

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

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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he had about two hundred acres of dairy farm, and had thirty or forty cows, and the milk came right into the city and was sold to the Valley Dairy on Seventh Avenue, Fairview, and then.

“Then I got married to Miss Marian Mackie, sister to William Mackie, who was nephew to William Mackie who preempted D.L. 472; Bill Mackie is living out on Marine Drive now and grows roses.”

McROBERTS’ FARM. CHRISTOPHER WOOD.

“At first I leased a farm from Fitzgerald McCleery; it really belonged to Christopher Wood, but Fitzgerald McCleery had a power-of-attorney, and finally I bought it. It was 110 or 112 acres on what is now known as the Grauer Road.”

At this point Mr. Laing had to hurry away, as he had an appointment.

As told to me,
J.S. Matthews, 21 January 1945.

MR. THOMAS LAING, WHO OWNS A PORTION OF THE OLD McROBERTS “RICHMOND FARM” ON SEA ISLAND, AND HIMSELF A PIONEER OF SEA ISLAND, HAVING GIVEN ME AN OLD SNAPSHOT PHOTOGRAPH, I SUBMITTED IT TO MISS MARGARET McCLEERY, YOUNGEST DAUGHTER OF FITZGERALD McCLEERY, WHEN SHE CALLED AT THE CITY ARCHIVES, 30 JANUARY 1945.

HUGH McROBERTS. McROBERTS ISLAND. SEA ISLAND, FIRST HOUSE.

Major Matthews: Miss McCleery. Thomas Laing gave this to me; he said it was the first house on Sea Island.

Miss McCleery: “Sure it is.”

Major Matthews: Whose is it?

Miss McCleery: “Hugh McRoberts; he built it. Christopher Wood, or Robert Wood, I don’t know which was first, whether Christopher bought and sold to Robert, or Robert bought and sold to Christopher; one or the other, from Hugh McRoberts.

“The house was on the river, just inside the dyke, about a mile and a half west of Eburne’s” (Marpole.)
“On McRoberts Island. It is now owned, that is, the farm is, by Thomas Laing; the house is not standing; they pulled it down. I don’t know who did.”

Major Matthews: Well, when did McRoberts build it?

Miss McCleery: “Well, Mother came out with her sister, Mrs. Christopher Wood, and Amy Wood, and Hugh Wood, who was a baby in long clothes. The house was on Richmond Farm; it was the first milk ranch on Sea Island. Hugh McRoberts’ milk customers were in New Westminster. I have his old milk route book with the list of customers yet. But he raised his cattle on the island, and his beef. He had his slaughter house down there. He had a little boat house right on the river bank, and used to load the beef onto boats—and in a canoe—and take it up to New Westminster.

“There is another picture of this first house on Sea Island in that little booklet on the history of the Presbyterian Church on Sea Island. I took the photo they made it from. But this is a good photo of the first house on Sea Island.”

Mr. Laing told me that McRoberts built the house in 1862.