

Early Vancouver

Volume Two

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

2011 Edition (Originally Published 1933)

Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1932.

Supplemental to volume one collected in 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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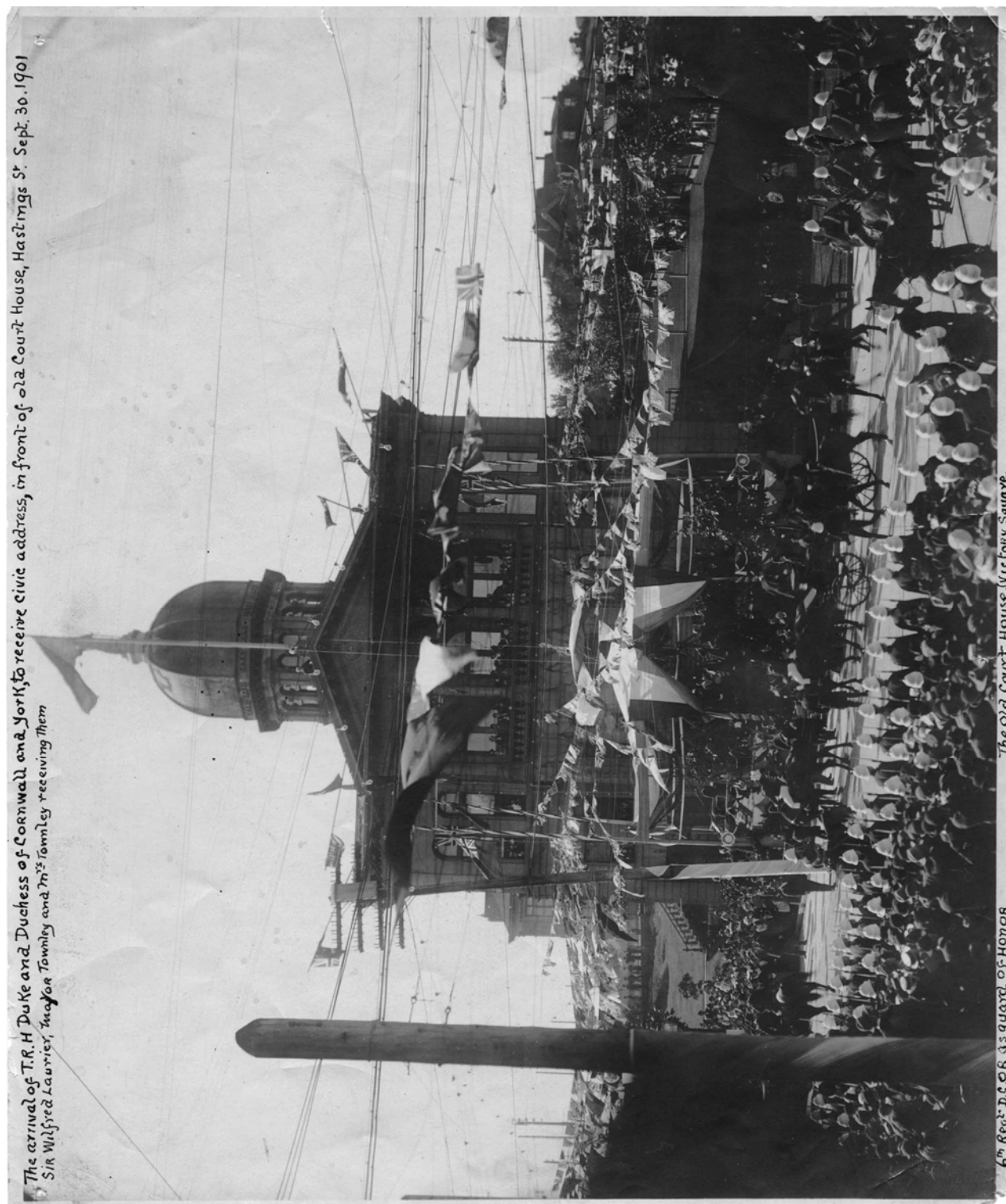
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Contact Information

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





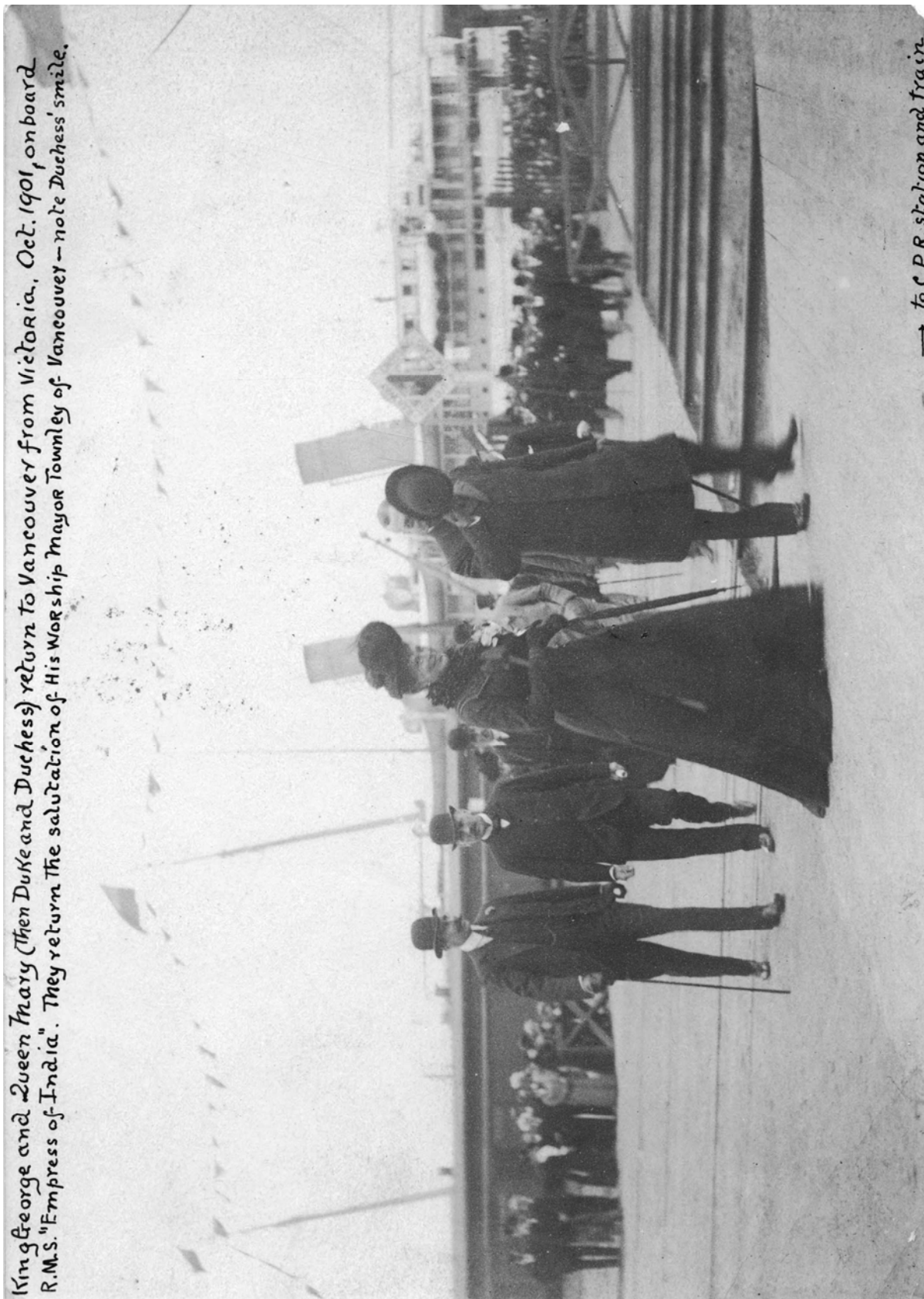
The arrival of T.R. H. Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York to receive civic address, in front of Old Court House, Hastings St. Sept. 30. 1901
 Sir Wilfred Laurier, Mayor Townley and Mrs. Tomlinson receiving them

The Old Court House, Victoria Square.

6th Regt. D.F.C. as guard of honor

Item # EarlyVan_v2_142

King George and Queen Mary (then Duke and Duchess) return to Vancouver from Victoria, Oct. 1901, on board R.M.S. "Empress of India". They return the salutation of His Worship Mayor Townley of Vancouver — note Duchess' smile.



→ to C.P.R. station and train

Item # EarlyVan_v2_143

Lieut. Col. T. O. Townley, first commanding officer of militia in Vancouver. 1894
and mayor of Vancouver in 1901



Item # EarlyVan_v2_144

DUKE AND DUCHESS OF CORNWALL AND YORK, 1901. HIS WORSHIP LT. COL. T.O. TOWNLEY.

Copy.

Newmarket, Ont.
Jan 23rd 1932.

Dear Major Matthews:

Re Royal Visit in 1901

I will try and put down a few more bits from memory. First, regarding the present King George's visit to Vancouver in 1901. He was then styled the Duke of Cornwall and York—the title of Prince of Wales was not bestowed upon him until after his return to London after the famous world's tour which embraced all the British Empire except India—which was the subject of a separate visit or durbar. When it became known that Canada was to be included in his itinerary on his way back from Australia, I got busy—I was Mayor of Vancouver at the time. According to the published itinerary through Canada, the Royal party was scheduled to visit Victoria—merely passing through Vancouver en route. I called together a few of the prominent citizens, and it was decided to send a man to Ottawa to get first hand information. Mr. E.R. Ricketts of the staff of the Bank of Montréal was chosen, and he proceeded at once on his mission. He was received most heartily at Ottawa—lunching at Government House with Lord and Lady Minto, and was given the entrée by Sir Wilfrid Laurier to all officials necessary for his purpose. The result was that the itinerary of the Royal party was changed, and Vancouver was given a day on the official programme. On Mr. Ricketts's return, and after receiving his report, he was appointed permanent secretary with the consent of the late Mr. Campbell Sweeny, then the manager of the Bank of Montréal, committees were struck, including the ladies for their end of it, and everything done to make the visit worthy of Vancouver and its citizens. (Note: the *Daily Province* has an article written by Arthur Cotton and it is enclosed in the box of photos, etc. I mailed to you a few days ago; you will find many details there.) The Royal party arrived (by C.P.R. train) in two sections—the first having on board the Premier, Sir Wilfrid Laurier—arriving first, and the second train half an hour later. A mounted escort was furnished by the North West Mounted Police of Regina, and accompanied the visitors to Vancouver and Victoria. The North Pacific Squadron of the British Navy was lying in Burrard Inlet with Admiral Bickford's flag flying (see *Province* for list of ships). The Royal train arrived on time to the minute, and was welcomed by a Royal salute by the fleet. Vancouver was crowded with visitors and the approach from the C.P.R. to the dais erected in front of the old Court House (Victory Square now) was roped off and lined with the local police, and the 6th Regiment "The Duke of Connaught's Own Rifles." The streets were a mass of bunting; all the prominent buildings were decorated. Many arches were built along Cordova, Hastings and Granville streets. When the Royal carriage drew up at the dais, His Worship Mayor Townley and Mrs. Townley received them on behalf of the city, and Sir Wilfrid Laurier on behalf of the Dominion Government. The members of the City Council and many leading citizens were on the platform, when His Worship read an address, after which little Miss Edith Townley presented Her Royal Highness with a bouquet of beautiful flowers. This function being completed the Royal party drove by way of Hastings, Westminster Avenue, Cordova and Cambie streets to the Drill Hall, which had lately been completed. The Duke, in a few words, declared the same duly opened. An adjournment was then made to the Officers' Mess where luncheon was served. After the toast to the King had been drunk, the Royal party adjourned to their train—to meet again at the Hastings Mill at the invitation of the management—Mrs. John Hendry, R.W. Alexander, and Charles M. Beecher—where a number of giant trees were cut into timber to the intense enjoyment and interest of the Duke and Duchess and their suite. The next part of the programme was a drive around Stanley Park via Granville, Georgia and Denman streets. By special invitation His Worship was in the Royal Carriage which, with its mounted escort, made a beautiful drive, stopping en route to visit the Big Trees, and to witness the gathering of school children filling the grandstand at Brockton Point Grounds. After the children had sung a few patriotic numbers, the party drove back through the city to board the H.M.S. *Empress of India* which was to convey them to Victoria. At the corner of Granville and Hastings Street, a band of Tsimpsonian tribe of Indians

from Fort Simpson in full tribal costume were met, and their chief presented an address and gift to H.R.H.—a headdress of eagle feathers if I remember aright. Then we drove down the incline to the wharf and I was invited on board and the Duke and Duchess presented me with individual autographed photographs; thanking me very heartily for the wonderful welcome they had received. The official reply to the address came later in a printed memorandum. At night the city and harbour were a blaze of illuminations, and the *Empress* pulled out in the wee sma' hours for Victoria, where a day was spent, and then the Royal Party turned East, and brought their transcontinental visit to an end.

This sketch may easily be enlarged upon by consulting the files of the local papers for the year 1901.

Yours faithfully,

T.O. Townley.

THE 6TH REGIMENT, "THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT'S OWN RIFLES." OFFICERS' MESS. BEATTY STREET DRILL HALL.

Col. Townley writes that the Officers' Mess was curtained, carpeted and furnished—the building had just been completed—by the committee in charge of the Royal visit, and the furniture was afterwards presented to the regiment at his instance as Mayor. He was also a former commanding officer of the same unit before its change from artillery to rifles. The chairs used by Their Royal Highnesses—two of them—and the Royal luncheon table, were marked with small silver distinguishing plates and inscription by Major Matthews in 1932.

All trace of the despatch box, containing the papers, etc., etc., of the Royal visit, belonging to the reception committee, has been lost. Mr. E.R. Ricketts carefully treasured them until his death abroad; no information can be obtained as to what became of them. JSM.

THE 6TH REGIMENT, "THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT'S OWN RIFLES." LIEUT. COL. H.D. HULME. VISIT OF HIS EXCELLENCY THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT.

On his first visit to Vancouver in his capacity of His Excellency the Governor-General about 1911, the Duke of Connaught dined with his officers of the regiment of which he was honorary colonel. The dinner was held in the Hotel Vancouver, the new wing of which had recently been opened, the wing next Howe Street.

There were two or three meetings of the officers of the regiment to arrange for the dinner, and at the final one, Col. Hulme, then, I think, president of the Officers' Mess said from his chair at the head of the mess:

"Well, gentlemen, everything is all finished. You are to dine with His Royal Highness on" (I think) "Thursday night; there is to be Royal squab, and I don't know just what else, but the price will be seventeen dollars and fifty cents per plate," (\$17.50) "*which you will all pay.*" Then, without a second's hesitation, he continued, "Mr. Secretary, what's the next order of business?" The secretary stated something, and the meeting went on.

This story is recorded simply to show the wonderful esprit de corps which existed in the "Old Sixth," and the great confidence which the officers had in their seniors, and their splendid training. Added to this was Col. Hulme's wonderful personality; when he left to take over the command of the 62 Overseas Battalion, the officers presented him with a purse of gold one evening after drill. It was nearing midnight, but they sent a cab, I believe it was, down for his wife, got her out of bed, and brought her up to the Mess where they had a great bouquet of flowers for her, and wallop big cake for the colonel's children at home in bed. Hulme told me afterwards, "Say, Matthews, that's some experience to go through, my boy; I had hard work to keep from shedding a tear." But to return to the dinner.

The dinner took place. The band played soft music on the lawn of the Court House, surrounded by a huge crowd, brilliant lights, arches illuminated, etc., etc., and the crowd peering on tiptoe to get a glimpse of those within the hotel, which, by the movement, they could see were attending some function; actually the