

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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August Jack Khahtsahlano, 1946.

Son of Khaytulk, or "Supple Jack," of Chaythoos, and grandson of Chief Khahtsahlanoogh (no European name) in whose honor the suburb of Kitsilano, Vancouver, is named. On 12th February 1879 he was baptised by Rev. Father N. Gregoire, as "Auguste, fils de Shinaokset, s. de Menaklot, Squamish, baptise l'age d'environ 16 mois le 12 fevrier, 1879". August stated, 16th July 1946: "Auguste!! That's me. When I little boy they call me "Menaklot", (pronounced tien-at-el-oh). But priest make mistake. My father Khay-tulk, he die day I was born. Qwy-what, my mother, marry Shinaokset (usually spelled Chimalset, i.e., "Téricho, Charlie, a very good man, whose first wife was Menaklot". The original baptismal certificate is in City Archives, deposited by August. August was born at the vanished Indian village of Skaug, (False Creek Indian Reserve) in a lodge directly below the present Burrard Bridge. At this Squamish village, in the big long lodge of Tse-who-quam-kee and by Squamish rite, in the presence of a large assemblage of his tribe and visiting Indians from Inusquean, Nanaimo, Sechelt, and Ustlawm (North Vancouver) the patronymic of his grandfather, Khaht-sahlanoogh was conferred upon him with ceremony by a Squamish patriarch, and that of Khaytulk, their father, upon his brother Willie. They were both young men, and August, having acquired wealth by working in a nearby sawmill, returned the compliment by giving a potlatch at which he distributed to the assembled guests, men, women and children, over one hundred blankets, and other valuables, and also provided a feast. It took place before about 1900. See "Early Vancouver," Vol. four, page 19, in *Alhew's*. On 26 Aug. 1938, by deed poll, deposited at Division of Vital Statistics, Victoria, and also City Archives, Vancouver, Mr. Khahtsahlano renounced the surname of Jack, by which he has been known, and assumed the name of August Jack Khahtsahlano. North American Productions 1st photo. Presented Dec. 1947, by Mrs. Thasie Arnytage-Moore, Vancouver. It appeared as a full front page illustration in the Indian monthly newspaper, "Native Voice", Vol. 1, No. 3, April 1947. August is a wise man, a courteous gentleman, and a natural historian. City Archives. & S.M.

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[photo annotation:]

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THE NAMES CAPILANO AND KITSILANO.

21st Aug. 1948.

Dear Mrs. Kay:

In the short space allowed by letter paper it is not possible to give you a full account, and further, time limits me. The whole subject would be a regular treatise encompassing 100 years of historical narrative. I will do the best I can.

Before the Whitemans came—there were no "Palefaces" in British Columbia, and it is Chinamans, kloodchmans, & Whitemans, not men—the territory of the Squamish Indians was "Skoa-mish-oath," i.e., "my country," and included all Howe Sound and Burrard Inlet. To the north were the Sechelts. Those up the Fraser River were also different. Roughly, a line drawn from Gibsons to Point Grey enclosed "SKOA-MISH-OATH." At the mouth of the North Arm, Fraser River, was a village, still there, north bank, within the limits of the City of Vancouver—MUSQUEAM—mentioned by Fraser as the place where he turned back in 1808. In this village lived a chief—commonly referred to as "Old Man" Ki-ap-a-la-no because Capt. Richards, of H.M.S. "Plumper," spells his name "KI-AP-A-LA-NO" in a letter to Governor Douglas, 21st August, 1859—precisely 91 years ago today; no 89 years. "Old Man" Kiapalano was over six feet—nice old man—very. He died about, say, 1875; used to camp in Stanley Park. Old Indian friends of mine knew him well when they were children. The "Old Man" had two homes. One was at Musqueam, adjoining Point Grey Golf Club. That was his "real" home. His grandson Ayatak (Frank Charlie), still living, told me that

"my grandfather tell me that, when he little boy 'bout so high (four feet), he see first white man come down Fraser" (1808).

The name Capilano is still preserved there in the persons of several descendants, all of whom are furious at the purloining of their traditional family name by a family of Indians residing on the north shore of the First Narrows, Vancouver Harbour.

The “Old Man’s” other home was at Homulchesun, a village on the east bank of our Capilano Creek; sometimes he was one place, sometimes another. Then, when white men came, they had a habit of calling Indians by descriptive names, such as “Jericho Charlie,” “Squamish Jacob,” “Howe Sound Jim,” so that, in some unknown manner, the creek became the “Old Man’s” creek, i.e., accordingly as you may chose to spell it, Ki-ap-a-lano, Kah-Pil-Lah-No, Ki-ap-lan-ogh, Capelano, none of which are a correct interpretation of the Indian pronunciation because that cannot be mimic[k]ed by the English tongue. So, when the “Old Man” died, was succeeded by his son Lahwa, and next by “Hyas Joe,” a relative, the early settlers hereabouts called him “Hyas Joe” at first, later “Capilano Joe” because he lived there.

(Note: originally he was Hyas [big] Joe; then Capilano Joe; then, after he came back from seeing King Edward VII, he became Chief Joe Capilano. His son was, or is, Chief Mathias Capilano—though, officially, he is Mathias Joe.)

In 1871 B.C. joined Canada, and soon after the Dominion conducted a survey of Indian Reserve. The “KAH-PIL-LAH-NO” Indian Reserve was set aside 15th June 1877. So, now, you can spell it as you prefer.

1859 Ki-ap-a-l a-no
1877 Kah-pil -lah-no
1948 Capil ano

always remembering that the Indian name of the village and creek was Homulchesun, and that Capilano is the name of a family living miles away on the North Arm, Fraser River, and that name of the family living there at Capilano Creek is Joe.

What makes the family who live at Musqueam “boil” is that the cherished name, Capilano, is used by a family with little, if any, of their blood. It all came about when Lahwa, son of “Old Man” Ki-ap-a-la-no, died childless, and the husband, Capilano Joe, of a half-grand-niece of the “Old Man” was chosen chief of Kah-pil-lah-no Indian Reserve. There was no heir, and he was a good man—the best available.

Now, the Kitsilano name came differently. Suppose we spell it Khahts-sah-lah-nough, a very ancient Indian patronymic. Indian babies are not named at birth, but by formal ceremony when they are youths some historic name is given—I am generalising. “Old Man” Khahts-sah-lah-nough came with his brother, Chip-kay-um on the False Creek Indian Reserve (Kitsilano) and Khahts-sah-lah-nough in Stanley Park, at Chaythoos (Prospect Point) across directly from Capilano Creek. Here he died, was succeeded by his son, Khay-tulk, who also died there, and was buried in a mausoleum of wood on posts, wrapped in a blanket, and laid in a canoe within the housing which had little glass windows so that one could peep in at the canoe within. His son was my friend, Khahtsahlano, who often comes to see me—over six feet, and a very fine gentleman indeed whose company is delightful. August Jack received the patronymic Khaht-sah-la-no at potlatch ceremony on False Creek about 1895, when he was 18.

About 1884 a man named Greer settled at what is now Kitsilano Beach, and then when the Canadian Pacific Railway came they ordered him away he would not go. They burned his cabin, lawsuits followed—he lost. The C.P.R. did not like him consequently, so that when in 1905 the C.P.R. decided to open for settlement what is now Kitsilano Beach, they rejected the name by which pioneers had known it, i.e. Greer’s Beach. Postmaster Jonathan Miller, pioneer of the 1860s, was asked by the C.P.R. to select an Indian name. Miller was very friendly with the Indians. Miller consulted Professor Hill-Tout, also friendly with the Indians, and Hill-Tout suggested Khaht-sah-lah-nough, but cut it down to KATES-EE-LANO. Someone, probably in the Land Department, (here or Montreal) of the C.P.R. changed this to Kitsilano. And that is the end of a very epitomised story.

In a rough way Khahtsa means “lake.” The word “Lanough” means “man.” We must never regard the native Canadian as a Siwash, i.e., “savage” in English, “sauvage” (sic) in French. They are not now, nor never were, any more savage than we. They lived differently to us, and were terribly handicapped. But, they lived, loved and laughed even as we, and had their chiefs, nobles,

commons and slaves; even as we have an abundance of serfs to this day—only we don't call them that. So that as Khahtsah means "Lake," and Lanough means "man," what we get, actually, is "Man of the Lake," just as we say Prince of Wales, or Duke of Devonshire. Khahtsahlanough was the principal man of the lake district. Of course that is stretching it a bit, but, you will gather the "general idea."

Now, about pronunciations of Indian words, etc.: August said to me:

"Indians just as anxious he's boy have good education as whitemans he's boy go to university, but he's got no pencil," etc. etc.

Consequently, as old Mr. (Rev.) Tate told me, cases have arisen when a grandfather could not quite understand the words used by the grandson. Again, there are 200 Indian place names in and about Vancouver Harbour, but when I asked the Squamish Indian Council to confirm my spelling, and they did so, they said it was so done because, as they could not agree among themselves as to some of the pronunciations, and, as in other cases, it was impossible to convert Indian into English, my spelling was the best makeshift.

I regret having been so long, but plead that I have not covered a quarter of it.

With best wishes and my deep respects,

Most sincerely,

J.S. Matthews
CITY ARCHIVIST

Mrs. Walter Byron Kay,
Saturna P.O.
Saturna Island, B.C.

Note: for Squamish Indian Life and Names, see *Conversations with Khahtsahlano*, Matthews, 1955.

CONVERSATIONS WITH KHAHTSAHLANO, PAGE 22.

Conversation with August Jack Khahtsahlano, *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 3, 31 May 1934.

SAASMAT.

Major Matthews: What does Saasmat mean? The Spaniards who were here before Captain Vancouver say that the Indians called the place "Saasmat."

August Jack: "That must be down towards Indian River. Don't know what it means; don't think it has anything to do with Tsa-atalum, that's out Point Grey, means" (shrugging shoulders) "chill place. Tsa-tsa-slum out Point Grey, not Squamish language; don't know what Saasmat means, not same language. We never finished the place names up the Inlet. I give you some more now, all I can think of just now."

Chul-wah-ulch: Bidwell Bay, same name as Coal Harbour.

Taa-tum-sun: Don't know exactly where, but up by Port Moody, east of Barnet. Don't know meaning.

Tum-tay-mayh-tun: Belcarra, means land.

Spuc-ka-nash: Little White Rock on the point just where you pass mill (Dollarton). Means "White Rock," same as whitemans call it. (White Rock Island in middle of channel.)

Thluk-thluk-way-tun: Barnet Mill. Means "where the bark gets peeled" in spring.

Slail-wit-tuth: Indian River.