

Early Vancouver

Volume Two

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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.

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together with some seven acres of land in South Vancouver. In 1910 he laid the cornerstone of the First Baptist Church on Burrard Street, Vancouver. He also set aside the equivalent of eleven thousand dollars to build the Baptist church since known as the Ruth Morton Memorial Church, South Vancouver, and the cornerstone of which was laid by my stepmother, Mrs. Ruth Morton.

“Sam Brighthouse married a Spanish lady of noted beauty, the widow of Captain Pritchard. Michael Brighthouse Wilkinson was a nephew who, to conform to his uncle’s will, changed his name to Michael Wilkinson Brighthouse.” (He died nine days after this narrative was written—12 March 1932.)

“William Hailstone married, sent his earnings to his wife in England. Then came a cable saying that she had died. Her will left her property to her two daughters, thus depriving her husband of his own earnings—a matter which was afterwards, I understand, adjusted. I heard afterwards that he fell down stairs and died of a broken neck.” (Hailstone was in 1895 living in Rose Villa, Quay Road, Bridlington, Yorkshire. He had returned and was personally known to J.M. Heselton, 2248 East 25th Avenue, Vancouver. The two daughters were then about 12 or 15.)

“All three pioneers died very wealthy, and within about thirteen months of each other. Though all married, one son only was given to them; myself. My wife was Miss Florence Appleyard, second daughter of Mr. C.H. Appleyard, Town Councillor, Mirfield, Yorkshire. We have no children.”

All above as recounted to me.

J.S. Matthews, August 1932.

THE ROUTE OF JOHN MORTON’S FIRST TRIP TO BURRARD INLET, “WESTMINSTER TO WEST END.”

See *The First Settlers on Burrard Inlet and Early Vancouver*, Vol. 2.

Narration of conversation between Joseph Morton, son of John Morton, and Major J.S. Matthews, V.D., City Archivist, 3 March 1932, wherein Joseph Morton states:

“The Indian and Father were brought together in New Westminster. An arrangement was made for the Indian to guide Father to the coal deposits, and they started off one day and came by forest trail to the head of False Creek. Just what trail they took I do not know.” ... “Anyway, Father told me the Indian led him to the head of False Creek, and after that cut through the trees to the Inlet, somewhere about Carrall Street now, and the Indian got a canoe” ... “What prompted the Indian to take Father out of the Narrows, I have no knowledge, but whatever it was, they went out of the Narrows in the canoe, and circumnavigated the peninsula” ... “They finally landed on the English Bay bathing beach at the foot of Denman Street ... They jumped ashore” ... “He” (the Indian) “pulled the canoe high up on the beach, and into the bushes, led off on a trail into the woods, and beckoned Father to follow” ... “To his” (Morton’s) “astonishment, after a short walk, they arrived back on Burrard Inlet” ... etc.

MORTON’S PROBABLE ROUTE FROM NEW WESTMINSTER.

It is assumed to have been via the Douglas Street trail (now Douglas Road) to Burnaby Lake, thence via Still Creek, Trout Lake and China Creek to the mouth of the latter at the old southeast corner of False Creek, now approximately the foot of St. Catherine’s Street.

AND FOR THESE REASONS.

1. H.M.S. *Plumper*’s chart, No. 1922, 1859-1860, shows an unsurveyed trail from New Westminster to a large unsurveyed lake known to exist, now Burnaby Lake.
2. Excerpt, *Victoria Colonist*, 4 July 1859: “The pleasure walk” (political sarcasm) “to Burnaby Lake is completed.” (Geo. Green quotation.)
3. Geo. Green quotation: “In February 1861, John Murray and Daniel Kelso contracted to open up two miles of Douglas Street Road” ... “The work was finished by July.”

Excerpt, *Columbian*, 25 June 1862: “We hear great complaints from settlers on this road” ... “the prospect of securing an abundance of coal on Coal Harbour has caused a flood of applications for preemptions there.”

4. Excerpt, Preemption Record, 205, 17 October 1860, 250 acres, Col. R.C. Moody, R.E.: “On False Creek, near the trail, to include clear land around the two ponds, and abut on the upper end of False Creek.”

NOTE ADDED LATER:

One of these “two ponds” was no doubt Trout Lake, and the other a much smaller one, now dried up, which straddled what is now Renfrew Street, at a point where the Great Northern Railway crosses that street in Blocks 35 and 36, and shown in a map issued in 1906 by the Provincial Government for use at the sale of government lands at auction by Messrs. Rankin and Ford, Auctioneers, 1906.

5. Excerpt, *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 1, conversation with C.E. Pittendrigh, New Westminster: “There were, in the early days, many dried weather-whitened antlers of elk lying around Little Lake” (Deer Lake).

Note: Indians, when travelling in the forest, naturally follow the easiest grades, and the lowest grades are the creek beds, and a route from Burnaby Lake to False Creek, via Still Creek, Trout Lake and China Creek—at the mouth of which there was an Indian clearing—would not rise more than 100 feet above sea level. An Indian trail from False Creek to the swamps of Trout Lake, “Renfrew Street Lake,” Still Creek, and Burnaby Lake muskegs—in all of which elk and beaver abounded—would naturally have been used by Indians to bring out the heavy carcasses of meat for consumption by the hundreds, perhaps thousands, living in the villages east of Point Grey and Point Atkinson. The trail mentioned by Col. Moody, R.E., was probably an old Indian trail as well known to Indians as Kingsway is to us.

J.S. Matthews, 14 April 1939

EXCERPT FROM LETTER, DATED 26 NOVEMBER 1932, FROM THEO. BRYANT, LADYSMITH, B.C., SON OF REV. CORNELIUS BRYANT, METHODIST MINISTER AT GRANVILLE, B.C. IN EARLY '80s.

Copied from lead pencil postscript of back of letter of 26 November 1932 in ink.

“You mention a place, Morton’s, of 1862.

“I may say that I was at an old log house on the edge of the woods about 1879 or 1880. It was towards Coal Harbour, as was known then. The old house was in disrepair then, but had been inhabited for some time, and the trees had grown into the clearing. The currants and raspberries were growing wild, and also the foxgloves were in bloom; it was quite a climb up the bank to the top where the old place was. I never had any information as to who it belonged to; perhaps it was Morton’s.”

Comment on above: it undoubtedly was, for no other hut or clearing other than Morton’s clearing could possibly have existed in that neighbourhood which could conform with the above description.

J.S. Matthews, 1932