

## **KYDD HOUSE – by Donald Kydd**

### **Harry Fairweather Kydd**

I am the grandson of Harry Fairweather Kydd and the son of Charles Fairweather Kydd.

Harry Fairweather Kydd was born in Ozark, Kansas on 18 July 1880 of Scottish immigrants from the Angus region of Scotland.

The following is excerpts from an article in the Friday, April 18, 1941 edition of the Vancouver Daily Province (page 12) headed Pioneer City Retailer Dies.

“Harry F. Kydd, President of Kydd Bros. Ltd. pioneer Vancouver hardware merchants, died Thursday evening in Vancouver General Hospital after an illness of several months. He was 60.

Born in Ozark, Kansas, of Scottish parents, Mr. Kydd moved to Ontario as a child. His business career began as auditor for the Armor Packing Co. in Richmond, Va. Later he was moved to other company branches, including Philadelphia.

He entered the hardware business in Vancouver in 1907, locating at the present address, 120 West Hastings, 22 years ago.

A former member of the Vancouver Board of Trade and the Kiwanis Club he was one time President of the Kitsilano Ratepayers Association.

Mr. Kydd is survived by his wife and one son, Charles and three brothers, Malcolm, Vancouver, Norman, Seattle and Donald, Fredericton, NB.”

To this it might be added that Harry ran for Alderman in the city at least twice in the late 1920s and early 1930s. I have posters for his candidacy in Ward 10 and Ward 2. He ran on a platform of honest administration and fiscal conservatism. I have a copy of letter he wrote to the Vancouver Province cautioning that a comprehensive health insurance plan would be like signing a blank cheque. How true that has proved to be!

I have a few pictures of my father in the front yard or the front steps of the house at 2496 West 8th Avenue. We could look through them together, perhaps you would recognize things that I wouldn't. There are pictures in the Vancouver Archives and the Vancouver Public Library relating to the various Kydd Bros. enterprises.

Hope this helps.

Donald Kydd

## **The Kydd Family in Kitsilano**

I drove by the house this afternoon so that I might recognize its bones in any picture I have. I forgot that it is oriented towards the corner rather than square to Eighth Avenue. The Kydd family in Scotland were farmers and my great-grandfather was an expert in fruit farming. So, gardening was a big part of Harry Kydd's recreational activity. Also he liked to travel around the area, fishing with friends etc. I have pictures of him on Nelson Island, Alta Lake and in the Qualicum area. Also at the Lodge on Hollyburn.

My father, Charles Fairweather Kydd was about ten when the family moved from the West End to Kitsilano. He graduated from Kitsilano High School. I'm not sure if he graduated early but if not it would have been about 1927. He was a wiz at math and enrolled at UBC hoping to get into Faculty of Engineering. Due to illness, he left during his first year. So, by 1929 he was working with his father in the "business." He married my mother on August 31, 1937. I have no knowledge whether he lived elsewhere between 1927 and 1937.

My father was a member of St. Marks Anglican Church nearby in Kitsilano in his younger days and that was where he married my mother. It's possible that Harry was a member there. Harry married Edith Wilson Butler who was born in Roanoke, Virginia on October 12, 1888. They married on October 12, 1908 in Wilmington, North Carolina. Edith was very active with the American Women's Club during her years in Vancouver. She never became a Canadian citizen. I don't know much more about her activities during the years in Kitsilano, except that judging from crochet work, pettipoint chairs and other fine crafts left in the estate, she must have liked to work with her hands. Either that, or anyone with money during the Depression could buy anything cheap. The houses where I visited her were also filled with antiques.

That's about if for now.

Donald Kydd

## **The Kydd Family In Vancouver**

Norman came out to Vancouver and as the town was booming he contacted his brother Harry in Virginia to come on out too. When Harry arrived they set up a hardware store just across the street from Woodward's.. Harry was the consummate entrepreneur salesman and they even took on the sale of stoves which were installed upon purchase.

Harry and his wife moved into the Manhattan Apartments on the NE corner of Robson and Thurlow in the west end and in 1909 a son Charles was born.

Harry became friends with C.N. Charley Woodward and they would often walk over to Main Street and catch the vaudeville shows at the Pantages Theatre. They were referred to as the two baldest men in Vancouver as neither had much hair.

The family moved to Kitsilano in 1919 and Charles attended the new Kitsilano High School.. The family lived in the house at the SE corner of 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Larch Street (2496 Eighth Avenue West) for twenty years before moving to 1599 King Edward Avenue West at Alexandra.

In the 1920's the Kydd Brothers opened a sheet metal shop on Cordova Street. They also did plumbing installation with about 20 plumbing employees but following a strike in the late 1920's (where the new wage became \$1 /hour), the Kydd Family left the installation market and stuck largely to plumbing sales to both retail and wholesale trade. After the Second World War, under the leadership of son Charles, and the growing influence of the automobile, the company relocated the commercial division to the south side of False Creek where they became BC Plumbing Supplies. The retail store on Hastings was sold to Alex Chrystal.

Charles had married in the late 1930's and moved with his new bride up the street to 3850 8<sup>th</sup> Ave West, just beyond Alma Road. He had worked in the family business from the late 1920's and when Harry died at the age of 60 in 1941, he took over the management of the company. Charles had a couple of sons who also worked in the business and continued on with the business after Charles' death in 1971. The company was eventually sold in 1988 after 80 years and three generations of the Kydd's.

Robert Haines as per telecon with Donald Kydd