

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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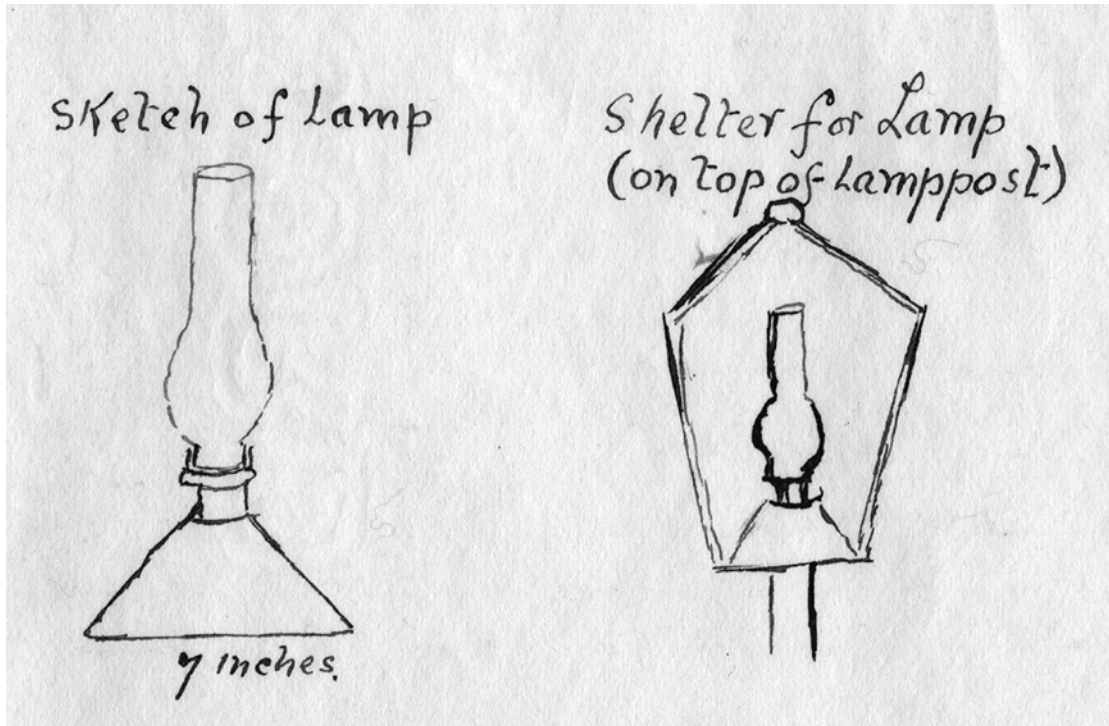
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Mr. W.M. Horie, of Baynes and Horie, tells me that the chain gang worked on streets around Balsam, York and First Avenue West in the winter of 1907. Grady was then in charge, and used to come to his house appealing for gloves, overcoats, etc., etc., "for my poor fellows, some of whom are not properly clothed for this sort of weather."

JSM

19 NOVEMBER 1931 - GRANVILLE AND SEYMOUR STREETS.

In the early 1890s and later, a shallow valley existed under, approximately, the corner of Granville Street and Dunsmuir Street. Mrs. J.R. Seymour, accompanied by Mr. Seymour's sister, Emma Seymour, once went gathering skunk cabbage in that shallow ravine, took a good armful home, thought they looked beautiful flowers, but could not understand where the awful smell came from as they carried them. They were then new arrivals in Vancouver. This ravine ran diagonally northeast and crossed Seymour Street between Pender Street and Dunsmuir, where, for years, the sidewalk on stilts was high above the ground beneath. The tree tops grew about to the level of the sidewalk, this is, second growth willows, etc. Old photos will illustrate the exact contour. Mr. J.R. Seymour was one of our early druggists and a well-known public man. In 1931 he was living in the 2000 block on Whyte Avenue, Kitsilano Beach. One of his two sons is a barrister in St. Catharines, Ontario, the other superintendent of the Edmonton General Hospital; his two daughters are unmarried. See *Who's Who*, 1923.

J.S. Matthews

J.R. SEYMOUR.

Of Mr. Seymour's two sons, one, Ainslie, was captain of the Vancouver High School Cadets, which made the trip to Australia in 1912; the other, Murton, was one of those interested in the very early aeroplane owned by Mr. Stark, photo of which is in the Archives, which is claimed to be the first aeroplane in Vancouver which flew. It was a queer looking contraption with the engine

beneath the wings, the pilot's seat in front, and the propeller in rear, and was entirely without a cabin, the pilot sitting out in front on a framework of bamboo poles. It flew from Minoru Park, afterwards was equipped with pontoons, and actually rose out of the water of the First Narrows and flew over English Bay.

JSM

20 NOVEMBER 1931 - WATER WORKS. BOULTBEE. HASTINGS SAWMILL. COMMERCIAL DRIVE.

Mr. Robinson, City Librarian, told me today that the Town Planning Commission had called him on the phone asking for the names of some Waverley novels, as they wanted to name some new streets. I rushed down to City Hall and saw Mr. Harrison, the secretary. He told me that Commercial Drive was now curved at its southern end, near Clark Park, whereas formerly it went south, then east, then south again, and that the curved shortcut, formerly a cutting made by the B.C. Electric Railway, would be named Commercial Drive, which would leave the short street running north and south from 15th Avenue to 18th Avenue, east of the cutting, without a name. They had selected a name out of a book, one which, I think he said, was the old name for Scotland. I protested very mildly, and he asked me what name I suggested.

I said, "How about Hendry," in honour of the manager for many years of the Hastings Sawmill. He replied, "Too near Henry." I suggested, "Boulton." He replied, "Excellent," after I had made the necessary explanations. They follow.

John Boulton was our first magistrate. He lived for some years on Westminster Avenue, east side, near Westminster Avenue Bridge across False Creek. Very nearly opposite lived the well-known C. Gardner Johnson, his brother-in-law, in a small cottage or shack. Magistrate Boulton's house stood over the water of False Creek, now filled in and used as flower beds for C.N.R. Station.

Lieutenant Colonel F.W. Boulton, who afterwards commanded the 6th Regiment D.C.O.R. about 1907 to 1910, was in the earlier days a clerk in the Vancouver Water Works, a private company, and when the city took over the water works, about 1892, F.W. (commonly called "Tom") became first city water works chief clerk, or office manager, and he remained as such until he resigned about 1913—about 21 years.

A son of John Boulton is E.L. Boulton of Macaulay Nicolls and Maitland, real estate.

The history of the water works of Vancouver would not be complete without some reference to the Hastings Sawmill flume which, in very early days, conveyed water for the Hastings Sawmill, Burrard Inlet, then practically the only settlement on that inlet.

The old flume ran from Trout Lake westerly, and when the Great Northern cut the deep cutting through Grandview to bring their trains to Vancouver, traces of the old flume were unearthed, according to Mr. T. Sanderson, now of the B.C. Mills, Timber and Trading Company (1931) who says he recalls seeing sections of it. The flume then continued along the head of False Creek in a northwesterly direction to the Hastings Sawmill. The old map in the City Archives, signed by Mayor MacLean and dated 1886, shows the water tank at the Hastings Mill. The flume ran through the forest, was a privately owned affair, never had anything to do with the city of Vancouver. The Hastings Sawmill had the logging rights over the adjacent territory, and when they sold such property as they possessed, retained Trout Lake and its environs for the water. Afterwards, between 1920 and 1925 approximately, they presented it to the city, who have converted it into a park. This lake is within a few hundred feet of the short street which it is proposed to rename.

Messrs. Raymur, Alexander and Hendry were successively managers of the Hastings Sawmill. The two former already have streets named after them; that of the latter was not acceptable as already explained. Hence, Boulton, the name of a pioneer family of distinction, one of whose members was closely identified with the early water systems, suggested itself.