

**Early Vancouver**

**Volume Three**

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**2011 Edition (Originally Published 1935)**

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

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

**About the 2011 Edition**

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### **CAMBIE STREET GROUNDS. JOE FORTES. CHAIN GANG.**

“Al Larwill and the little fellows cleared the most part of Cambie Street. Why, the fires would be burning there until midnight! There was just a sort of little clear space in the centre” (see *World* panorama, 1890); “all the rest was stumps; it was cleared up towards Cambie Street; down by Beatty and along there was all stumps. I remember the old darkie, Joe Fortes, used to be up there helping, and when it was time to go back to the Bodega” (saloon) “where he worked, to sell beer, he would have to hurry, so he did not have time to wash his hands when he got there. When I was on the Council I got the chain gang sent up there, and they pretty nearly finished what was left of the clearing to be done.”

Query: George Matheson told me this was the shack Al Larwill lived in.

Mr. Gallagher: “So it was, at first, for the first couple of years or so. But they added to it. At first it was 200 feet from Beatty Street, but they kept shoving it back and back ‘til they got it almost to the edge of Beatty Street in the corner. The shack they pulled down wasn’t the shack they put up; it had been moved two or three times, added to, altered, twisted around.” (Note: this explains the altered position in picture of naval review on Cambie Street, Queen’s Diamond Jubilee, 1897.) “He was there a long time, fifteen years, anyhow. I remember they put a little verandah on it, and Al and his friends used to sit out there and smoke; this is it here in the corner.” (See photos of Queen’s Jubilee parade, 1897, sailors marching.)

### **VANCOUVER ATHLETIC CLUB.**

“Al Larwill had more to do with the building of the Vancouver Athletic Club, the building on the northwest corner of Dunsmuir and Smythe streets—the one they afterwards sold to the Navy League” (now and for years past used as Drill Hall for Vancouver Regiment) “—than the men who put up the money. He worked for it day and night, never let up; it was more due to him than anyone else that the building was finally erected. And when war was declared, eighty-five percent of the young fellows in that club joined up, and all the directors but two or three.”

### **W.L. TAIT’S SHINGLE MILL. RAT PORTAGE LUMBER CO.**

Re W.L. Tait’s shingle mill, on the water’s edge, corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Centre Street (Granville Street), beside the old 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue bridge. Afterwards site of Rat Portage Lumber Co. (destroyed by fire in May 1933.)

“Tait’s little portable mill? He didn’t build it; he just set it on the ground; he was head sawer, tail sawer, and everything else. When the saw took a cut you had to wait two or three minutes for the boiler to get up steam before it would take another cut.”

### **CONVERSATION WITH W.M. HORIE, RE W.L. TAIT’S MILL.**

Mr. Horie: “I remember Tait’s little shingle mill; he had a little old boiler you could move away in a wheelbarrow. He cut shingles over there; I came here in May, 28<sup>th</sup> May 1889, and I’m not sure, but I think I seem to recall them starting it.”

### **BREWERY CREEK.**

There seems to be confusion as to where Brewery Creek was, or which of two was the proper Brewery Creek, similarly as there is respecting the “North Arm Road,” of which in all, there were three, the first “North Arm Road” being from Westminster to Point Grey, afterwards River Road, now Marine Drive; the second one was the “Road to Granville,” afterwards “North Arm Road,” still later Fraser Avenue, and a third one, now Granville Street, commonly so called about 1900.

The proper Brewery Creek was the creek coming down Mount Pleasant Hill just east of Main Street (then Westminster Avenue), and on which creek was the Brewery of Doering and Marstrand, 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue. (See Tea Swamp.)

A creek which some say was known to them as Brewery Creek is one which got its name from the Red Cross Brewery on Seaton Street, now Hastings Street West, which brewery got its water from the creek, as did also Spratt’s Oilery in the early 1880s, and also John Morton before that. (John Morton is reported

by his son to have said that its proper name was "Tindall's [?] Creek.") There was a dam in the creek above the brewery.

It is shown in the Royal Engineer survey notes of March 1883, also on the official map of Vancouver. (H.B. Smith, C.E. of 1886.)

It flowed down quite a deep ravine, which ran back to the near the corner of Georgia and Howe streets, ending in a swale. The ravine was filled in about 1890, and is mentioned in Mayor Oppenheimer's printed book of printed reports re Vancouver. The portion *below* the present Hastings Street is still unfilled, and the remains of the old stone walls of the Brewery are still visible close beside Hastings Street on the west side of ravine. Nearby, a few yards westward, is the entrance to the C.P.R. tunnel.

The foundations of the wooden houses on Pender Street, erected in the early 1890s, have recently been giving much trouble by sinking; probably much wood and debris was thrown in when the ravine was filled up, and this has rotted.

### **MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. DAVIDSON, PIONEER WATCHMAKER, CORDOVA STREET, 13 JUNE 1934.**

#### **C. GARDNER JOHNSON. L.A. HAMILTON.**

"One day, a long time ago, at a meeting, Gardner Johnson had to make a speech; I was sitting right in front of him, and he pointed to me and said, 'Davidson here knows all about what I went through down in Manitoba. When I got to Granville I was broke, and went to the hotel, the first one you come to along Water Street. There was a pile of cordwood outside the hotel, and I said to the proprietor, 'Will you let me cut that cordwood up?' The proprietor replied, 'Young fellow, you don't need to cut that cordwood up; you can stay here as long as you like.'

"Then once, sometime after, L.A. Hamilton came along and wanted to go to catch the train at Port Moody. I got a row boat and rowed him up there,' continued Johnson. 'There were three valises as well as Hamilton, and it was a long way to row, and what do you think he gave me when he got out of the boat? Why, just one great big silver cartwheel'" (American dollar), "and I had to row back too.'" (C. Gardner Johnson arrived in Granville, 1885.)

#### **VANCOUVER EXHIBITION.**

"Yes, the late J.R. Seymour was right. We did try to put the Vancouver Exhibition on the Kitsilano Indian Reserve. Jonathan Miller was one of those who tried to establish a Vancouver Fair; he knew the Indians, and we approached them through him. My recollection is that the Indians were to get \$1,900 an acre; that was some time in the '90s, but as you know, the thing fell through."

### **MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH H. WINDEBANK, MISSION CITY, 13 JUNE 1934.**

#### **JOHN MORTON.**

"John Morton and I were very close friends; his Mission ranch was right in front of my place, right on the river bank; I think the eastern boundary was the railway track, the branch line down to Seattle. He used to tell me about his troubles with Joe, his son. He told me that he offered the Mission ranch to Joe, but Joe told him he did not want it, that he could keep his 'old ranch.' He used quite strong language in declining his father's offer. Joe was very excitable. John told me he had deeded the ranch to Lizzie, his daughter, but whether he ever did or not I don't know. John was a very sterling old fellow; very reliable when dealing with cattle. I put a small ice plant in my hotel to keep my meat, and from this I gradually developed into the butcher business, and bought cattle from John; we never had a dispute."