

## **Early Vancouver**

### **Volume Three**

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

**2011 Edition (Originally Published 1935)**

*Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1933-1934.*

*Supplemental to Volumes One and Two collected in 1931-1932.*

### **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.

### **Copyright Statement**

© 2011 City of Vancouver. Any or all of *Early Vancouver* may be used without restriction as to the nature or purpose of the use, even if that use is for commercial purposes. You may copy, distribute, adapt and transmit the work. It is required that a link or attribution be made to the City of Vancouver.

### **Reproductions**

High resolution versions of any graphic items in *Early Vancouver* are available. A fee may apply.

### **Citing Information**

When referencing the 2011 edition of *Early Vancouver*, please cite the page number that appears at the bottom of the page in the PDF version only, not the page number indicated by your PDF reader. Here are samples of how to cite this source:

Footnote or Endnote Reference:

Major James Skitt Matthews, *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 3 (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011), 33.

Bibliographic Entry:

Matthews, Major James Skitt. *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 3. Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011.

### **Contact Information**

City of Vancouver Archives  
1150 Chestnut Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3J9  
604.736.8561  
archives@vancouver.ca  
vancouver.ca/archives



## **MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH GEORGE CARY, 18 JUNE 1934.**

### **SURVEYS. CAMBIE AND CORDOVA STREETS. SQUATTERS.**

"As I was telling you last year" (see *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 2), "J.J. Irwin lived in a shack on the northeast corner of Cambie and Cordova streets. He was one of the squatters of Granville. The C.P.R. were giving the squatters trouble. Irwin had squatted on the two lots, the corner and the next one." (Lots 9 and 10, Block 5, O.G.T.) "The C.P.R. wanted a slice off the corner lot in order to avoid a bad corner at the junction of Cambie and Cordova, so Irwin offered to compromise, and settle the dispute, offering to give them the corner lot so that they could straighten out the proposed street, and he would take the other inside lot and call the dispute off. The C.P.R. agreed to this, and addition gave him \$250 or \$300."

### **FISHERMAN'S COVE. CAPTAIN RICHARD GOSSE. LELAND HOTEL.**

"I was building the annex" (north side of Hastings Street), "Leland Hotel, 100 feet or so west of Granville on Hastings—the annex was across the street—when a young fellow, Rich Gosse, came to me asking for a job as carpenter, which I gave him. He was a tall, strong young man, and made a good workman. Then he went down on the Fraser River building canneries; got intimate with some of the cannery owners, and I soon found him building cottages in the West End. Then more canneries went up and he came to me asking for pointers re estimating their cost, and after that, he went right ahead; that was the start of his career in the cannery business, and his ultimate success as salmon canner." (Gosse-Millerd.) "Captain Westerland's wife's father lived around on Howe Sound just 'round Point Atkinson." (See Vol. 2. Also W.A. Grafton, Vol. 3.)

### **NAVY JACK.**

"Navy Jack married an Indian woman. His children live at North Vancouver."

(Note: August Khaatsalano says one daughter is Mrs. Henry Jack, another Mrs. Williams, and a third who married a foreigner. They live on the North Vancouver Indian Reserve.)

## **MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH GEORGE CARY, 21 JUNE 1934.**

### **COAL HARBOUR. LOST LAGOON.**

(See *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 2.) "This photo" (No. 55, Dally Collection, Provincial Archives) "is in Lost Lagoon; I know by the lay of the land; there was a little gully just to the right. Old Mr. Tiffen used to hand split shingles down there, and Ostrander had a cabin down in Stanley Park nearby, but this looks like Indians. These are Indian canoes, six of them, and there are two long poles—fish poles, probably, with iron spear points." (See Calvert Simson, "Ostrander.")

### **BLASTING STUMPS ABOVE VICTORY SQUARE.**

"Yes, and at night, too." (*Early Vancouver*, Vol. 2, after "when the gang quit at noon.")

### **BRUNSWICK RIFLE.**

(Rifle dated 1860 presented by Thos. Deasy of Saanich, June 1934.) "This round hole in the butt here is where the cloth grease patches were kept; your powder was in a flask over your shoulder. You put the little grease patch over the muzzle, then put the lead bullet on it, and then pulled out your ramrod and rammed it down, and by the time you had finished ramming I doubt if the bullet was still a round bullet."

## **MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION TO MR. AND MRS. PATRICK J. MYERS, 1840 EAST 6<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE, GRANDVIEW, ABOUT APRIL, 1933.**

### **BIG TREE, GEORGIA STREET. LOGGING, SITE OF VANCOUVER.**

"The truth about that big tree on Georgia Street between Granville and Seymour streets, is that it was a stub; the top was broken off; anyone who says it was 325 feet high is talking rot; it was just a stub, not over 80 feet high. I was working for Phil McMahon and Hugh Carr; we were getting the timber off the Brighthouse estate west of Burrard Street; they sold most of those logs which came off the Brighthouse estate to Victoria mills. *I was about the last man to work around that tree to get ready, ready to handle it. I skidded up to it.*"

Query: What do you mean by “skidded”?

Mr. Myers: “Built a road. That was 1885 or 1886. But they told the chopper not to fell it; it would only break up our skid road; it wouldn’t pay to take it out; it was too big and heavy; the repair of the skid road would be too much work, so we left it. Then, too, we had got over the line, the big tree was on C.P.R. property, and Angus Fraser went and told the C.P.R., so it was left there. It stood right back of the Vancouver Block.”

Query: What do you think of the timber which stood on the site of the city of Vancouver?

Mr. Myers: “The greatest piece of timber that ever was grown; anybody’ll tell you that; you can tell by the stumps between here and New Westminster, and I’ve logged over most part of the coast, too.”

### **CENTRAL PARK.**

“You see, the only bit of timber left now is that bit out there they call Central Park, and that’s growed since the fire, not a fire of recent years, but 200 or 300 years ago. You see, fire has its feeding ground; I wouldn’t tell that to some of those university fellows, but fellows like John Hendry know all about it. All that land between here and Westminster was swept by fire two or three hundred years ago, and those trees at Central Park have grown since. All that land was burned bare, save for some hollow spots and patches where the fire missed. All that land was earth and stones, and trees won’t grow on that; all the moss and decayed vegetation was burned off some time long, long ago.

“There was beautiful timber out Kerrisdale and Shaughnessy way; no conky” (rotten timber) “stuff out there; just an odd one, here and there, where the fire had caught it. There was fine timber on Little Mountain.”

### **JOHN MORTON.**

Query: What do you suppose was the way John Morton came over from Westminster to Burrard Inlet in 1862? His son says he came with an Indian to the head of False Creek (Grandview).

Mr. Myers: “Nothing to stop him; nothing to stop a man going through that timber; walk through, it was like a park—a nice stand.”

### **STANLEY PARK. BRIGHOUSE ESTATE.**

“I logged all over the place around Vancouver. Charlie Dagget and Ivie Ferry logged in Stanley Park, and dumped their logs on the Coal Harbour side at the time I was logging in the “West End,” and had my log dump right at English Bay bathing beach; right where they bathe now, perhaps a little bit to the left; I logged all over the Brighthouse estate, except for a little bit, perhaps, down by the Government Reserve” (Stanley Park) “boundary. We had no horses, logged entirely with oxen; that was two years after the fire of 1886. We never pulled cedar logs; never cut it.” (See Jim Franks in *Early Vancouver*, 1932.) “What was the use? Nobody wanted it. There was no cedar at all sold here until, say, 1900.” (See J.B. Henderson.)

“I dumped my logs into English Bay, and they were towed up False Creek to the mills. I sold a few to Leamy and Kyle mill at what is now Cambie Street, but most of them went to the Royal City Planing Mills at Carrall Street. That was up to two years after the fire.

“I hauled logs out of the woods on Prior Street in 1888 and afterwards Campbell Avenue too—just shingle logs on Campbell Avenue.”

### **GREER’S BEACH. JOHN SCOTT. SAM GREER.**

“John Scott built the cabin which Sam Greer afterwards occupied; he built it to winter in. I came out here in the spring of 1883 and worked with him that winter, and then went back east, and the winter of 1884 I worked for the Hastings Sawmill at Point Grey—not Jericho, Point Grey—and they all said out at the camp there that John Scott built that cabin. He deserted it, and the Indians took possession and Sam Greer came along and drove them out. I was one of the men who built the C.P.R. line out to English Bay.

“Sam Greer was a hard one; damned old rascal. Why, one Sunday evening I went to his beach in a canoe and pulled it up on the sand and when I got back the canoe was gone. Greer said a young fellow had stolen it from him—I don’t know whose canoe it was. Sam jumped one man’s preemption at

Chilliwack, and was responsible for two men's deaths up the Cariboo. He jumped their claim and the judge gave it to him, and the two young fellows went down river and were drowned."

#### **PORTUGUESE JOE.**

"Portuguese Joe had no store in Gastown in my day; his family is up at Pender Harbour now."

#### **NAVY JACK.**

"Navy Jack was a bartender in Robertson's Saloon."

#### **INDIAN CHURCH, GRANVILLE.**

(See *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 2.) "I remember the little old Indian church, just a bit of a place about twenty-four feet wide and forty long; bell on top; oh, that would be 1884 or 1885. Out Coal Harbour way the Siwashes had a little path; they used to drag their canoes across from English Bay" (into Lost Lagoon); "dragged them across in bad weather. Then around the shore they had a nice little orchard, two or three acres."

"My father was Irish, so was my grandfather; I was born in New York; been married 59 years now" (Mrs. Myers was seated nearby) "and her lips are just as sweet today as they were fifty-nine years ago."

#### **MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. WALTER E. GRAVELEY, 8 JUNE 1933.**

(See *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 2.)

"You see, when I left Winnipeg in the summer of 1883, I went to Victoria. It happened that at the time matters concerning confederation terms were under discussion in the House; the building of the dry dock at Esquimalt; and the building of the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway; they all said it would make work, and there would be a real estate boom, and I thought I would make a bit of money in real estate. I came with just \$4,000, all I had."

"So I got interested in a piece of land owned by the Hudson's Bay Co., twenty acres, and asked them what they wanted for it; \$400 an acre, that is, \$8,000. E.V. Bodwell was in on it with me, half shares, but I had only \$4,000 and they wanted \$8,000 cash. So I asked the Hudson's Bay Co. how long it would take to get the deed, and they said, 'Six weeks to two months.' So I countered with, 'Would you take half cash, and the balance when the deeds arrive?' They said, 'Yes, that would be all right,' so I paid over all I had."

"Then I got the property surveyed, into lots, and some little dodgers printed, just little pieces of paper with a map of the property, and terms, \$3,000 a lot, \$25 down, and the balance without interest, and had them folded in with the daily newspaper, so that everybody got one. Before the deed arrived, I had the money to make the second payment."

"Ultimately, Bodwell took the unsold lots, and we, Innes and Graveley, got out, got from under. We had had one experience in Winnipeg, and did not want another. F.C. Innes and Co." (Innes, Richards and Ackroyd.) "F.C. Innes was a partner of mine in Winnipeg, and afterwards in Victoria in 1883 and 1884, and then we dissolved partnership, and Innes came over the Granville and had his first real estate office on Carrall Street. I came over later. Then Innes took in Richards, and afterwards Ackroyd, and finally Gall."

#### **TERMINUS OF C.P.R. COAL HARBOUR. A.W. ROSS. WM. VAN HORNE.**

"A.W. Ross, as you know, was a brother to Mrs. MacLean, wife of our first mayor, and had been in the real estate business in Winnipeg. He came to me one day with a letter. He made me promise that, whether or no the contents of it led to business, I would tell no one of its contents. The letter was from Van Horne. I read it. It was to the effect that the terminus was to be at Coal Harbour, not Port Moody."

#### **HASTINGS MILL LAND. GRANDVIEW.**

"The Hastings Mill people owned all that land, 264 A, at the head of False Creek, Grandview now; the Hastings Mill was practically owned by San Francisco people, Victoria and San Francisco anyhow. Ross got an option on a lot of that property for Powell, Oppenheimer, Dupont and ourselves, Innes and Graveley; Ross had no money, but was given one fifth interest. What about J.C. McLagan and the