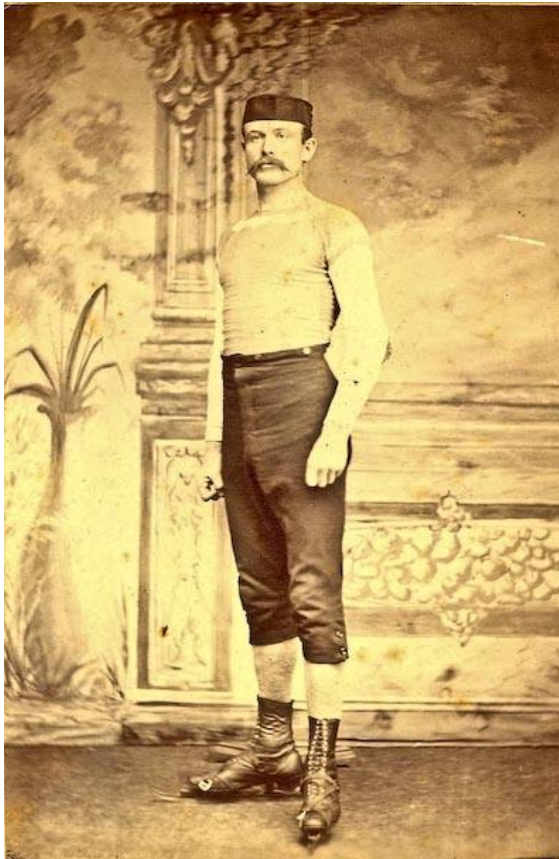


Hugh J. McCormick

World Professional Speed Skating Champion

The Hugh J. McCormick Story©

Hugh McCormick skated and skated well they said. And yes, the records he set during his professional skating career from 1883 through 1895 say it all. In 1883 he became the New Brunswick Champion and by 1885 he was both the Canadian Maritime and North American Champion. In 1887 he set world records for distances 1, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12 & 14 miles. In 1890 Hugh McCormick would become the World Professional Speed Skating Champion after defeating reigning World Champion Axel Paulsen of Norway in a series of races held at Minneapolis, Minnesota and Eau Claire, Wisconsin.



...and the rest is history as they say.

But besides these sporting records, who was this Hugh McCormick and how did he become the World Champion...

...certainly there was more to the story than that: there was scuttling skulduggery, loads of prize money to be won, a royal count from Belgium played a part; Europeans, Americans, Canadians...

Hugh J. McCormick

Part I

Hugh J. McCormick was born in late February 1854 at McCormick House on Kennebecasis Island, an island located at the confluence of the St. John and Kennebecasis Rivers in the Province of New Brunswick, Canada. He was the youngest of nine surviving children born to Ralph & Bridget McCormick. Hugh's parents were Irish immigrants who landed in New Brunswick in the early 1830s and settled on Kennebecasis Island – during their time and still today also known as McCormick's Island.

Hugh's early life on the Island was simple, one of attending school at the Island's one-room school house, doing chores around the family farm and playing on the St. John & Kennebecasis Rivers – in winter he skated the frozen surface, in summer he rowed.

As sculling boats were popular during Hugh's growing-up years, coupled with the situation of residing on an island, he took to rowing at a young age and developed into a proficient, accomplished rower. Early on Hugh rowed with his brother Charles, together they competed in and won a number of local pair-oar rowing regattas. Hugh eventually moved on to the single-man scull boat and continued to compete within the local rowing scene. However during winter months temperatures dropped well below freezing causing the local rivers and waterways to ice up – boats were then pulled up and ice skates taken down. Skating was both a sport and a means of getting around during wintertime. Provided the river ice was thick enough one could skate for miles and quickly get to and from all places along the frozen waterways – in fact during the 1800s most centres of habitation, commerce and such were located along the waterways as there was little in the way of roads connecting villages and towns – the rivers and waterways were the highways in these times, being used extensively for transportation of people and goods.

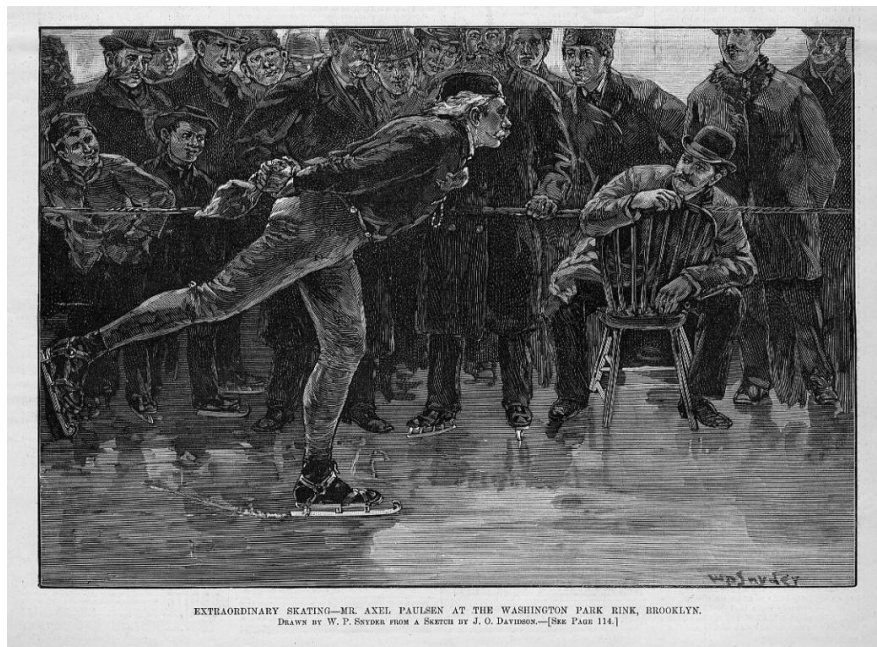
Life was like that for Hugh; farming, fishing as well as playing on the rivers would have continued like that had it not been for a key sporting event that caught his attention, along with the attention of North American sport enthusiasts overall.

In the winter of 1883 the World Professional Speed Skating Champion, Axel Paulsen of Norway, came to North America to participate in a series of skating events. The previous year in 1882 Paulsen had participated in The Great International Skating Tournament in Vienna, Austria where he won the speed skating event and placed third in the fancy (figure) skating event.

On February 8, 1883 a race was held at the open air rink in Washington Park, Brooklyn, New York. Paulsen defeated 17 'picked' skaters, the fastest from Norway, Canada, England & the United States. Paulsen also set the following records at the race:

1 mile: 3 minutes, 34 $\frac{3}{5}$ seconds
5 miles: 19 minutes, 10 seconds
10 miles: 39 minutes, 7 $\frac{3}{5}$ seconds

Paulsen's impressive sweeping and record breaking victory over his competitors captured the attention and fired the imagination of North American winter sport enthusiasts.



Extraordinary Skating - Mr. Axel Paulson at the Washington Park Rink, Brooklyn

Saint John, New Brunswick was by no means immune to the excitement and stimulation these races would have on its ice skaters and its sporting community as a whole. Saint

John was the largest city in the Province of New Brunswick and, housing a number of world class ice rinks, the Provincial centre for skating competition. The city and its surrounding areas produced some of the best competitive speed skaters. Thus the news of Paulsen's accomplishments in Brooklyn caused a huge stir in New Brunswick skating circles, particularly amongst the local skating elite. Then, if that wasn't enough, during the latter part of February 1883 Paulsen came to Saint John where he was scheduled to race the Canadian Amateur Champion Robert Elliot, however due to poor ice conditions the race was cancelled. Nevertheless Paulsen did put his time in the city to good use by giving a number of exhibition performances in both fancy and speed skating. During one event at Victoria Rink Paulsen set a rink speed record of 7 minutes, 8 ½ seconds for a 2 mile distance. This instantly pushed local speed skating to a level of obsession – with the bar now reset to this new high, skaters from all over the Province were vying to beat Paulsen's record. Further fueling the craze was tangible backing in the form of cash prize purses, attracting many accomplished, known skaters and drawing spectator crowds that filled rink venues to capacity. The best of the best tried to beat this new rink record, but to no avail. Then, as it can happen in sport, a dark horse appeared on the scene; a spud flogger from the country is how some described him – a nobody it seemed, straight out of the blue – or was it the green!

But McCormick nearly missed his encounter with destiny. If it wasn't for the prodding of his good friend and local businessman John O'Regan, who managed the Brayley Drug Company, Hugh may never have raced competitively at all. The day was April 4, 1883. Hugh started early that morning, strapped on his 'long-reachers' skates and set out from McCormick's Cove, McCormick's Island, skating across the Kennebecasis and St. John Rivers and into the City of Saint John – a somewhat dangerous jaunt over river ice at that time of the year. The main purpose of his trip was to sell in the city market some excess farm produce left over from the long winter and pick up a few supplies needed back at the homestead. After Hugh finished his business he headed off to visit with his good friend John O'Regan.

O'Regan talked with excitement about the big speed skating race being held that evening at Victoria Rink – an open event with the winner to be named the New Brunswick Speed

Skating Champion. “Are you going down to watch the big race tonight?” asked O’Regan. McCormick answered he certainly was, “wouldn’t miss it for the world,” continued Hugh. At one point O’Regan then suggested, “you have your skates with you Hugh and it’s an open one, why don’t you give the others a go!” McCormick went silent and wasn’t sure how to respond. “Was O’Regan just joshing around with him or was he serious?” mulled McCormick. Regardless, an interesting idea he thought, but, although he skated for years, Hugh had never raced competitively and felt the idea a wee farfetched considering the expert skaters that would be competing. As well, not having ever raced, Hugh had no idea if he was in any way near fast enough to compete with 'real' speed skaters. O’Regan thought different, he had skated many times with McCormick and he knew the strapping countryman’s ability. O’Regan continued to pitch Hugh on the idea. Finally McCormick agreed he'd throw his hat into the ring – why not. So Hugh went down to the rink a little earlier that evening and signed up for the race.

That night Victoria Rink was packed, full with rambunctious spectators who’d come for one thing and one thing only: fast action. The competition would be over a distance of 2 miles with a winner-take-all prize of \$10. With 6 skaters signed up to race there would be a first round of 3 one mile qualifying heats with the three winners advancing to the final 2 mile test – oh yes, with no doubt in anyone's mind, this night the audience would certainly be getting what they came for!

McCormick won his first round and was paired with the other first round winners Frederic Jones and G. W. Campbell. Jones and Campbell were attired in fine skating sportsman costume. McCormick, not quite as finely attired, was decked out in a coonskin hat and homespun trousers, with hand knit socks pulled over his pant legs. The crowd roared with laughter at the sight of McCormick and it was said some thought he was there for "burlesque-like" comic entertainment. However, in those times, being the son of Irish immigrants, laughter and jeering long since didn’t faze Hugh in the slightest and steely poised atop his long-reachers he stood rock steady awaiting the starting pistol. When the gun fired Hugh got off to a slower start than the other two but by the first mile he was well ahead (proving to be a pistol himself) and continued to advance his lead to the finish.

There was no more laughter and jeering became cheering as Hugh J. McCormick, defeating his two opponents over a course of 2 miles in a time of 7 minutes, 35 seconds, was now the New Brunswick Speed Skating Champion.

Victoria Rink



The Victoria Skating Rink on City Road. Opened in 1865, the rink was demolished in 1928. Besides ice and roller skating, it was used for concerts and exhibitions, such as the 1875 Manufacturers and Mechanics Exhibition. After the Great 1877 Saint John Fire, the rink housed hundreds of homeless people. The Colonial Inn Motel stands in its place today. (Hall Coll., PIRP #2403; James Coll., PIRP #7526)



With a smart sum of \$10 in his homespun trousers, the professional speed skating bug not only bit the new Champion but burrowed under his skin and laid eggs in Hugh's heart. Confident with what he could do under competition he would now be going for the top spots and, secretly in his own mind, the apex of those spots – Hugh leveled his sights firmly on one Axel Paulsen, reigning World Champion.

End of Part I

Part II

The following winter in 1884 the passion and craze for speed skating continued its upsurge. Spectator numbers were ever increasing, with rink operators leveraging the swelling interest to promote and run races by offering winner medals and ever larger cash prizes.

McCormick was now a well known local champion and frequent challenger in many competitions. Early in the 1884 season McCormick made his first attempt to contest Paulsen with a challenge to race for a medal. Paulsen declined saying he only raced for money. Local businessmen then put up a prize purse of \$100. Again Paulsen refused the amount, but said he'd be willing to race McCormick for a minimum of \$500 at a later date. In the meantime McCormick attempted to break the record Paulsen set over a 2 mile distance at Victoria Rink in Saint John. In an exhibition race against the clock and before a large spectator crowd, McCormick flashed over the Victoria Rink 2 mile course, clocking a time of 6 minutes 10 ½ seconds – almost a full minute faster than Paulsen's record from the previous season. It was an incredible display and record, turning the sport of speed skating throughout North America on its head. But although Hugh's fast time was thoroughly vouched for by reliable persons, there emerged doubt south of the border in the States where speed skating was also a hugely popular winter sport and where Paulsen was well known having raced, exhibited and set numerous records.

Mr. Curtis, editor of the New York sports paper 'The Spirit of the Times', laughed when he heard of this "two mile humbug". However, Curtis offered McCormick \$500 if he would come to New York and repeat his world champion bettering performance. After hearing this Hugh was furious at the New York papers for doubting the validity of his performance and record result in a skating event that was professionally organized and witnessed by many. When approached by a reporter from the Saint John paper 'The Sun' regarding these Yankee comments, the local champion had only one thing to say,

“... that it was all very well for the New York papers to go for him when the winter is over. Hold on, said McCormick, wait until next winter, and if I am still alive, I will head south and show the New Yorkers what I can do in the way of skating.”

With that McCormick hung up his skates as the winter came to a close, having to be content with his achievements and new records set during the season, but also knowing full well that he had something to prove south of the border the following winter.



Hugh J. McCormick

End of Part II

Part III

During the past 1884 season another local New Brunswick skater was also establishing a reputation as a competitive speed skater. This being William Whelpley from the Long Reach area along the St. John River, not far from Kennebecasis Island and McCormick House. Like Hugh, Whelpley had also skated virtually all of his life and was a keen long-distance endurance skater having skated for years up and down the long stretches of New Brunswick's St. John and Kennebecasis Rivers. Whelpley developed the long blades he used in skating, and others including McCormick used Whelpley's successful 'long-reachers' skate design – named after the Long Reach section of the St. John River where Whelpley lived and skated. Whelpley proved his endurance skating ability competitively during the 1884 season, particularly in a marathon skating event held that year at Victoria Rink,

Shortly after 12 o'clock yesterday the ten hour go-as-you-please race started in the Victoria Skating Rink. Each contestant had a number pinned on his breast. The contestants were No 1 Whelpley, No 2 French, No 3 Braun, No 4 Foster, No 5 Pitt, No 6 Koehan & No 7 Vandyne. When V.B. Hagen said "go" the men started. Braun spurted gaining a half lap on French. During the afternoon Whelpley forged ahead gaining several laps on Braun and kept his lead, gradually gaining lap after lap until toward the close, when he started to show signs of distress. Braun kept gaining steadily on him, and had they had another hour to skate it is doubtful whether Whelpley would have stayed. At 10 o'clock sharp the referee called time with the following results announced by the scorer:

*Whelpley 117 miles, 12 laps
Braun 114 miles, 8 laps
French 103 miles, 11 laps
Pitt 102 miles, 10 laps*

Whelpley was a confident racer and with official competitive results he offered to race any man in the world over a distance of 50 miles provided the challenger could put up a prize purse of \$500.

In the winter of 1885 William Whelpley, with his brother Wallace Ross, travelled to Newburg, New York. Whelpley was looking for skating matches against American

counterparts. Whelpley signed on for a meet against Joseph Walsh who claimed to be champion of the Hudson and America. Whelpley beat Walsh by half a mile over a 5 mile course and in so doing broke all existing American records for multiple mile races from 1 through 5 miles. With this victory Whelpley was considered to be the Canadian Amateur Open Champion. After this performance no other American skaters would race Whelpley and he returned to Saint John victorious.

McCormick, along with his brother Charles, arrived in New York shortly after Whelpley's record breaking race. When it was learned that McCormick was faster than Whelpley, Hugh found it impossible to line up any matches with American skaters. That now being the situation he decided to use his time in the States to challenge existing North American and World records; a task, in part, he had to do anyway to put quiet one Mr. Curtis – and relieve him of the cash prize he'd pledged.

In fact Mr. Curtis offered two cash prizes. One prize was the \$500 he offered the year before for McCormick to repeat the record time for a 2 mile distance Hugh had achieved in Saint John during the 1884 season. The other was a \$250 purse open to McCormick or any other skater to skate a 1 mile distance under 3 minutes and 10 seconds.

Over 11 days McCormick raced four times against the clock. His first go, at the Williamsburg Athletic Club Rink in Brooklyn, New York, was for the 2 mile distance. For that one Hugh's effort fell short of the prize mark set by Mr. Curtis. McCormick next focused his effort on the 1 mile distance. At Hoboken, New Jersey McCormick blazed around a slow track in a time just over the limit set, although still faster than had ever been recorded in the United States – Mr. Curtis was begrudgingly impressed. With Hugh's confidence bolstered he then attempted to break the 3 mile distance record at Bergen, New York. McCormick bolted around the ice rink at lightning flash speed to complete 3 miles a full 6 seconds faster than the previous standing record. Hugh was clearly on a roll and, using this momentum, for his last race he chose the 1 miler with every expectation of taking home the \$250 prize money staked by Mr. Curtis.

McCormick informed Mr. Curtis of his intention to skate the 1 mile for Curtis' \$250 prize. The race attracted a large crowd of spectators and with the audience as witness the quick Canadian skated the mile in a record breaking 3 minutes 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ seconds, beating the mark set by Mr. Curtis. However, when Hugh tried to collect the prize money Mr. Curtis refused to pay on a reason of technicality that nobody really understood. Nevertheless McCormick was happy as he proved to the New Yorkers his speed skating prowess. Hugh and his brother Charles returned to Saint John with Hugh now confirmed the Professional Champion of North America.

Saint John sport skating fans were on a high seeing both Whelpley and McCormick returning from the States with winning and record breaking performances. This set the stage for local skating enthusiasts to call for a match between the two skaters, with fans from the supporting camps of each champion proclaiming theirs the better, faster speed skater. A challenge was finally agreed to with Whelpley and McCormick set to meet on March 18, 1885 in a 5 mile race for the Canadian Maritime Championship. The race was held at La Tour Rink in Saint John with each competitor putting up \$50 of his own money, in addition a special prize of \$200 was added by Count Robert Visar de Bury – Saint John's resident Vice-Consul for Belgium. The contest would be the pinnacle event of the 1885 season. With over 4000 fans in attendance if there was any doubt about who was the faster of the two skaters going into the match, there certainly wasn't by the end: McCormick defeated Whelpley by over a lap to win the race and capture the Canadian Maritime Championship.

This was another significant milestone for McCormick, particularly against a formidable and accomplished skater as Whelpley was, but still a test match against the elusive Norwegian for the World Professional Champion title was Hugh's ultimate goal. Worryingly though with the 1885 season now coming to a close, McCormick began to seriously wonder if he would ever get the chance to race Axel Paulsen!

End of Part III

Part IV

Of course the victory over Whelpley was a very satisfying achievement for Hugh and clearly crowned him the king of North American speed skating, now having both the Canadian Maritime and North American championship titles under his belt. But the supreme prize for Hugh was to race victorious over Paulsen and claim the coveted world title – the definitive 'top spot'. Paulsen had declined McCormick's challenge the year previous and the 1885 season proved the same. In fact during the 1885 season the Crystal Palace Rink in Montreal tried to arrange a match between the two champs but again Paulsen would not agree to meet. McCormick tried many more times to arrange a match with the slippery Norwegian but these efforts were to no avail – to the New Brunswicker's great frustration a match with Paulson continued to elude him.

As a point of note, in those times there was no official skating body that governed the sport of speed skating. Also the majority of competitive skating was of a professional standing – skating for winnings in the form of prize money. Lacking any form of governing body, a skater could also claim championship position by virtue of beating a number of top ranking contenders or beating the reigning champion's records. This being the professional realm of the day, a reigning champion often dodged challenges that could threaten one's crown in order to remain on top and be in demand for exhibition events and races that returned rewards and prize money along the way, particularly against lesser skaters vying to move up in standing. The crafty Norwegian was enjoying his standing at the top and he certainly knew McCormick was a competitive threat to that position.

However, it should also be noted that besides speed skating Paulsen was an accomplished 'fancy' skater (figure skater) as well; with performances of fancy skating also in high demand during these times. In fact it was this same Axel Paulsen who invented and perfected the 'Axel jump', one of the six key jumps in figure skating. Today figure skating still considers the Axel jump the most difficult jump for new skaters to learn, let alone master (the single, double & triple Axel). It was during The Great International Skating Tournament held in Vienna in 1882, hosted by the Vienna Skating Club, where Paulsen participated in both fancy and speed skating competitions, that he first performed

the Axel jump in international competition. A letter in the 'Sydney Morning Herald', January 26, 1882 titled "Our Vienna Letter" describes the tournament figure skating event:

"The contest began with skating the whole 'school' of figures from the simplest to the most complicated, and in this the foreigners did not take part, there having been little time and no ice to practice on. With the thermometer at 5 degrees Réaumur over freezing point, the most interesting part of the contest commenced, that in which every skater proved his skill by a figure of his own invention, to last four minutes in the execution. The tribunes, decorated with draperies, flags and garlands of fir branches, began to fill, and two archdukes came in a good time to witness the interesting performance, which was accompanied throughout by the gay sounds of a military band. The public applauded furiously when Axel Paulsen at the end of a figure jumped backwards to a considerable distance, and then finished with a pirouette which looked like something turned round by the whirlwind. Leopold Frey, of Vienna, skated an enormous double snake in the unaesthetic but difficult position of the legs usually designated as half-moon. Engelmann, of Vienna, executed a very difficult combination of circles and arches, ending with a pirouette differing only from Paulsen's only by being skated on the point of the skate. Half a dozen more skaters followed with performances of great merit, but which could not vie with the three just described. More figure skating followed, and then two professionals competed for the prize assigned for such only. The conclusion was made by a general performance of all the first-rate skaters at once during which the public witnessed so much art and grace, that the applause was unceasing. The jury withdrew for an hour to decide who were to be the winners, and then, the seven electric lamps having been lighted, the distribution of prizes began. A very pretty girl, the best skater in Vienna, who is inimitable when she dances a valse on skates, performed the pleasant duty of presenting the prizes. The first prize was a silver statuette of the famous skater, Jackson (Haines), modelled by Vienna's best portrait sculptor, besides a gold medal of 500 francs, awarded to Mr. Leopold Frey, of Vienna; the second a gold medal with 400 francs, awarded to Engelmann, also of Vienna; the third a gold medal, with 300 francs, awarded to Axel Paulsen, of Christiana."

On the day following the figure skating competition, Paulsen competed in a 1600 meter speed skating race where he won with a margin of 250 meters, beating fellow Norwegian skaters Mr. Anne from Trondheim and Carl Werner from Christiania (Oslo). Paulsen's winning the speed skating event was not a surprise as he was the World Professional

Speed Skating Champion. There is no question that Paulsen was a first-rate and accomplished champion skater, both in ‘fancy’ and speed skating competition.



Axel Paulsen

For the next few years McCormick continued to race, break records and challenge Paulsen. However by the 1889 season a heavy cloud of confusion as to who was the world champion pervaded and hung over the skating world. Paulsen said he was the one. And so did McCormick by virtue of beating almost all competitors over the past few years, setting world records and consistently bettering Paulsen’s times. Having this controversy and uncertainty burning within the sport could not continue much longer – everyone, and now even Paulsen, knew this. Thus, after months of negotiations Paulsen got the terms and conditions he demanded for a championship match against McCormick.

The meet would take place in the United States with races held in the states of Minnesota and Wisconsin. This was Paulsen's choice of locales as these two places pretty much represented home-ice advantage for him - in these years Minnesota and Wisconsin were the first and second States, respectively, in the United States with the largest Norwegian immigrant populations. In fact a significant portion of the two States' populations were of Norwegian extraction, either Norwegian immigrants or first generation offspring – neither being a place with much of a fan base for an Irish Canadian matched up against a Norwegian champion.

The long anticipated match between Paulsen and McCormick was set to begin on January 1, 1890. With much at stake for many, the New Year was immediately off to an exciting start. The initial race was held at the Palace Rink in Minneapolis, Minnesota. This was the first round of a 3 race contest with the winner of 2 races taking home a prize purse of \$1000 and, most importantly, being acclaimed the World Professional Speed Skating Champion – the absolute 'top spot'.

With 5000 excited fans watching, the Norwegian and sturdy Canadian began the first race – a 15 mile distance. Lap after lap McCormick shadowed Paulsen just behind by a yard or so. On the second to last lap McCormick shot past the weary Nordic and was clearly headed for a win, but on the last lap, and in the lead, McCormick hit a wayward chair that mysteriously found its way onto the ice in front of him. Seizing this opportunity Paulsen picked up his game by mustering a final spurt of extra effort and crossed the finish line first to beat McCormick. There were a number of theories about how the chair wound up in front of Hugh, ranging from the chair being on the ice as a course marker to an act of skulduggery. No one will know for sure but nevertheless the results stood with Paulsen taking the first win and the two contenders moved on to the next race.

The second race was held on January 15 again at the Palace Rink, with this round set at a distance of 5 miles. Shortly after the second lap Paulsen fell, he never recovered and McCormick skated on to victory with the contest tied one race apiece.

The final race was held at Eau Claire, Wisconsin on February 1, 1890. The atmosphere was electric with an immense spectator crowd cheering to near rapture with anticipation and excitement as the biggest ice skating competition in North American history was about to start – the deciding race, winner takes all. This time with no mishaps for either skater, over a distance of 10 miles, on a bad track due to mild weather, McCormick beat Paulsen fair and square. Hugh J. McCormick, age 36, was crowned World Professional Speed Skating Champion.

End of Part IV

Epilogue

McCormick held his long awaited Champion title for only a short while when he was defeated in 1892 by the new Norwegian Champion, Harold Hagen, at a meet in Christiania (Oslo), Norway. When the 1893 season opened McCormick was back in Minneapolis matched up to race Hagen a second time for the world title. It was a 3 race series with a \$1000 prize purse. Again Hagen beat McCormick who was now 39 years old.

Hugh continued to skate competitively for a number of years thereafter but the hard driving days of competition were catching up to him. By 1896 he retired from competition but continued to skate exhibitions and support younger skaters in their aspirations to compete. In 1910 after a long illness Hugh passed away and was mourned by a great many admirers. Even the good people of New York didn't forget Hugh with notice of his passing being placed in 'The New York Times' Obituaries, August 29, 1910 issue.

CHAMPION SKATER DEAD.

Hugh J. McCormick Held the World's Title from 1890 to 1892.

ST. JOHN, N. B., Aug. 28.—Hugh J. McCormick, ex-champion skater of the world, died here to-day after a long illness and several operations. He first appeared on the ice as a skater in 1883, and after defeating many Canadian competitors went to New York, where he broke several records.

In 1890 he defeated Axel Paulsen, then champion speed skater of the world, in Minneapolis. In 1892 he went to Norway to race Harold Hagen, and under adverse conditions was defeated. His fastest mile, done in 2:58, was skated here.

The Rev. Dr. Charles G. Gilliat.

Special to The New York Times.

NEWPORT, R. I., Aug. 28.—The Rev. Charles G. Gilliat, Ph. D., died to-day of a paralytic stroke, which he suffered on Saturday. A former stroke obliged him to give up the rectorship of St. George's Church here, which he had held since 1884. He came to Newport as rector of Zion Church, but it was sold, and then Dr. Gilliat built St. George's. He was born in Newport on Aug. 31, 1835, and was the son of John Henry Gilliat, and his wife, who was Miss Susan Henrietta Uiter Schroeder of Baltimore, a cousin of Rear Admiral Seaton Schroeder, Commander in Chief of the Atlantic fleet. Dr. Gilliat was married twice, to Miss Catherine Louise Osborn of Buffalo in 1867, and three years after her death to Miss Lucivar Maria Head Wright of Newport in 1884. His only surviving child is Miss Amella Osborn Gilliat.

Isidor Loewe.

BERLIN, Aug. 28.—Isidor Loewe, one of the most important industrialists in Germany, is dead. He was the head of the Ludwig Loewe Company, manufacturers of machine tools, and of the Mauser Rifle Company and a Director in fifteen other large manufacturing companies. Herr Loewe received his business training in the United States.

Paul Mantegazza Dead.

SPEZIA, Italy, Aug. 28.—Paul Mantegazza, the famous anthropologist, is dead. He was born in 1831.

Obituary Notes.

Mrs. MARY J. HOOGLAND, who was descended from one of the first Dutch families to settle in New York, died at her home, 692 St. Mark's Place, Brooklyn, on Thursday of paralysis. She leaves two sons and seven grandchildren. She was 80 years old, and her ancestor, Dierck Weulse Ten Broeck, was one of those who landed with Peter Minuit in New Amsterdam in 1624.

THOMAS S. L. HOWARD died on Friday at his home, 671 Gates Avenue, Brooklyn. He was 69 years old, and was in the insurance business. A widow and three children survive him.

SAMUEL COOPER, for many years a well-known figure in New York theatrical life, died yesterday of tuberculosis at the home of his sister in Washington, D. C. Mr. Cooper was business manager of the Herald Square Theatre during the Hyde & Behman occupancy of that house in the early '00s. Last season he was advertising agent of the Columbia and Murray Hill Theatres.

The New York Times

Published: August 29, 1910

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As a person Hugh could not be better characterized than by an article in the Saint John 'Evening Star' paper in 1926... "Reference to the old skaters who made the name Saint John known the world over in ice sports could not better be started than with something about Hugh J. McCormick. There probably had never been a more popular Saint John athlete than he. His ascent to the pinnacle of Champion Skater of the World in 1890 made no difference in his amiable relations with the great number, rich and otherwise, who were glad to be among his friends. He was always the same Hugh – pleasant and friendly, of outstanding honesty in professional sport, one whose word was his bond and one who could be depended on to do his and give the best that was in him when the contest demanded it. Hugh McCormick died August 28, 1910."

Somebody once said that it doesn't matter how one died, what's important is how they lived and how that life had a positive effect on others around.

Our coonskin hats off to him – well done Hugh!

End

Written by: Andrew Gillen

Copy Right: Andrew Gillen

Note - This history has been largely researched from the following publications:

1. Saint John, a Sporting Tradition, 1785-1985 - by Brian Flood and Richard Papenhausen.
2. Saint John Speed Skating Heritage 1890 – 1929.
3. The New York Times, August 29, 1910 issue.
4. Saint John's North End – by Harold E. Wright and Paul James.
5. Ryan Stevens blog posting about the Great International Skating Tournament on: <https://skateguard.blogspot.hk>