

curt notice to the magistrate telling him to quit in 10 minutes. Ten minutes elapsed. Nothing happened. Harris sent a messenger to ask for the magistrate's reply. The magistrate told the messenger that a reply wasn't necessary and went on with his case.

Some of the outraged councillors exploded into murderous threats. Councillor Copland suggested that 20 specials be sworn in to throw the magistrate into the street. But Councillor Copland coveted the mayor's position and Harris knew it, so took no action.

The Council later got temporary quarters at Broad Street and Trounce Alley.

While in office Harris suffered a bad accident. He was driving to his Saanich farm when the shafts came away from the cart. Harris held tight to the reins and was dragged over the dashboard. He was discovered only the next day . . . an indication of the sparse population of the area. During the mayor's illness Councillor Copland appointed himself deputy-mayor. Many viewed this with disfavour and when he attended an official dinner in his self-appointed capacity he was unceremoniously ejected before he had a chance to eat.

Harris, like many others who had spent too generously during the boom years of the gold rushes, fell on lean times later and had to sell his fine home. He died of melancholia. There were many such deaths among Victoria's pioneers and medical opinion today associates them with heavy drinking. Harris Green, on Pandora Avenue in front of the First Church of Christ, Scientist, opened in 1920, bears a tablet to the memory of the first mayor.

But of greater impact on the citizens than incorporation and the establishment of a more representative Assembly was the establishment of a public bathing place next to W. and J. Wilson on Government Street. This venture by an enterprising San Francisco youth was the forerunner of many others. The bathing establishments conferred an inestimable boon on residents and transients. People were for the first time in Victoria in 1862 able to get a hot bath . . . and some had been here since 1843.

Chapter 3

CHURCH, CRIME AND CULTURE

ONE CONSEQUENCE OF THE Fraser River gold rush, as mentioned earlier, was an influx of officials from the United Kingdom to midwife the two colonies of British Columbia (the Mainland) and Vancouver Island in their birthpangs.

Culture cannot develop where people's energies are absorbed entirely by the need to earn their daily bread and the newly arrived officials had assured incomes and the leisure to enjoy them. A contemporary noted sourly that executive salaries were \$50,000 in 1862 against nil a year earlier.

Among the newcomers were two men who made a great impact on Victoria society. Both were tall and handsome. One was Matthew (later Sir Matthew) Baillie Begbie, first judge of British Columbia and the other Bishop "Beau Brummel" George Hills.

Begbie's bungalow, the grounds of which included two tennis courts, was on the rise at the intersection of Collinson and Cook Streets and his property ran north to Collinson, east to Linden and south to Fairfield Road. Begbie used to walk downtown for official functions dressed like Sir Walter Raleigh . . . black velvet breeches and buckled shoes, flowing cape and wide-brimmed hat, wearing a Van Dyck beard and invariably followed by his half-dozen spaniels.

On Sundays he changed into the cassock and surplice of a Cathedral chorister and often read the lesson. His high-pitched voice when excited was in contrast with his masculine bearing. Oddly enough this apparently most eligible bachelor (he was 40 when he came to

the Colony) never married although he was "dear Sir Matthew" to every matron with marriageable daughters.

Begbie shot duck and entertained in his Fairfield surroundings. An invitation to his Tuesday tennis parties or to his Saturday night dinners (two sittings . . . one until 10 p.m. for the clergy and the second after 10 p.m. for cards and men of the world) was the hallmark of acceptance in the upper echelons of society. He was also an enthusiastic rosarian, a fine horseman, tennis player, pianist and whist player. Whist was then as popular as is bridge today.

A power though he was in British Columbia, Begbie did not have a great legal mind. "His judgments," as a member of the Bar Association wrote after his death, "sometimes defied precedent." Indeed he owed his advancement to his proficiency with Gurney's shorthand, which brought him to the attention of prominent Colonial office officials, rather than to legal brilliance. But if his judgments were sometimes unorthodox, so were the conditions under which he worked in the Colony. Travelling on horseback through the rugged Cariboo, accompanied by a manservant, or swinging along in shirt-sleeves singing at the top of his voice, he often held court in a tent. He thought the gold-seekers "rough" rather than tough, dealt with them condescendingly and showed his contempt by, on one occasion, emptying the contents of his chamber pot on a group pitched nearby, to whose remarks he took exception. In his early years in the Colony he referred to British Columbia as a "land of Siwashes," but in later years grew to love the country and especially Victoria.

When Begbie died in Victoria in 1894, so great was the throng of mourners that marshalling orders had to be printed and distributed in advance of the funeral.

One of two friends in the chief mourners' carriage was Peter O'Reilly, whose home now over 100 years old, is open to tourists. It is on Pleasant Street and known as Point Ellice House.

O'Reilly, who made Begbie's acquaintance while serving as a gold commissioner, became a member of the Legislative Council (1863-1870) and a judge. He had no legal training and his elevation to the bench was due to whom he knew rather than what he knew. He married Caroline Agnes Trutch, sister of Sir Joseph Trutch, British Columbia's first Lieutenant-Governor.

Begbie is often slanderously referred to as the "hanging judge." There is no proof that he hanged any who did not deserve it and his trials were impartial. He protected the Indians at whom miners used to shoot as though they were ducks and made the Cariboo as safe for travellers as the dominions of Genghis Khan. A receipt for gold nuggets at Barkerville was as good as cash in the bank in Victoria, provided, of course, it was not Macdonald's Bank. The failure of Macdonald's Bank shook Victoria to its foundations and ruined many lives.

In the late 1850's Alexander Macdonald, a handsome young man from Inverness, arrived in Victoria with his attractive bride. They had spent some time in New Orleans where he had relatives in the banking business. He saw the business possibilities in the gold rush and opened a bank and general store at No. 5 Yates, now the site of Dowell's Cartage (Yates and Wharf). Initially great success attended his venture.

Macdonald's Bank issued its own banknotes, and dealt in bills of exchange, brokerage, bullion and general banking business. Macdonald opened a branch in the Cariboo and was also interested in sawmill and steamship companies. He built a fine home called "Springfield" at 633 Michigan Street at a cost of \$12,000 (about \$120,000 today) which was the scene of many splendid dances, dinners and other social gatherings. Everybody wanted to be "in" with the young Scot and his bride, and many lent him capital.

When customers went to draw money on the morning of September 23, 1864 they found only a distraught cashier. In the night the bank had been burgled and \$25,000 in gold, plus several thousand dollars' worth of silver, dust and currency stolen. Macdonald was away at the time. The bank was in charge of John Waddell, a good-looking and business-like man of 60. Investigations showed that on the night of the burglary the safe had not been fully secured and Waddell had the key in his pocket. Entry had been secured through a skylight and the ladder used was exactly the length of skylight to floor.

Urgent messages for Macdonald to return were sent immediately but although he was continually reported to be on his way back, the panic-stricken and angry depositors had to wait two months before

he was again in Victoria. Meanwhile the city seethed with suspicion, people were arrested and released, the police were criticized, slanderous theories were circulating.

When Macdonald did arrive he held a meeting of creditors. This proved to be a prelude to bankruptcy proceedings. A few days before the proceedings were to have been held in December, Macdonald got his manager Waddell to row him to Race Rocks (the harbour was watched) and boarded a ship bound for San Francisco.

His home and everything in it was seized and sold up. People argued for months and still argue as to the extent of Macdonald's guilt.

He left here with nothing, had to look for a job in San Francisco and as a "rogue" banker had great difficulty in getting one. Had he remained to face his creditors in Victoria he would have been imprisoned for debt or worse and indeed his life was in danger.

But why did he delay so long in returning to Victoria after the crime was discovered? Was it not a fact that the outlook for his bank was not very promising with the introduction of new laws restricting private banks? Also had he not encountered fierce competition with the establishment of the Bank of British North America and the Bank of British Columbia at the same time as the gold rush was tapering off?

As years went by, suspicion fell increasingly on his manager, John Waddell. John Waddell's son was arrested in the East some years after the robbery on a charge of murdering his father by throwing him overboard from a sailboat. He murdered his father, it was alleged, to possess himself of several thousand dollars which the parent had acquired through an act of piracy in scuttling a schooner to get the insurance money. A man capable of such a fraud would not think twice of robbing a bank. Macdonald always maintained that Waddell was the culprit.

A year before the Macdonald Bank robbery, four Indians were hanged together in Bastion Square or Lower Bastion Street as it was then called. Public executions were one of Victoria's more lugubrious forms of entertainment until they were abolished in 1870. They generally took place outside the courthouse which was until 1860 in the old Colonial Police Barracks.

Sometimes justice miscarried as when an Indian, so old he had to be carried to the gallows, was executed and his son, a year afterwards, confessed to the murder.

The crime of the four Indians hanged on May 3, 1863, though gruesome, testified to the resentment felt by Indians at the white man's intrusion. They had murdered three white men and a 15-year-old girl. One white, Bill Brady, had landed on a small island south of Salt Spring Island with a companion John Henlee. They were in their tent after dinner when shots rang out. Brady was mortally wounded, but Henlee, though shot in three places, fought off the intruding Indians and even managed to row his dying partner to Oak Bay.

The murdered girl was Caroline Harvey, married daughter of a German settler Frederick Marks, murdered with her father on Saturna Island.

According to Indian witnesses Marks was shot as he sat on a rock and Caroline was chased, caught, stabbed to death and her stripped body thrown into the sea with a piece of stove tied to her hair.

During the search for the suspects Charles Bryden, a seaman on H.M.S. *Forward*, was killed by a shot fired from Kuper Island which was being bombarded by the warship. Ah-Chee-Wun and two other Indians hanged for the death of Bryden. Another Lamalchi Indian Um-Whangh hanged for the murder of Caroline Harvey. Ah-Chee-Wun was considered guilty also of the murder of Frederick Marks and Caroline Harvey. He had boasted of having murdered 10 whites . . . presumably gold-seekers canoeing over to the Mainland. But as he was already convicted for the murder of Bryden the other charges were not proceeded with.

Caroline Harvey is buried in Pioneer Square adjacent to Christ Church Cathedral. The City cemetery was originally at the southwest corner of Douglas and Johnson (the block with Dorman's Men's Wear on the corner), but the bodies were transferred in 1860 to the Quadra Street site.

It was Begbie's duty to confirm all death sentences, but apart from his legal activities he was prominent in the arts. He was first president of the Victoria Philharmonic Society formed in 1859. He bought the old Hudson's Bay Company fur warehouses on Govern-

ment Street and converted them into the Victoria Theatre. The theatre was demolished after hosting many famous stage personalities, including Mr. and Mrs. Charles Keen in 1864. Today's Churchill Hotel stands at the approximate entrance to the theatre. The Victoria Theatre could seat 500, but it was in the sixties not the only entertainment hall. A room under Goodacre's butcher shop, corner Government and Johnson Streets, named the "New Idea" was used for minstrel shows and light comedy.

The "New Idea" later become the "Omineca." There was also Moore's Hall at the northwest corner of the present Post Office (Yates and Langley Streets).

Theatres seemed to spring up and disappear almost overnight in the early days. A touring group in 1859 played in the Royal Hotel on Wharf Street and called it the Royal Theatre. The next year a group played in a music hall on Government Street (the "New Idea"?) and called it the Colonial Theatre.

Begbie's Victoria Theatre was renamed the Royal Theatre in 1867.

Some of the internal complications of the theatre world were revealed by bankrupt touring company promoter John Potter in 1863. He complained that he had enjoyed full houses but very little money. His high-living partner, he alleged, had lived high on the town and tendered theatre tickets in payment. Potter also suspected his doorkeeper who was at all times "very flush." To top all when Potter went to renew the lease on the theatre he found it had been leased to the doorkeeper. The doorkeeper then had a fight with the cashier and the latter absconded with the cash, leaving Potter holding the bag of unpaid bills.

But touring companies were few and far between. In general, Victorians had to generate their own entertainment. The Victoria Amateur Club had some clever comedians and actors. Their repertoire included Shakespeare's plays and other popular features such as *Coleen Bawn*, *Boots of the Swan*, *Who Stole My Pocket Book* and *Henry Dunbar*. Performances with a political slant were very much appreciated in a town so politically conscious as Victoria and the readings by visiting authors were well attended.

Among the original members of the Victoria Amateur Club who

performed in the Royal Theatre were Charles Clarke, W. M. Anderson, C. B. Tenniel, Arthur Keast, Lumley Franklin, S. Farwell, H. C. Courtney, H. Ruston, Joseph Barnett, Ben Griffin (of the Boomerang Inn), Godfrey Brown, W. J. Collingham and Alex Phillips.

Admission prices varied between 50 cents and \$1.50. These prices were high in relation to the wages of the day, but as entertainment was scarce and the proceeds went to charity, to attend was a citizen's duty.

The Orphans of St. Ann, the hospital and the fire brigades were regular beneficiaries from performances.

Other cultural activities which came as a result of the gold rush and the influx of businessmen and officials included the Philharmonic Society, which provided the Victoria Theatre's first orchestra since John Tod's fiddle. Members were Digby Palmer, F. S. Bushell and Messrs. Gunter, Roberts and Hayes, all performances being directed by R. G. Marsh.

The Oddfellows had their first meeting at Fort and Langley Streets in 1864, sponsored by California visitors. Later the Oddfellows moved to the site of the B.C. Cement Building, Fort and Wharf (now used for a dance club), and in 1880 to their present building at 1323 Douglas. The Germania Sing Verein (beer and song, sometimes more beer than song) was popular in the early 60's and in 1862, H. Heisterman (the name of a real estate firm today) started a library with 160 members at 111 Government Street (between Johnson and Yates).

Also in being were the St. Andrew's Society founded in 1859 . . . it had 100 members in 1863 and their names appear in the City directory of that year, also those of the Masonic Lodge. The Lodge stood at the southwest corner of Langley and Yates. A new building went up in 1878 costing \$12,000 at the northwest corner of Figgard and Douglas and, with additions made in 1903, still stands.

The Mechanics' Literary Institute, started in 1864 with F. Swanwick as chairman, catered to the growing number of literary citizens. It had two spacious rooms in Fardon's Building, the entrance being on Langley Street next to Hibben and Carswell's corner

(Yates and Langley south side). Hibben and Carswell were the pioneer stationers and booksellers of Victoria.

An unusual society was the Chebra Bekus Cholim Ukedis Ha. In the 1863 directory, the Society states that it was organized in the month of Seva. First assumption that this was a mystic cult is dispelled by the names of the directors . . . Keyser, Davis and Levy.

In the religious field Victoria then as now has always been most church-conscious. The Rt. Rev. George Hills, first bishop of British Columbia, who was, with Sir James Douglas and Sir Matthew Baillie Begbie, one of the three most influential of early citizens, wrote to a friend on his arrival in Victoria in 1860: "The congregation here contains a larger proportion of shrewd, thrifty, intelligent educated gentlemen than any in England outside London. The Church (Christ Church) holds 400 and five-sixths of them are men."

In 1861 with 600 permanent residents the city had five churches. As is the case today, those seeking religious truth had a wide choice from the orthodox churches to the less-traditional efforts of Harmony Hall and "New Messiahs." Many San Francisco evangelists came here and they fought for each other's sheep with no holds barred.

One reverend gentleman in 1861 won a house and lot in a beer saloon crap game.

Another influx of San Francisco evangelists followed the great earthquake of 1906. They plagued inmates of saloons and hotels urging them to "beware of the wrath to come" and to mend their sinful ways, acting on the assumption that if San Francisco had had no saloons there would have been no earthquake.

One of Victoria's early proselytizers was the Reverend A. G. Garrett of Cedar Plains Church (he later became a bishop in the Episcopal Church of America). Aided by the choir of Christ Church he used to preach from a barrel to departing and not too sober gold-seekers on Wharf Street.

But true to their crusading traditions the Roman Catholics were first in the field here. The first R.C. church in the province was St. Charles, established in Esquimalt in 1847.

It was followed in 1853 by another building — a mere shanty full of cracks on Courtney Street between Douglas and Government Streets. Oblate Father Lamfritt built and plastered the building with clay with his own hands.

Bishop Demers, who crossed over Puget's Sound in an Indian canoe in 1852, built St. Andrew's Church on Humboldt Street in 1858. The *British Colonist* of those days reported that "it is built without much regard to the niceties of architectural design," but sweetened its criticism with praise of the paintings and carvings, the work of Father Michaud. This building is now the chapel of St. Ann's Academy. The present St. Andrew's on Blanshard Street was built at a cost of around \$60,000 in 1892. Originally it had two spires but one blew off in a most untimely storm on Christmas Day 1905.

At Broad and Pandora was Victoria's original Methodist church, opened in 1860.

The site was later that of the Brackman-Ker (millers) Building and now carries a furniture showroom. The 1891 land boom brought a \$30,000 windfall to the Methodists and they replaced their church with the present steepled Metropolitan United Church at Pandora and Quadra dedicated in 1891. Demolished to make room for the church was the house built by C. Sharp in 1858 which was then the only house on Pandora.

A similar windfall befell the First Presbyterian Church originally at the corner of Blanshard and Pandora. Their church, opened in 1863, sold for a fancy price in 1912 and was replaced with the present First United Church at Quadra and Balmoral.

The Baptists were early on the scene with the Church of Calvary (Reverend Wm. Carnes) on Herald Street near the present site of Hudson's Bay Company store. This church went up in flames in 1876 and was replaced with the new Emmanuel Baptist Church in 1886. This church still stands at Fernwood and Gladstone Streets. Other early churches include St. Stephen's in Saanich (1862), St. Paul's, Esquimalt (1866), St. James in James Bay (now demolished) built in 1884 and St. Luke's, Cedar Plains, opened in 1862.

Unfortunately the history of Victoria churches is not altogether peaceful. George Hills, for example, first Anglican bishop of British

Columbia, had a very difficult time, although he came with all the authority of a consecrated Bishop of the Diocese of British Columbia, created by the issue of Royal Letters Patent by Queen Victoria on January 12, 1859. This tall, white-haired and aristocratic-looking son of an English admiral arrived here in 1860 and was met by the Reverend E. Cridge, former Hudson's Bay Company chaplain and leader of the Anglican community. Together the two men trudged the three-mile trail, knee-deep in mud from Esquimalt to Victoria, where a group of ladies had procured a small house and prepared a meal for the first ordained bishop.

Cridge was a little apprehensive and, one may assume in the light of events, rather jealous at the arrival of a supervisory ecclesiastic.

He was inclined to evangelical rather than conservative church practice, but if he was jealous he dissimulated well because Bishop Hills was soon writing to a friend that "Cridge is a truly good man . . . he enters into all my plans and is a great support to me." The Bishop was soon to be disillusioned.

Bishop Hills was a dedicated and indefatigable worker. He organized the Victoria diocese and appointed Reverend Robert J. Dundas to conduct services in the Victoria courthouse on Sunday mornings and at St. Paul's in the afternoons. The Reverend R. Dawson was made incumbent at Craigflower and the Reverend E. Cridge, Dean of Christ Church.

The Bishop also consecrated the Victoria District Church (Christ Church) as the first Cathedral in the province.

For 32 years Bishop Hills was head, but not the undisputed head of the Anglican Church in British Columbia.

His antagonist was the short, bearded, kindly but rather obstinate Dean Cridge, who, one is inclined to suspect, thought that he and not George Hills should have been the first Bishop. As years went by, the Dean became a thorn in the flesh of Bishop Hills, causing him great distress.

The Dean's jealousy and resentment can be understood. He was an old-timer compared with the Bishop, having been appointed Colonial Chaplain in 1854. He had many friends and the Hudson's Bay Company built the Victoria District Church for him in 1856. The Church was only a small, wooden, box-like building where the

new Court House now stands, but in it the Dean performed all church services including weddings, baptisms and funerals, a funeral costing only \$1 which included grave digging and tolling of the bell.

The Victoria District Church was supplemented in 1860 with the so-called Iron Church, or St. John's. This was a corrugated-iron building sent out from England by the well-known benefactress Miss (afterwards Baroness) Burdett-Coutts of the famous London banking family. This lady also endowed generously the B.C. bishopric as she had already endowed the bishoprics of Adelaide and Capetown. The Iron Church was erected on Douglas Street where the Hudson's Bay Company store now stands and served until 1913 when it was demolished. Old-timers remember it chiefly because of its capacity to amplify outside noises. A passing tramcar or dray could make the service temporarily inaudible. First rector of St. John's was the Reverend R. Dundas, who later became canon of Winchester.

Christ Church, oldest of Anglican churches, has been rebuilt three times. The first wooden building burned down in 1869. The alarm was given (somewhat suspiciously many Anglicans thought) by a cassocked R.C. padre hurrying home to supper. A new Christ Church went up on the same site in 1872. The present Cathedral adjacent to Pioneer Square was constructed by Parfitt Bros. and consecrated in 1929.

Christ Church has, incidentally, the oldest vital statistics on the coast which were begun in 1837 by the Reverend Herbert Beaver, chaplain in Fort Vancouver, Washington, before the Hudson's Bay Company transferred its Pacific Northwest headquarters to Victoria.

Dean Cridge's antipathy towards Bishop Hills intensified with the years, many of which were spent by the Bishop organizing his vast diocese under conditions of great hardship and sometimes physical danger. The differences between the two men finally came into the open at the consecration of the new Christ Church Cathedral in 1873. The brawling, locking of church doors and verbal and written accusations which accompanied and followed this event seemed more appropriate to the times of Oliver Cromwell.

For the consecration Dean Cridge had invited Wm. Reece, Arch-deacon of Vancouver Island, to preach. In his sermon Mr. Reece

suggested encouragement of a moderate ritual, maintaining that ritual springs from a revived religious life. When he had finished his sermon Dean Cridge jumped to his feet and shouted:

"This is the first time Ritualism has been preached here. So far as I am concerned it shall be the last." Cridge's supporters in the Church showed their approval of his outburst by clapping and stamping of feet.

There is no evidence that Bishop Hills had pre-knowledge of Mr. Reece's views, but he took Dean Cridge to task for his unseemly behaviour and other offences. The Bishop's representations still further incensed the Dean who went on to publicly repudiate the Bishop and his authority. When the Bishop forbade the Dean to preach, the Dean's supporters locked the Cathedral and prevented the Dean's removal.

Finally as Dean Cridge denied the authority of the Ecclesiastical Court the Bishop took the case to the Supreme Court of British Columbia, which gave judgment against Dean Cridge. The irascible Dean then took his supporters to worship at the First Presbyterian Church on Pandora and later built a new church, the Reformed Episcopal Church (Church of Our Lord) on Humboldt Street. It stands there today, Victoria's oldest church building, flanked by the recently constructed Cridge Memorial Hall.

Some people maintain that Sir James Douglas, the Chief Justice and many other leading citizens were secretly in sympathy with the stormy Dean. Judge Begbie in fact remitted to Cridge the court costs which he had incurred defending himself against Bishop Hills.

The Anglican Church went from strength to strength in spite of the dispute. In 1879 the huge British Columbia diocese was subdivided by the formation of the dioceses of New Westminster and Caledonia.

A great building boom accompanied the expanding suburbs in the years 1940-1960.

Archbishop H. E. Sexton, recently retired, is the only bishop of the Diocese to become an Archbishop and holds the record for continuous service (32 years) as Bishop of the Diocese.

The dissension within the Anglican Church community followed closely on that which rent the Presbyterian Church.

The dispute contributed to Royal Governor Seymour's view that "Victorians were tempest torn and excited." Long term result of the dispute was to give Victoria two churches catering to Presbyterians . . . St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church on Douglas Street and the First United Church at Quadra and Balmoral which combines Methodist and Presbyterian beliefs.

Trouble in the Presbyterian community followed the arrival of the Reverend Thomas Somerville in the early sixties. Somerville wanted a clearly defined system of Church government under the Church of Scotland. But many local Presbyterians wanted to carry on as before, catering to all Presbyterians under a very loose system of administration. Many felt a debt of gratitude to the Irish Church which had supported them financially.

The Rev. T. Somerville's irritation with church elders was sharpened by the fact that his modest salary was constantly in arrears. He called a meeting of his supporters in the Mechanics' Institute and announced his resignation. When he went to preach a farewell sermon the following Sunday, the *Colonist* of September 10, 1866 relates, he found the Pandora Street church locked up and his opponents refused to give him the key. Tempers got short and were shaping up for a free-for-all outside the Church doors when Somerville was admitted, mounted the pulpit and managed to calm his supporters. He maintained that rebels had usurped his functions. He arranged for his supporters, the bulk of the congregation, to hold services in the old Gymnasium Hall on Broughton Street. Then he set about organizing a new church, as a result of which St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church came into being, originally at the corner of Courtney and Gordon Streets (in 1869) and now at 680 Courtney.

The hard-core "Old Believers" who disputed Somerville's authority found themselves, as a result, unable to hold services for nine years. He in fact put the First Presbyterian Church temporarily out of business.

First Presbyterian minister in Victoria was the Reverend John Hall who made a lone trek from Esquimalt to Victoria in 1861. He was sent out by the Irish Presbyterian Church and as his earlier letters show had his moments of despondency. Victoria was teeming with gold-seekers and their shacks and he had great difficulty in

finding any Presbyterians or anybody who knew what Presbyterianism was. His luck changed when he walked into the Bank of British North America and asked a man whether he was a Presbyterian. The man was Alexander Wilson who answered "yes" and helped him trace others of the faith.

The first Presbyterian service was held in Moore's Music Hall. A site was then bought at the northwest corner of Blanshard and Pandora and services started in 1863.

To bring the Church story up to date, Victoria in 1970 had 70 church and religious organizations, Anglican churches being predominant, for a population of 180,000, but the number of church buildings was far greater than these figures indicate because many churches had added annexes to cope with growth of congregations. The abundance of churches which are exempted from taxes was a matter of concern to some city and municipal officials.

Against this concern must be set the undoubted benefits to the taxpayer through the services given by religious organizations and especially the older churches like the Anglican and the Roman Catholic.

Human beings have since they were cave men always needed a power beyond themselves to which to turn for consolation, hope and inspiration in those times of great stress from which few are immune in their journey through life. In the troubled post-World War II years when all values are questioned and civilization itself is in a state of flux the need for belief in an omnipotent and wise Creator has been greater than ever. There can be little doubt that organized religion has played and is playing a significant role in reducing the number of people who might otherwise have needed costly taxpayer-subsidized care to enable them to overcome their problems.

Chapter 4

THE ROYAL GOVERNORS

A COLOURFUL BACKDROP to the social stage in Victoria's formative years was provided by the royal governors. Royal governors had far more influence than the lieutenant-governors who succeeded them when British Columbia became part of Canada in 1871. They were representatives of the British Empire to which the Island belonged, men of good breeding, absolutely incorruptible and skilled in administration.

Of the five royal governors between 1850 and 1871 all except Richard Blanshard were men of private means to supplement their not ungenerous salaries. Their social gatherings and other semi-regal functions offset the isolation of life in a small and distant colony and gave stimulus to the modest catering, dressmaking, liquor vending and carriage businesses, besides contributing to general conviviality.

Blanshard, the pecuniary exception, had a "raw deal." He was the first Royal Governor of the Colony and arrived in Victoria on March 9, 1850 in H.M.S. *Driver*. Our tribute to him is Blanshard Street. This 32-year-old tall, aristocratic, but by no means robust gentleman presented his credentials at a solemn ceremony in the Fort thereby instituting British government in the Pacific Northwest.

This proved to be the highlight of his governorship for Blanshard could not get his salary, a staff or even a place to live. He had to stay at first on board H.M.S. *Driver*. His only subjects if one excluded the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company were Captain Grant and his eight grumbling men.

HARRY
GREGSON

A History of Victoria 1842-1970

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