

Early Vancouver

Volume Two

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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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BRIEF ITEMS OF INTEREST.

Hugh E. Campbell, member of Volunteer fire brigade, 1886.

"The C.P.R. Roundhouse on False Creek was built in 1888; prior to that they had used a bit of a shed a few yards south of Pender Street, close to Carrall Street; just an open shed.

"Hastings Street, at the time of the Fire, June 1886, was just four blocks long; from Cambie Street to Westminster Avenue.

"Bill Cordiner's daughter married Chas. Nelson, first reeve of West Vancouver. 'Navy Jack' and Bill Cordiner helped to clear the forest off old Granville."

KERRISDALE.

Alderman W.H. Lembke of 2162 West 40th Avenue, three years reeve of Point Grey Municipality, and an old timer there before it came into the city of Vancouver, tells me that the first house in Kerrisdale is now numbered 2941 West 42nd Avenue, and is the home of Dr. J.M. Pearson. It stood on what is now West 42nd Avenue between Carnarvon and MacKenzie streets, and was originally on a five acre plot, and the house stood well back from the road. Kerrisdale gets its name from it.

HORSES RACING ON HOWE STREET.

Walter E. Graveley, who purchased the first lot sold by the C.P.R. in Vancouver (southeast corner of Carrall and Cordova) lived at the Sunnyside Hotel and kept the deed in his trunk. When the Sunnyside burned in the fire of 1886, the trunk was also burned, but the fierce draft wafted a bundle of documents out of the trunk, and they dropped on the beach, and a day later were picked up and delivered to Mr. Graveley who still, 1933, retains the ownership of the lot, and also the deed, much mud-begrimed.

Mr. Graveley states that as the old Vancouver Opera House was being built they used to climb the brick walls and watch the horse races on Howe Street—from about Nelson to Georgia—from its walls.

EARLY NEWSPAPERS.

Robert Mathison, who worked on the *Herald*, says it was the first newspaper. The *News* started 3 May 1886, and the *Advertiser* just after the fire of 13 June 1886.

The first newspaper on Burrard Inlet was a sheet called the *Moodyville Tickler*.

3 JULY 1931 – THEATRES.

The first theatre in Vancouver was Hart's Opera House on Carrall Street, the second the Imperial Opera House on Pender, and then of course there was the Vancouver Opera House. The Imperial Opera House was built in 1889, but whether before or after the Vancouver Opera House has not been ascertained at this moment.

When I came to Vancouver in November 1898 there was a small theatre called the Grand Theatre on Cordova Street, in the middle of the block between Cambie and Abbott Street—north side. It is still standing.

This theatre was a small affair. Its frontage was twenty-five feet, and its depth presumably about one hundred and twenty. In 1898 the Imperial Opera House was still in use, but as a Drill Hall. The only two theatres at that time which I recall were the "big" theatre, and the "little one," the former being the Vancouver Opera House, and the latter, the "Grand," and it was customary to go first to one, and then to the other, for there was no other one to go to; we alternated.

The stage was very narrow. There were boxes on both sides. The boxes were just wide enough for one person to squeeze into, and were entered by a passage way, very narrow, from behind which led to the stage. Box holders sat one behind the other. All the formality of etiquette was observed by those using them; dress suits with white bosoms, and the ladies in low necked dresses. In the middle of the theatre