

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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[photo annotation:]

Yew wood or deer horn wedges.

Under cut with stone chisel.

Outline of canoe.

Outline of log as felled.

Bottom end cut off.

Cut off.

Shape of finished canoe.

Cut off.

Top end cut off with stone chisel.

Indian method of felling cedar tree with stone axe and stone chisels; yew wood or deer horn wedges.

I asked August Jack Khahtsahlano if Indians cut cedar slabs from standing tree. He grasped this sheet of paper on my desk, and with a lead pencil, drew these few hasty strokes. After he had departed I traced over them with ink. August neither reads nor writes.

Sketch to go with conversation of 9th July 1943.

City Archives, Vancouver.

J.S. Matthews.

MEMO OF CONVERSATION, 12 JULY 1943, WITH MRS. W.B. IRVINE, OF MONTRÉAL, WHO HAS BEEN VISITING AT SIDNEY, VANCOUVER ISLAND FOR THREE MONTHS, AND IS NOW SPENDING A MONTH IN VANCOUVER BEFORE RETURNING TO MONTRÉAL.

She is staying at the residence of Mrs. N.F. Mussenden, 2915 West 37th Avenue, Kerrisdale, Kerr. 0725-R, and very graciously visited the City Archives today and remained for two or three hours conversing on old Vancouver, and looking at the Hamilton documents and paintings.

Note: Mrs. Irvine, née Bodington, is the daughter of Dr. George Fowler Bodington, M.D., pioneer physician of Vancouver, first honorary secretary of the Vancouver Reading Room, now Vancouver Public Library, and granddaughter of Dr. George Bodington, M.D. of Sutton-Coldfield, England, world renowned as the first medical practitioner to advocate the open air treatment for tubercular sufferers. About two months ago the *Vancouver Daily Province*, Saturday magazine section, published a half-page illustrated article on her grandfather and father. Her sister is Mrs. L.A. Hamilton of Toronto, widow of the late Alderman L.A. Hamilton of the first City Council, C.P.R. Land Commissioner who laid out the site of the City of Vancouver, upon whom the freedom of the city was conferred in 1938. Her son is Ronald Irvine, Esq., manager, Fairchild Aircraft (manufacturing) Company of Longueuil, Québec.

VANCOUVER, THE BEAUTIFUL.

Mrs. Irving said: "As I came west on the C.P.R. this spring, I was overjoyed to be back in beautiful British Columbia, and enraptured with Vancouver again. I was born in England, not far from Sutton Coldfield, and spent part of my girlhood in Vancouver. I was eleven years old when I left Vancouver to go to eastern Canada, and do you know I cried when we had to go away and leave it. I think Vancouver is the most beautiful place I know of, with its mountains and the sea and the green trees. Victoria is nice, very nice, but my heart is with Vancouver."

L.A. HAMILTON.

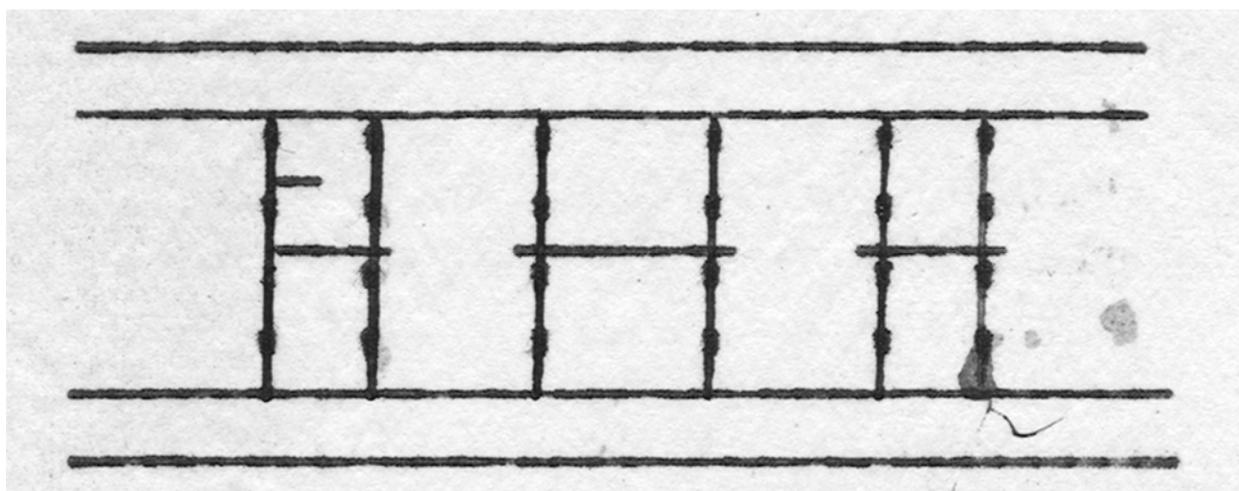
(After spending half an hour viewing the originals, in frames, of Mr. Hamilton's watercolours, and the album of photographs of the same paintings) "My brother-in-law was quite an artist, wasn't he? I sometimes wonder why he does not get more credit as an artist." (Note: his other accomplishments overshadow.)

“Mr. Hamilton was a very clever man, and full of humour. But just before he died, he grew very old. He ‘made’ Glen Leven at Lorne Park, Ontario; fixed it up, and just ‘made’ it nice. He used to be fond of chopping there, and would take an axe and chop logs, but, towards the last, he chopped very slowly and laboriously, quite a long pause between each slow stroke, and one day, as he slowly raised the axe and let it strike again, he remarked to me, ‘You see, I can still chop.’

“I remember him once wearing a long red coat; it was part of” [blank] “and he got it out and wore it. We teased him, and said, ‘Lockie’” (Lauchlan), “‘why the red coat?’ He replied that the British Empire was at war, and he had to wear a red coat.”

FIRST RUSTIC BRIDGES. STANLEY PARK.

“Mr. Hamilton designed the first rustic bridges over the small streams in Stanley Park; they were made of small poles and branches of trees cut right at hand. You know what rustic bridges are like; something like this” (drawing.)



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“We charged him with including ‘H’ for Hamilton, his own initial, in them, and he was quite taken aback when he observed that, quite undesignedly, that was what he had done. It was all in fun, of course.”

GLEN LEVEN, ONTARIO. KISSIMMEE, FLORIDA.

“Mr. Hamilton felt the winter’s cold in Toronto; that was why he spent his winters at his estate, ‘Oak Tree House,’ Kissimmee, Florida. He owned both ‘Oak Tree House’ in Florida, and ‘Glen Leven’ in Ontario.”

EARLY VANCOUVER. HOWE STREET, 400 BLOCK. SWEET SCENTED MUSK.

“Dr. Bodington, my father, lived on Howe Street between what is now Pender and Hastings Street, but it was all wild then. Mr. Abbott’s house” (Gen. Supt., C.P.R.) “was just across the way—on the angle—and Mrs. Abbott had a lot of hens in a run. All around was swampy, and I used to go out in the swampy ground and gather wild musk, such large plants, about eighteen inches high I should think, and so sweet smelling.” (Note: for some reason unknown, of recent years, musk has lost its aroma.)

GROUSE MOUNTAIN. "THE ELEPHANT."

"My sister" (Mrs. L.A. Hamilton) "used to call that mountain over there, Grouse Mountain, 'The elephant.' Don't you think it looks like an elephant?"

Major Matthews: (delightedly) Mrs. Irvine, you've just given me, unconsciously, an idea, one that I have been looking for for a long time. Do you see that peak over there, the most westerly, the part at the top of the long slop up from Capilano Valley; it's part of Crown Mountain, but from here, it looks like a separate peak; actually, it is part of Mount Crown; it has been called the "Knees," but I don't think that a suitable name. With a little imagination you can see that it has the outline of the tail, back, head and trunk of an elephant; tail to the west, trunk to the east. Why not call that peak "The Elephant." We already have "The Lions."

(Note: it is quite possible that, as about 1890, the two peaks, known to the Indians as "The Twins," and to pioneers variously as "The Sisters," "Sheba's Breasts," but which in or about that year were christened "The Lions," Mrs. Hamilton heard of the new name, and it suggested to her that "The Lions" west of Capilano Creek might have a counterpart in "The Elephant" to the east of that valley. JSM.)

Mrs. Irvine is an intimate friend of Mrs. (Capt.) Sutherland Horn, 5237 Dunbar Street. The Board of Park Commissioners have sent her complimentary tickets to "The Theatre Under the Stars," now playing in Stanley Park. His Worship the Mayor has invited her to inspect the City Hall. The Women's Canadian Club will have her as their guest at an early club meeting. JSM.



This was taken from a point about a few feet south of Queen Victoria's monument in Stanley Park.

"West End", Vancouver, autumn 1889, looking southwest across "Coal Hbr. Bridge", showing "Park Road" entrance to Stanley Park before bridge built 1888, and arch erected for Lord Stanley. 35W Oct. 1889. Stanley Park Brewery is at foot of Alberni St. produced. Big tree beside arch is well known tree at foot of Georgia St. See photo showing Indian huts on shore.

The house was built by George Grant Mackay, and was afterwards "Stanley Park Brewery", Royal Brewing Co Ltd. B.S.M.

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[photo annotation:]

"West End," Vancouver, autumn 1889, looking southwest across "Coal Hbr Bridge," showing "Park Road," entrance to Stanley Park before bridge built 1888, and arch erected for Lord Stanley.

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C.V. N. St. 41 P. SL 115. The house was built by George Grant Mackay, and was afterwards "Stanley Park Brewery," Royal Brewing Co. Ltd.