

Early Vancouver

Volume Six

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Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1940-1945.

Supplemental to volumes one, two, three, four and five collected in 1931, 1932, 1934, 1939 and 1944.

About the 2011 Edition

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CONVERSATION, MISS MARGARET E. MCCLEERY, DAUGHTER [OF] FITZGERALD MCCLEERY, 1862, AT CITY ARCHIVES, 7 AUGUST 1941.

FITZGERALD MCCLEERY. D.L. 315. SURVEYS. LOCATION STAKE.

Miss McCleery: "This survey stake" (a piece of cedar, roughly squared four inches, thirty-one inches long) "was found last month under the roots of a maple tree two feet thick on the lane south of the sixth subdivision of D.L. 315, and about one hundred and thirty-five feet south of Marine Drive, midway between Macdonald Street and the boundary line of D.L. 315 and 316.

"Gerald, my father's grandson, and father's son-in-law Harry Logan, and Robert Mackie, brother to William Mackie, the pioneer who lives not far from us" (came here in 1882), "they were all working on the road; they told me about it when I came home that night, and Harry gave it to me, and I give it to you, and I stuck the little Union Jack on it with a pin.

"You see, we cut down the maple tree, then cut the roots all around. We did not use powder to blow it; we put horses on it and pulled it over. This old piece of cedar was in the ground underneath the centre of the tree. You see, in those days, when you located a proposed preemption, you put in a location stake; then afterwards when the property was proved up, i.e., certificate of improvement granted, it was surveyed by a surveyor, and proper corner stakes put in. As far as I can see, Father preempted 160 acres, and it looks to me that this was the location stake on the northern boundary of D.L. 315. Later he bought forty acres north of that again. I did not see the horses pull the stump over, but they told me that when the stump went over this piece of cedar stake was standing upright in the ground underneath the centre of the maple tree." (The historic stake has been mounted on a polished board, and a handsome brass inscription plate affixed. It is preserved in the City Archives.)

Note: McCleery preempted the first land in the City of Vancouver as created 1929.

MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. JAMES MCLELLAN, 328 ASH STREET, NEW WESTMINSTER, WHO VERY KINDLY CALLED AT THE CITY ARCHIVES, 14 AUGUST 1941. HE WAS ONE OF THOSE PIONEERS WHO WERE PRESENT AT THE UNVEILING, PROSPECT POINT, 26 JULY 1941, OF THE WALKING BEAM OF THE S.S. BEAVER.

FIRST BASEBALL IN VANCOUVER.

Mr. McLellan said: "The Terminal Baseball Club was the first baseball club in Vancouver; it was organised in the winter of 1887; the first meeting was held in an office but I am not sure whether Ceperley's office or the office of the American Consul, Charles M. Bolton; Mr. Ceperley was afterwards made Hon. President, and Mr. Bolton was President; the name selected was the 'Terminal Baseball Club.'"

"TERMINALS" BASEBALL CLUB. AL LARWELL.

"I was born in London, Ontario, 14th November 1866, and came to Vancouver in November 1887 by C.P.R. Al Larwell, he looked after the Cambie Street grounds, he had a little club house which he lived in, right there on the north end of it; he was quite a sport, and he played baseball in the east in Ottawa. So one evening Al Larwell came to the 'Greyhound' hotel looking for ball players. He did not know that I could play ball, but he had been told that there were some ball players staying at the Greyhound; I had played in London, Ontario and Strathroy; I had played in Detroit in 1884 for a junior team in Detroit. And when I came west I played in Winnipeg too. Then at the time we built the C.P.R. Hotel in Banff, we played there against Calgary; that was in the spring of 1887; the hotel was started about April 1887.

"So Al came around and asked Harry Cole if there were any ball players in the hotel; Cole came in the sitting room and asked. So two of us, Billy Norval and I, said 'Yes,' we'd played. So Al Larwell told us to come around to some office, I forget just where, one evening that week, and we did, and when we got there, there was a few of us there, and we talked it over about organising. There was present Larwell, and Metz, and Geo. L. Allan, the boot store on Cordova Street, and Norval, and myself, and there might have been two or three others; I forget.

"So we decided; Al Larwell took charge of the meeting, more or less, it was only a talk, and decided to get a few more interested in it.

“So we got talking to Frank W. Hart, furniture store, who was quite prominent at the time, and Tom Dunn, also of the business man of the growing city, and a few others, and they held a meeting and Andy Kyle, he was clerk or bookkeeper for Tom Dunn, and they just took charge and looked after the ball club, and we were out of it then except for the playing.”

THE FIRST GAME.

“I cannot tell you the exact date of the first game of baseball here that I played in, but it was early in the season of 1888; about the first of May, I should think. That day we played for a cup which was presented by Harry Cole of the Greyhound on Water Street; we played against the James Bay Baseball Club of Victoria, and we won the cup. I don't know where the cup got to, but Harry Cole kept it in the barroom for a year or two anyway. Of course, we had a few practices before the game, and we had the practice games on the Cambie Street grounds, which at that time was the pretty stony ground on a low slope; the south corner was the lowest. We had the diamond up on the corner of Cambie and Dunsmuir, on the high corner, and we batted south.

“Then in the spring of 1890 I went over to live in New Westminster, and have lived there ever since. I don't know what became of the team; I think all died, all dead now, so far as I know, except myself. I think I am the last of the first baseball club of Vancouver.

“The names of the men who played on that first match against James Bay were” (see *News-Advertiser*, 22 May 1888) “Norval, catcher; Flannigan, an Irishman, he was pitcher; Allan, short stop; Larwell was second base; Brophy, he left field; McLellan, first base; Metz was third base; Peck was centre field; and Lang was right field.”

AL LARWELL.

“Al Larwell was a good sport. He lived in a shack at the north end of the grounds; he kept his beer under the floor of his cabin; had a trap door in the floor. Just a little hole a few inches square, enough to keep a few bottles and things in, but actually what he had there underneath was a little keg, a small keg about eight gallons.”

CAMBIE STREET GROUNDS JAMBOREE. ORANGE LODGE.

“We had a jamboree in the shack once. That was on the 12th of July about 1893; we played ball that day; we picked a team; just a scratch team, and we played the City Team, but the scratch team won that day, so that, well, the Orangemen were having a picnic out at Brockton Point, and they gave us, well, there must have been near a dozen bottles of whisky, and two kegs of beer anyway, and we made a whole night of it in Al Larwell's shack; that was their 'reward' for playing for the Orangemen's amusement at Brockton Point.”