

**Early Vancouver**

**Volume Three**

**By: Major J.S. Matthews, V.D.**

**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 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the City's founding. The project was made possible by funding from the Vancouver Historical Society.

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worked around and around, and the more he tried to get free, the deeper he got in the mud; he made an awful racket there during the night," (with emphasis) "I'll tell you. They cut him up; some of the whites and half-breeds, kanakas; all kinds of men here then. It was right down in front of where we lived—between Lynn Creek and Moody's Mill.

"There were lots of those black fish then; look like a whale; used to go up and down the harbour *squirting*; you don't see that nowadays."

Query: Herring?

Mr. Scales: "Herrings all gone; why, when we went over to the Island" (Nanaimo) "the herrings were that thick when you rowed you just stirred them up; they used to sell them for a dollar a ton."

#### **FRASER RIVER FROZEN OVER.**

"Anybody ever tell you about the Fraser River frozen solid? Take a team of horses, drive right over; go on one side, pull off the other; hauling hay across, on sleighs; right about where the bridge is now, by the penitentiary at Westminster, somewhere along there. There used to be a meadow on the south side." (Note: this meadow is the flat land below Port Mann.) "We used to go over there for hay. I was only a bit of a child. My Father made a sleigh to pull my sister Elizabeth over there on, I remember; I was too big to ride on a sleigh, I was a big man. No, I was going to walk, not ride on a sleigh; I'll never forget it. You see, it used to be rough ice; they used to clear a patch and flood it with water, make it smooth for skating, so that the skating would be good—a very little water would make it smooth—but it was rough where we crossed, and I fell down and could not get up; I yelled, and Father came and got me."

#### **MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. JOHN HENRY SCALES, 23 JULY 1934.**

##### **ROYAL ENGINEERS BAND.**

"I have often watched the Royal Engineers Band form up under Prof. Haynes at 'The Camp' preparatory to going to church. The uniform they wore was a red coat with white waist belt and brass buckles, dark trousers with a red stripe, and, for head gear, a black busby with all white plume on the right side. I judge their numbers to be twenty, perhaps twenty-five, not more."

##### **FALSE CREEK CROSSING. MAIN STREET.**

"When we went from Gassy Jack's across False Creek, we crossed the narrow part where Main Street is now, on stepping stones, when the tide was low. There was a man on the south side whom we called 'Julius Caesar,' and he used to roll his rocks into the mud, to provide a stepping stone passage, probably more for himself than for us. You had to wait until the tide was right before you could get across, and if you stayed too long you had to get back by going around the head of False Creek."

##### **THE 'BLACK TRAIL,' KINGSWAY.**

"There was a big fire ran through all the timber between here and Westminster, some time in the late '60s. After that the mill men from English Bay used to travel through there to New Westminster picking their way as best they could in and out among the stumps; I used to hear them talking, and saying that they had come over, or were going back, by 'The Black Trail.'"

##### **MEMORIES OF 65 YEARS IN VANCOUVER.**

(Note by J.S.M.: as I sat with Mr. Scales looking out over Vancouver on this beautiful summer's afternoon, surveying this city stretching before us as far as the eye could see, Mr. Scales remarked, "Just fancy sitting here on this beautiful afternoon, and looking on that scene, and reflecting that what I used to do was sit on a stone on the beach" (Water Street) "and watch the gulls, or an eagle, or see the big fish" (whales) "blowing as they went up and down the inlet—that was about all there was to see in those days. It has been a remarkable life; to think of all the changes that have taken place, and to sit here and watch that stream of automobiles going up and down Hastings Street."

Mr. Scales is a picture of health; his eyesight is wonderful.