

**Early Vancouver**

**Volume Five**

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

**2011 Edition (Originally Published 1945)**

*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**

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 125<sup>th</sup> 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. 5 (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011), 33.

Bibliographic Entry:

Matthews, Major James Skitt. *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 5. Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011.

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“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.

“There must have been a lean-to on the east” (sic, perhaps it was west side) “because there was no connection between the hospital building proper and the lean-to where Mr. Burke, the orderly, and Mrs. Burke, lived. There was no way to make him get up at night when I wanted him, so I had a club, and would bang on the wall, and he” (Burke) “would come out of the front door of his lean-to, and come in the front door of the hospital into the front room where I was. You walked right in, no vestibule or passage way, because once when Burke was giving me a sponge bath, she came in the front door, saw what was going on, put her hands over her face, and cleared out again. She was a fine looking woman. I was a kind of special patient there, and had the front room.”

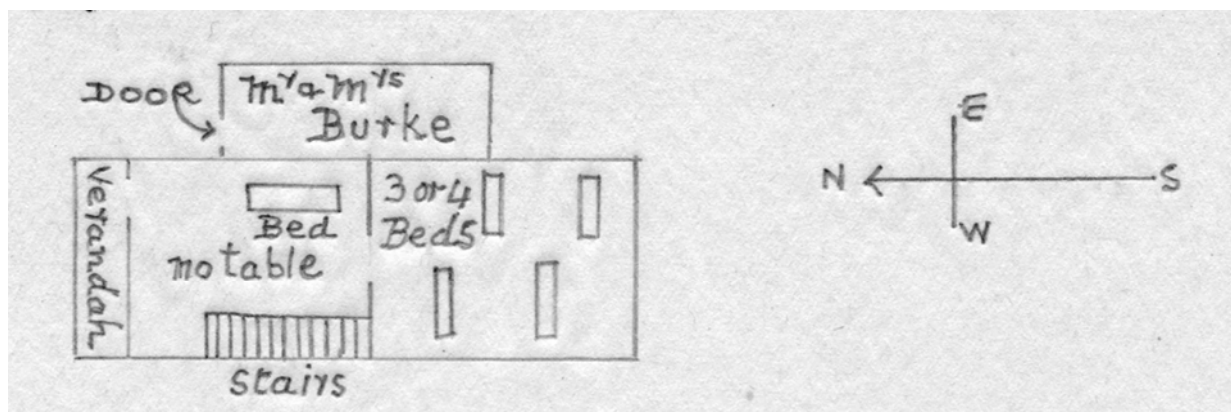
**MR. AND MRS. BURKE.**

“The stairs went up straight, very steep, straight up, out of the front room; the room was about as big as an ordinary dining room, say 12’ x 15’, and my bed was in the corner, the stairs in the other corner, the front door in a third corner. Burke caught the typhoid fever from me, died in three days, and Mrs. Burke married Hartney, the logging contractor; he logged at Point Grey and elsewhere. The last I heard of her, she was in Seattle.”

**MRS. M.A. MACLEAN. SAM BRIGHOUSE.**

Mrs. MacLean, the Mayor’s wife, used to come down and see me, and so did Sam Brighthouse. I don’t recall the railway, nor the trains going by, so it must have been—it was spring, because I don’t remember a store or the fire being in it—the spring of 1887 that I was there.

“Here is a ground plan of the C.P.R. hospital as I remember it.”



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Compare with narrative and sketch plan by T. Fred Clulow, Shushartie, Vancouver Island, and his letter, 31 March 1936.

**THE FIRST (WOODEN) CITY HOSPITAL, BEATTY STREET.**

“I was convalescing when we moved up to the new City and I don’t recall an alarm of fire, which you say took place in July 1887, so I must have been there before July 1887.”

**MRS. ROBERTS. HOSPITAL MATRON.**

“Mrs. Roberts was the matron, and she ran things on ‘old country’ style, lots of discipline; we did not get along very well; not after the easygoing C.P.R. hospital; I don’t think Mr. and Mrs. Burke knew much, as Dr. Langis says, about nursing; they took what they could get; but Mrs. Roberts was all discipline; no smoking cigarettes in bed after nine o’clock, and she would come snooping around to see if she could smell anything. Miss Crickmay was also nurse at the hospital. Mrs. Roberts had a whole lot of clothes made out of grey cloth, and all the patients were supposed to wear them, but I was a bit rebellious and would not do so, so one morning I found all my street clothes gone, and the grey clothes on the chair beside the bed. So Dr. Robertson came along, and Mrs. Roberts said to him, ‘Look here, McConnell won’t put those’ (grey) ‘‘clothes on.’ So Dr. Robertson replied, ‘Well, if he won’t put them on I don’t see how you are going to make him.’

“After Mrs. Roberts, Miss Crickmay was matron; I think there were two Miss Crickmays; both went to the Jubilee Hospital, Victoria; one is dead, but the other is Mrs. Geo. D. Curtis, Comox, B.C.”

#### **FIRST HALIBUT IN VANCOUVER.**

“I brought the first halibut into Vancouver, for Fader and Co. After a bit they got an old boat and went up after the halibut. I never saw so many halibut. Just throw a line over the side of the boat, and pull in six or seven tons as fast as we could haul them. We just went to the north end of Vancouver Island, and the Indians caught the halibut. I think our vessel had made about three trips and things were not going good, so I went up to take charge; they were making money; shipping it to Boston, so I was to get the fish all ready by a certain date when the steamer would be back; I was to get to the Indians to catch the fish—but they never came back. What happened was this.

“After the last trip—that is, the third—they had not got any returns” (money) “from Boston, and on the fourth trip, the halibut rotted in the cars on account of the eastern combine, and that finished it, and the venture blew up. I am not sure of the ins and outs of the whole thing, but that is what they told me afterwards, that the halibut of the fourth trip rotted in the cars in the New England railway yards.

“There I was up in Blunden Harbour with the Indians and no way to come down; after the fourth trip they left me up there; they did not come back. The way I got down was through young Carter-Cotton, son of Carter-Cotton of the *News-Advertiser*. I heard that he was at a party here in Vancouver, and told them that they had left me starving on a deserted island—it wasn’t deserted, of course, and I wasn’t starving—so they rented the old *Agnes* belonging to Capt. Babington, and came up after me.

“There was only one boat up to that part of the world in those days, the old *Boscowitz*; came in once or twice a year. The Indians wanted me to start a store there; offered me all sorts of inducements, but I made the mistake of my life and would not accept. Some young fellow came along afterwards and started a store, and in a few years he went off for a trip around the world; wealthy.

“I was born at La Chute” (sic), “county of Argenteuil, Québec, on the banks of the Ottawa River, and when I was fifteen years of age, about 1879 or 1880, went with my brother, who was a geologist, over the headwaters of the Athabasca. Then I went back home, and was afterwards in the northwest during the rebellion where my brother, who was afterwards an alderman of Vancouver, had a ranch, and then I came on over the C.P.R. right of way to Port Moody in 1886. Years after, in 1898, I drifted down the Yukon river from Lake Bennett, the headwater, twenty-eight hundred miles to the mouth; then I was at Nome in 1900.

“My one child, daughter, Mrs. Leslie Osborne (Viola) is in Seattle. Two brothers are living, and two sisters, all in Montréal. One brother, R.G. McConnell, was head of the Canadian Geological Survey.”