

Rev. C.M. Tate - Did you know?

Born in Blyth Northumberland
England 1852

Founded Coqualeetza
Boarding School in 1886
with his wife Caroline
when they took 16 First
Nations children into their
home in Chilliwack

Ordained & married 1879

1870 Tate came to British Columbia
at the age of 18 to try his fortune in
the Gold Rush, but arrived too late

Coqualeetza Residential School operation 1894–1940

"Periodically I walked or staged from New Westminster to Hastings, then went by ferry to Moodyville [North Vancouver], where I preached to the Indians who worked at the mill crossing by Indian canoe to Gas Town (Granville) thence traversed the woods to False Creek where I was entertained in the community house of Chief George [Chief Chip-kay-um], whose wife was a Nanaimo woman, where also I gathered in most of the tribe for religious services. From Kitsilano I walked through the Indian trail to Musqueam, from which point after visiting, and preaching to the Indians in the Chief's house I returned to New Westminster, either by canoe, or Granville, via Main Street, across False Creek Bridge to Hastings Mill, and Stevens' Ferry to the end of the road at Moodyville crossing, where I took Lewis' stage, or walked to New Westminster. . . I frequently took a rowboat, or canoe to First Narrows, to visit a small tribe near where Lumberman's Arch now stands." Letter from C.M. Tate to Major Matthews, April 16, 1932, *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 5, City of Vancouver, 2011, 246.

Took issue with the joint federal provincial McKenna–McBride Royal Commission established in 1912 to resolve the Indian reserve question in British Columbia. ". . .the Commission now at work is not dealing with the question of TITLE, which question covers the rights of the Indians not only to the land, but also to the fish, game, timber, water and other interests, to which the natives laid claim, before the coming of the white man, and which they have never surrendered." C.M. Tate Letter on behalf of Indian Rights Association of BC June 22, 1914

Rev. Tate played an important role as General Secretary of the Indian Rights Association (1909-1916) and advocated for land rights and title for Aboriginal peoples in BC

Vehemently opposed the potlatch and criticized government officials for not enforcing the potlatch ban. "Now, it is a well-known fact that the potlatch has an inherent principle which is antagonistic to civilization, and under its cover deeds of darkness and shame are perpetuated which would be an astonishment to the civilized world were they brought to light. . . . Trusting that the department will issue definite instruction for the vigorous enforcement of the law, and the suppression of this monster evil. Yours in behalf of civilization for the Indians, C.M. Tate Methodist Missionary" *The Daily Province*, Feb 25, 1896

"In later days the poor Indians felt the effects of the white man's fishing laws; they fined the poor Indian ten or fifteen dollars if he went out and caught a salmon in a stream which, from time immemorial, his ancestors had caught their fish." Rev. C.M. Tate conversation, J.S. Matthews, 19 December 1932. *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 2, City of Vancouver, 2011, 159.

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In 1914 the Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Duncan Campbell Scott, reported on Tate's activities in support Aboriginal rights to one of Tate's superiors in the Methodist Church: "I regret to have to call you[r] attention to the active part which for a considerable time past has been taken by the Rev. C.M. Tate, Superintendent of Methodist Missions, Victoria, B.C., in connection with agitations by the Indians of that Province in regard to their land matters. Formerly as Secretary of the British Columbia Fishermen's Union, and more recently as General Secretary of the Indian Rights Association of British Columbia, Mr. Tate has used his influence with the Indians to induce them to continue the agitation which has been carried on by them for a number of years... Petitions prepared by Mr. Tate for signature by the Indians, and meetings held by him for the purpose of discussing the land question have kept the minds of the Indians in a continual state of excitement and have impeded the Department in its efforts to secure a reasonable solution of the matters at issue between the Dominion and the Province in regard to the claims of the Indians." Duncan Campbell Scott to Rev. James Endicott, 7 October 1914. RG10, vol. 11023, file 662.

"Critics have often told us of the futility of trying to civilize Indians by simply preaching to them without first educating them, but experience has taught that it is much easier to educate the head after the heart is made right. Lawless barbarians have never become law-abiding citizens by book learning, but by Christianity we have seen the cannibal savage become a docile member of the community, and literally ask for the education that would enable him to compete with the educated people who had invaded his territory, and not be forever playing a losing game." Rev. C.M. Tate conversation, J.S. Matthews, December 1932. Early Vancouver Volume Two, City of Vancouver, 2011, 160.

"A lone result of missionary labour, the smoke-begrimed community house [traditional longhouse] where a dozen families herded together under anything but moral and sanitary conditions, has given place to the individual family cottage, and war paint has been washed from their faces, the feathers combed out of their hair, and modern clothing has supplanted the blanket pinned around the body with a wooden skewer. The canoe has given place to the gas boat built by themselves, and so far as the Indians are concerned, life and property is perfectly safe for the white man in any part of the country, largely due to the work of the missionaries; at least, so said a government official to me a short time ago." *Rev. C.M. Tate conversation, J.S. Matthews, December 1932. Early Vancouver Volume Two, City of Vancouver, 2011, 160.*

"As I found them, all Indians were a kindly, hospitable, joyful and entertaining people. Once you got on the right side of them there was little too good for their friends to whom they gave the best they had. Many of the miners returned down the Fraser from the Cariboo 'dead broke,' and without food, and were helped back to civilization largely through the kindness of the Indians who frequently gave them supper, bed and breakfast—such as it was—asking no return, and in that way the miners got one day further on their journey to the coast." Rev. C.M. Tate conversation, J.S. Matthews, December 1932. Early Vancouver Volume Two, City of Vancouver, 2011, 160.

After Tate's wife passed in 1929 he lived with his nephew and his wife in Vancouver's West End at 1749 Nelson St.

Rev. Tate died in 1933 the year in which St. Andrew's-Wesley church was opened. Tate's memorial service was held at St. Andrews-Wesley.

"So lived and worked and died a real blazer of trails, - a pioneer and pathfinder for the Kingdom of God - a reconciler of alien peoples, and obliterator of racial prejudice in British Columbia..." *Obituary of Rev. C.M. Tate, 1933*