

Early Vancouver

Volume Six

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

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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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Contact Information

City of Vancouver Archives
1150 Chestnut Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3J9
604.736.8561
archives@vancouver.ca
vancouver.ca/archives



years after, it was still growing flax, which shows that they know how to feed their land and not bleed it, for flax is very hard on land.”

HUGH MCROBERTS.

“They started from Belfast, and left England from Southampton, and when they got to Victoria, that was the first they began to understand about gold. In Victoria they heard of a man named Hugh McRoberts, and Father told me that when he heard the name Hugh McRoberts, he remarked to the person he was speaking to that he had an uncle by that name who had gone to Australia, and the person replied, ‘I think it’s the same.’ But Father did not know Hugh McRoberts was here until he found him here.

“Father and Samuel first met Hugh McRoberts, their uncle, in New Westminster. The two brothers continued on up to the Cariboo; they walked all the way, and when they got there Fitzgerald was earning six dollars a day, but Samuel was ailing and could not work, and it was taking three dollars a day to keep Fitzgerald, and three dollars a day to keep Samuel, so that would never do, so they decided to come back to New Westminster, and walked all the way back. On the way back, the bible, which his Sunday School teacher had given him, and which I have given to his grandson, Harry Fitzgerald McCleery Logan, my sister’s only son and child, fell out of their pack and rolled down the cliff, so they climbed down after it.

“And that was how my father and uncle spent the first year after they arrived in British Columbia.”

[FITZGERALD MCCLEERY.]

On the evening of 28 April 1941, I dined at the home of Most Worshipful Brother A. McC. Creery, 5337 Balsam Street, and after the dinner one of his life-long friends, Mr. A.P. Horne, 4025 Granville Street, of Horne, Taylor and Co., West Pender Street, came in and we all chatted.

FITZGERALD MCCLEERY. HIS WORSHIP C.S. DOUGLAS. A.P. HORNE.

Mr. Horne: “You remember C.S. Douglas; he was Mayor, and in the real estate business. Well, Douglas told me that he went to old Mr. McCleery, Fitzgerald McCleery, and told him he could sell his farm down on the North Arm for two hundred thousand dollars. Douglas told me what was said; it went something like this.

Mr. Douglas: “I could sell your place for \$200,000, Mr. McCleery.”

Mr. Fitzgerald McCleery: (puzzled) “But what would I do with \$200,000?”

Mr. Douglas: “Well, at six per cent it would bring you in twelve thousand a year; that would be one thousand a month.”

Mr. McCleery: “But what use would a thousand a month be to me? My family don’t need more than fifty dollars a month to supply all we require; what use would a thousand dollars a month be to me?”

On the morning of 9 May 1941, Miss M.E. McCleery, “Greta,” youngest daughter of Mr. McCleery, was in the City Archives, and I repeated the above to her, and asked if she had ever heard of it, and if it was true. “Greta” was very near to her father, who called her his “right bower.”

Miss McCleery: (laughingly) “Sure, it’s true. Yes, I’ve heard that before. Of course it’s true.”

And then she went on laughing. A splendid woman; a real chip off the old block.

In the afternoon I called at the home of Mrs. Fleming, 6551 Sperling Avenue, to see Mrs. McCorvie, a very old lady, daughter of Mr. Christopher Lee, who was on the council of New Westminster in the very early days, and I mentioned Mr. McCleery.

Mrs. McCorvie: “Yes, I remember Mr. Fitzgerald McCleery very well; they used to walk, Mrs. McCleery too, all the way from their farm away down the North Arm, up the trail to New Westminster, to church.”