

Early Vancouver

Volume Seven

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

2011 Edition (Originally Published 1956)

Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected between 1931-1956.

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

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Footnote or Endnote Reference:

Major James Skitt Matthews, *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 7 (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011), 33.

Bibliographic Entry:

Matthews, Major James Skitt. *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 7. Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011.

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Arthur Tinniswood Dalton, F.R.G.S. mountaineer, and former Assessment Commissioner, City of Vancouver, said, Oct. 4, 1953: ~ "I started to climb Grouse Mountain about 1895. A very poor trail led up what is now Lonsdale Ave; you were considered quite skillful if you could keep on it; we called it "Pig Alley," some Chinamen kept pigs. It took us a day to get to "Trythall's Gash"; another day to the top, and a third day to come down; three days. Trythall had slashed about two acres, and built a poor log cabin; no door, we often stayed there a day to rest. It was two or three hundred feet under "Trythall's Creek", now called "Mosquito Creek". About 11,000 feet.

This photo was taken by M^r Dalton in 1902.

City Archives, J.S.M.



Trythall's Clearing, North Vancouver, 1902. It was about two acres of slashed timber and a poor log cabin sunk in a great wilderness of primeval forest which covered all North Vancouver. Land cost one dollar per acre. A poor trail led up what is now Lonsdale Ave to 13th, swung west, followed roughly Mahon Ave; was quite close to Mosquito Creek on Lot 32, D.L. 883. It adjoined what in 1953 is known as "Canyon Heights." The ascent of Grouse Mountain took three days; one to Trythall's; one to the top, and one down again to the ferry. The clearing was just below where the Grouse Mountain Ski Lift aerial tramway starts. William J. Trythall reached Vancouver from England 21 June 1888. He founded Trythall & Son, printers, and printed the first Vancouver directory, 1888.

[photo annotation:]

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This photo was taken by Mr. Dalton in 1902. City Archives. J.S.M.

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CONVERSATION WITH MRS. ROY TRYTHALL, OF IRVINE'S LANDING, PENDER HARBOUR, B.C., WHO KINDLY CALLED AT THE CITY ARCHIVES THIS MORNING, 30 DECEMBER 1953, BRINGING WITH HER A NUMBER OF PHOTOGRAPH PRINTS AND NEGATIVES OF TRYTHALL'S CLEARING, NORTH VANCOUVER.

WM. J. TRYTHALL, PIONEER.

Mrs. Trythall: "I was born in Plymouth, England, and first came to Vancouver in 1905 when I was fourteen. Then I came a second time in 1911 and married Mr. Roy Trythall at the First Baptist Church, Nelson Street. I have five children—four living. They are, in order of birth, Edwin, Gwendoline, Dorothy (deceased), Roy and Joyce. Edwin has a flower shop in West Vancouver; Gwendoline is Mrs. Templeton, in Edmonton. Roy is the dentist, and Joyce is Mrs. Grimwood. All of the original Trythall family are deceased excepting Mrs. E. Victor Smith, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. J. Trythall, the original pioneer. She is in Portland, Oregon."

TRYTHALL'S CLEARING. MOSQUITO CREEK.

"When I first came in 1905 we sometimes went to Trythall's Clearing. You see, my father, Joseph Willoughby, of Plymouth, was nephew of Mrs. William J. Trythall. Her name had been Willoughby and my name was Willoughby. My mother, my sister and myself stayed in Vancouver for one year while my father went to Japan. When war broke out he was interned and died there. We never received one single item of his possessions—family silverware and so forth. Then, in 1906, my mother, sister and I went to Japan; then, after we had been in Japan two years, we went back to England. My sister had to go to school. My mother died in England and my sister and myself came to Vancouver. My sister married, several years afterwards, a Mr. Milne. He is in Scotland—so is she."

TRYTHALL'S CABIN. JOHN COWAN, LOGGER.

"Mr. Trythall's cabin was on a ridge. In front of it was a steep bank dropping down to Mosquito Creek. The creek circled around so that, on the level of the cabin, it was to the east of it; the falls were to the east of the cabin, and, from what I remember, about on the same level as the cabin—about level with it. We had to carry our water with pails. After I was married in August, 1911, we frequently went up there for weekends. People climbing Grouse Mountain were always dropping in to get some water to drink, if for nothing else, for it was the only water supply until they got to the top. Somewhere nearby below there was a winding road where a logger had a cabin. His name was John Cowan, and I think, almost sure, this photo, Mount. P. 71, N. 31, taken by Mr. Dalton, is the cabin.

"The Trythall boys had hobbies. Roy, my husband, was the yachtsman; Howard was a bachelor and almost always spent his weekends at the cabin. It was always considered his property."

TRYTHALL'S CABIN ABANDONED.

"Sometime between the two wars—say it would be about 1935—we went up there one day and found the whole cabin had been wrecked by vandals. They had thrown the stove down the bank and it was smashed. The logs had been pulled out of the side of the cabin and thrown down the bank. We never bothered again—we abandoned it."

WATER WORKS ACQUIRES TEN ACRES.

"Ten acres, right at the bottom, were sold to the Water Works. They put in a dam and two big water tanks for the City of North Vancouver water supply. I have not been up there for fifteen years. The cabin was just where the falls were and I fancy the falls must have disappeared—destroyed when they built the dam. They were not more than 50 or 75 yards from the cabin and the dam was about the same distance. Mr. Trythall's land—as I understood—was long and narrow, and ran right up the hill. He owned 160 acres. After his death we lost it for non-payment of taxes. We did not consider it worth keeping."

DESCENDENTS OF MR. AND MRS. TRYTHALL, SENIOR.

Six Sturtions
Three Smiths
Two Peakes
Five Trythalls
One Trythall
Seventeen in all