



Rugby Football in British Columbia: Its Past, Present and Future

By Roy T. S. Sachs

"1887" sounds a long way off, and makes many of us feel old; to Vancouverites it is almost prehistoric. Yet on Easter Monday, 1887, was played the first Rugby football match in British Columbia, between teams representing Vancouver and New Westminster. The latter town was then many times the size of the struggling little village on Burrard Inlet, and its Rugby men viewed the challenge of Vancouver with as much equanimity as, until recently, its present lacrosse team regarded the *defis* of Mr. Jones and his merry men. The game was played in Vancouver on the old Hamilton street grounds, practically all the town flocking to the sidelines, and resulted in a win for the home team by a goal and a try to a try—eight points to three.

It is surpassingly interesting to go over the names of the members of that first Vancouver team. Most of them are with us yet; some have passed away; but they, one and all, were the real early pioneers of our Last and Greatest West—pioneers of civilization, industry and sport, bringing with them into their work, as on to the Rugby field, those same glorious traditions of justice and fairplay. G. McL. Brown we know of, at least, as the head of the great

Canadian Pacific Railway in London, England. C. Gardiner-Johnson is still a name to conjure with in our city, both in the world of business and sport. Few are the matches at Brockton Point when we do not see Mr. Gardiner-Johnson's burly form, following the game he loved and played so well and often, with as much keenness and zest as the most enthusiastic devotee.

H. St. George Hamersley, an English and New Zealand Rugby International, and many times captain of Vancouver, is, as the dullest politician knows, the member for Oxford at the Mother of Parliaments. The Hon. R. G. Taitlow, our late Minister of Finance, and one of the most unassuming and lovable of men, whose recent death has left a breach that can never be filled. A Gardiner-Johnson, again, dead in the terrible snows of the frozen north, in that wild stampede of '98. The Rev. M. Edwards, the then curate of St. James', with, next to him, his rector, the Rev. Fiennes-Clinton, who is still with us, a fine example of muscular Christianity. Harry Watson, now passed away, and Vancouver's first captain. Tom Holt, a carpenter then, and still engaged in his trade, albeit his hair is now as white as snow. Licut.-Col. Boulton, now re-