

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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property placed in Ross's name in trust for us? 'Us' was J.C. McLagan and Gideon Robertson; we had all known each other in Winnipeg.

"Then one day Van Horne got off the steamer from Tacoma at Victoria and A.W. Ross was with him. A sheriff tapped Ross on the shoulder as soon as he touched the wharf. It was a most awkward situation for Ross; he had come up on the boat with Van Horne and here he was under arrest as soon as he landed. Some clergyman in Australia had entrusted some funds to him for which it was said he had not accounted. It was a week or so before we found out. When we did we went to a lawyer, had him draw up an assignment—I have the document yet—and conveyed to us his interest. The outcome was that Oppenheimer and Dupont got out of the trouble, but in getting out, Ross gave our property, 1,400 or 1,500 acres in what is now Grandview, as security for their advances to him personally."

POST OFFICE. A.W. ROSS, M.P.

(Looking at Ridley photo of Maple Tree and Gastown.) "A.W. Ross, the M.P., used to come up the two-plank sidewalk from the Hastings Mill with the mail bag slung over one shoulder, walk into the Granville Hotel, and dump it on the counter; then everybody would help themselves to their letters." (This was before the Fire.)

Archivist's note: In more recent years, probably 1888-1890, A.W. Ross' office, with section of big Georgia Street tree beside it, stood on the south side (see photo No. ?) of Hastings Street, between Hamilton and Homer streets, about present DeBeck Block. Later the firm was Ross and Ceperley, now Ceperley, Rounsefell and Co.

EXCERPT, *PORT MOODY GAZETTE*, SATURDAY, 16 MAY 1885, PAGE 3, COLUMN 1.

THE COAL HARBOUR LAND SYNDICATE.

As considerable interest attaches to the above firm on account of the grievous harm that has resulted from it, not alone to Port Moody, but, we think we may truly say, to the Province at large, we have taken pains to secure the names of the original stock holders. If there are any mistakes in the names or the number of shares originally held by the gentlemen respectively, we are open to correction.

Oppenheimer Bros.	3 shares
Messrs. Mara and Barnard	3 shares
Dr. Powell	3 shares
Messrs. Hugh and Geo. Keefers	3 shares
Mr. Strous	2 shares
E.G. Pryor	1 share
R.E. Jackson	1 share
D. Harris	1 share
Wm. Powers	1 share
Dupont	1 share
Messrs. Hawks and Dunlevy	1 share

Each share represents \$17,500 x 20, the number of shares - \$350,000, total amount of stock."

STREET NAMES.

Archivist's note: The above is interesting as revealing the source from which some of our street names in that area was derived.

CONVERSATION WITH WALTER EDWARD GRAVELEY (CONTINUED).

FIRST SALE OF LAND, C.P.R. THE NAME VANCOUVER.

"I bought the first piece of land the C.P.R. sold in Vancouver" (see *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 2), "that is, on 6th March 1886. Here is the receipt on which you will see is printed Vancouver, B.C., and it is dated 6th March 1886, which is a month before Vancouver became Vancouver officially, and it is for parts of Lots 1, 2 and

3, Block 8, D.L. 196, on the southeast corner of Carrall and Oppenheimer streets. It is, as you see, for \$233.33 paid down; total price to be \$700. I have it yet." (See previous conversation.)

BIG TREES.

"John Melton French Stiles, to whom Henry Mutrie of Port Moody leased a store on the *fifteenth of December 1885*, in the 'City of Vancouver' is the man standing on top of the big tree on Georgia Street, famous for the real estate sign, 'J.W. Horne,' lots for sale. He is on top of the log with his arms folded. He came from San Francisco, and committed suicide."

PUBLIC SALE, C.P.R. LAND.

"When afterwards the C.P.R. opened up their property for public sale, the sale took place at L.A. Hamilton's, Land Commissioner's office, in the wooden Ferguson Block, southeast corner Carrall and Powell streets; it was burned in the Great Fire. Ferguson and ? sat up around the stove most of the night, and long before Hamilton's office opened at 9 a.m., Ferguson had his hand on the door knob to hold his place as first in the line; I was fifth or sixth in the line. We just walked up to the counter, said what we wanted, paid our money, and were given an interim receipt."

L.A. HAMILTON. C.P.R. AUCTION SALE OF LOTS.

(Remark by Geo. R. Cordon, September, 1933. "L.A. Hamilton had his office in the Ferguson Block—over Hartney's store on the southeast corner Carrall and Powell streets; it was in his office that the C.P.R. held the first auction sale of lots.")

VANCOUVER IMPROVEMENT CO. HASTINGS SAWMILL.

"The Heatley and Co. people of London once owned the Hastings Sawmill. Those in the Syndicate? There were A.W. Ross, who formed the syndicate, Dr. Israel Wood Powell, Major Dupont, David Oppenheimer, Gideon Robertson and myself—streets are named after most of them. The syndicate bought the land from Peter Curran Dunlevy, owner of much property in D.L. 184, and to get our deeds we divided up."

GRAVELEY STREET.

"Yes, Graveley Street is named after me. I had a lot of property in D.L. 195, 264A and 200A. Odlum Drive is named after Professor Edward Odlum, Grant Street—after John Grant, well-known business man of Victoria whose brother lived in Melville Street."

GREAT FIRE. REFUGEE BIVOUAC. MAIN STREET.

"This photo" (No. ?) "of the bivouac of some of the Vancouver citizens who fled—from the Great Fire of June 13, 1886—down towards False Creek, and stopped at the first point of safety, just across the bridge, was taken on the Monday morning of June 14, the morning after the Fire. The bivouac was beside the road, Westminster Avenue, east side, just across from what was afterwards Front Street, now First Avenue West. Bob Spinks, my partner in Graveley and Spinks, had a house on piles opposite. We sold him the land before the fire for \$200 and he built the house you see here" (pointing to a building west of stables in photo No. ? by Bailey Bros—on extreme right of picture. The people in the bivouac photo are: 1. Robert Robertson, 2. ? , 3. ? , 4. W.E. Graveley, lying down.)

SPRATT'S OILERY.

"This photo is of Burdis and Jones, boat house. It was at the foot of ? Street, West End. Burdis died early this year" (1933); "Captain W.D. Jones was afterwards for thirty-five years or more, lighthouse keeper at Brockton Point. It was he who converted with his own hands that point into the floral wonder. He must have moved tons of stone and earth to do it."

"This wharf is the wharf of Spratt's Oilery, the first real wharf—outside of Hastings Sawmill—in Vancouver. The frames beyond are the net drying racks for the nets." (See W.R. Lord.)

DEAD WHALE.

"I recall an amusing thing about that oilery. Somehow or other, a dead whale was found out in the gulf. Burdis and Jones, or someone, had it towed in, and they tried to make some money by charging people two bits to view it, but it smelt so high they had to tow it out again."

WEST END, EARLY HOMES. H.J. CAMBIE.

"The first house to the west of Granville Street was built by Mr. H.J. Cambie, C.P.R. engineer. It stood on the southeast corner of Georgia and Thurlow streets. The second house was built by Mr. Wilgress, another C.P.R. official, on Georgia Street. I built the third house—it was on the west side of Burrard Street—between Georgia and Robson. Afterwards they put a garage there, and it was moved to Melville Street where it now is."

ST. ALICE HOTEL. HARRISON LAKE.

"The St. Alice Hotel at Harrison Lake was built by Fred and Jack Brown. One of them married Miss Agassiz of Agassiz, B.C. The first time I ever saw it, about 1889 or 1890, was when we went up the Fraser River in a steam launch on a fishing trip. We went up the Harrison River, and slept in the Hotel; there were a lot of workers, carpenters, plasterers, etc., at work, and just in front of the Hotel we caught so many trout we kept them all eating trout."

COMMERCIAL BLOCK. COLUMBIA STREET.

(See photo No. ?) "The Commercial Block was built and owned by D.E. Brown, brother to Sir George McL. Brown, now European agent in London for the C.P.R."

WHEELBARROW RACE ON CORDOVA STREET.

"I remember this. Dave Douglas was brother to C.S. Douglas, afterwards mayor. This old gentleman with big beard is old Captain Mellon who, together with Mrs. Mellon, started the Art, Historical and Scientific Society, now the City Museum." (See photo No. ?)

MEMORANDUM OF FURTHER CONVERSATION WITH WALTER E. GRAVELEY, 17 APRIL 1934.

CITY HALL IN TENT. FIRST POLICE COURTS. JAIL.

"You know that photograph of the City Hall in the tent. Just in front of it is a telegraph post. They used to tack notices on to it, and around the post was a logging chain they used to handcuff the prisoners to; the prisoners sat on the ground. They used to chew tobacco and wiled away the time by squirting tobacco juice to hit a fly on the notices on the post—which they often did; they were 'experts' in those days. There was a big long slit in the tent, and sometimes, when there was no fly in sight, they had a 'shot' at that slit instead. The tent had a splash of brown tobacco stains on both sides of the slit, where they had missed. Of course, if Magistrate Boulton was inside trying a case, probably some old drunk, well, it was just 'too bad' for magistrate and prisoner."

CAPTAIN WILLIAM WEBSTER. UNION STEAMSHIP COMPANY OF B.C.

"I don't know very much about him. He was a big man. He has a wife, I think. My partner, Charles E. Hope, 3900 Heather Street, had something to do with the settling up of his estate."

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH ANDY LINTON—NOW STOPPING AT THE IVANHOE HOTEL, VANCOUVER—AT CITY HALL, 20 SEPTEMBER 1933.

He spends each winter in California.

BOAT RACES

Major Matthews: (showing him Bailey Bros. photo No. ? of his old floating boat house at the foot of Carrall Street, the old City Wharf, and four sailboats with sails set) What's this about?

Mr. Linton: (pointing to the largest) "That's the *May*. I owned and built her; right here on the float. In one year I won over \$500 cold cash with that boat right there on the inlet. I won \$100 in the first race, yes, Dominion Day sports; that's the best picture I have seen; looks familiar doesn't it? That hulk out there by Deadman's Island is the old *Robert Ker*; that's where the races used to be, every night; from my boat house around the *Robert Ker* and back; outrigger racing boats, every night."

Major Matthews: Alex MacLean and Bob Johnson? (See *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 2.)