

Captain James Westropp Brereton

1830-1911

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<https://www.retson.ca/breretonjameswestropp1830.pdf>

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Captain James Westropp Brereton.

Captain James Westropp Brereton, son of David Brereton and Margaret Vance was born in 1830 in Bantry Bay, Cork County, Ireland. He served an apprenticeship as solicitor but never practiced. He served as a sub-inspector with the Royal Irish Constabulary in Limerick.

On 10 Nov 1864 he married Ursula Caroline Elizabeth Harnett at Listowel, Kerry County, Ireland. He emigrated to Montreal in 1876 with his wife Ursula Caroline Elizabeth Harnett and their children.

After Montreal, they moved to Toronto in 1877 then to Chicago, Illinois in 1878 and Winnipeg in April 1879 where Brereton became Dominion Police Commissioner and Magistrate at Rat Portage [now Kenora, Ontario].

They had 4 children:

- i. David "Dave" Leslie Dean Brereton b. 3. August 1865, m. Margaret Martin d. 12 Jan 1920 Glichen, Alberta, Canada
- ii. Richard "Dick" Ralph Brereton b. 14 Sept 1866 in Kerry, Listowel County, Ireland m. (1)Elizabeth Mary Marshall December 1889. (2) Annie Sweeten, d. 27 November 1936 at North Vancouver, BC
- iii. James William Henry Brereton, b. 21 Feb 1868 in Bantry Bay, Cork, Ireland, m. Mary Jessie Maude Owens 17 Sept 1895 at Bridgeburg, Ontario, Canada (2) Helen G. McGrath 21 Nov 1917 Monroe, New York, USA d. 12 Jul 1946 Saint Petersburg, Pinellas, Florida, USA buried at Mount Hope Cemetery, Rochester, Monroe County, New York, USA, PLOT Range 6, Lot 98, Southwest ¼ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/184223263/james-h.-brereton>
- iv. Robina (Ina) Elizabeth Margaretta Brereton (Glass) b. 10 Aug 1874 m David Craig Glass d. 12 Jul 1955 Royal Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, England

On December 20, 1878, he was appointed Commissioner of Police within Ontario and Manitoba. His appointment was for "all the territory within the municipality of Rat Portage and for territory alongside of the Pacific Railway in disputed and extending for a quarter of a mile on side of the railway otherwise known as the Canadian Pacific".

They left for Manitoba traveling through Detroit, Chicago and finally arrived in Winnipeg on April 13, 1879.

From 1878 to 1884 he was Dominion Commissioner of Police from Winnipeg to Eagle River and then Winnipeg to Rat Portage. He was regarded as the first magistrate of Rat Portage.

The family settled in a 42.830 acre site described as part of section 17, township 10, range 17, east of the principle meridian, bounded by the shore of Cross Lake and on the south by the road allowance between section 8 and 17 that backed onto the right-of-way for the Canadian Pacific Railway and is now part of the Whiteshell Provincial The family had various visitors including Sir Charles Tupper. He rested with the Breretons on 4 November 1880 and on November 5 traveled with

them to Selkirk, Manitoba. On Sunday 7 November they dined with Sir Charles at Government House.

Relations with his wife became strained. In an entry to his diary on 18 August 1897 he noted 'Wife deserted me, Brereton Point' In April 1888 he received a letter advising him that Mrs. Brereton had been granted a divorce (08/09/1887 in Yankton, South Dekota.) She married Lionel C. Smallwood on 2 June 1888 at Holy Trinity Church, Jersey City.

He remarried Hannah Francis Lucas from whom he was separated in 1897.

He acquired a piece of land on Coney Island known as Brereton's Point. It is said that he served as a supply officer for the railway during its construction through Manitoba

He remained on his property in the Whiteshell until he moved to Kenora in 1903.

In 1904 he took up residency at St Joseph hospital and remained there until his death in 1911.

He died in Kenora on 9 February 1911 and was interred in the Lake of the Woods cemetery on February 11, 1911. He is commemorated by Brereton Lake in southeastern Manitoba.

Sources: Brereton-Goodwin, Faye, Brereton Families of Ireland (Volume 2)



Geographic Names of Manitoba, Manitoba Conservation, 2000.

<http://breretonhistory.ca/David%20Brereton.pdf> accessed October 9, 2016

https://mhs.mb.ca/docs/people/brereton_jw.shtml