

**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 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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False Creek, looking west, midsummer, 1888. From foot of present Hemlock St. Miss Isabelle J. Hamilton (Mrs. John Leask) approaching their camp at mouth of creek in  
 ravine at Hemlock St. Her widowed brother, L.A. Hamilton, in stern; his daughter Isobel, born Oct. 3, 1890, beside him. Left to right: Looks to be landing float of  
 logs where boats from Carrall St. etc. landed at camp; next False Creek Indian Reserve & Indian houses; next railway embankment C.P.R. line to Greer's Beach.  
 C.P.R. trestle bridge (finished Oct. 1886) across False Creek; forest in centre about Nicola & Cadboro Sts. clearing fires and smoke on Beach Ave. and approx. Duke St.  
 On extreme right, forest on Burrard, Horn by & Howe St. It would seem "bushwhackers" were, about this date, felling that forest. See companion photos of (1) L.A. Hamilton's  
 camp in forest, on Fourth Ave. 100 yards east of Granville St. South. Tide is high, sand bank, now Granville Island, is not visible. See companion photo (2) of logging skid road,  
 leading south, from float, just east Hamilton's camp. Photo probably taken by John Leask, nee "Belle" Hamilton, Collingwood, Ont. 1900. City Archives 25M



Item # EarlyVan\_v5\_007

*[photo annotation:]*

False Creek, looking west, mid summer, 1886. From foot of present Hemlock St. Miss Isabelle J. Hamilton (Mrs. John Leask) approaching their camp at mouth of creek in ravine at Hemlock St. Her widowed brother, L.A. Hamilton, in stern; his daughter Isobel, born Oct. 3, 1880, beside him. Left to right: Looks to be landing float of logs where boats from Carrall St. etc. landed at camp; next False Creek Indian Reserve & Indian houses; next railway embankment, C.R.R. line to Greer's Beach. C.P.R. trestle bridge (finished Oct. 1886) across False Creek; forest in centre about Nicola & Cardero Sts., clearing fires and smoke on Beach Ave. and approx. Bute St. On extreme right, forest on Burrard, Hornby, & Howe St. It would seem "bushwhackers" were, about this date, felling that forest. See companion photos of (1) L.A. Hamilton's camp in forest, on Fourth Ave, 100 yards east of Granville St. South. Tide is high, sand bank, now Granville Island, is not visible. See companion photo (2) of logging skid roads leading south from float, just east Hamilton's camp. Photo probably taken by John Leask, presented by Mrs. John Leask, née "Belle" Hamilton, Collingwood, Ont. 1940. City Archives. JSM.

**[LETTER FROM T.J. LEASK.]**

Collingwood,  
April 14<sup>th</sup>, 1936.

Dear Mr. Matthews:

I've been thinking a lot about Vancouver this long winter, and wondering how you've been progressing in your wonderful piece of work. Yes, I too, remember the times Mr. Cary used to row me *[see Early Vancouver, Vol. 2]* over to our camp on False Creek. We had two tents; the house was occupied by the workmen and cook. We spent four months there until it got so cold we went to Victoria for a month, till my brother's house was completed.

I simply loved every inch of the city, and watched it grow even to the building of the first side-walk. I have many photographs of the early days, and enjoy looking at them. Am glad you have the work to do, also that you have Mr. Leask's photograph taken at that time. They certainly were exciting times with the clearing trees, chinamen etc. on it.

I would love to visit the beautiful city, and would if I had a pass, but I do not know Sir Ed. Beatty, only his father's people. I hope my brother L.A. Hamilton will go; he really did build up or helped to build up a great city to be proud of; a very wonderful city; we are all justly proud of it, and the people who did their best work in helping to make it what it is.

I must apologize for not answering your letter of long ago but there has been and still is some trouble with my eyes. Hoping you will succeed in your work.

I remain yours most sincerely,

*[signed]* T.J. Leask.

From Mrs. John Leask  
Box 815,  
Collingwood,  
Ontario

(Note: widow, John Leask, city auditor, sister L.A. Hamilton, C.P.R. Land Commissioner. J.S.M.)

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, Gillingwood. Photo by L. A. Hamilton. City Archives. J.S.M.



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 Bealy (sic), squatter & bull puncher 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. 3<sup>rd</sup> 1880, and his sister Miss Hamilton, later Mrs. John Leask. Here the Hamiltons took refuge after the great Fire, 13 June 1886. George Cary yowed 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 25), Fairview.

Item # EarlyVan\_v5\_008

*[photo annotation:]*

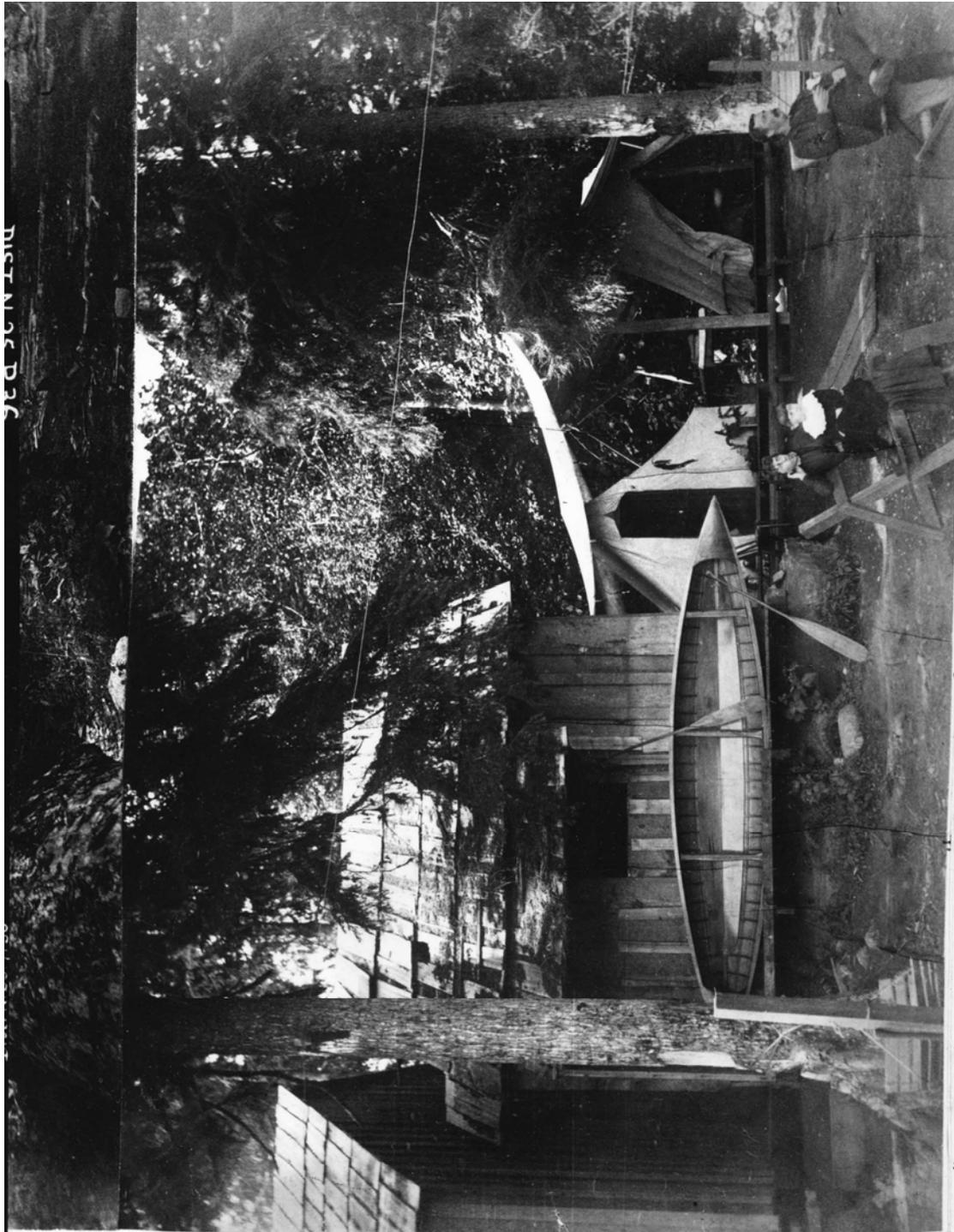
Miss Isabelle J. Hamilton (Mrs. John Leask), L.A. Hamilton's sister, seated on log with his daughter Isobel. John Leask seated between logs. A.J. Dana, wearing hat, C.P.R. Purchasing Agent, seated on log; man in shirt sleeves perhaps Louie. See map "C.P.R. Townsite" (on rollers) presented by H.R. Bray, 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, (roof visible behind Mr. Dana.)

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

City Archives. J.S.M.

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 Beaty (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. 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 and log estimated nine feet six inches diameter (on Block 251), Fairview.

WEST SIDE



south side of bank of a river, in a photo, taken by John Leask, 1886, presented by H. R. Bray.

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 side of Granville St South, and on the west bank of a creek flowing in a ravine. John Beatty Squatter & bulpuncher, with his Indian wife, had lived in one of these board & batten side cedar shake toof shacks but in 1886 occupied by Mr Hamilton, widower, his daughter Isobel, born Oct 3, 1880, and his sister, Miss Hamilton, later Mrs John Leask. Here the Hamiltons took refuge from devastation, Great Fire June 13, 1886. George Cary rowed 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 by H. R. Bray. See two companion photos (1) Miss Hamilton in canoe, (2) log skid road & 2 logs, at back of cottage which is partly concealed in trees.

Item # EarlyVan\_v5\_009

*[photo annotation:]*

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 side of Granville St. South, and on the west bank of a creek flowing in a ravine. John Beaty, squatter and bullpuncher, with his Indian wife, had lived in one of these board & batten side, cedar shake roof shacks, but, in 1886, occupied by Mr. Hamilton, widower, his daughter Isobel, born Oct. 3, 1880, and his sister, Miss Hamilton, later Mrs. John Leask. Here the Hamiltons took refuge from devastation, Great Fire, June 13, 1886. George Cary rowed them across, "Louie" tended camp; a skid road led 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 A.W. Ross & Co., presented by H.R. Bray. See two companion photos (1) Miss Hamilton in canoe, (2) log skid road & 2 logs, at back of cottage which is partly concealed in trees.

Exact location: north corner of Lots 22 & 23, Block 251, D.L. 526, south side Fourth Avenue, 100 yards east of east side of Granville St. South.

Photo by L.A. Hamilton, 1886, presented 1940, by Mrs. John Leask, Collingwood, Ont.

City Archives. J.S.M.