

Early Vancouver

Volume One

By: Major J.S. Matthews, V.D.

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.

Copyright Statement

© 2011 City of Vancouver. Any or all of *Early Vancouver* may be used without restriction as to the nature or purpose of the use, even if that use is for commercial purposes. You may copy, distribute, adapt and transmit the work. It is required that a link or attribution be made to the City of Vancouver.

Reproductions

High resolution versions of any graphic items in *Early Vancouver* are available. A fee may apply.

Citing Information

When referencing the 2011 edition of *Early Vancouver*, please cite the page number that appears at the bottom of the page in the PDF version only, not the page number indicated by your PDF reader. Here are samples of how to cite this source:

Footnote or Endnote Reference:

Major James Skitt Matthews, *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 1 (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011), 33.

Bibliographic Entry:

Matthews, Major James Skitt. *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 1. Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011.

Contact Information

City of Vancouver Archives
1150 Chestnut Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3J9
604.736.8561
archives@vancouver.ca
vancouver.ca/archives



the consequent superabundance of salmon; probably the most favoured location in hundreds of miles.

As an early resident, thirty years, at the mouth of False Creek, so far as I know, there were no middens between the C.P.R. tracks on Yew Street, and the Indian Reserve boundary, on the False Creek shore. A few clam shells, broken bits, could be found almost anywhere, but nothing more. Behind the beach was an extensive muskeg, along the cliff north of Ogden Street there was no trace of middens; all the higher land was clothed in heavy timber. But between the western boundary of the Indian Reserve there was a wide flat of sand running almost as far as the Burrard Street Bridge; beyond that the usual mud of False Creek. The Indian village was, in 1898-1907, *exactly under* the present Burrard Street Bridge. There may be some remains of middens along that shore, but I have never noticed any.

J.S. Matthews

Extract, *Daily News-Advertiser*, 9 July 1887, page 4.

"The Siwash ranche below the Hastings Mill was the scene of another disgraceful disturbance on Thursday night. About a dozen Indians amused themselves by getting drunk," etc., etc.

The ranche was cleared out about a week later. They had built themselves a number of shacks there, and became a nuisance.

JUNE 1931 - FIRST DOMINION DAY CELEBRATION, 1887. SEYMOUR BATTERY. WESTMINSTER RIFLES. SERGEANT MAJOR J.C. CORNISH.

In checking over my article on "Vancouver Celebrates Her First Dominion Day," published in the *Province*, 28 June 1930, with Sergeant Major J.C. Cornish, now of White Rock, where he was formerly a customs officer, he said:

"I was only eighteen when I joined the new Canadian permanent force just after Confederation. You will see me in my winter uniform in the photograph in my album, first page, in the Vancouver City Museum. There is also a photograph of C Battery, R.C.A., the first permanent unit of Canadian forces to arrive in B.C.; it has something about 'wish you a Merry Christmas' on a big notice.

"The uniform of the Seymour Battery of New Westminster, afterwards amalgamated with the B.C.B.G.A. as No. 1 Battery, was modelled on that of the Royal Artillery, a so-called bearskin busby, but actually made out of some other animal's fur. They had blue tunics, with red facings, and yellow braid.

"Lieutenant Chas McNaughten, the rifle shot" (see Laurie Bugle team photo, 1884, in Archives), "died in 1889. I was at his funeral, a military funeral, in New Westminster. A Mr. Fiennes-Clinton was one of our officers, perhaps it was Reverend Father Clinton."

Query: In the Sixth Regiment D.C.O.R. souvenir book, 1907, it reads that the Seymour Battery had the same uniform as the Royal Artillery, minus the red shoulder straps and monogram 'VRI'?

Answer: "The Royal Artillery never had red shoulder straps; they had blue shoulder straps with an edging of red. I don't know about the 'VRI.'"

"The old records of the Westminster militia were not destroyed in the old Drill Hall on Clarkson Street. We moved over to the new Drill Hall, the one they now use, several years before the fire of 1898. The old Drill Hall on Clarkson Street must have fallen down, I suppose.

"The uniform of the New Westminster Rifles," said Captain F.R. Glover, formerly of the 72nd Seaforth Highlanders, later of the B.C. Electric Railway Company, and an officer of the Rifles in the early days, "was supposed to be exactly the same as the Rifle Brigade of the British army. I don't know that it actually was, or that all of us had it. Some of us, I had, served in the East" (eastern Canada) "before we came out to B.C., and so had our uniforms; perhaps others did, so

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.