

## **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 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the City's founding. The project was made possible by funding from the Vancouver Historical Society.

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“A trail ran up Hastings Street from about where the B.C. Electric Railway Depot is now, as far as Woodward’s department store, and thus far it might have been possible for a two-wheeled cart to get by, but west of Abbott Street on Hastings Street, towards Victory Square, the trail was too narrow.

“Another important trail ran, in 1886, from the ‘residential area’ on Cordova Street, up Abbott Street to Pender Street and Cambie Street, climbing the hill past the old hospital and school grounds, and wandering off into the woods, goodness knows where, until finally it came out at the foot of Granville Street on False Creek near Robertson and Hackett’s sawmill now. It was used by hunters, and loggers from the logging camps out on English Bay, near Jericho. It had been an old Indian trail. When you reached the salt water at the foot of Granville Street on False Creek, you waved a stick with a rag for a flag, and an Indian would come over in a canoe from the Reserve and take you across and bring you back again, for four bits. An old Indian lived at the foot of Granville Street; he would ferry you over for two bits. I have had them call for me and bring me back many times. There was lots of excitement down at Greer’s Beach in 1886, and the fellows used to go over there to see what the place was like.”

#### **CLEARING THE FOREST AWAY.**

It was remarked to Mr. Gallagher that Mr. William Hunt of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue West has in his possession a very old painting in oil, done by his father Mr. C. Hunt in 1895, from a photograph given him at that time by Mr. Norman Caple, a very early photographer of Vancouver, and which Mr. Hunt Sr. says Mr. Caple told him at the time he requested him to paint it, was of Granville Street looking south from Pender Street in 1884. It shows a buggy travelling on an almost straight uphill trail, and towering forest on both sides.

“How could that be, even in 1884,” replied Mr. Gallagher. “Of course, the old logging roads always led downhill, but in 1884 no buggy could possibly drive up or down Granville Street. The logging road, which came down from the top of the hill in almost the exact position of Granville Street today, had great wide skids, ten feet wide or more, and in the winter of 1886 these were still in position. Anyone who has seen the old corduroy roads will understand; they were made of logs a foot or more in diameter, and laid side by side. In the autumn of 1886, the C.P.R. was hauling stumping powder and camp supplies in ‘stone boats’ over those skids. Early in the summer of 1887, the C.P.R., under the direction of Mr. L.A. Hamilton, C.P.R. surveyor and an alderman, cleared and graded Granville Street, and the skids were then removed and destroyed. They rough graded a road, and planked it, ten or twelve feet wide, wide enough for a drive, and at their own expense.

“In the other direction, on the slope facing south, the logging road ran from the crest of the hill about Robson Street, towards False Creek, but it did not follow Granville Street; it sheared off to the east—the land sloped in that direction, and the logs from that area were yarded into False Creek by Angus Fraser, to about where the C.P.R. roundhouse now stands. Oxen, probably six or seven yoke on one log, dragged the logs out of that trail as late as 1887.

“I think perhaps the old painting might be of Granville Street South, across False Creek, opened by the C.P.R. about 1890. It could not be Granville Street from Pender Street.”