

## **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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combined to defeat Mr. Alexander. It was also the first time there was any open display of ill feeling between Victoria and Vancouver, an ill feeling which did not die down until after the defeat of the Victoria oligarchy by Mr. Semlin of Cache Creek.

“There were some wonderful men on our earlier councils—not all on our first council—and head and shoulders over our parliamentary legislators at Victoria. A few I can hurriedly recall were MacLean, Oppenheimer, Alexander, Hamilton, Lefevre, Dunn, and Templeton, besides others. They all served without remuneration. MacLean did not even take his postage.”

#### **THE FIRST COUNCIL MEETING.**

“The first council meeting was held in the sitting room of the old Court House, which faced the sea, on Water Street, where the No. 1 Fire Hall was afterwards, and now the site of a storage garage. The building stood back about ten feet from Water Street; the front door and sitting room windows faced Water Street. The interior of the sitting room was about ten feet wide and twenty long, was lined with plain cedar ‘V’ joint, and lighted at night by a large coal oil lamp. Four doors in a row took up most of the long side opposite the windows, and opened into four prison ‘cells.’

“At the appointed hour, the mayor and aldermen elect and some others, I think in all about twenty-one—more could not have found standing room—crowded into the small sitting room. The poll clerk, Mr. C. Gardner Johnson, and His Worship-elect took the head of the table. Mr. McGuigan sat on the poll clerk’s left; I stood at Mr. MacLean’s right, and was about the only person present not in some official capacity. I stood close to his Worship’s elbow.

“Mayor MacLean and I had met before we came to Vancouver. He had been purchasing agent for the government in the Northwest Rebellion of 1885; he employed ‘a thousand’ teams; I had horse feed for sale and was buying wheat at Wolseley, thirty miles east of Qu’Appelle. Mr. MacLean had been exceptionally courteous and considerate of my interests then, so that afterwards when we were both in Vancouver, and he was candidate for mayor, I naturally desired to return the compliment. He had little of worldly goods then, scarcely a week’s board, so that a good opportunity was open to me to show my appreciation of his past kindnesses. I had also had previous experience in the establishment of civic government at Wolseley, Assiniboia, N.W.T., and so was more or less familiar with the procedure. Thus it was that I was at Mr. MacLean’s right hand when the initial meeting of the City Council of Vancouver took place.”