

Early Vancouver

Volume Five

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

2011 Edition (Originally Published 1945)

Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1936-1945.

Supplemental to volumes one, two, three and four collected in 1931, 1932 and 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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Miss Isabelle J. Hamilton (Mrs. John Leask), L. A. Hamilton's sister, seated on log with his daughter Isobel. John Leask seated between logs. A. J. Dana, wearing hat, C.P.R. Purchasing Agent, seated on log; man in shirt sleeves perhaps Louie. See map "C.P.R. Townsite" on rollers presented by H.R. Bray for exact location skid road. (Issued by A.W. Ross & Co.). See two companion photos (1) Mrs. Leask in canoe; (2) cottage front, tent & canoe under trees. (Yooof visible behind Mr. Dana.) Photo presented 1940 by Mrs. John Leask, Collingwood. Photo by L. A. Hamilton. City Archives. T.57m.



L. A. Hamilton's Camp. 1886. False Creek, now Fairview, looking north across creek. The exact site was on south side of Fourth Ave, one hundred yards east of east side of Granville St. south, and on the west bank of a creek flowing in a ravine, where John Beatty (sic), squatter & bullpuncher had lived, with his Indian wife, in a board & batten side, cedar shake roof shack, but, in 1886, occupied by Mr. Hamilton, widower, his dau. Isobel, born Oct. 3rd 1880, and his sister Miss Hamilton, later Mrs. John Leask. Here the Hamiltons took refuge after the great Fire, 13 June 1886. George Cary rowed them across. "Louie" tended camp. Skid road, embryo of Granville St. South, leads uphill into forest. False Creek sandbank shows through trees; is now Granville Island; tents on far shore about Richards St.; skyline of clearing about Drake St.; tree tops in distance (above log) on Burrard St. (line of forest between D.L. 185 and "C.P.R. Townsite"). Stump & log estimated nine feet six inches diameter (on Block 251), Fairview.

Item # EarlyVan_v5_008

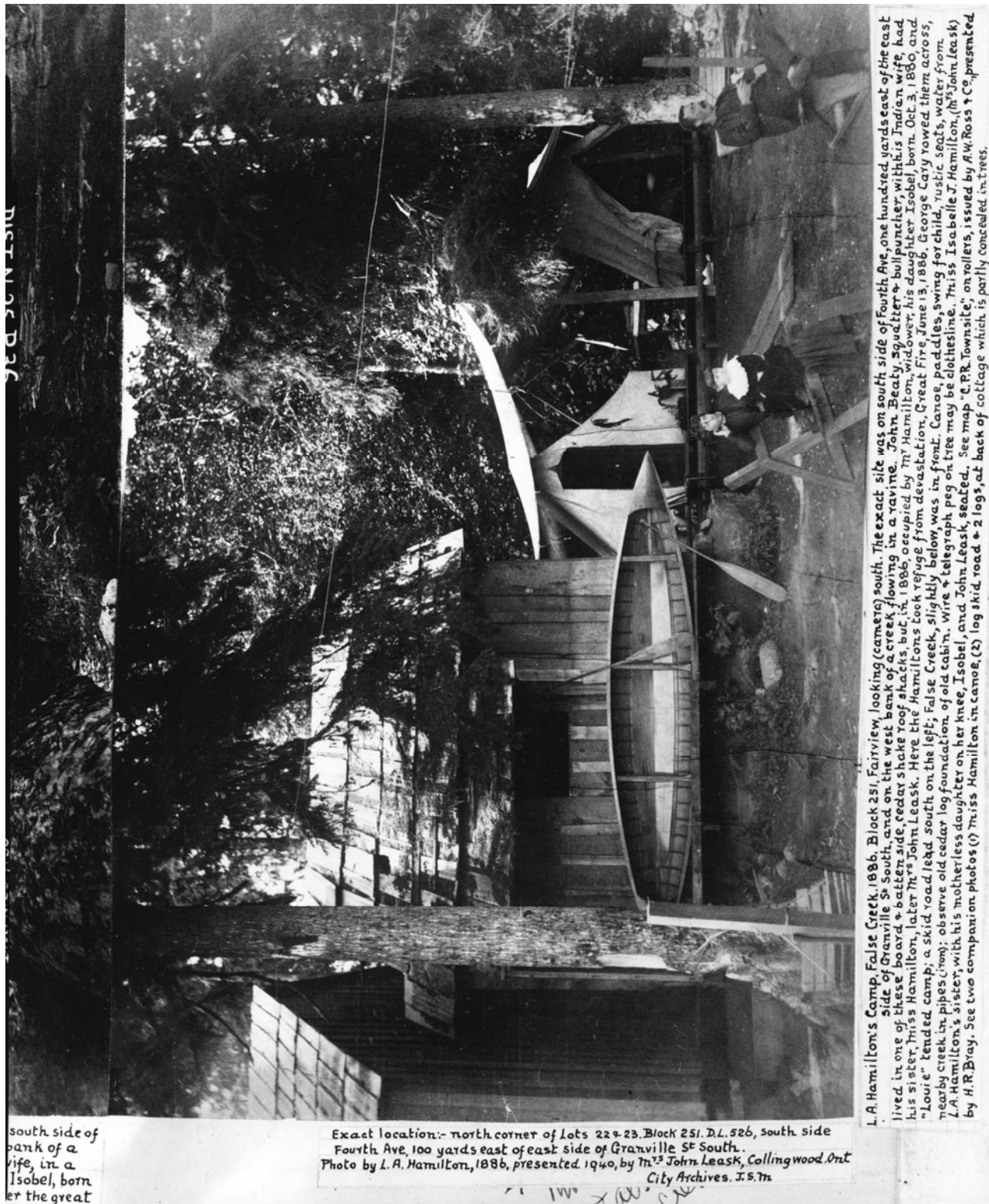
[photo annotation:]

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Photo presented 1940 by Mrs. John Leask, Collingwood. Photo by L.A. Hamilton.

City Archives. J.S.M.

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south side of
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creek, in a
cabin, born
of the great

Exact location:- north corner of lots 22 & 23, Block 251, D.L. 526, south side
Fourth Ave, 100 yards east of east side of Granville St South.
Photo by L. A. Hamilton, 1886, presented 1940, by Mr. John Leask, Collingwood Ont
City Archives. J.S.M.

L. A. Hamilton's Camp, False Creek, 1886. Block 251, Fairview, looking (camera) south. The exact site was on south side of Fourth Ave, one hundred yards east of the east
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his sister, Miss Hamilton, later Mrs John Leask. Here the Hamiltons took refuge from devastation, Great Fire, June 13, 1886. George Cary towed them across,
"Louie" tended camp; a skid road lead, south on the left; False Creek, slightly below, was in front. Canoe, paddles, swing for child, rustic seats, water from
nearby creek in pipes (iron); observe old cedar log foundation of old cabin. Wire & telegraph peg on tree may be clothesline. Miss Isabelle J. Hamilton, (Mrs John Leask)
L. A. Hamilton's sister, with his motherless daughter on her knee, Isobel, and John Leask, seated. See map "C.P.R. Townsite", on rollers, issued by H.W. Ross & Co., presented
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Photo by L.A. Hamilton, 1886, presented 1940, by Mrs. John Leask, Collingwood, Ont.

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EXCERPT, *TORONTO TELEGRAM*, 30 NOVEMBER 1936.

TORY WORKER AT COLLINGWOOD

ALTHOUGH NEARING 90 MARK—YOUNG CANADA CLUB MEMBER

Special to the *Evening Telegram*.

Collingwood, Nov. 30—Mrs. John Leask, Collingwood's grand old lady and daughter of the shipbuilding town's first mayor, personally received over 100 guests who visited her Saturday afternoon on the occasion of her 88th birthday.

Mrs. Leask, despite her four score and eight years, is still an active member of the Ladies Conservative Association in Collingwood, an organization which she helped to form. Only last year she felt that she should be helping the younger people and applied for a membership in the Young Canada Conservative Club. Her application was received and granted, and the aged party worker is now an honorary life member.

When Denton Massey came to Stayner to speak at the district nomination meeting of North Simcoe Conservatives, Mrs. Leask was the first person to walk up to the platform and welcome the Toronto member. He expressed surprise when he was told Mrs. Leask's age, but he received a greater surprise when she informed him that she was planning to "stump" for the party throughout the district.

Born in Penetang, Mrs. Leask was one of a family of 11 children, six girls and five boys. When she was six her family moved to Collingwood, and for 82 years she has made Collingwood her home.

Her father, William Basil Hamilton, was one of the greatest champions of the Conservative cause in the province at that time, and he became the first mayor of Collingwood over 75 years ago.

Mrs. Leask has two brothers still living. Both have retired and are now living in Florida. They are Bishop Hamilton, who spent 45 years as a missionary in Japan, and L.A. Hamilton, once land commissioner of the Canadian Pacific Rlwy.

A devoted Anglican, Mrs. Leask loves to tell about the days when she attended Sunday School in a little frame church on Cedar Street.

"For 62 years I taught a Sunday School class, and only a few years ago I decided to retire. I wish I hadn't though, because I feel just as good as ever, and I do miss the children." Mrs. Leask remarked.

Speaking of the coming election in East Hastings, the loyal pioneer of the Tory party said: "I am sure the conservatives will sweep the riding. I only wish I could go down there and help Dr. Welsh in his campaign."

Mrs. Leask has one grandson, Charles Thompson, who at present is residing with her on Ontario Street. Charles is following right in the footsteps of his great-grandmother and great-grandfather, and was recently elected to an office in Collingwood branch of the Young Canada Conservatives Club.

Mrs. John Leask, well known life long resident of Collingwood who celebrated her 88th birthday here on Saturday. Mrs. Leask is the daughter of the late William Basil Hamilton, Collingwood's first mayor. She is also one of the first organizers of the Ladies' Conservative Association in the town and is still taking a very active part in federal and provincial politics.

(Photo by Deacon Studios, Collingwood.)