

Early Vancouver

Volume Six

By: Major J.S. Matthews, V.D.

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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Province.” (See file, “Point Atkinson Lighthouse,” undated clipping from the *Province* captioned “OLDER THAN VANCOUVER.”)

THE CITY COUNCIL, 1943.

As described by R. Rowe Holland, Esq., Chairman, Parks Board, Governor, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and Governor, City Archives, Vancouver, at a banquet tendered to Major J.S. Matthews, City Archivist, Stanley Park Pavilion, on the evening of his sixty-fifth birthday, 7 September 1943, and attended by about thirty of the eminent of Vancouver, including the Hon. and Mrs. Eric Hamber (formerly Lieutenant-Governor), the presidents of Vancouver Exhibition, Tourist Association, Women’s Canadian Club, University of B.C., Pioneers’ Association, Howard Green, M.P., Mrs. Tillie Rolston, M.L.A., etc.

Mr. Holland: “And the City Council, an aggregation of one hundred and twenty-five dollars a month men.”

(No one protested; some smiled.)

And to which Major Matthews, “under his breath,” added: “Masquerading under the misnomer of City Fathers,” so that, the full comment is:

The City Council, an aggregation of one hundred and thirty-five [*not twenty-five*] dollar a month men, masquerading under the misnomer of City Fathers.

There is no civic government in Vancouver. We have an administration, but not a government. We are supposed to have democracy; actually, we have a most vicious form of autocracy—because it masquerades as democracy and the electors cannot see that it is not. It is idiotic, not democratic. One hundred thousand electors are on the rolls, most of whom know nothing of civic affairs; they vote for representatives they have never even seen, whose names are frequently unknown to them until the ballot paper is before them. One hundred thousand have surrendered to eight aldermen. Council meetings are frequently held in secret, and when held in the Chamber—in the afternoon when business men are in their offices, and working men at their work—are rarely attended by more than two or three spectators.

CONVERSATION WITH FORMER REEVE SAM CHURCHILL (OF CHURCHILL STREET), POINT GREY MUNICIPALITY, AT CITY ARCHIVES, 9 SEPTEMBER 1943.

CHINESE DEAD. SHAUGHNESSY HEIGHTS, 1908. GRANVILLE STREET SOUTH AT 16TH.

Mr. Churchill said: “One day, 1908, I met a C.P.R. foreman in what is now Shaughnessy Heights; it would be about Granville Street and 16th Avenue, just there, and lots of trees. He said to me, ‘Wait till I show you something,’ and I followed him from the” (North Arm) “road down a little trail into the woods a piece, just a little way. About a few yards from the road we came on two dead Chinamen lying under the big trees. They were fully clothed. They had poisoned themselves. The Chinese had a habit of doing that, when they became old or useless. The two Chinamen had just gone there and poisoned themselves.”

FAIRVIEW.

“In 1890 there was not a house west of Ontario Street until you came to Greer’s Beach” (now Kitsilano Beach.) (Note by JSM: Not strictly correct, but very nearly so.)

NOTE BY JSM.

The disappearance of Chinese under peculiar circumstances is remarked upon by Dr. Langis, former C.P.R. doctor. In his conversations he speaks of it occurring, to his personal knowledge, at Kamloops and Port Moody, and gives his opinions. He refers to the Chinese doing away with themselves, or being done away with by their friends, when they have become useless by accident on C.P.R. construction.