

Early Vancouver

Volume One

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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.

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15 DECEMBER 1931 - GRANVILLE STREET, 1 JULY 1900. FIRST MILITARY CAMP IN VANCOUVER. ROYAL CANADIAN REGIMENT.

There is a photograph in the Archives showing a number of “bell” tents, such as used by soldiers, pitched on grass, and a column of soldiers and sailors marching down Granville Street. Its date is Dominion Day 1900. The troops are going to Brockton Point for ceremonial parade and games by the old ferry route, where they will land in Stanley Park at an old wharf long since removed.

This military encampment is supposed to be the first in Vancouver; old Vancouver volunteers concede that it must be, as they do not recall an earlier one. The sailors marching down the street are from Her Majesty’s warships in port, and the soldiers are thought to be the 3rd Battalion, Royal Canadian Regiment—as the 2nd (Special Service) Battalion, R.C.R., was fighting in South Africa, and the 1st Battalion elsewhere in Canada—from Esquimalt. The 6th Regiment D.C.O.R. is thought to be marching in the rear, the leading men only in the picture.

The tents are on the C.P.R. hotel park made in 1887 which, it will be noted, is several feet below Granville Street.

The big block of buildings in the centre is the New York Block, where the C.P.R. Telegraph was then, and where (it is believed) the Art, Historical and Scientific Society had their first room for their collection, now grown into the City Museum.

The Bank of Montreal, on [the] corner, is without the addition afterwards added. Seymour Street is shown ten to fifteen feet higher than the old ground level. Twenty-nine bicycles appear in the picture, an evidence of the extreme popularity of bicycling in the years around 1900 (see item of “Bicycles and bicycle paths.”) A balcony is shown over the sidewalk on west side of Granville Street; this was an old architectural practice (see “Carter House,” etc.) Note the growth of young fir trees on vacant lots—probably ten years old, perhaps thirteen—Granville Street was cleared in 1887. The long wharf is the B.C. Sugar Refinery wharf just in front of Cedar Cove. Moodyville is in the far distance, the *Yosemite*, *Princess Louise* (one funnel) at dock, and possibly *Islander* is the steamer near.

The liquor store is “Urquhart’s.”

Note that the flags are Canadian naval ensigns, not Union Jacks (see item elsewhere), old-style label.

In 1900, Granville Street was not paved; it was macadam, and in dry weather, very dusty. The watering carts were constantly passing up and down all day.

The sidewalks were of planks and, frequently, when anything small, such as a coin, was dropped, it disappeared between the cracks. From time to time, there was a certain amount of grass on the edges, clover or such. Street clearers with shovel, broom and receptacle on wheels passed up and down cleaning up dung.

JSM