

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.

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24 JANUARY 1932 - THE FIRST VOLUNTEER SOLDIER OF VANCOUVER.

The first volunteer soldier of Vancouver was probably Corporal J.Z. Hall, afterwards a well-known citizen and real estate broker of Vancouver, and resident at "Killarney," Point Grey Road, Vancouver, and whose wife, now, 1932, a widow, was formerly Miss Jesse Columbia Greer, daughter of Sam Greer of Greer's Beach and a brilliant, public spirited woman.

Corporal Hall belonged to the British Columbia Garrison Artillery, and at first had a small stationery store in Granville. He journeyed to New Westminster to attend drills, sometimes walking, and sometimes reaching Vancouver in the early hours of the morning after attending drills. It is stated by his wife, Mrs. Hall, that he never missed a drill. His photograph, taken in the uniform of his corps in 1885, is in the Archives. He died in September 1925 or 1926.

The first telephone in Vancouver was in Mr. Hall's stationery store. Mrs. Hall states that he told her that he had a telephone in his store long before Tilley's generally reputed to be the first phone. It was a toll line; 25¢ per call.

The uniform of the B.C.B.G.A. shows a bearskin busby with white plume, and scarlet flap on the right side. The buttons are shining brass, the belt white with buckle surmounted with a grenade. The scabbard is for the long bayonet, and a beard is worn.

JSM

Herring, who was in this unit in early days, told me the tunic was artillery blue, and so were trousers, which had a broad red stripe down seams. He said, "I never saw a red coat in New Westminster after the Royal Engineers left."

JSM

CITY OF VANCOUVER, SURVEY OF SITE FOR CITY, CANADIAN PACIFIC LANDS, ALDERMAN L.A. HAMILTON.

Copy of letter:

Canadian Pacific Hotels
Vancouver, B.C.
4th Oct. 1929

J. Alex Walker Esq.
Town Planning Commission
Vancouver

Town Planning Commission
RECEIVED. Oct. 5th 1929

Dear Mr. Walker:

I was most gratified on returning to the hotel to find your note and the book "Of a plan for the City of Vancouver."

I am sorry I have to leave tomorrow by 9 a.m. train as I know I would have enjoyed a chat with you. I cannot say that I am proud of the original planning of Vancouver. The work however was beset with many difficulties. The dense forest. The Inlet on the north and False Creek on the south. The pinching in of the land at Carrall Street. A registered plan on the east and one on the west. My first plan was based on the cancellation of the plan to the west and "Lot 185." I had a new plan drawn making great changes in it. So made that all the streets leading westerly from the C.P.R. property would run without any jog with those in Lot 185. There were a number of owners in fact all but one consented to it. A Mr. Pratt (*Spratt*) who owned 4 lots on the waterfront where the lofty Marine Building is now being erected, had had a disagreement with the other land owners, and was determined to fight through the courts to prevent us altering the original plan. As we could not wait I had to adapt my plan as nearly as possible with the old

plan, but in doing this was only able to give a continuous line for the alternate streets. You can understand that I was obliged to switch my plan so as to have the principal streets to run northerly and southerly, inasmuch as they would thus lead to a large block of land belonging to the C.P.R. south of False Creek.

Expressing my regret at not being able to meet you.

I am, Yours truly

L.A. Hamilton

The explanation of the above address given by Mr. Hamilton is that he was in Vancouver attending a meeting of the Anglican Synod of Canada of which, for many years, he has been treasurer. His address is care Canada Trust Company, Toronto. Mr. J. Alexander Walker is the secretary of the Town Planning Commission.



Victoria, about 1929

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