

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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[LETTER FROM EMILY E. MATTHEWS TO W.E. IRELAND.]

1158 Arbutus street
Kitsilano Beach
Vancouver.

26th July 1948.

Dear Mr. Ireland:

When, in 1933, the City Archives was instituted, it was weak and frail. Gradually it tottered to its feet, and, uncertain, stood looking about, wondering as to the next best step.

The Provincial Archives—more than all others—came with a supporting hand; to encourage and to steady until, year by year, it gathered strength to stand alone. Such beneficence has not been forgotten by those of Vancouver who know; and will not be, if we have our way.

It was the late John Hosie, your predecessor, who, whenever we wavered, ejaculated, almost angrily, 'KEEP ON, KEEP ON.' Difficulty beset us; had he said 'Give up,' the City Archives might not have been. Then, one day, a huge packing case came; the express man said it was for us from the Provincial Archives. Nothing was expected; we could not believe it. The contents of that big box were our first stationery supplies.

Your acceptance of "EARLY VANCOUVER," volumes one, three, four, five and six—you already have No. two—will gratify my husband and me; will serve to refresh pleasant recollections; acknowledge the debt of the people of Vancouver to the Provincial Archives and, in a measure, be a memorial to a great and good archivist, John Hosie, without whose helping hand much might not have been.

Most sincerely,

Emily E. Matthews.

W.E. Ireland, Esq.,
Provincial Archives,
Victoria, B.C.

[LETTER FROM WILLIAM E. IRELAND TO EMILY E. MATTHEWS.]

Provincial Archives
Victoria, B.C.

July 27th, 1948.

Mrs. E.E. Matthews,
1158 Arbutus St.,
Kitsilano Beach,
Vancouver, B.C.

Dear Mrs. Matthews:

Your letter of July 26th has come to hand, and you may rest assured that your kindness in presenting to us the five volumes of Early Vancouver is greatly appreciated by this institution.

I full well appreciate the difficulties under which you and Major Matthews laboured in those early days, and I am equally grateful that the late John Hosie had the foresight to urge you on with the task in hand, and that he was able to give you some material assistance from time to time. I am pleased, too, that it was possible for both myself and Dr. Lamb to continue this assistance during the period of lean times, and I certainly think your desire to present the volumes to us, more or less in tribute to John Hosie, is an extremely courteous gesture, and one that is appreciated by his many friends here and by the institution he so long served.

On behalf of the Provincial Archives please accept this expression of my sincere thanks for your courtesy in this connection.

Yours sincerely,
William E. Ireland
Provincial Librarian and Archivist.

WEI/MW

Note: "No. 2 had been in Provincial Archives for 10 or more years." (See [previous] page.)

[LETTER FROM J.S. MATTHEWS TO W.A. McADAM.]

5th Nov. 1948.

Dear Mr. McAdam:

This is a difficult letter to write—I do much of my own typing, especially letters to you. It is my first letter on the typewriter since my sorrowful absence. My dear wife was laid in her final resting-place yesterday afternoon.

I lay me down and wept awhile. Now I rise up and fight again. She left me the most beautiful love letter I ever read. It was handed me after her death.

Most sincerely,
[J.S. Matthews]
CITY ARCHIVIST

W.A. McAdam Esq., C.M.G.,
Agent-General
British Columbia House
Vancouver.

EXCERPT FROM LETTER WRITTEN BY MAJOR MATTHEWS.

Nov. 6th, 1948.

The service in Christ Church Cathedral, where we were married in 1920 on Nov. 16th 1920—28 years ago—was conducted by the Very Rev. Dean Swanson, assisted by Rev. S. Higgs. The cathedral holds 1200 and was about one third full. The Mayor of Vancouver attended. There was a surpliced choir, and the organist played three hymns. The casket was covered with the Union Jack, on which her medals rested on a black cushion. The pallbearers were all freemasons, old friends, elderly men. The party of mourners, led by me, included three sisters, three nieces, one nephew. It was as beautiful a ceremony as I have ever witnessed, conducted with solemn military precision but still with gentle grace and dignity. The Dean departed from the rule of the Church of England in that he stood upon the chancel steps and delivered a eulogy on her service to mankind in peace and in war. Funerals in the Cathedral are extremely rare. The last was in September when the Mayor of Vancouver died. The one before that in August, 1947, when a Senator of Canada died.

The newspaper reports of her death were remarkable in that the leading newspaper of western Canada announced it with a two column heading. In three days there have been over 100 letters of condolence received. I have omitted to say that the front of the cathedral chancel was banked with a mass of wreaths. No man could have asked for a more complete tribute to a wife than the citizens of Vancouver has given to me.

I forgot to say that on my return that morning from the hospital (Tuesday, Nov. 2nd), Mabel, (Mrs. Willis) handed me a letter which Emily had written to me on October 15th, 18 days