

Death on One Kitsilano Block

by Edna McGillvray

from a rock plaque at Cornwall Avenue and Trafalgar Street

I have lived in my home for eighty-seven years. This is how death affected one Kitsilano block, from 1st Avenue to 2nd Avenue on Trafalgar Street.

We lost the following boys in World War II: Billy Vandervoort, Bobby Mathers, Gordon Mantle (our paper boy) and the two Worthington brothers, Don and Jack. Don was in command at Falaise in France, and his brother served under him. Their father was Dr. Worthington who owned the Cut Rate Drug Stores. He had a community centre for cards and teas built at 4th and Trafalgar in their memory. It is long gone now.

This Sherman tank, now a static display in front of the Drill Hall on Beatty Street, is similar to those used by the British Columbia Regiment (DCO) in the Northwest Europe campaign of 1944–1945. The Regiment fought in Sherman tanks from Normandy to Germany, and lost over 120 tanks to enemy fire. This Sherman has the same markings and name as the tank Lieutenant-Colonel Worthington took into battle on the 8th and 9th of August 1944.



Both brothers served with the Regiment throughout its training in Canada, first as an infantry battalion, then as an armoured regiment upon conversion of the unit to armour in early 1942. During their training period in the Niagara area, Don was promoted to Major and assigned command of a rifle company and, later, an armoured squadron. With less experience, Jack retained command at the platoon and troop level.

Don went overseas with the Regiment's advance party, while Jack remained with the main party. They trained extensively, both with the Regiment and at various schools and on a variety of courses. Shortly after his arrival in the United Kingdom, Don was assigned to the British Royal Armoured Corps School to attend the Tactical Course; the course report noted that Major Worthington would "make a first class Squadron Leader." This was neither the first nor last time that his exceptional abilities were noted.

In 1943 Don deployed to North Africa where he was attached to the 2nd Lothian and Borders Horse Yeomanry, an armoured regiment assigned to British First Army. He served as a Squadron Commander and Second-in-Command of the Regiment and saw extensive action in the offensive in Tunisia to clear the German Army from North Africa.

Don rejoined his Regiment and his brother in April 1943. His experience, noted leadership qualities and exceptional abilities were noticed in high places. He attended the Canadian Military Headquarters Senior Officers' School from May to July 1943 and was appointed as Second-in-Command of the Regiment while on course.

In June of that year, Jack was promoted to Captain and the following month was assigned as the Regimental Signals Officer, a position he retained until the following August.

On 27 August 1943 Major Don Worthington was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel to command the Regiment; he was responsible for preparing the Regiment for the Northwest Europe campaign. He was a dynamic, popular and demanding Commanding Officer who got the most out of his officers and men. He drove them hard and treated them with respect. As a part of the preparation for combat and in recognition of his abilities, Lieutenant Colonel Worthington was

earmarked to replace his Brigade Commander in the event that Brigadier Booth became a casualty.

Colonel Worthington led his Regiment, as part of Worthington Force, into combat on 9 August 1944 during Operation Totalize. The Regiment's first combat engagement in the war was devastating, with more than half of the soldiers in the fighting echelon lost as casualties, along with three quarters of the Regiment's tanks. Colonel Worthington led his troops from the front throughout the battle and provided an inspiring example through his bravery and leadership. He was mentioned in despatches in "recognition of his gallantry and distinguished service" that day. He died from a shrapnel wound late that afternoon.

Jack Worthington was promoted the day after his brother was killed and assigned command of a squadron, where his first task was to help lead the reconstruction of the Regiment after its heavy losses. On 14 August 1944, Major Worthington led his squadron in Operation Tractable and follow-on offensive operations. In the next four days the Regiment advanced fifteen kilometres to the southeast of Falaise to cut off the retreating Germans. In the confusion of that advance, Jack's tank was mistaken for a German vehicle and strafed by a Royal Air Force Typhoon attack fighter. He was mortally wounded by the friendly fire and died minutes after being turned over to a Polish medical evacuation unit.

In 1946 Jane and Dr. Worthington wrote letters to Canadian Army Headquarters asking that the brothers be interred together. Their request was granted. The story of Don and Jack Worthington is one of inspiration and tragedy; they provided remarkable leadership to the British Columbia Regiment at war. May they Rest in Peace. Dr. and Mrs. Worthington are buried in the Masonic cemetery on North Road in Burnaby.



Wreaths adorn the Cenotaph at Victory Square in downtown Vancouver following the Remembrance Day ceremony in 2009. The words inscribed on the Cenotaph, *Their Name Liveth Forever More*, were written by Rudyard Kipling for use by the War Graves Commission after the First World War. The phrase is carved into the Stone of Remembrance at all Commission war graves cemeteries with more than 1000 graves. Kipling was active with the Commission from its outset after his son Jack, an 18-year old myopic Second Lieutenant with the Irish Guards, went missing and was presumed killed during the Battle of Loos in September 1915.

Heritage Warrior

by Daphne Sleigh, author of *The Man who Saved Vancouver: Major James Skitt Matthews*

OF ALL THE REMARKABLE CHARACTERS who took the stage in the civic life of 20th-century Vancouver, Major James Skitt Matthews was one of the most colourful—and also one of the most significant. Some have called him “the city’s saviour.” A saviour? Yes, in the sense that it was Matthews who saved the city’s history from oblivion; saved it when no one else was taking action; saved it in the face of apathy, indifference and outright opposition. The great achievement of his life was his triumph in founding the City Archives of Vancouver, which opened officially in 1933.

Matthews came out of nowhere when he landed in Vancouver in 1898, a youth of twenty with no money, no contacts and no obvious prospects. He was born in Wales, but when he was nine his parents emigrated to New Zealand with the idea of running a large sheep farm. Many things went wrong for them; they uprooted again and sailed for South America, leaving the teenage James behind to fend for himself. He quickly found consolation in the form of pretty little Maud Boscawen, and soon the couple were secretly engaged. Since her aristocratic father had always disapproved so strongly of young James, life in New Zealand seemed out of the question. James headed for North America, sent for Maud as soon as he was able, and they married in Vancouver in 1899.

In Vancouver he soon found a steady job with Imperial Oil, rising from the junior position of clerk to that of an accountant and sales manager. But his passionate interest outside his working hours was his life in the militia. He joined the Duke of Connaught’s Own Rifles in 1904, and this became his great enthusiasm—the parades, the camps, and above all, the history and tradition of the regiment. He swiftly acquired the position of regimental historian, and this was the beginning of his other life as a compulsive archivist and collector.

Gradually he amassed an unwieldy accumulation of antiquities and “relics,” as he liked to call them. He did not restrict himself to documentary records, for he was attracted to any item of historical interest, and since he was collecting for the regiment as well as himself, it also included old military uniforms, badges, weapons, and so forth.

Opposite

Major James S. Matthews poses proudly in his Duke of Connaught uniform. The “Major” served as the City of Vancouver’s archivist from 1933 until his death in 1970 at the age of 92.

Below

A bronze sculpture of the Major’s beloved wife, Emily, along with one of the old warrior himself, Major Matthews, are on display in the city’s archives.



With the First World War his enjoyable times in the Beatty Street Drill Hall were soon transformed into the harsh reality of frontline warfare. He enlisted with the Canadian Expeditionary Force, and in the last months of the Battle of the Somme he received a severe head injury, which left him permanently deaf in one ear. His active service was over. He returned home, but on the day of his arrival Maud told him she was leaving him for another man.

After the divorce James married again to Emily Edwardes, a nurse who had served courageously overseas in the war. This was to be a most compatible marriage, in which Emily gave James all the affection and support which this prickly character so badly needed.

But the 1920s were troubling times for James. One of the great sorrows of his life was the loss of his much loved youngest son, Hugh, who met sudden death in an elevator accident at the office where he worked for the Robertson-Goodson Co. Ltd. in 1922. This was a traumatic bereavement for James. He began to experience a sense of emptiness in his career. He had left Imperial Oil after the war and was now trying various forms of commercial enterprise, but with little feeling of fulfilment. Suddenly an idea came to him: he would turn his leisure pursuit of collecting into a serious avocation.

First he offered to set up a Vancouver archives as a branch of the Provincial Archives in Victoria, but the provincial budget would not allow of this. He had to settle for starting out informally as an unpaid amateur archivist, working in a shabby attic of the Vancouver Public Library. It took four years of heavy networking before he could finally steamroller the Vancouver City Council into creating an archives department and appointing him as city archivist. Only the powerful personality of Major Matthews could have achieved such a result at the height of the Great Depression.

Once ensconced in City Hall, he presided over the Archives like a benevolent dictator, doing exactly as he pleased, ignoring his budget, commissioning photos and paintings, making up the rules as he went along. He irritated the bureaucrats, but the public loved his forthright style, and he also had the affectionate support of many high-ranking civic leaders, who understood the value of his work. He worked with a consuming energy, often writing up his histories until far into the night. If it were not for Major Matthews we would not have the seven volumes of *Early Vancouver*, the interviews with Chief Khatsahlano or the map of historic native sites. We would not



The Robertson-Goodson Co. Ltd., a plumbing supply facility located on Beatty Street south of the Sun Tower and immediately north of the Beatty Street Drill Hall, was the scene of the tragic elevator accident that claimed the life of the Major's son Hugh.

have the hundreds of documents, photos, paintings and plans that constitute the Matthews Collection which researchers consult to this day.

Councils came and went; but Matthews stayed firm, whether he offended authority or not. Efforts to induce him to retire, once he was over eighty, proved useless. He died at the age of ninety-two, still the City Archivist of Vancouver, in charge of his beloved archives.

A Man For His Time

BORN IN TORONTO IN 1889, Austin Cottrell Taylor was educated at St. Andrew's College in Aurora, located north of his birth city, and made his first \$1,000,000 playing the stock markets before reaching his 21st birthday. He was an excellent polo player and played in the east, and when he came to BC played up and down the west coast as far south as California in amateur polo matches. He was definitely a man's man, happiest in the outdoors with his dogs and horses, fishing or hunting. He married Kathleen Elliott, a graduate from the University of Manitoba, and the couple had a son and two daughters.

The 28-year-old Major Taylor came to British Columbia in 1917 as the Director of the Aeronautical Department of Britain's Imperial Munitions Board in charge of harvesting the straight, tough and fine-grained Sitka spruce from the Queen Charlotte Islands for the manufacture of training aircraft for the war effort. He was directed to fulfill the IMB's mandate and with Harold R. MacMillan, Chief Forester, to deliver "Airplane Spruce" to the fledgling aircraft industry both at home and in England. An expert organizer, Taylor quickly set up hundreds of camps, scores of tugboats, and thousands of men to cut down the trees. Canadian Pacific Railway Company tugs hauled great rafts of logs across the waters of the Pacific Coast and discharged their cargo at the many mainland mills. The towing of log booms in stormy weather in the open ocean proved to be a nightmarish logistical headache for Major Taylor. The obstacle was solved with a Davis raft that resembled a large sausage stuffed with logs. These rafts delivered logs to mainland mills for processing with the result that hundreds and hundreds of CPR cars rolled eastward monthly loaded with prime airplane lumber bound for the airplane factories in eastern Canada. Dressed lumber was also shipped to England. Great Britain's spruce requirements were 8,500,000 board feet of timber monthly. British Columbia's January 1917 production was 1.36 % of that requirement, 12 % by June, and 80.6 % by November, but with the added fir shipments Canada's contribution reached 97 % of England's total lumber requirements.

Taylor's greatest business venture came in 1931 during the Depression, when he raised the necessary capital to take over a failing gold mine north of Pemberton. He made it into Bralorne Mines Limited, and it became one of Canada's leading gold producers. It also made him a multi-millionaire.



Above

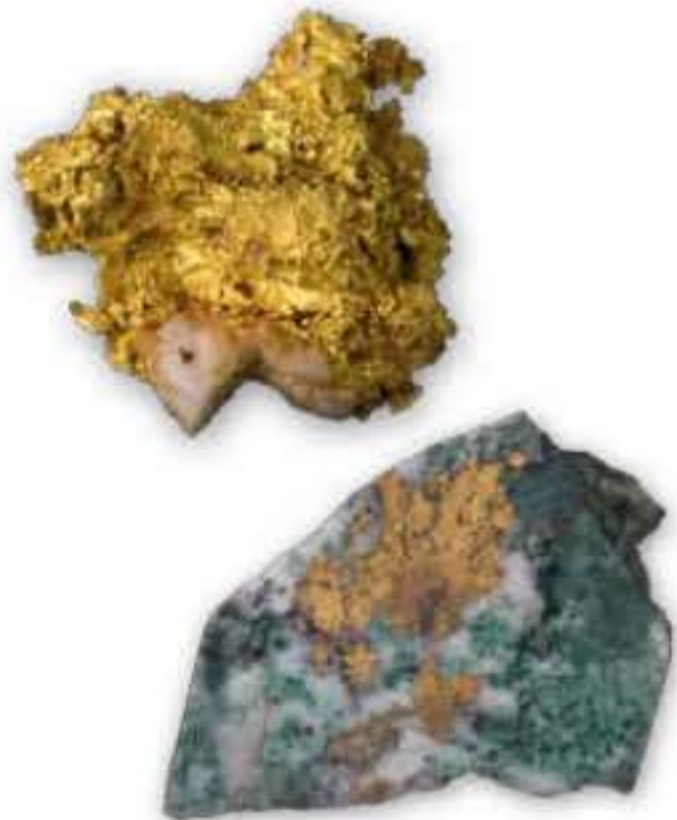
Borsalino in Italy made Austin C. Taylor's fedora for Calhoun's Ltd. in Vancouver.

Opposite

A page from a one-off booklet presented to Major Austin C. Taylor in 1919 by the heads of west coast forestry companies for coordinating the supply of Sitka ("Aeroplane") spruce for the manufacture of wood-framed aircraft that helped the Allies win World War I.

Below

Two gold samples taken from Taylor's Bralorne Gold Mine. The top specimen is over 80% gold.



Mr. Taylor, an avid horseman, became interested in thoroughbred racing in 1928. Now wealthy, he purchased a ranch near Kelowna and the large A.C.T. Breeding Stables at Milner, a suburb of Langley, where he raised the finest thoroughbred stock in BC and trained them on his own track. His horse Indian Broom was the only BC horse ever to enter the Kentucky Derby. It ran third in 1936. Another famous Taylor horse was Special Agent, which won many honours at tracks all over the continent. The horse was apparently named after the 1935 movie "Special Agent" about Canada's William Stephenson, the "Man Called Intrepid." Taylor raced horses mainly in Vancouver and at the Santa Anita track in California. He also used some of his fortune to purchase a Tudor revival style manor in Shaughnessy Heights. The home had been built in 1915 for lawyer and whiskey baron Edward Tulk. Taylor later purchased sugar



The Cookie Drive

by Lerae (née Parrott) Brigden

In 1941, when Shannon was subdivided, my parents built a five-room bungalow on 60th Avenue between Granville and Adera Streets. Young families occupied the surrounding homes. In those days people did not move about very much, so we grew up with all the same neighbourhood kids, and for blocks around we knew who lived in every house except one. It belonged to Austin Taylor and sat in the centre of an ivy-covered brick wall enclosure too high to see over. To us kids it was a scary, grand, off-limits, palatial mansion—another world entirely. It fronted on Granville Street with big iron gates and a gatehouse and backed onto Adera to the west, 57th Avenue to the south and 54th Avenue to the north. For us curious kids this was as good as a haunted house, and the big “double dare” was to find a foothold in the wall, climb over and run as fast as you could to get to the other side of the property before the Doberman pinschers could catch you. It was a bad idea! I once got caught halfway across, so I jumped in the large decorative pool with the dogs in a barking frenzy. The commotion quickly alerted the gatekeeper who unceremoniously escorted me out the gate. Needless to say, I had some mighty fancy explaining to do when I arrived home soaking wet. My sister Jo once tried to sell them Girl Guide cookies and somehow snuck past the coach house and guard. She was met at the main door by a maid and was told to go back to the coach house since they didn't buy cookies at the house.

magnate Benjamin T. Rogers's showplace home named Shannon at 57th Avenue and Granville Street. He spent time at Milner during the summer, but his year-round residence was Shannon.

During the Second World War, the federal government made him a \$1-a-year man, and he held posts as the vice-president of Wartime Shipbuilding Limited as well as chairman of the British Columbia Security Commission that dealt with enemy alien matters. He was also active in organizing Commonwealth air training schools. He was chosen for these positions because of his past performances, his contacts, and his wealth. According to family folklore, Taylor gifted the federal government one million dollars (possibly two) for the war effort.

As the chairman of the British Columbia Security Commission responsible for security matters during the war, Taylor's committee in 1942 made the difficult decision to remove the Japanese from the coast and into internment camps both for their safety and for the country's welfare during the war. At the time it was perceived as a very real threat that Japanese aircraft carriers might make it to the BC coast and attack Greater Vancouver. The Canadian military was afraid that local Japanese-Canadian men might side with the invading army or, if they remained loyal to Canada, might be captured by their own countrymen. Taylor has been much maligned by Japanese-Canadians for the treatment they endured during their time in prison camps, but Canada and Japan were at war, and such measures were thought to be necessary to protect Canadians.

During the war years Taylor spent time in New York, where his daughter Patricia attended university. She later, in 1950, married William F. Buckley Jr., a CIA agent and writer. Buckley ran unsuccessfully for Mayor of New York in 1965.

In 1947 Taylor was awarded the Order of the British Empire for his wartime civilian service. He agreed to chair the BC Emergency Flood

Committee to fundraise for victims of the 1948 Fraser River flood. A modest and humble man, Taylor never sought publicity for his accomplishments even though he held directorships in a number of corporations. He was offered the lieutenant-governorship of BC several times but each time refused the honour. He was a generous and kind man with a wry sense of humour who shunned publicity.

Taylor suffered from arteriosclerosis and died after a long illness in 1965 in Vancouver at the age of 76. A few years after his death property developer Peter Wall purchased Shannon as well as the A.C.T. Breeding Stables in Milner. In 1972 Wall commissioned legendary architect Arthur Erickson to turn the estate into a condo development with the understanding that he preserve both the large home and the coach house.

Shannon was originally built for Benjamin T. Rogers, dubbed BC's "Sugar King." Upon his death his wife sold the mansion and its surrounding property to Major Austin C. Taylor. With Austin's death in 1965 land developer Peter Wall purchased the prestigious estate and with the assistance of world-famous architect Arthur Erickson converted the home and its surrounding area into rental townhouse properties.



The Asiatic Exclusion League

THE ASIATIC EXCLUSION LEAGUE, often abbreviated AEL, was a racist organization formed in the early twentieth century in the United States and Canada, aiming at preventing immigration of people of East Asian origin.

A sister organization with the same name was formed in Vancouver on 12 August 1907 under the auspices of the Trades and Labour Council; its aim was "to keep Oriental immigrants out of British Columbia." On 7 September riots erupted in Vancouver when, after listening to inflammatory racist speeches at City Hall, league members besieged Chinatown. Shouting racist slogans, the white mob marched into Chinatown and Japantown smashing storefronts. An important, albeit indirect, consequence of AEL activity was the introduction of the first drug and gambling laws. The Minister of Labour (and future Prime Minister) William Lyon Mackenzie King investigated the riots and the victims' claims for compensation. An

The Tait residence, called Glen Brae and located in the Shaughnessy Heights district, became the official headquarters of the KKKKK. The twin domes of the lavish home led many to refer to it as the "Mae West" House.



The Kanadian Council of the Ku Klux Klan held a meeting in the former William Lamont Tait residence in Shaughnessy Heights on 25 October 1925 to discuss the expulsion of "Asiatics" from British Columbia.

opium manufacturer submitted a claim that sparked an investigation into the local drug scene, and politicians and police convinced King that opium consumption was spreading to young white women. A federal law was soon passed "prohibiting the manufacture, sale and importation of opium for other than medicinal purposes."

White racists used similar tactics in 1914 to keep the *Komagata Maru* with passengers from India from landing in Vancouver by having crafty lawyers come up with new legislation requiring direct passage from potential immigrants' birthplace to British Columbia.

The AEL resurfaced in the early 1920s and pushed for the passage of the Chinese Immigration Act of 1923 to restrict Chinese immigration to Canada.

In the fall of 1925, the Invisible Empire of the Kanadian Knights of the Ku Klux Klan paraded south down Granville Street to their headquarters in Shaughnessy Heights at Glen Brae, the former residence of lumber baron William Lamont Tait. The klansmen paraded around the grounds in masked white robes, carrying crosses adorned with red electric lights. This came to an abrupt end when the city passed a bylaw prohibiting mask wearing.



Kaiser Bill's Realtor

by Janet Nicol

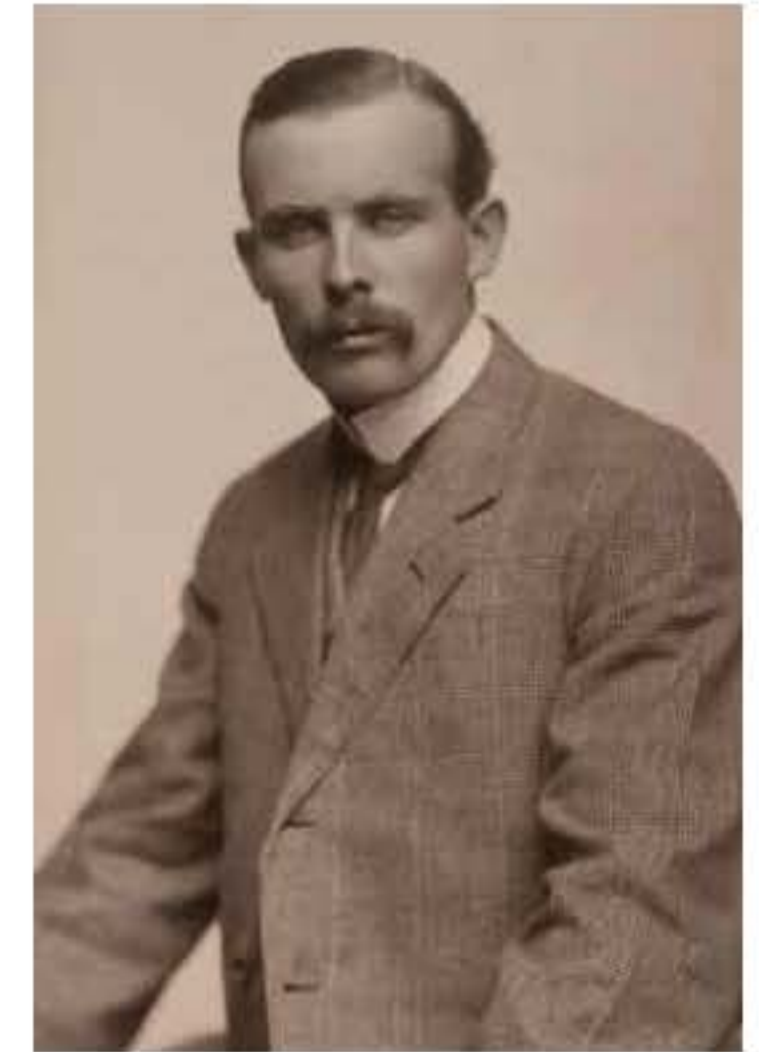
Vancouver Historian

KAISER WILHELM II was the last German Emperor and King of Prussia, ruling from 1888 until 1918. He was born in Berlin to Prince Frederick William of Prussia and Princess Victoria of the United Kingdom. He was Queen Victoria of England's first grandchild. Ironically, Wilhelm II of Prussia and King George V of England were first cousins and when together looked "like two peas from the same pod."

Gustav Konstantin Alvo von Alvensleben was Vancouver's premier German realtor prior to the First World War. He had been born in Germany in 1879 and on completion of his education had spent five years in the Prussian army. His first venture away from his native Germany was a visit to his younger brother's coffee plantation in El Salvador. He then headed north to the goldfields of Alaska. The lanky 25-year-old arrived in Vancouver in 1904 and decided to stay to make his fortune. He recounted his arrival in later life: "I arrived in June 1904 and within a very few days was pitching hay in Agassiz, and from then on, until 1908, earned my living as a working man, including two seasons of fishing for the Brunswick Cannery and I can assure the editor, that the handling of a Columbia River gillnet boat and a few hundred fathoms of net is work, and hard work..."

Alvensleben later bought his own fishing boat and a horse and cart to sell fish and game birds door-to-door to upscale Vancouver restaurants. One of his stops included the back door into the kitchen of the elite Vancouver Club. A few years later the same kitchen staff would see him arrive through the front door as a club member.

By 1907 Alvensleben had enough savings to rent an office downtown, where he advertised his various business services in local newspapers. He became a co-founder of the Vancouver Stock Exchange, and on some days over half of the daily turnover were his transactions. He began to court Edith Mary Westcott, a schoolteacher in Ladner, who happened to be the daughter of a construction engineer at the Brunswick Cannery and from one of the leading families in the city. The pair brushed aside family protests and eloped in 1908. Alvensleben purchased a large 20-acre estate on 41st Avenue in Point Grey, and over the next five years the couple had three children, Margaret, Gero and Bodo.



German-born Gustav Konstantin von Alvensleben came to Vancouver in 1904 and shortly thereafter became heavily involved in investing for wealthy German aristocracy that even included Wilhelm II, the last German Emperor.

Opposite

The red brick and ochre terra cotta-faced Dominion Trust Building was rumoured to have been built with German Kaiser Wilhelm's money and upon completion in 1910 was the tallest commercial building in the British Empire. A year later the nearby Sun Tower became the city's tallest building by one storey. The off-white cenotaph at Victory Square appears in the foreground.

The intersection of Hastings & Richards Streets looking northeast, featuring the David Spencer Department Store, the Standard Furniture Company, J. W. Foster Company with the Woodward's and the Dominion Trust buildings in the background.



Alvensleben began to advertise widely in German newspapers about the wonderful opportunities for enterprise in fast developing Vancouver with the result that a German businessman based in Ottawa was asked to check up on the aggressive west coast entrepreneur. The man travelled to Vancouver and wrote in his memoirs:

Alvensleben was a promoter in great style. When he visited Berlin, he arranged a great meeting in the ballroom of the best hotel in Berlin, and offered to his guests a sumptuous luncheon with caviar and champagne. He lectured them about Canada and her great chances. Near the door stood his brother with a book in which every guest had to enter his name, and was supposed to add the amount he would subscribe to Alvensleben's adventures. There had been a start made already by prominent names with large amounts subscribed, and no guest dared to leave without a subscription.

Thus Alvensleben began to cultivate German bluebloods with millions of dollars to invest in Canadian real estate. They included Field Marshall von Mackensen, Reich Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg, champagne heiress Emma Mumm, and it was rumoured that the Dominion Trust Building, Vancouver's first steel-framed high-rise and the tallest commercial building in the British Empire upon its completion in 1910, was built with Kaiser Wilhelm's money. By 1911 Alvensleben had financed a dozen large companies, whose capital totalled more than \$10,000,000 from German backers.

In 1910 Alvensleben financed the building of the Wigwam Inn, a hideaway resort for wealthy tourists at the north end of Indian Arm. The four-storey cedar inn had a veranda on three sides and peaked gables and originally had a German character as a "Luftkurort" or fresh air resort. There were German band music and beer, and the inn attracted wealthy customers such as John D. Rockefeller, the richest man in the world, and the almost as rich John Jacob Astor. Alvensleben no doubt had plans of entertaining Kaiser Bill, the godfather to his oldest child. He also owned the Minnekhada Ranch in North Coquitlam, where the wealthy of Vancouver came to play polo.

The Berlin stock market crash in the fall of 1911 caused a few of Alvensleben's homeland investors to pull their support for his German commercial empire in the province. The high point of the prosperous era came in 1912 when His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught in his role as Governor General of Canada and his Duchess, the former Princess Louise Marguerite of Prussia, visited the province. That week all the German community outdid themselves as loyal subjects of the crown and as Germans remembering their homeland. The Union Jack and the German flag flew together with the result that the impression was truly one of an Anglo-German society. Through a huge triumphal arch, erected on Vancouver's Granville Street by the German, Austrian and Swiss residents of the city, drove the vice-regal party; the bands thumped; the presentation speeches abounded; and in the evening the nostalgic tunes of Lehar operettas filled the summer air. It was the climax, and also the end, of an era, and a year later it was apparent that the province was in the middle of a major depression.

By the spring of 1914, Alvensleben owned the entire Pacific Building on the southeast corner of Hastings and Howe Streets with his own offices on the ground floor. He employed a staff of 50. That summer Alvensleben returned to Germany to try and convince his clients that the worst of the depression was over and that they could safely reinvest in his many businesses.

When Britain declared war on Germany, Alvensleben was in mid-ocean and on his way back to Vancouver. He was suddenly caught in world politics and would watch helplessly as his empire collapsed. He disembarked in New York and travelled across neutral United States to Seattle from where he contacted Premier Richard McBride, requesting a visa to enter Canada. His pleas to authorities even made the front page of the Vancouver Sun: "My friends know that while I am a good German, my object in coming back is strictly to attend to my business. I am not coming back as an enemy to the people I have lived among so many years." His words



fell on deaf ears. Ironically, only three months before the war began, *BC Magazine* had run an article praising Alvensleben's business schemes under the title: "A Canadian who has brought Canada and Germany into closer relations."

Not a naturalized Canadian citizen, Alvensleben could easily have enlisted in the German military while he was in Europe. Two of his brothers who had spent time in BC returned to Germany to fight for their fatherland, and their actions made Alvensleben's Canadian loyalties more suspect, causing authorities to believe that he wanted to return to Vancouver from abroad as a German spy. His roots were in Germany, while his family and investments were in British Columbia. He was between a rock and a hard place. Refused entry back into British Columbia, the Canadian government was able to confiscate his assets under the newly enacted Custodian of Enemy Property Act. Consequently, his wife and children had no option but to join him in Seattle, where he resided at liberty and continued with developing a coal mining investment with German money. This

This advertisement appeared on the back cover of the *Man to Man Magazine* November 1910, offering properties for sale in the municipalities of Point Grey and South Vancouver by German realtor Gustav Konstantin von Alvensleben.

enterprise did well, and he was able to sell coal to his homeland until the US entered into the war in 1917. He tried to get an exit visa for his family to return to Germany but was instead arrested and sent to an internment camp in Fort Douglas, Utah. The *Salt Lake Tribune* newspaper had this to write about Utah's guest:

Von Alvensleben was a typical officer of the Prussian type, highly educated, and polished in manner and with the upright carriage that denotes years of service in the army. Canadian government officials declare that they have positive information showing that German machinery was set to work before the war to make von Alvensleben governor of British Columbia.

Besides "enemy aliens" such as Alvensleben, the camp population was comprised of military and political prisoners—including members of an anarchist trade union called the Industrial Workers of the World. Alvensleben was considered one of the major troublemakers and spent much time in solitary confinement. When the war ended, he and other internees were kept incarcerated for another year and a half. When released in 1920, Alvensleben was not deported back to Germany but was instead re-united with his family in Seattle, where he went back to practising real estate and investing. In 1926 Canadian immigration rules were slackened, and Alvensleben was able to make regular trips to Vancouver to visit in-laws and conduct business. The Alvensleben home in Kerrisdale had been sold to *Vancouver Sun* newspaper owner Robert Crombie in 1929.

At the outbreak of war, the Canadian government was uncertain how to deal with its internal "enemy" population. According to the 1911 census, out of the then 7 million Canadian residents, 393,320 were of German origin and 129,103 had ties to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In the first weeks of the war, the government turned a blind eye to nationals of enemy countries, as many travelled back to their homeland or re-settled in the still neutral United States. Deferring to Britain for guidance, the Canadian government eventually formulated guidelines for surveillance and internment. Ultimately, a total of 8,579 men were interned in nation-wide prison camps for as long as five years. Ironically, a few German families were ignored by the authorities and farmed at the top end of Pitt Lake, isolated away from the trials and tribulations of a world at war.



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The SS Komagata Maru Fiasco

A Diamond Jubilee is held in a British monarch's 60th year. Queen Victoria celebrated her jubilee in 1897, and this medal was a typical "military style" souvenir of the Victorian era. This trinket was treasured over the years by one of Vancouver's early pioneers before it was donated to the Old Hastings Mill Store Museum. For future royal memorabilia collectors, should she still be on the throne at the time, Queen Elizabeth II's diamond jubilee will be in 2012.

This statue of a Sikh soldier in British military attire, complete with turban, stood outside the Ross Street Sikh Temple at Marine Drive from 1996 until 2001. It is now on display at the East Indian Historical Museum at South Fraser Highway & Ware Street in Abbotsford.



RACISM IN BRITISH COLUMBIA was alive and well on 23 May 1914, when a boatload of Sikh immigrants silently arrived into Burrard Inlet and anchored just offshore. Baba Gurdit Sandhu, an affluent Hong Kong businessman, had chartered the *Komagata Maru*, a Japanese steamer, as a direct challenge to Canada's exclusionist laws. He was an Indian nationalist, anxious to get independence for India. Singh renamed the steamer the *Guru Nanak Jahaz* after the first Sikh Guru.

The first East Indians arrived in Vancouver on the Empress ships as Sikh soldier tourists to participate in Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1887. These men returned home with positive stories about the west coast's mild weather and the opportunity for employment in the lumber industry. The first East Indian workers, many of whom were ex-soldiers in the British army, began arriving in 1904 and 1905 to replace the decline in Pacific Ocean traffic from Hong Kong caused by the \$500 Chinese head tax.

Eventually many Canadian Sikhs became disenchanted with the British expanding their empire and setting up colonies throughout the world. The retired East Indian soldiers became politically conscious and realized that instead of fighting for the oppressed and downtrodden they were instead helping the British colonize in the conquered countries. The local East Indian community became fractured into three distinct groups. The larger, more militant group called for patriotism to India and advocated that the British

get out of India. A second, smaller group, referred to as the "immigration group," were pro-British and co-operated with the Vancouver immigration authorities. A third group was undecided.

In 1908 the Canadian federal government paid a delegation to go to British Honduras and investigate employment opportunities, economic conditions and possibilities of settlement for all of British Columbia's Sikhs. The delegation consisted of James B. Harkin of the Interior Ministry of the federal government, William C. Hopkinson, Vancouver immigration official and interpreter, and two local Sikhs, Nagar Singh and Sham Singh.



PASSENGERS OF THE KOMAGATA MARU. Front row from left to right: Gurdit Singh Sandhu; his son Balwant; Daljit Singh, Secretary of *Komagata Maru*; Puran Singh, Store keeper of *Komagata Maru*; and Gurmukh Singh Lalton, first passenger of *Komagata Maru* to ever to return to Vancouver after their deportation in 1914. He came back to Vancouver in 1958.

When the Sikhs returned and reported back to the community about the unsuitability and poor living and economic conditions of British Honduras, the local Sikhs unanimously rejected the proposal and steadfastly declared their intention to stay in Canada. This evacuation plan was probably far too extreme ever to have succeeded, but it does give an indication of the intensity of the anti-Asian sentiments of that time and the stance of all levels of government on the issue. The two East Indians delegates suggested that Hopkinson tried to bribe them with \$3,000 to make a favourable report on the conditions in British Honduras.

Most pro-British Canadians prior to the arrival of the *Komagata Maru* sang the “White Canada Forever” and endorsed the many discriminatory acts by the government. The Election Act of March 1907 deprived East Indians from voting in provincial and municipal elections, and laws even prevented East Indians from placing their money into banks. The final insult was the government attempt to ship Sikhs to British Honduras.

On 3 October 1909 the Sikh Gurdwara (Temple) congregation gathered at their temple on 1866 West 2nd Avenue just west of Burrard Street and agreed to burn their British military uniforms and medals in protest.

Three of the leaders of the Vancouver Sikh community of the time, Bhag Singh, secretary of the Guru Nanak Mining and Trust Company, Balwant Singh Atwal, religious leader of the Sikh Gurdwara in Vancouver and Hakim Singh Hundal, travelled to

India between 1909 and 1910, hoping to bring their wives and children to Canada. The mining and trust company had purchased property from the government in the Eagle Harbour district of West Vancouver.

The East Indians aboard the *Komagata Maru* in Burrard Inlet were British subjects and should have been entitled to enter Canada, but the federal government in 1910 had given the law firm of Bowser, Reid, Wallbridge and Ritchie the task of drafting legislation with safeguards that would exclude East Indians from entering Canada. The new legislation amended the Immigration Act by taking away from the courts the right to interfere with decisions of the immigration authorities. One amendment required that any applicant for admission have \$200 in his possession on landing in Canada, while another amendment required that all immigrants into Canada come “by continuous journey and on through tickets from their country of birth or citizenship.” The makers of this new legislation knew that few of the ocean-going ships could take on enough fuel to travel direct from India to Canada and those that did were the CPR’s Empress line. This steamship company

was excluded because they travelled to ports throughout the world and never directly from India to Canada. The legal powers wasted little time and passed the amendments into law, knowing full well that although morally wrong it would be legal. Many of the key players that played roles in the creation of legislation to keep the East Indians out of Canada were Masons. Even J. Edward Bird, the lawyer hired as counsel for the applicants aboard the ship, was a Mason.

For two months the passengers aboard the *Komagata Maru* were denied fresh water and food in an attempt by all levels of government to force them out of Burrard Harbour and into taking the ship back to India. Malcolm J. R. Reid, the head of the immigration department in Vancouver, and William B. A. Ritchie, one of the ablest lawyers in Canada, were given the task of manoeuvring through the tangle of red tape to keep the ship’s Sikh passengers from ever setting foot onto Canadian soil. Ritchie was incredibly connected. He had been a partner with Robert L. Borden in the Maritimes, but their law practice broke up when Borden went on to become Canada’s eighth Prime

Minister. Ritchie decided to come west in 1911 to join the prominent Vancouver law firm of Bowser, Reid and Wallbridge. William John Bowser had been the provincial Attorney General since 1907, while Robie Lewis Reid was a well-known lawyer and historian. All four men were from the Maritimes. Robie L. Reid was the Masonic historian who later wrote “The Inside Story of the *Komagata Maru*” in the *Biographical Journal of Freemasons: British Columbia and the World*. He went on to become the Grand Master in 1929-1930.

Immigration officer Reid was a strong conservative supporter and a former schoolteacher who owed his immigration position to Henry Herbert Stevens, the Chairman of the Asiatic Exclusion League and the Conservative Member of Parliament for South Vancouver.



William John Bowser served as Attorney-General in the cabinet of Sir Richard McBride from 1907 until 1915, when he succeeded McBride as Premier.

HENRY HERBERT STEVENS. As the Chairman of the Asiatic Exclusion League and the Conservative Member of Parliament for South Vancouver, he was a major player in the *Komagata Maru* fiasco. He later played a role in the construction of the Lions Gate Bridge and the development of British Properties in West Vancouver.





His Majesty's Canadian Ship *Rainbow*, recently refurbished in Esquimalt, sits off Brockton Point in readiness to aid in the deportation of the *Komagata Maru* on 21 July 1914. The tug *Sea Lion* and many small vessels also sit in the harbour in anticipation of a confrontation.

Stevens was a racist who embraced the "White Canada Forever" mindset. An adventurer in his youth, Stevens had become a soldier of fortune at the turn of the century and joined the United States Army to participate in the Boxer (Opium) Rebellion in China. He impressed the Americans, and they placed him in charge of receiving 80 tons of silver from the Chinese Imperial Mint as compensation for riot damages to the victors of the conflict and getting it back to the US. On coming to British Columbia, Stevens first worked in the mining camps before becoming a firefighter for the Canadian Pacific Railway. On coming to Vancouver, he got into the grocery business and then real estate. As a politician, he was assisted by lawyers Reid and Ritchie to keep the country pro-British. Stevens said in 1907, "We contend that the destiny of Canada is best left in the hands of the Anglo-Saxon race, and we are 'unalterably and irrevocably' opposed to any move which threatens in the slightest degree this position.... As far as Canada is concerned, it shall remain white, and our doors shall be closed to Hindus as well as to other Orientals." Behind the scenes, Member of Parliament Stevens urged Prime Minister Borden to refurbish the west coast's only naval ship, the *Rainbow*, at Esquimalt with guns in readiness to blow the *Komagata Maru* to pieces if its captain and his passengers refused to leave Vancouver.

Bill Hopkinson was a secret-service officer who spied on East Indians for the British and Canadian governments regarding any suspicious revolutionary activities. An Indian-born ex-police officer, Hopkinson was fluent in several Hindu languages.

The "White Canada Forever" British Columbians were openly hostile to the 376 Sikh passengers on the *Komagata Maru*, and



precautions were immediately taken to prevent any passengers from being landed surreptitiously with help from local East Indians. The vessel was not allowed to dock but was kept anchored far out in the inlet, and a constant patrol was maintained about the ship both day and night. None of the local East Indians were allowed on board for fear of weapons being smuggled to the passengers. On one occasion authorities from the tug *Sea Lion* were repelled from boarding the ship to search for weapons that the passengers might have brought with them from China.

On the 21 July 1914 men from the 6th Duke of Connaught's Own Rifles and the Irish Fusiliers stood by as the HMCS *Rainbow* sailed into the harbour and trained its guns on the *Komagata Maru* and unceremoniously escorted the ship out into deeper waters. The *Komagata Maru* was quickly provisioned with food and Gurdit Singh Sandu was told to prepare to lift anchor and return home to India.

By the time the *Komataga Maru* returned to Calcutta the world was at war, and many of the returning passengers were either arrested or shot. The British treated the passengers as freedom fighters or mutineers. Gurdit Singh Sandhu managed to escape and lived in disguise for eight to nine years until being persuaded by Mahatma Gandhi to give himself up. Although their leader and some other men escaped, the treatment of the East Indians by the British resulted in many British Columbian East Indians leaving and returning home.

The last straw in these incidents in Vancouver came on 6 September 1914, when Bela Singh Jain, an informer and agent of Inspector Hopkinson, pulled out two guns and started shooting at the Khalsa

Mahatma Gandhi Quotes:

"Whatever you do may seem insignificant to you, but it is most important that you do it."

"Be the change that you want to see in the world."

"First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win."

"You must not lose faith in humanity. Humanity is an ocean; if a few drops of the ocean are dirty, the ocean does not become dirty."

"A coward is incapable of exhibiting love; it is the prerogative of the brave."

"You must not lose faith in humanity. Humanity is an ocean; if a few drops of the ocean are dirty, the ocean does not become dirty."

"A man is but the product of his thoughts what he thinks, he becomes."



BHAI MEWA SINGH. Although a murderer in the eyes of the Canadian legal system, he was a martyr to the Indian cause for shooting immigration officer William C. Hopkinson in the Vancouver courthouse on 14 October 1914. Singh was convicted in the same courthouse at 7:45 AM on 30 October 1914 and was executed by hanging on 11 January 1915 in Burnaby.

Diwan Society Gurdwara Sahib on West 2nd Avenue. He murdered Bhai Bhag Singh, President of the Society, along with Battan Singh and Bela Singh. He was charged with murder, but Hopkinson agreed to appear as a witness at his trial, and the East Indian community knew that his testimony at the trial would likely result in Bela Singh being acquitted.

Amongst the local Sikhs a few spoke up against this injustice, one of them was Bhai Mewa Singh a religious-minded Sikh, a reciter of the Guru Granth Sahib who came from the village of Lopoke in Amritsar, India. On 21 October 1914 Bhai Mewa Singh shot Hopkinson repeatedly on the steps of the Vancouver courthouse with two revolvers because he believed Hopkinson was a spy who had made up much of his testimony at the trial for Bela Singh.

Mewa Singh made this statement in court: "My religion does not teach me to bear hatred to anyone, no matter what class, creed or religion he belongs to. I had no hatred for Hopkinson. I heard that he was oppressing my poor people very much. On finding this to be a fact, I, being a staunch Sikh, could no longer bear to see the wrong done both to my countrymen and the Dominion of Canada. This is what led me to take Mr. Hopkinson's life and sacrifice my own, and I, in performing the duty of a true Sikh and remembering the name of God, will proceed towards the scaffold with the same amount of pleasure as a hungry babe does towards its mother. I shall gladly have the rope put around my neck thinking it to be a rosary of God's name. I am sure God will take me into his blissful arms."

Singh was hanged on 11 January 1915 at the Oakalla Prison Farm in Burnaby. He was the first and only Sikh to be executed in Canada. Leading up to execution of Shaheed Bhai Mewa Singh were many different acts of injustice and harsh discrimination against the Sikhs.

On 13 April 1919 British soldiers fired on a crowd of 20,000 unarmed Indians at Bhai Mewa Singh's place of birth at Amritsar during a religious holiday. The confrontation at a holy temple turned out to be a passive resistance that resulted in the death of many Sikhs. It was the beginning of the end for British colonization in India. At the end of the Second World War Mahatma Gandhi asked the British to leave his country. He explained that the British military in India stood at 100,000 men and that the population of India stood at 350,000,000. The British did the math and decided that it might be in their best interests to leave India. King George VI gave India its independence on 15 August 1947. The sun had set.



Aerial view of Vancouver's Lost Lagoon & Coal Harbour, circa 1935.

The Vancouver Millionaires

THE VANCOUVER MILLIONAIRES franchise had its origins in Renfrew, Ontario, in 1909 with a team then known as the Creamery Kings of the National Hockey Association. Ambrose O'Brien, son of railway builder and mining magnate Michael J. O'Brien, owned the club that was soon renamed the Renfrew Millionaires after players Frederick W. "Cyclone" Taylor and brothers Lester and Frank Patrick began demanding salaries of \$5,200 and \$3,500 to "skate up" to play. Because of the senior O'Brien, Renfrew became the home of the NHA.

Prior to their introduction of hockey to Vancouver, the Patrick family owned and operated the Patrick Lumber Company in the Creston Valley near Nelson, with 100 men working in the mill and another 100 in the woods. Joseph Patrick, the father of the

- 1 Deadman's Island
- 2 Ballantyne Pier
- 3 CPR Piers B & C
- 4 CPR Pier A
- 5 Marine Building
- 6 Oil Tanks
- 7 Brooks Iowa Lumber Co.
- 8 Denman Arena
- 9 Stanley Park Armoury

two hockey players, became disenchanted with lumbering when 9 million board feet of logs broke from their booms during an early spring thaw and floated down the Slocan River into the United States. The father and sons acted immediately and travelled south into the State of Washington to alert authorities and attempt to salvage the timber. The Americans responded as if the logs were the spoils of war, resulting in an ugly Canadian versus American confrontation that ended with the Canadians coming home empty-handed.

In 1911 Joseph Patrick sold the family's profitable lumber company and moved out west to capitalize on an exploding hockey scene. Not long after moving to the coast, the Patrick father-and-sons team erected arenas with the first artificial ice in Canada in Vancouver and Victoria. The 10,500-seat rink in Vancouver, located near the north end of Denman Street, was the largest in the world. The Victoria rink, seating 3,500, cost \$110,000, but the Vancouver rink, capable of seating 10,500, cost close to \$210,000. The Patrick clan then proceeded to "buy" up the Renfrew Millionaires and change the name to the Vancouver Millionaires. The Patricks were called Canada's Royal Hockey Family. The start-up costs to bring hockey to the west coast wiped out the family's entire fortune before the puck was dropped at the first game.

Fred W. "Cyclone" Taylor was the Wayne Gretzky of the early part of the nineteenth century, and his exploits on the ice were legendary. When Frederick Stanley, known as Lord Stanley of Preston and name-giver to Stanley Park, bought a small silver bowl in 1893, he could never have imaged in his wildest dreams that the "cup" would help forge eastern and western Canada in the sport of hockey. The NHL took charge of the Stanley Cup in 1910. The Vancouver Millionaires amazed Canadians when they won the Stanley Cup in 1915.

The Denman Arena was Vancouver's athletic showplace until it burned to the ground on 20 August 1936, and for some time the flames threatened the entire West End of Vancouver. The damage was pegged at \$600,000.

In 1958 Fred "Cyclone" Taylor visited Russia as the Canadian ambassador for hockey and was amused to see his old Renfrew Millionaire portrait hanging in the rotunda of Moscow's Lenin's Palace of Sport among a gallery of Soviet hockey players. Russian President Leonid I. Brezhnev and his assistant, Alexei Breznev, affectionately called the Blues Brothers, showed the hockey legend his own portrait.

Patrick Lester's skate from when he played with the Renfrew Creamery Kings, circa 1909.



Fourteen years later, in 1970, Fred returned to Moscow to see for himself the progress of the Soviet players. Unfortunately the Cold War between Canada and Russia prevailed and there was some mistrust of the hockey legend that had served as an immigration officer both in Canada and England during his 42 years of service.

The Pacific Coliseum, built at the Pacific National Exhibition grounds in 1968, eventually replaced the Denman arena. The Westin Bayshore Hotel today sits on the site of the Denman arena.

In 1978, Taylor, aged 92, and Giani Kartar Singh, age 97, the only known survivors of the tragic *Komagata Maru* incident in 1914, enjoyed a cordial visit at Taylor's residence. The two men talked to each other through an interpreter. As second-in-command of the immigration office, Taylor's job had been to prevent boats from assisting the immigrants ashore and to grant temporary permits for those requiring medical attention. Once Taylor and his men were repulsed by a barrage of bunker coal when they tried to board the *Komagata Maru* from the tug *Sea Lion*. "I remember the incident well. About 24 of us [immigration officers and police] went out in a launch to board the *Komagata Maru* and somebody—I believe it was from our boat—fired a shot and immediately we were bombarded with large chunks of coal from the deck above us. We were nearly killed. Everyone rushed to the one side of the launch and it almost capsized before we got out of there." It was 19 July 1914, and the tug was carrying provisions for the ship's outward voyage. Taylor failed to mention to the newspaper reporter that the East Indian immigrants aboard the *Komagata Maru* emptied their chamber pots as well as coal onto the immigration officers and police. Eleven officers were injured. This bit of trivia is mentioned in his memoirs *Cyclone Taylor: A Hockey Legend*, by Eric Whitehead.

Taylor died a year later at the age of 93.

Frederick Wellington Taylor, known as "The Cyclone," was one of the original Vancouver Millionaires that won the coveted National Hockey League's Stanley Cup trophy in 1915. A talented crowd pleaser, he played for the Vancouver team for seven years.

Taylor, an immigration officer, played a prominent role in the *Komagata Maru* fiasco that same year—and years later, as Canada's ambassador for hockey, visited Russia at the height of the Cold War for the purpose of thawing relationships between the two countries.



The World's Fastest Humans

PERCIVAL A. WILLIAMS, winner of the 100- and 200-metre running races at the Olympic games in Amsterdam, Netherlands, in 1928, was born and raised in Vancouver. He showed that his success was not an accident, winning the 100-yard dash at the inaugural British Empire Games in Hamilton, Ontario, in 1930 and setting a world record. The Americans were not happy and invited Williams to a series of indoor track meets south of the border. They were even less happy when Williams won 19 out of the 21 races on their turf to become the fastest sprinter in the world. Unfortunately, Williams pulled a thigh muscle and was never able to make a comeback. He competed in the 1932 Olympics in Los Angeles but was eliminated, after which he left sports and became an insurance agent.

"Chick" Turner was a world-class runner from Vancouver's Point Grey. A brilliant student, he enrolled at the University of British Columbia in 1945 at the age of 16 and by age 19 was easily breaking all previous world records for running and was looking forward to competing in the Olympics in Holland in 1949. Turner became a Rhodes scholar and went to England for university. Ironically, the International Olympic Committee at the last minute changed the rules that required an athlete to train in his home country for the six months prior to the games, with the result that he was disqualified. John N. W. Turner did however go on to have a successful political career and became Canada's 17th Prime Minister.

Vancouver hosted the British Empire Games in 1954 at the newly completed Empire Stadium in Hastings Park, and the most famous event of the games was a one-mile race in which John Landy and Roger Bannister both ran a 4-minute mile. Nearing the very end of the race, Landy glanced over his shoulder and Bannister barely nosed past him to win the race.

Henry Winston Jerome won gold medals in 1966 and 1967 at the British Empire Games and the Pan American Games respectively and set a total of seven world records.

Percival A. Williams, born and raised in Vancouver, won the 100- and 200-metre running races at the Olympic Games in Amsterdam, Netherlands, in 1928.

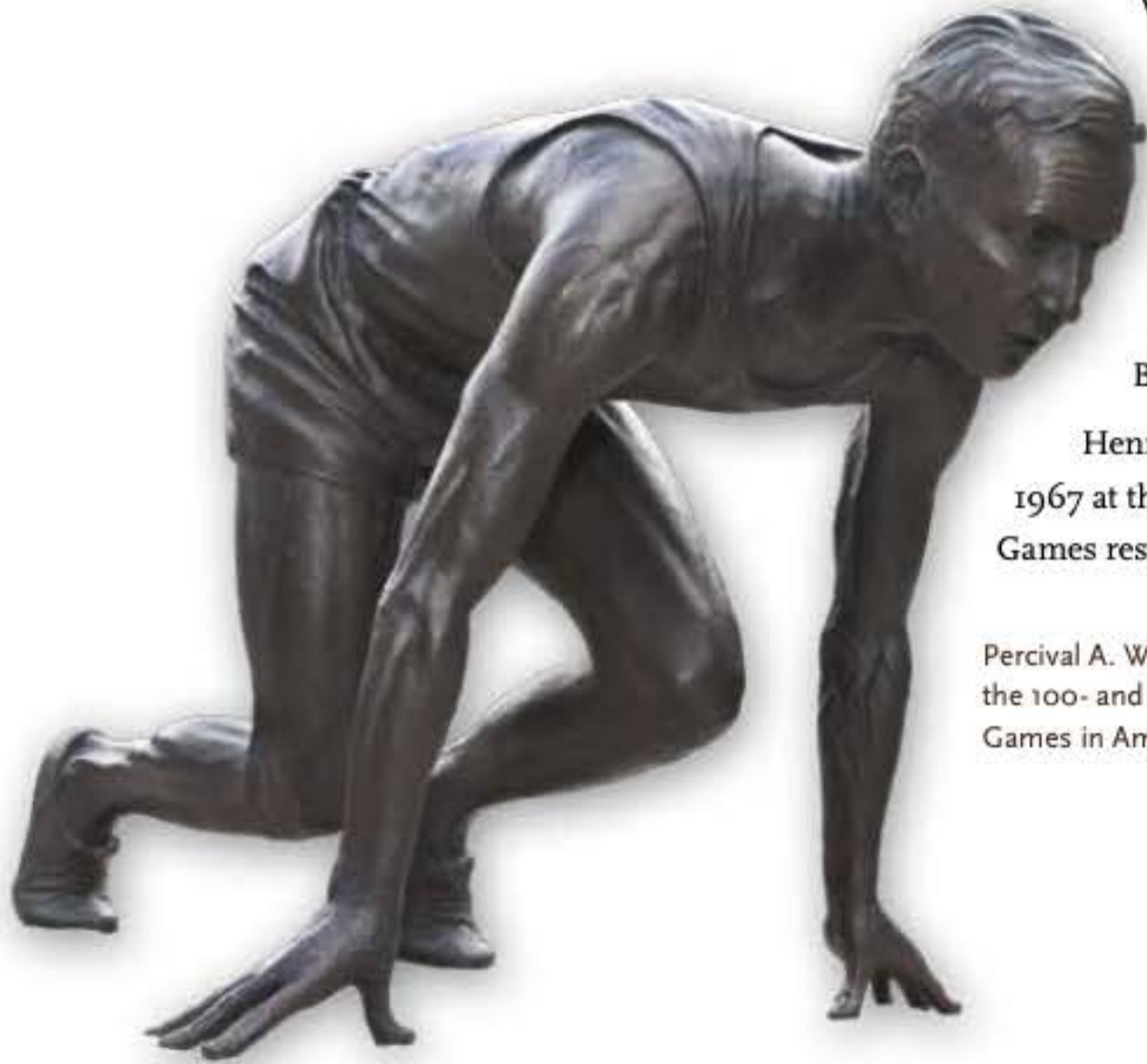


Above

These track shoes, a gift from his schoolmates, were worn by Williams and are currently proudly displayed among other Williams memorabilia in the BC Sports Hall of Fame.

Below

Williams's likeness, cast in bronze, rests on a pedestal at the entrance to BC Place Stadium.



The Battle of Ballantyne Pier

EVER SINCE 1912 there had been friction between Vancouver's longshoremen and what came to be known as the Shipping Federation. The latter was formed by Vancouver's wealthier businessmen, who depended on the free flow of goods through the docks to maintain their profits. The Federation included most of Vancouver's notable names, including Brigadier General Victor W. Odlum, the Brigade Commander, and many senior militia officers. Lieutenant-Colonel R. G. Parkhurst, Commanding Officer of the Vancouver Regiment, was prominent amongst them as president of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company.

In the spring of 1935 the longshoremen's union reached an agreement with the Shipping Federation, which, however, was unfavourable to the union. Thus both sides remained pitted against each other.

The labour scene at that time was volatile for another reason: in April a general strike was called by the unemployed men in the relief camps that the federal government had set up to deal with the massive unemployment situation, and on April 4 almost 2,000 strikers descended on Vancouver to join in protesting the abysmal conditions in the relief camps. These men were organized in the Relief Camp Workers' Union (RCWU), which was affiliated with the Workers' Unity League, the trade union umbrella for the Communist Party of Canada. Thus they had a direct wire to Moscow, and, perhaps not surprisingly, the authorities were afraid of a major revolt, if not a full-scale Communist revolution. In preparation for a confrontation, police forces at all three levels of government were mobilized, and the Citizens' League of British Columbia was formed of anti-communist volunteers who were given rudimentary police training at the drill hall under Odlum and the blatantly fascist and anti-Semitic former chief of police, Colonel Charles E. Edgett. These volunteers, bearing a striking resemblance to Nazi Brownshirts, were sworn in as special constables of the Vancouver City Police.

During the next few weeks the strikers held several demonstrations in order to raise public awareness and empathy. Usually these demonstrations were peaceful, but on one occasion property was damaged at the Hudson's Bay Store, and a policeman was wounded. When the demonstrators converged at Victory Square, Mayor Gerald G. McGeer came out and read the riot act: "Our Sovereign Lord the

GERALD GRATTAN MCGEER. The City of Vancouver's 22nd mayor found himself between a rock and a hard place with respect to the Battle of Ballantyne Pier. Elected in the middle of the worst depression in history, he ordered the police and military to quell the uprising because of rumoured communist infiltration into the importing and exporting of goods into Vancouver. The tense situation resulted in his reading of the riot act: "Our Sovereign Lord the King charges and commands all persons assembled immediately to disperse and peaceably depart to their habitations or to lawful business upon pain of being found guilty of an offense on conviction of which they may be imprisoned for life." As a very forward-thinking politician, McGeer was instrumental in the construction of Vancouver City Hall and Vancouver General Hospital outside the downtown core.



The song "The Red Flag"

*The people's flag is deepest red,
It shrouded oft our martyr'd dead
And ere their limbs grew stiff and cold,
Their hearts' blood dyed its ev'ry fold.
Then raise the scarlet standard high,
Within its shade we'll live and die,
Though cowards flinch and traitors sneer,
We'll keep the red flag flying here.*

King charges and commands all persons assembled immediately to disperse and peaceably depart to their habitations or to lawful business upon pain of being found guilty of an offense on conviction of which they may be imprisoned for life." He was flanked by Vancouver Police Chief Colonel William Wasborough Foster. The crowd dispersed peacefully, but the situation remained explosive.

On 27 May 1935 the longshoremen at Ballantyne Pier on Burrard Inlet unilaterally took over dispatching of jobs—one of the sore points in the recent agreement with the Federation, giving the Federation the reason for a lock-out. The Federation brought in untrained replacement workers, so-called scabs, and mobilized police forces to prevent the locked out workers from picketing.

Meanwhile the unemployed longshoremen joined the relief camp at Hastings Park. The spiritually and physically broken men didn't have as much as the nickel required for the tram ride to Ballantyne Pier. Many walked from the relief camp to the pier, stood around all day, only to return back to the camp at night and missing out on a much needed meal, as the rule was that anyone leaving the camp in search for a job would not be let back in.

However, a short while after the lock-out started the relief camp workers left town on their famous On-to-Ottawa Trek. Still, it was a crowd of 1,000 protesters, consisting of locked out workers and their supporters, who marched toward the Heatley Street entrance to Ballantyne Pier on June 18 in order to "talk to the scabs."

Leading the protesters was Victoria Cross recipient Mickey O'Rourke, a pacifist who had been a stretcher-bearer while serving overseas during the First World War. After being awarded his medal in November 1917 at a ceremony Buckingham Palace, O'Rourke sailed to the west coast of the United States and was engaged in public speaking to crowds often in the thousands to raise money for War Bonds. After his discharge, he suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder. He also had emphysema from being gassed, and by 1920 he was seeing doctors in Shaughnessy Veterans' Hospital in Vancouver with a nervous condition that severely affected his ability to hold onto jobs, although he did work on the Vancouver waterfront for many years.

According to union legend, the 59-year-old O'Rourke, a well-known personality in the city, and union leader Ivan Emery led the parade in the confrontation on 18 June 1935. The aged war hero usually



The Ballantyne Pier replaced the site of the Hastings Sawmill just to the west of the Rogers Sugar Refinery in the 1920s. The huge grain elevator, dubbed "Steven's folly," was sandwiched between the CPR tracks and the pier. The smaller dock was called the Great Northern Railway dock.

wore sun glasses due to eye infections resulting from having been gassed in the First World War but opted to loan them to Emery to conceal the union leader's identity, as the police had him on their surveillance list. At first observers of the march believed O'Rourke was guiding a blind man with a Union Jack draped over his shoulders. The two men, with many First World War veterans marching immediately behind them, left Labour Hall and marched east one block on Hastings Street before turning north on Heatley Street towards Ballantyne Pier. O'Rourke's presence in the procession was established by an impeccable source: the police reports. They had a clear photograph of him, standing neat and proud, recorded in their files.

As the demonstrators approached the entrance, they were met by a line of Vancouver Police led by Colonel Foster, who would not let them through.

Foster and O'Rourke were definitely from opposite sides of the tracks. Foster was born in England in 1875, and on coming to British Columbia immediately became involved in the lucrative lumber business before serving as a superintendant with the CPR and then as a police magistrate in Revelstoke. From 1922 to 1927 he had been the Commanding Officer of the Duke of Connaughts. At the time of the Ballantyne Pier lock-out he had just been appointed chief of the Vancouver Police Department.

What was said between Foster and O'Rourke has not been recorded, but it was not cordial, as the strikers attempted to force their way through the police line.

According to the *Vancouver Sun* newspaper, members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police fired tear gas over the heads of the crowd. The Vancouver City Police began to use four-foot-long wooden clubs to disperse the strikers. At that point a contingent of the BC Provincial

Memories of a Union Leader

by Gordon Westrand

President of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, 1992-1996

My grandfather started working at the Hastings Sawmill in 1906 as a longshoreman loading heavy timbers into confined areas into the ships. He'd come over from Sweden and was a very capable fisherman so was nicknamed "Charlie the Fish." He had several sons by the time of the big strike in 1935. He would go out fishing all night and then do picket duty during the day. There were several incidents on the picket lines when the "goon" squad, scabs working for the Shipping Federation, either beat up or abused strikers. My uncle Carl was a semi-professional boxer and sometimes he and some other men would go around and repay individuals for transgressions against some of their union members.

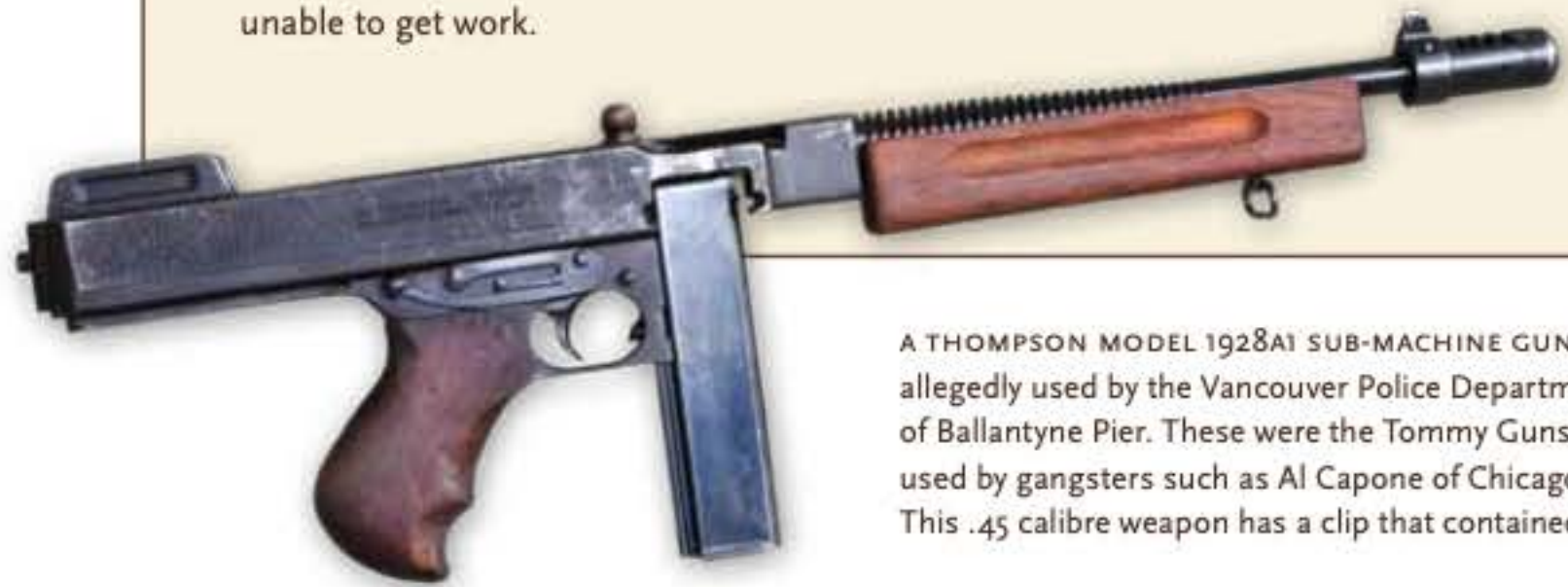
My family was in the march that ended in the Battle for Ballantyne Pier on 18 June 1935 when the police fired tear gas at the strikers and charged them on horseback with clubs. My grandfather was clubbed down at least once. My uncle Carl was clubbed down and knocked unconscious four times. I was given reassurances that each time he left his mark with the police officers in question.

My grandfather and uncles were all blacklisted by the employers after the strike and were unable to get work.

The Battle for Ballantyne Pier was a set-up with the police and the employers provoking the confrontation. The strikers had been marching in an orderly way to talk to the scabs that were taking their jobs. I've been told that there were police with machine guns hidden in a flat-deck rail car at the marshalling yards at the north foot of Heatley Street. The strike had the support of the general public and several storefronts on Hastings Street had signs in the windows saying that they supported the strikers. The police fired tear gas into these grocery stores and other buildings. After the police read the riot act mounted policemen with clubs emerged from behind buildings and charged at the crowd. The strikers fled east down Powell Avenue but were prevented from escaping by police who were in hiding in police cars armed with shotguns.

Many of the stories that I heard from my family never appeared in the newspapers. My father told me about having to go to the butcher shop and get discarded liver that was usually given away for dog food. He and his bothers and sisters ate the liver.

My grandfather died in 1938 but my father and other family members have many fond stories about him. It's good that he is being remembered.



A THOMPSON MODEL 1928A1 SUB-MACHINE GUN. Guns like these were allegedly used by the Vancouver Police Department during the Battle of Ballantyne Pier. These were the Tommy Guns of the same type used by gangsters such as Al Capone of Chicago in the 1920s-1930s. This .45 calibre weapon has a clip that contained 20 rounds.

Police, armed with clubs, and members of the RCMP, mounted on horses, charged into the crowd. The horsemen experienced some difficulties when some of their horses refused to cross the railwas tracks. Reinforced by the "specials," the VCP quickly gained the upper hand, and a running battle ensued that saw the first use of tear gas in Vancouver. According to some reports the police had machine guns, but they were not used. During the melee O'Rourke was said to have thrown a large brick at one mounted officer before being seized by an RCMP sergeant and dragged out of the fray to safety.

The strikers did not back down meekly, however, and the fight lasted some three hours, spreading into the surrounding residential area, where the police on galloping horseback chased the longshore strikers and clubbed them with batons even as they were retreating. Two demonstrators received buckshot wounds in the back of the legs by a police who emerged from prowl cars armed with shotguns. Close to one hundred police and strikers were injured during the confrontation, thereafter referred to as the "Battle of Ballantyne Pier."

Between 4 June and 25 October 1925 over 500 criminal cases were brought before the courts resulting in 148 convictions for assault, damage to property, trespassing, rioting, obstruction, unlawful assembly, threatening and even vagrancy. Union leader Ivan Emery was charged for inciting a riot and for counselling an unlawful assembly and sentenced to three months in jail, and one man was sentenced to three years in jail and five lashes with a cat-of-nine-tails. At year's end 18 longshoremen and seamen were serving time in Burnaby's Oakalla Prison Farm. Mildred Dougan, a women's auxiliary member who was charged with assaulting a police officer, was held in jail for six weeks before coming to trail and receiving a sentence of a \$25 fine or 30 days in jail. She chose the 30 days.

Though the Shipping Federation won the battle, they would eventually lose the labour war. By the 1940s working conditions had improved considerably, a strong union had developed, and the Federation eventually lost its grip on the dockyards.



WILLIAM WASBOROUGH FOSTER. A Colonel with Vancouver's prestigious Duke of Connaught's Own Rifles during the World War, this much decorated war hero became Chief Constable of the Vancouver Police Department following a corruption scandal. He had the unfortunate duty of leading riot police against longshoreman strikers during the depression years to win the "Battle of Ballantyne Pier."

“AJT” Taylor and the Lions Gate Bridge

THE NAME OF ALFRED JAMES TOWLE TAYLOR is inextricably linked with Vancouver's Lions Gate Bridge. The bridge may not have been Taylor's original idea (thoughts of connecting Vancouver and the North Shore were aired as early as 1890), but it was he who brought the necessary capital together and revived the project when the time was right.

Taylor, affectionately known as “AJT” to his close associates, was born in Victoria in 1887 to Welsh parents, his father being an Anglican Church deacon. Taylor's formal education ended at age 14, and two years later he was working as an apprentice at the Vancouver shipyards, earning \$5 a month and living in a rented CPR shack at Hastings and Burrard Streets. Hard work, a good marriage, and an engineering degree started Taylor's career. He had fearless ambition and was inclined to risk-taking, provided there was a chance of big rewards. One of his earliest ventures was the formation of a company to operate Dolly Vardon Mines, a rich silver property located near New Aiyansh, north of Prince Rupert. The property was staked in 1910 with cash from Chicago, Boston and New York interests.

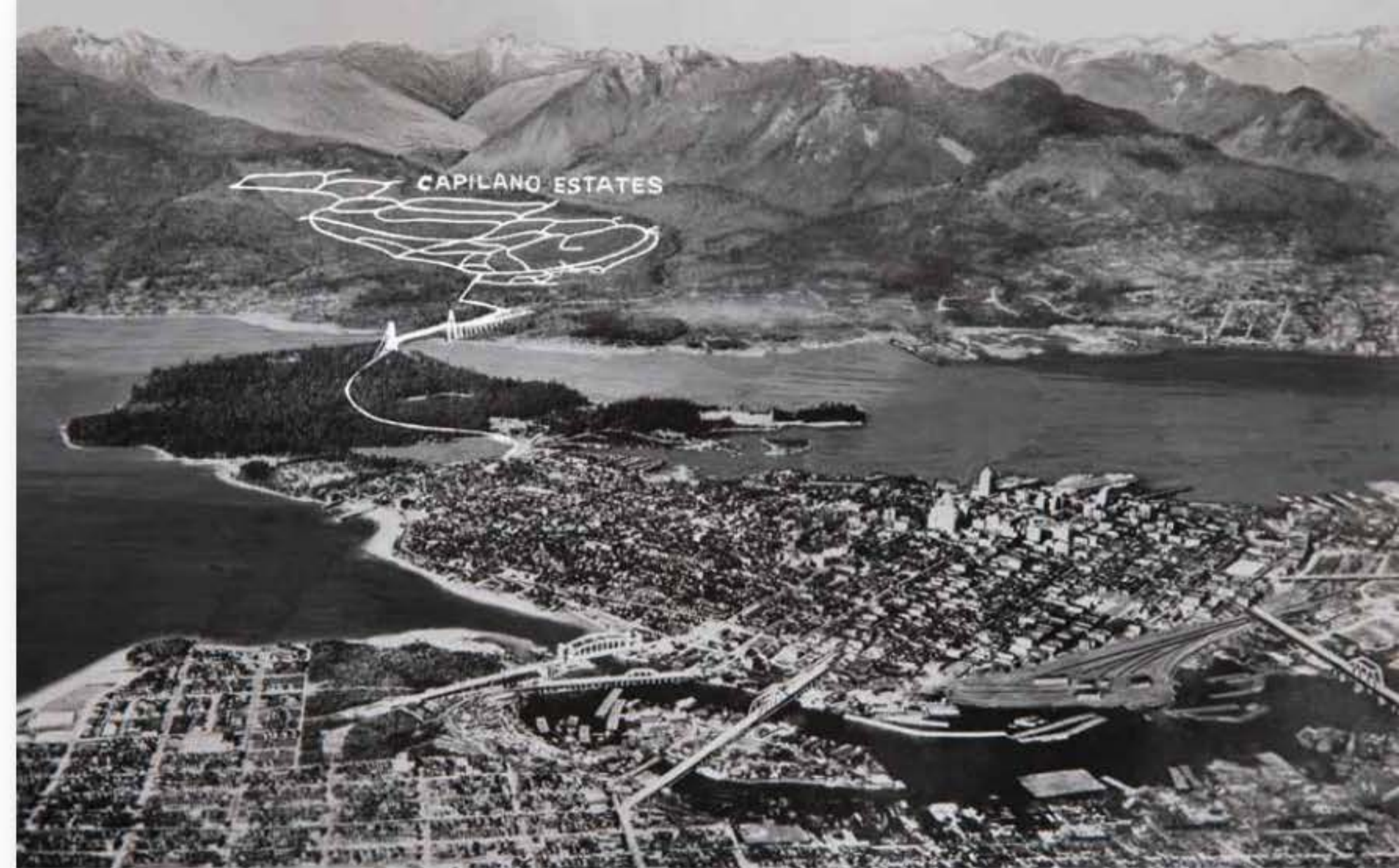
Another early project for Taylor's engineering company was the building of the Imperial Oil refinery in Ioco in 1913, followed by the installation of a crude oil processing facility.

In the early 1920s West Vancouver was not more than a small community of 3,000 people, but even then developers saw the potential of connecting the untapped real estate potential on the north shore of Burrard Inlet to downtown Vancouver by a bridge. Taylor was part of this proposal, which was put to a plebiscite in 1927. The proposal was defeated at that time, but Taylor still owned the provincial franchise to build the bridge and decided to look for the necessary capital elsewhere.

He took his family to England and set up a business in London at an address on Rabbit Row near Hyde Park. He had already an important contact in London: William S. Stephenson, a Winnipeg-born Canadian who had become a very successful international entrepreneur with offices in London. The two Canadians set up the Stephenson-Taylor Trust Company and began to woo money from Britain's wealthy elite. Among the pair's group of influential friends was a retired London banker named W. S. Eyre, while Francis J.



A GUINNESS CLOTHES BRUSH. The Guinness family made their first fortune in Dublin, Ireland, in the brewing industry, producing a world-famous dry stout. The family later branched into other investments such as real estate but are better known for the Guinness Book of Records.



A government aerial photograph taken in the early thirties showing proposed construction of the Stanley Park Causeway, the Lions Gate Bridge, and Capilano Estates (British Properties) in West Vancouver. The second Hotel Vancouver and the Marine Building, the two tallest high-rises in Vancouver's downtown core, are clearly visible in this photograph.

S. Hopwood (Lord Southborough), a prominent member of the gentry, represented a vital link with the Iveagh Trust. This trust was a richly endowed investment fund set up by the Guinness Brewing Company, which was owned by three brothers—Edward C. Guinness (the Earl of Iveagh), Walter E. Guinness (Lord Moyne), and the honourable Arthur Guinness.

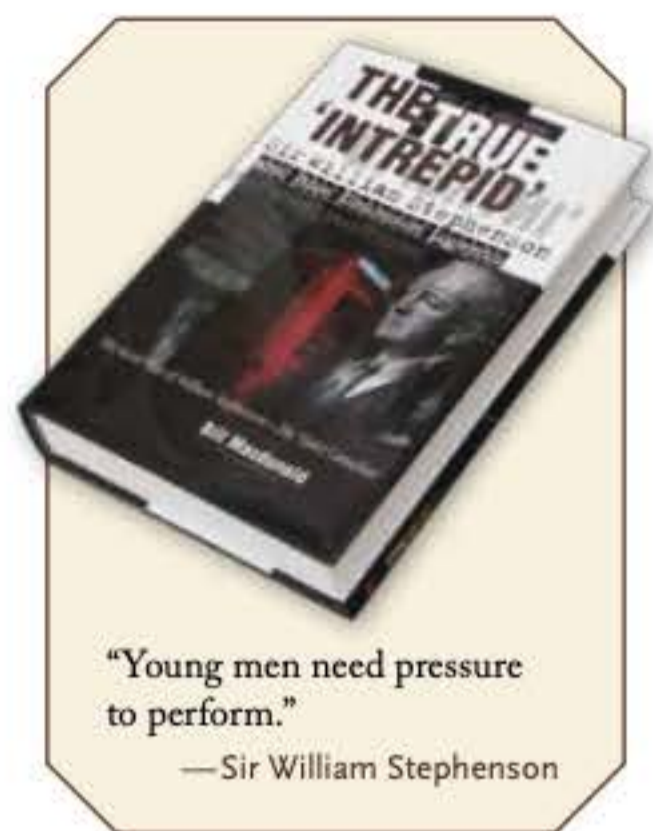
Stephenson, who had been a top fighter pilot during the First World War and was credited with shooting down 26 enemy aircraft, was initially very enthusiastic about the Lions Gate Bridge proposal. Eventually, however, he withdrew to pursue a different project in India. The contact between Stephenson and Taylor was later revived during World War II, which saw the two men working together again.

In the summer of 1930 Taylor and Eyre travelled to Vancouver together, and the Englishman clearly saw the potential for property investment for his and of course the Guinness family interests.

Guinness Family History: a Saga of Ireland

They all stand firmly on the old brewery in Dublin. It was in the 18th century that Arthur Guinness, founder of the line, obtained a lease for 9000 years at 45 pounds a year on the property near St. James's Well in Dublin and there began the manufacture of ale. The business venture was a canny one, because of the heavy tariff placed by Britain on native Irish ale and porter. Guinness had taken the precaution of obtaining a British charter and so was not subject to the tax.

LONDON GAZETTE, 23 DECEMBER 1939



“Young men need pressure to perform.”

—Sir William Stephenson

The True 'Intrepid': Sir William Stephenson and the Unknown Agents: The Secret War of William Stephenson—The 'Quiet Canadian' by Bill Macdonald. Publisher: Tim Lawson, Timberholme Books Ltd

Garlanded with fresh spring flowers, Charles Marega's lion sculpture sits on guard at the south entrance of the Lions Gate Bridge. Similar smaller lions adorn the top story of the Marine Building in Downtown Vancouver. Over the years, vandals have managed to break off a portion of this lion's right ear.



Upon their return to London the British Pacific Properties Company was incorporated, with Taylor and Eyre being made directors.

On the sea voyage back to London Taylor met an old friend, Henry H. Stevens, Member of Parliament for South Vancouver. Stevens had real estate interests in the Lower Mainland as well as an option on 2,000 acres of West Vancouver land located between the 750-to-1500-foot elevations west of the Capilano River. Taylor learned that the cash-strapped West Vancouver municipality was also holding another larger tract of land that was also available at a rather attractive price. This property, totalling 4,000 acres, rose well up the face of Hollyburn Mountain and stretched all the way to Horseshoe Bay. The newly created British Pacific Properties Company acquired the entire parcel of land, some of it for as little as \$20 per acre.

Taylor correctly speculated that this chunk of real estate would become very valuable once the North Shore would be connected to Vancouver. Consequently he spent years arguing with government and marine authorities until eventually, with the support of Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King and after having managed to raise the \$6 million needed for construction plus another \$4 million for land development, the bridge project was given the green light on 30 April 1936. Mayor William Harold Malkin turned the first sod on the 7th of July that same year, and the bridge opened for traffic on 14 November 1938. The cost of the project came to \$5,959,600, in other words: just under budget. On 29 May 1939, during a royal visit to Canada, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth (the mother of Queen Elizabeth II and Princess Margaret) presided over the official opening.

During the building of the bridge the British Properties Company took over the 21-storey Marine Building on Burrard Street at Hastings. Due to the Depression, this art deco gem was sold off by its original owners at less than half the construction costs.

Taylor converted the observation deck into a penthouse apartment for himself, his wife, and their two daughters, but his wife didn't like the height, and the family moved out. Possibly inspired by the Rockefeller Centre in New York, Taylor used the 19th floor for an office, which featured an art deco-style interior with 18-foot ceilings and 12-foot-high windows with majestic views of the bridge construction and the Lions Mountains. He had a pair of lion statues installed off his balcony, smaller replicas of the pair that had been sculpted for either end of the bridge.



The Entrance to the Lion's Gate Bridge from the Stanley Park side of Burrard Inlet in 1939.

During the Second World War Taylor was the technical advisor to the British Ministry of Production in London and Washington, DC. He spent considerable time in New York, where he worked closely with his former business partner Stephenson out of the Rockefeller Center. Stephenson—later Sir William Stephenson, known as the Quiet Canadian and the Man Named Intrepid—by this time had become the Chief Intelligence Officer, Western Section, and was the go-between between England's Prime Minister Winston Churchill and United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The Atlantic convoys were one of his responsibilities. Stephenson was responsible for the development of the 160-acre Camp X located near the Toronto–Kingston Highway along the north shore of Lake Ontario. Taylor's brother, a construction contractor in Toronto, had clandestinely purchased the farm for the Canadian government. Camp X was a secret wartime training centre for spies and counter-spies. Stephenson recruited many young Polish women from the boroughs of the City of New York to go to Camp X for training to

The original builders of Vancouver's downtown Marine Building ran into financial difficulties due to the Great Depression and sold the art deco-ediface to British Properties at far less than it had cost to build.



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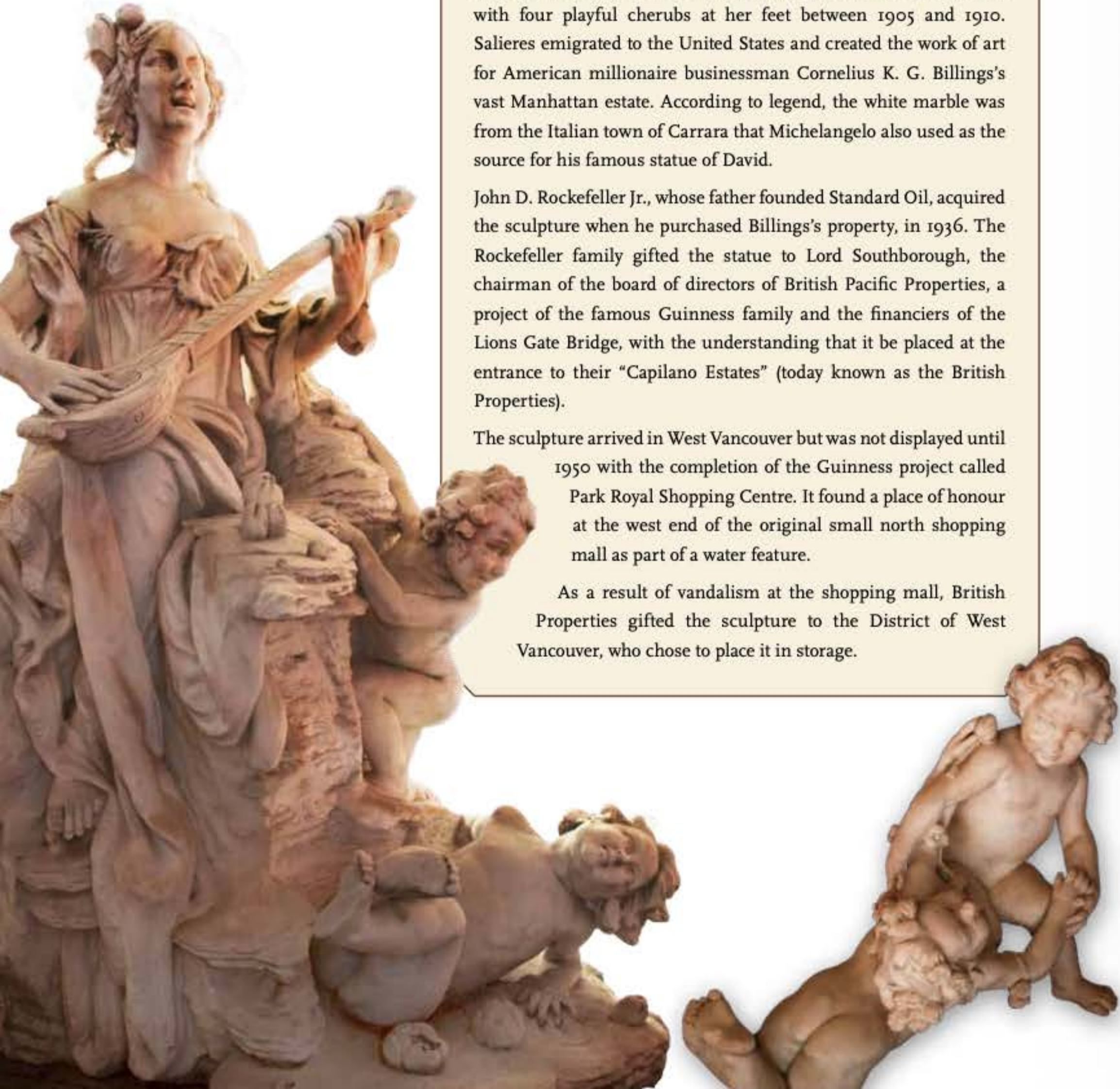
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A Muse strums a lute, while four playful cherubs frolic at her feet. This sculpture, made of Carrara marble, is from the same quarry from which Michelangelo carved the famous David. The sculpture was on display at the Park Royal Shopping Centre for several years but because of vandalism has been in storage at the West Vancouver works yards for the past 20 years.



The Salieres Sculpture

by Norma L. Young
fine arts appraiser

The beautiful 9-foot-tall marble sculpture represents Music, as a serene female seated on a rock plays a stringed instrument with four playful cherubs at her feet.

Sylvain Salieres, a French sculptor, carved this beautiful 9-foot-tall serene female seated on a rock and playing a stringed instrument with four playful cherubs at her feet between 1905 and 1910. Salieres emigrated to the United States and created the work of art for American millionaire businessman Cornelius K. G. Billings's vast Manhattan estate. According to legend, the white marble was from the Italian town of Carrara that Michelangelo also used as the source for his famous statue of David.

John D. Rockefeller Jr., whose father founded Standard Oil, acquired the sculpture when he purchased Billings's property, in 1936. The Rockefeller family gifted the statue to Lord Southborough, the chairman of the board of directors of British Pacific Properties, a project of the famous Guinness family and the financiers of the Lions Gate Bridge, with the understanding that it be placed at the entrance to their "Capilano Estates" (today known as the British Properties).

The sculpture arrived in West Vancouver but was not displayed until 1950 with the completion of the Guinness project called Park Royal Shopping Centre. It found a place of honour at the west end of the original small north shopping mall as part of a water feature.

As a result of vandalism at the shopping mall, British Properties gifted the sculpture to the District of West Vancouver, who chose to place it in storage.

afterwards be dropped into their native land to spy for the Allied forces. Taylor's children would later never talk about their father's involvement with Stephenson, as they had been sworn to secrecy. They, like the other 750 Canadians working out of the Rockefeller Center, all were, like their boss, "Quiet Canadians."

Taylor died in New York in 1945 at the age of 57. In compliance with a request he had made from his deathbed, he was cremated, and friends scattered his ashes from the Lions Gate Bridge. The British Pacific Properties Company remains active with development in West Vancouver to this day.

King George VI's official portrait taken in 1939 is proudly displayed in the Bessborough Armoury.

The King and Queen had visited Canada on a Dominion tour the previous summer. With the abdication of his older brother, King Edward VIII, (later the Duke of Windsor) the shy and modest "Bertie" was crowned just as his country faced the onslaught of World War II. In 1947 he visited India and gave it back its independence. King George VI died from cancer in 1952, when his daughter Elizabeth became Queen.



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An industrialized False Creek, circa 1940.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1 British Properties | 6 Woodward's Building |
| 2 Hudson's Bay Company | 7 Beatty Street Drill Hall |
| 3 Marine Building | 8 World Building (later Sun Tower) |
| 4 Simpson's Building | 9 Western Bridge & Steel Fabricators |
| 5 Dominion Building | 10 Salt Building |



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The development of British Properties and the building of the Lions Gate Bridge.

- 1 British Properties
- 2 Lions Gate Bridge
- 3 Stanley Park Causeway
- 4 Hotel Vancouver
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A young Japanese girl enjoys the tranquility of the Nitobe Gardens at the University of British Columbia. Dr. Inazo Nitobe, a member of the Japanese House of Peers and Undersecretary General of the League of Nations, died suddenly in Victoria on his way to a peace conference in 1933. A small garden was built in honour of his peace efforts, but it was vandalized during WW II. The consulate and UBC decided to revamp the garden. It was designed by Kanosuke Mori and dedicated in 1960.

Nihonmachi (Powell Street)

by Linda Reid née Kawamoto

Archivist, Japanese Canadian National Museum

VANCOUVER'S NIHONMACHI, the Japanese name for the Powell Street area, began in the 1890s with commerce around one of the largest employers of Japanese, the Hastings Sawmill located at the foot of Dunlevy Street. As the Japanese contractors began to supply labour for the mills and the building of the railroad as early as 1886, they set up offices on Powell Street. In order to serve the needs of the labourers who were living in boarding houses close to the mill, Nihonmachi hotels, food suppliers, baths, barber shops, restaurants, churches, clothing stores, banks and all things Japanese began to pop up along Powell, Alexander, Hastings and Cordova Streets. The Canadian Pacific Railway's Empress Fleet was among the first to

bring Japanese immigrants across the Pacific to Vancouver, peaking in 1907 with some 8,000 Japanese immigrants coming to these shores. A total of 11,000 Asian immigrants came that year, causing a great deal of anxiety within the Caucasian community, resulting in an anti-Asian riot in 1907 that left many stores along Powell Street and in Chinatown damaged. The September 1907 riot led to the restriction of male immigrants to 400 per year, with no restrictions on women and families joining their husbands, and so the "picture bride era" began, and a resultant baby boom of the Nisei or second generation.

The Issei or first generation pioneers worked mainly in the forestry, fishing, farming and canning industries throughout the province. But the two most concentrated communities were Nihonmachi and Steveston. Nihonmachi was known as "Poweru Gai" or Powell Street by the Japanese community. By 1921 there were 578 stores, organizations, businesses, churches, in the area. The frontier buildings predated Japanese immigration and were built for and by the earliest residents of Vancouver—city officials, business elite and labourers. Many of the buildings were boarding houses. As the wealthy elite moved to more prestigious neighbourhoods, the Japanese began to buy up the crude shiplap buildings. They added store fronts, living quarters for the family, and often ran a boarding house in the back. By 1940 the thriving community was considered to be the centre of the Japanese community. Some of those buildings still exist today.

William Lyon Mackenzie King, high-ranking federal civil servant and from 1909 Minister of Labour, visited Vancouver shortly after the Asian riots of 1907. He had led a Royal Commission report on Oriental immigration in 1902 and acquired a Ph.D. from Harvard University for his dissertation based on the study of Oriental immigration to Canada.

In 1942, when the Japanese Imperial Army's aggression in China and Southeast Asia contributed to fear that

This war memorial, located in Stanley Park, was dedicated on 2 April 1920 to honour the Japanese Canadians who fought in the First World War. Ironically, after the war was over, some of these war heroes were treated as enemy aliens, their land was taken away, and they were sent to camps or to Japan. One veteran, Zennosuke Inouye, after writing 80 letters, successfully had his land returned to him in 1949. A smaller plaque, attached later, honours those Japanese Canadians who died in the Second World War and the Korean War.





Hiroshima Kenjin kai (gentlemen of the Hiroshima prefectural association) pose along Powell Street just east of Gore Avenue before going on a picnic, 1919. On the corner is Taishodo Store, the first two-storey business built by a Japanese Canadian selling gifts and patent medicine. The building on the right shows the considerable architectural modification that had already taken place. The two-storey, shiplap-clad, hipped-roof house has a structure added at the back, a square false front and new storefront.

大正八年六月一日
 亦=回旅島島海外 恒有以在 物支訊 運勤守

PHOTO BY
 SHOKICHI AKATSUKA



Ochigo san (Buddhist formal dress for celebrations) in front of Yoshino's restaurant at the 300 block Alexander Street, 1916. Japanese Canadian communities all over BC participated in local parades such as this Dominion Day parade in Vancouver, often entering floats. Front row from right: Miss Kumano, Tatsuke (Kato) Masuda, 5th over: Shizuko (Sato) Fune.

Japan would plan an attack on BC's shores, it was Prime Minister Mackenzie King who declared war on Japan. In an already anti-Asian climate, Japanese Canadians in British Columbia found themselves at the mercy of a long history of racism, fear, and political decisions that violated human rights. Anxious to prove loyalty to Canada, many Nisei offered to sign up to fight for their country. They were refused.

Using the powers given to the Cabinet under provisions of the War Measures Act (1914), King removed 22,000

Japanese Canadians from the 100-mile coastal security zone, in his words "for their own safety." The BC Security Commission under Chairman Austin C. Taylor, a business leader, was to oversee the removal of the Japanese from the coast, relocate them in camps, and act as the authoritative body to enforce the numerous Orders-in-Council. One of the camps, Tashme, was named after Taylor, Shiras and Mead, taking the first two letters of their last names. John Shirras was the Assistant Commissioner of the BC Police, and F. J. Mead was the Assistant Commissioner of the RCMP.

As the evacuees were allowed to take only few possessions with them, their homes were turned over to the Custodian of Enemy Property and later sold, as legislated by Order-in-Council. Nihonmachi and the vibrant community of Japanese disappeared in the space of months. Many of the already aged buildings in Nihonmachi fell into disrepair and were sold for less than fair market value, while the Japanese Canadians were in the camps.

The Japanese Canadians were not allowed back to the coast during the war years, and due to a new act in 1946, entitled "National Emergency Transitional Powers Act," they were kept away from the coast until 1949. This

act was a way to disperse the Japanese community and coerce some 4,000 to go to Japan (50% of those had never been to Japan and were born in Canada). Half of the remaining 17,000 were dispersed across the provinces of Canada, and the rest slowly moved to communities in BC, but very few returned to the Powell Street area. In the 1950s a few Japanese stores sprung up, some restaurants, and a gambling club at the Lion Hotel on Powell Street. In 1953 half of the former Japanese language school and hall was returned to its owners, the only example of a confiscated property returned in Nihonmachi. During the war, the Canadian Army had used half the building for administration

POWELL STREET UNITED CHURCH KINDERGARTEN GRADUATION, 29 JANUARY 1932. Many Japanese immigrants attended the Methodist Church, which amalgamated with the Presbyterians to become the United Church in 1925. The early Methodist ministry helped the residents of Powell Street learn English and assimilate into Canadian society, set up a Kindergarten in 1901, and organize a free medical clinic in 1925. The ministry also assisted in the Japanese in the camps throughout the internment period.



and sold the other half for expenses. A year later the Buddhist church bought the United Church building on the corner of Jackson Avenue and Powell Street; both organizations exist today as stalwarts of Japanese culture. Tonari Gumi, a volunteer organization that in the early days provided assistance for seniors and new immigrants, was established in the 1970s. Eventually the volunteers set up Sakura So, a seniors' residence on Powell Street. The group supported a long-term-care facility nearby with culture and lunch programs that served as a drop-in centre for those in need.

Nineteen seventy-seven was a big revival year for the area: youthful activists masterminded a centennial celebration that acknowledged the immigrant

experience and the history of Nihonmachi with a book and touring exhibition entitled "A Dream of Riches." Currently the exhibition and Nihonmachi history are housed in the Japanese Canadian National Museum in Burnaby. The annual Powell Street festival is held at Oppenheimer Park each August. This popular event presents Japanese cultural events, food, arts and crafts, a sumo tournament, Powell Street walking tours, and other displays from supporting organizations. In honour of the legendary Hall of Famers, the Asahi baseball team plays a memorial game at Oppenheimer Park each year.

HASTINGS PARK CLEARING STATION 1942. Building K, formerly the Forum, was turned into the Japanese men's dormitory. The Park was taken over by the BC Security Commission to temporarily house and disperse the Japanese Canadians in the early months of 1942. This photo was taken by Leonard Frank, a well known Vancouver commercial photographer who was hired by the BC Security Commission to document the clearing station and the camps.



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Japantown

1 Ballantyne Pier 2 Japanese Language School 3 Maikawa Department Store 4 Uchida Building
5 Fuji Chop Suey 6 St. James Anglican Church 7 Tamura's New World Hotel 8 Sisters of
Attonement Mission 9 Oppenheimer Park 10 Buddhist Church 11 Vancouver Police Department

The St. Roch "Workhorse of the North"

by Daniel B. Lemieux,

RCMP Staff Sergeant (retired) and Special Events Docent at the Vancouver Maritime Museum.

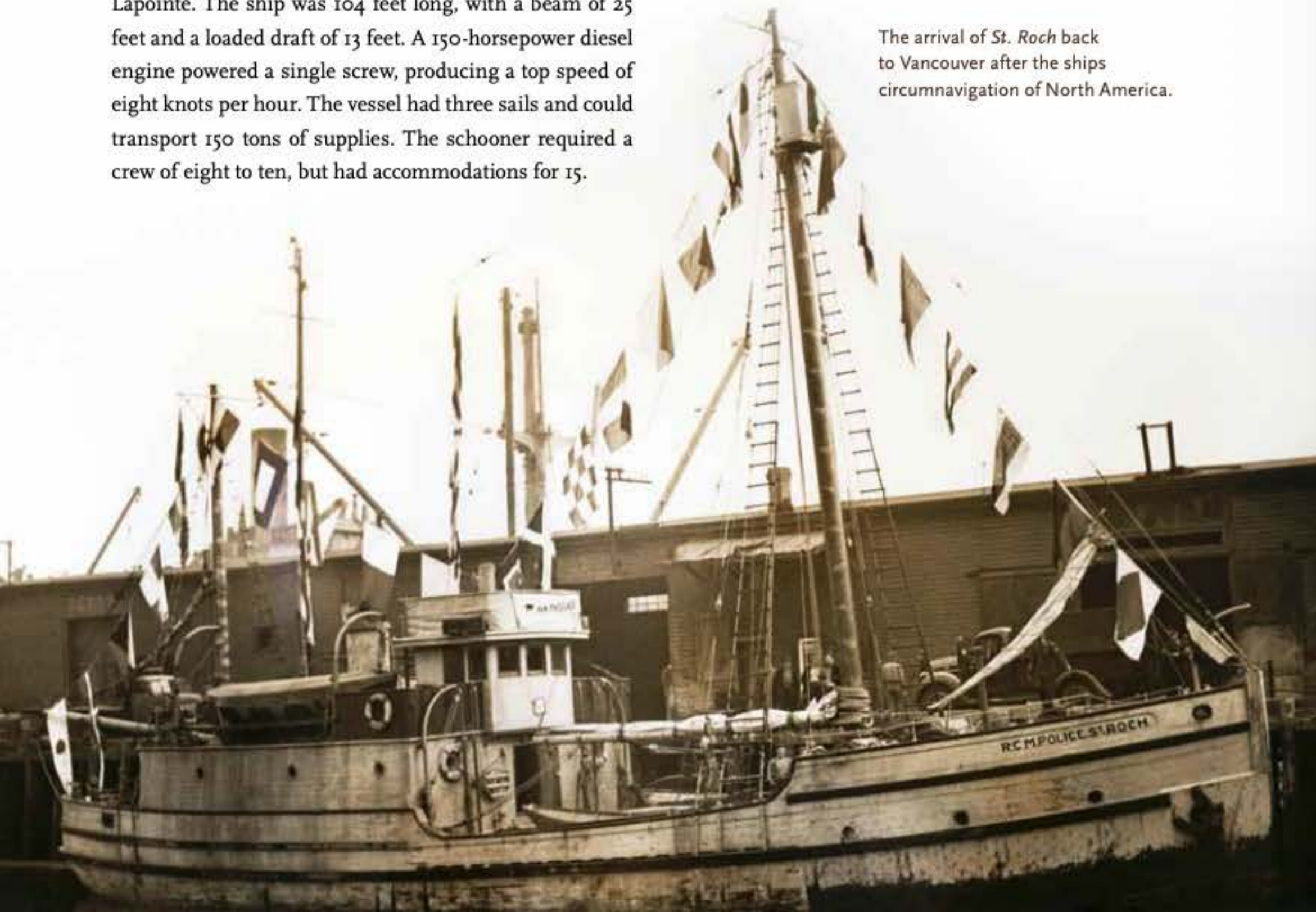
In 1903 the Royal North West Mounted Police established their first two-man detachment in the Arctic to assert Canadian sovereignty and respond to missionary complaints that whalers were debauching the Inuit. By the late 1920s there were seven northern detachments, four of which were in the Western Arctic. Private ships were used to supply these detachments during summer months. Assistant Commissioner Stuart Wood decided it would be more effective if the RCMP had its own supply vessel.

In 1928, at a cost of \$80,000, a specially designed wooden schooner was built in Burrard Ship Yards at the foot of Lonsdale in North Vancouver. It was named *St. Roch* after the Eastern Quebec Parish of Justice Minister Lapointe. The ship was 104 feet long, with a beam of 25 feet and a loaded draft of 13 feet. A 150-horsepower diesel engine powered a single screw, producing a top speed of eight knots per hour. The vessel had three sails and could transport 150 tons of supplies. The schooner required a crew of eight to ten, but had accommodations for 15.

The hull was egg-shaped and sheathed in Australian Iron Bark. It had three huge ice beams to prevent it from being crushed by ice during winter months. Cement was used to fill spaces between decks. This design was effective, but the ship was very unstable in rough seas.

The first Captain was Hugh Gillen, with Constable Henry Asbjorn Larsen as first mate. Larsen was Norwegian-born and had been at sea since he was 15 years of age. While sailing in the Arctic, he was impressed with RCMP members he met. On learning the force was building a vessel to serve in the north, he became a Canadian citizen and joined the RCMP. Because of his skill as a mariner and his knowledge of the Arctic, he was appointed skipper and remained Captain until the ship was taken out of service.

The arrival of *St. Roch* back to Vancouver after the ships circumnavigation of North America.



The *St. Roch* proved very suitable for life in the Arctic. When frozen in ice during winter months, it became a working detachment. Police officers, using dog teams, conducted patrols, investigated crimes, and settled domestic disputes. They also took census, reported weather conditions, and provided medical treatment for the injured. They enjoyed an excellent relationship with the Inuit, employing many as guides.

In 1939 Sergeant Larsen was directed to sail from Vancouver to Halifax through the Northwest Passage. In 1903 Roald Amundsen sailed the *Gjoa*, a 30-year-old fishing sloop with a three-foot draft through the passage from east to west. The journey took three years. For 250 years prior to that, ships seeking a short route between Europe and Asia had attempted this feat but failed. Some ships were lost and their crews frozen or starved to death.

The *St. Roch* left Vancouver on 23 June 1940, but was only able to travel as far as the west coast of Cambridge Bay in the Arctic before being frozen in for the winter. On 31 July 1941 they finally broke out of the ice and continued eastward until again being ice-bound in Palsey Bay. On 3 August 1942 they managed to break free and arrived in Halifax on 11 October 1942. Although it took over two years, the *St. Roch* was the first vessel to successfully navigate the Northwest Passage from west to east. Members of the crew were awarded the Polar Medal. The *St. Roch* remained in Halifax and was transformed into a Ketch with a bigger and more powerful engine. A wheelhouse and more accommodations were added.

In 1944 the schooner returned to Vancouver in 80 days, using a more northerly route, and continued to supply Arctic detachments until 1948. In 1950 the ship returned to Halifax through the Panama Canal and was the first vessel to circumnavigate North America. The *St. Roch* was de-commissioned in 1954 and became the main feature of the Vancouver Maritime Museum at Kitsilano Point in 1958. The hearty vessel is truly a Canadian icon and Captain Henry Larsen, a Canadian hero.

Right

During 1957 and 1958 the RCMP *St. Roch* vessel came into Sterling Shipyards Ltd. in Vancouver for restoration and a refit to its original 1928 profile. In the course of restoration the crew of specialists removed some of the wood and it became waste material destined for the burner. Fred Bodnaruk, RCMP Staff Sergeant (retired) created several violins from the Burmese teak to commemorate the famous RCMP *St. Roch* and the memory of Henry Larsen, its famous captain. Several violinists played the instruments and were surprised at their tonal quality.



Royal Canadian Mounted Police Sergeant Henry Asbjorn Larsen commanded the *St. Roch* from Vancouver through the Northwest Passage to Halifax and returned to Vancouver between 1941 and 1944. He then circumnavigated from Vancouver south through the Panama Canal, to go for a third time through the Northwest Passage in 1954.



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A

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