

Early Vancouver

Volume Six

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2011 Edition (Originally Published 1945)

Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1940-1945.

Supplemental to volumes one, two, three, four and five collected in 1931, 1932, 1934, 1939 and 1944.

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. 6 (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011), 33.

Bibliographic Entry:

Matthews, Major James Skitt. *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 6. Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011.

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SALVATION ARMY, ITS FIRST STREET PARADE, VANCOUVER, 10 DECEMBER 1887.

Memo of conversation (over the phone) with Mrs. Hannah Elizabeth Greatrex, née Lynes (pronounced Ly-ness), who lives with her daughter, Mrs. C.F. Williams, 3615 Irving Street, Burnaby, and kindly telephoned me, 10 December 1943.

SALVATION ARMY, FIRST STREET PARADE.

Mrs. Greatrex: "We went on the corner of Carrall and Cordova Street and had an open air meeting, the first; today is the anniversary, 10th December. Captain Mary Hackett, Lieut. Iverack, Lieut. Tirney and myself" (Lieut. Lynes), "just the four of us, and our drum and flag. And then after the open air meeting—that was the first in Vancouver—we paraded down to the other end of Carrall Street, and the men all followed us, and we went into Hart's Opera House and had another meeting in there."

J.S. Matthews
December 1943

A REMARKABLE VISITOR—FRANK PLANTE. FIRST WHITE CHILD BORN ON BURRARD INLET, 1868.

In no other city in the world could such an incident as took place this afternoon, 7th September 1944, in the City Archives, City Hall, Vancouver, have taken place.

François Plante, commonly called Frank, the first white child born, 13th April 1868, on the site of Greater Vancouver, eldest child of Peter Plante, the first bridegroom, and his wife, Ada Plante, née Miss Ada Guinne, the first bride whose wedding at Moodyville, 1868 was the first marriage by Christian rite solemnised on Burrard Inlet, or Vancouver, walked into the City Archives carrying a small parcel, and remained, seated at my desk, smoking and chatting for an hour or more.

The parcel he carried contained four pictures, the two larger being black and white drawings from carte de visite photographs, the two smaller being actual photographs of carte de visite size.

One of the larger, a drawing, is of Supplien Guinne, commonly known in very early days as "French John," the first preemptor and settler at what is now Marpole, Vancouver.

The other larger one, also a drawing, is of Peter Plante, the father of my guest, François Plante, and son-in-law of Supplien Guinne.

One of the smaller, a photograph, is the photograph of Supplien Guinne, and the original from which the larger black and white drawing had been made.

The other smaller one, also a photograph, is of Mrs. Peter Plante, formerly Miss Ada Guinne, daughter of Supplien Guinne, wife of Peter Plante, and mother of François Plante.

Mr. Frank Plante presented them to the Citizens of Vancouver, as represented by the Trustees and Governors, City Archives.

Mr. Plante, our first baby, is 76 years old, is very active, and a most agreeable personage. We gossiped for an hour.

About us, beyond, lies a great city, Vancouver, ten miles wide by five deep, with 150 churches, 100 parks, 70 large public schools, 90 private ones, monumental buildings, luxurious offices, beautiful homes and green lawns, all of which have risen out of the wilderness of primeval forest in the short span of a single life, the life of our first baby, Frank Plante, who honoured me with his presence this afternoon.

J.S. Matthews

CITY ARCHIVIST.
On my 66th birthday.

City Hall, Vancouver.
7 September 1944.