

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

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We have had means of verifying his reports and have found them correct in every particular.

He is, as we believe, the first diver to make an examination of the bottom of the First Narrows of Burrard Inlet, and while in our employ has proved himself a capable and fearless diver, ever ready to go down when called upon; he even went down in the dark with only small boats to attend him when it was necessary to cut loose some barrels that were attached to the submerged water pipes, and the current was making pretty fast at the time, the depth of water at that point is 58 feet at low water, and the velocity of the water reaches 9 miles an hour.

We have no hesitation in recommending him as a careful, reliable and fearless diver.

[signed]

KEEFER & MCGILLIVRAY

CONTRACTORS

THE OUTBREAK OF WAR. 4 AUGUST 1914. 6TH REGIMENT D.C.O.R.

The command of the contingent from the 6th Regiment D.C.O.R. devolved upon Major W. Hart-McHarg, second in command of the 6th Regiment. In a subsequent conversation with Captain W.H. Forrest, paymaster of the 6th Regiment, and a close friend of Major McHarg's, he reports Major McHarg as saying to him, "I can't understand Hulme." (Lt. Col. Hulme commanded the regiment; McHarg was his second-in-command.) "Here he has got the chance of a lifetime; why doesn't he take it? But with me it is different. I have only a couple of years to live in any case." Major Hart-McHarg had for years suffered from indigestion, and once told me that about all he ate was "biscuits and milk." He was a man of five feet ten or eleven inches, but weighed 145 pounds only; his large head belied the fact that very slender legs supported a large frame. A conversation I once had with this remarkable personality is illuminating; it was concerning his more youthful days.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL MCHARG.

"I cannot fathom the young man of today," he said (about 1912.) "When I was in Winnipeg all I got was \$25 a month and lived on it" (he was a law student); "but today, a young man gets pretty much what he wants and spends it; I don't know how they manage it."

How did you live on \$25 a month? I queried.

"Well, I walked to the office, wore celluloid collars, and washed them; and as for going to a theatre, why, that was beyond my wildest dreams."

Captain John McMillan, quartermaster, both of the 7th Battalion C.E.F. and 6th Regiment D.C.O.R., told me that McHarg sat up all the night awaiting news of the outbreak of war, and was "bleary eyed" when, next morning, about 10 a.m., a few of the officers of the 6th Regiment D.C.O.R. met at the Drill Hall. There were present Colonel Hulme, Major Hart-McHarg, Captain Gardiner, adjutant, Captain McMillan, and others.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL H.D. HULME.

But, in relinquishing the command of the first troops to leave Vancouver, Colonel Hulme, commanding the Sixth, was actually self-sacrificing, and logical. Major McHarg had had war experience in South Africa as a sergeant; Colonel Hulme had no war service at all, and at that time, and to soldiers especially, war service was considered far more essential to command than later, when all manner of business men rose to high military station and rank. Major McHarg was without ties of business or family; he was unmarried; had a business partner of repute. Colonel Hulme was married and had three children approaching their 'teens, and his business affairs included trusteeships, etc., which he could not drop at a moment's notice without injury to others. To let Major McHarg take the first body of men to the front was proper to a logical mind. But it brought unkind thought, and some criticism from the less thoughtful.

Colonel Hulme afterwards commanded the 62nd Overseas Battalion, the third battalion to leave Vancouver.