

# The Duke of Connaught's Visit

## The Ghost Soldier of the Beatty Street Drill Hall

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When I first began working at the British Columbia Regiment, I had a sense of being watched or observed. Not knowing the history of the place, I had wandered around the building, taking in my surroundings. One day I looked up towards the inside windows and saw a movement near the exit sign. It was as if a hand moved across the sign blurring it. Another time I was sent down to the Quarter Master section and by mistake took a wrong turn and ended up in the Junior Ranks area. I felt a strong sense that someone was watching me, and that sent shivers throughout my entire body. I know that he is not an evil presence, and I suspect he just wants to make sure that I was okay being in the regiment that he values so much. Later I was told about his ashes and did my own research on him and came to discover that one of his requests was that he be buried at sea. I feel his wishes should be honoured, so his restless spirit can be at ease, and if he chooses to visit then he can do so with a sense of peace.

From The Vancouver Sun, 18 September 1912

WITH A GUARD OF HONOUR of the Duke of Connaught's Own Rifles standing at the salute and with the regimental band playing the National Anthem, the royal train rolled in at the Canadian Pacific depot at 3 o'clock this afternoon, and His Royal Highness and the Duchess and the Princess Patricia and the members of the vice-regal suite, were accorded a hearty welcome to the Terminal City by Mayor Findlay and the civic reception committee and representative of the Dominion and provincial governments and military forces.

Although work on several of the arches was being actively proceeded with late this morning, the nail had been driven; the last piece of bunting adjusted and everything was in readiness for the people of Vancouver to greet their royal highnesses when the train arrived. For two hours the citizens in tens of thousands had been thronging the streets, admiring the splendid decorations and taking up their places along the line of route.

From early morn Vancouver has been on the tiptoe of expectation over the vice-regal visit. Like all hospitable hosts—*anxious that nothing should be left undone*—the city has been actively engaged in preparations for the guests and work on the decorations was being rushed to the very moment of their arrival.

There is no desire to make comparisons—for everyone knows that all along the "royal progress" every town has done splendidly—but Vancouver as decked today without a doubt compares favourably with any other city in Canada, as regards decorations.

Taking their places in the carriages waiting near the platform, the royal guests escorted by the detachment of the British Columbia Mounted Horse under the command of Colonel Flick, proceeded on their tour of the city. The winding roadway from the railway station to the corner of Granville and Cordova Streets, was one densely packed mass of surging humanity, each wait of which was eager to catch the first glimpse of the vice-regal visitors. The police cordons were well preserved, though the mounted and foot constables had a busy time keeping clear the path. The crowds were thickest near the corner of Granville and Hastings Streets. Here nearly ten thousand people had gathered to view the royal procession.

Their royal highnesses were greeted with hearty cheers that almost re-echoed across the inlet and were in one long-continued surge of sound

along the liner of route as the party passed on the way.

The thousands of flags waved bravely in the breeze, the air seemed vibrant with tense enthusiasm, and the brightly decorated arches and buildings and resplendent uniforms of the militia regiments blended in one kaleidoscopic mass of colour, contrasting effectively with the sombre garb of the civilians in the orthodox frock coat and silk hat, who occupied the carriages.

The gala attire of the streets and buildings and the harbour shipping, the general air of festivity and civic wellbeing, the magnificent buildings handsomely decorated, all combine to present to the distinguished visitors of this afternoon a scene of progress and prosperity probably unsurpassed on the continent.

The decorations are of the amplest and most attractive description. Myriad flags flutter from every vantage point. Work on the decorations has proceeded day and night without intermission for the last week, and it has been a race against time to complete them. Workmen have labored under extreme difficulties, and have accomplished much under the most trying conditions. It's a question whether the Italian arch on Hastings Street will be completed on time.

## Arches Are Feature

An arch erected by the Progress Club on Granville Street from a design by Mr. George Henry Little, a reproduction of Holbein's architectural masterpiece at the gateway at St. James' Palace, London, is among the most striking of the decorative effects. This arch represents the architecture of the Tudor period. It is finished off with a fine coating of stone on paint, with mullioned windows of the old-fashioned bulls' eyeglass, expressly made in small sheets.



Prince Arthur, the Duke of Connaught and Strathern, was the third and favourite son of Queen Victoria. He rose to the rank of Field Marshall in his own right as a professional soldier in the British Army. He also served as the Masonic Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England from 1901 until 1939. The Duke of Connaught served as the Colonel of the Regiment and then Colonel-in-Chief of the 6<sup>th</sup> Duke of Connaught's Own Rifles (now the British Columbia Regiment's Duke of Connaught's Own) from 1900 until 1942. He was Governor General of Canada from 1911 until 1916. The Duke of Connaught Lodge No. 64 in North Vancouver was named to commemorate his 1912 visit to Vancouver.





Vancouver City Mounted Police sit at attention in front of an arch that straddled Hamilton Street at Pender Street. The arch was built and donated by the BC Shingle Association to honor the visit by the Duke and Duchess of Connaught.

A huge Douglas fir, bark left on, was sawn into eight logs—each four feet in diameter and 20 feet long—that were stood on end and topped with a flag-bedecked pediment. According to folklore, there was not a nail in the whole of it.

William J. Edgett took this photograph on 20 September 1912 during the visit of the royals. The arch was later dismantled and relocated in Stanley Park at the Indian Village of Whoi-Whoi. By 1947 that arch had deteriorated and as a result was demolished.

From the turret will fly one of the few Royal Standards in the city. The Royal Coat of Arms and that of the Duke of Connaught are emblazoned, as also the emblem of the Progress Club. The whole will be lit up tonight by a scheme of illumination from within. To the energy of Mr. J. T. Stephens, the erection of the Progress Club's arch is largely due. Vines are being trained on the structure and the whole will form a very complete reproduction.

### Italian Arch

Another handsome arch is the one erected by the Italians, designed to represent the arch of the Constantine at Rome. This arch is of Roman Corinthian order and is the tallest in the city, 64 feet high. Over the top is inscribed in English and Italian, "Italian Colony, in Honor to His Royal Highness." The arch is solid wood construction, in columns plastered to imitate marble. The plaster caps of the columns were engraved by a local sculpture and are an exact reproduction of the Corinthian caps at Cori, Italy, the only one of the kind known. The Canadian Northern arch adjoining is after

the French style. Perry and Nicholas are the designers of the Italian arch. Other arches are the Japanese arch after the design of those generally erected at the entrance to the temples of Buddha, and the Chinese arch, on Carrall Street, that is a reproduction of the arches generally constructed in China for similar occasions. The Germans have erected on Granville Street an old German design of a city gate, the outline of which is illuminated. A smaller ancient city gate, from a design by Mr. Ormaton, is erected at the corner of Granville and Hastings Streets. Another handsome erection is the Lumbermen's Association arch at Pender and Hamilton Streets. Massive unhewn logs of Douglas fir form the bases. This arch is to be, it is understood, rebuilt in Stanley Park. The gaily dressed harbor ships fly the British emblem from every masthead.

A view east of the Italian arch across Hastings Street at Homer Street with the Dominion Building blocked by the left hand corner of the arch with the Great Northern Railway arch in the background.

