

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

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**MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH MRS. HILTON PHILPOT, NÉE “GRETA” (MARGARET) MILLER, 12 JUNE 1946.**

Daughter of the late Jonathan Miller, Esq., Returning Officer of the first civic election in Vancouver, and a very early pioneer of Granville, Burrard Inlet; afterwards Postmaster of Vancouver for about thirty-five years. Mrs. Philpot called at the City Archives at our request, and graciously consented to check for correction the index cards listing the names and addresses of all persons now living in or about Vancouver, who were residents on the shore of Burrard Inlet in or before 1886. It is in connection with the issue to them of small medallions commemorating the Diamond Jubilee of incorporation as a city of Vancouver. The checking having been completed, we asked Mrs. Philpot a few questions.

“Gastown prisoners tied to stumps.” By B.A. McKelvie, *Province*, 8 June 1946.

**GRANVILLE. GRANVILLE GAOL. CONSTABLE JONATHAN MILLER. W. WYMOND WALKEM.**

Major Matthews: Mrs. Philpot, when did you arrive in Granville?

Mrs. Philpot: “Seventeenth of September, one eight seven nine” (1879.)

Major Matthews: Did you happen to see an article in last Saturday’s *Province*, magazine section, by Mr. McKelvie about prisoners being tied to stumps?

Mrs. Philpot: (smiling) “I did.”

Major Matthews: What did you think of it?

Mrs. Philpot: “Rubbish and rot.”

Major Matthews: Did they tie prisoners to stumps?

Mrs. Philpot: (aroused, and in a voice raised above the quite customary tone of this demure and gracious lady; her indignation was discernible, and her attitude one of anger) “Nooooooooooooo.”

Mrs. Philpot: (continuing in her mild manner) “Father used to read Mr. Walkem’s letters and laugh. Mr. Walkem used to write a lot of things which Father said never happened; one was about a corpse which was supposed to have fallen through the bottom of the coffin; Father said it never happened. And then, when Mr. Walkem wrote his book, Father used to sit and read it and laugh and laugh; Father said there were lots of things which never happened, and it used to make Father laugh. Mr. Walkem didn’t know much about Granville; he lived in Victoria and New Westminster.”

J.S. Matthews  
City Archivist.

City Archives,  
City Hall,  
Vancouver, Canada  
12 June 1946.

Note: in a recent conversation with John Warren Bell, associated with the DeBeck firm, logging on Burrard Inlet, who came to Moodyville on the S.S. *Beaver* in 1871, Mr. Bell was severe in his denial that any prisoner was ever tied to a tree or stumps in Granville, or elsewhere on Burrard Inlet.

J.S. Matthews.