# EARLY MASONRY IN NANAIMO, B. C.

By W. Bro. Joseph M. Brown,

Ashlar Lodge, No. 3, B. C. R.

In 1865, meetings of Freemasons were held at Nanaimo, at one of which it was decided to apply to the Grand Lodge of England for a Charter. Those present signed the petition including Captain the Hon. William H. Franklyn, a member of Grand Master's Lodge, No. 1, E. R., who probably was the prime mover, and also Alexander Mayer, in whose hands the petition was left for further signatures. Bro. James M. Brown's signature (he was an Englishman formerly a member of a Lodge in California) was secured by Bro. Mayer and the petition sent off. The warrant was issued in England and forwarded by mail arriving in San Francisco in about six months, but was lost in the wreck of the H. B. Co.s S.S. "Labouchere" between San Francisco and Victoria. The petitioners applied for a duplicate which arrived in 1867.

The first meeting of Nanaimo Lodge No. 1090, E. R., was held on the 15th of May, 1867, and the following charter members were present:

Bro. Wililam Hales Franklyn.
Bro. Daniel Pender.
Bro. Edward Beverly Bogg.
Bro. James Stanford Smith.
Bro. Robert William Carrol.
Bro. Alexander Mayer.
Bro. David Frew.
Bro. James Miller Brown.

A number of brethren members of Victoria Lodge (Richard Lewis, W.M.) No. 783, E.R., the W.M., of which was empowered by virtue of a dispensation from the Grand Lodge to authorize the brethren to go to Nanaimo in regalia to constitute No 1090, arrived

at Nanaimo on the 15th of May, 1867, on the steamer "Sir James Douglas" with several members of Vancouver Lodge, No. 421, R.S., and also the band of the volunteer militia.

The members of the new Lodge, with the visitors met at the Lodge room (a one-story house on the south-easterly corner of Hecate and Cavan Streets, lately torn down after being used as a residence for many years) and the Lodge was duly constituted, W. Bro. Henry Holbrook, of Union Lodge, No. 899, E.R., in the chair, and the following officers were installed:

Bro. W. H. Franklyn, Worshipful Master.
Bro. William Clarke, Senior Warden.
Bro. William Stewart, Junior Warden.
Bro. Solomon David Levi, Treasurer.
Bro. James Harvey, Secretary.
Bro. W. A. Phillips, Senior Deacon.
Bro. David Frew, Junior Deacon.
Bro. James M. Brown, Inner Guard.
Bro. James S. Smith, Tyler.

These proceedings concluded, the members, with their wives, sisters and sweethearts, met at a hall (a building at the head of what is now the C. P. R. Wharfhouse, since taken down) where the banquet was held, followed by a grand ball.

R. W. Bro. M. Bate, P.D.G.M., told me some years before his death that he remembered the occasion, walking about with Mr. John Bryden, neither of them Freemasons, viewing the brilliant procession, also listening to the music, and that he also attended the ball. Mr. Bate lost no time in making application and becoming a Freemason.

A number of the brethren were not well-versed in English Work so they made application to the Grand Master Mason of Scotland for a charter which was duly granted, and the first meeting of Caledonia Lodge, No. 478, R.S., was held on the 18th of November, 1867, and the following officers—who were Charter Members —installed:

Bro. S. D. Levi, R.W.M.
Bro. Wm. Stewart, S.W.
Bro. James Harvey, J.W.
Bro. Archibald Muir, Treasurer.
Bro. Archibald McAllister, Secretary.
Bro. James M. Brown, Senior Deacon.
Bro. David Frew, Junior Deacon.

The two Lodges were on formation of the Grand Lodge of British Columbia, chartered at Nanaimo Lodge, No. 2, B.C.R., and Caledonia Lodge No. 6, B. C.R., respectively.

The Lodges abandoned the first one-storey meeting house and leased a two-storey building on Commercial Street about the middle of the site now occupied by the Royal Bank of Canada. After some difficulty with the landlord and having spent quite a large sum in altering it to suit Lodge purposes, they abandoned that also and met for some months in a back room of Bro. A. Mayer's store— where Halse Block is now. Very soon they set about buying a lot and building on it. Having by means of a Masonic Building Com-

mittee bought a lot on the corner of Commercial and Skinner Streets, they arranged to commence the erection of a two-storey wooden building thereon. The Brethren of the Lodges considered it advisable to amalgamate and having made application, a dispensation was granted on the 8th of December, 1873, by M.W. Israel Wood Powell, Grand Master of British Columbia, to Bro. M. Bate, W.M., of Nanaimo Lodge, No. 3, B.C.R., and Bro. John Renwick, W.M. of Caledonia Lodge, No. 6, B.C.R., to hold a joint meeting and to amalgamate as Ashlar Lodge No. 3, to which all the property of both Lodges should belong; and to elect the Officers thereof. The joint meeting was duly held and the following officers of Ashlar Lodge No. 3, B.C.R. were elected:

Bro. James M. Brown, Worshipful Master.
Bro. Archibald Muir, Senior Warden.
Bro. George Bevilockway, Junior Warden.
Bro. Alexander Mayer, Treasurer.
Bro. Charles Newton Young, Secretary.
Bro. Alexander Easson, Senior Deacon.
Bro. Andrew McKinnell, Junior Deacon.
Bro. Samuel Drake, Steward.
Bro. William Horne, Steward.
Bro. John Sabiston, Inner Guard.
Bro. Arthur Fenney, Tyler.

Installed December 27, 1873.

The new Lodge Building was completed in 1874 and used as a Masonic Hall until it was torn down. The present three-storey brick building was erected in 1923 by Ashlar Lodge on the same site.

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