

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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Then he wandered into the drawing room, played tag with the books and bric-a-brac, and left it in disorder.

Then he went upstairs and tried Mrs. Plummer's bed, so went to sleep on top of it; or rather, by the looks of it all crushed down, we suppose he did.

Having tired of the afternoon's enjoyment he went back to the kitchen window, left that way, and took to the woods. Of course he left his visiting card.

RACCOON AT KITSILANO.

Last summer my niece was leaning over the rail protection at the top of the cliff, University of B.C., Point Grey, looked downwards and there, within ten feet, was a raccoon studying her. She screamed. The 'coon bolted. A 'coon was on top of my roof at Kitsilano Beach about three years ago. The "News-Herald" City Hall reporter lives near the beach on the West Vancouver shore. As he was dressing early one morning, to his astonishment, he watched a deer walk across his lawn towards the salt water. The deer entered the water a short few feet, played around, and then when Mr. Bruce opened the window, a slight noise alarmed the animal and it hurried back to the mountains behind.

A year or so ago I flew over the mountains of the north shore. A more magnificent and appalling sight I never saw. It was winter and the peaks were white with snow. It was the wildest scene I have ever seen—something akin to the Atlantic Ocean in a violent storm and the peaks and valleys were without number. This is the habitat of our wild animals. There are over 300 cabins on Hollyburn Ridge, Grouse Mountain and Seymour Mountain, occupied by the young folk every week-end, and I suppose some of the wild animals become familiar with human beings, gradually getting bolder and bolder until they lose all fear of man. That, probably, accounts for so many bears bothering the gardens of West and North Vancouver.

But, the little "chap" who slumbered in madam's boudoir in her own town mansion is the best yet.

With best wishes

Most sincerely,

J.S. Matthews

W.A. McAdam, Esq., C.M.G.,
Agent General for B.C.,
London.

THE LAST OF THE *BEAVER*. PROSPECT POINT, FIRST NARROWS, VANCOUVER, 1898-1914.

200 West 15th Street,
North Vancouver, B.C.
March 27th, 1950.

To Major J.S. Matthews, V.D.

Dear Sir:

In answer to your letter of March 6th and Mrs. Harrop's reference to Station there, she meant the First Narrows Light House and Fog Station, known as Prospect Point.

My father, John Grove, took charge of that Station in the year 1898, month of September. He had been assistant Light Keeper at Point Atkinson before appointment to Prospect Point. He remained there until his death in 1935.

My recollection of "Beaver" was when the tide was low, I would climb on to the Paddle wheel frame-work and onto the boiler, then search in the sand and under any small rocks for copper rivets, copper nails and some sheet copper. Then, on extreme low tides it was possible to

get pieces of beams and parts of the keel with rivets or long bolts in such pieces. At that time there was no top works or the cabin left. It had been removed to make canes as curios for tourists. If the hull was taken away, whoever took it forgot to take the keel because I pulled up a piece four feet long, eight inches by eight inches. This piece was, as all other wood, below water, perforated by toredos [teredos] and that was about 1913. That same year I also pulled up an anchor which was one belonging to the "Beaver," or the same as was used on her. This anchor was completely covered by very large barnacles. We notified the Museum at the time. Someone took it away later but nearly all barnacles had been removed and it did not look so imposing.

You asked if any part was left in 1914. The only remaining part was a small section of the keel just level with the sand and rocks. The rocks would break away from the Prospect Point cliff and roll down and cover all the remaining evidence of anything that was embedded there. The sandstone all along Stanley Park is continually washing away and it has deposited many tons of sand into the Narrows and English Bay. This sand covers everything rapidly.

I sincerely hope this will give you the information you wished. If in future I can be of assistance, please call on me. I remain

Yours truly,

W.L. Grove

CONVERSATION, 11 APRIL 1946, WITH JOHN WARREN BELL, PIONEER OF BURRARD INLET, WHO CAME HERE ON S.S. BEAVER, 1871; WENT TO SCHOOL AT MOODYVILLE (MRS. MURRAY THAIN, TEACHER); AND WAS A FREQUENT VISITOR TO GASTOWN.

Major Matthews: Please read this, in the *Province*, April 9th. (He reads.) What do you think of it?

Mr. Bell: "I shouldn't like to say."

Major Matthews: Why not?

Mr. Bell: "She is a lady of repute, I presume."

Major Matthews: School Teacher. But why not say what you think.

Mr. Bell: "It wouldn't be wise."

Major Matthews: Well, throw discretion to the winds for once, and tell me what you think of it.

Mr. Bell: "Well, in the first place, Gassy Jack would be a fool to do it" (tie a man to a tree), "and in the second place he couldn't do it.

"Yes, see, they didn't do those things in those days. Unwritten law wouldn't allow such a thing; it couldn't and wouldn't be done. The people would get up in arms; you see, the whole fraternity; everybody knew each other; they wouldn't allow any man to be treated in that manner; there were unwritten ethics of the day, they wouldn't allow any citizen to be tied or strapped up—unless they were having some fun, and did it in a joke, but not any serious ..."

Major Matthews: How did they treat their drunken man?

Mr. Bell: "Leave him alone; as long as he didn't encroach; he had his freedom. So long as he didn't make a nuisance of himself; then they might throw him out of the hotel, or wherever he was. Don't bother with him; tell him get out."

Major Matthews: Did you ever see them do anything of the sort as stated in the *Province*.

Mr. Bell: "Never did; never heard of it. I remember, up at Maxie's, two men got into an argument, and one would tell the other to do what he would do to him. They were privileged to settle their differences outside, squaring away, and settle it, shake hands—you're a better man, the drinks are on me, and all hands would go up to the