



Beatty Street Drill Hall

The 6th Regiment, of the Duke of Connaught's Own Rifles, parade for their annual inspection in 1909. The parade was held on the Cambie Street Grounds immediately west of the Beatty Street Drill Hall in downtown Vancouver. The view is east across Cambie Street.

From the Plaque at Beatty Street Drill Hall

VANCOUVER'S FIRST SOLDIERS were militia gunners who occupied the former Imperial Opera House located near the corner of Beatty and Pender Streets to train and use as their headquarters. As the regiment numbers increased, they soon outgrew the old wooden building. After much resistance the Federal Government finally approved the purchase of land and the construction of Vancouver's first drill hall. Construction started late in 1899 and was completed in 1901. Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Owen Townley was the Vancouver Battalion's first commanding officer in 1896 and was also registrar of land titles in Vancouver. His influence had much to do with the approval of the drill hall construction and its prominent location. Townley became Vancouver's eighth mayor in 1901.

The drill hall was designed by David Ewart and was opened on 30 September 1901 by the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York (later King George V and Queen Mary). The building has two prominent castle-like turrets complete with battlements; World War II era tanks and two original 64-pounder guns used by the

regiment now adorn the exterior. The Beatty Street Drill Hall has long been a Vancouver landmark and is listed as a class-A heritage building. The walls are three and a half feet thick; the building rests on huge granite blocks. Limestone from Gabriola Island was used for the parapet, and it features a rusticated stone trim. The drill hall includes a large parade square, offices, a museum and classrooms. It formerly contained a firing range and bowling alley. Originally the Cambie Street Grounds, now a parking lot, across the street was also used as part of the regiment's training facilities.

Boer War veterans march north down Granville Street on 30 September 1901. The soldiers are in Vancouver for the official opening by the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York (later King George V and Queen Mary) of the Beatty Street Drill Hall and for the presentation of medals for their South African service to the British Empire. Their tents have been set up in CPR Park, part of the second Hotel Vancouver complex. The view is taken to the northeast from one of the balconies near the top of the hotel.



Route to be taken by the Royal party

ON ARRIVAL

From CPR depot to corner Granville and Hastings

Hastings to Main

Along Main to Pender

Along Granville to Georgia to Courthouse

AFTER CEREMONY AT COURTHOUSE

Proceeds to Aberdeen School from Court House, along Howe via Georgia; and Howe to Smithe, and along Smithe to Burrard

DRIVE AROUND PARK

Aberdeen School, Burrard to Nelson, Nelson to Bidwell, Bidwell to Beach Avenue to park, leaving by Georgia Street entrance and thence via Georgia back to hotel.

VICTORIA COLONIST, 30 SEPTEMBER 1901