

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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MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. GEORGE WILLIAMS EDWARDS, 2596 WEST 8TH, WHO VERY KINDLY CALLED AT THE CITY ARCHIVES THIS MORNING, 14 JULY 1941, TO EXAMINE THE INSCRIPTIONS TO BE PLACED IN SEALED GLASS TUBES, AND WHICH IS PROPOSED SHALL BE PLACED ON THE TOP OF MOUNT GEORGE EDWARDS, AND MOUNT TINNISWOOD, JERVIS INLET, BY MR. A.T. DALTON, F.R.G.S., CITY HALL, WHEN HE ATTEMPTS WHAT IS THOUGHT TO BE THE FIRST ASCENT OF THESE TWO PEAKS.

Mr. Edwards is president, Vancouver Pioneers Association, 1941.

GEORGE W. EDWARDS.

Mr. Edwards: "You had better add to the inscriptions, 'Born Brighton, Ontario, in 1867, March 16th.'"

Major Matthews: Mr. Edwards, when, why, how, and for what did you come to Vancouver?

Mr. Edwards: "Well, I had been in the photographic business in Waterloo, Ontario, and hearing from old friends that Vancouver was growing, I decided to quit Waterloo and come to Vancouver. My family, father and mother, came out a few months ahead of me. I was single at the time. Six of us came out. Father, Mother, two brothers and one sister, and myself; I was the eldest. We came C.P.R. Father and Mother came out in January 1891; so did the others; I came last, in August 1891. Father started a spring mattress factory in Vancouver, which he afterwards sold to James and David A. Smith. Father died in 1930; Mother died in 1920; both are buried in Mountain View; the others are living.

"One of my brothers is Capt. A.N. Edwards; he is with the Harbour Navigation Co., running to Indian River; he was, at one time, the manager of the West Vancouver Ferries; he does not work all the time, only when he feels like it and there is something special which interests him. My other brother, E. Herbert Edwards, partner with me in the photographer business, is taking life easy; he is retired, and spends his time amusing himself.

"My sister Louisa, still Miss Louisa, she never married, has her own home on Haro Street."

EDWARD BROS., 1891. PIONEER PHOTOGRAPHERS.

"When we got off the train, the first thing to do was to find a location for a studio, and finally we located in part of a shop run by a man named Hardiman; this building had been built by Spinks and Tatlow; part of the Spencer store site now. It was about fifty feet from Seymour Street, south side Cordova Street; the old C.P.R. office was directly across the street.

"Dick Hall, afterwards Sheriff Hall, had a photographic studio in the same block, just a few doors east. Dick Hall sold out to Wadds Bros. We kept on until 1921, when we retired, and rented our property at 623 Granville Street.

"When we moved to Granville Street in 1902, we quit the portrait business, and went into photographic supplies.

"In 1898, at Christ Church, I married Miss Rosalind Webling, daughter of R.J. Webling of London, England, and we have two children. The eldest, Lucy, now Mrs. C.B. Crittenden of Louisville, Kentucky, has one little daughter about nine; the youngest, Florence, is living with us at home, single. Mrs. Edwards is not very well just now. Mrs. Crittenden is a graduate of the University of B.C. She was born in Vancouver in 1900, and Florence in 1908, or about. Mrs. Crittenden was for some time head of the Health Department at Chattenough" (sic.)

MOUNT GEORGE EDWARDS.

Major Matthews: When did you start climbing mountains; I see on the Forest Map of Sechelt Peninsula for 1933 that there is a mountain named "Mount George Edwards"?

GROUSE MOUNTAIN. DAM MOUNTAIN. GOAT MOUNTAIN.

Mr. Edwards: "My first mountain climbing was in the Similkameen Valley. I went down there for the mining company—it never came to anything—where the town of Princeton is now. The company was prospecting all that ground where the townsite is now. Afterwards I came back from there, I was photographing all along the C.P.R. line, and climbing up mountains to get views, and that gave me a start.

The first party to climb Grouse Mountain was Sidney Williams, and Phil Thomson” (Vancouver Yacht Club); “just those two. There had been a Major Burnett here who had tried, together with the Rev. Norman Tucker of Christ Church, to climb Mount Crown and they failed to break through the underbrush, so Sidney Williams and Phil Thomson made it by following up Mosquito Creek, up on to Grouse Mountain, and over the ridge as far as Goat Mountain. They gave the names to these peaks, Grouse, Dam and Goat.”

Major Matthews: Why?

Mr. Edwards: “On Grouse, they shot quite a number of blue grouse; from the top of the next peak, which they called Dam, they could see the old intake dam on the Capilano River; and on the next, which they called Goat, they shot two goats; that was the way it was, how Goat, Dam and Grouse got their names.

“Sidney Williams asked me if I thought the names appropriate, and I thought they were very good. We organised a party about ten days later—that was in October 1894—this party consisted of Sid. Williams, who was a surveyor in partnership with Dawson, of Williams Bros. and Dawson, surveyors” (Dawson was afterwards Surveyor-General), “Ernest Cleveland, the present chairman of the Vancouver Water Board; Knox—I forget his Christian name, but I think he lived at Duncan and was quite an experienced climber; Parkinson, who was a surveyor; and myself; this is five in all. I took up a camera.

“I took a photo of the four others, and I do not know what became of the negative, but I know that Dr. Cleveland has a photo of the party. We made the trip, and blazed the trail from the waterfront to the top of Grouse in four hours; we blazed the trail from Mosquito Creek, below the falls on Mosquito, to the top of Grouse.”

MOUNT CROWN, NAMED IN 1859. “SLEEPING BEAUTY.”

“The following year, 1895, Knox, Parkinson and I think Cleveland—there were four, including myself—climbed Mount Crown. We followed the same route, climbing Grouse and over the ridge to Goat, then down Goat and up Crown. This was the latter part of June 1895. Sam Robb of the *World* wrote a most fantastic account of our trip. Sam said we had seen an avalanche, and one of the ‘Lions’ had fallen off and slipped down.”

JERVIS INLET. PRINCESS LOUISA INLET. MOUNT GEORGE EDWARDS.

“I have been up Jervis Inlet lots of times. The way it came about that Mount George Edwards was named after me was that Arthur Dalton, being an old friend of mine; I had no idea he was going to name it after me. I had climbed with his father, W.T. Dalton, the architect, but I have done no climbing on Jervis Inlet; I have climbed on Bute Inlet, the unnamed mountains back of Orford Bay, and at the head of Bute Inlet; I was just hunting for game.

“I have been up peaks in the Rockies; Mount Stephen; I did not get to the top; I started out not intending to climb it; I just wanted to take a photograph of the valley, and after taking the photograph I started going on up until I realised the shoes I had on were getting pretty thin, and by the time I got back they were pretty near off my feet.”

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH FORMER ALDERMAN F.E. WOODSIDE OF B.C. CHAMBER OF MINES, 402 WEST PENDER STREET, VANCOUVER, 23 JULY 1941.

PRELUDE.

I noticed in the *News-Herald*, 23 July 1941, this morning, that a dinner had been held to celebrate the opening of the Vancouver Airport, ten years ago, but did not see that former Alderman F.E. Woodside was present, so telephoned him at his office.

J.S. Matthews.

VANCOUVER AIRPORT. ALDERMAN FRANK WOODSIDE.

Major Matthews: I have heard, Mr. Woodside, of a man who went “ploughing” around in the muskeg on Lulu Island, got himself all “plastered” with mud and his feet wet; he was looking for an airport for Vancouver. Do you happen to know him?