

## **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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Footnote or Endnote Reference:

Major James Skitt Matthews, *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 5 (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011), 33.

Bibliographic Entry:

Matthews, Major James Skitt. *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 5. Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011.

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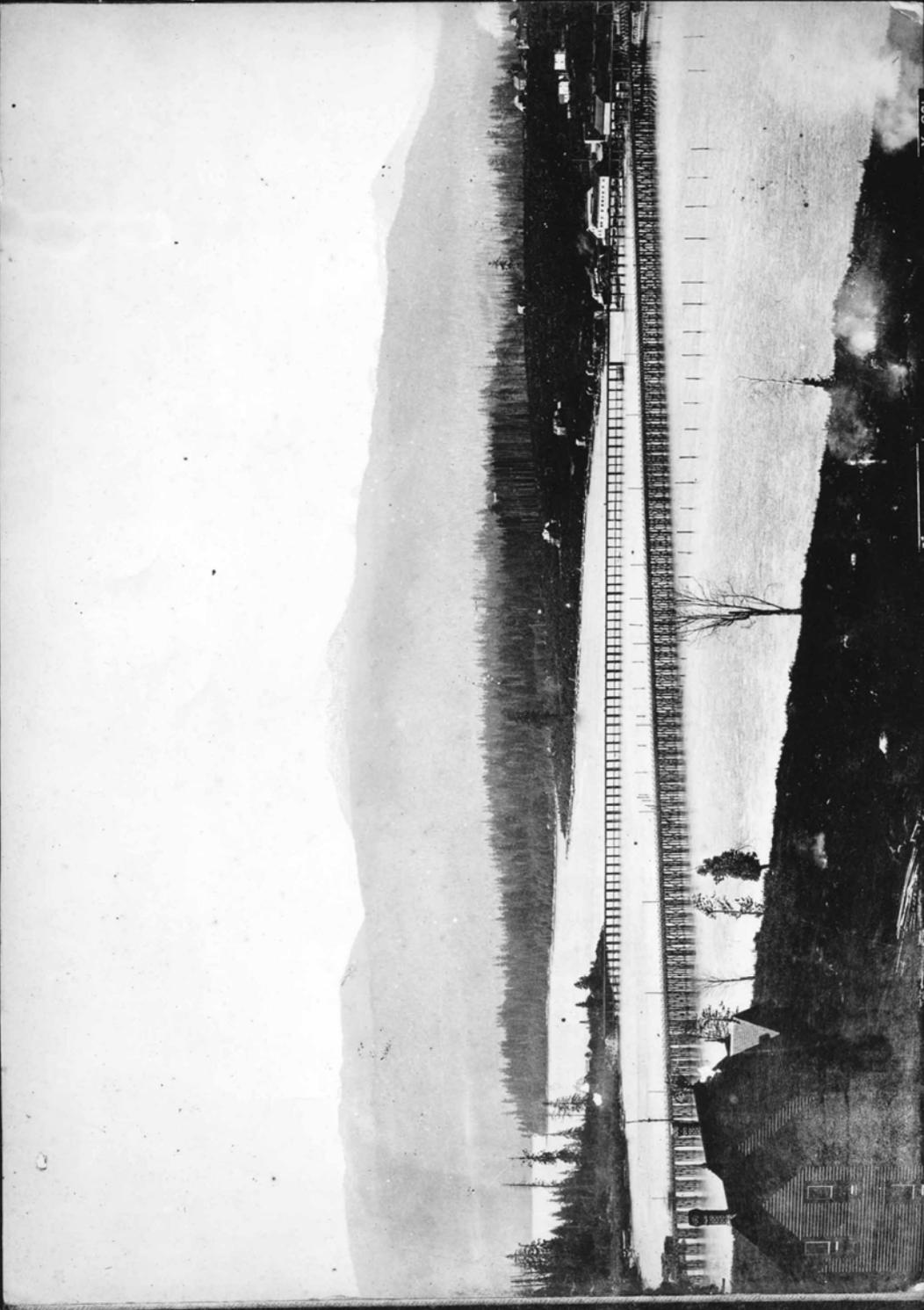
WEST END. 1889 FROM S. E. of cor of Birch & SEVENTH AVE J.S.M.  
left section of three panorama sections  
House is 1304 Seventh

Houses on Davie

Forest on Davie and Nicola  
Lacy Johnson Creery house

Canney

Houses on Beach Ave ↓



House on BIRCH SE  
and SEVENTH AVE  
1304 SEVENTH

GRANVILLE-Third Ave Bridge  
opened Jan 4, 1889

Attempted pre-emption by  
VASHON

↓ Houses on DAVIE St near BUTE St  
Two houses (Mages) on S.W. cor. Pacific  
and BURRARD St

Item # EarlyVan\_v5\_037

**MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH EDGAR ALBERT VACHON (NOT VASHON AS SHOWN IN THE EARLY DIRECTORIES OF VANCOUVER) (SON OF EDOUARD VACHON, PIONEER CONTRACTOR, AND IN EARLY DAYS OF VANCOUVER, OF PENDER STREET), RETIRED B.C. PROVINCIAL POLICE OFFICER, NOW RESIDENT 4160 PRINCE ALBERT STREET, AT CITY ARCHIVES, 30 JULY 1936.**

**GRANVILLE ISLAND. FALSE CREEK.**

Mr. Vachon said: "Father" (Edouard Vachon) "spell it Vachon, not Vashon, came to Gastown long before the fire of June 1886; I think he came in 1885; he was a subcontractor on the building of the C.P.R., all through the Kicking Horse Pass, and about Golden. I came here with Mother, on November 1<sup>st</sup> 1886, who still survives and lives with me, and three sisters, two of them now deceased; my surviving sister is Mrs. Tom Carter, 1678 West 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver. Mother was Miss Emma Montagne, whose father came to Canada from France somewhere about 100 years ago, about 1835, and she was born in Sainte Anne des Montes, Québec, in 1857. Father died in Dawson, Yukon Territory, whilst mining, in June 1905. I was educated at the old St. Louis College, New Westminster. Was first married by the Rev. Ebenezer Robson in 1910 to Miss Florence Busby; then I was married again; I have one son and two daughters."

**PREEMPTIONS.**

"Yes. Father drove those piles around what is now known as Granville Island, but at the time a sand bank in False Creek straddling and straddled by the first bridge at Granville Street to Third Avenue" (opened 4 January 1889.) "The piles can be seen in the well-known photograph of 'West End from Fairview, 1890.' They were going to preempt the sand bank; Father predicted that someday that sand bank would be converted into an island—but the C.P.R. warned him off; got an injunction or something." (See G.G. MacKay, A.P. Horne files, and Paul Marmette, *Early Vancouver*, volumes 1, 2, 3.)

"Then Father homesteaded 160 acres of land at the mouth, east side, of the Capilano River; he had a little cabin there, and a bit of a garden—I recall it because we went over there one day, and the old man who was looking after it was watering the plants in the sunshine, and Father told him not to do that, but to wait until the sun went down."

**FIRST C.P.R. WHARF, 1887.**

"Father cut the roof braces for the angles under the peak of the roof of the old C.P.R. wharf buildings, out of trees; got a big branch with an angle in it, and adzed it down like knees for a boat.

"He also built our house on Pender Street; two storey up and down board and batten; it was destroyed by fire in 1888. It was near the old City Hospital, now the Relief Office and can be seen beside a row of cottages which appears in the well-known photo called 'Hastings from Seymour,' showing Hastings Street planked, and a brick building half finished at the southeast corner of Hastings and Seymour."

In September 1941, Mr. Calvert Simson brought in a *The Monetary Times*, Toronto, July 1907, and on page (I think 1123) there appears a photo illustration of the first C.P.R. wharf, 1887, taken from the foot of Granville Street, and showing a single shed at the foot of Howe Street produced to wharf deck. It is now, September 1941, being re-photographed.