

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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WHOI WHOI, STANLEY PARK.

Letter from Professor Chas. Hill-Tout, F.R.S.C., F.R.A.I., etc.

Frontenac Apartments
Quebec Street, Vancouver
August 2nd 1932.

Dear Major Matthews:

The photograph you sent me, which records the demolition of one of the largest of the old time middens in Stanley Park is most interesting as well as worthy of preservation.

I had no idea anything so reminiscent of the early days of Vancouver was in existence. The road around the park ran right through this midden, which was situated about where the Lumberman's Arch now stands, and its material composed mostly of calcined shells and ashes, was used largely for priming the roadbed around the park. In carting away the midden mass, numerous skeletons were brought to light. The bones of these were gathered up by the workmen, and placed in boxes for the Indians to take away, and bury in their burial grounds.

I recall making selections of these bones, and sending them to the museum at Ottawa. This ancient campsite formed one of the largest of the native villages of the Squamish in earlier days—so the Indians informed me—but had been practically abandoned since the period when small pox first attacked the native people of this region. This scourge struck this village very severely, and practically depopulated it, hence its abandonment hereafter.

Yours sincerely,

Chas. Hill-Tout

(Refer Bailey Bros. photo No. 541, "deposit of shells eight feet deep on Park road.")

MOUNTAIN VIEW CEMETERY. THE GREAT FIRE.

F.E. Tilley, Bradner, 18 August 1932. "No, I am no relation of Tilley's of the stationery store in Granville, but I built the first house in the east end after the Fire.

"I had a lot out there, and when I saw the fire coming I dragged out a trunk and buried it; that was the only thing I saved.

"Afterwards a fellow came to me and said, 'Let's get some lumber; I'll help you build a shack, and share it with you.' I had \$150, but if I spent that I was 'stumped.' Anyway, I went down to the mill" (Hastings Sawmill) "and said I wanted some lumber and showed young Alexander some money—I don't know which son it was—anyway he looked at it, fingered it for a moment, and then pushed it back across the desk, and said, 'You keep that.' I got the lumber I wanted.

"Afterwards Capt. Tatlow came to me. I had another lot between his house and some two or three lots he wanted to make his place larger. Someone said, 'Charge him a good stiff price; he's got lots of money,' but he came to me and offered, I think it was \$300, and I took it. I couldn't 'hold him up.' It worked out all right afterwards because when I got the contract to clear the cemetery, the Mountain View Cemetery, the city wanted two bondsmen. Some of the contractors from Seattle had cleared out without paying their men, and the city wanted two sureties. I went all 'round town with the papers, but no one wanted to 'back' them, so finally I went to Capt. Tatlow, and he said, 'Oh, pass them over here.' After that I could get a dozen bondsmen if I had wanted them."