England, and was about two years old when we arrived; he's older than Johnnie. Mrs. Kyle was the first white girl born in New Westminster, Mrs. Raymond came next, I came next, then Mrs. Ems, now of Point Grey. Mrs. Kyle died a year or so ago. I was educated at the 'Brothers' School,' New Westminster, run by Brother Fitzpatrick and Brother Allan; Father Harris was head of it."

**GEORGE BLACK'S. HASTINGS, B.I.**

"I have been a butcher all my life; cut meat at the first butcher shop in Gastown, George Black's place over the water; used to drive cattle by the old Burrard Inlet Road" (Kingsway) "with a horse; no dogs. The first slaughter house we had was at Hastings and then after they built the Hastings-Granville Road, extended it to Granville from Hastings, the slaughter house was here on False Creek down about the foot of Carrall Street."

**BARRELS. COOPERAGE. HAND-SPLIT SHINGLES.**

"George Black had a big ship's whaleboat for a butcher boat to take the meat from Granville to Moodyville. When a ship was about to sail he would take over about four to six quarters of beef and ten to fifteen barrels of corned beef. There used to be an old man here who made barrels out of fir; there was another cooper in New Westminster; they both used to make barrels for the canneries, for salmon, 50 lb, 100 lb, and 200 lb barrels; it was quite an industry, and then the logging camps used to take four or five barrels of corned beef at a time, and take them to the logging camps. Same with shingle bolts. There used to be all kinds of shingle bolt camps on both roads between Gastown and New Westminster; an old cabin in the woods, and make the shingles right there, and then take them to New Westminster."

**GREAT FIRE, 1886.**

"I was on the fire brigade at New Westminster at the time of the big fire here in 1886. Chief Ackerman, chief to the New Westminster Fire brigade, came over to Vancouver; loaded the apparatus on C.P.R. flat cars and brought them around by Westminster Junction. I stayed in New Westminster to look after the town, but Chief Ackerman came over here with the other half of the brigade; of course, he was of no use by the time he got here. Then for twelve years I was chief of the Kamloops Fire Brigade, from about 1897 to 1909."

**ELK. CAPE HORN.**

City Archivist: What became of the elk?

Mr. Murray: "I did not get much education. Would go to school for a day or so, and then someone would lose a horse or a cow, and I would take my pony and go after it; might stay away from school three or four

days, and then George Black got me to drive cattle, and he would keep me at Hastings three or four weeks.

“The only elk I ever saw was on the Coquitlam Road at an old point known as ‘Cape Horn’—that’s the bluff on the road about a mile past Fraser River Mills—and I was on horseback, and he just ran across the road and went down onto the flats. Johnnie saw him several times, too. I was then about 15 or 16 years old, so it must have been about 1881 or 1882. I knew there were elk in the country, but I had never seen one before, and it interested me to see what they were like.”

(Note: the first mention made to me by a person who has actually seen elk on Coal Peninsula. JSM.)

#### **CHARLESON’S LOGGING CAMP. ELK.**

(See photo Bailey Bros. No. 679.) “Charleson’s had a logging camp back of the Fraser River Mills, Millside, beyond Sapperton, and there were lots and lots of elk horns to be found all over the woods near the logging camps; they are probably there yet.”

#### **SALMON CANNERY. JOHN MURRAY. STAMP AND HOLBROOK. FIRST SALMON CANNERY.**

“Johnnie and I made the first fish boxes to put salmon in on the Fraser. Father had a little mill run by water from ‘Government House Creek’ by the present penitentiary; the penitentiary put in a dam to get water from, and Father put up the little mill which had a little water wheel for power, and cut the lumber—not logs—they delivered the lumber to us, and we cut the lumber into bottoms and sides, and we got eight cents a box for making. Stamp and Holbrook had the first salmon cannery.”

#### **SURVEY OF PORT MOODY, ETC.**

“I helped to lay out the site of the town of Port Moody for my father and Capt. Clarke, who both had 160 acres of land crown grant. The Royal Engineers who stayed had a chance to take up land where they wanted it, but I don’t know for what particular reason Father selected Port Moody. A man named Stevenson surveyed the town into streets and town lots; there were eight of us in the survey party including my two brothers; we lived on a scow at Rocky Point where we afterwards made our home.

“Father and Capt. Clarke named the streets after members of our family. There was one logging camp there then, I think belonging to the Moodyville Sawmill, right at the head of the bay, about a mile away, but there was absolutely no other house or shack, nor was there a trail. If there was a trail from Port Moody to Sapperton it was never used; we always went to Bonson’s at the end of the North Road.”

#### **MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. PATRICK J. MYERS, 1840 EAST SIXTH AVENUE, GRANDVIEW, 30 DECEMBER 1937.**

##### **FOREST FIRES. CENTRAL PARK. SHAUGHNESSY. WEST END.**

Mr. Myers is a very old logger in and about Vancouver. He came here in the spring of 1884, and has been married sixty-four years; Mrs. Myers answered the phone in a clear voice, and called Mr. Myers; both enjoy the best of health.

Mr. Myers said: “All that timber around Central Park, and out Grandview—along the ridge towards Shaughnessy—was burned over centuries ago. I have been in the woods all my life, all over Canada; I know what I am talking about; those University men” (forestry) “don’t know what they’re talking about; they don’t go out into the woods; no man alive can tell you the age of those trees out at Central Park; well, I came through there in 1884, and those trees haven’t grown two inches diameter in fifty-four years. Those University men try to count the rings; they can’t count the rings; the growth is so small the rings don’t show.”

##### **LIGHTNING.**

“All that country out Burnaby way was burned over three or four hundred years ago; that’s what made those trees out there so small; no humus, all burned off; we never got any big logs out that way; that’s all second growth, except in the hollows where the fire missed. Lightning started those forest fires.” (Note: confirmed by Indian tradition.)