

Early Vancouver

Volume Seven

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

2011 Edition (Originally Published 1956)

Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected between 1931-1956.

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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“Here’s an example of American justice. The judge who first had my case said he could not finish my case because he was using the invention himself. The rascal who was representing me in Seattle, that is, the lawyer, told me that if I liked to appeal the case I would win and it would cost me only three hundred” (\$300) “but I would have to go to San Francisco. I replied, ‘I have just put up two hundred’” (\$200) “for a transcript of the mess you have made in my case, but you can take the whole business to San Francisco or here, if you like, and I will give you ninety percent of the proceeds you collect and that should be at least \$100,000.”

SHAUGHNESSY HEIGHTS.

“We started clearing where McRae had his home afterwards.”

(Note: Colonel A.D. McRae, who built “Hycroft,” now Hycroft Military Hospital, McRae Avenue.)

HINDOOS. COLONEL A.D. MCRAE.

“The C.P.R. paid the Hindoos 57½ cents a day for their labour—fifty-seven and a half, but then, they built a great long shed for them to live in.”

BLACK POWDER. STUMPING POWDER.

“We used black powder; sometimes put two or three boxes, without opening them, under a stump. I had the contract below McRae’s place. I was on a salary, \$75.00 a month” (seventy-five dollars.) “Johnston was getting seventy-two, and I was getting three dollars more. He was jealous.”

C.P.R. GARDENS. COL. ALFRED MARKHAM.

“Colonel Markham cleared the vegetable and flower gardens the C.P.R. had beside the interurban track at Kerrisdale.”

BEAR AND DEER. WEST VANCOUVER.

October 7th, 1952.

BED TIME STORY West Vancouver bears

Dear Mr. McAdam:

Sometimes, somewhere, a light story may be wanted, and this one is true.

The black bears have been giving a lot of trouble in North and West Vancouver this summer. Large and small, with or without cubs, they come down from Grouse Mountain and Hollyburn Ridge and break into gardens, root up the delicacies; eat anything from raspberries to apples; climb over fences, and their weight damages the fence; make a regular nuisance of themselves and hasten back to the tall timbers before anything can be done about it. In all, from Horseshoe Bay to Deep Cove, North Arm, there have been about fifty reported this summer. They never hurt anyone.

The extraordinary thing is that householders telephone the police. A constable comes running with his revolver. It sounds amusing to hear that the constable failed. Odd to send for a policeman about the bear’s behavior.

However, this is the prize pastmaster XXXX forty overproof extra special story, and is true.

Mrs. Plummer of Howe Sound Lane, West Vancouver, went to a community chest meeting, and left milk and apples on the kitchen table for her two children, boy and girl, when they got back from school that afternoon. Warm day, and she left the kitchen window up, and the little half grown cub crawled up a nearby barrel, and squeezed in through the open window.

The little bear spilt one bottle of milk, but got the benefit of the other, and the peaches nearby.

Then he wandered into the drawing room, played tag with the books and bric-a-brac, and left it in disorder.

Then he went upstairs and tried Mrs. Plummer's bed, so went to sleep on top of it; or rather, by the looks of it all crushed down, we suppose he did.

Having tired of the afternoon's enjoyment he went back to the kitchen window, left that way, and took to the woods. Of course he left his visiting card.

RACCOON AT KITSILANO.

Last summer my niece was leaning over the rail protection at the top of the cliff, University of B.C., Point Grey, looked downwards and there, within ten feet, was a raccoon studying her. She screamed. The 'coon bolted. A 'coon was on top of my roof at Kitsilano Beach about three years ago. The "News-Herald" City Hall reporter lives near the beach on the West Vancouver shore. As he was dressing early one morning, to his astonishment, he watched a deer walk across his lawn towards the salt water. The deer entered the water a short few feet, played around, and then when Mr. Bruce opened the window, a slight noise alarmed the animal and it hurried back to the mountains behind.

A year or so ago I flew over the mountains of the north shore. A more magnificent and appalling sight I never saw. It was winter and the peaks were white with snow. It was the wildest scene I have ever seen—something akin to the Atlantic Ocean in a violent storm and the peaks and valleys were without number. This is the habitat of our wild animals. There are over 300 cabins on Hollyburn Ridge, Grouse Mountain and Seymour Mountain, occupied by the young folk every week-end, and I suppose some of the wild animals become familiar with human beings, gradually getting bolder and bolder until they lose all fear of man. That, probably, accounts for so many bears bothering the gardens of West and North Vancouver.

But, the little "chap" who slumbered in madam's boudoir in her own town mansion is the best yet.

With best wishes

Most sincerely,

J.S. Matthews

W.A. McAdam, Esq., C.M.G.,
Agent General for B.C.,
London.

THE LAST OF THE *BEAVER*. PROSPECT POINT, FIRST NARROWS, VANCOUVER, 1898-1914.

200 West 15th Street,
North Vancouver, B.C.
March 27th, 1950.

To Major J.S. Matthews, V.D.

Dear Sir:

In answer to your letter of March 6th and Mrs. Harrop's reference to Station there, she meant the First Narrows Light House and Fog Station, known as Prospect Point.

My father, John Grove, took charge of that Station in the year 1898, month of September. He had been assistant Light Keeper at Point Atkinson before appointment to Prospect Point. He remained there until his death in 1935.

My recollection of "Beaver" was when the tide was low, I would climb on to the Paddle wheel frame-work and onto the boiler, then search in the sand and under any small rocks for copper rivets, copper nails and some sheet copper. Then, on extreme low tides it was possible to