

**Early Vancouver**

**Volume Five**

**By: Major J.S. Matthews, V.D.**

**2011 Edition (Originally Published 1945)**

*Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1936-1945.*

*Supplemental to volumes one, two, three and four collected in 1931, 1932 and 1934.*

**About the 2011 Edition**

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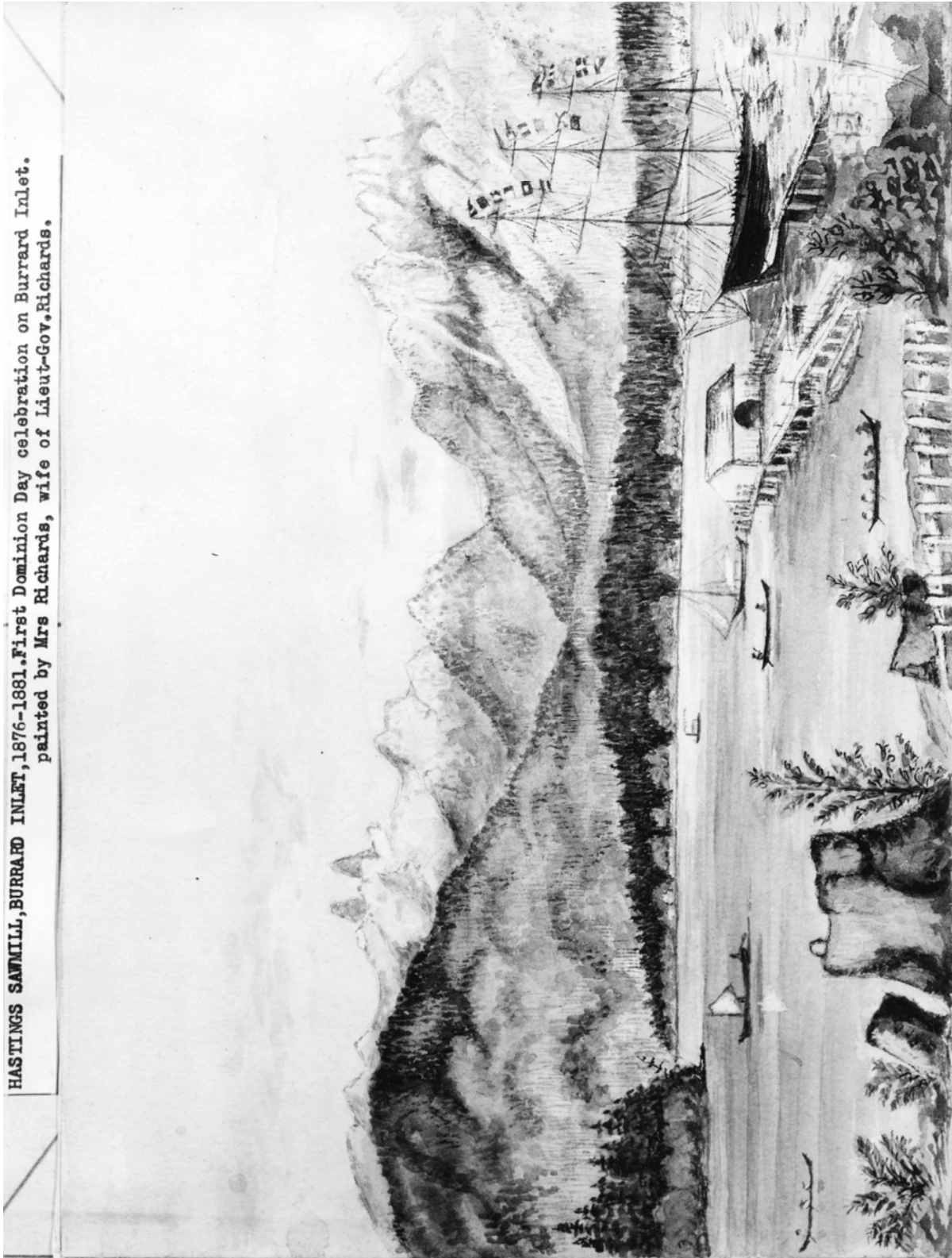
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HASTINGS SAWMILL, BURRARD INLET, 1876-1881. First Dominion Day celebration on Burrard Inlet.  
Painted by Mrs Richards, wife of Lieut.-Gov. Richards.



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[illustration annotation:]

Hastings Sawmill, Burrard Inlet, 1876-1881. First Dominion Day celebrated on Burrard Inlet. Painted by Mrs. Richards, wife of Lieut.-Gov. Richards.

**MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH MISS MARY RAYMUR LAWSON, M.B.E., OF NO. 1 OCTOBER MANSION, 1030 COOK STREET, VICTORIA, IN COMPANY WITH MRS. (CAPT.) R.L. JERMAIN, NORTH VANCOUVER (NORTH 1807) AT CITY ARCHIVES, VANCOUVER, 18 MAY 1936.**

**CAPT. J.A. RAYMUR. HASTINGS SAWMILL.**

Miss Lawson: "Being a niece of Capt. James Arnold Raymur's wife" (née Mary Grassie Lawson) "I came to live with her after Capt. Raymur's death, 31<sup>st</sup> July 1882. He was the first manager of the Hastings Sawmill, Burrard Inlet. My first visit to the Mainland was in March 1883. The boats from Victoria usually went up the river to New Westminster, and the Burrard Inlet passengers came over by stage, but there was such a bad snow storm that evening the boat could not go up the Fraser, and had to come into Burrard Inlet and land her passengers at Hastings."

**L.A. HAMILTON, 1885. SURVEY CAMP AT ENGLISH BAY.**

"I was up again in 1885 to visit the Alexanders." (Mr. R.H. Alexander was manager of the Hastings Sawmill after Capt. Raymur's death.) "By this time the C.P.R. were beginning to survey for the townsite and had a camp at English Bay, so one day we went to visit L.A. Hamilton. We had to go in a boat from the mill up to Coal Harbour, then crossed over through a beautiful trail, just where Sir Chas. Hibbert Tupper's house was built afterwards."

**THE FIRE, 1886. R.H. ALEXANDER.**

"On June 10<sup>th</sup> 1886, Mrs. Scriven" (Archdeacon Scriven's wife) "and I went up to visit the Alexanders again and to see the new town that had sprung up. On the boat there were wives going up to the Inlet to join their husbands; some of those same wives were widows on Sunday.

"The Sunday, June 13<sup>th</sup>, Whit-Sunday, was a beautiful day—and we did not realise down at the mill that there was any more fire than usual, as it was always smoky from the clearings, until the people from the town came running past the house—calling to us to come and get on board the boat at the mill wharf, as the men were all away, the town was on fire. The boat soon filled and pulled off to Moodyville. Mrs. Scriven and I stayed with Mrs. Alexander, as the men, being Sunday, were all away. I remember so well, how much we appreciated Hugh Walkem staying with us. He and three other young men were staying at George Black's at Hastings, and had go down as far as the mill, to see how the fire was progressing—when they realised they were likely to be cut off by the fire from getting back to their hotel, I heard one of them say to Hugh Walkem, 'We had better start back now,' but he said, 'No, I will stay,' but the others went back. We got the birds and animals out on the bank, and other things we could carry, but fortunately for the mill the wind changed, and only the fence of the Alexanders' house was burnt.

"We all went down to the beach when the fire came along, and took with us such as we could; dogs, cats, and we stayed on the bank. There was too much wind; the waves were too big for us to go out in the water."

**DR. BECKINGSALE'S.**

"The fire went up the hill, and burnt to the ground Dr. Beckingsale's beautiful new home. Mrs. Beckingsale was away in New Westminster, or I am sure she would have saved some of her personal things. She had just got new dresses and other clothing from England. Dr. Beckingsale only saved an axe handle, or something equally trivial. I stayed a week or two after the fire and there was plenty to do. The people were hungry and we gave them everything we had, household materials as well as food; very soon provisions and clothing came pouring in from Victoria and other places; that was my first experience of relief work."

**DR. I.W. POWELL.**

"On the Monday, Mrs. Scriven took care of a woman all day who had stood in a well trying to save her son, but she was so badly burnt she died that evening. As there was no hospital nearer than New Westminster, she was put in an old shack, down by the mill; they got a box mattress and laid her on it wrapped in a blanket, and all that could be done was to pour oil over her, as the smoke had got into her lungs. Dr. I.W. Powell from Victoria was with her when she died."

## **ST. JAMES CHURCH.**

"Many think that the St. James Church being rebuilt now is the second St. James, but it is the third, as the first one was burnt down the afternoon of the fire. We attended services at 8 and 11 o'clock that morning, and the Sunday School was in session when the fire approached the church. Father Clinton, seeing the danger, took all the children to safety over the trail to False Creek. He did do so much at the time of the fire, and at all times, too, for that matter.

"Capt. and Mrs. J.A. Raymur were instrumental in building St. James Church, and when it was finished the Church Committee could not agree upon a name to give the church, so the naming of it was left to Capt. Raymur. He consulted his wife, in the presence of the Rev. Mr. Ditcham, and Mrs. Raymur said, 'Why not call it after you, James?' Mr. Ditcham reported it to Bishop Sillitoe, and Bishop Sillitoe, sensing the humour of it, said, 'Shall it be James the Less, or James the Great,' and Capt. Raymur said, 'James the Great, of course,' so that explains the naming of St. James Church."

Edited and approved by Miss Lawson, M.B.E., Victoria, B.C., 12 June 1936.

## **FURTHER MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH MRS. PETER LAWSON, 4311 ALBERT STREET, VANCOUVER, WHILST ON BOARD S.S. *PRINCESS JOAN*, PROCEEDING TO NEWCASTLE ISLAND FOR ANNUAL PICNIC OF VANCOUVER PIONEERS ASSOCIATION, 14 JUNE 1939.**

### **VANCOUVER HIGH SCHOOL. EAST END SCHOOL. MOUNT PLEASANT SCHOOL, THE BARN.**

Major Matthews: Were you the first school pupil in Vancouver to become a Vancouver school teacher?

Mrs. Lawson: "When I came to Vancouver from Winnipeg in October 1889, I was Miss Barnes, and I had with me my normal school diploma, obtained in Manitoba, but before I could attend the Vancouver High School, I was required to sit my entrance examination, which I did, and was admitted to the high school class in January 1890. I think there were high school classes before January 1890; I have been told there were, and it is not likely that I should have been required to sit an entrance examination if there had not been.

"In January 1890, Miss McDougall of the Mount Pleasant School was ill, and although I was without a British Columbia teacher's certificate, and was a high school pupil, I was asked to go up to Mount Pleasant School, 'the Barn,' we called it, and take her place for a week while she was away. Then I returned to the high school, which was held in a room in the Central School, a brick building on Pender Street."

Major Matthews: Who could possibly have preceded you as a Burrard Inlet school pupil who became a Vancouver school teacher?

Mrs. Lawson: "I have never known or heard of such a person; there may have been, I don't know; it has never occurred to me before that I might be the first pupil to become a teacher in Vancouver.

"Then, 26<sup>th</sup> June 1890, the examinations were held, and in July it was announced I was the head pupil. I was the first pupil in Vancouver to receive the gold medal for the highest marks. I think there had been high school classes before 1890, but the examinations in June 1890 were the first, I think, in which they gave anything to the leading pupil. You can easily verify it; it is recorded at the head of a list posted up at the King Edward High School—'Miss Catherine A. Barnes, 1890,' it says, or something like that; anyway, I appear as the first pupil in Vancouver to take the gold medal; my name is first on the roll.

"In addition, I was given a book, a beautifully bound book—I have it yet. It is Scott's Poetical Works. The inscription in this book reads: 'A PRIZE PRESENTED TO MISS CATHERINE A. BARNES HEAD PUPIL OF HIGH SCHOOL, BY HON. JOHN ROBSON, VANCOUVER, 26<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 1890.'

"Then, in August 1890, I was appointed to the East End School; that is, the Oppenheimer Street School.

"There were four teachers there; I was the junior. The principal was Mr. Ganton, then Miss Alice Christie, a friend of our family when both families were in Manitoba—she had not attended any Vancouver school as pupil—and thirdly, Mr. J.J. Dougan, for many years in Vancouver schools, and well known; lastly, myself.