

Vol 1195A

#14

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

HALIFAX, N.S.

Mr. Dawson  
League

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

May 28, 1950

Dear Mr. Dawson

Thank you very much for your letter of May 20th. You have certainly expended a great deal of time and effort on the Old Academy. Personally I am glad to see they are bearing such rich results.

There were originally two plaques in the Old Academy placed there by the Quebec Commission in 1912. I think, and donated by the Nova Scotia Historical Society. One is evidently at the Academy, perhaps both. They should be put up somewhere in the vicinity and your idea seems excellent. One Dr. D.C. Harvey is President of the N.S. Historical Society - and also is the representative of the Historical Sites and Monuments Board (Federal) in Nova Scotia. He is now in Ottawa. I shall see him on his return or perhaps prior to it as I am leaving for Kingston Ontario tomorrow and he plans to be there also. His cooperation is absolutely essential if we are to get them to pay for it.

The Ottawa folk have a memorial called and want for erection to Sir William Dawson as soon as a site can be procured. I have been in touch with the Mayor regarding this. If we can locate the tablet taken from the site where it could be placed on the Caern this is an N.S. Historical Soc. plaque. If they mean to have a monument built on the site I will be glad to help you in any way from me as soon as I can be in touch with it. Very sincerely,  
Mr. Dawson

MG 8  
12  
(2)

MG-1  
VR 1195A  
#9

The Pictou Academy  
Educational Foundation

cordially invites

M<sup>r</sup> + M<sup>rs</sup> V A Barnwell

to

attend the unveiling

Wednesday afternoon, Oct. 30, 1957

at 2.30 o'clock

of the memorial to

Sir William Dawson

which has been erected by the Historic

W Sites and Monuments Board of Canada

W on Church Street, Pictou

In the event of inclement weather, the ceremony will be held in the Saint Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Pictou.

Weather was fine

me 8  
12  
(3)

Dawson Memorial

I was one of those who attended the unveiling of the monument to Sir William Dawson, which stands on the plot of ground where his birthplace stood, in the days when the house was still standing and behind the storm door was the Nova Scotia Historical Society plaque which stated that this was the house in which the great geologist was born. Years later the house was torn down, the plaque disappeared, but was found later and was placed in the hands of Mrs. A. Barnwell for safe keeping, she being interested in the historical spots of the town when the Dawson Memorial was being planned, many letters passed between Mrs. Barnwell and those in authority in such matters, and it was finally settled that the N.S. Historical plaque was to be placed on the monument at the rear. On the day the Dawson monument was unveiled I looked to see if the plaque had been placed. It wasn't. From time to time I made inquiries about it, and then finally, just the other day, I went to see Mrs. Barnwell. She still has the plaque, and in addition a number of letters dating back to 1933 regarding the placing of this plaque. Letters in her possession make the statement that the Dawson plaque was to be placed on the new monument. But to this date it hasn't been done. Why? The place for that plaque is on the monument and not in Mrs. Barnwell's cabinet, and she is just as anxious to have it in its rightful place. I read some of the letters she has written and received about this matter, and some one in authority is either passing the buck or slipping up on the matter. Mrs. Barnwell is persistent, as she has always been in this matter, must be discouraged and I would suppose, willing to call the matter quits. Now it's time for perhaps the Town Council to write the Historical Sites and Monuments Board of Canada and insist that this plaque be placed without delay. Mrs. Barnwell has a letter dated November 1st, 1954, authorizing the placing of the plaque certainly in a year, slow moving as these bodies are, the work should have been done.

1950

1953

MONUMENT TO DAWSON

At long last a monument is to be erected in the memory of Sir John William Dawson, M.D., F.R.S., for many years one of Canada's leading educationalists, scientists and university presidents. The place where he was born in Pictou on the thirteenth of October, 1820 has been neglected for years. It is the now vacant lot at the foot of Deacon's Hill. After his death, a bronze tablet was placed on the house, still standing until recent years, but a storm door fastened back most of the time covered the tablet and few people saw it. The Advocate complained about that. When the house was removed, no provision was made to mount the tablet, and we complained again. When a flour advertisement appeared on the vacant lot, there was more unfavorable publicity.

If our memory serves us correctly, Mrs. A. Barnwell devoted a lot of time and energy on this and similar projects.

Eventually, the town purchased the property and proceeded to work through the Historic Sites and Monuments Board. It took a long time to get action, but now there is assurance that a suitable remembrance will be erected to the memory of a truly great man.

Roland Sherwood in  
Pictou Advocate, July 1954