

# FROM SMALL START SAINT JOHN INDUSTRY WINS EMPIRE STATUS

Products in Brass and Other Goods Fill Big Place In Industrial Life—History of Firm is Story of Gripping Interest

**RATED** in one of the highest positions among the progressive and successful Saint John industries is that of T. McAvity & Sons, Limited, carrying the honor of being the largest manufacturers of the most complete line of brass and iron valves in the British Empire. It is the proud claim of this firm, with a history dating from the year 1834, a history telling of continual growth and ready acknowledgment of success, that it has yet to receive a contract of any nature that has not been satisfactorily fulfilled. Numberless mills, power plants, factories and private homes, throughout the length and breadth of Canada, are outfitted with McAvity valves and fittings, and Canadian railway locomotives are equipped with McAvity foundry products.

Canadian and Saint John readers readily recognize in the name of T. McAvity & Sons, Limited, a concern of rank and prestige in the engineering trade. The history of this very prominent Saint John firm is perhaps without parallel in the annals of the industrial life of Canada. The period of activity extends from 1834, nearly 100 years ago, at which time this now very extensive business was centered in a comparatively small shop in the City of Saint John (then Parrtown).

## FOUNDED IN 1834.

Thomas McAvity, when a youth of 12 years of age, became apprenticed to James Hendricks, hardware merchant, whose business he subsequently acquired in 1839 and changed its name. The history of the firm from that time on is of intense historical and industrial interest.

The founding of the firm dates back to May 19, 1834, and from a small beginning it has gradually increased. Thomas McAvity, the founder of the firm, was a man who had the reputation of being a straightforward business man, a good friend and upright citizen. From 1839-63 he was Mayor of the Loyalist City and was in office when the late King Edward, then Prince of Wales, visited Saint John in 1860.

The site of the business activity of the company was first on North Market wharf, under the name of Thomas McAvity & Co. Later, in 1854, the firm name was changed to J. & T. McAvity, with premises in Water street, and in 1873 it became T. McAvity & Sons, remaining so until 1907, when the firm was incorporated under its present title of T. McAvity & Sons, Limited. Were it possible for the founders of the business, which still bears their name, to return to earth for a few hours they would marvel at the wonderful transformation that has been wrought in the house they established.

## EXPANSION.

To the foresight and optimism of James H. McAvity, the eldest son of Thomas McAvity, is due the establishment of their now extensive brass and iron foundry business. Many years ago, and his brother William, were very optimistic as to the success of a

foundry in connection with their hardware business.

Accordingly, in 1863, James H. McAvity bought out James Kennedy, who conducted a small foot-lathe brass foundry in Princess street. The business then consisted of all kinds of ship work, bells, rudder braces, roller brushes, etc., and gave employment to 121 or 14 men. The business was removed to a building in Broad street, near Charlotte street. This site, with subsequent additions, was the same as later occupied by the firm's Vulcan Iron Works, which has lately been removed to the Rothery avenue plant, along with the brass foundry.

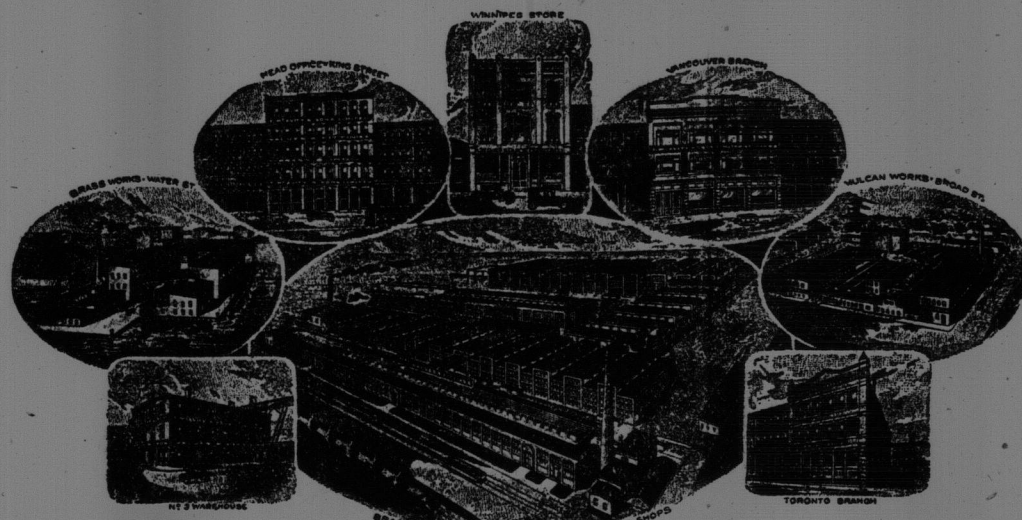
Finding still larger quarters necessary, Messrs. McAvity made another move and in 1869 located in Water street. Here they added small brass work to their line of ship work and employed 80 or more men. After the great Saint John fire of 1877, they erected a temporary structure in Market Square. In 1879 they rebuilt the old Water street building, and it was in this year that the present King street store was established.

## ROTHERY AVENUE.

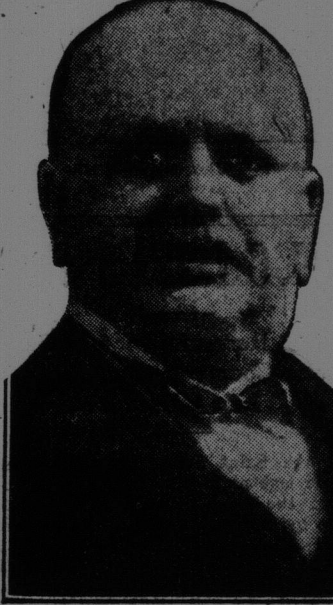
With the idea of consolidating their brass and iron foundries and machine shops on one site, the erection of the Rothery avenue plant was begun in April, 1916. This is credited as being one of the most modern plants of its kind in the Dominion. It was used for the manufacture of munitions during the Great War, the products consisting of 8.2 shells and 9.5 shells. Owing to the large number of shell contracts obtained, the McAvity company was compelled to make temporary use of the main Exhibition building and there 4.7 shells were manufactured for the Vulcan foundry. 2.5 cast iron proof shells were made.

The Rothery avenue plant, with eight spur lines connecting with the main lines of the different railways, gives them the manufacturing and shipping facilities required to keep up with the increasing demand for the "World" brand valves, cocks, and fittings. As conditions warrant, there will be added new brass and steel foundries, warehouses, pipe and malleable foundries to take care of the ever-enlarging business.

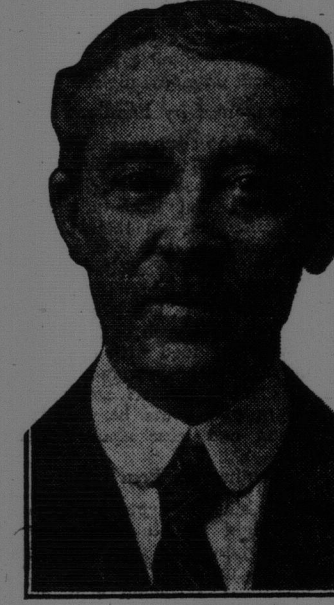
## Units In McAvity Industry, and Officials



GEORGE McAVITY, President.



JOHN A. McAVITY, Vice-President.



CHARLES COSTER, Secretary.

When the brass foundry manufacturing plant was moved to Rothery avenue, the office was transferred to the new building. The present office is on the fifth floor of the King street building and is as modern in construction and operation as possible. The president, vice-president and secretary, as well as G. Clifford McAvity, managing director of the Rothery avenue plant, have separate offices.

The brass foundry retail department, formerly at Water street, as well as the marine department, are now established at King street. This admits of larger display quarters being given to

formerly at the King street store. The McAvity firm is well aware that age counts for little unless the experience gained and strength acquired make for better service and greater usefulness. These are the days of high speed, high tension and greater responsibilities. Wide-awake, new methods are necessary to meet the demands of modern business, and the firm is keeping pace with the times as to methods and the use of new patterns, tools and machinery.

Thomas McAvity, second, for many years ably directed the business of the old partnership, assisted by his brothers James H., John A., George, William and Stephen. He was the financial head of the firm and for many years worked early and late and saw and conquered the many vicissitudes the firm went through. When the company was incorporated in 1907, Thomas McAvity became president and remained in that position until he retired in 1910. George McAvity, the present president and general manager, succeeded him.

George McAvity rates among the best known and most influential men of Canada. He is popularly known among his employees as the "Big Boss" and takes a keen interest in their personal welfare.

## 48 YEARS THREE.

Charles Coster, the efficient secretary of the firm, has been with the company for 48 years, serving it well and faithfully during this long period in his capacity as accountant and secretary.

Mr. Coster entered the business in 1877 as bookkeeper and has risen to the responsible position that he now holds, with the supervision of the large office staff. He has seen many changes in accounting and office methods during his time, well remembered when cumbersome, bound books were used in place of modern loose-leaf devices; when the typewriter supplanted the pen in the handling of the correspondence; and when many modern office appliances, such as adding machines, dictaphones, billing machines, multigraphs, were unknown and unthought of.

## WHERE PRODUCTS GOES.

The greater portion of the normal output of the McAvity plant goes to Upper Canada and the Northwest and also for export trade. McAvity valves and fittings are installed in numberless power plants and in all the diversified factories, mills and mines throughout Canada. The homes of the Canadian people have more or less McAvity goods in their plumbing and heating systems, while almost without exception, pulp mills in the Dominion have a large proportion of McAvity bronze acid-resisting "World" brand valves and fittings. This part of the business has become increasingly large of late.

On taking a railroad journey or ocean trip, it may not be realized that the locomotive drawing the train is, in almost every case, equipped with McAvity's locomotive specialties, such as Hancock inspirators and valves, "World" pop safety valves, "World" XX valves, whistles and pipe unions; that a fair proportion of the bearings of the freight and passenger car journals, upon which they are riding, are made of "World" bronze journal bearings; and that on a steamer many of the multitudinous steam valves and fittings, stateroom port lights, ship bells and whistles, or the steamship telegraphs, are often products of the McAvity foundries and made in Saint John city.

## BOUNDARY MARKERS.

Equipment in the way of valves and fittings is similarly much in demand for steel plants and coal mines. The bronze boundary posts, marking the international boundary between the United States and Canada, are the products of this firm. McAvity business is attributed to good workmanship and the use of the best materials obtainable, such as pure ingot copper, tin, lead and zinc, all of which go into the manufacture of brass. A further feature of the McAvity works incidental to the various processes of manufacture is a completely equipped chemical laboratory, where a test piece of iron and steel is taken once a day and subjected to a chemical test, afterwards being pulled on a powerful 75-ton testing machine to see that the mixture is exactly according to the proper formulae. After this, the articles are machined, fitted and made up. They are then further subjected to several hydraulic tests at just double the pressure at which they are to be used, for no matter what the article is, it must be packed and thoroughly tested before it is permitted to be sent out of the factories.

## THE PRESIDENT.

The president and general manager of the company, George McAvity, has occupied this position since 1910 and under his management the business has made tremendous strides. When he became president, the McAvity corporation was employing about 200 persons at the Water street, Vulcan foundry, the King street store, and the different warehouses. During the war, the list of employees embraced some 2,625 individuals, 2,000 of these being employed at the Rothery avenue plant in the manufacture of munitions. At the present time the number employed is limited to 500, several of whom have been with the firm extending over a period of 40 years and more.

The continued growth and success of the McAvity business is attributed in a large measure to the ability to sense the demand and produce goods

that meet with the approval of the buying public. The constant aim is to make a good product better.

The business has survived wars and business panics and has taken a large share in building the industries of the Maritime Provinces. Today the house of McAvity adorns the memory of its revered founder with a record of 91 years of honorable service. The McAvity corporation, in addition to the manufacture of brass and iron valves, fittings, etc., under the trade mark names of "McAvity" and "World," has the Canadian rights for the use of the Hancock, Ashcroft and Leslie patents and designs.

## TO LOYALIST DAYS.

An interesting coincidence in connection with the McAvity firm is that the site now occupied by their wholesale and retail hardware store in King street is the identical spot occupied by the log cabin in which the first Thomas McAvity's wife's mother, a daughter of the Loyalist Van Dean family of Knickerbocker descent, was born in 1783.

The board of directors consists of Thomas, John A., George, Stephen S., James L., G. Clifford and P. D. McAvity and T. McAvity Stewart. The officers of the firm are George McAvity, president and general manager; John A. McAvity, vice-president; and Charles Coster, secretary.

The management of the firm is made as follows: G. Clifford McAvity, managing director of the Rothery avenue plant; P. D. McAvity, sales manager of the hardware department; and Stephen S. McAvity, manager of the retail department. Other members of the personnel are W. E. Stratton, purchasing agent for the hardware department with W. S. Clark as assistant; Fred S. Stewart, advertising manager; Joseph B. Hamm, sales manager for the manufacturing department; Frank L. Miller, purchasing agent for the manufacturing department; O. S. Trenoway, manager of the machine and automobile departments; S. C. Hoyt, manager of the cutlery department; W. S. Harrison, in charge of the paint department; A. J. Bener, manager of the builders' hardware department; and F. T. Clarke in charge of the plumbing department.

The officers of the Rothery plant are: L. J. Gagnon, general superintendent; James P. Speer as assistant; James P. Hoyt, production superintendent; John J. Ruskey, mechanical engineer and designer; Robert H. Nichol, general foreman; Gordon Nichol, chief inspector; Frank Riel, iron foundry superintendent; and Ernest A. Wood, superintendent of the brass foundry.

## HOSPITAL HAS MAY BALANCE

Credit of \$10,518 for Last Month Reported at Meeting

Average Number of Patients Daily in Month 135, Superintendent Reports.

A balance of \$10,518.65 after payment of outstanding checks was reported yesterday afternoon at the monthly meeting of the Board of Hospital Commissioners in the board room of the General Public Hospital. The report of the superintendent, R. H. Gale, showed that there were 131 patients in the hospital on May 31. There had been 12 deaths during May and 195 had been discharged. The average number of patients per day was 135.5.

M. E. Agar presided at the meeting and there were present also Lieut.-Col. Alexander McMillan, D.S.O., Mrs. J. V. McLellan, Dr. W. W. White, Hon. Dr. W. F. Roberts, Minister of Health, and W. H. Emerson. Mr. Gale acted as secretary.

Action on the notice of motion for changes in the by-laws by J. King Kelley was postponed on account of the absence of Mr. Kelley. The report of the board approved the appointment of Miss Rhoda Keith as assistant anesthetist.

## REPORTS RECEIVED.

Reports of the superintendent, the superintendent of nurses, Miss Margaret Murdoch, secretary of the medical board, Dr. C. L. Emmerson; secretary of the out-patient department, Dr. O.

## First Aid

In case of sprains, bruises and inflammation apply Minard's at once. It prevents complications, soothes and heals.



B. Evans; the dietitian, Miss E. S. Buttell; the matron, Miss E. J. Mitchell, and the social service worker, Miss Belle B. Howe, were seated.

The report of the hospital superintendent showed there were 131 patients in

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the institution on May 31. There had been 144 on April 30, 194 had been admitted and 207 were discharged, with 12 deaths. Seventy-six operations were performed in the operating room and there were 94 operations and 716 treatments in the out-patient department. Some routine matters of repair and renovation were included in the report.

## THE FINANCES.

The financial statement showed receipts of \$20,079.81 including \$7,330.64 from the city chamberlain; \$4,423 from the county secretary; \$4,543.40 from paying patients and \$1,668.85 from X-ray treatments.

The report of Miss Margaret Murdoch, superintendent of nurses, showed that there were now eight graduate nurses and 16 students in the institution.

Dr. Emmerson reported that the medical board had met on May 30.

The report of the out-patient department, submitted by Dr. O. B. Evans, showed that there had been 238 patients, 716 treatments and 94 operations.

## MEALS SERVED.

Miss E. S. Buttell, dietitian, reported that 24,232 meals had been served at a cost of \$4,039.76.

Miss Mitchell reported that a total of 220 articles had been supplied to the linen room. The report of Miss Howe, social service worker, showed that 69 visits had been made during May and that 27 cases had been investigated. It was reported that one patient, considered undesirable, would be deported if arrangements could be concluded.

Hon. Dr. Roberts was appointed commissioner for June.

Permission was granted to the New Brunswick Council of Physicians and

Burgess to use the lecture room for examinations during the latter part of June.

The resignation of Miss Wood, who had been appointed pupil dietitian to report June 8, was received and the superintendent was given authority to secure another.

John Mooney, of B. Mooney & Sons, informed the meeting that his company would repair the covering of the parapet on the roof of the Nurses' Home at their own expense.

## DR. RYAN ILL.

A letter was read from Mrs. E. J. Ryan, saying that Dr. Ryan, who is a member of the board, was at present in a hospital in New York with an infected arm. He had had three or four minor operations and another was to have been performed at the time of writing. It

was hoped that he would be back in Saint John in the next few weeks.

Several applications for the position of dietitian, which will be vacated July 31 by the resignation of Miss E. S. Buttell, were referred to a committee.

Including Dr. Roberts, Mrs. McLellan and Mr. Gale for report at a later meeting.

The matter of a genital-urinary service was discussed. The medical board had recommended that it be an outside service. The first section of their re-

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