

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.

Copyright Statement

© 2011 City of Vancouver. Any or all of *Early Vancouver* may be used without restriction as to the nature or purpose of the use, even if that use is for commercial purposes. You may copy, distribute, adapt and transmit the work. It is required that a link or attribution be made to the City of Vancouver.

Reproductions

High resolution versions of any graphic items in *Early Vancouver* are available. A fee may apply.

Citing Information

When referencing the 2011 edition of *Early Vancouver*, please cite the page number that appears at the bottom of the page in the PDF version only, not the page number indicated by your PDF reader. Here are samples of how to cite this source:

Footnote or Endnote Reference:

Major James Skitt Matthews, *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 7 (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011), 33.

Bibliographic Entry:

Matthews, Major James Skitt. *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 7. Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011.

Contact Information

City of Vancouver Archives
1150 Chestnut Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3J9
604.736.8561
archives@vancouver.ca
vancouver.ca/archives



HENRY BLAIR.

Last survivor of those who signed the petition for the incorporation of the Townsite of Granville as the City of Vancouver.

Footnote to letters from Mr. D.H. Elliott, 1242 Granville Street, to Major J.S. Matthews, 2 February 1948: "Henry Blair is still living. He is in the out-patients ward of the hospital, 12th and Heather. He has to have help to get out of bed. I go to see him quite often."

INCORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER. DEATH OF THE LAST SURVIVOR, HENRY BLAIR, 24 MARCH 1949.

Sir:

I have the honor to inform you that Mr. Henry Blair, the last survivor of the 125 men of the Townsite of Granville, who signed the petition, on a sheet of foolscap, praying the Legislature of British Columbia to incorporate the City of Vancouver, died in the Marpole Infirmary last evening, 24th March, 1949, about 8 p.m.

I have the honor to be, sir,

Your obedient servant,

J.S. Matthews

CITY ARCHIVIST

His Worship the Mayor,
City Hall,
Vancouver

FIRST WHITE CHILD BORN IN NEW WESTMINSTER WAS BLACK.

Conversation in the City Archives with Mrs. Ruby Bower (sometimes Bauer), who is the daughter of Benjamin Springer, pioneer and manager of the Moodyville Sawmill Co., Moodyville, Burrard Inlet; 19 July 1949.

Mrs. Bower had been reading Major Matthews' compilation, *Early Births, Vancouver and Vicinity*, recently bound into book form; had been examining the records of her own family, gave certain information as to dates, etc., and then stated:

Mrs. Bower: (smiling) "The first white boy born in New Westminster was black; he was a darkie boy."

Major Matthews: Was he a negro, or one of those Hawaiians—Kanakas—the Hudson's Bay Company brought up from Honolulu?

Mrs. Bower: "I don't know" (still smiling.) "But the boy used to say, 'I was the first white boy born here,' and they took a hand full of snow and said, 'We'll make you white,' and rubbed it over his face; it was all in fun of course. I used to hear them joking about the first white boy in New Westminster being black."