

William H. McCreery

(See: www.mccreeryhouse.com)

William H. McCreery originally built the house. He was born in the Ligonier Valley, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania on November 17, 1839. He attended Military school in Pennsylvania and became ordained as a Presbyterian Minister. In 1870 he married his first wife Martha Marshall. In 1874 they came to Colorado seeking to improve his health and a chance to start a church of his faith in the wilderness. Mr. McCreery traveled up and down the eastern slope of the mountains looking for a place for a second congregation of the United Presbyterian Church. He was invited to Alexander Canyon (now Big Thompson Canyon) and decided that this is where he wanted to begin his work.

The United Presbyterian Church of Loveland was born on Thanksgiving Day, the 25th of November 1875. It is said that Rev. McCreery preached a sermon from Psalm 105. In it's first years the church met in schoolhouses. The first church building was completed in August 1, 1878 and located on Fourth Street and Lincoln. This church cost \$1600 to build and the Board of Church Extension loaned \$600 of the money.

In 1879 he discontinued his pastoral duties and retired to his farm. He was appointed superintendent of schools in 1882 for Larimer County and held this position for 5 years. In 1888 McCreery conducted the Loveland Academy for advanced students. This lasted only one year and failed. After this he did real estate and loans.

The McCreery house was built sometime between 1888 and 1901, it appeared on the Larimer County assessor records in 1901. The Larimer County Clerk and Recorder office in Fort Collins, has the original Warranty Deed of purchasing the land dated May 14, 1888.

In 1905 the new United Presbyterian Church was completed at Fourth and Jefferson. This was needed to accommodate the growth of the congregation. The architect was Montezuma Fuller, and the work was completed at a cost of \$18,000.

In 1918 Mr. and Mrs. Charles Quick and family moved into the house and boarded William McCreery for their rent. The house was filled with Mr. McCreery's second wife's furnishings and her own hand painted china. It was considered a show place of Loveland.

The last information we have on McCreery is from June 17, 1926 from the Loveland Reporter Herald. The Reverend McCreery died in a train fire in 1926. The car he was sleeping in caught on fire. The passengers were aroused by flames, which spread so quickly they could not reach the doors and jumped out of the windows. According to Mrs. McCreery, his daughter in law, the Rev. McCreery went back into the burning train to put on clothes where he died of smoke inhalation. Mr. McCreery must have had a great influence on the Loveland community for no other headlines of this size was found through the earlier newspaper.