

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

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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Footnote or Endnote Reference:

Major James Skitt Matthews, *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 5 (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011), 33.

Bibliographic Entry:

Matthews, Major James Skitt. *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 5. 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



MEMO OF CONVERSATION, 12 SEPTEMBER 1935.

(Whilst taking eight or nine photographs of her as she sat in her sitting room. W.J. Moore Photo Co.)

Mrs. Morton: "We went to England in 1888 the first time. Joseph was one day old when his mother died; Lizzie was born in Blackpool. Joseph had been living with the Greys" (or Grays) "in New Westminster, and when we went to live at Mission, he was astonished at the calves, pigs, and the farm generally.

"Once Mr. Morton and I went down to Westminster; a circus came in. Joseph would be about five years old then. We were going to take Lizzie, but I wanted to take Joseph. Joseph cried to go to the Greys; he called them Grandma and Grandpa; Joseph did not know me very well."

(Note: this indicates that after the first Mrs. Morton died, he had to place his little baby son Joseph in the care of his friends, the Greys.)

"At Westminster we saw the circus, the camels and the elephants, and when he got back, Joseph told Lizzie all about the big animals, with much gusto, and about one of them having a tail at both ends."

MEMO OF FURTHER CONVERSATION, 18 NOVEMBER 1935.

MORTON FAMILY.

Mrs. Morton: "I think my husband, John Morton, was the eldest of the family; there were ten of them I think, John was first, I think, then there was Jonathan, Alfred and Joseph, the youngest, and Mrs. Clegg, and Maria, Eliza, and some that had died; there were ten in all, I think; all gone now."

BAPTIST COLLEGE.

"I will give you this letter of September 5, 1890, from Mr. Morton to me. From it you can see his great interest in Baptist churches. He wanted to establish a Baptist College in the West End for the higher training of Baptists, and gave them ten lots" (66 feet each) "but they did not pay the taxes and gave him a lot of trouble to get them back. We came back from England and found the taxes had not been paid. He was very anxious about the location, and got Mr. Hamilton, the engineer, to select the best place."

RECIPROCITY OF TRADE WITH UNITED STATES.

"Mr. Morton was a Liberal in politics, and in 1911" (Laurier defeated in election fought over reciprocity) "was a great reciprocity man. He used to say then, 'If it does not come now, it will come eventually,' and it has come tonight." (Newspapers of 18 November announce signing of King-Roosevelt Reciprocity agreement.) "I am glad I have lived until tonight to see it. I am very pleased it has come at last, as he said it would."

THE FIRST MRS. MORTON.

"Mr. Morton's first wife died in New Westminster when Joe was born; she had a presentiment that she would never see the white sands of English Bay; she never saw them."

As narrated to me. J.S. Matthews.

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH MRS. RUTH MORTON, 15 MARCH 1937.

Widow of John Morton, first settler on Burrard Inlet, 1862 (and who died in 1912 in Vancouver) who kindly invited me to visit her this evening at her apartments, the "Montrose," 1190 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, where she resides with her companion, Mrs. Buxton. Mrs. Morton will be eighty-nine in two days, that is, 17 March 1937, and for her great age looks a picture of health, says she feels very well, and she talks with those measured words which are becoming her years. She is tolerably active of movement.

Mrs. Morton is a very tiny lady, certainly not as much as five feet. Her hair is not white, but iron grey; her complexion clear; she has few wrinkles; her figure erect; her hand warm. She rose, not without some slight effort, when I entered, received me most graciously and the conversation, which lasted for an hour continuously, began, until I retired, fearing to fatigue her; but as I left, and she accompanied me a few steps to the door, she showed no appearance of fatigue.