

VALLEY HISTORY AND THE WINDERMERE VALLEY MUSEUM

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**Dr. William Henry Gaddes
1929**

(By Boyce Gaddes)

Dr. W. H. Gaddes (1869-1965) of Kelowna and Vancouver, along with some of his family, were associated with the development of the Edgewater area from about 1908 until about 1946. In 1908 Dr. Gaddes was involved in Kelowna with the Central Okanagan Land Company who were active in buying large tracts of land, subdividing it into 10 and 20 acre lots suitable for fruit growing, building an irrigation system to serve the future orchards, and finally marketing the lots. The Dominion Trust Company advanced the funds to finance the Okanagan project, and because the Land Company was able to repay their loans promptly, the Trust Company was impressed with their competence in land development.

Also in 1908, Jim McKay of the Columbia Valley, was involved in developing a large tract of undeveloped land extending from the Upper Ranch, just north of Radium, north to a ranch at Luxor. McKay also was financed by the Dominion Trust Company, and because of the financial success of the Central Okanagan Land company in Ke-

lowna, the Trust Company asked Dr. Gaddes to act in a consulting role to assist McKay in his very ambitious project. They also sent in a Victoria engineer and surveyor, Mr. H. W. Ebbs-Canavan, to assist with the development. By 1911 the new company, known as Columbia Valley Orchards Ltd., had acquired almost 15,000 acres between Radium and Luxor, surveyed the town site of Edgewater which was situated in the middle of the property, constructed a flume system for irrigation, built a combined office-residence building, a summer house for a resident manager, and farm buildings in the town site of Edgewater. A hotel was built near the Company office building to accommodate settlers on their arrival, but it was destroyed by fire in the early years of the venture.

Dr. Gaddes visited the McKays several times during the years 1908-1910 and stayed with them in their home at the Upper Ranch, but purely in an advisory capacity. He was not a partner in the new land company. The story of how McKay marketed the lots during the pre-war years must be found in other historical sources. But the 1914-1918 War intervened before the venture got off the ground and Columbia Valley Orchards Ltd. eventually ended in bankruptcy.

After the War only a handful of settlers remained and the Dominion Trust Company put the entire property up for sale in an effort to recoup some of their losses. Dr. Gaddes, being familiar with the development, felt that it could be restored to its original condition and sold to a land settlement company within a few years. He formed a company, with this aim in mind, which included his brother, Herbert Gaddes, a Vancouver business man, and a Vancouver surgeon, Dr. J.W. Thomson. In 1922, these three partners purchased the entire assets and property of Columbia Valley Orchards Ltd. from the Dominion Trust Company.

1922-1925: Dr. Gaddes set out to restore the flumes, fences, and to upgrade the farm buildings. To provide a cash flow which would support the operation, he brought in a trainload of beef cattle and some hogs. Each summer he employed a crew of young farm workers to look after the animals, attend to the flume, cut and store a large crop of hay and perform any other necessary ranch work. In 1923 the company was renamed Columbia Valley Ranches Ltd. To reflect the type of mixed farming for which the area was suitable. The summer work crews included his two oldest sons, Charles (1901-1988) who headed the summer crews from 1923-1925, and Leonard (1903-1994) who maintained the flume system. In the mid 20's the company added a small saw-mill in order to cut ties for the C.P.R. and provide an added cash income. During these years Dr. Gaddes sold a few small holdings to settlers from the Prairies, mostly hard working Europeans.

1925-1929: Dr. Gaddes' youngest brother, Mel Gaddes of Calgary, and a real estate agent, interested another Alberta businessman in buying the Edgewater property and bringing in settlers from the Prairies. In 1925, the two Alberta men bought the entire operation, and began selling small holdings of about 20 acres each. At \$50.00 an acre a settler could buy 20 acres, for a total price of \$1000.00, with a down payment of \$100.00 and spread the balance over 10 years at 6% interest. From 1926 until 1929, Mel Gaddes and his partner brought in about 60 families. In addition to the crops from mixed farming, the settlers could work in the mill during the winter, or do other casual work in the district in order to make their annual payments to the Company. All went well until the stock-market crash of 1929 when the C.P.R. stopped buying ties from the Company. This cut off the main cash income for both the Company and the settlers so that the two Alberta owners were unable to complete payment for the operation. As a result, the property reverted to Dr. Gaddes and his two Vancouver partners. Because Dr. Gaddes had been appointed to a B.C. Government position in 1928, and was living and working in Vancouver, he was unable to take over

the management of the Edgewater property, so appointed his second son, Leonard, as resident manager in 1930. Leonard served in this capacity for the next twelve years.

1930-1942: In the fall of 1930 the Hofort Company came into the district looking for Christmas trees, so Leonard organized the cutting of about 70,000 trees. This replaced the loss of the saw-mill income and was the beginning of a growing annual business which continued for many years. In 1931 the G.R.Kirk Company came in and Leonard Gaddes developed a regular winter business cutting Christmas trees for this company for the next ten years. During those years Edgewater supplied from 125,000 to 140,000 trees each winter, making it possible for the settlers and the Company to survive during the depression years. Leonard also secured a market for fresh vegetables with the C.P.R. hotels and Banff and Lake Louise. The settlers formed a co-op, bought a truck, and made two deliveries a week to the hotels during the summer season. When Dr. Gaddes retired from his government position in 1934, he spent some time each year in Edgewater and attracted more settlers from the Prairies. By 1941 they had a regular market established for vegetables and berries in the summer, potatoes in the fall, and cattle through the Farmers' Institute. The Christmas tree operation in the winter was well established. The local people had become very expert from their long experience in this winter business operation.

1942-1946: After Leonard left to go into business on his own, Dr. Gaddes spent the rest of the war years at Edgewater supervising the operation until he was able to sell it. In the middle 1940's he sold most of the property, including the Upper Ranch, to G.R.Kirk Company. The remaining town-site lots, and some farm land, he sold to Harry Moore, who was operating a saw-mill in Edgewater. In addition, Moore bought the Agreements for Sale on the properties already sold to the local settlers, and the Lower Ranch at Luxor he sold to Karl Knudel. Thus ended the long association of Dr. Gaddes and his associates with the Edgewater area.

Hospitals and Hospitality

By: Ross Haworth

With a pandemic continuing to spread across the globe and dominating the international conversation, residents of the Columbia Valley are becoming increasingly conscious of our hospital systems. The first discussion of a hospital in the region was in late 1899 when it was decided by some concerned citizens that a place where the injured could be cared for was dearly needed.

A subscription list was written up where a person could write their name and donation. These donations went to a "small Emergency Hospital, to become the property of the inhabitants of Peterborough (Wilmer), but to be open to all comers excepting only infectious or contagious patients." Donations ranged from five dollars to a hundred dollars in lumber, with one man even offering two days of work. Named Windermere District Hospital the building was constructed in 1900. The building was the valley's hospital for eleven years during which Dr. Elliot and Dr. Hannington served the sick and injured. In 1911 it was decided that the building was inadequate and so it was moved to the Union Hotel.

Looking back we can see historically how our community has stayed strong in difficult times. Jean McMartin Weir came to Wilmer from Ireland to work as a nurse. She wrote of an experience treating a hunting accident, "The patient's neck and shoulders were riddled with shot. That case let me know how kind the people in the valley were. A man phoned from Athalmer that evening and asked, "How is Chris Rawlas?" I told him the doctor was quite pleased with how he was after the shock. The man said that there was to be a dance in Athalmer that night, but if Chris had been in a serious state the dance was to be postponed."

We can look back on that story and be proud of our community's togetherness. In this time of crisis we need to act in a way that people will be able to look back on in a hundred years with pride. We need to act with neighborly compassion for those

around us, even if we have to postpone dances.

Ross Haworth is a student at DTSS who has an interest in writing and local history. Writing a little about the local history allows Ross to record what he knows while polishing his writing skills.

September 10, 1929

Interview with Baptiste Morigeau (B. G. Hamilton)

I had a long conversation today with Baptiste Morigeau who was born at the headwaters of the Elk River in 1840. I pointed out to him the round excavations in the ground at different places, chiefly at the back of the C.P.R. depot and near the Creamery on parts originally known as Lot 216 G1. He at once pronounced them to be ' Keek-Willies' but said that he did not think that they were true to shape. According to his idea, the larger ones are remains of the Shuswap Indian winter houses. He said that they were never used by the Kootenay Indians in any shape or form. According to him, and he spoke from personal experience, the winter houses which they built here were rectangular in shape, built of logs placed in layers, one on top of the other, in the same manner as a log house would be built today with one exception, that they were shortened at each tier until, as they gradually worked upward, there would only be a small opening in the center left. This opening would serve as a means of entrance and exit to the structures. A piece of timber would be put in the center of the structure reaching from the ground to the top. On both sides of which steps would be cut, or at least large notches with a flat base to each notch. This pole would be used as a means to climb to the top of the structure in order to enable any person wishing to do so to climb outside. The aperture would also leave an opening by which the smoke from the family fire would escape. He explained that he had seen these on what is now the Shuswap Indian Reserve.

(B. G. Hamilton Files)

MOUNT SALLY SERENA

**From a letter from Thomas Starbird
March 14, 1913.**

"It was in the year 1901 that I was engaged in building Horsethief Wagon Road. In July or August I was visited by Hon. W.C. Wells, Minister of Public Works and E.J. Scovil, government representative at Wilmer. We took lunch at the roadside where Seven Mile Creek crosses the road. Mrs. Farnham, wife of Paulding Farnham of New York, who was one of the owners of the Ptarmigan Mine, a most attractive woman was one of the party. As a mark of honor, the Hon. W.C. Wells told Mrs. Farnham in an offhand manner that they would have named after her any physical feature which she might select. He asked her the name by which she had been known to her schoolmates and she said it was "Sally the Serene." Sally being her Christian name and serene she said she thought had been added on because she was proud.

"Very well," said Mr. Wells jokingly, "Make your selection and as the representative of government, I will do my best to make the name stick."

Mrs. Farnham then made as her selection the mountain on the east side of Horsethief Creek. It was at this junction that we turned off McDonald Creek to reach the Ptarmigan Mine and she was quite familiar with the sight of it.

Sure enough, Mr. Wills made his promise stick and in due time the name Mount Sally Serena appeared on the maps of the district."

DELPHINE CREEK AND GLACIER

"These were named after Mrs. George Stark, innkeeper, who was one of the first white women to visit the Toby Creek Headwaters. She assisted her husband in his mining operations in that neighborhood about 1889.

FRANCES CREEK

Information from Major Aitken, Chief Geographer. Confirmed by H. E. Forster December, 1915.

"The Creek was named by Mr. G.G. Aitken, Chief Geographer of the Provincial Government after the daughter of Mr. Harold E. Forster, MPP. The name was given in 1914 at the request of Mr. Forster."

October 1945

All roads have a beginning. Few are privileged to be so near the beginning of a road opening up a new Valley in a new world.

Until 1888 our Valley was accessible only by pack horses and canoe. From 1885-1888 a road of sorts had been hewn through the forest, cut along the mountains and bridged over the Kootenay, Columbia and lesser streams, from Galbraith's Ferry (Fort Steele) to head of navigation on Lake Windermere. Until that time, flat bottomed boats and scows had been poled or rowed up the Columbia from Golden. The "Cline" first stern wheeler to ply the waters of the Upper Columbia arrived in 1888. This means of communication to the north maintained until 1892 when a road, which had been under construction for sometime, reached Golden and was completed in October of that year. Archie Cameron was foreman. The first man over the road in any kind of conveyance was the late Rufus Kimpton. He had established some years before, a trading post at Windermere. Now that the road was opened he hoped to settle his family there. He drove through with a single horse and buggy. At the Hogranch, the first stop on this side of Golden, the road was not completed, but with the help of the roadmen he got over. A week later he returned from Donald with Mrs. Kimpton, his sons Clifford and Vaughn. The road was passable but in no sense a boulevard. Over the roughest places big Archie Cameron carried young Vaughn. Mrs. Kimpton walking, led Clifford by the hand. Rufus held on the hurricane deck and kept the buckboard and cayuse right side up. In four days they arrived at their new home.

(Jaryl McIsaac Files)

Fred N. Christensen **April 4, 1935—April 16, 2020**

Our sincere condolences to Margaret, June and the Christensen and Harrison Families.
Fred will be deeply missed.

If it is your wish, memorial donations can be made to the Windermere Valley Museum.

(Compiled by Sandy McKay)