

Early Vancouver

Volume Four

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

2011 Edition (Originally Published 1944)

Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1935-1939.

Supplemental to Volumes One, Two and Three collected in 1931-1934.

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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Specifications can be seen at the Brighton Hotel, Hastings, B.C.

Lowest or any tender not necessarily accepted.

Address all tenders to

S. BRIGHOUSE, Vancouver, P.O.
Burrard Inlet.

“Local items.”

The land for which Mr. Brighthouse is asking tenders for underbrushing is known as Lot 185, adjoining the old Granville townsite on the West, and lies between False Creek and Burrard Inlet.

Note by JSM: it does not *adjoin* old Granville townsite.

BRITISH COLUMBIA OIL REFINERY, PORT MOODY.

This refinery, the first establishment in British Columbia for the refining of petroleum oils—a very small establishment, and not very efficient—was established on the site of the first C.P.R. station at Port Moody. The site of the first C.P.R. wharf, where the first train stopped, 4 July 1886, was used to reconstruct there a new dock, the old C.P.R. one having fallen down. It is my recollection that the old C.P.R. station building, shown in many photos as in use on that famous day, 4 July 1886, was used as a sort of office for the refinery, whose main office was in Vancouver or New Westminster. J.A. Cunningham, son of the well-known Cunninghams of New Westminster (hardware merchants), was the manager and moving spirit. The tanks were on the hill above the C.P.R. tracks. They refined black oil only which had been “topped”; made skid oil, a little fuel oil, distillate, and I think petroleum asphalt. They did not market gasoline or the lighter oils such as coal oil. They sold lubricating oils which they imported in barrels by steamship from California, did quite a nice little business in a small way.

About the same time the Imperial Oil Company Limited established a bulk storage plant for gasoline, kerosene, and fuel oils at Impoco, which they subsequently pulled down when loco was established.

See *Saturday Sunset* (a weekly paper published in Vancouver) of 25 March 1909, which says the refinery is starting to operate. It is filed under “Schools” (since 1900).

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH MRS. A. BROWN, 1637 DAVIE STREET, SEYMOUR 1781L, 7 MAY 1936.

LOUIS GOLD OF THE “GOLD HOUSE.” GRANVILLE, BURRARD INLET.

Mrs. Brown said, over the phone, “I knew Mr. Gold in England in 1888 quite well; he was always talking about his wonderful Vancouver. He was in the furniture business, and in quite a large way; he had a place near the Victoria station, London, and he also had a place of business in Liverpool. He was importing furniture into Canada. That was the time that printed oil cloth first came out; they made a great deal of it at St. Helens, and he was shipping it to Canada; I believe he made the first shipments.”

MEMO OF CONVERSATION, OVER THE PHONE, WITH MRS. A. BROWN, 1637 DAVIE STREET, 8 JUNE 1936.

LOUIS GOLD. EDWARD GOLD. MRS. EMMA GOLD. “GOLD HOUSE.”

A voice of the phone: “This is Mrs. Brown speaking; you know I wrote you the other day about Mr. Gold. Thank you for your reply.

“Yes. I know. You cannot say anything; I never did anything, but we lived together for seventeen years, and deserted me with four children; I was only eighteen years old when I married him.”

City Archivist: Well, did you marry him; was it a case of bigamy?

The voice: "Why, of course, I married him. For years I used to write his letters, but he always signed them; he was an illiterate man. I used to write them for him to 'Dear Mother and Eddie'" (the son); "I did not know it was his wife and son I was writing to, but I never did anything. He died in Kamloops."

This subject appears to have arisen through the publication in Vancouver newspapers, of the notices concerning the banquet given to the voters at the first election, 1886, and the mention of Edward Gold as one of them, which he was not, and did not attend the banquet, but it evidently raised in Mrs. Brown's mind a sense of injustice she is (alleged) to have suffered, or perhaps vindictiveness, at the hands of Eddie Gold's father.

J.S. Matthews.

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH THEODORE BRYANT, WHILST ON A VISIT TO VANCOUVER, 22 JULY 1935.

Postmaster of Ladysmith, B.C. for many years, and son of the Rev. Cornelius Bryant, Methodist minister at the parsonage, Granville, B.C., from about 1878 to 1883.

GRANVILLE, 1878.

We had before us a Photostat of a map of Granville, August 1885, made by the Sanborn Map Co., and once published in the *Vancouver Daily World*, about 1896 (souvenir edition).

"The small building touching the shore line in front of the parsonage and facing in a nor-northeast direction is probably the boathouse. I recall the place in 1878, and from the front of the parsonage to the boathouse was only a few feet; I could hop, skip and jump from one to the other. For a few feet to the east of the boathouse towards Portuguese Joe's place the shore was filled in with old slabs, and the tide came up to these slabs. The boathouse itself was above the tide, but we had a little sloped grating from the beach to the boathouse up which we dragged the boat, and it is here that young Robson probably fell through and had to be sawn out. Our garden was to the east of the parsonage and ran almost up to Portuguese Joe's store; it had a little fence around it, but in front of the house there was nothing but rubbish and bushes—it was several steps below the parsonage floor, because there were steps down from the parsonage to the few feet separating the boathouse.

"To the westwards along the beach was Isaac Johns place, and beyond that some bachelor shacks, and still farther, probably about the foot of Cambie Street, was a little clearing. There the Indians used to camp intermittently."

(Note by J.S.M.: John Henry Scales speaks of making a primitive fireplace of stones and iron bars beside a creek so that his mother could do her washing after heating the water in a boiler. This must have been close to the empty shed, deserted some years previously, which John Scales, his father, occupied with his family. It would be reasonable to suppose that the small clearing, which Mr. Bryant speaks of as being used by the Indians, would be beside a creek; probably the same creek as would be used by Mrs. Scales, and before her by the coal borers. This creek is known to have crossed Hastings Street beside the first Y.M.C.A. (Public Library—Hotel Astoria Building). It may be concluded that the coal bore, mentioned in Oppenheimer's report as being put down twenty years ago, was very close to the foot of Cambie Street.)

"As I remember Portuguese Joe's store, it was, in 1878, deserted, and, I think that Mrs. Gold opened a store there before they opened the Gold house. Joe's store was a very unpretentious building and he had a big sign on the water side, spread across the face of the building, with or without his name, advertising the fact that he sold groceries and general merchandise. On the water side, on the west corner of the building, was a sloping gangway which allowed him to haul his goods from the rowboats and into his store."

INDIAN CHURCH.

"Father came with us to Granville in 1878, and stayed three years, but I cannot remember much about the Indian church excepting that the services were very irregular, but I presume it was still standing in 1881 and later, if Miss Thompson, daughter of the Rev. Thompson who followed Father, remembers using it as a playhouse.