

Early Vancouver

Volume Two

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Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1932.

Supplemental to volume one collected in 1931.

About the 2011 Edition

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Yet, here he sat and solemnly told me that he believed the above story, and even related it with such earnestness that it was almost convincing to the listener. Respect for his sincerity forbade further questioning.

**CONVERSATION WITH REV. C.M. TATE, 26 NOVEMBER 1932, AS HE LAY IN HIS BED
INDISPOSED AFTER A TOO FESTIVE CELEBRATION TWO WEEKS AGO OF HIS 80TH BIRTHDAY.**

Mr. Tate is probably the foremost Indian linguist of today, and was an Indian missionary who knew all the coast, and up as far as Yale, in the seventies, eighties and nineties. He listened as I read the foregoing page. Then I remarked, Do you believe in Jack and the Beanstalk?

Mr. Tate's reply was a smile, a nod of the head, and the laconic, "Suppose we'll have to." Then I added quizzingly, And the biblical story of the five loaves and the little fishes with which Christ fed the multitude? Again he nodded. Then how can we point the finger of scorn and ridicule at the Indians?

Mr. Tate replied, "Well, cannot you see the stone at Chulks; doesn't that prove it? You know that Mount Baker in the state of Washington is the 'Mother of All Indians,' don't you? Well, Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt; what's unreasonable about the Mother of All Indians being turned into a mountain of snow, or Siwash Rock being made from an Indian fisherman?

"Why, I remember," he continued, "one story they told me up at Bella Bella years ago. They told me all about the flood, the great flood which enveloped the earth; that the water was coming up and up, and the people went up the mountain to escape it, but the water kept on coming and coming, until they were in fear that it would soon cover the top. So they cried out, and the people who had gone to a higher mountain heard their cries, broke off the top of the higher mountain, and threw it across to them and saved their lives. Of course, the top broken off landed on top of the smaller mountain, just exactly where it was wanted to fall, and that was twelve miles away. They told me that in all seriousness; the mountain is there yet, top of it and all, just as it was thrown across."

And then the Rev. Mr. Tate smiled again.

AUGUST KITSILANO, OR HAATSALAHNO.

Andrew Paull (Qoitchetahl), secretary of the Squamish Indian Council, having told me that he was a direct descendant of the celebrated hero of the Squamish tribe, Qoitchetahl, the serpent slayer of Squamish—Haxten, an aged Indian woman, says Andrew Paull is the grandson of the great-granddaughter of the original Qoitchetahl—I asked August Kitsilano, grandson of Chief Haatsa-lah-nough, to give me his conception of the legend. He said, 19 December 1932:

"This is the way it was:

"Qoitchetahl just a man, he just get married, then a serpent come in the lake way up above Squamish. Old peoples say to Qoitchetahl, 'You go chase that serpent; don't stay at home asleep with your wife.' So Qoitchetahl he get up, and tell his wife he be away ten days and not to worry; but he go away ten years. Well, when he was going on the way, was following the serpent, he wash, wash, wash himself all the time, take bath in the creeks in the mountains, get power. He gets that power, and the serpent was in the lake swimming about, and then the serpent came to the Indian man. Of course, they talk together, the serpent and the man Qoitchetahl, and the serpent said, 'Go get pitch wood, and drive it into my head, one stick; get three sticks, make sharp, drive one in my head right here, the other one in the middle of my back, and the other one at the end of my dragon tail.' You know, serpents have two heads, one at each end; the one in front is his head, the other is near the tail, and is a dragon's head. I see one once, little fellow, 'bout five feet long; two heads, one in front and one in tail.

"Well, Qoitchetahl did as the serpent told him. Serpent die. Qoitchetahl stay there until serpent all rotten. Then he took a bone, just one special bone, like a club, and he took it down with him out of the mountains. When he comes to the head of the Squamish River, he pulls out that bone, out of his pocket, and he waves it in the air. All the peoples, everybody, just drop, just like dead, but he has stuff which he sprinkle on them, and they all come up again. When the peoples come up, they give him a wife, and by time he gets back to Squamish he had eighteen wives. Everywhere he goes, the people fall down just like

dead, and he bring them back to life again; his real wife, he just let her die; he had eighteen other wives with him."

Then my friend August Jack said, "I must be off; I've got to see the manager of the sawmill at Eburne about my log scale sheets. Would you mind telephoning him I shall be late keeping my appointment?"

How can one reconcile the assertion of this hard-headed business man, this splendid Indian man, that he had seen a "little serpent" of the kind Quitchetahl gets credit for having killed? I did not ask him where he had seen it. I asked him a similar question once, and do not care to do it again—his retort was too vigorous.

CHIEF CHIP-KAAY-AM (CHIEF GEORGE OF SNAUQ).

"Statement made 7 July 1932 to F.J.C. Ball, Indian Agent, at request Major J.S. Matthews, by August Jack (or Supplejack) at Mr. Ball's office, 837 Hastings Street, and taken down as narrated. (Copy.)

"August Jack says Chief Chip-kay-m, or Chief George, was first chief to make a home at Hat-sa-lah-no, he and his brother-in-law, Chief Andrews' father. They built canoes there and dried smelts and made traps on the sandbar (Granville Island) for flounders, perch, etc. They built a big house there, a great potlatch house. Before that, the Musqueam Indians occasionally went there to fish, but never established residence of any kind. Chief (George) Chip-kay-m came from the far end of Squamish River to settle where the Kitsilano Reserve is now. They lived there all the time except when up Squamish drying salmon in summer. Chief George had one daughter who married John Beatty, a white man; she had one daughter. Chief George had no son.

"August Jack's grandfather and Chief George were brothers, and August Jack's people lived in Stanley Park. August Jack's grandfather's name was Haat sa lah no, he had no English name as his brother George had. Haat sa lah no had a son named Supplejack who married Sally from Ykhopsim (Yekwaupsum) Reserve, Squamish River, and August Jack is their son. Other children were Louisa, Willie Jack, Cecile, Agnes, August."

CHIEF LAH-WA.

"Chief Lah-wa came from Capilano where he was chief. Lah-wa was drowned off Brockton Point; he left no sons. Chief Joe Capilano was put on as chief after Lah-wa's death, but was not a near relative; the tribe intermarried, and they were all distantly related to each other, but were not cousins, or even second cousins. Lah-wa's predecessor was called Chief Capilano, after his death Lah-wa, who was Capilano's son-in-law" (?) (see Genealogy of Capilano) "became chief. Capilano's name was Joe, and after he was made chief he took the name of Capilano Joe."

(signed) "Frederick J.C. Ball, Indian Agent"

FOOD SUPPLY IN INDIAN DAYS.

Dick Isaacs (Que-yah-chulk), Indian, North Vancouver Reserve, 7 November 1932. He is aged 70 or 75.

"Oh, lots food those days; walk right up to bear and deer and shoot, him fall down, no scared. No noise then, he never hear gun. Now him hear gun, get scared, run away; those days very quiet, stand still. Indian just walk right up with bow and arrow; shoot, just like walk up tame cow. Shoot duck just same. Indian very good with bow and arrow."

Chil-lah-minst (Jim Franks) born at Skwa-yoos (Kitsilano Beach) about 1870.

"Plenty of mowich" (food) "here those days."