

Early Vancouver

Volume Six

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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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HASTINGS SAWMILL SCHOOL. FALSE CREEK BRIDGE. EARLY ATTEMPTED SUICIDE.

"I was at the Hastings School, here, this one in the photograph. And here, this old bridge, I remember that; the old False Creek bridge was rickety.

"I was driving south over it one day, and it was rickety, and I was watching, and just here, at the south end, I saw a girl coming along reading an open bible, and just when I got near her, she climbed on the rail, and with her bible open, jumped off into False Creek. But her skirts ballooned, and that kept her afloat. I shouted and hollered, and that man who kept the Bridge Hotel at the north end, he came; they got a boat, and saved her. It was her skirts full of air which saved her. I don't know who she was; never found out."

FURTHER CONVERSATION WITH FRANK PLANTE, OF CLARKE ROAD, R.R. No. 2, NEW WESTMINSTER (CLARKE ROAD IS ON THE WAY FROM NEW WESTMINSTER TO PORT MOODY) WHERE HE RESIDES WITH HIS SISTER, MRS. (CAPTAIN) GEORGE MAYERS, 9 AUGUST 1943.

Mr. Plante said that he had been to W.J. Moore, 420 West Hastings Street, as requested by me, and had his photograph taken. He also brought me, for copying, a photo of himself taken by the late Harry T. Devine, pioneer photographer, on 29 October 1889, the day he, Frank Plante, drove Lord Stanley and Mayor Oppenheimer around the Stanley Park for the dedication ceremonies.

I also read to him my account of his conversation of 4 August 1943, which he approved of as correct, *except* that the portion referring to Alderman Robert Balfour, alderman on the first City Council, 1886, needed amplification. JSM.

ALDERMAN ROBERT BALFOUR. MARTIN AND BALFOUR. THE GREAT FIRE, 1886. BALMORAL HOTEL.

Mr. Plante said: (after reading his conversation of August 4th to him) "That's all right except here, where you have me saying: 'I also drove for Martin and Balfour of the Balmoral Hotel' at the corner of Cordova and Carrall." (Note: the original Balmoral Hotel was at the corner of Columbia and Hastings; the second was at the corner of Carrall and Cordova.)

Mr. Plante: "On the night of the fire, the same night, 13th June 1886, Sunday night, I drove the Martin family, the Balfour family, and the waitresses of the Balmoral Hotel, over to New Westminster in an express wagon. There were thirteen of them all told, all in the same express wagon."

INSLEY OF COLONIAL HOTEL. NEW WESTMINSTER.

"I took them to the Colonial Hotel, New Westminster; Insley was 'running' it. The only place they had to put them was in the parlour upstairs, so the whole thirteen of them slept on the parlour floor; it was the only place Insley had."

THE FIRST RUBBER TIRE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA. THE FIRST TRACTION ENGINE IN B.C.

On 11 August 1943, Calvert Simson, Esq., 1890 Barclay Street, Vancouver, formerly storekeeper (the second or third) at the Hastings Sawmill, and who came to Burrard Inlet about 1884, presented the City Archives with a piece of thick pure rubber, dark but not quite black, a cube roughly three and one half inches square, which he cut, himself, from one of the tires of the famous Cariboo Road traction engine, the traction engine which is well known in the histories of the Cariboo. It is in excellent state of preservation despite its age of approximately 75 years. The shape of a groove on it, which is one half of a hole cut through, evidently that of a bolt which at one time attached it to the tire, is sharp and distinct as though made last week.

This traction engine was used on the Cariboo Road during the Cariboo gold excitement, or soon after, but did not prove a success. It was afterwards purchased by Jeremiah Rogers of Jerry's Cove, or Jericho, English Bay, and was used to haul out logs by that early timber and logging contractor from the forests of Point Grey and Little Mountain and Fairview and Shaughnessy.

Another sample of this rubber was, some years ago, presented to the City Archives by August Jack Khahtsahlano (Kitsilano), who, as a boy, cut a piece of rubber from the original tire and shaped it with a