

**A. Whitney Matthews**  
**Leader in Pharmacy and Sport**  
A Biography (draft)

The Matthews family left PEI where Whit was born in 1901 and came to Alberta in 1905. They came to a town at the end-of-track called Daysland and settled there. Whit Matthews attended school in Daysland and later high school in Camrose graduating from Grade XII in 1918. He entered Pharmacy at the University of Alberta and elected to take the newly offered 3 year B.Sc. Pharmacy program graduating in 1921. This was the first Pharmacy degree program in the British Empire and there were 3 graduates in the first graduating class of 1921. An apprenticeship was required of all pharmacy students and Whit served his apprenticeship with the Red Cross Pharmacy in Edmonton at 102 Street and Jasper Avenue. He also worked at Revillon Freres Wholesale in Edmonton, a firm that was later purchased by National Drug.

As a student Whit had an active interest in sports and played on the Pharmacy hockey team, the Medical hockey team, and served as the coach/trainer for the U of A. women's hockey team for two years, probably because one of his classmates, Dorothy Whitehouse was on the team.

From the time of his enrollment his interest in an academic career was evident and this was confirmed when he continued his studies in the M.Sc. program and completed his degree in 1925. He describes the period following the first war, 1914-1918, as a period when Pharmacy began to change from a mercantile endeavor to a more professional outlook and this in turn influenced the teaching at the U of Alberta. The pioneering era in which pharmacists from Eastern Canada had moved West to provide pharmacy services was coming to an end as educational programs were established in Saskatchewan and Alberta in 1914. In 1918 Alberta established the minimal requirement for a diploma in the province as a 2 year course at the University of Alberta to replace the one year certificate program. The 2 year program was the most popular program for students for many years with only a few taking the 3 year degree program. The issues facing the pharmacy licensing organizations at the time were: establishment of pharmacy practice; scope of course content in the new pharmacy educational programs; drug supply; and the overall independence from the medical profession. Whit Matthews worked with the council of the Alberta Pharmaceutical Association during this period providing coordination between practice and education..

He was a Lecturer in Pharmacy beginning in 1923 and continued as Lecturer and later as Assistant Professor through to 1942. During this period he was active in promoting pharmacy practice and became a key member of CPhA. He was a major contributor to the Canadian Pharmaceutical Journal, which at the time was an important vehicle for communication among pharmacists on changes in practice, with a regular column entitled, "The Dispenser's Digest".

The Canadian Foundation for the Advancement of Pharmacy was founded in 1945 due to the efforts of J.R. Kennedy the President of the United Rexall Company (he was the first president) and Whit Matthews was a director on the first board appointed and later served as President. The CFAP was a charitable organization to raise money to provide funds for educational projects and student loans. His relationship with Kennedy is likely the reason for his move to Rexall.

The Second World War had a tremendous impact on Canada and the universities. During the war it was required for all students to undertake military training. Whit was involved in the war effort in Canada during the period 1939-43 serving as Lt. Cmdr. of the RCNVR and Commanding Officer of the UNTD (naval officer training at the U of Alberta). He also cultivated medicinal plants during the war to demonstrate that they could be grown in Canada as the normal source of supply was disrupted during the war.

As a young academic Whit worked on his Ph.D. and was granted this degree in 1941 (University of Florida). He was the first pharmacist in Canada to achieve a Ph.D. in Pharmacy. In recognition of his academic status he was appointed as Professor and Director of the School of Pharmacy in 1942 and continued in this status until 1946. He was a leader in pharmacy education and took an active part in the founding of the Canadian Conference of Pharmaceutical Faculties (CCPF), later the Association of Faculties of Pharmacy of Canada (AFPC) in 1944. At the 3 day founding meeting the agenda was prepared by Whit Matthews outlining immediate and long term objectives. The immediate objectives were the apprenticeship requirements, post war problems, working with CPhA on public relations and developmental programs, and Canadian Formulary revisions. He then served as Chair of CCPF in 1963-64. (From CPJ Oct 1982).

The Rexall Drug Company of Canada needed some research assistance and Whit began to work with them in 1942 and later, in 1946, joined them full time as Director of Research. This continued until 1950 when he resigned stating that the promises made to him were not honored. He then became the President of Riker Pharmaceuticals of Canada 1950-52.

The academic path once again beckoned and he accepted the position as Professor and Dean at the University of British Columbia in 1952, remaining as Dean until his retirement in 1968. Retirement was only an administrative description of his shift from academic employment to engaging in directing the development of standards for pharmacy practice in the form of national examinations. In 1967 he became the Registrar of the Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada 1967-73 then Secretary of Examinations 1973-1980. While in Toronto working with the PEBC he agreed to be the executive officer for the Commission on Pharmaceutical Services (1968-71) established by CPhA to conduct a major study of the profession of Pharmacy. The result was a Report, Pharmacy in a New Age which was widely circulated and discussed in pharmacy and resulted in changes in pharmacy organizations and practice.

His interest in sport was always evident. While in Edmonton he was an avid golfer and told the story of having his students prepare powder papers to be used at the Victoria Golf Course to repair the damage from snow mold. His students kept asking him about the strange mixture and what was it used for but he told them it was just for developing the technique of folding papers and the content was irrelevant. He was the Alberta Amateur Golf Champion in 1930. He was member of several Alberta Willingdon Cup Teams. In addition to being an avid golfer, his organizational ability was recognized by golf organizations and led to his presidency of the Royal Canadian Golf Association in 1945. Later in life he continued his golf activities serving as a member of 7 Canadian Seniors International teams. In Vancouver he was active with the

Shaunessy Golf Club and in Toronto golfed at the Rosedale Golf Club. He is an Honorary Life Governor Canadian Seniors Golf Association..

In curling he was a member of the Alberta Macdonald Brier rink that tied for the Canadian Championship in 1929. While retired in Toronto he was a regular curler at the Granite Curling Club.

Although there is no record of him playing football he was a founding director of the original Edmonton Eskimos and BC Lions. He liked to tell the story of how he got the BC Lions into the league which at the time had 4 teams in Western Canada and were not keen to have another one. At the time Walter Sprague, one of his former students that he had helped establish a pharmacy, was serving as president of the Edmonton Eskimos and also president of the league. He said he prevailed on Walter to support him getting the BC Lions into the league and this happened in 1954. He was President of the Canadian Rugby Union (later the Canadian Football League) in 1943 and on the Board of Directors of the BC Lions football club in 1967.

On a more general level he was the Secretary-Treasurer of the first Western Canadian Intercollegiate Athletic Union. (This may have been the Western Interprovincial Rugby Football Union) Later in Toronto he was Secretary and Co-author of the Report of the Council of Ontario Universities Study of Graduate Programs in Physical Education in Ontario Universities . Whit also served as the Research Officer and author of the Report on Athletic Programs in Canadian Universities 1973-74. When he received his Honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Dalhousie University he gave a short address on the importance of physical education.

In the world of pharmacy Whit Matthews was extremely active. At the local level he worked closely with the Alberta Pharmaceutical Association and linked the educational program to the developments in pharmacy and drug therapy. At the national level he worked to link the pharmacy educators with the Canadian Pharmaceutical Association and later served as President of the CPhA, 1962-63. His method of operating was to quietly organize meetings and discussions that led to a more formal organizational structure as was the case with the Canadian Conference of Pharmacy Faculties, the Canadian Foundation for the Advancement of Pharmacy, the Association of Deans of Pharmacy of Canada and the Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada. He had a wide circle of friends in Pharmacy and this enabled him to get support for many of his initiatives.

Whit Matthews was recognized with an Honorary Life Member award from CPhA in 1977, Honorary Life Member of the Alberta Pharmaceutical Association, Robins Award 1962 (BC), E.R. Squibb Award 1964 (CPhA), In the academic world he received a D.Sci from UBC in 1969, an Honorary doctor of laws ( LL.D) degree from University of Alberta 1967 and an LL.D degree from Dalhousie University in 1977.

Always quiet and polite, Whit was a gentleman and a gracious host. He inspired confidence and was constantly being asked to take on organizational responsibilities. Many people responded to his request to join him in a variety of endeavors.

Whit died in Toronto September 24, 1992 at the age of 90.