

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 125th 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.

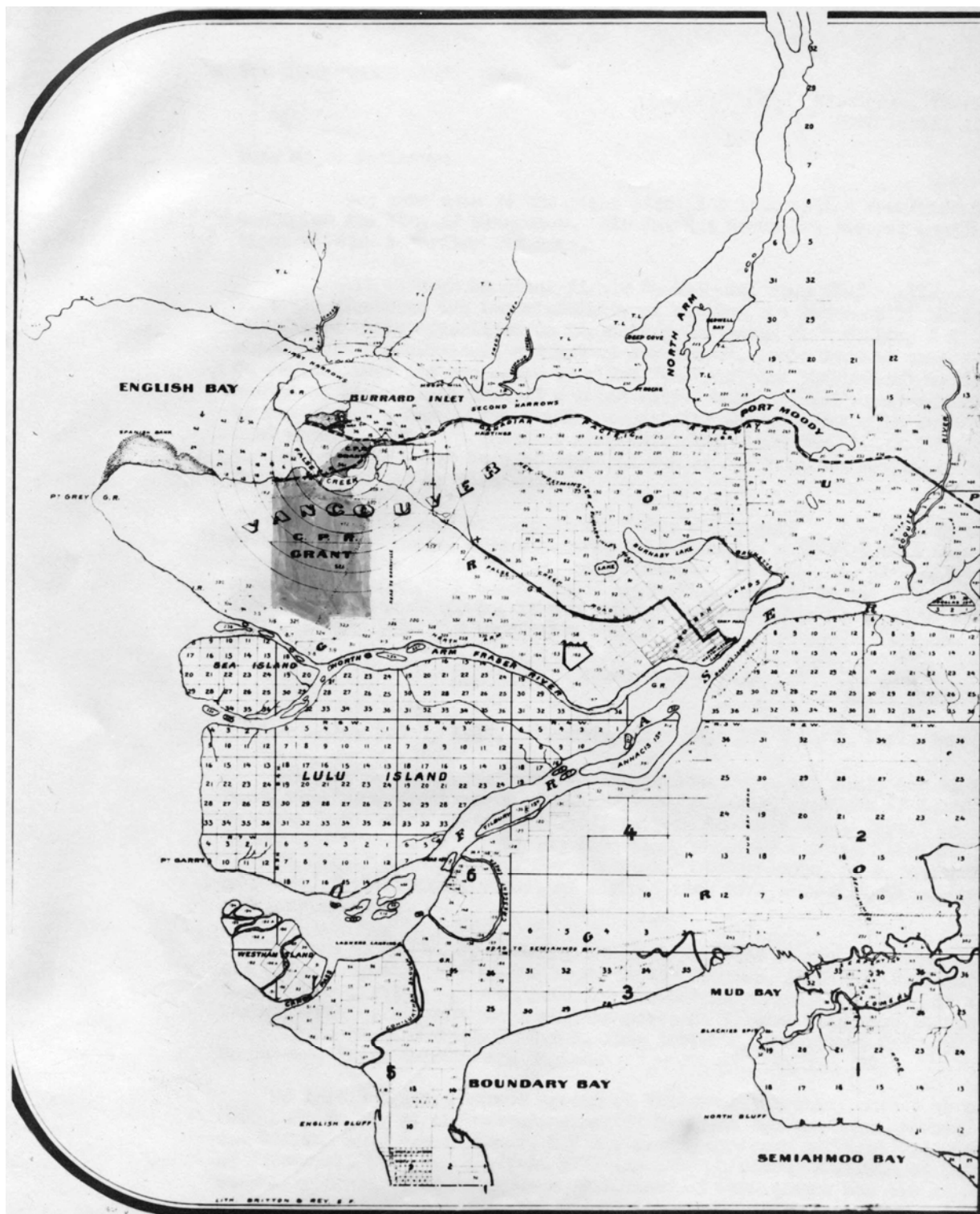
Bibliographic Entry:

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





Item # EarlyVan_v3_027

30 St. Joseph St.,
Toronto.
12th Nov. 1934.

Dear Major Matthews:

Pardon the delay in not answering your letter of Nov. 3 much before this. Delay was due to our breaking up the house in the Country and moving into Toronto.

NAMING OF FAIRVIEW AND MOUNT PLEASANT. EARLY C.P.R. OFFICES.

I am afraid I cannot give you any answer as to the naming of Fairview and Mount Pleasant as the naming of those subdivisions took place after I left Vancouver. As to the plans, we had two offices, one at Port Moody and one at Vancouver. The former in charge of H. Abbott and the latter controlled by myself. The big plan you refer to was no doubt made at Port Moody; it had to do with certain formalities in connection with the right of way and the water front lands that the Co. secured under their contract with the Canadian Government.

FIRST MAP OF VANCOUVER.

The large plan of the City was prepared by myself in the Office of the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway. Mr. Dunsmuir, the head of that Corporation, was good enough to give me room in their Victoria Office. Preliminary plans dealing with the laying out of the streets and blocks were made partially in the Ferguson Block but were all destroyed in the fire.

THE GREAT FIRE.

I lost in that fire all the photographs that I had taken previous to the fire. The heat was so great when I escaped from the building that a number of valuable documents were burnt in my arm, and all glasses in the levels were cracked in the surveying instrument I was carrying over my shoulder.

As I explained in my previous letter the final plan, as approved by the Company of the city was deposited in the Registry Office in Victoria.

I am looking up some water color sketches stowed away here and intend to send them on to you by mail. They are not highly artistic and were made under difficulties at the time but they will give an impression of the Country as it was when I commenced to make the first survey of the city.

Sincerely yours,

L.A. Hamilton.

SURVEY OF VANCOUVER, C.P.R., 1885.

Hotel Vancouver
Vancouver, B.C.
4th Oct. 1929.

J. Alex Walker Esq.,
Town Planning Commission,
Vancouver, B.C.

Dear Mr. Walker:

I was most gratified in returning to the store to find your note and the Book "of a Plan for the City of Vancouver."

I am sorry that I have to leave tomorrow by 9 a.m. train as I know I would have enjoyed a chat with you. I cannot say that I am proud of the original planning of Vancouver. The work, however, was beset with many difficulties. The dense forest, the inlet on the north, and False Creek on the south, the receding in of the land at Carrall Street. A registered plan on the East and

one on the West. My first plan was based on the cancellation of the plan to the west of "Lot 185." I had a new plan drawn making great changes in it and so made that all the streets leading westerly from the C.P.R. property would run without any jog with those in Lot 185. There were a number of owners, in fact, all but one consented to it. A Mr. Pratt [*Spratt*], who owned 4 lots on the waterfront, where the lofty Marine building is now being erected, had had a disagreement with the other land owners and was determined to fight through the courts to prevent us altering the original plan. As we could not wait, I had to adapt my plans as nearly as possible with the old plan, but in doing this was only able to give a continuous line for the alternate streets. You can understand that I was obliged to switch my plan so as to have the principal streets to run northerly and southerly, inasmuch as they would thus lead to the large block of land belonging to the C.P.R. south of False Creek. Expressing my regret at not being able to meet you, I am Yours very truly,

L.A. Hamilton.

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH MAJOR-GENERAL JOHN W. STEWART, C.B., ETC., AT HIS OFFICE (STEWART AND WELCH), 425 HOWE STREET, VANCOUVER, 28 DECEMBER 1933.

GRANVILLE STREET.

At my request, General Stewart received me. I called at his office, and found a picture of health and activity seated at his desk within a hundred yards of a noisy, busy artery of traffic, Granville Street, which must hold entrancing memories for a man who first saw it as a peep hole through an evergreen mass of dark, damp forest. He said:

SURVEY OF STREETS, VANCOUVER, 1885.

"No, I don't recall the stake from which the survey of Vancouver commenced, being driven. What I do recall is that we camped on the other side of False Creek; about the site of the sawmill" (Hanbury's, just west of Granville at Fourth Avenue.) "There was no mill there then; they were dumping logs into the water." (See many references to this skid road.) (Rowling.)

FALSE CREEK TO BURRARD INLET IN THREE DAYS.

"And I remember it took *three days* to cut a line from False Creek" (north side) "to Burrard Inlet for Granville Street; the timber was so heavy." (See McWhinney, Myers, Rowling.) "That was in the winter of 1885-1886." (Cambie Map of right of way was signed by Abbott 22 February 1886.)

"You see, I was here six months only; then I went east up the line on other survey work, and did not return for twenty years; consequently my recollections are not particularly vivid. Other than Mr. L.A. Hamilton, I do not recall who was on the survey party. I do recall that, on the day of the Fire of 13th June, 1886, we were camped at Hastings."

H.B. SMITH'S MAP OF VANCOUVER, 1886.

"H.B. Smith was not on the party I was on." (The lithographed map, "adopted by the Mayor and Council of Vancouver," and signed by Mayor MacLean and City Clerk McGuigan, bears "H.B. Smith.")

REFERENCES – EARLY VANCOUVER, VOL. 2.

"Hamilton told me he started the survey from the corner of Hastings and Hamilton streets, using a nail driven in a wooden post as a starting point." – Findley.

"The corner post from which the survey started was placed with a certain amount of ceremony at the corner of Hastings and Hamilton streets. The only ones I can remember were members of the party were Charlie Johnson, John Leask, Jack Stewart, and Louis, chief axeman, the son of an English canon whose name I cannot recall." – Hamilton letter.

"Jack Leask, whilst blazing survey lines between Carrall Street and Westminster Avenue, got lost, and the party spent all afternoon searching for him" – Mrs. D.R. Reid.