

Early Vancouver

Volume One

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2011 Edition (Originally Published 1932)

Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1931-1932.

*A Collection of Historical Data, Maps, and Plans Made with the Assistance of
Pioneers of Vancouver Between March and December 1931.*

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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Footnote or Endnote Reference:

Major James Skitt Matthews, *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 1 (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011), 33.

Bibliographic Entry:

Matthews, Major James Skitt. *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 1. Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011.

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path, with one exception near the reservoir where, some years later, an alteration was made. He took his own time to survey the path, and was assisted by some of his axemen," continued Mr. Gallagher.

"The late A.G. Ferguson, contractor under Onderdonk, took a very great interest, with Mr. Hamilton, in Stanley Park, and practically fathered it for, say, ten years. That brings to mind an incident worth mentioning in connection with Stanley Park.

"Mr. Ferguson was an American, and when he was elected a park commissioner, while others were sworn in, he was excused that ceremony. He took such an interest in Stanley Park that, when the annual sum appropriated by the Council for its upkeep and development was exhausted, he himself invariably paid the bills to the end of the year. Being a civil engineer, he gave the grades for grading the roads in the park, acted as park foreman, and practically gave all his spare time to it, the other commissioners being agreeable to leaving it to him. Ex-Alderman Michael Costello told me that one year it had cost Mr. Ferguson five thousand dollars." (Costello was also a park commissioner.) "Mr. Ferguson was a very far seeing man, and purchased some of the finest corners on Hastings Street. Mr. Ferguson had no children of his own, nor had Mrs. Ferguson. Mr. Ferguson left a portion of his estate to his sister-in-law, Mrs. Ceperley, with the suggestion that, when she had no further use for it, it should be left to the city of Vancouver, and this gave us, ultimately, the Ceperley Children's Playground at Second Beach. I believe Mr. Ferguson stipulated in his bequest that the money should be used for a park for children."

NOTE ADDED LATER:

7 December 1939

In conversation with Mr. Vaughn of Ceperley Rounsefell and Company today, I read the page to him. He said, "I knew Mr. Ferguson, and what you have written here is essentially correct so far as I know.

"Mr. Ceperley was an American, so was the first Mrs. Ceperley, and I think Mr. Ferguson was too. Mr. Ceperley afterwards took out British papers.

"The property Mr. Ferguson gave Mrs. Ceperley was where the Standard Bank is now, and also diagonally across the street. He gave her both. Arthur T. Ceperley in the city is a son of Mr. and Mrs. Ceperley.

"Mr. Ferguson was a contractor; that's how he made his money."

THE GRANVILLE HOTEL. TOM CYRS. "LONG BIT," "SHORT BIT," 12½¢ AND 25¢. LIQUOR.

"At Tom Cyrs' Granville Hotel on Water Street, every guest was entitled to an eye-opener—had a drink coming to him—before breakfast. The 'right' was not limited to Tom Cyrs; it was, in fact, the custom of the country.

"The practice was that when a stranger went to a hotel, the first thing he did before going to his room was to go into the bar and, at a convenient moment soon after, he would announce that he was a stranger and would 'the house' (all present in the bar) have a drink 'on him.' One drink cost a 'short bit,' but you could buy six drinks for a 'long bit.' A short bit was ten cents, a long bit twenty-five cents. We had no nickels here for five or ten years after incorporation; they were in the country, but not in British Columbia, and for years after the city was incorporated, the miners coming down from the Cariboo would carry their scales and a poke of gold.

JOHN CLOUGH.

"The truth about John Clough is that he was so fond of the flowing bowl that he frequently got '30 days and costs' for being 'drunk and incapable'; a man was not fined for being drunk, but for being 'incapable.' John was in so often," continued Mr. Gallagher with a smile, "that ultimately he became a 'trusty,' and finally they took him on the staff as 'jailer.' He had only one arm, and rarely, if ever, drove the chain gang wagon with its load of prisoners of the chain gang, himself."