

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

Copyright Statement

© 2011 City of Vancouver. Any or all of *Early Vancouver* may be used without restriction as to the nature or purpose of the use, even if that use is for commercial purposes. You may copy, distribute, adapt and transmit the work. It is required that a link or attribution be made to the City of Vancouver.

Reproductions

High resolution versions of any graphic items in *Early Vancouver* are available. A fee may apply.

Citing Information

When referencing the 2011 edition of *Early Vancouver*, please cite the page number that appears at the bottom of the page in the PDF version only, not the page number indicated by your PDF reader. Here are samples of how to cite this source:

Footnote or Endnote Reference:

Major James Skitt Matthews, *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 3 (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011), 33.

Bibliographic Entry:

Matthews, Major James Skitt. *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 3. Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011.

Contact Information

City of Vancouver Archives
1150 Chestnut Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3J9
604.736.8561
archives@vancouver.ca
vancouver.ca/archives



**CONVERSATION WITH HAROLD E. RIDLEY, BORN HASTINGS SAWMILL 1875, NOW RESIDENT
1956 VENABLES STREET, 11 AUGUST 1933.**

HASTINGS SAWMILL. GEORGE HARVEY. HENRY HARVEY.

"Henry Harvey was the first storekeeper at Hastings Sawmill, or almost the first, but I think he was the first. Calvert Simson followed him, but Captain Raymur, manager, was gone before Calvert Simson came. Frame followed Simson, and was the last storekeeper at Hastings Sawmill. George Harvey, formerly of Turner, Beeton, Victoria, was nephew to Henry Harvey, the first storekeeper."

SPRATT'S ARK.

"Spratt's Ark, the floating cannery at the foot of Burrard Street, was afterwards turned into a bath house, a floating bath house. Jones and Burdis ran it; you paid 'two bits' for a swim; it was all 'two bits' for everything in those days."

EXCERPT FROM THE PORT MOODY GAZETTE, 30 OCTOBER 1886.

SPRATT'S ARK.

AN IMMENSE SCOW.—"Spratt's Ark" has been converted into a steam scow and will in future be used to transport heavy freight and also employed in the coal trade. The scow has a carrying capacity of 600 tons and is propelled by two engines of 20 horse power (nominal) which give an average speed to the vessel of 6 miles per hour. The machinery, cabins, &c, are placed in the stern of the vessel by which arrangement three fourths deck room and hold is left clear for cargo. She is fitted with a powerful derrick and steam winch, and is in every way admirably adapted for freighting heavy material. Her dimensions are as follows: viz: length, 145 feet; beam, 34 feet; depth of hold, 8 feet. The scow is now lying at the C.P.R. wharf and is receiving on board the balance of the materials used on the Onderdonk contract which Mr. Thos. Spratt has purchased. Captain Pamphlett is in charge.

FROM *THE VANCOUVER DAILY PROVINCE* OF 12 SEPTEMBER 1918.

**JOE MANNION: REAL PIONEER
LEFT COLLEGE IN IRELAND BACK IN 1862
TO PROSPECT FOR GOLD
WAS ONE OF GASTOWN'S FAVORITE BONIFACES
IN THE EARLY DAYS**

By Dr. W. Wymond Walkem

Joseph Mannion, one of the most interesting figures of the early days of "Gastown," who passed peacefully away at Lillooet this week, was born in the County Mayo, Ireland in 1839. Leaving school he entered Maynooth College with the intention of qualifying for the Catholic priesthood. After spending several years in the institution, his studies were interrupted by recurring reports of the rich gold diggings on the Fraser River, which fired his young brain with dreams of wealth awaiting the use of the pick and shovel on the banks of the far-distant river of the west. This was in 1862.

He left his native soil and took passage on the regular mail steamer which in those days plied between Southampton and the Isthmus of Panama. After crossing the isthmus he took passage on a steamer for San Francisco, and there embarked on the ill-fated steamer *Pacific* for Victoria, where he arrived on April 10, 1862.

ON TO CARIBOO.

There he heard the principal mining ground had changed from the Fraser River to Cariboo, where fortunes were being taken out every day from some of the principal creeks. Cariboo was now his destination. Instead of proceeding thither by New Westminster and the old Cariboo trail, he was

persuaded by Victorians to try the newly advocated route by Bella Coola which was emphasised by the islanders as a better and shorter route.

Starting for Bella Coola with a few companions, he took Lieut. Palmer's trail from that Indian settlement with the intention of reaching Fort Alexandria. But in some manner they missed the trail and wandered about in the woods for three months but finally reached their objective.

But when they arrived on Williams Creek the mining season had almost closed, so they invested their remaining money in provisions and started on their return to Victoria, where they put in the winter working on the wharves, loading and unloading vessels. Mannion continued working in Victoria until 1864, when he obtained employment with the Overland Telegraph Company who were at that time erecting the trans-Siberian telegraph.

In 1866, on the cessation of that work through the successful laying of the Atlantic cable, Mannion started for the Big Bend, then enjoying a great reputation as a mining camp, but there he had no luck.

RAN THE GRANVILLE.

Returning to New Westminster, he obtained work in logging camps until 1874 when he bought a half interest in the Granville Hotel, in Granville or Gastown as the village was commonly known by. He continued in this hotel of which he gradually became the sole proprietor, until 1884, when he sold out and bought a ranch on Bowen Island—now known as the Terminal Farm. During his life as a boniface he was an especial favorite of the loggers of the Northwest Coast.

Of late years he has been failing rapidly in health. Three years ago he sought a change of climate in Lillooet, but although it prolonged his life it could not prevent the continuation of his trouble. On Tuesday last he passed peacefully away at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Christie in Lillooet.

EXTRACT FROM THE *VANCOUVER DAILY PROVINCE*, FRIDAY, 24 DECEMBER 1909.

Old Timer was, most likely, Joseph Mannion, as this newspaper clipping, pasted with others of articles by Mr. Mannion in a scrap book, was loaned by his daughter, Mrs. H.A. Christie.

OLD-TIMER TELLS OF CHRISTMAS IN EARLY DAYS

WHAT VANCOUVER LOOKED LIKE THIRTY-FIVE YEARS AGO AS OLD GASTOWN

CELEBRITIES OF YEAR 1874

ETTA WHITE BROUGHT CHRISTMAS GIFTS FROM VICTORIA

MAIL CAME TWICE A WEEK VIA STAGE FROM WESTMINSTER

What sort of day did they have for Christmas in Vancouver thirty-five years ago?

Plenty of people know what Christmas was like in Vancouver twenty-five years ago; quite a few are able to hark back even a quarter of a century; but the thirty-five-years-ago folk are so scarce that they belong to another generation. Add another five years to the back of that and you have the day when Vancouver was but a lumbering, trading village with the deep woods covering all the city peninsula down to the present corner of Carrall and Hastings and all west of Cambie, with a little settlement between comprising the centre blocks of Water Street as it is today.

Picture for yourself this village, long before the days of railways and street cars, long before the days when it was known as Vancouver; and listen to the tale of the patriarch of the Old Timers' club.