

**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 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the City's founding. The project was made possible by funding from the Vancouver Historical Society.

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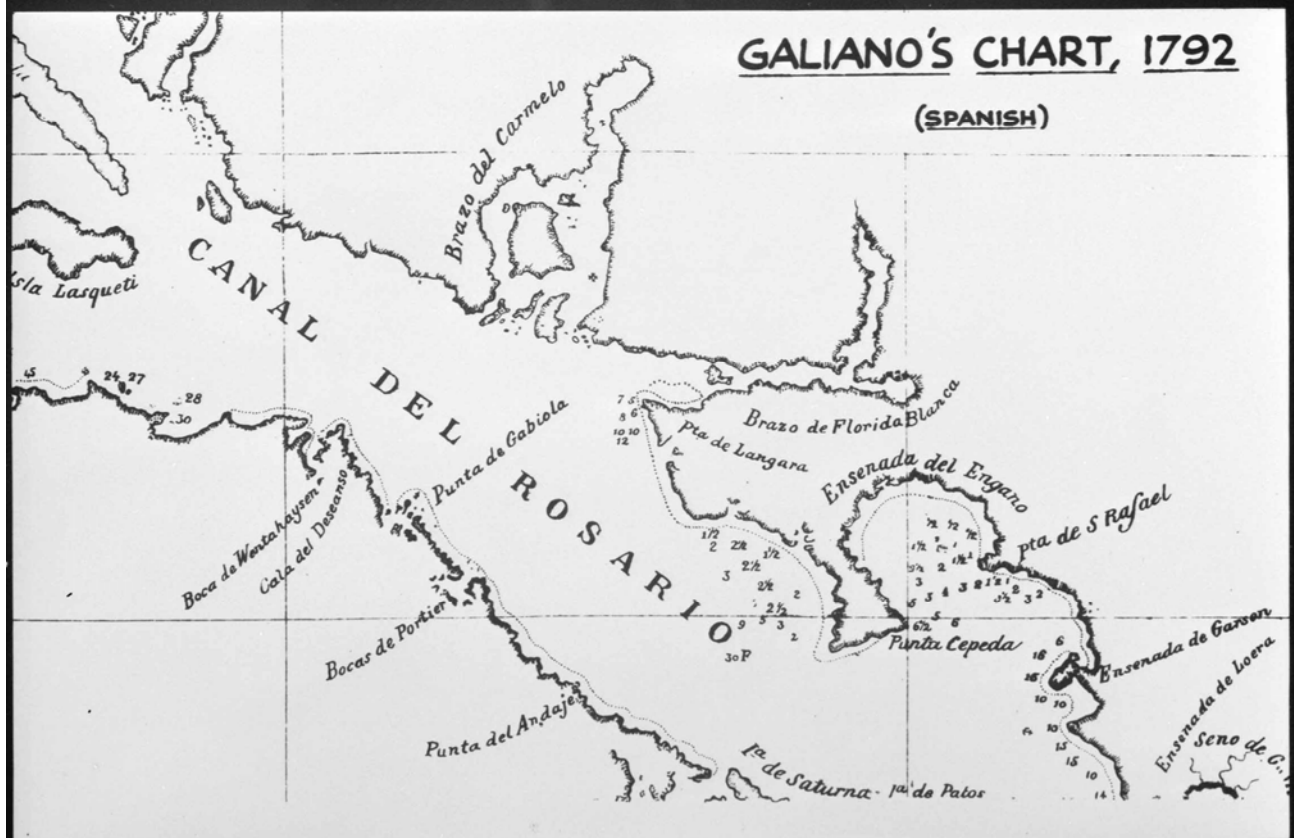
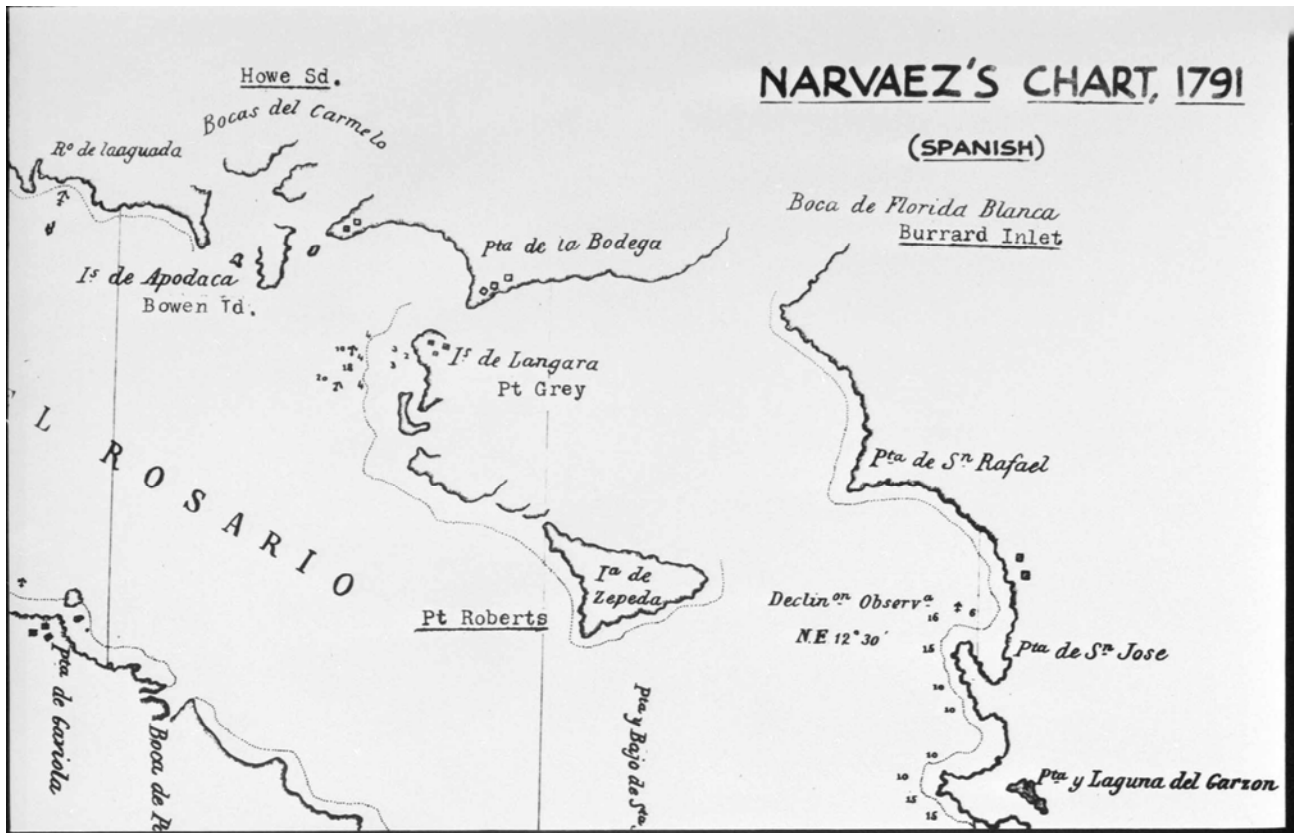
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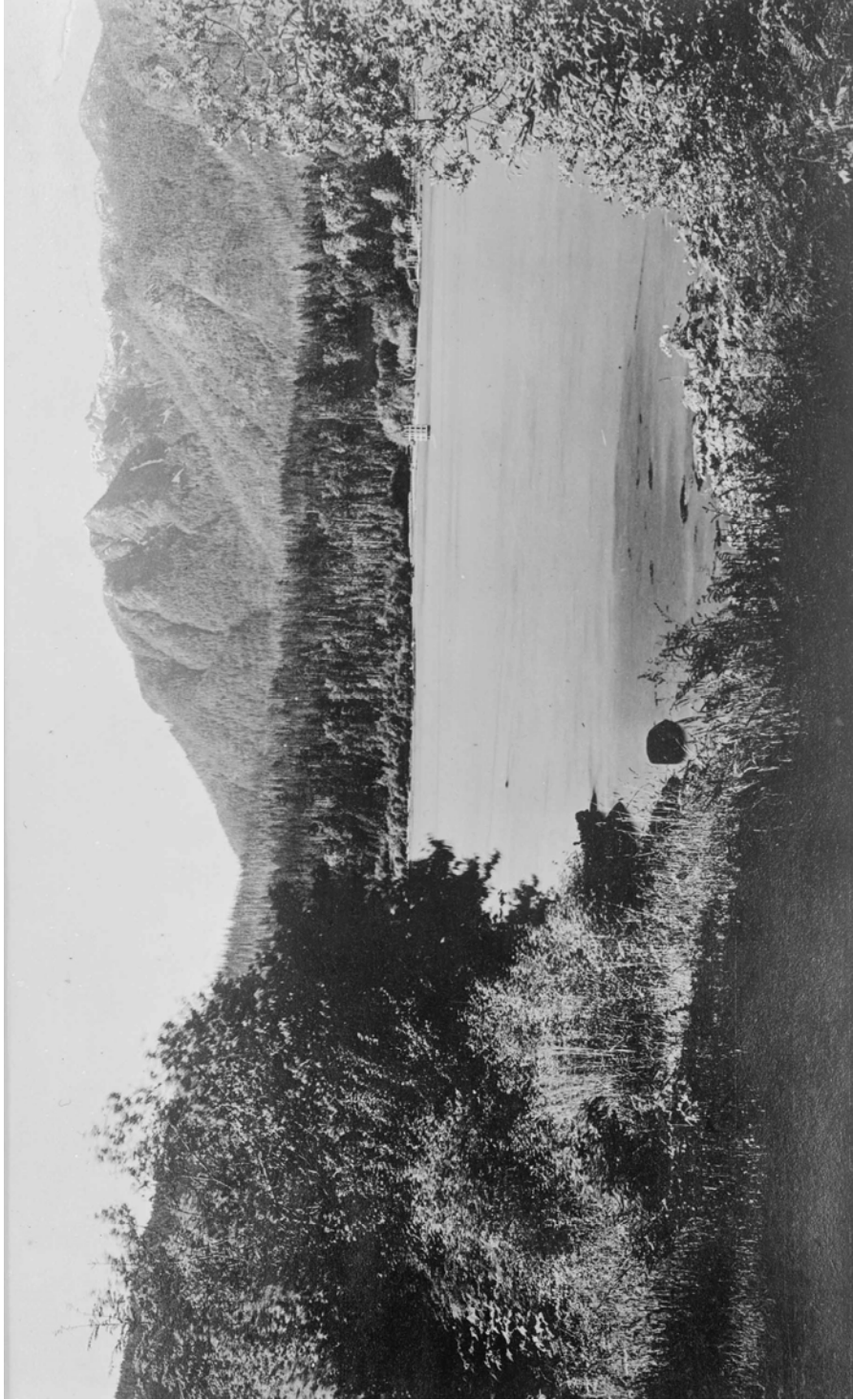
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Item # EarlyVan\_v7\_039



*Captain Vancouver discovers Burrard's Canal, 13 June 1792.*

*The view from Chaythos towards Homulchesun before the whitemans came. This photograph was taken from Chaythos, the home of Chief Kkaktshahlano (Kitsilano) a smooth place just east of Prospect Point, circa 1890. On the opposite shore across the First Narrows is the Squamish village of Homulchesun, where, on the east bank, Chief Ki-ah-a-lano (Capilano) lived when not at Mousquam. The mouth of Capilano Creek is in the centre.*

*A tiny dark oblong scarcely discernible in the distant trees is the cottage of Capilano Joe in the village of Homulchesun. The picture illustrates the scene Captain Vancouver saw as he entered Vancouver Harbour. It confirms the supposition by Major Matthews in his compilation, "Narrative, Discoverer of the Rio Blanco", that the Spanish navigators must have sailed very near, otherwise he could not have seen, partly concealed in the foliage, the dark Indian lodges of Homulchesun and marked their approximate location on his chart, 1791.*

*City Archives of Matthews.*

Item # EarlyVan\_v7\_040

[photo annotation:]

Captain Vancouver discovers Burrard's Canal, 13 June 1792.

The view from Chaythoos towards Homulchesun before the whitemans came.

This photograph was taken from Chaythoos, the home of Chief Khahtsahlano, (Kitsilano) a smooth place just east of Prospect Point, circa 1890. On the opposite shore across the First Narrows is the Squamish village of Homulchesun, where, on the east bank, Chief Ki-ap-a-lano, (Capilano) lived when not at Musqueam. The mouth of Capilano Creek is in the centre.

A tiny dark oblong scarcely discernible in the distant trees ins the cottage of Capilano Joe in the village of Homulchesun. The picture illustrates the scene Captain Vancouver saw as he entered Vancouver Harbour. It confirms the supposition by Major Matthews in his compilation, "Narvaez, Discoverer of the Rio Blanco," that the Spanish navigator must have sailed very near, otherwise he could not have seen, partly concealed in the foliage, the dark Indian lodges of Homulchesun and marked their approximate location on his chart, 1791. City Archives. J.S. Matthews.

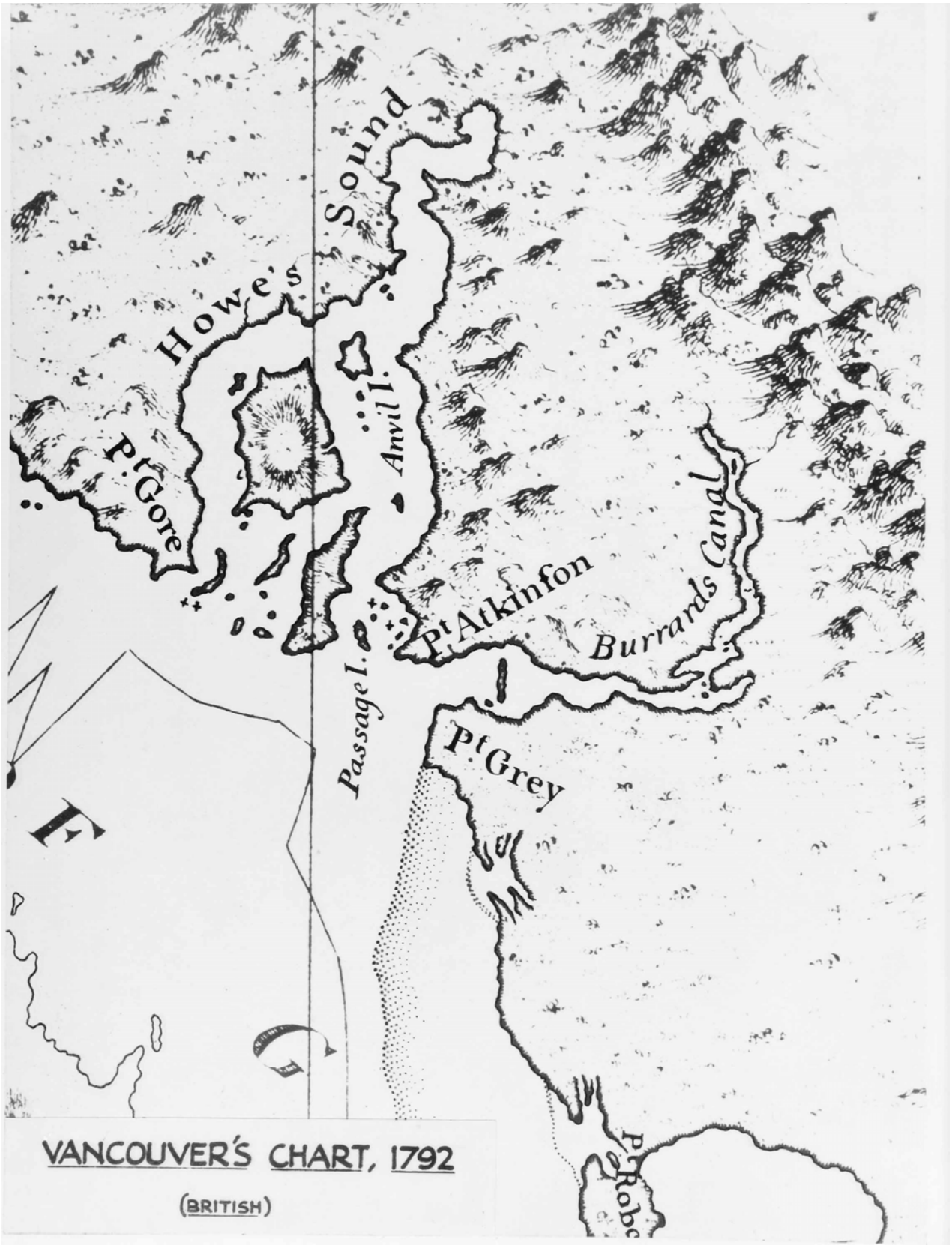
### **CONCERNING ARRIVAL OF NARVAEZ, 1791, AT VANCOUVER.**

Conversation with August Jack Khahtsahlano, of Lower Capilano, who came to wish us a Merry Christmas at City Archives, 19 December 1942.

Note: Mr. Khahtsahlano is now about sixty-seven years old. (He was born in 1877.) He is a very responsible Indian—a fine character—and is probably the best informed Indian now living on early Indian history of Burrard Inlet. He is a natural born historian and, though he cannot read nor write, he can draw and even paint well in colour, and understands charts. August spent the day after the "Fire, 1886" looking over the ruins of Vancouver. His father was Khay-tulk, who, about 1876, was buried with great ceremony in a mausoleum of wood at the end of the Pipe Line Road, Stanley Park. Later, his mother, Qwhy-what, married Chinalset, or "Jericho Charlie," another fine Indian, who was employed by Rogers and afterwards Fraser, of Jerry's Cove (Jericho) to freight supplies to the logging camp from the Hastings Sawmill store. August made countless trips with his stepfather in the big five-ton freight canoe. Both Chinalset and Qwhy-what told August much early history and August, who has an excellent memory, was deeply interested. See *Conversations with Khahtsahlano*, Matthews, 1955.

Major Matthews: (with Narvaez's chart, photographs of Jericho, admiralty charts and modern maps of Vancouver spread before August) August, tell me about Jericho and Capilano in early days. Suppose you were on the beach below the cliffs of Point Grey—looking east—could you see Indian houses at Capilano and Jericho at Homulchesun and Eyalmu?

August: "No. You can't see through a hill; nor trees. You'd have to go a mile, more than a mile, out Spanish Banks before you could anchor. If you stay on beach you can't see Jericho; you can't see through all them trees. And, Capilano" (Homulchesun) "that's too far away; houses too small—wrong colour to see—you could see where they was, but you couldn't see them. That's long time ago."



Item # EarlyVan\_v7\_041

Major Matthews: August. You know Imperial Street; look at these photos. (Leonard Frank, No. 13975 and 13983, September 1930.) This is the golf course looking west from the Club House, twelve years ago, looking west from the old cove towards Locarno Park cedar and fir trees. Tell me, where was the old potlatch house? The great big long one the Indians lived in before the whitemans came—the one the warship pulled down and took part of it away.

August: “It was about two hundred feet back from the beach on the sand heap. It was over there” (pointing), “somewhere back of where they built the first air station; back from the beach. They cuts down a lot of trees, though, what used to be there. The warship pulls the old potlatch house down, but when I was a little boy I used to ‘ride’ on what they left; roof pieces, long thick slabs of cedar—forty feet long, six inches thick and eighteen inches wide—very thick, cedar. They was in the water and I got on top and paddled with my hands. But on this side” (east side) “of Imperial Street there wasn’t many trees—all muskeg and swamp and bushes.”

Major Matthews: Well, supposing you were out in English Bay, over in the middle just sailing about, how far would you have to go east of Jericho before you could see back at the potlatch house hidden behind the trees at the foot of Imperial Street?

August: “You’d have to go right over to Point Atkinson and then go east. You couldn’t anchor nearer than a mile off Point Grey, and then you’d have to go east to about a mile off Siwash Rock, about opposite Hollyburn, before you could look back and see the old potlatch house. Because the trees at Imperial Street would hide them.”

Major Matthews: Well, this chart here (Admiralty chart, 1893) shows Indian houses at Jerry’s Cove, right here on the west bank of the cove, across the cove from Angus Fraser’s camp just a few yards.

August: (annoyed) “Oh, that’s not where the potlatch house was. That’s my stepfather’s house, and Burns’.” (Indian) “My stepfather’s house, Charlie ,about sixty feet long, and made of sawn boards from the Hastings Sawmill, and white—whitewashed. That’s not the old Indian houses. The old potlatch house was away west of that—west of the cove—three or four hundred yards, on the sand bank; about two hundred feet back from the water; very old cedar slab house. Nobodies lives in it—long time ago everybody live in it. First white man that come never see Indian house at Jerry’s Cove—it’s not there, it’s not built.”

### **HOMULCHESUN. CAPILANO CREEK. FIRST NARROWS.**

Major Matthews: Well. We’re out on the beach at Point Grey and we’re looking towards First Narrows. Look at this chart. Look at this photo from Point Grey—see how Ferguson Point sticks out very prominent and you cannot see Prospect Point at all. Suppose you didn’t know there was an entrance to First Narrows there—what would you think if you’d never been there and never seen it before?

August: “Well, if you didn’t know about First Narrows you’d think it was a big bay and that Siwash Rock was a sharp point” (cape.)

Major Matthews: The chart says the Indians’ houses are on the east bank of Capilano Creek.

August: “That’s where they were. Only Lahwa” (Chief Lahwa) “had his house on the west bank, but it was white; whitewashed, sawn boards from Hastings Mill. But if you were at Point Grey you couldn’t see the Indian houses at Homulchesun; could see where they were but they too far away. You could see where they were better if you went half way to Point Atkinson.”

Major Matthews: And they were only one storey—very low. What colour would they be?

August: “Cedar colour—old cedar colour, no paint, not quite black—kinda reddish. They’s not very high—only about twenty feet or bit more. Nobody could see them from Point Grey. If they was white you could see white spots but they’s almost black. The first white man to come must have come pretty close to old cedar houses at Homulchesun. You would *have* to go close—they was hidden by the crab apple trees. Indians don’t cut crab apple trees on west side of Capilano Creek. They keep those trees for shelter from the wind. What time of year was the first white man here?”

Major Matthews: July. (1791.)

August: "Oh!! He couldn't see those houses at Homulchesun. He must have come pretty close. In July the leaves would hid the houses and the houses was old cedar colour. He must have come close."

Major Matthews: But he didn't find the opening to the Narrows.

August: "May be. What would he want to go into Hollyburn wharf for? He's just sailing around. He sees a big bay with Indian houses in the middle. He thinks it's just a big bay. He knows nothing about First Narrows. And trees all down Prospect Point. He thinks it's just another point so he goes away."

Major Matthews: Good. Thanks—just what I wanted. (Gives him \$1.25 to buy himself a Christmas present to his liking.)

August is a charming man; one of nature's gentlemen.

J.S. Matthews  
CITY ARCHIVIST

City Archives  
City Hall  
Vancouver

19 December 1942.

**CONVERSATION WITH MRS. JAMES WALKER, DAUGHTER OF JOSEPH SILVEY (OR SILVIA) OF GRANVILLE, OR "GASTOWN," AT HER ROOM AT 721 CAMBIE STREET, 23 SEPTEMBER 1943.**

**CHRISTINE, DAUGHTER OF JOHN THOMAS, OR "NAVY JACK." ROWIA. JOWYAK. QWHIL-EET-ROCK.**

Mrs. Walker: "I went over to Christine to see about my mother's" (Khaal-tin-aht) "father. You see, my mother was a granddaughter of 'Old Chief' Ki-ap-i-la-no, so I asked Christine about his son, my grandfather, who was, of course, father of my mother. Christine is my cousin. She is the daughter of my mother's sister, Rowia" (pronounced as in "how" or "now"—not as in "bow" tie.) "Rowia married a white man, Mr. Thomas, who used to live over there at West Vancouver. His nickname was 'Navy Jack.' Mr. Thomas owned all that land over there, but he did not pay, and lost it."

**JOWYAK. KHAALTINAHT. ROWIA. LUMTINAHT OR LOMTINAHT.**

"You see, there were four sisters. The eldest was Susan, or Jowyak, the next was my mother, Khaal-tin-aht" (or Mary Anne); "then came Rowia, and the youngest was Lum-tin-aht. They were all grandchildren of 'Old Chief' Ki-ap-i-lano—the head chief, my great-grandfather Ki-ap-i-la-no.

"And there were a lot of boys but I forget their names."

**QUIL-EET-ROCK.**

"Christine told me my grandfather's name was Quil-eet-rock. He was the son of the 'Old Chief.'"

**JOSEPHINE SILVEY. JOSEPH SILVEY. PASLEY ISLAND. BOWEN ISLAND. WHALING. PETER SMITH. HARRY TRIM. CAPT. DOUGLAS.**

"I made a mistake when I told you Josephine was born in Gastown. She was not born in Gastown but on Bowen Island" (Pasley Island nearby is probably meant), "where they were whaling. My father, Peter Smith and Harry Trim and a Capt. Douglas were whaling. Capt. Douglas had a schooner and there were some more men. You see, I was only three years old and I am sorry I left that out about Josephine being born on Bowen Island. Capt. Douglas used to go sealing, but they came over from that and went whaling off Bowen Island. They used to shoot the whales. They got a lot of oil out of the whales, and Capt. Douglas had the big schooner and they had a wharf there. Josephine was born right on that island. All the women had little cabins—all the Indian girls who were white men's wives. Harry Trim's wife was an Indian. Peter Smith's wife was an Indian and my father's wife was an Indian. All had little houses—nice little houses—and they built the wharf for the schooner to land. It was a nice bay."