

Early Vancouver

Volume Three

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Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1933-1934.

Supplemental to Volumes One and Two collected in 1931-1932.

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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CONVERSATION WITH MRS. J.Z. HALL (NÉE GREER).

Also see *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 1, and “The Fight for Kitsilano Beach.”

GREER’S BEACH. KITSILANO BEACH.

“We wanted for nothing. If we wanted any trout, we just took a boat and came along the shore; there were lots in the sea and streams. We could shoot, too. We very nearly lived in the boats.

Query: What about smelts?

Mrs. Hall: “Oh, we did not bother about them. The smelts were there in shiploads, yes shiploads. We could fill a boat in fifteen minutes. I myself, as a girl, have filled three or four sacks—potato sacks—and towed them behind the boat. You could almost tip the boat over, and fill it. But they have all gone now. Now, where do you suppose they have gone to?”

CONVERSATION WITH PAUL MARMETTE, 19 JUNE 1933.

FALSE CREEK, 1888-1889, NOW GRANVILLE ISLAND.

“Those piles which you see driven in a sort of great circle enclosing the sandbar, now known as Granville Island, were driven about 1888-9 for or by Mr. Vashon, a contractor who cut out piles for the C.P.R. He tried to preempt the bar—they were not to hold logs, but to mark the boundaries of his preemption. I don’t know the details, or who or what was behind him. He was very secretive about it. All I know is that he tried to preempt that sandbar in False Creek, and either the city or the government stopped him. The day of the Great Fire they phoned us that Vancouver was burning, so he and I took a boat, and it took us an hour or more to row from Hastings to Hastings Mill—the wind was so strong we could make little headway, and Mr. Vashon was a strong man. The boat was half full of water by the time we got to the mill. He was drowned near Dawson, Yukon Territory, afterwards; his wife still lives, I think. At the Hastings Mill, Mrs. Alexander was attending to a woman—dying from burns, her face was all black.” (See well-known photo, “West End 1890.”)

ATHLETICS, GEORGE BLACK’S. HASTINGS.

“The C.P.R. offices at Hastings, where I drew the bridge plans, was a two-storey house; no dances were held in it in my time. West of this house was the recreation field. The C.P.R. used to run special trains on Saturday afternoons during 1887-1888 to the football matches held there.”

NEWS-ADVERTISER, 5 JANUARY 1889.

FIRST GRANVILLE STREET BRIDGE.

“Formally opened yesterday, January 4th, by the Mayor” (Oppenheimer.) “Was designed by city engineer.” (See Vol. 2.)

10 MAY 1933 – WILD ANIMALS. KITSILANO INDIAN RESERVE.

“One night, it must have been about 1906, I was returning to Kitsilano Beach by street car when, as we passed through the Indian Reserve, the street car ran over a skunk, and oh boy! And my friend—I don’t know his name, but he is a member of Composite Masonic Lodge—made fearful grimaces, and wildly waved his hands across his nose, while we laughed at his antics illustrating his vivid memories of a smell twenty-seven years old; a pretty strong smell to be so lasting.”

For further items re wild animals which lived around Kitsilano Beach see elk, muskrat, coon, wolf, (Wild Animals), etc.