

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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flag of Canada, was unfurled. The band played "God Save the Queen," and the assemblage gave three cheers for Her Majesty Queen Victoria. The Park Commissioners had been appointed the previous day, and Mayor Oppenheimer delivered to them a copy of the by-law creating their office, and concluded his speech by saying:

"Ladies and Gentlemen: I shall not detain you longer but, in the name of the citizens of Vancouver, I deliver Stanley Park to the care and guardianship of the Park Committee here present, and hope that under their management and that of their successors, we may ultimately realise our present hopes to have the most beautiful park in the world."

A large number of fireworks were let off which, exploding high in the air, released inflated forms of men, animals and ships to the delight of the children. Some people went picnicking, others for a drive. That night the new Salvation Army band paraded for the first time, and the day's festivities closed with a ball in the Opera House—Hart's Opera House—actually a glorified shed, on Carrall Street, in what is now our Chinatown. It was nearly daylight when the dancing ceased. It had been the most gala day Vancouver had ever known.

There is no greater honour than to be the representative of one's fellows and the trustee of his welfare. The greatest of all honours is to be a good servant—kings and queens aspire to that. The most civilised man, and most intelligent, is he who serves his fellows most. I ask you to examine the roll of the sixty-seven park commissioners who have served us since 1888. You will not find in all Canada a more conscientious, faithful and devoted group of men and women, whose axiom has always been that they seek no reward other than the comfort derived from the esteem of their fellow citizens, and the quiet consolation of duty done. Banish the thought that a Commissioner does nothing save attend a meeting once in two weeks. The daily detail is constant and continual. Some have served long years—Mr. Rogers twenty-six, though some calculate it twenty-seven; Mr. Holland nineteen; Mr. Tatlow eighteen; Mr. Lees sixteen; Mr. Baynes fifteen; Mr. Tisdall fifteen; and Mr. McDonald and Mr. Costello ten.

And, these good men would chide me if I failed to remind you of the officials, great and small, from Mr. Avison, the Park Ranger, in that day the only employee, to Mr. Dickson, our present Chief Gardener; from Mr. Eldon to Mr. Stroyan and Mr. Lefeaux; and from some unknown lady to Miss Bell.

All honour to you all on this your diamond jubilee day. To those who now serve we urge, "Keep on, keep on." To those who serve no longer, we bow our heads and grasp their hands, and to those here to represent commissioners who have passed away we give reassurance that the memory of your dear relatives is held in fond recollection.

(The roll of deceased Park Commissioners is called.)

When men, having first provided for their own as is right that they should, turn aside in their path and devote their talents to the common weal it is fitting and proper that they should receive the plaudits of their fellows, that others may see their good works and so emulate their example. Birds of the air and beasts of the field—they hustle for themselves and are satisfied when their bellies are full. But with mankind it is different. They sometimes give their lives, in peace or war, for one another. I am the spokesman for the multitude. It is the voice of the host which you hear—the old pioneer, the newcomer, the aged and the children, in admiration and appreciation of what you are doing and what you have done. In one grand united acclaim they are cheering, "Well done, Park Commissioners, well done; thank you, thank you."

DEDICATION OF STANLEY PARK, OCTOBER 1889. TOY BALLOONS.

"These two small paper flags, one of the Japanese National flag, and the other a sort of imitation of the United States stars and stripes, except that it has only nine stars, came out of the toy balloons they fired up in the air at the end of the Coal Harbour Bridge, by the Park Ranger's home—where the Causeway is now at the entrance to the park, when Lord Stanley dedicated the park. They went up as rockets, burst, and a little balloon floated down with these two flags flying to it. My Father" (William Bennett) "ran after one and got this and I have kept it ever since—over sixty years. When I got it I was very much

disappointed because it was not a Union Jack; I wanted a Union Jack. I was just over fourteen at the time.”

Mrs. Ernest Silvester Smith, née Miss Bennett, when speaking to Major Matthews, City Archives, 28 July 1950.

Mrs. Smith presented the two flags to Major Matthews. They are of paper, and about twelve inches square—attached together with the original twine. JSM.

COMMEMORATING THE DEDICATION OF STANLEY PARK, 1889 AND HONORING THE PIONEERS OF VANCOUVER, CANADA, 1949.

Banquet, tendered by the Board of Park Commissioners, at “The Pavilion,” Stanley Park, on Tuesday, 1 November 1949, at 6:00 p.m.

Remarks by City Archivist:

The first European to see Stanley Park was the Spanish navigator Narvaez. He named it Point Bodega, the oldest name in our city. He was also the first white man to see the western mainland shore of Canada. A year later, 1792, Captain George Vancouver discovered that behind Stanley Park was a narrow entrance which we call our First Narrows, leading to a spacious harbour beyond. Last year twenty-seven thousand ships, great and small, followed where he led.

Vancouver was accorded a cordial welcome—the first ever given here to a distinguished visitor. A flotilla of Squamish canoes put out from the now-vanished village of Whoi-Whoi in Stanley Park, and escorted his small boat as it passed inwards. They showered him and his men with handfuls of white down feathers plucked from the breasts of wild fowl which they threw as we throw confetti over a bride. The gentle summer zephyrs wafted the fluffy white down into the air, whence it fell, as a myriad of white specks, upon the placid surface of the waters. A palisade of huge green trees towering to the heavens stood like pillars on both shores as Vancouver passed through the narrow marine corridor.

For sixty years Stanley Park lay silent and still as it had done since the dawn of time. Then the Royal Engineers, sent here in 1858 to establish civil government in the wilderness which Queen Victoria, the Good, had named “British Columbia,” set our park aside, together with the Indian Reserve on the opposite shore, as a defence from attack in the rear of New Westminster, capital of the new crown colony.

A few more years pass and then, in 1886, Vancouver was incorporated as a city—a city on paper, for all else was forest. The first City Council met in a primitive building of board and batten above the Water Street beach. They had no money but the first resolution passed at the first meeting was to petition the Canadian government to give us the naval reserve as a park. At that time access to Stanley Park was by a huge log which had drifted in, and spanned, from bank to bank, the narrow channel at Lost Lagoon. Across it pioneers scrambled with care lest they slip and fall into the waters beneath. Filled in with earth it is now the beautiful “Causeway,” entrance to the park.

Two years later, in 1888, after minor improvements, the Park was formally opened by Mayor David Oppenheimer. Next year, 1889, on October 29th, sixty years ago, Lord Stanley, Governor General, in his carriage drawn by four white horses, passed through the forest then standing on our now populous “West End,” and on to Chaythoos, a grassy spot, formerly the site of an Indian village near Prospect Point. There, upon a tiny platform, with arms upraised as though embracing the whole primeval solitude, he dedicated it,

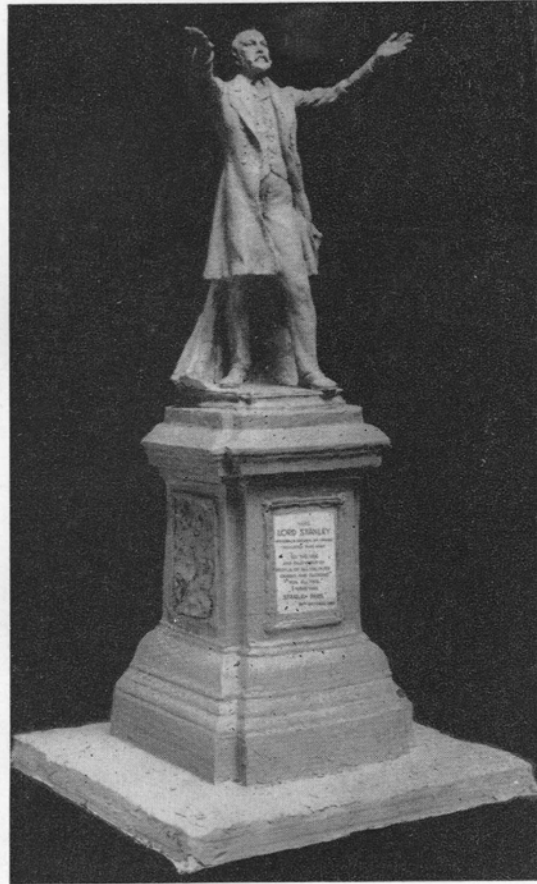
“To the use and enjoyment of peoples of all colours, creeds, and customs, for all time.”

Then, as he poured the sparkling wine upon the virgin earth, he solemnly declared,

“I name thee ‘Stanley Park.’”

The Dedication of Stanley Park

1889



Statuette, in bronze, of His Excellency Lord Stanley of Preston, Governor General of Canada, 1888-1893, dedicating Stanley Park at Chaythoos, First Narrows, 29th October, 1889. By the celebrated sculptor, Sydney March, Farnborough, Kent.

With the compliments of the City Archives, Vancouver.

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"THE PAVILION," STANLEY PARK

In honour of the visit to Vancouver of Major the Right Honourable the Earl of Derby, M.C., LL.D., and the Countess of Derby, a complimentary luncheon was tendered them by the Board of Park Commissioners at "The Pavilion," Thursday, 27th September, 1951. Lord Derby, 18th Earl, is the great grandson of His Excellency Lord Stanley.

GUESTS—The Rt. Hon. the Earl and Countess of Derby; His Worship Fred J. Hume, Mayor of Vancouver; Major J. S. Matthews, City Archivist; Mrs. S. C. Sweeney.

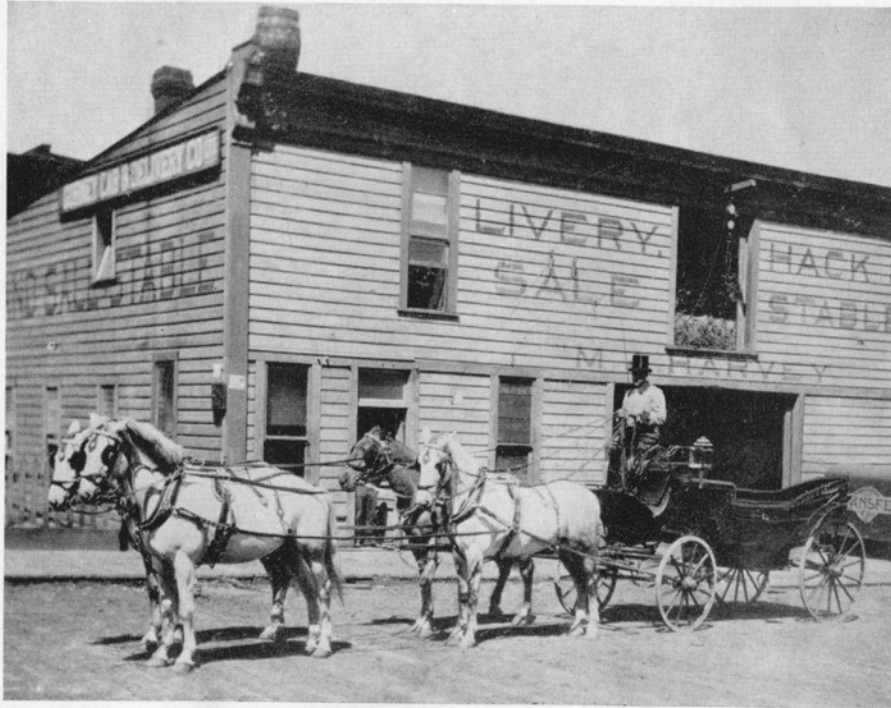
COMMISSIONERS—Arnold Webster, Esq., Chairman, Mrs. Don C. Brown, Messrs. John S. C. Moffitt, Earle G. Adams, W. G. Calder, Robert R. Maitland, Frederick W. Taylor.

PAST COMMISSIONERS—Mrs. James Allen Clark, Colonel G. M. Endacott, Messrs. F. A. Armstrong, E. G. Baynes, C. E. Blaney, D. C. Brown, E. W. Dean, B. A. Emery, J. Fyfe-Smith, E. J. Erwin, M. S. Logan, D. A. MacDonald, R. P. Pettipiece, S. V. Smith, C. W. Thompson, Geo. Thompson.

PARK OFFICIALS—P. B. Stroyan, Superintendent; S. S. Lefeaux, Assistant Superintendent; Miss Marion Bell, Secretary; Mrs. Martin Dayton, Harry Duker, Public Relations.

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THE GOVERNOR GENERAL LEAVES FOR THE CEREMONY

The Chairman's Welcome

(ARNOLD WEBSTER, Esq.)

Lord and Lady Derby, Your Worship, and Commissioners:

We are proud today to have as our guests Lord and Lady Derby. We welcome them for many reasons, but, first of all, we honour them for their personal worth, expressing, as they do, the highest qualities of British citizenship.

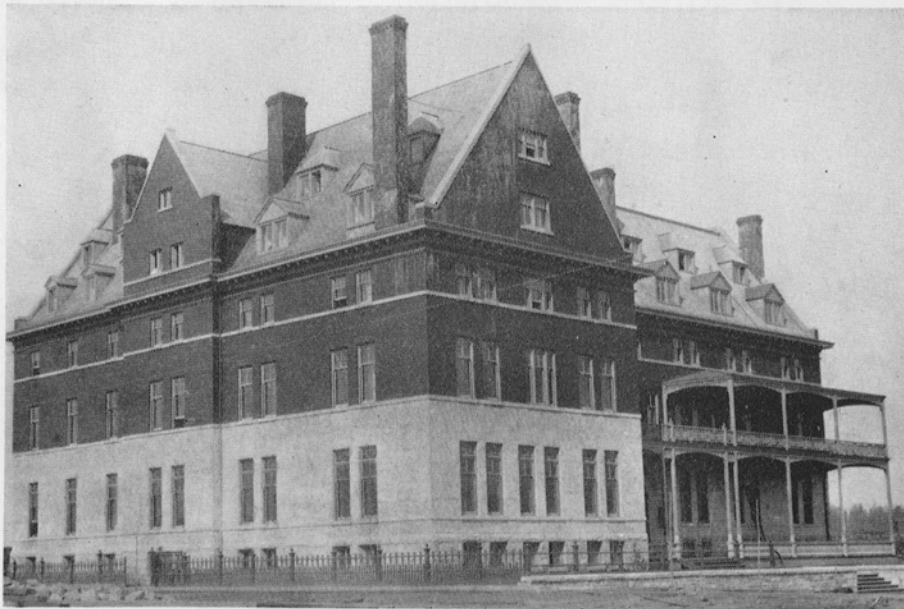
Although only a few years from Oxford, and from war service in which he was awarded the Military Cross for gallantry, Lord Derby has been extremely active in public affairs, in business, and in sport. Of especial interest to us in his membership in the Lancashire County Council.

We are glad to have the opportunity to express through Lord

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Derby, the high esteem in which the people of Vancouver have always held his great-grandfather, His Excellency Lord Stanley of Preston, former Governor General, who, on October 29th, 1889, named and dedicated Stanley Park. We acknowledge, with gratitude, the high purpose and broad humanity of the man who set forth the principle that these beautiful acres of forest should be preserved "for the use and enjoyment of peoples of all colours, creeds, and customs for all time". I can say with truth that the Commissioners of the Parks Board have, throughout the years, faithfully discharged their responsibilities to the citizens of Vancouver.

We appreciate that Lord and Lady Derby found time from their busy schedule of engagements associated with the "Festival of Britain" to visit us. I assure them that we recognize the importance of main-



**THE "HOTEL VANCOUVER," FIRST HOTEL OF THE
CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY**

Built 1887, "away out in the clearing," on the southwest corner of Granville and Georgia Streets. Now demolished and its site used as a parking area in downtown Vancouver. Here, in 1951, the host surges to and fro, traffic controlled by signals blinking red and green.

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A RELIC OF THE FOREST

This great tree, over eleven feet in diameter, grew on Georgia Street a few yards west from the Hotel Vancouver, and had been one of thousands of forest monarchs, towering to the skies, which formerly stood, thick as a field of grain, since the dawn of time.

taining our close associations with our friends in the United Kingdom. And, in small measure we have tried to do this in a parks system by the use of such names as Hastings, Granville, Strathcona, Trafalgar, Connaught, Kensington, Killarney, Douglas, Prince Edward, and Queen Elizabeth.

We are of one opinion in declaring, without maudlin sentiment, that the democratic principles which characterize the British Commonwealth, constitute the most constructive forces in world civilization.

*Stanley Park Pavilion,
Thursday, 27th September, 1951.*

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Lord Derby's Response

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of my wife and myself, I wish to thank you for this wonderful reception. Having arrived in Vancouver a mere three hours ago we are a little out of breath. However, I hasten to say that our introduction to your beautiful Stanley Park has been a delightful experience.

Our visit to Vancouver is the realization of a dream. Major Matthews, your faithful archivist and historian, has kept me so very well informed that I feel very much at home with you today.



THE "WEST END" IN 1889

As the Vice-regal procession of carriages progressed down Georgia Street it passed through the remains of the forest from which the larger trees had been removed, passed beneath an arch, and crossed the "Coal Harbour Bridge." The waters are now enclosed by the "Causeway," and known as "Lost Lagoon."

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SQUAMISH INDIAN LODGE, 1868, NOW "LOST LAGOON"

Green lawns now slope gently down to "Lost Lagoon." Squamish Indian lodges were of thick cedar slabs split with deer's horn wedges, and built with stone hammers and stone chisels by Squamish Indians, the greatest natural carpenters in North America. Six "dugout" canoes lie at rest upon the beach.

The Chairman, Mr. Webster, has referred with appreciation to the services of my great-grandfather, Lord Stanley. In crossing Canada I have been very proud to observe the many streets, parks, and various public institutions which have been named "Stanley" or "Preston". And of course, I do not forget the famous "Stanley Cup", still the most prized trophy in the world of hockey.

The dedication of this thousand acre playground indicates to me that my great-grandfather was a statesman with a vision clearer than most of his contemporaries. I wish to congratulate those men and women, who through successive boards of Parks Commissioners, have been responsible for the day to day care and development of this great

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park, and the many other parks of Vancouver. I am pleased to hear that these number more than one hundred public parks. Fortunately, this is the trend in the planning of modern cities.

I wish, again, to say how much pleasure you have given us by the sincerity of your welcome. We shall long remember this happy hour spent with you today in "The Pavilion", Stanley Park.



THE LORD STANLEY ARCH AND COAL HARBOUR BRIDGE

The arch of short pieces of saplings, cut from the nearby forest, erected in honour of Lord Stanley's visit. It stood at the entrance to Stanley Park, and at the foot of Georgia Street. The broad and beautiful "Causeway," smooth paved and adorned with flower beds and shrubs, has replaced it.

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THE PARK ROAD, STANLEY PARK, 1889

The procession proceeds onwards, and the horse-drawn carriages pass along the "Park Road," a marine drive which encircles one thousand acres of primeval forest, seagirt, and almost an island. It had been paved with white calcined shells dug from the prehistoric Indian village of Whoi-who, on the shore of the First Narrows; a deposit of refuse in places eight feet deep, and about three acres in extent, cast three centuries ago, by its inhabitants.

Historical Address by City Archivist (MAJOR MATTHEWS)

Mr. Chairman, My Lord, Lady Derby and Commissioners:

The twenty-ninth day of October, 1889, was declared to be a public holiday for the few of early Vancouver; it rained a little in the morning; a passing shower.

The Governor General and Lady Stanley, accompanied by their son, afterwards the late Lord Derby, and his bride, were escorted from the first Hotel Vancouver to an open carriage drawn by four white

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horses, and, as they drove down Georgia Street, they passed the site of our present Court House and its green lawns, then a disorderly area of huge black stumps, and other debris of the former forest. At the foot of the hill, where they crossed what is now our Nicola Street, they entered the towering trees, which had stood there since the dawn of time. At the entrance to Stanley Park, known to us as "The Causeway", the procession of carriages, buggies, democrats, and, last of all, a butcher's two-wheel cart, passed through an arch of saplings, erected at the end of a narrow wooden bridge, wide enough for two buggies to pass, which spanned Coal Harbour. Three young men had cut the

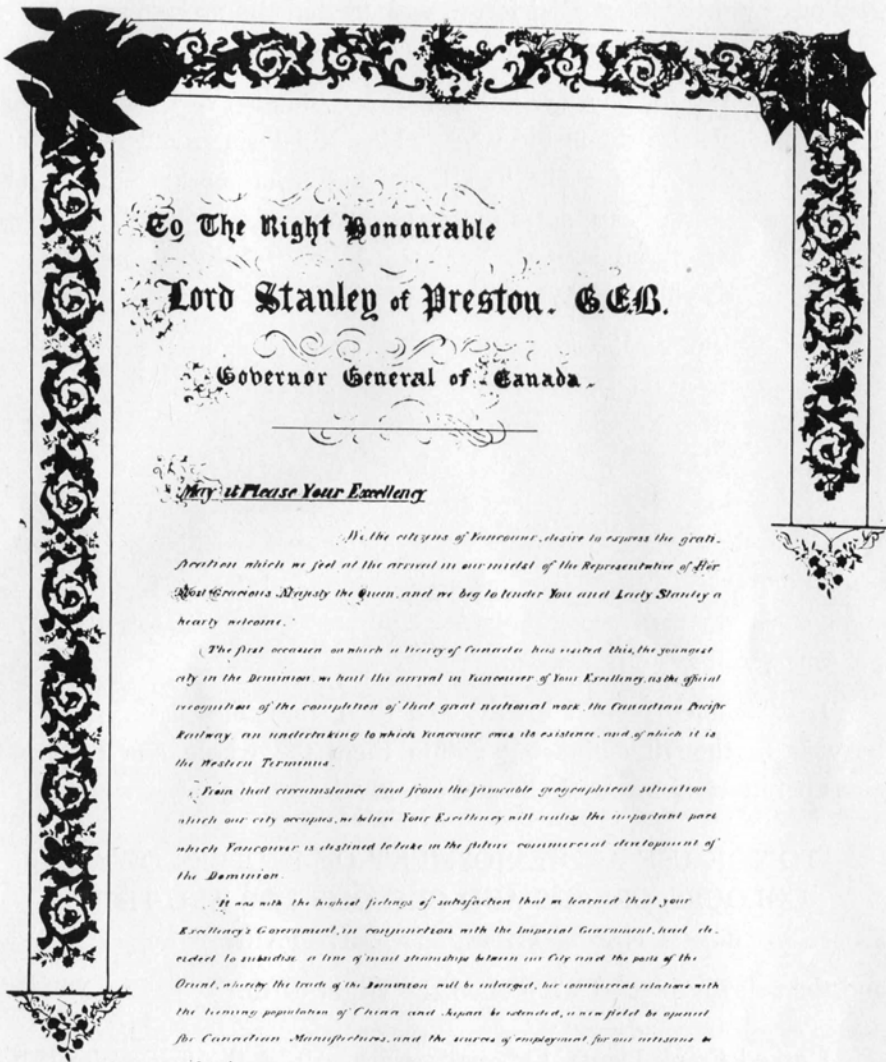


CHAY-THOOS, FIRST NARROWS

(Indian name, no especial meaning)

Here, upon a tiny platform, the dedication formalities took place. His Worship David Oppenheimer, second Mayor of Vancouver, read the illuminated address of the Citizens of Vancouver. Lord Stanley responded, named the park, and poured the wine upon the virgin earth. The big stone beside the flagpole is believed to be part of the commemorative cairn, all trace of which has been lost. It is here that it is proposed to erect a full size statue, nineteen feet high, to commemorate the site of Lord Stanley's solemn dedication of Canada's greatest civic park.

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THE ILLUMINATED SCROLL PRESENTED TO LORD STANLEY

“We, the Citizens of Vancouver, desire to express the gratification which we feel at the arrival in our midst of the representative of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen, and we beg to tender you and Lady Stanley a most hearty welcome.

“The first occasion upon which a Viceroy of Canada has visited this, the youngest city in the Dominion, etc., etc.”

saplings from the West End forest, and erected the arch; one of them, Mr. Baynes, former Park Commissioner, sits with us today.

The procession encircled the shore of Stanley Park via the new Park Road, a mere slit in the trees, which had been paved with white calcined shells. The shells had been dug from an ancient kitchen midden, or refuse heap, acres in extent, and in places eight feet deep, deposited there throughout the centuries by the inhabitants of the pre-historic Indian village of Whoi-who.

Six months earlier the citizens of Vancouver had discontinued using water from wells, and had piped running water for domestic use across the First Narrows from Capilano Creek. At the end of the Pipeline Road, where the pipes emerge from beneath the sea, the dignified little procession halted at a tiny grassy spot. Lord and Lady Stanley and party stepped from their carriages; Lord Stanley mounted a low platform about as large as a table top, and Mayor Oppenheimer commenced to read the illuminated address of the citizens, unrolling the long scroll as he proceeded.

Lord Stanley replied briefly, and then, throwing his arms to the heavens as though embracing within them the whole one thousand acres of primeval forest, dedicated it with the words,

"TO THE USE AND ENJOYMENT OF PEOPLES OF ALL
COLOURS, CREEDS AND CUSTOMS FOR ALL TIME.
I NAME THEE, STANLEY PARK"

and then slowly poured wine upon the virgin earth.

I asked Frank Plante, his carriage driver, and the first white child born on Burrard Inlet, who got what was left in the bottle. Frank ejaculated with emphasis: "Search me, I know I didn't."

The late Lord Derby, illustrious son of an illustrious father, both great servants of the British Commonwealth, was a man of immeasurable perception, and when I made so bold as to ask him for the return of the original address, which he had preserved for fifty years at Knowsley, he graciously assented, and here it is. By that act he made possible



PROSPECT POINT, STANLEY PARK, 1889

The ceremonies over, the Vice-Regal party drive to the summit of Prospect Point, a precipitous eminence which rises 200 feet sheer from the sea at the First Narrows; entrance to Vancouver Harbour. Here they linger to gaze up the magnificent scene of mountain, sea and stream.

printed copies which have since been scattered far and wide; thousands of copies are in the hands of our school children and others.

Lord Derby. The dedicatory words of your beloved great-grandfather implied the admonition that he expected much in connection with this park upon which he had bestowed his distinguished name. We assure your Lordship that nothing we can think of has been left undone to make it worthy of the honour bestowed. For sixty-two years it has been the cherished care of a long line of park commissioners, some active today, others retired but seated about you; many who have gone; devoted men and women who, without hope of reward other than the esteem of their fellows, and the gratification of work well done,

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have assiduously labored, year after year, in the performance of their public duty. And, they have been supported by a host of equally devoted officials.

Mr. Chairman, with your kind permission, I will read a few words from the original address to Lord Stanley.

“May it please Your Excellency. We, the Citizens of Vancouver, desire to express the gratification which we feel at the arrival in our midst of the representative of Her Most Gracious Majesty, the Queen, and we beg to tender you and Lady Stanley a hearty welcome.

“The first occasion on which a Viceroy of Canada has visited this, the youngest city in the Dominion, we hail the arrival in Vancouver of Your Excellency as the official recognition of the completion of that great national work, the Canadian Pacific Railway, an undertaking to which Vancouver owes its existence, and of which it is the western terminus. (Six paragraphs omitted).

“We also hope that Your Excellency will be pleased to visit that noble tract of forest, which granted by your Government for the benefit of our people, you were pleased to consent should be called by your illustrious name, and to view the proportions of this noble gift to the people of this city for their use and enjoyment for all time to come.”

Lord Derby, I am not permitted to part with the cherished relic which your great-grandfather so graciously entrusted to our custody, but we have prepared an exact replica of it. Perhaps you would do us the honour to accept it.



SIWASH ROCK, ENGLISH BAY

Siwash Rock, English Bay, probably 1895. Its height is 46 feet. This photo indicates that it is owned by whoever owns Stanley Park, as it is clearly not an island, and is part of Stanley Park. First known as Ninepin Rock. It is not known who applied the name Siwash, but the earliest known appearance of the word in print is in the magazine "The West Shore," Portland, Ore., September, 1884. The Squamish Indian name is Skaalsh, a man on the shore whom the Indian gods turned into stone as punishment for being greedy, and as a warning to all. So was Lot's wife, but the Squamish have their rock to prove it, and the Christians have not got their salt. He has two wives, one without name, is a big round-shape part of cliff close by; the other is Sunz, or Sahunz, a miniature "Siwash Rock" on the shore at the base of Prospect Point. The name probably attached by pioneers as the Indians told them legends about it so often. "Sah-lal-ah-kum", a mythical savage dragon, covered with horny spikes, whose great mouth has terrible teeth and fangs, lives beneath.

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THE "SEVEN SISTERS", STANLEY PARK, 1920

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