

## **Early Vancouver**

### **Volume Six**

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

**2011 Edition (Originally Published 1945)**

*Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1940-1945.*

*Supplemental to volumes one, two, three, four and five collected in 1931, 1932, 1934, 1939 and 1944.*

### **About the 2011 Edition**

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“My brothers died when they were babies, and I have four sisters; I am the eldest. This is the order.

1. Eldest, Jane, myself, born River Road, 12<sup>th</sup> June 1877, married David Beach, at New Westminster, 12<sup>th</sup> September 1892, and I have four daughters.
2. Frena Blanche, now Mrs. H.R. May, Lulu Island, and she has eight living children.
3. Sarah Ann, now Mrs. Ben Thomas, and she has one daughter.
4. Violet Blanche, she is Mrs. Fred Soames, and she has two children; they live at Grantham's Landing.
5. Youngest, Laura, now Mrs. Archibald Emery; no children; they live in Vancouver.

### **MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. QUINTIN JAMES TROTTER, 26 MARCH 1941.**

Now of 1071 Comox Street, formerly of Kew Beach, West Vancouver, who kindly called at the City Archives, with his famous dog “Rex,” and as the City Hall regulations would not permit a dog to be taken to the ninth floor in the elevator, accompanied by Major Matthews, they all three climbed nine floors. Mr. Trotter is seventy-one.

#### **GENEALOGY.**

Mr. Trotter said: “I was born in Bobcaygeon, Ontario—that is the Indian name for ‘flat rock’—on the 30<sup>th</sup> May 1870; my father was Alexander Trotter, furniture manufacturer, born in 1834 in Antrim Co., Ireland, and came to Canada in 1852, and settled at Bobcaygeon, Ontario, where he worked in Moss and Boyd's sawmill, and then started in the cabinet work, and it developed into a furniture factory making anything in the cabinet line. He died there in 1921, after having filled public office as Councillor for a number of years; he belonged to the Presbyterian Church; aged 87 when he died.

“Mother was a Miss Margaret Moore before she married Father at Bobcaygeon, about 1862, and there were eleven children, six boys and five girls. Four of my sisters are living in Toronto, and one sister has died. Of the six sons, three are living, one in Toronto, one in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and one, that's myself, in Vancouver, since March 17<sup>th</sup> 1898. Mother died at Bobcaygeon about 1919, aged 77.

“In 8<sup>th</sup> August 1902, at my stepdaughter's, Mrs. W.M. Gow, house, on Harwood Street, and by the Rev. Mr. Wilson of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, I married Miss Leila Marie Cougherty, widow of the late A.B. Cougherty, Vancouver pioneer butcher. There was no children, but Mrs. W.M. Gow is my stepdaughter, the only stepchild. Mrs. Trotter died in 1936. I am the only one among the Trotter brothers and sisters without children.”

#### **McKINNON BLOCK.**

“When I came to Vancouver, C.P.R., in March 1898, the Klondike rush was on, and I worked for Robertson and Hackett, sawmill, cabinet making, on Seymour Street, between Pender and Dunsuir, and the first work I did was making fixtures for the McKinnon Block, now Williams Block, southwest corner of Hastings and Granville, and then I got a chance to go as steward on the *Stikine Chief*, a stern wheeler, on the Stikine River, from Wrangel to Telegraph Creek. I worked on her until she went up to St. Michael's to run on the Yukon River, but got wrecked on the way. She was owned by J.A. Mara, M.P.P., of Mara, B.C.”

#### **S.S. PRINCESS VICTORIA. WAVERLEY HOTEL. GOLDEN GATE HOTEL.**

“Well, then I came back to Vancouver again, and started to work for the old Royal City Planing Mills, Carrall Street, and stayed there a year; then went to E.H. Heaps and Co., at Cedar Cove” (Powell Street), “sash and door factory, and then I had a cigar store on Carrall Street, and then I worked on building the upper works of the *Princess Victoria*, the first ‘honeymoon ship’ on account of the staterooms—she came into the harbour looking very gaunt; just her iron showing, no upper works at all—and while I was working there I bought out the Waverley Hotel, on the southwest corner of Seymour and Georgia streets, where the Strand Theatre is now. I sold out there in March 1906 and cleared up a little profit, and then, on June 27<sup>th</sup>, bought the old Golden Gate Hotel, southeast corner of Davie and Granville streets, and closed it

down for three months for remodeling. Opened up again in September 1906, and I called it the 'Tourist Hotel,' and sold out again in 1908, to Geo. E. Trorey, who still owns it." (For \$65,000.)

#### **ALDERMAN FRED CRONE.**

"When I had the Waverley Hotel, a young fellow named Fred Crone came and stopped with me; he told me afterwards he only had a dollar and eighty cents when he came to my hotel, when he first arrived in Vancouver. He was just a young fellow, big, good natured, strong, but not married."

#### **VANCOUVER EXHIBITION.**

"About 1909 or 1910, they started the Vancouver Exhibition. They were offering one hundred life memberships to men about town in Vancouver, so I gave them the hundred dollars life membership fee, and this button which I am wearing is the life member's button."

#### **"HOLY JOE'S COVE."**

"Then I dabbled in real estate until after the Great War, say about 1919, when I opened up a summer resort at a place once called 'Holy Joe's Cove,' now Kew Beach.

"Calvert Simon, who used to be Simson, Balkwill and Co., ship chandlers, told me that the first name of my place was 'Holy Joe's Cove,' and that Joe was a very contrite fellow after a drunk, and he would go to the Salvation Army, and they would sober him up, and then he would promise to go straight again, and then go home to his cove. Joe was a fisherman, and after he had saved up a little money, he would go to town and have another 'drunk,' and then get 'saved again.'

#### **NAMING OF KEW BEACH.**

Major Matthews: Who named Kew Beach, Mr. Trotter?

Mr. Trotter: "I did. The reason was that the point is in the shape of the alphabetical letter 'Q,' and the first letter of my Christian name was 'Q,' and 'Kew' Gardens in London, England, is a well and favourable known name for a beautiful spot. Mrs. Trotter and I argued the point, and we decided upon 'Kew.' Mrs. Trotter was chatelaine at Kew Beach, and it was her pleasure to make every visitor comfortable and happy."

#### **KEW BEACH, 1919.**

"It's a long story as to how I acquired Kew Beach, but to cut it short, in 1913 it fell into my hands as debt; I loaned \$12,600 on it as a mortgage to A. Oswald Barrett, and there was a second mortgage against it in favour of a Colonel Mainguy. The property comprised fifty acres, taking in the point. There was no legal difficulty; everything was very agreeable, and it was arranged that I should take over the property. Mr. Barrett is still in Vancouver, and we are good friends. And I paid \$1,800 in back taxes on it."

#### **EAGLE HARBOUR CANNERY.**

"So, in the spring of 1920, I built ten little cottages for summer campers on the beach looking towards Eagle Harbour cannery. I built a float, cleared the beach, which was covered with rocks and boulders, and made a fine beach of it, and the cottages soon filled up, and have been full ever since, up to 1936, when I sold out. Here is a photo of it you can have; the building to the left is the store; next to it is our cottage, 1922."

#### **KEW BEACH STATION. MARINE DRIVE.**

"For water there was a natural spring. I did not pipe it, but got a pump; ice-cold clear beautiful water, and lots of it. Then I put a store in in 1922; there never was a post office, and is not yet; we had to go to Caulfeilds for our mail, but the newspapers were thrown off by the conductor of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway, at Kew Beach Station. Eagle Harbour Station was moved to Kew Beach Station; we had quite a time getting it changed. At that time I had a small gasoline launch, and went to Vancouver for supplies.

"Sometimes in the summer we would have sixty or seventy adults and children camping in the cottages, and on holidays there would be hundreds of them come. They became so numerous that I had to cut a trail up the cliff to the Kew Beach railway station.

"We were there for seventeen years and one month, and never had an accident or disaster. Bit by bit, the taxes, which had started at \$230 on the 50 acres grew to \$779.58 for 1936. I held the fifty acres to the last, less the Pacific Great Eastern right of way, and the Marine Drive right of way; Marine Drive reach us in 1926, and after that we could drive to town.

"I had a boat building shed, or shop, where I built boats—don't forget, I am still able to do cabinet work—I built nine row boats during the seventeen years we were there; I used them for hire."

#### **KEW BEACH. "CHULKS."**

"I'll tell you something about Kew Beach. On the southwest, or south side, there is a boulder about fifteen feet in diameter, and it is sitting in a niche about twelve feet wide, wider at the top than at the bottom; it is about thirty-five feet deep from the top to the bottom, and this boulder sits in the top of the great crevice.

"Well, on the east side of Vancouver Island—this is an Indian legend in connection with this rock or boulder—there was once a great Indian tyee, and to show his power, he took this boulder in his sling, and was going to throw it at Mount Garibaldi, but he hit the wing of a raven, and the boulder dropped short, and landed in this niche of rock. That story was given to me by Andy Paull, secretary, Progressive Native Tribes of B.C., one day when he was up at Kew Beach."

#### **A.J.T. TAYLOR.**

"Finally, in September 1936, A.J.T. Taylor, who as you know was one of the principals in the building of the First Narrows bridge, took such a fancy to the location that he offered me a good price for about twenty-four acres west of the P.G.E., and the remainder I still own."

Major Matthews: What became of the beaches and cottages?

Mr. Trotter: "Mr. Taylor bought all of the waterfront, including the beach; he tore down all the cottages, excepting three, and the remaining three he lined with lumber, and used them for some private purpose. The beach is now private property, and is not used by other than members of the Taylor family and their friends."

#### **MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH MISS MARGARET ELIZABETH MCCLEERY IN THE CITY ARCHIVES, 18 APRIL 1941.**

She was resting, very tired, after a trip to New Westminster in connection with the plans for a proposed subdivision on both sides of South West Marine Drive at Macdonald Street, very close to the two old McCleery houses and the barn (6750 Macdonald Street and 2650 S.W. Marine Drive.)

#### **FITZGERALD MCCLEERY.**

Miss McCleery said: "Father did not come to British Columbia for gold; he came to get freedom. You see, in those days in Ireland they had to ask permission to cut down a tree; Father had heard of a place called the Peace River; that's where I'm going as soon as I can get this subdivision matter fixed, and almost 80 years after my father started on it but never got there. He said he was going some place where he could down a tree, or plant one if he wished to, without asking permission.

"You see, it was this way. My father showed me when we were in Ireland in 1910, and we went and visited his old home. As a boy he got a job, and when he came home that night his mother asked him what he had been doing. He said, 'Carrying liquor upstairs on a tray.' He had been carrying drinks to a man's wife; she was addicted to liquor, and her husband had sent her up liquor on the tray, and Fitzgerald did the carrying upstairs. Father told me his mother said him, 'Fitzgerald, you are not going to work there again,' and Fitzgerald said, 'That's settles it; I've heard about a place called Peace River, and I want to go there.'

"Samuel said he wanted to go too, but Samuel was younger than Fitzgerald and he was frail; he always, all through his life, suffered from bronchial trouble. So it was decided that Samuel could go too, and Fitzgerald was to look after him. So his father, my grandfather, borrowed one hundred pounds on a field of flax, \$250 each, and when Father and I were in Ireland, Father took me to see that field of flax—sixty