

Life of Sir James Douglas

This morning a commemorative stained glass window designed as a memorial to the late Sir James Douglas, first Governor of the Colony, and also in memory of the Hudson's Bay Company, so prominently identified with early history of this city and province, Messrs. Work, Colmie, Finlayson, Graham, Chiles and Munro, which has been placed in Christ Church cathedral, will be dedicated by His Lordship Bishop Perrin. The window has been placed on the south side of the chancel, between the altar and the seat of the Bishop. The design was executed by Mr. James Bloomfield of Vancouver, who fixed the glass at his private kiln at Spokane, while the rose company of this city leaded and installed the window.

The chief features of the decorative scheme of the memorial window consist of a representation of the Hudson's Bay Co. and those of Sir James Douglas, the former at the top and the latter at the bottom, and the names of the chief factors of the company who were in command of the Victoria post from the time of its establishment to the changing of the order with the receipt of the modern flag of the city.

The memorial services will be held at 11 a. m. today, when His Lordship will deliver a sermon upon the life of Sir James Douglas which will be preached by the rector, Rev. Canon Beaulieu. Representatives of the Hudson's Bay Company and their families have been invited to attend the services, and relatives of the late Sir James Douglas and the factors whose memory the window will also commemorate have also been invited to be present.

The movement for the establishment of a commemorative window as a memorial to the late Sir James Douglas was begun after his death on August 2nd, 1877. At the request of the congregation of Christ Church Cathedral subscribed towards the placing of a window in the Cathedral. The sum subscribed, however, was not sufficient for the purpose, and the money was deposited in a bank, where with the passage of time it accumulated to \$500.

Last year the Rector of the Cathedral concluded to extend the scope of the memorial to include the officers of the Hudson's Bay Co., in order that proper recognition should be given to the action of the Company in having provided for the worship of God in the territory under the jurisdiction of the Company.

In 1836 when the chief post of the Company was still at Vancouver the services of a chaplain had been secured in the person of Mr. Robt. Beaven, who arrived from England with the registry books, birth, death, marriage, which are still in use at Christ Church Cathedral. From that time to the conclusion of the regime of the Hudson's Bay Company a chaplain was provided by the Company until the late when, Edward Cridge, now Bishop Cridge became dean of the Cathedral.

Sir James Douglas was, perhaps, the most remarkable man that has appeared in the public arena of the province of British Columbia. A Scotsman by descent through the line of the Black Douglas, educated in Scotland, and his earlier years spent with the members of the Northwest company who were his countrymen, he both inherited and acquired many of these distinguishing characteristics which stamped his ruggedness and strength of their native meetings and much of the picturesque charm of Caledonian scenery. Sir Jas. Douglas was a large man physically and mentally. His intellect, alike of physique and character. Although at the age of sixteen he sought the wilds of the Northwest in the employ of a fur company, he did not lose sight of his education throughout his career he aimed to increase his stock of knowledge and increase his accomplishments. He retained and strengthened the moral rectitude of his youth. In his private life he represented the old-fashioned punctiliousness in regard to details of all kinds, with progressive and far-seeing views of business, which he combined a genius for business with a love of nature, of family, of literature, of devotion. His love of order, his respect for the conventionalities of office, his becoming and dignified manner rather too much the impression of pompous display and an assertion of superiority, both of which were foreign to his nature. Sir James Douglas was a man of office, but not the man. He was a strong, masterful man, and with the faults that such men have—a tendency to rule with too firm a hand, to brook no opposition, to be intolerant of traits which were developed usually under the one-man rule of the Hudson's Bay company, and necessary to the conditions under which the successful corporation carried on its operations over a vast extent of the new world. He had a good mastery of French, which he spoke fluently with a correct accent; had a wide knowledge of the political economy; conversed with ease and entertainingly; rose early and rode and walked a good deal; was tenderly devoted to his family; was constant in religious exercises; assiduous in the performance of official duties; and generally was a man who acted well his part in life and did honor to his high position in the state. Of splendid physical proportions, and herculean physical strength, he had an imposing presence. He possessed the quality of personal magnetism in a high degree, and exercised corresponding influence with all whom he came in contact. Cool, calculating and cautious, he was also courageous and prompt to act, combining the dominating characteristics of Anglo-Saxon and Celt. When he retired he still possessed considerable vigor of mind and body, and might still have continued to take an active part in the affairs of the country; but he had probably reached that stage in the development of the province at which he was more in spirit with the past than the present, where others more in harmony with new conditions would rule with greater acceptance to the people. He had acted a part in affairs that redounded highly to his credit and to the welfare of a budding colony, with tact, intelligence, rare ability, and high conception of and conscientious application to duty. Had his early training been in the field of politics and his lot been cast in a wider and more important sphere he could have and undoubtedly would have taken a place of the first rank among the statesmen of his time. He had the qualifications which make men of mark. In estimating him as a man and as an official he must be judged by the

success he achieved in the sphere in which he moved. His record in that respect was the best possible.

When he retired from public life, according to his well-earned honors, he visited his native land. He went to England by way of Panama, and after spending some time in Great Britain, visited the continent, through the countries of which he made a leisurely tour, and returned to his adopted and ultimate home in British Columbia, for which he had an ardent attachment after a year's absence. His impressions of his travels, as recorded in his journal, are most interesting reading, and throw many interesting sidelights on his character and qualities. He lived in retirement with his family in Victoria until August 2, 1877, upon which day death came as a hasty and unexpected messenger to call him to his final home. He lives gratefully in the memory of the older inhabitants of the province. He is also remembered by a monument of stone in the grounds of the parliament buildings, and his statue occupies a niche at one side of the main entrance, a corresponding niche being occupied by the statue of another commanding figure, that of the late Sir Matthew Baillie Begbie, whose selection to bracket with that of Sir James was wisely made by

sanctioned and afterward confirmed, but he was distinctly told that "it had been doubted by authorities conversant in the principles of colonial law whether the Crown can legally convey authority to make laws in a settlement founded by Englishmen, even for a temporary and special purpose, or in legislation not elected wholly or in part by the settlers themselves." Governor Douglas was also given power by clause of his commission to fix the number of representatives, divide the colony into districts, and, when necessary, to establish separate polling places. It was by proclamation of June 18th, 1856, that Governor Douglas began the history of representative institutions on Vancouver Island, when he proclaimed an election of a House of Assembly. Four constituencies were made on the island. Victoria had three members, J. D. Pemberton, Jas. Yates and E. E. Langford, and later J. W. McKay was added. Other representatives were Sook John Muir, Nanaimo, J. F. Kennedy, Esquimalt, Thomas Skinner and Dr. J. S. Helmcken. The doctor was speaker. The Assembly met in an unfurnished room within the fort, and received no pay; afterward they met where the Law Courts now stand and later "across James Bay." Their legislation was of the simplest

mand of Sir James Douglas, a native from Fraser lake had murdered one of the company's servants. The murderer concealed himself for some time, but no notice having been taken of the affair, he thought there was nothing to fear, and returned to his village. At length he was led by his evil genius to visit the Indian village at Stuart lake. Douglas heard of him being there, and though he had a weak garrison, determined that the murdered man should not be unavenged. The opportunity was favorable, as most of the Indians were absent on a hunting excursion, and the murderer was nearly alone. Douglas proceeded to the camp, accompanied by two men, and killed the murderer.

On their return in the evening the Indians learned what had happened. A council was held and it was decided they should retaliate. A war, however, that Douglas was on his guard, and that the gates were shut and could not be forced, they resolved to employ stratagem. The old chief, accordingly proceeded to the fort alone, and knocking at the gate, desired to be admitted, which was permitted. He immediately stated the object of his visit, saying that a deed had been done in their village which subjected himself and his people to a heavy responsibility to the representatives of the dead; that he feared the consequences, and hoped that a present would be made to satisfy them.

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Still another incident of the career of the late Sir James Douglas was the manner in which he punished the murderer of Peter Brown, killed by Cowichan Indians. The gold fever made the times exciting on the mainland, but Vancouver Island was working out its existence in a quiet manner. In December, 1852, a Cowichan Indian murdered Peter Brown, a shepherd of the Hudson's Bay company. The crime must needs be punished, and Governor Douglas secured the culprit in his own quiet way. On the morning of the murder it was reported, had taken refuge with the tribe at Saanich; the other had fled to Nanaimo. Capt. Kuper, of H. M. S. Thetis, then at Esquimalt, volunteered to assist in his capture. The Recovery, a sufficient force was transferred from H. M. S. Thetis to the company's vessel, Recovery, and on January 4th, 1853, this craft was towed by the Thetis into Haro Strait. Governor Douglas taking command of the expedition.

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Next morning the chief was again summoned to meet the Governor in front of his men. Instead of the chief the culprit himself came forward, armed and painted, followed at a short distance by the chief and a number of Indians, all armed. He walked slowly, and apparently hesitatingly, then suddenly raised his gun, levelled it at Governor Douglas and pulled the trigger. It missed fire, otherwise the governor would likely have been killed, but he gave no order for his men to fire. He calmly raised this grave order to seize the offender, Douglas calmly looking on. The would-be murderer was bound by the Indians and there and then handed over for trial. The trial took place immediately, and the man was hanged to the nearest tree, in full view of the tribe. The Cowichans gave no trouble from that day forward.

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composed of every nationality, sometimes disappointed men when he saw the Governor, without attempting to court popularity, treated to such an evening as tonight, it told him that the Governor must have been deservingly of the colony by surprise. The Governor had to do everything, he had to organize, arrange and create. There was one monument to his worth—the noble roads which he had caused to be opened. His administration had been one of the most successful of all, and had done for the land and vituperation of interested parties. . . . All party feeling was now buried, and the feeling now was one of general esteem.

The "send-off" given to the Governor when he left Victoria for New Westminster was an enthusiastic one. As the Governor proceeded on foot to take the steamer, a large procession followed. Every flag was displayed, bunting. When the gangway of the steamer Enterprise, which was gaily dressed with color for the occasion, was reached, the Governor was greeted by the Governor on the way were given with renewed vigor. A band stationed on the steamer Otter struck up "Auld Lang Syne," and a salute of thirteen guns was fired by employees of the Hudson Bay Company. A year later he retired, and afterward traveled in Britain and in Europe before returning to take up his home until his death in the province for which he had done so much.

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the designers of that splendid structure adorning the award "across James Bay."

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the whole of the Indians, the chief's brother at their head. The men of the fort were overpowered before they had time to stand on their defence. Douglas, however, seized a wall-piece that was mounted in the hall, and was about to discharge it upon the crowd that was pouring in upon him, when the chief seized him by the arm and held him fast.

For an instant Douglas, surrounded by thirty or forty Indians, was in the utmost peril. The Indians clustered around him, brandishing knives over his head with angry gestures.

"Shall we strike? shall we strike?" the Indians asked. The men of the fort were overpowered before they had time to stand on their defence. Douglas, however, seized a wall-piece that was mounted in the hall, and was about to discharge it upon the crowd that was pouring in upon him, when the chief seized him by the arm and held him fast.

The chief hesitated. At this critical moment the interpreter's wife stepped forward, and by her presence of mind, saved him and the establishment.

Observing one of the inferior chiefs who had professed the greatest friendship for the white men, standing in the crowd, she addressed him, saying: "What, you a friend of the white man, and not say a word in their behalf at such a time as this? Speak! You know the murderer deserved to die; according to your own laws the deed was just. It was a life for a life." The white men are not dogs; they love their kindred as well as you do; why should they not avenge their murdered men?"

The speech of the woman quelled the tumult; her boldness seemed to awe the Indians and saved the situation. The chief she had addressed, acting on the suggestion, interferred, and was seconded by the old chief, who seems to have had no serious intention of injuring the white men, was satisfied with showing that he had held their power. Douglas was freed and an amicable conference held, after which the Indians departed, pleased with their enterprise.

The duties attached to the service when Douglas was engaged in the northern interior were severe and often perilous. Once he was made captive to which the name of the mainland territory of the province was changed in 1850 from Caledonia, November 19, 1855, was legislative birthday of the province. Sir James Douglas was married to Amelia Connolly, daughter of James Connolly, in whose honor the governor named Fort Connolly, at Bear Lake, at the headquarters of the Skeena.

Among the anecdotes told of the career of Sir James Douglas, history records a tragedy at Fort St. James, in which he took a leading part. John McLean describes the incident in a book published in 1848. He states that Wacac, an interpreter, informed him that while Fort St. James was under com-

mand of Sir James Douglas, a native from Fraser lake had murdered one of the company's servants. The murderer concealed himself for some time, but no notice having been taken of the affair, he thought there was nothing to fear, and returned to his village. At length he was led by his evil genius to visit the Indian village at Stuart lake. Douglas heard of him being there, and though he had a weak garrison, determined that the murdered man should not be unavenged. The opportunity was favorable, as most of the Indians were absent on a hunting excursion, and the murderer was nearly alone. Douglas proceeded to the camp, accompanied by two men, and killed the murderer.

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Camosun became "Fort Albert" soon after its establishment, and later the growing city built about it became Victoria, the western outpost of the Empire and proud capital of British Columbia. Sir James Douglas was appointed governor of the colony of Vancouver Island in 1851. He was still chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Co. His first care, after his appointment, was to call together a representative assembly; and in the official correspondence between him and the Rt. Hon. H. Labouchere, the Secretary of State, on the subject, a vital principle in the formation of British colonies was evolved. "The Labouchere letter," after cited as the key to the full political rights of the colonists as British subjects. The commission of Governor Douglas empowered him, with the advice of his council, to make laws and ordinances alone. Local circumstances compelled him to adopt the latter course, and the laws so made were

the whole of the Indians, the chief's brother at their head. The men of the fort were overpowered before they had time to stand on their defence. Douglas, however, seized a wall-piece that was mounted in the hall, and was about to discharge it upon the crowd that was pouring in upon him, when the chief seized him by the arm and held him fast.

For an instant Douglas, surrounded by thirty or forty Indians, was in the utmost peril. The Indians clustered around him, brandishing knives over his head with angry gestures.

"Shall we strike? shall we strike?" the Indians asked. The men of the fort were overpowered before they had time to stand on their defence. Douglas, however, seized a wall-piece that was mounted in the hall, and was about to discharge it upon the crowd that was pouring in upon him, when the chief seized him by the arm and held him fast.

The chief hesitated. At this critical moment the interpreter's wife stepped forward, and by her presence of mind, saved him and the establishment.

Observing one of the inferior chiefs who had professed the greatest friendship for the white men, standing in the crowd, she addressed him, saying: "What, you a friend of the white man, and not say a word in their behalf at such a time as this? Speak! You know the murderer deserved to die; according to your own laws the deed was just. It was a life for a life." The white men are not dogs; they love their kindred as well as you do; why should they not avenge their murdered men?"

The speech of the woman quelled the tumult; her boldness seemed to awe the Indians and saved the situation. The chief she had addressed, acting on the suggestion, interferred, and was seconded by the old chief, who seems to have had no serious intention of injuring the white men, was satisfied with showing that he had held their power. Douglas was freed and an amicable conference held, after which the Indians departed, pleased with their enterprise.

The duties attached to the service when Douglas was engaged in the northern interior were severe and often perilous. Once he was made captive to which the name of the mainland territory of the province was changed in 1850 from Caledonia, November 19, 1855, was legislative birthday of the province. Sir James Douglas was married to Amelia Connolly, daughter of James Connolly, in whose honor the governor named Fort Connolly, at Bear Lake, at the headquarters of the Skeena.

Among the anecdotes told of the career of Sir James Douglas, history records a tragedy at Fort St. James, in which he took a leading part. John McLean describes the incident in a book published in 1848. He states that Wacac, an interpreter, informed him that while Fort St. James was under com-

mand of Sir James Douglas, a native from Fraser lake had murdered one of the company's servants. The murderer concealed himself for some time, but no notice having been taken of the affair, he thought there was nothing to fear, and returned to his village. At length he was led by his evil genius to visit the Indian village at Stuart lake. Douglas heard of him being there, and though he had a weak garrison, determined that the murdered man should not be unavenged. The opportunity was favorable, as most of the Indians were absent on a hunting excursion, and the murderer was nearly alone. Douglas proceeded to the camp, accompanied by two men, and killed the murderer.

On their return in the evening the Indians learned what had happened. A council was held and it was decided they should retaliate. A war, however, that Douglas was on his guard, and that the gates were shut and could not be forced, they resolved to employ stratagem. The old chief, accordingly proceeded to the fort alone, and knocking at the gate, desired to be admitted, which was permitted. He immediately stated the object of his visit, saying that a deed had been done in their village which subjected himself and his people to a heavy responsibility to the representatives of the dead; that he feared the consequences, and hoped that a present would be made to satisfy them.

Continuing to converse thus calmly, Douglas was led to believe that the matter could easily be arranged. Another knock was heard at the gate. "It is my brother," said the chief; you may open the gate; he told me he intended to come to hear what you had to say on this business."

The gate was opened, and in rushed

swept from his horse. Bancroft prefaces his narration of the incident by stating: "There is something sublime in that quality inherent in noble natures which cannot overlook a duty, and the performance leads to death." Lassertes after falling from his horse, was swept some distance down the river. Just before reaching a drift of log and debris, through and under which he was furious water was surging, he caught the end of a fallen tree, and held to it as his only hope of life. The men of the party drew back appalled. In his journal Douglas himself described the incident. He said: "Fear fell on the company. Lassertes was every moment growing weaker. He was apparently a doomed man. The contagion weighed upon my own mind, and I confess I was rushing to the rescue as at other times."

Douglas saw, though, that if he did not make the attempt no one would be left to take care of the man, until the man was drowned, but Douglas could not do that. His nature was not formed that way. "Even then," he writes in his journal, "I could not find a fellow creature to assist without an effort to save him, while the inactivity of all present was an additional incentive to redouble my own exertions. With a sensation of dread, and almost hopeless of success, I pushed my horse with spur and whip nearly across the river, sprung into the water and rushed toward the spot, where the nearly exhausted sufferer was clinging, with his head above water, to a tree that had fallen into the river. Upon its trunk I dragged myself out on all fours, and great was our mutual joy when I seized him firmly by the collar, and with the aid of a canoe that arrived soon after, landed him safely on the bank, where a blazing fire soon restored warmth to both. And to my latest breath may I cherish the remembrance of Lassertes' providential rescue from a watery grave, as I could never otherwise have enjoyed perfect tranquility of mind."

Still another incident of the career of the late Sir James Douglas was the manner in which he punished the murderer of Peter Brown, killed by Cowichan Indians. The gold fever made the times exciting on the mainland, but Vancouver Island was working out its existence in a quiet manner. In December, 1852, a Cowichan Indian murdered Peter Brown, a shepherd of the Hudson's Bay company. The crime must needs be punished, and Governor Douglas secured the culprit in his own quiet way. On the morning of the murder it was reported, had taken refuge with the tribe at Saanich; the other had fled to Nanaimo. Capt. Kuper, of H. M. S. Thetis, then at Esquimalt, volunteered to assist in his capture. The Recovery, a sufficient force was transferred from H. M. S. Thetis to the company's vessel, Recovery, and on January 4th, 1853, this craft was towed by the Thetis into Haro Strait. Governor Douglas taking command of the expedition.

The vessels anchored off the village at Saanich, and Douglas went ashore. The murderer was absent, though he had gone to Cowichan. The Recovery proceeded to Cowichan, and a demand was made for the murderer. The chief asked for time to consider and this was granted. A meeting was arranged for conference, and forces from the vessel were landed. The chief met Douglas and those with him, with few attendants, on a knoll, and they waited for the coming of the Indians. Soon, two canoes were seen coming from the Cowichan river, followed by six others, all large war canoes. The Indians chanted war songs, and drummed at times on their canoes, as they paddled along the shore line. They passed the council ground, and landed; then rushing up the hill, shouting and clashing their arms as if to strike terror to any who opposed them, they came to a standstill and glared ferociously at the intruders. It was with difficulty Douglas could restrain his men from firing upon them; gradually, however, the Indians became quiet. They then produced the murderer, armed and unarmed, from head to foot. After some parleying the chief handed the man over to Douglas and the governor made a speech, which was translated to the Indians,