

Early Vancouver

Volume Two

By: Major J.S. Matthews, V.D.

2011 Edition (Originally Published 1933)

Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1932.

Supplemental to volume one collected in 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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Footnote or Endnote Reference:

Major James Skitt Matthews, *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 2 (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011), 33.

Bibliographic Entry:

Matthews, Major James Skitt. *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 2. Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011.

Contact Information

City of Vancouver Archives
1150 Chestnut Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3J9
604.736.8561
archives@vancouver.ca
vancouver.ca/archives



THE FIRST STATIONERY STORE IN GRANVILLE. THOS. R. PEARSON.

“My first employment was in the office of the Paymaster of the Government Surveys, became chief clerk in February 1878, and retained this position until the office was abolished and the C.P.R. route determined.

“Next went in the stationery and fancy goods business in New Westminster, and became B.X. Express agent. In those days conditions were very different to what they are now. I used to attend to my own business from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. after which I did up the express and frequently packed as much gold upon my back as I could stagger under down to the wharf at all hours of the night and no street lights in those days, but it was never molested. Would not get far with it these days, eh?

“I can remember upon returning from a trip my wife and I had to take a canoe to get from old Gastown to English Bay where my father-in-law Mr. C.G. Major and family were in their summer camp.

“At the time of the fire I had a place of business adjoining the old Granville Hotel and had some \$7,000.00 worth of goods burned upon which there was no insurance.”

Thos. R. Pearson, New Westminster, 1932.

(Note: it was from this stationery store that W.H. Gallagher bought the pad of plain paper, pen and ink, with which our City Council first started to record its proceedings; all presumed to have been burned in the fire.)

EARLY TRAILS. ENGLISH BAY CAMPERS, 1882. C.G. MAJOR.

“In 1882, I along with my parents, camped on the property now owned by the City on English Bay. This property is where the bandstand and little park is, just back of the bathing beach. My father owned this property and afterwards sold it to the city. The only way we could get in to what is now the main part of the City of Vancouver was to go by canoe or boat through the Narrows or up False Creek to about where the C.N.R. Depot now stands, and then walk through a trail to the one business street. There was a trail through by Coal Harbour at that time which at times was not passable. One sister, Mrs. T.R. Pearson, is the only other member of the family” (see above) “beside myself who was there at that time. Of course, I was pretty young at that time, fifty years ago.”

H.C. Major, Official Administrator, New Westminster, 1932.