

Early Vancouver

Volume Two

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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 125th anniversary of the City's founding. The project was made possible by funding from the Vancouver Historical Society.

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HASTINGS SAWMILL. R.H. ALEXANDER. THE FIRST WHITE WOMAN, MRS. R.H. ALEXANDER. MOODYVILLE SAWMILL OR “MOODY’S MILL.”

Excerpt from letter F.W. Alexander, 725 Henry Building, Seattle, 26 May 1932, son of R.H. Alexander, one of the “Overlanders of 1862.”

“The Hastings Sawmill was not built until 1865, and my father, the late R.H. Alexander, entered that company’s employ in 1869, the family following him in December 1870. My mother was the first white woman to live in what is now known as Vancouver, and my brother, the late H.O. Alexander, Stipendiary Magistrate, was the first white child born there in 1873. There was a mill at Moodyville before the Hastings Mill was built, and white families living there, but they cannot of course be deemed as living in Granville or Gastown.

“Cannot state positively, but am inclined to think there were no whites living on Burrard Inlet in 1858.”

BEAUMONT BOGGS. HASTINGS STREET.

“I was in Vancouver in February 1886 and purchased the northeast corner of Hastings and Carrall streets from Graveley and Spinks for \$650.” Beaumont Boggs, 13 June 1932.

HASTINGS SAWMILL. PETER BILODEAU.

“My father, Peter Bilodeau, came up from San Francisco on the paddle steamer *Propeller*, arrived Victoria 1 May 1873, Hastings Mill, 2 May. There were nine white men working in the mill, and they turned out about fifteen thousand feet per day. About fifty people here. A little boat ran from Gastown to Moodyville. Father is now 81.” Dr. Bilodeau, Vancouver, May 1932.

HASTINGS AND MOODYVILLE.

“John Strange arrived in Gastown from New Brunswick in July 1873. There were seven white families in Gastown and six in Moodyville. Jerry Rogers had three logging camps on site of Vancouver; one where Cordova Street is, one at Jericho, and one at Greer’s Beach. Jericho was the headquarters of camps. Robert and Sam Preston” (note: who preempted Kitsilano Beach in 1873) “were the foreman and brother-in-law of Jerry Rogers.” John Strange, 6th and 6th streets, New Westminster, April 1932.

BUSH FIRES.

“I took a walk from Sapperton to Port Moody; the blue sky showed only as a blue streak through the dense timber, which was mostly killed by the fires that devastated the whole province in, I think, 1867.” L.A. Agassiz, Agassiz, May 1932.

PLAN OF HASTINGS, 1869. SALE OF LOTS AT HASTINGS, 1869. HOCKINGS.

A map in the Land Registry, Vancouver, describes what is believed to be the first sale of lots on Burrard Inlet. It read as follows:

“Plan of Hastings

“The following lots were offered at auction 10th July 1869.

“2-20, 23-29, 33-36, 40-46, 48-50, 53-55.

“Lots sold are marked thus ‘O.’

“Lots reserved are marked thus ‘R.’”

Fifty-three lots are included in the plan, of which two groups of three lots, and one single lot, seven in all, were sold. There were eleven lots reserved as follows:

For Government buildings	3
For Church buildings	1
For Hospital buildings	2
For Waterfront lots	<u>5</u>
Total Reserved	11

The old plan shows a house, "Hockings," and nearby, at the "End of the Road" from New Westminster, a stable; some distance off a float; it was cedar logs and rose and fell with the tide; and on the shore nearby two buildings, probably boat houses. A shed stands on the bank across the creek from the stable, probably a pigsty. This creek now runs through the Hastings Park (Exhibition Grounds).

Two streets are shown of which one, a very short one, still exists as "Douglas Road," the other has been obliterated by the right of way of the Canadian Pacific Railway which passes also over the site of Hockings and the stable and pigsty. Hockings stood almost exactly at the foot of the present Windermere Street; access to Douglas Road is now by McGill Street, which enters its western end.

So far as is known, this is the first instance of the sale of lots of real estate on Burrard Inlet. In 1868 Joseph Silvy asked permission to purchase a piece of land with waterfrontage on the "Government Reserve," afterwards Granville, and his request was refused, but on 11 April 1870 Gregoris Fernandez bought, and in the same month, April, John Deighton and E. Brown also bought, lots in the Townsite of Granville, which had been surveyed into 94 lots as shown on Trutch's map of 10 March 1870. During the remaining months of the year and in 1871, several more lots were sold in Granville. Trutch's map of 10 March 1870 shows nine buildings at Granville ranged crescent shaped along the shore, two on the street, two standing on more than one lot, and all built at different angles, from which it is quite evident that Granville was a more popular location than Hastings, for while one building only, Hockings, is shown at Hastings on 10 July 1869, eight months later, 10 March 1870, nine are shown as existing at Granville together with jail and customs house.

GRANVILLE, 1870.

Excerpt, letter from Miss Alma M. Russell, Assistant Provincial Archivist, Victoria, to Theo. Bryant, 31 October 1932.

After careful search in the Archives Dept. we were able to find a letter written by Joseph Silvy asking permission from the government to rent a piece of land with waterfrontage on the government reserve. This was in 1868, and was refused.

As we did not have a copy of the map of Granville surveyed by Joseph Trutch in 1870 I went down to the Survey Department, Government Bldgs, and found that they had the original map.

On this map Lot 16, Block VI, was owned by a man named Gregoris Fernandez. He bought it on 11 April 1870. But on the same map lot No. 7, Block 2, was sold to Joseph Silvia on 9 May 1871.

Lots on this block were numbered from 1 to 7, and were sold as follows:

- No. 1 Block 2 sold April 1870 to John Deighton.
- No. 2 Block 2 Jail and Customs House.
- No. 3 Block 2 sold April 1870 to E. Brown.
- No. 4 Block 2 sold May 1871 to Geo. Brew.
- No. 5 Block 2 sold December 1870 to John A. Webster.
- No. 6 Block 2 sold May 1871 to Alexander McCrimmon.
- No. 7 Block 2 sold 9 May 1871 to Joseph Silva.

At the time the map was made, all these lots had buildings on them.

On Silvia's or Silvy's letter his name is spelled Silvy, his X mark, so it is difficult to decide which should be the proper spelling, as the man himself could not write."

NOTE ADDED LATER:

The Silvy or Silvey family now live at Egmont, B.C. See Genealogy form, Vancouver City Archives. September 1934. JSM.