

Early Vancouver

Volume One

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2011 Edition (Originally Published 1932)

Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1931-1932.

*A Collection of Historical Data, Maps, and Plans Made with the Assistance of
Pioneers of Vancouver Between March and December 1931.*

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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we just used our old uniforms, so that you cannot be sure with these old photographs that they are the exact uniforms of the Westminster units.

“Chas McNaughten—ten, not —ton—is the officer on the corner of the column in the photo of the B.C.B.G.A. on Cordova Street, Dominion Day, 1887. Lieutenant Doane of the Bank of British Columbia, New Westminster, went to Portland, Oregon. A third officer, who should have been on parade, but I don’t see him, is Lieutenant R.J. Rickman, John Hendry’s right hand man, chief accountant of the Royal City Planing Mills. John McMurphy, whom John Reid—sergeant then, now captain—says was on parade, was a son of Sergeant Major John McMurphy of the Royal Sappers and Miners.”

In Colonel Robertson’s *History of the 5th Regt. C.G.A., (Victoria,) and B.C. Coast Defenses*, only three copies of which were typewritten—one in Ottawa, one in Provincial Archives, Victoria, and one in Vancouver City Museum—it states:

“... wrote Governor Douglas on Nov 18th 1863 etc. ... a roll of 55 names has been made up to form the New Westminster Volunteer Rifles in the mainland colony of B.C. ... change of name to New Westminster Rifle Corps in 1866.”

JUNE 1931 - SEYMOUR BATTERY. CAPTAIN (JUDGE) BOLE. SENIOR SERGEANT JOHN REID.

Captain John Reid was a senior sergeant in the New Westminster Rifle Company in 1887, and was on parade on Cordova Street in the famous parade of soldiers in the Dominion Day parade, 1887. He states the photo of Judge Bole, taken in uniform by “Judkins, Puget Sound, Washington Territory” (showing two buttons above and two below crossbelt—see Archives) was “taken about 1880.”

Provided this photo was taken before 1884, or late 1883, it is very likely the uniform of an officer of the Seymour Battery—long thought completely lost. A memorandum of a conversation with Captain Bole on this subject, by Major Matthews, is in the Provincial Archives. The star of rank is on the collar; it may be that in those days an ensign wore one star, a lieutenant two, a captain three, and that Judge Bole was an ensign at the time it was taken.

(Note: prior to 1930, all junior officers were “lieutenants,” and wore two stars on their shoulder straps; after 1930, second lieutenants wore one star, lieutenants, two stars. The old form dates back forty or more years.)

29 JUNE 1931 - WILD ANIMALS IN VANCOUVER.

A cougar was killed by men sent to hunt it, in Stanley Park about the last week of October 1911. It is now to be seen, mounted, in a glass case at the Stanley Park Pavilion.

A black bear was shot about the end of June 1911 on Angus Road (now Forty-Seventh Avenue West), Kerrisdale, by Mr. W.D. Goodfellow.

NOTE ADDED LATER:

Reeve J.A. Patow, in *Province*, 29 May 1937, writing under “Point Grey Still Grows,” records this bear as having been killed in Kerrisdale, 27 July 1911.

Soon after the Richmond Rifle Range was opened in October 1904, Captain J. Reynolds Tite purchased, from Mr. Magee, the site of his subsequently beautiful home on Marine Drive, then Magee Road, about a mile from Magee Station on the interurban line; he cleared the site with his own hands largely. There was a great deal of forest around; Magee Road was a forest road; there was a small shingle or sawmill, with a railway siding, on the interurban just south of Magee station.

I met Captain Tite one morning as he was entering his office. He said that a cougar crossed in front of him as he came up the road that morning; wished he had had his rifle; said that he frequently saw deer.

About 1902, possibly earlier or later, a telephone message was received in the Imperial Oil Company's office, then in the DeBeck Block, Hastings Street, asking Mr. C.M. Rolston—then bookkeeper, for many years after manager—to hurry home as a bear was near the fence at the back of their garden at the corner of 13th Avenue and Ontario Street.

The writer went to live at 1343 Maple Street, between Kitsilano Beach and the Indian Reserve, in December 1911. For three or four years afterwards there were coons in the Kitsilano Indian Reserve; my son Hugh hunted them.

Before 1913, before the Pacific Dredging Company filled in, with sand pumped from False Creek, the muskeg at the back of the Kitsilano Beach, a deep slough, filled with sluggish water, ran from about the Henry Hudson School to the centre of the beach. It crossed the street car fill through a culvert, and ran northwesterly through what is now Laburnum Street to the beach. My son Hugh caught several muskrats there in 1911–1913. Hardpan was about four feet down through the muskeg; the muskeg was rank with coarse grass and small bushes, willows, etc.; the banks of the slough, which was too wide to jump across, overhung with vegetation of various sorts; the ground was black loam, the decayings of centuries, and strong enough to support a man's weight, dry enough to walk across; a veritable muskrat paradise.

About 1887, a wolf was shot, behind what is now the bathhouse on Kitsilano Beach. It was shot out of the bedroom window by Mr. Sam Greer, and its body found dead in the garden when daylight came.

J.S.M.