

## **Early Vancouver**

### **Volume Five**

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

**2011 Edition (Originally Published 1945)**

*Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1936-1945.*

*Supplemental to volumes one, two, three and four collected in 1931, 1932 and 1934.*

### **About the 2011 Edition**

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"There are six children in our family; three boys and three girls. Three were born before we went to Mount Pleasant, and three after we went there; five are living today; one is unmarried; and there are five grandchildren.

1. Edith (myself), born in London, England, 19<sup>th</sup> November 1879; married Humphrey Trites; he died 16 years ago in 1922, and we had three children.
  - a. Frank, born 1912, married Miss Marguerite McCullough, and with one son, aged 4, and one daughter, aged 2½; he works for the B.C. Electric.
  - b. Edith, born about 1914, unmarried.
  - c. Russell, born about 1916, unmarried.
2. Charles, born in Rideau Hall, Ottawa, married Grace Raynor, works at the Sumner Iron Works, Vancouver; no children.
3. Gwendolyn, born on Cordova Street, Vancouver, unmarried.
4. Clarence, born on the Mount Pleasant ranch; killed in a gun accident when 16½ years old, accidentally shot by another boy on the False Creek beach in front of our home.
5. George, born on the Mount Pleasant ranch; a musician; married to Ada Simpson. They have one son, Gerald.
6. Muriel, born on Mount Pleasant ranch; married Wm. Thorburn of loco. They have one daughter, Theresa.

Corrected and approved by Mrs. Trites, 20 December 1938.

J.S. Matthews.

(See photo C. V. P. Bu. 184, 185, 186, 196, 197.)

### **A MEMORANDUM BY MRS. E.E. TRITES, NÉE MADDAMS, OF CHINA CREEK, HEAD OF FALSE CREEK, JANUARY 1939.**

#### **MADDAMS RANCH. RHUBARB WINE. CHINA CREEK.**

My father, C.C. Maddams, not only raised all kinds of fruit for a large wholesale trade, such as apples, pears, prunes, plums of all kinds, raspberries, strawberries, loganberries, and the black, red and white currants, but one year a 40 gallon cask of wonderful rhubarb wine which connoisseurs likened to champagne. It was a beautiful amber colour (its natural colour) and had a fine effervescence and sparkle. Among those who praised it was W.H. Malkin of Malkin Bros. Commission Merchants, with whom my father did business. Mr. Malkin wanted to have some more made to sell up north, but found the alcoholic content too high for public sale, so no more was made at that time. One laughable incident in connection with this cask of wine was that my father had to go away on one of his usual trips. He was still on the C.P.R., and as he was to be away two weeks, he told my mother to be sure and lift the bung in the top of the cask or it would burst. Well, my mother forgot all about it for several days, until some of us noticed the sides of the cask bulging out, (an oak whiskey cask at that) and then she was afraid to touch it, and got a neighbour man to try and get the bung out. Well, he didn't try much, as soon as he touched the wooden bung it hit the ceiling of the woodshed with an awful bang, and the froth hit the ceiling, and ran for a time, losing a whole lot of wine. And so for the history of Maddams' rhubarb wine. I can remember a couple of its contents besides the rhubarb were a 100 lb. sack of white sugar, \$3.00 of isinglass to clear it before bottling. There was no colouring used, as they decided to leave it the natural colour; it was a very clear amber and sparkled beautifully when opened.

#### **CIDER. POULTRY. CANADA GEESE.**

My father also tried making cider as there was always a surplus of apples in the fall, but he cider wasn't as popular as the rhubarb wine. When we first went in for pure-bred chickens, and had

about 10 or 12 different breeds of which I can remember, Buff-Cochins, Light Bramas, Crested Houdans, White Wyandottes, Silver-laced Wyandottes, Black Spanish, Langshans, Brown and White Leghorns, Barred Rocks. These pure-breds were quite expensive, and there were only two hens and a cockerel to a pen; the idea was to sell eggs for setting, but there was not enough sale for the eggs, so it ended up by keeping the best egg producers, and in time we had a large flock of hens. The ones kept were Barred Rocks, Langshans (a large black hen) and Leghorns, so we had sufficient eggs for ourselves, and sold some, too. Just here I might mention a comical incident which happened about that time. My father was keeping two decoy Canada Geese for Mr. Harry Abbott, his employer, which were kept in with the chickens, and which were quite used to us children going in to feed them, but when my brother Charlie went in dressed in his Sunday best, the geese didn't know him, so after quietly passing them, they sneaked up, and gave Charlie an awful nip behind; so Charlie had no use for geese after that.

### **PIGEONS.**

My parents, after having tried many ways of increasing their revenue also at a later date tried pigeons, but this really started by the boys wanting some for pets, so my brothers got a few pair of homing pigeons and afterwards a pair or pouters and fan-tails, and they used to sell an odd pair to their boy friends, but in a year or so they tired of keeping them and my father bought some more and tried them out in a commercial way, viz, to sell the squabs. So they wired in a large square adjoining the large and well-made shed with an upper and lower story. There were several rows of nests, in the loft, as we called it, with about 40 or 50 sitting pigeons, with some on eggs, some just hatched, some a few days old, and so on; but the squabs were usually sold at two weeks old. There were some chinamen who used to buy a lot and said they wanted the squabs for some sick chinamen for a cure.

Well eventually the sales were not enough to make any profit, so the pigeon business was abandoned, but anyway it was something to remember and was very interesting to our family, and many other old timers of Mt. Pleasant whose children themselves remember the great cage of pigeons, and many people, strangers to us, used to like to come through our place to see the different interesting things there. Also another thing I might mention about the old home, was its beautiful natural setting, and also the large amount of money my father spent in beautifying it. I remember my father receiving a consignment from Holland, a \$1600.00 order, mostly of Rhododendrons, but also there were Azaleas, Clematis, Peonies, and bulbs in this order. We also had one or more consignments of lily bulbs and Irises from Japan, such as Liliun Auratum, Liliun Rubrum etc. also we had many beautiful roses, Marchiel Niel, Gloirie De Dejou, La France and others, also two very large wire arches, covered with crimson rambler, Dorothy Perkins, Hiawatha and such pillar roses; also our house was faced with a beautiful terrace lawn, which ran out about 100 feet south from the front verandah, and immediately outside our front fence was the 3 board side-walk which was a couple of feet off the ground, so anyone could easily look over it at the garden, which many people did, especially on Sundays. Also in front of our house were two very large Queen Ann cherry trees, which were a beautiful sight in May when in full bloom. About 200 yds. east of the house there was a ravine which ran through our place from Seventh Avenue to False Creek and the bottom of which ran under 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue bridge, and 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. bridge, and in which my brothers, and the Mt. Pleasant boys of 1890 and on, used to spear many a salmon and salmon trout.

### **H.H. STEVENS.**

The Hon. H.H. Stevens' home was on the east bank of the stream, and it is still there, 1939, but not occupied by Mr. Stevens. Also about 2 blocks south of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, this same stream ran through a block my father owned at that time, bounded by 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue on South, Knight Rd. West, 14<sup>th</sup> Ave., North, and Woodland Drive, East.

### **BRICKS. SALMON. EELS. LAMPREY. STICKLEBACK.**

There was a brickyard on this block at that time owned by a Mr. Wymkin, a German, and we have often seen the bricks drying in the racks they used. Our family used to picnic there as it was a pretty spot, and my father was having the block cleared. Also under the stones in the stream here we used to catch small eels, lamprey, and stickleback fish, which were treacherous to handle,

because of the spines all over them. My two brothers live on this property at present, that is Charles on 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue East and George on 3029 Woodland Drive.

A memo, written in January 1939 by Mrs. E.E. Trites, a widow, daughter of C.C. Maddams of "Maddams" Ranch, China Creek, False Creek, 1888. Mr. Maddams built the first house in that district, 7<sup>th</sup> and St. Catherines.

J.S. Matthews, January 1939

## **MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH MRS. E.E. TRITES, NÉE MADDAMS, 10 JANUARY 1939.**

### **MADDAMS RANCH. FALSE CREEK.**

Mrs. Trites said: "The fertiliser for our garden on Seventh Avenue at China Creek was received in a unique manner. Father was a very versatile and practical man, and invented a labour saving device; it was a double truck flat car which ran on a track of wooden rails running up and around the garden; pulled up hill by a horse, which dumped the fertiliser equally around the ranch garden. The stable manure was brought to our place on a small flat scow, and the scow was tied to a small wharf which we built at the foot of our garden; right on the False Creek shore; today it would be 200 yards east of the foot of St. Catherines Street, although of course, there was no sign of a street there then. We used to get the manure from Hayes and McIntosh, and the B.C. slaughter houses—there were two of them—half a mile below us on False Creek, and quite close to Westminster Avenue.

"My father often had to go out at two or three in the morning to catch the tide, and he used to pole the loaded scow along, and the tides helped him. You see, False Creek east of Westminster Avenue was very shallow, and used to run dry at low tide, and no tug could get in there, so it was necessary to pole the manure scow from the slaughter house to our ranch, and then pole the empty scow back again."

### **WILD DUCKS.**

"My brother Charlie used to shoot wild ducks on False Creek; there were an awful lot of wild ducks on the creek in those days; all kinds, mallard, pintail, teal, butter balls, hell divers, (but we never killed hell divers), cranes, but they never used to shoot the cranes, but the Chinamen used to eat the cranes; the Chinese would ask us to shoot a crane for them to eat. You see there were no restrictions in those days, you could shoot all you liked; the ducks were not 'fishy' eating; not fishy tasting at all; we used to give them away.

"We had a canvas canoe for shooting in; it was cigar shaped with oak ribs; in fact, while we lived there, there were three canoes made; they rotted in time, and had to be renewed. The canvas was oiled and painted, and was decked at both ends, just like a kayak, with an open space in the centre for two persons to row or paddle. I have gone on a moonlight night out to the marsh grass in front of our place—there was a lot of sea grass out in front of us which the tide used to cover at high tide—to paddle the canoe while my brother was shooting. We went out one night and got stuck in the mud, which shows how shallow the head of False Creek was. He is still a good shot, as is my younger brother, who was the captain and crack shot in the school team, and won a couple of medals, at the Alexander School on Broadway."

### **CHINESE GARDENS. CHINA CREEK.**

"The Chinese used to bring garbage over for their pigs, in boats, and land right in front of our place."

### **COAL.**

"There were seams of coal on our beach, black lignite coal."

### **INDIAN IMPLEMENTS.**

"We found a couple of stone tools in the earth of our garden. There are some like them in the museum; one was a round flattish stone with a small hole in the centre" (for making fire or perhaps sinking fish nets) "and the other" (a small size carpenter's hammer) "was a small oblong stone, about five inches long, and round, more than an inch in diameter; like this."