

## **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 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the City's founding. The project was made possible by funding from the Vancouver Historical Society.

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## **INDIAN HOUSES. JOHN INNES.**

In conversation today with John Innes, the last of the pioneer historical scenic painters, at his office in the Province building, Hastings Street, Vancouver, and who ornamented the map of Indian place names, published in the *Province* of 12 March 1933 under the caption "BEFORE THE PALE-FACE CAME," I asked him to tell me about the building he drew to adorn the map.

"That building was at Bella Coola; I sketched it years ago; it was the finest Indian community house I ever saw. It was about sixty feet long, 25 or 30 feet wide, and about 15 feet to the cross timbers inside. At the far end the chief and his family lived, at the near end the slaves; down the centre was earth, where the fires were built. On each side of the earthen centre was a platform on which the dancing took place, and between the platform, which extended on both sides of the building from one end to the other, were the sections, or 'cubby holes,' where the families lived.

"The roof had a pitch of about ten percent; very flat; but in the centre of the building—not from end to end, but in the centre only—on the roof, was a portion of the roof which was raised, as you will see in my drawing, to let the smoke out. The smoke opening extends a few feet in the centre of the roof."

I asked, "I thought they" (the Indians) "built roofs with one slope only, and knew nothing about gables?"

"No," answered Mr. Innes, "that building had a gable roof; I think it is there yet, at the 'Rascal's Village' which MacKenzie, the explorer, speaks of in his narrative."

The map in question was illustrated by Mr. Innes without my knowledge, and published as illustrated. The evidence of Mr. C.M. Tate and Professor Chas. Hill-Tout (see their remarks and reports) is distinctly that Squamish Indians, at least, built lean-to buildings, and did not build gable roofs. Further, a picture drawn by the artist on Captain Cook's ships at Nootka in 1778 shows lean-to buildings.

J.S. Matthews

## **ALTERATION OF PRONUNCIATION BY SUCCEEDING GENERATION OF INDIANS.**

Rev. C.M. Tate, Methodist Indian Missionary, 25 August 1932: "I have known of cases where there was a grandfather, a father and a grandchild; the father would have to interpret the grandchild's speech to the grandchild's own grandfather. Professor Hill-Tout is right."

Professor Hill-Tout explains that the interpretation of sounds as herein given by him are from notes made by him over forty years ago; a somewhat difficult task, and further, surviving Indians of the generation amongst which he laboured inform him that the present generation of Indians do not invariably pronounce words as did their forefathers, and suggest that perhaps these two facts account for the slight differentiation between authorities.

Tim Moody (Yahmas), a North Vancouver Indian whose forehead is flat—flattened in his babyhood, according to former Indian custom—probably 60 or 70 years old, anyway old enough to recall the Hudson's Bay steamer *Beaver* lying on the rocks at Prospect Point in 1886-1892, that is over forty years ago. I had come to ask him to pronounce the Indian names because, I said to him, "young Indian say differently old Indian."

In reply he looked up, his eyes glistened, and he gesticulated concurrence, and said, "Eh, eh" (Yes, yes.)

Remark by Prof. Hill-Tout: "The epithet 'Siwash' is a corruption of the French word 'sauvage,' i.e. 'wild, savage.'" See Chillahminst (Jim Franks).