

## The British Isles



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## Historic Society

History, Traditions & Customs

## Victoria Day Special Edition

taken place since 1898 in the monarch's namesake city of Victoria, British Columbia. In nearby New Westminster, the Victoria Day weekend is distinguished by the Hyack Anvil Battery Salute, a tradition created during colonial times as a surrogate for a 21-gun salute: Gunpowder is placed between two anvils, the top one upturned, and the charge is ignited, hurling the upper anvil into the air.

### TRIVIA:

**Born:** Princess Alexandrina Victoria of Kent, 24 May 1819, Kensington Palace, London

**Died:** 22 January 1901 (aged 81), Osborne House, Isle of Wight

**Burial:** 4 February 1901, Royal Mausoleum, Frogmore, Windsor

**Reign:** 20 June 1837 – 22 January 1901,

**Coronation:** 28 June 1838

**Predecessor:** William IV

**Successor:** Edward VII

**Father:** Prince Edward, Duke of Kent and Strathearn

**Mother:** Princess Victoria of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen\\_Victoria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen_Victoria)

## Victoria Day



Canada is the only country that commemorates Queen Victoria with an official holiday. Federal government protocol dictates that, on



Victoria Day, the Royal Union Flag is to be flown from sunrise to sunset at all federal government

buildings—including airports, military bases, and other Crown owned property across the country—where physical arrangements allow.

The holiday has been observed in Canada since at least 1845, originally falling on Victoria's actual birthday (May 24, 1819). It continues to be celebrated in various fashions across the country; the holiday has always been a distinctly Canadian observance. Victoria Day is a federal statutory holiday, as well as a holiday in six of Canada's ten provinces and all three of its territories.

Several cities hold a parade on the holiday, with the most prominent being that which has



## The Hastings Mill Store,

moved from it's original location and now

residing at 1575 Alma Road, is the oldest building in Vancouver, originally construct in 1865, 21 years before Vancouver was incorporated. It was constructed as the company store for the B.C. Mill and Vancouver Island Spar Lumber and Sawmill. When mill owner Captain Edward Stamp went bust, it was renamed the Hastings Sawmill.



### Edward Stamp

(1814–1872) was an English mariner and entrepreneur who contributed to the early economic development of British Columbia and Vancouver Island. Born at Alnwick in Northumberland, Stamp served as the captain of a steam transport in the Crimean War in 1854.

In 1865, he formed the British Columbia and Vancouver Island Spar, Lumber and Sawmill Company to establish a sawmill and logging rights on Burrard Inlet. The company first attempted to locate the mill at Brockton Point in what is now Stanley Park, but inshore currents and a nearby reef made the site impractical and the site was shifted about a mile farther east, on the south side of the inlet. Stamp had a minor career in politics, serving on the Legislative Council of British Columbia in 1867 and 1868. He died at Turnham Green, Middlesex, on 20 January 1872.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward\\_Stamp](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Stamp)

**TRIVIA:** You can thank Queen Victoria and her husband Prince Albert for your Christmas tree. They popularized the custom in 1848 when Albert sent decorated trees to schools and army barracks around Windsor. An image of the royal family decorating a tree was also published that year, inspiring other British families to do the same.



## Victoria, B.C.

There are two capital cities named after Queen Victoria, Victoria the capital city of the Canadian province of British Columbia , and Regina , the capital city of the Canadian province Saskatchewan , were both named for Queen Victoria . `` Regina " is the Latin word for queen.

Erected in 1843 as a Hudson's Bay Company trading post on a site originally called Camosun (the native word was "camosack", meaning "rush of water") known briefly as "Fort Albert", the settlement was renamed Fort Victoria in November 1843, in honour of Queen Victoria. Victoria was incorporated as a city in 1862. In 1865, the North Pacific home of the Royal Navy was established in Esquimalt and today is Canada's Pacific coast naval base. In 1866 when the island was politically united with the mainland, Victoria was designated the capital of the new united colony instead of New Westminster and became the provincial capital when British Columbia joined the Canadian Confederation in 1871.

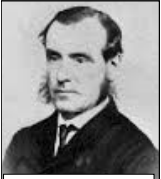
The following were also named on honour of Queen Victoria: Victoria Avenue, Victoria, B.C., Empress Hotel, Victoria, Victoria Drive, Vancouver, and Queen Victoria Hospital, Revelstoke, B.C.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victoria,\\_British\\_Columbia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victoria,_British_Columbia)

<https://www.tourismvictoria.com/>

**TRIVIA:** At least six serious assassination attempts were made against Victoria during her reign — most of which while she was riding in a carriage.

# British Columbia History



Robert Burnaby

Robert Burnaby (November 30, 1828 – January 10, 1878) was an English merchant, politician and civil servant in British Columbia, where he served as

Private Secretary to Richard



Richard Moody

Clement Moody, the founder and first Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia. Moody named Burnaby Lake, in British Columbia, after Burnaby, and the city of Burnaby was subsequently named after Burnaby, as were at least ten other urban and geographical features, including a mountain, Robert Burnaby Park, a Haida Gwaii Island, and a street in Vancouver.

Burnaby was born in Woodthorpe, Leicestershire. Before his appointment to the staff of Richard Clement Moody, he worked for the Civil Service in London, during which service he attracted the favour of Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton.

At incorporation, the municipality's citizens unanimously chose to name it after the legislator, speaker, Freemason and explorer Robert Burnaby, who had been private secretary to Colonel Richard Moody, the first land commissioner for the Colony of British Columbia, in the mid-19th century. In 1859 Burnaby had surveyed the freshwater lake near what is now the city's geographical centre. Moody chose to name it Burnaby Lake.

The well-connected Burnaby was a close friend of many prominent figures in the region, including the Judges Matthew Baillie Begbie and Henry Pering Pellew Crease, gold commissioner Thomas Elwyn, and Richard Clement Moody.



Matthew Begbie

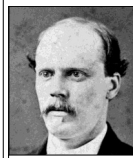
Sir Matthew Baillie Begbie (9 May 1819 – 11 June 1894) was a British lawyer, politician and judge. In 1858, Begbie became the first Chief Justice of

the Crown Colony of British Columbia in colonial times and in the first decades after British Columbia joined Confederation as a province of Canada.



Henry Crease

Sir Henry Pering Pellew Crease (20 August 1823 – 27 November 1905) was a British-Canadian lawyer, judge, and politician, influential in the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia. He was the first Attorney General of the united Colony of British Columbia and sat on the Supreme Court of that province for 26 years. Crease was born at Ince Castle, in Cornwall, the son of a Royal Navy captain.



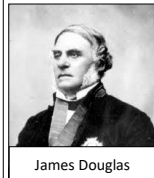
Thomas Elwyn

Thomas Elwyn (c. 1837 – 11 September 1888) was a British soldier, police officer and gold commissioner in colonial British Columbia.

Elwyn was born in Ireland into a family with a long military tradition. He served as a lieutenant in the 30th Foot during the Crimean war. He arrived in Victoria on Christmas Day, 1858 and was appointed, on the strength of his references from England, to the police force under Inspector Chartres Brew. After serving for five months as the Chief Constable of Yale, Governor James



Chartres Brew



James Douglas

Douglas (first Governor of the Colony of British Columbia) made him Assistant Gold Commissioner of Lillooet.

**TRIVIA:** Queen Victoria was the first member of the Royal family to live at Buckingham Palace.

Shortly after her accession to the throne, Queen Victoria moved into Buckingham Palace, which was previously owned by her late uncle King William IV. This made Queen Victoria the first reigning monarch to take up residence at Buckingham, though her move did not come without its struggles. As the royal family's website puts it, "Her marriage to Prince Albert in 1840 soon showed up the Palace's shortcomings."

Buckingham continues to serve as a place of royal business and the London residence of Queen Elizabeth.



**Surgeon-General  
Charles Edwin  
McVittie**  
**Honorary Physician to  
Queen Victoria**

British Medical Journal; London Vol. 1, Issue. 2881,  
(Mar 18, 1916):

SURGEON-GENERAL CHARLE EDWIN MCVITTIE,  
Madras Medical Service (retired),  
Born: 10 Feb 1842 **Dublin, Ireland.**  
Died: 17 Feb 1916, **Goodrest, Exmouth, Devon  
England.**

He took the L.R.C.S.I. in 1865, and the Fellowship in 1874, and the L.R.C.P. Edinburgh. in 1866. He entered the I.M.S. as assistant surgeon on March 31st, 1866, became surgeon on July 1st, 1873, surgeon-major on March 31st, 1878, deputy surgeon-general on March 7th, 1891, and Surgeon-General on April 1st, 1895, retiring on April 1st, 1900. A good service pension was conferred upon him from May 17th, 1894, and on March 23rd, 1898, He was appointed Honorary Physician to the Queen. He served in Afghanistan in 1880, receiving the medal, and in Burma in 1886-7, when he was mentioned in dispatches, in G.G.O. No. 434 of 1887, and received the medal with two clasps.

Personal Note: Charles Edwin McVittie was my Grandfather,

Editor: Stephen Edwin McVittie,  
The British Isles Historic Society

**TRIVIA:** Her first name was not Victoria. Queen Victoria was originally named Alexandrina Victoria, after her godfather, Tsar Alexander I, and her mother Marie Louise Victoire but always preferred to go by her second name, or the nickname 'Drina. She was proclaimed Queen Alexandrina Victoria but insisted on being called Victoria.



## Victoria

(r. 1837-1901) Victoria was born at Kensington Palace, London, on 24 May 1819. She was the only daughter of Edward, Duke of Kent, fourth son of George III. Her father died shortly after her birth and she became heir to the throne because the three uncles who were ahead of her in the succession - George IV, Frederick Duke of York, and William IV - had no legitimate children who survived.

Warmhearted and lively, Victoria had a gift for drawing and painting; educated by a governess at home, she was a natural diarist and kept a regular journal throughout her life. On William IV's death in 1837, she became Queen at the age of 18.

Queen Victoria is associated with Britain's great age of industrial expansion, economic progress and, especially, empire. At her death, it was said, Britain had a worldwide empire on which the sun never set.

In the early part of her reign, she was influenced by two men: her first Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, and then her husband, Prince Albert, whom she married in 1840. Both men taught her much about how to be a ruler in a 'constitutional monarchy', in which the monarch had very few powers but could use much influence.

Despite her advanced age, Victoria continued her duties to the end - including an official visit to Dublin in 1900. The Boer War in South Africa overshadowed the end of her reign. 'We are not interested in the possibilities of defeat; they do not exist.'

Victoria died at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight, on 22 January 1901 after a reign which lasted almost 64 years, then the longest in British history. Her son, Edward VII succeeded her.

<https://www.royal.uk/queen-victoria>