

## **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.

### **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. 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



### **HIS WORSHIP GERALD GRATTON MCGEER, MAYOR OF VANCOUVER, 1935 (AND 1936).**

Mr. McGeer is the son of James (Jim) McGeer, a pioneer farmer of a preempted farm at the corner of Kingsway and Fraser Avenue, known as the "Tea Swamp"—an old elk pasture. He conducted a milk business. (See *Early Vancouver*, vols. 1, 2 and 3, Matthews.)

Reeve W.B. Russell, Reeve of South Vancouver Municipality in 1916-1917, says in part (see his genealogy sheet), 2 May 1935:

"As a boy, I peddled milk same as 'Gerry' did when he was a boy with holes in his pants and no boots on his feet. Gerry and I were apprenticed to our trade at the same time, and worked together in the old B.C. Iron Works at the foot of Dunlevy and Heatley Avenue."

### **CHIEF JUSTICE AULAY MORRISON.**

In a speech at the annual banquet of the officers of The British Columbia Regiment (D.C.O.R.):

"I love even the name" (with emphasis on *British*) "*British* Columbia."

### **CHARLES E. TISDALL, FORMER MAYOR OF VANCOUVER. JOHN INNES, SCENIC PAINTER.**

John Innes loved to joke, even when he was ill in bed, as he was from September 1934 to March 1935. Mr. Tisdall was a pioneer gunsmith, afterwards had the first and the finest sporting goods store in Vancouver, but was always noted for his economy.

"Bill Barnes," said Mr. Innes, "was City Hall reporter on the *Province*, and in that capacity was able to do Mr. Tisdall, while he was a mayor some years ago, several favours. Bill decided to go on a fishing and hunting trip, and somehow Mr. Tisdall got to know about it. Anyway, Bill got a letter from Mayor Tisdall saying he wanted to see him before he started on the fishing trip. Bill conjured up visions of something good; thought he was going to get a cheque 'for past services' to help with the expenses, and provide a bottle or two to keep the cold out. So Bill goes down to the Mayor's office in high glee and expectancy.

"What do you suppose His Worship handed him?" chuckled Mr. Innes.

J.S.M.: Cannot imagine.

"A sporting goods catalogue," laughed Mr. Innes.

### **PIONEER ICE, AND "WHISTLING TEXAS."**

By the City Archivist.

"Texas," warmhearted, smiling, queer identity, got his sobriquet from cold ice; Texas Lake natural ice; and before they made it artificially; before frigid air.

Pioneer Granville, now Vancouver, lived well, and liked it; nature provided ice for summer cooling. When the first Vancouver was melted, June 1886, by an angry blast of flame, a mysterious black mound remained on Water Street beside what had been the celebrated Sunnyside Hotel. A man scaled that low mound to scan the distance for a missing brother; then slipped and fell, his hands pawed the charcoal; and, astonished, he got a bucket and drank. Those pioneers who first ventured back into the still burning embers, quenched the fierce thirst of their parched throats from that same mound; the second Vancouver's first water supply was melted ice in buckets.

As the hotel icehouse was consumed by fire, its sawdust lining had fallen in flame upon a deep shield of damp sawdust beneath which the icy blocks were stored, and thus protected from a heat so intense that iron office safes turned into molten amalgam, and silver coins into lumps of metal.

In the years before the first artificial ice plant was established, ice came in carloads by the new railway from Texas Lake near Yale. The TEXAS LAKE ICE AND COLD STORAGE CO. LTD., the first in our city, had its icehouse on Pender Street beside the first C.P.R. roundhouse of wood, with its long row of water barrels on the roof—just behind the present B.C. Electric interurban depot; access from the narrow road

of dust or mud, now paved and polished Pender Street, was by a bridge of planks across the ditch. All Vancouver lived within a mile of Pioneer Place, and received their ice from three horse drawn "rigs"; Texas is said to have been "on the staff." And now he has gone; with his old boats of a quarter of a century ago, the Bowen Island ferries, *Defiance*, *Britannia*, *Bowena*, *Baramba*, and *Ballena*.

Of the one hundred and seventy four customers served with Texas ice during the summer of 1892 very few survive, but among them are the Vancouver Club, Sir George McLaren Brown, J.W. McFarland; the others are with "Texas." Here are some names which will awaken fond memories.

15 March 1936. J.S. Matthews.

### **ICE CUSTOMERS, SUMMER OF 1892.**

From delivery book, Route No. 1.

#### TEXAS LAKE ICE AND COLD STORAGE CO. LTD.

J.J. Mulhall, president, D.W. Sheehan, superintendent.

D.M. Cashin, secretary and manager.

Office, 403 Cordova street, Telephone 424, P.O. Box 136.

Ice House, Pender street, near C.P.R. tracks.

HOTELS: Regina, Oriental, City, Waverley, Leland, White, Swan, Ottawa, Colonial, Union, Manor (Badminton) House, Sherman House, Ellesmere House.

CLUBS: Vancouver Club, St. George's Society Club, St. Laurence Hall.

SALOONS: Opera, Boulder, Crown, Alhambra, Fountain, Pullman, Cosmopolitan, Bayview, Stag and Pheasant, Pig and Whistle, Richmond, Union, Office, Edinburgh, New Fountain, Gambrinus, Merchant's Exchange.

RESTAURANTS: Jubilee, Cosmopolitan, Scott's, Tapley's, Alcoma, Tremont, Nickle Plate, Oyster Bay, Spa. Smith.

FIRMS: Hastings Mill Store, Hudson's Bay Co., B.C. Fishing Co., Thorpe & Co., Brown & Sons.

MARKETS: City Market.

HOSPITALS: City Hospital.

STORES: Ross & Co., Major and Eldridge, R.V. Winch, G.W. Weeks, McMillan and Hamilton, Alderson, Dominion, Homestead and Arcade Groceries, A. Muir, E. Fader, Harcus, W. Templeton, A.W. McIntosh, Scuitto.

PRIVATE RESIDENTS: [*a few*] Campbell Sweeny, Dr. Kendall, Wm. Murphy, Mrs. Thain, A.G. Ferguson, H.H. Abbott, J.M. Browning, Hugh Keefer, Evan Thomas, Innes and Richards, Mr. Berteaux, R.D. Kinmond, W. Green, A.J. Dana, Mrs. Leonard, Mrs. C.D. Rand, Mr. McGilvray, Wm. Sulley, H. Bell-Irving, Mr. Grant, Jonathan Miller, H. McDowell, Mr. Tolmie, T.O. Townley, R.H. Alexander, R.B. Oxley, E.V. Bodwell, The Wigwam, George McLaren Brown, S.J. Emanuels, Rev. Mr. Hobson, Peter McNaughton, Capt. Webster (Union S.S. Co.), S.T. Tilley, Mr. Ceperley, Gen. Twigg, Mr. Searles, Mrs. Coleman, Mrs. H.J. Cambie, E. McGarrigal, Mrs. Rhodes, Mrs. Rogers, Mr. Pringle, Mrs. P. Cook, J.S. Anderson, Mrs. Keene, Mrs. Draper, Mrs. F.W. Hart, Mrs. O'Dwyer, J.M. Howell, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Coburn, J. Byrne, A.W. Black, Capt. Soule, Mrs. Hammersley, Dr. Lefevre, J.W. McFarland, Mrs. J.C. McLagan, Mrs. Cooper, J. Bailey, Mr. Weeks.

In all 174 customers.