

Early Vancouver

Volume One

By: Major J.S. Matthews, V.D.

2011 Edition (Originally Published 1932)

Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1931-1932.

*A Collection of Historical Data, Maps, and Plans Made with the Assistance of
Pioneers of Vancouver Between March and December 1931.*

About the 2011 Edition

The 2011 edition is a transcription of the original work collected and published by Major Matthews. Handwritten marginalia and corrections Matthews made to his text over the years have been incorporated and some typographical errors have been corrected, but no other editorial work has been undertaken. The edition and its online presentation was produced by the City of Vancouver Archives to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the City's founding. The project was made possible by funding from the Vancouver Historical Society.

Copyright Statement

© 2011 City of Vancouver. Any or all of *Early Vancouver* may be used without restriction as to the nature or purpose of the use, even if that use is for commercial purposes. You may copy, distribute, adapt and transmit the work. It is required that a link or attribution be made to the City of Vancouver.

Reproductions

High resolution versions of any graphic items in *Early Vancouver* are available. A fee may apply.

Citing Information

When referencing the 2011 edition of *Early Vancouver*, please cite the page number that appears at the bottom of the page in the PDF version only, not the page number indicated by your PDF reader. Here are samples of how to cite this source:

Footnote or Endnote Reference:

Major James Skitt Matthews, *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 1 (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011), 33.

Bibliographic Entry:

Matthews, Major James Skitt. *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 1. Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011.

Contact Information

City of Vancouver Archives
1150 Chestnut Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3J9
604.736.8561
archives@vancouver.ca
vancouver.ca/archives



nothing. Possibly they had been there for some time; some had not, but squatted just the same. Of course, this was all in old Granville Townsite, around the lower portion of Hastings and Pender streets. Mr. Orr, the member of parliament, squatted on one lot, and built an office on it, but the C.P.R. came along, and when Mr. Orr came down one morning, he found his office in the middle of the street. So he started to build it again, but the C.P.R. men pulled it down, so Mr. Orr decided that the C.P.R. had more men than he and desisted. He did not get his lot. It was all swamp there at that time, a muskeg full of croaking bullfrogs; they were really toads. All around the corner of Hastings and Abbott streets, where Woodward's Limited is now, was low land. Some of the squatters got their lots."

CARRALL STREET.

"At high tide, the water of False Creek and of Burrard Inlet came very close together; only a narrow strip of land separated them," said Mr. W.F. Findlay, member of the Pioneers Association, an old newspaper man—*The World, Province, News-Advertiser* and *Sun*—and a nephew of Lewis Carter (see Voters List, Vancouver, 1886) who built and owned the Carter House, an early hostel.

"My uncle, Lewis Carter—my mother was his sister—was one of the surveyors of the line of the C.P.R. from Port Moody to Vancouver. He once told me that he had once taken a big Indian canoe, capable of holding three and a half tons cargo—a big canoe—and he (Mr. Carter), three or four Indians, and two surveyors—a regular survey party—had carried it across from Burrard Inlet to False Creek at high tide, via what is now Carrall Street, to save half a day's paddling, and bucking tide necessary to go around through the Narrows." (Also see F.R. Glover's statement in "Vancouver Celebrates First Dominion Day, 1887" herein.)

10 JULY 1931 - CHINESE RIOTS. JOHN MORTON. EARLY WATER.

"You have heard of the Chinese Riots in February 1887," said Mr. H.P. McCraney, a very early pioneer and civic administrator, now living at the corner of 17th Avenue West and Cypress Street. "The time the police came over from Victoria because the people of Vancouver had driven the Chinese out of town." (The people of Tacoma did similarly.) "Well, the Chinese went to their camp which was just where the Elysium Hotel is now on Pender Street, south side, close to Thurlow Street, where there was a splendid spring of water. The spring was under exactly what is now the west wing of the hotel. R.G. Tatlow, afterwards a well-known B.C. finance minister, park commissioner, and after whom Tatlow Park is named, owned the lots and lived there. I lived next door. We used to get our water from the spring before the water was laid on. There was a skid road which came out there. Spring water was a valuable acquisition before the water pipes were laid." (See fire brigades, water tanks, wells.)

Answering a query: "Perhaps so, perhaps that was why John Morton located there. It was beautiful cold clear water. The people used to get it to water their cattle." (John Morton was Vancouver's first resident.)

"Oh, I will tell you a real story about the Chinese Riots some time. You see, I had the contract to clear the land at \$300 an acre, and John McDougall came in and offered to do it for \$150. He brought the Chinamen. I suppose it was a certain amount of selfishness on my part. He is still living at Quesnel."

J.S.M.

10 JULY 1931 - THE GREAT FIRE OF 1886. H.P. MCCRANEY.

"The manner in which the Regina Hotel, which was in the path of fire, escaped was this," said H.P. McCraney, a very early pioneer of Vancouver, one of our first park commissioners, a former alderman, and who laid our first street car tracks.