

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

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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45. Dwelling.
46. Dwelling.
47. Water tank connected with flume from Trout Lake. Fish in this tank, in fact, in all tanks.
48. Water tank, ditto.
- 48A. Two tall fir trees close to smoke stacks in panorama photo, 1886, of Vancouver.
49. to 54. Shack dwelling for "breeds." White-Indian, Hawaiian-Indian, a single Malay; no Chinese.
55. to 68. All occupied shacks. Mill hands of Chinese, "breeds," Indians, etc., etc.
59. Shack outside flume. A Chinese died of small pox here, and Abington Ridley had the task of burning the shack down.
65. to 68. (Probably 67.) Occupied by Captain Stevens, of the Moodyville tug *Senator*, and also associated with Captain Soule in the stevedore business.
- All of the buildings termed "dwellings" were small affairs of one storey (save in one or two instances), and all of the same pattern. Even Captain Raymur's first cottage was very simple until the big addition was made by Mr. Alexander to the front of it.
69. The Road to Granville and Hastings. A two-plank sidewalk on beach side to Granville from mill.
70. St. James' Church on beach.
71. Westminster Avenue.
72. Gore Avenue.
73. Dunlevy Avenue.

Read and approved 27 February 1935, (signed) H.E. Ridley.

NOTE ADDED LATER:

Harold Ridley died 2 June 1937 of cancer, leaving widow, one son Eugene, one daughter Mrs. Millet. Buried in family plot, old section, Mountain View.

He died very poor, was buried at City's expense in a coffin little better than a rough box.

He was a strikingly fine character; one might almost say, beautiful. He wore overalls or work clothes when he came to see me, but beneath that rough covering was a gentleman with a soul, and a face I never tired of admiring.

J.S. Matthews
4 June 1937

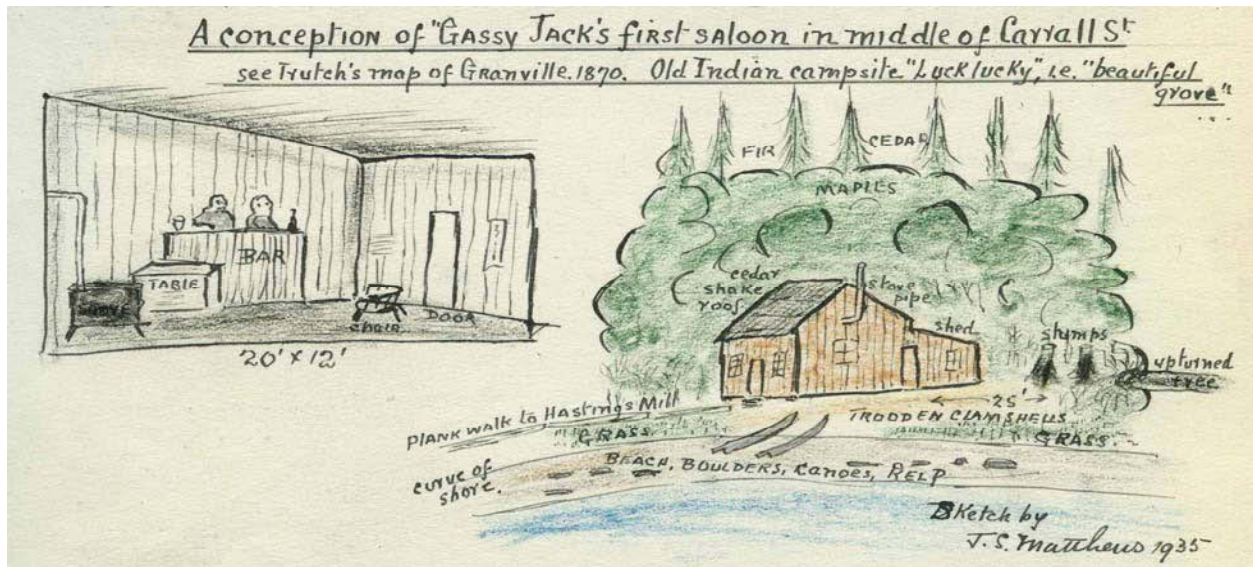
MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH HAROLD E. RIDLEY, 1956 VENABLE STREET, 18 OCTOBER 1933.

HASTINGS. THE "END OF THE ROAD."

"The 'End of the Road' was the way in which we habitually referred to the terminus of the Hastings-New Westminster Road at Hastings. There was no road or even wagon track from Hastings to Granville when my father came here in 1871, but one was finished before I was born in 1875." (See Mrs. McLean, *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 2.) "Anyway, before I can remember. I know it was finished in 1880 when I was five or six years old, and I can remember my brother's birth in 1880. I can remember Harry Freeze driving stage to New Westminster."

GASSY JACK'S PLACE AT GRANVILLE.

"Gassy Jack's place—call it hotel, or saloon, or what you like, it won't make it any different—his first place was not the one most people know as the Deighton Hotel on the corner of Carrall Street; it was nearer the water and a little to the east, in a little clearing edged with maples and crabapple trees—it must have been an old Indian Camp. We were told he had to move because he was on Hastings Sawmill property, but I guess this map, Trutch's Town of Granville, 1870, explains it; we were just children and did not know the facts; it was evidently on the road or street allowance, that must have been the reason. This sketch of it here in the middle of Carrall Street is exactly how it was; I recall it very well, because it stood on the shore for a long time after I can first remember."



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NOTE ADDED LATER:

"From my memoir of 1873, I quote, 'we tied up to the floating walk, fastened to piles that lead ashore.'

"Seems to me, there was nothing but Gassy Jack's small place and the forest back of it.'

"This sketch on opposite page is so true to my memory—except the 'floating walk' [They are two canoes; not a float. JSM.] being three years later 1873—I feel it is almost incredible in its accuracy.

"J. Warren Bell"

8 February 1946

JSM

"It was a bit of a shack about twelve feet wide by twenty long, with board and batten side and a roof with a pitch of about forty degrees, covered with hand-split cedar shakes. There was no chimney, but a stove pipe stuck out of one side—just like it does in this photo of the Caulfield brothers' house down at the Mill. It faced the sea and stood just a few feet from high tide, and was surrounded with a bit of a clearing, just a ragged bit of clearing on the shore, about 100 feet frontage and seventy-five feet deep. In front there was a little space between high tide and the shack, and this had been tramped bare; it must have been an old Indian camping ground, for the earth was half broken clam shells. The road to Hastings Mill twirled around the west end of the shack, and went off into the forest towards Hastings Mill. The front door was just a door in the middle, and a couple of steps from the ground in front, and from the northeast corner a two-plank sidewalk just laid on to the ground, led off towards Hastings Mill through the bushes and along the beach above high tide. On each side of the door was one window looking over the inlet; twelve panes of glass, in two parts, the top sash was movable and could be dropped in its frame. Around the back was

a small lean-to sticking out, as shown here in Trutch's map. It was a bit of a low thing with a single door facing west, and a small window of perhaps four small panes facing the same way; I remember they once put a horse in it for the night; it was full of nothing very much. I think there was a stove pipe sticking out of the lean-to roof.

"The 'road' to Hastings Mill was not more than twenty-five feet wide—forest both sides, and where it turned, it just touched the southwest corner of the shack; the road ended there and near the shack was a shard packed clam shell road, and led off back to Hastings Mill.

"To the east of Gassy Jack's shack, almost overhanging it, were some maple trees and crabapple trees, rather pretty place. To the west was the well-known Maple Tree. At the back was a litter of old upturned stumps beside the road, and behind that the tall forest."

HASTINGS SAWMILL.

"Bailey Bros. photo No. 722, 'Looking across Burrard Inlet from Vancouver' is really the Hastings Sawmill about 1889 or 1890, perhaps 1890. This is the explanation of it.

"On the extreme left is the 'New' and 'Old' Mill Store combined into one behind a 'store front.' The words 'Hastings Mill Store' are painted on the wall of the 'new' part; the old part—the part which is now out at Alma Road—is to the north of the 'new' part. Above it is a pile driver. And below it winds the Hastings Mill Road with two women wheeling baby carriages on it; this is now Dunlevy Avenue.

"Two cottages, exactly alike, face the mill store. R.H. Alexander lived in the western one before he was manager; afterwards Peter Cordiner, an alderman of the first City Council, and an official of the mill; at the time of the fire I think Calvert Simson was living in it. The eastern one was once occupied by old Dr. Walkem, afterwards by Mahoney, and the time of the fire I think A.E. McCartney, the first resident land surveyor in Vancouver (he is buried in the old part of Mountain View Cemetery), and his tombstone records that fact.

"Behind these is a taller dwelling with a small attached building; that is the Ridley home, my father's home, and still further back is the cottage of the Caulfield brothers, a special photo of which you have, showing the front of it; you will note the stove pipe comes out of the side.

"Between the ship and the mill store is a building with cupola and bell tower; that is the cook house, dining hall—the bell on top of the cook house was rung to call the men to meals, and don't I recall—do you think I'll ever forget?—that old bell, when it rang at dinner and supper time, how it used to hurry us over there, when it went gong, gong, gong!

"Below the stern of the shop are two buildings, one running north and south, the other east and west. The latter is the new shed for dressed lumber; the other, running north and south, is the old shed for dressed lumber."

OLD OLD MILL STORE.

"The top of the telephone post between the words 'Burrard' and 'Inlet' just touches the gable end of the old office, used in my time as a 'mill' local office, which reminds me that it was over in that direction that the really old 'Mill Store' stood; there was an old mill store before the old one now at Alma Road; it was the one they used when the mill was first built. The old 'Office' was a very old building."

FIRST LIBRARY IN VANCOUVER. BUMMER'S HALL.

"A small white gable, in the centre of photo, and directly below distant Indian Mission, is the Bummer's Hall, a big sitting room where they held dances and the men used to sit and it was there that the first library in Vancouver started.

"The long open shed running parallel with the mill—from the small steamer eastwards, was a new structure, and it was at the eastern end of it that Bailey Bros. photo No. 414 was taken.

"Below and between the four smoke stacks you can see a semaphore on the Railway, and running from that to the eastern end of the mill is a fence to prevent pilfering of lumber.

“Touching the big stump east of the fence is a large water tank, one hundred feet square, built up in a shallow excavation. To the west of the fence is a similar tank, both above ground in shallow excavations, both of wood; big tanks, and in which I have often fished for trout; the water came by flume from Trout Lake.” (See elsewhere for route of flume.)

“In line with the semaphore is a clump of bushes which conceals the old duck pond” (see H.B. Smith’s map of Vancouver, 1886) “and creek which came down from up Hastings Street way.”

NORTH VANCOUVER.

“You can see the C.P.R. railway fence, and also observe how the line swings round between the Ridley and Cordiner houses on the left. In the far distance across the inlet you can see Tom Turner’s shack to the *right* of the smoke stacks, and the Indian Mission to the *left* of them. The clearing is now the location of Lonsdale Avenue, North Vancouver.

“The streak—about three inches long—on the lower right hand corner of the photo, Bailey Bros. No. 722, is the road to Hastings and New Westminster; hard baked sand and mud.”

CATTLE PEN.

“Just east of the semaphore there was an unloading place for cattle, a cattle yard. In 1898, at the time of the Klondike rush, they unloaded cattle there to go to the Klondike, and a lot of Belgian dogs, vicious brutes.”

HASTINGS MILL SCHOOL.

“The well-known Hastings Mill School photo with group of children in front shows a clear piece of ground beside it, and at the bottom a pyramid shaped boulder; that is not the Hastings Mill Road, but the school playground, the first in the city. The Hastings Mill School encroached on the C.P.R. right of way and was torn down; just when I cannot say, but I know I attended a school up on Oppenheimer Street in 1887.”

HASTINGS ROAD.

(Road to Hastings from Hastings Mill.) “The road to Hastings kept close to the shore; there are still traces of it to be seen now in this year 1933; traces between Powell Street and the railway track; especially right up by Victoria and Salisbury Drive. It was right close to the water, and as it passed where the sugar refinery is now, it ran so low that at high tide the water washed over the road; it was very swampy along there; you can see the swamp there still.” (Hastings Viaduct is south of it) “and the same low ground.” (See story about Indians passing canoes through.)

HASTINGS MILL BEFORE 1890.

BEAVER.

“I think the last man to catch beaver in Trout Lake was ‘Old William,’ an Indian; he, as an old man, and I, as a boy, used to go together to fish up there. He went to Squamish, and must be dead now; he was an old man then.”

BREWERY CREEK. BEAVER, TROUT, ELK. DOUGLAS PARK.

“Brewery Creek is that creek just east of Westminster Avenue where Doering and Marstrand had their brewery; that is why it was put there; to get the water. I used to fish for trout in it, and I have seen there the bitten-off ends of logs which the beavers had cut down. The park at Heather and 20th and 22nd avenues was a beaver meadow; that’s why the loggers camped there.”

CHINA CREEK.

“China Creek was away off to the east at the head of False Creek; it was called China Creek because some Chinamen started, in 1888 or 1889, a garden there on a small clearing; the creek came down from Trout lake. There used to be lots of trout in Trout Lake, but they cannot get up now that the head of False Creek is filled in. Oppenheimer had a brick yard up by China Creek; most of the bricks for the old Market Hall” (City Hall) “were burned there.” (See Sentell’s story re the bricks in City Hall coming from Hong Kong. There was another brick yard at Welwyn Street and Salisbury Drive.)