

= Matthew McCauley (politician) =

Matthew McCauley (July 11 , 1850 ? October 25 , 1930) was the first mayor of the city of Edmonton , and a member of the legislative assemblies of both the Northwest Territories and Alberta .

McCauley was born into a farming family in what would become the province of Ontario to an Irish father and Canadian mother . His restless nature and desire for adventure led him to travel west to Manitoba . In Manitoba , he established a livery business , which he ran until he set off for Edmonton in 1879 . He farmed for two years in Fort Saskatchewan before finally moving to Edmonton , where he established the settlement 's first livery and cartage business .

Along with a couple prominent Edmonton citizens , he formed an association aimed to restore order in the area , settling many disputes , including during the 1885 Riel Rebellion as its captain . He soon established a school board , recognizing the need for a school , which he served as president and trustee for 18 years . Shortly before Edmonton was incorporated as a town in 1892 , he formed the Board of Trade . Upon the incorporation , he was acclaimed the town 's first mayor in 1892 , and the next two following years . He did not run for re @-@ election at the end of his third term , opting to run for the seat representing Edmonton on the Territorial Legislature , which he served for six years . Following his defeat moved to Tofield , Alberta farm until 1905 , when he returned to Edmonton and was elected to the new Legislative Assembly of Alberta . The following year , he resigned his seat to serve as the first warden of the province 's first penitentiary . After five years as warden , he moved to British Columbia to fruit farm , but he moved back to Sexsmith , Alberta 13 years later to farm , where he died in 1930 .

= = Early life = =

Matthew McCauley was born July 11 , 1850 in Owen Sound , Ontario to Alexander and Eleanor (née Latimer) McCauley . His father Alexander was an Irish immigrant who was born in Antrim . He moved to Canada at the age of five , and went on to become a successful farmer . Though his early years were described as him being a " typical farm boy " of the time , he received schooling from the Owen Sound Public School . McCauley desired to follow in the footsteps of his father as a farmer after his completing his education , but his restless nature and passion for adventure set him off to the west , where he first set off to Fort Garry in Manitoba .

McCauley established a livery business , the first of the kind in Fort Garry (later Winnipeg) . He married Matilda Benson of Sarnia , Ontario in 1875 , and resided in Fort Garry with her for the next four years , where he continued to operate his livery business . After growing restless in Winnipeg in 1879 , McCauley sold his business and traveled west , this time to Edmonton . McCauley arrived in Edmonton in the fall of 1879 after 21 days of travelling by ox cart . He purchased a farm in Fort Saskatchewan the following spring , and farmed for two years before moving to Edmonton in 1882 . In Edmonton , he opened the town 's first livery and cartage business , the Edmonton Cartage Company , and a butcher shop in 1883 .

= = Early activities in Edmonton = =

= = = Protective Association = = =

McCauley arrived in Edmonton at the time of what has been described " one of the biggest conflicts ever . " The Hudson 's Bay Company has recently surveyed lots of land that were intended to be sold as property , however word broke out that the particular are of land was the only land surveyed in the entire district . People attracted to the area were unable to afford land , and therefore built shacks . As more claim @-@ jumpers moved in , it was requested that they move three or four miles outwards , but they refused . McCauley sent many urgent messages to Ottawa to settle the dispute in a civil manner , but to no avail . As a result of the government not being able to do anything , and

the lack of a law enforcement agency in the town , a group of prominent citizens formed a " Protective Association " as an attempt to restore law and order , to which McCauley was elected its captain .

As captain , McCauley tried hard to settle the dispute and reach a compromise with the claim @-@ jumpers who " had no desire for a peaceful settlement . " He was involved in a brief altercation with a claim jumper whom he approached and ordered to move . The man was armed with two revolvers and refused to move , therefore McCauley and his crew jacked the shack off its foundation and sent it down the riverbank . The Protective Association , however was involved in a legal problems brought up by the claim jumpers , for " willful damage to property . " The brief trial resulted in McCauley , as the captain being fined 40 dollars , and six other members of the committee found guilty , but being let off with court costs and an order to replace the damaged property . The Protective Association eventually managed to restore peace and order in Edmonton , and claim jumpers eventually decided that the area was not the place to build on once the land for the townsite was surveyed by the Hudson 's Bay Company .

= = = Edmonton School Board = = =

After realizing Edmonton as a suitable place for raising his children , McCauley soon recognized the community 's need for a school . McCauley led a group of prominent men and arranged for a school to be built on land donated by the Hudson 's Bay Company . The school opened in on January 2 , 1882 . Three years after the opening of the school , McCauley found himself and a small group of people paying off bills for the school . Initially , McCauley suggested that land owners be taxed with the funds going to the school , but protest followed . McCauley then decided to propose that Edmonton be designated as an official school district by the government in Ottawa , which was voted in favor of following a close vote . The school district was successfully negotiated with Ottawa , and it became the first of its kind in the North @-@ West Territories . Edmonton became known as having the " finest school system in the west of Portage la Prairie " that set an example for many other following cities . McCauley served as chairman of the newly formed School Board from 1885 to 1888 , when he stepped down , although he served as a trustee for 18 years following . He was nicknamed " Edmonton 's Father of Education " in honour of his efforts to bring an education system to the community .

= = = Rebellion of 1885 = = =

During the Riel Rebellion in 1885 , news of the Frog Lake Massacre spread to Edmonton , invoking fear to many residents . McCauley , concerned for citizens of the town , quickly responded by organizing a group of men into what was known as the " Home Guard , " which formed a sentry that ensured security from possible attacks , until the arrival of additional military protection .

= = Political career = =

= = = Mayor of Edmonton = = =

In 1889 , McCauley co @-@ founded (with Frank Oliver and John Alexander McDougall) the Edmonton Board of Trade , forerunner to the Chamber of Commerce .

When Edmonton was incorporated as a town on January 9 , 1892 , it held its first election in 1892 with McCauley acclaimed as mayor as no other candidates had put their names forth . Among his concerns during his first term were to " establish order " among the scattered shacks near the trading post , and widening various streets around the town , in preparation for what he envisioned in the future of Edmonton becoming a " busy metropolitan " . He was re @-@ acclaimed in 1893 and 1894 before stepping aside voluntarily after his third term , never having been contested in an election . During his term as mayor , the Canadian government decided to move the Dominion Land

Office from Edmonton to Strathcona , which was then a separate community , on the south side of the North Saskatchewan River . Upon the arrival of government agents to carry out the move , citizens quickly set up a resistance . Headed by McCauley and a group of prominent citizens including councillor John Cameron , Angry Edmontonians descended on the office , cut horses loose and tore to pieces the wagon that the officer was packing with records for transportation . The situation escalated quickly , becoming heated , from which McCauley called on the people to relent as they would request reconsideration from Ottawa . Later that same day , the decision was reversed . In 1893 , he went to Ottawa to enter negotiations with the federal government for a street railway system . McCauley was successful , and the system became the first in the west . He also advocated for federal government assistance in building a railway bridge over the North Saskatchewan River for the existing Edmonton @-@ Calgary rail connection , which was completed in 1900 . McCauley also saw Edmonton 's need for a hospital , and consequently established what later became Grey Nuns Hospital , arranging for the Grey Nuns to establish at the town , along with a nurse .

In 1896 , McCauley re @-@ sought election to Town Council , this time as alderman . He was easily elected , finishing first of eight candidates in an election in which the top six were elected . He served a single term , and did not seek re @-@ election the following election .

= = = Territorial and provincial = = =

Following his decision not to run for re @-@ election as mayor in 1893 , three years later , McCauley sought to be Edmonton 's representative in the North @-@ West Territories Legislature . During his term as representative , he worked to upgrade Edmonton 's school system , along with upgrading the town 's trade industry . He served in this capacity until 1902 , when he was defeated . During his time , McCauley kept his focus on his development of the school system , introducing a single tax bill intended to give schools boards power to adopt the tax .

In 1901 , McCauley sold Edmonton Cartage Company and used the proceeds to buy one thousand acres (4 km ²) of farmland at Beaver Lake , near Tofield , Alberta , where he farmed until returning to Edmonton in 1905 . While in Tofield , he married Annie Cookson - his first wife , Matilda , had died in 1896 - with whom he had four children , bringing his total to twelve .

Upon Alberta becoming a province in 1905 , McCauley returned to Edmonton and was elected as a Liberal member to the Legislative Assembly of Alberta in the riding of Vermilion in the province 's first general election . During his tenure , he had introduced many bills to the house , and advocated for a university to be founded .

McCauley played a vital role in Edmonton being chosen as the provincial capital city . In a speech , he pointed out the ongoing development at the northern town of Peace River , Alberta , and how Edmonton would be the " logical centre of the province " .

= = Later career = =

McCauley resigned his seat in the Legislature the following year after he was elected , after his appointment to be warden of the Edmonton Penitentiary , the first of its kind in Alberta . It was said that his reputation of " honesty , fairness and ability to keep law and order " was a contributing factor in his appointment . In the years he served in the capacity , McCauley instituted a number of new practices , including creating labour jobs for prisoners , like producing bricks , concrete , clothing and tools . Prisoners were also to garden to produce their own food , and by the end of his tenure as warden , a coal mine was formed . He was greatly respected amongst his colleagues , and it was said that " he never once had a complaint against him from either staff nor inmates . "

McCauley resigned as warden in 1912 to become a fruit farmer in Penticton in the Okanagan valley . After thirteen years farming in Penticton , he moved to Sexsmith , Alberta to farm on a recently bought 1000 @-@ acre farm .

= = Personal life = =

McCauley married Matilda Benson of Sarnia , Ontario in 1875 , in which he would remain married to until her sudden death in 1896 . He married once again in 1902 , to Annie Cookson , originally from Manchester , England . He had seven children with his first wife Matilda ? Alexander , Lilly Bell , Margaret Alberta , Mabel , Maud , Frank and May . With Annie Cookson he had four children , Georgina , John , Raymond and Ada .

McCauley was an active member of the Edmonton community . He served as a director of the Edmonton Agricultural Association for 16 years . The association brought the Edmonton Exhibition to Edmonton , one of the prominent fairs of the west at the time . As telephone service was brought to Edmonton , McCauley was one of the first to receive one installed . His telephone number was # 1 . When John Hamilton @-@ Gordon , 1st Marquess of Aberdeen and Temair would visit Edmonton for business , McCauley and his wife would usually be the ones to entertain him . Also an avid curler , McCauley was a founder of the Royal Curling Club in Edmonton and led his curling team where he served as a skip . He also enjoyed other sports , including horse carriage racing .

McCauley School was named his honour in 1912 , for his work in pioneering the public school board .

= = Death and legacy = =

McCauley died in Sexsmith on October 25 , 1930 following a long illness . He was survived by his second wife , Annie Cookson , and 11 children and step @-@ children . Upon learning of his death , all school flags in Edmonton were ordered to fly at half @-@ staff . Almost 600 students from McCauley School , which was named in his honour , stood in " solemn salute " . McCauley 's body was brought back to Edmonton , when he laid in state on October 30 at the First Presbyterian Church , where his funeral services were later conducted . He was interred at the Edmonton Cemetery .

McCauley was often called " Honest Matt McCauley " . It was said that he " has a strong personality , high ideals and indomitable will and was generous to a fault . " Edmonton 's McCauley neighbourhood is named for him . What was known as McCauley Plaza was also built on the site of his home , overlooking the North Saskatchewan River . It has since however been renamed Telus Plaza .