

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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hope you can, standing here beside me all in a row, watching you and smiling in the warmth of their pleasure and pride in the tribute you are paying them—proud of you as their successors. It is a little wondrous that, half a century later, and upon the exact spot, your corporation, the Imperial Oil Limited, now grown great, deigns to mark with a bronze memorial the site of their first feeble effort.

Note: owing to temporary indisposition, the above speech was not delivered by Major Matthews in person, but was tape recorded so efficiently as not to reveal his absence. In his stead, Alderman George T. Cunningham removed the Union Jack, unveiled the plaque, and made a short eloquent speech.

[LETTER FROM JACK BIRT.]

IMPERIAL OIL LIMITED

718 Granville Street
Vancouver, British Columbia.

J.C. Birt Room
Field Representative

Birks

s 720-721
Building

September 13, 1955.

Major J.S. Matthews,
City Archivist,
City Hall,
Vancouver, British Columbia.

File: Pe3.

Dear Major Matthews:

Thank you for loaning us a copy of your speech at our 75th anniversary celebration. We have now made several copies for ourselves and are returning it to you for your records.

Yours very truly,

Jack Birt

per S.M.

-/sm
Enc.

THE CLERIC AND THE DEVIL.

A cleric, fired with unctuous ire, was preaching to the people;
Exhorting them to shun the evil one and all his ways;
And witness that the devil, from a niche beneath the steeple,
Was listening interestedly, in open-mouthed amaze.

As deeper still and deeper raged the denunciations;
Great tears rolled down poor Satan's cheeks, and sorrow filled his cup;
He moaned, "If I'm responsible for all those depredations,
I shall repent, and give the whole damnation business up."

So, when the sermon ended, to the vestry room he hurried,
To tell of his repentant state, with many a moan and sob.
The cleric paled, and stuttered out in accents weak and worried,
"Pray do not be so radical, or I shall lose my job."

Then Satan, with sardonic yell, puffed out in sulphurous vapor;
All hell's hot halls re-echoed as he roared upon his way.
He called for carbon pencils, and some thick asbestos paper,

And he jotted down a moral, reading thus: NO HELL, NO PAY.

John Innes.

John Innes, a most celebrated painter in oils of Canadian historical scenes, had, in 1934, a studio and office at 602 Province Building, Victory Square, Vancouver. On a wall was stuck a yellowing clipping. It was a print-sketch in black and white—cartoon in character—by Mr. Innes. He told me that it, together with the poem, had been published, years previously, by a journal which employed him in some eastern United States city—perhaps New York.

It depicted a cleric, with bishop's sleeves, preaching with vigour high in a pulpit in the distant end of the church to the congregation below him while Satan, with cloven hoof, horns and forked tail, near at hand in the belfry, was listening intently and excitedly making grimaces.

The fact that it was the work of so celebrated an artist prompted me to ask Mr. Innes to write out the words, which he did on this slip of paper. I cannot approve of it and preserved it for historical reasons only.

J.S. Matthews

City Archives,
City Hall,
Vancouver,
Canada.