

Early Vancouver

Volume Five

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Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1936-1945.

Supplemental to volumes one, two, three and four collected in 1931, 1932 and 1934.

About the 2011 Edition

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FITZGERALD MCCLEERY.

Fitzgerald McCleery, of North Arm, Fraser River, kept a diary, in fact several diaries, and his daughter, Miss Margaret Elizabeth (Greta) McCleery, has shown me two, the earliest being a pocket diary for 1863. The latest one contains memorandums shortly before his death. She is exhibiting them today, St. Patrick's Day, 17 March 1938, on eleventh floor of City Hall.

NORTH ARM ROAD. RIVER ROAD. MARINE DRIVE.

An entry in the earliest known diary of Vancouver reads:

May 1st 1963

WEATHER FINE. LANDED THIS DAY TWELVE MONTHS IN NEW WESTMINSTER, UNCLE [Hugh McRoberts] AND JENNIE [cousin, afterwards, Mrs. Charles Bunting] MEASURED TRAIL TODAY. [Now Marine Drive.]

Miss McCleery remarked: "That shows you what women did in those days." (Hugh McRoberts had the contract to build the trail, and Samuel and Fitzgerald McCleery helped him, and were paid by McRoberts in land scrip.)

"ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL."

"You know," said Miss McCleery, who is a very loyal Irishwoman, and brought three pots of shamrocks, three boxes of chocolates and Irish novelties for myself and two assistants, "the first church service held in Vancouver was held in Father's cabin; that's why we called it 'St. Patrick's Cathedral.' It was on District Lot 316, outside the present dyke, and right on the river bank. It was just a small place, and built of drop siding from the sawmill at New Westminster; not of logs. I remember the inside very well. Just inside the door was a wash basin; it was on a shelf attached to the back of the door, and when the door opened, shelf and basin and all swung with the door; at the first service they used that wash basin for a collection plate. I don't know what denomination the congregation was; none at all; everybody came. Later, one Sunday it was Methodist, and the next Presbyterian."

STEWART ISLAND. COWAN ISLAND.

"Stewart Island was called after old Capt. Stewart who married the widow of Samuel McCleery. Cowan Island was named after the man Cowan to whom Stewart sold it; I don't know Cowan, or who he was; ask Roy Stewart, Capt. Stewart's son; he is running a garage out in Marpole."

JOHN BAILEY MCCLEERY.

"The father of the three McCleerys who came to B.C. was Samuel McCleery; he borrowed money on the security of a field of flax at the old home, 'The Toy,' Killyleagh" (or Killyleigh), "Ireland, to send the boys to British Columbia, and when I was in Ireland in 1910, I visited the old home and the field was growing a crop—of flax. James, the youngest son of the family, went to Australia, and did well there.

"Miss Elizabeth Margaret McCleery is the eldest daughter of the eldest of the three brothers who came to B.C., and I, Margaret Elizabeth McCleery, am the youngest; the youngest daughter of the three, i.e., Fitzgerald."

MARY WOOD.

"My mother was Mary Wood; her home was at Port Renfrew, Co. Norfolk, Ontario.

FIRST SEWING MACHINE (NOW IN CITY ARCHIVES). FIRST PIANO. FIRST PLOW.

"The sewing machine you saw upstairs is the first sewing machine on the North Arm. Oh, I remember how as a girl I used to work it; we clamped it on the edge of a table; I made a lot of nice things on that old sewing machine. We have the old first plow on the farm now; I would have liked to have brought it in, but it was too big. In our house we have still today the first piano on the North Arm, perhaps the first in Vancouver." (See Mrs. Richards, Hastings Sawmill [afterwards Mrs. Ben Springer] in *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 3, Crakanthorp.)

“Three pianos came out together around the Horn; one of them went to the girls’ school at Yale. I don’t know where the other went to, but see Mr. Pugsley, my cousin.”

FURTHER CONVERSATION, 14 JUNE 1938.

NAME OF RICHMOND. RICHMOND VIEW.

Major Matthews: Miss McCleery, what did your father (Fitzgerald McCleery) refer to when he wrote in his diary in 1863, and afterwards, about Richmond: “Going over to Richmond”; “going down to Richmond”?

Miss McCleery: “‘Richmond’ was the name given to Hugh McRoberts’ farm on Sea Island, now belonging to Thomas Lang.”

Major Matthews: Well. Where was “Richmond View”?

Miss McCleery: “I don’t know. I must ask.”

Major Matthews: Where did he get the name “Richmond”?

Miss McCleery: “I don’t know. Hugh McRoberts came here from Australia, and I think it was after some Australian place.”

J.S.M.

MEMO OF CONVERSATION OVER THE PHONE WITH MR. JAMES QUINTIN McCONNELL, 1286 HARO STREET, DOUGLAS 1493Y, BROTHER TO THE LATE ALDERMAN G.S. McCONNELL, 25 FEBRUARY 1936.

(Following notice in press asking for information of anyone who had been in the old C.P.R. Hospital on Powell Street, 1886-1888.)

FIRST HOSPITAL IN VANCOUVER. C.P.R. HOSPITAL. DR. LEFEVRE.

Mr. McConnell said: “I was in the old hospital down on Powell Street, suffering from typhoid fever; must have been there for two months or more. Dr. LeFevre was my doctor; he used to come down and look things over; a Mr. Burke and his wife were in charge.

“It was a little bit of a place, board and batten up and down boards, with a little bit of a verandah in front. I don’t know how many patients were there; I was in the front room all by myself, but I know there were two or three in the back room, but they were strangers to me.”

ST. LUKE’S HOME.

“I think that must have been in the spring of 1888 because there was another hospital in town at the time, St. Luke’s Home on Oppenheimer Street, where Sister Frances and Father Clinton were, but it was full up, and I had to go down to the Powell Street hospital.

“Then, when I got convalescent, I was moved up to the City Hospital, the first one, on Beatty Street.”

As narrated to me and approved by Mr. McConnell.

J.S. Matthews, 17 March 1936.

MEMO OF FURTHER CONVERSATION WITH MR. JAMES QUINTIN McCONNELL, 1286 HARO STREET, BROTHER ALD. G.S. McCONNELL, 17 MARCH 1936.

FIRST (C.P.R.) HOSPITAL. TYPHOID FEVER.

“It was facing Powell Street because I remember coming out and smoking my first cigarette—I had to learn to smoke over again after the typhoid fever—and I walked up and down on a narrow kind of sidewalk—in front of the little hospital.