

OBITUARY

HUGH MCKELLAR.

Hugh McKellar, pioneer agriculturist, died on October 28, 1929.

Born in Oxford County, Ontario in 1849, McKellar received his education in the public schools of the district and at the Galt Collegiate Institute. Later he taught school and for six years acted as principal in the public schools of Paisley and Teeswater.

Moving West in 1880 McKellar settled on a homestead near Clearwater, Man. where he farmed for ten years. He next entered the emigration department of the provincial government and in 1892 became Chief Clerk of the Department of Agriculture, a position which he held until 1904. Proceeding in the latter year to Moose Jaw, Sask., he became secretary to the Board of Trade and in due course founder of the "Saskatchewan Farmer" and afterwards the "Agricultural Review," a paper which he edited to within a few weeks of his death.

Hugh McKellar was not strictly speaking an entomologist but as Chief Clerk of the Department of Agriculture it was his duty to keep abreast of all matters appertaining to agriculture, and when insect outbreaks occurred, to learn how to control them. Moreover there was no agricultural college staff or other source of information within the province in those days and the task of obtaining and supplying it was largely in his hands. It was under these circumstances that McKellar was brought in contact with such men as Dr. James Fletcher, Entomologist and Botanist to the Dominion Experimental Farms, and with Professor Otto Lugger, the well known entomologist from Minnesota. A perusal of Fletcher's reports from 1890 to 1904 reveals many extracts from McKellar's correspondence and indicates that he was the former's chief source of information on insect problems in Manitoba. From 1900 to 1904 he, in company with Fletcher, carried on an extensive campaign against grasshoppers. It was at this time that I first came in contact with him and he soon afterwards introduced me to Fletcher; it was also during this memorable grasshopper campaign that we first thoroughly demonstrated the superiority of poison baits over mechanical implements, such as "Hopper Dozers" and originated the "Criddle mixture." All of this was made possible through the enthusiastic co-operation of McKellar who arranged for the supplies of poison with which the experiments were carried out. Thus, in this way, as well as in others, he had a direct influence on the progress of economic entomology and for this reason, if for no other, his name is worthy of a place in its annals.

Hugh McKellar was a ready speaker and a keen enthusiast for the betterment of agriculture. His memory for the friends of pioneer days was always warm and when I visited him a few years ago he showed me, with great pride, a copy of "Farm Weeds of Canada" in which was inscribed in Fletcher's characteristic handwriting: "To my dear old friend Hugh McKellar." N. CRIDDLE.

Mailed Saturday, January 4th, 1930.