

Early Vancouver

Volume Three

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Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1933-1934.

Supplemental to Volumes One and Two collected in 1931-1932.

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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needle. Ike said, 'Be fi' dollars, very good darning needle, I sell it for fi' dollars; it worth ten dollars, but' (confidentially) 'I sell it to you for fi' dollars, but don't tell Dave; Dave got bad heart; he die if you tell him.'"

"Another one is about Dave, Ike and some other fellow playing poker.

"The other fellow: 'Who shuffled?'

"Dave: 'Ike.'

"The other fellow: 'Who dealt?'

"Ike: 'Dave.'

"The other fellow: 'Pass.'"

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH JOHN INNES, CELEBRATED CANADIAN PAINTER OF HISTORICAL SCENES, APRIL 1933.

BELLA COOLA. INDIAN HOUSES.

"The diagrammatic drawing of an Indian Community Dwelling at Bella Coola is made from rough sketches made in my notebook when, in company with Mr. Harland I. Smith of the Victoria Museum, Ottawa, in September 14-15, 1924, I visited there. The totem poles in the drawing were added to the drawing for decorative effect; they did not exist in reality.

"We had some difficulty in getting into the old building, as someone had fitted a modern door to its only entrance, and the door was padlocked, and the key in the possession of an old witch doctor, goodness knows how old he was, he was very old, very grumpy, hates white men, and claims to have killed six white men by his magic. 'Stikine Joe' was his name. He finally opened it.

"The building was old and decayed, quite empty, could not be lived in, nor was there sign that it had been occupied for years, very gloomy and dark inside, we could hardly see all of it, but it was all there, all the floors were in place, and many of the relatives' cubicles.

"The aged Indian lit a fire, just an act of hospitality, I suppose, and the smoke went out of the roof openings, and then he explained to us how each portion of the building was occupied and used, the chief at the far end, then his relatives, and the servants, and slaves, in that order, towards the entrance.

"I was able to make a few notes of the construction, but with difficulty, as it was so dark inside. The roof was of thick cedar boards, hand-split shakes, with a sort of dormer over the central part, with openings to let the smoke out. The posts, also cedar, were trimmed and adzed around, not very sound, and I supposed may have been replaced as the earlier ones decayed, although cedar is very lasting. There was no ornamentation on them, nor anywhere else in the building. The walls of horizontally laid cedar boards, split and adzed, unpainted, and without nails; they were tied with roots to the upright posts. The wall boards had bored in them small holes through which the roots passed. There were no chinks, the wall boards fitted very close; I don't know how they built it, but the boards were a beautiful fit. Perhaps the walls were double; I could not see in the darkness, and there was no time to bore through them, as the old Indian was anxious to get rid of us. The dancing floor was split and tooled-adzed-timber, and in the centre was an oblong of earth floor in the centre of which was a concave hole, say nine inches deep, in the middle, where the fire was burning.

"The cubicles were about six feet deep, five feet wide, open at one end, and roofed over at about five feet high, and goods stored, so we were told, on the roof. Not much imagination is needed to conceive the weird spectacle an Indian dance around that fire must have been; the flames, the masks, the shadows, the reflection on the masks; it must have been a weird performance." (The drawing is in Provincial Archives; photo copy in City Archives.)

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH JOHN INNES, CELEBRATED PAINTER OF HISTORICAL SCENES OF CANADA, AT HIS OFFICE, 602 PROVINCE BUILDING, VANCOUVER, 30 DECEMBER 1933.

CITY COUNCIL, FIRST MEETING.

Mr. Innes sat smoking his pipe. We had been discussing what size the proposed painting of the first meeting of the first City Council of Vancouver—which I have been trying to get painted—should be; we decided it should be sixty-six inches by ninety. I was looking at his painting of the H.B. steamer *Beaver* in some narrow channel of sea, high mountains beyond, two totem poles and an Indian hut on right, and white traders offering blankets to Indians. I pointed to the painting and said, Is that a real scene?

Mr. Innes: "No. None of my paintings are real scenes; nature seldom makes a picture; you cannot get all of it in; the eye cannot catch it all; but what difference does it make? Why, you know that picture of the Fraser Canyon, the one where the men are passing around a wall on a hanging bridge. Well, old Jason Allard, you know him, old Jason, before he died, used to come in here and declare he knew the spot well; had been there many times, but" (chuckling) "Jason never saw that place; no one ever saw it; it does not exist. The old man was perfectly sincere; he thought he had. The reason is that the picture is an *epitome* of the Fraser Canyon, that's all."

I said I was going over to New Westminster to see Hugh Murray, who came as a child on the *Thames City*.

Mr. Innes, smiling: "I used to sneak over there sometimes and go and sit in the old Holy Trinity Church, sit in a little pew; just sit there and think. You can get a good many old memories back just sitting there; wonderful place to sit. I was leader of the choir there one time, so I just went over to sit in a pew by myself; nobody else in the church; no one knew who I was. I did not know the rector; did not want to."

FATHER PAT.

"Old Father Pat used to be over there—we were great pals; and Bishop Sillitoe; fine man; fine men. Old Father Pat and I used to sit together and talk, in the See House, and smoke the Bishop's cigars and drink his whisky. Father Pat was a wonderful man;" (with emphasis) "a real he-man, if you like."

"Opposite was the Roman Catholic Church. One day, Father Pat said to me, 'Peter's down.' They had got him down off the top of the R.C. Church, and Peter was lying on the sidewalk, waiting to be repainted; he had a brass crown."

"A day or so after I went to see Father Pat and opened the door, and Father Pat was in convulsions laughing. 'Well,' he laughed, 'Peter's up again,'" (pause) "then he ejaculated, 'D'you know how they got him there? Hauled him up with a rope, and' (slyly) 'with a rope around his neck.'"

CONVERSATION WITH LIEUTENANT COLONEL HULME, V.D., BARRISTER, PACIFIC BUILDING, VANCOUVER.

Who raised and commanded the Dawson Rifles of Canada, Dawson, Yukon Territory, the 62nd Overseas Battalion, C.E.F., and commanded the 6th Regiment D.C.O.R. at the outbreak of the Great War, and until 1915, when he raised the 62nd Overseas Battalion at Hastings Park.

DAWSON RIFLES OF CANADA. LIEUTENANT COLONEL HERBERT D. HULME, V.D.

"The organisation of the Dawson Rifles of Canada, officially known as the Dawson Rifle Company, came about in this way.

"I went to Dawson in August 1898 from Toronto, where I had been a captain in the 2nd Regiment Queen's Own Rifles. The Klondike Gold Rush was then at its height. Adventurers from all over the world had been pouring into the Yukon, and in 1899 the Yukon Field Force, a special force of regular or permanent force soldiers fifty strong, was sent in to preserve law and order in support of the North West Mounted Police which was not numerically strong enough. Their commander was Lieutenant Colonel T.D.B. Evans; the second in command was the present Major General Harry Burstall, and the present Major General Thacker, one of the officers. They came down to Dawson in winter outfit. After their arrival they carried on