

Nonagenarian Is

Well Known Here

Colonist Jan. 5 '45

A nonagenarian, Mrs. Mary Barnswell, who celebrated her 91st birthday recently at Mount St. Mary's, has spent more than 80 years in Victoria, and the story of her life is linked with that of the early days of the city. The grandmother of a popular athlete, Barney Barnswell, she is one of the best known of figures among old-timers.

Children and great-grandchildren and friends called upon the pioneer woman on her birthday, and she had a happy day serving tea to her visitors. Sister Mary Graves made a special cake for the occasion.

Mrs. Barnswell likes to recall the events of the 80's when she came to Victoria from her West Indies home with the family of the late Captain Devereux. Her husband, the late James Barnswell, was a native of Kingston, Jamaica, who came around Cape Horn to follow his luck in the days of the gold rush. He died in 1919.

The family have always lived in the same district and until a short time ago Mrs. Barnswell lived at 1148 Johnson Street, with her son, Arthur, who remained with his mother to look after her. There are six other children living; four daughters, Mrs. Charles Alexander and Mrs. Fred Alexander, who recently celebrated their golden wedding anniversaries; Mrs. Herbert Carter, Vancouver, and Mrs. Beatrice Graves, Portland. Jimmy Barnswell, father of Barney, also lives in Victoria. A great-grandson, L.A.C. Herbert Alexander, R.C.A.F., was wounded in action overseas some time ago.

There are 13 grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren. Three children are deceased.