

## **Early Vancouver**

### **Volume Two**

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

**2011 Edition (Originally Published 1933)**

*Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1932.*

*Supplemental to volume one collected in 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 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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work for unemployed returned soldiers.” Major Matthews saw General Odium, publisher of the *Star* newspaper. General Odium said, “prepare me a map of your proposal, and I will publish it.” A few days later a map showing the paucity of parks in the older more densely populated area of the West End, Fairview and Mount Pleasant, appeared on the front page of the *Star*, and described Major Matthews’ proposal. The cutting down of the beautiful cedar and fir trees on the Indian Reserve was a wanton piece of vandalism.

Next Major Matthews brought the matter to the notice of the Kitsilano Ratepayers Association, secured their support, etc., advocated the proposal on every occasion. At one of the ratepayers’ meetings, Mr. S.M. Eveleigh, the pioneer architect, was present, and heard what Major Matthews advocated.

Some considerable time afterwards, Mr. Harvey Hadden visited Vancouver on one of his periodic trips from England. His first visit was in the early nineties, or perhaps late eighties, and he was returning to England by train when he got in conversation with someone (Mr. Harry Abbott, Superintendent, Canadian Pacific Railway, Vancouver) on the train, who told him of the brilliant prospects of the young city of Vancouver which he had just left. Mr. Hadden got off the train, returned to Vancouver, and saw the C.P.R. land again and on his advice bought property, some of which was at the northeast corner of Hastings and Granville Street. He made much money as a result of his investments. He afterwards also constructed in West Vancouver a wonderful forest home known as “Hadden Hall,” a sort of Garden of Eden in the forest. There were no roads in West Vancouver in those days, and the lumber for “Hadden Hall” was taken on horseback—pack horse—up the Capilano Road, and across the suspension bridge at the Canyon as the only means of getting it there.

Mr. Hadden’s married life was not a happy one, and this probably had something to do with the manner of his behaviour, his actions and his bequests.

But on Mr. Hadden’s visit in 1929 he again renewed the friendship of Mr. S.M. Eveleigh, with whom he had had long business associations and had been architect of the Hadden block on the above mentioned property, and informed Mr. Eveleigh that he would like to do something for Vancouver which had done so well for him in his real estate investments. Major Matthews’ proposal that the Indian Reserve should be a park, and should be connected by a park to Kitsilano Beach, and that the ultimate goal of building a waterfront promenade from Kitsilano Beach to Jericho Beach should be always kept in view, was explained to Mr. Hadden by Mr. Eveleigh. The upshot of it all was that Mr. Hadden bought the two connecting blocks and gave them to the city.

At the suggestion of Major Matthews, the Kitsilano Ratepayers Association then endeavoured to secure knighthood for Mr. Harvey Hadden, but after taking the necessary steps, were informed by Thos. Mulvey, Under Secretary of State, Ottawa, 10 March 1930, 4492, GS/BG that “if the petition were transmitted” (to the King) “by the Canadian Government it would have to be accompanied by a recommendation of the government, and any such recommendation would be out of harmony with the will of Parliament.”

Despite attempts to secure for the Archives of Vancouver a photograph of its benefactor, so far this has been impossible of accomplishment.

## **INDIAN RESERVE.**

Major Matthews endeavoured for many years to get the Indian Reserve allocated for park use. He met with considerable opposition. As an instance Mayor L.D. Taylor was not favourable, but offered, so it is said, it as a possible site to the agents of the Ford Motor car for an assembling plant site. The Harbour Board of Commissioners also wanted it for a deep sea vessel lumber loading yard, and the Provincial Minister of Lands, Mr. T.D. Pattullo, personally told Major Matthews that he was opposed to it, its use as a park, and publicly stated in a speech before the Provincial House, that “there were people in Vancouver who thought it should be allocated for a park use, but that he did not agree.”

Major Matthews then appealed to the newly formed Town Planning Commission, and was overjoyed to see in their first report issued, that they agreed with his recommendation, and that the new City Hall should be built at the northern end of the Burrard Bridge (proposed) overlooking the Indian Park and English Bay, “one of the most superb locations for a city hall in all North America.”

In 1932, on one summer's day, Major Matthews took his camera and photographed the groups of bathers bathing in the sea on the northern shore—foot of Fir Street produced—to the number of six or seven hundred persons. These photographs were joined together to form a panorama, and then submitted to the Board of Park Commissioners, who passed a resolution to be forwarded to the City Council asking that the Indian Reserve be set aside for park purposes.

The great beach stretching from Trafalgar Street to Cypress Street at Kitsilano has not been acquired without the effort of many citizens over a long period of years. At first it was a short stretch of sand leased by the city at the foot of Yew Street; bit by bit it has slowly been added to, not as a result of official action taken after consideration, but as the result of the agitation of many citizens, including Mrs. J.Z. Hall, Mr. J.H. Calland, Mr. Fred Crone, Mr. Chas. H. Fraser, all or nearly all members of the Kitsilano Ratepayers Association. It was in this manner that the two blocks on Cornwall Street between Yew and Arbutus Street were secured; after a constant fight for years.

J.S.M. 1933.

### **THE "HOTEL SITE" PARK, KITSILANO BEACH.**

The "Hotel Site" is so named from the fact that it so appears on certain early maps of Vancouver as the site of a proposed C.P.R. hotel. The piece of land so known is bounded by McNichol Avenue and Maple Street, and was so marked on the maps when the section of land to the east of Kitsilano Beach was surveyed and opened for occupancy and settlement in 1909. At that time the General Superintendent of the Canadian Pacific Railway in Vancouver was Mr. Richard Marpole, and it is stated that it was his dream to have erected on the "Hotel Site" a palatial tourist resort hotel.

In the real estate boom days, the Board of Park Commissioners secured an option on the site for park purposes for \$200,000. The purchase price not being available, they continued to lease it for many years, paying therefore a rental equal to the amount of the taxes imposed. Finally, about 1929 or 1928, a bylaw to purchase park sites was passed by the electorate and the "hotel site" purchased. In the meantime the option had been dropped, and they finally secured it for \$50,000, one quarter of the original price.

Again it was the Kitsilano residents who "forced" this matter through. It may be stated that it was to their own interest so to do, but such was not the case, nor the motive. The Kitsilano Ratepayers Association has ever been a sane, reasoning body of men and women, who are not prompted by motives unworthy of the best citizenship.