

The Hodgson Story

by
Leroy Koop

The Wetaskiwin Branch was contacted on August 12 via its website by Marie L. She wrote:

"My Great Grand Parents and some of their children are buried in the Duhamel Cemetery. There are no records of where they are buried. A fire burned all the wooden crosses. Would the funeral home keep records on where people are buried? Duhamel does not have these records. You can email me or phone. My great Grand Parents are Kathleen & John Hodgson both their names are misspelled on the Stone Monument at the Cemetery, I would like to find their graves and put a marker on their graves."

Since Marie specifically asked about funeral homes, the Moore's Funeral Home of Wetaskiwin Records were the first to be checked. Here is what was found:

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FUNERAL RECORD AND LEDGER

Ordered by <u>Wm Hodgson</u>		Charged to <u>Wm Hodgson</u>		Residence <u>Wetaskiwin</u>	
Place of Death <u>near Wetaskiwin</u>	Casket, +	Box,	Plate,	<u>Jan 4/32</u> By Cash, <u>40.00</u>	
Cause of Death <u>Cancer</u>	Hearse,				
Name, <u>Kathleen Hodgson</u>	Automobiles,				
Age, <u>73</u>	Crape,	Gloves,	Ribbon,		
Died, <u>Jan 3 - 1933</u>	Embalming,				
Where Born, <u> Sask. approx</u>	Grave,	Digging,	Trimming,		
Occupation, <u>-</u>	Printing,				
Residence, <u>Wet-</u>	Attendance,				
Where Buried, <u>Duhamel</u>	Shroud,				
Date of Funeral, <u>Jan 4/32</u>	Chairs,				
Minister, <u>A. C. Church</u>	<u>40.00</u>		<u>40.00</u>		
Physician, <u>Dr. Shillaber</u>					
Style, <u>6.00 incl py</u>					

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FUNERAL RECORD AND LEDGER

Ordered by <u>Wm Hodgson</u>		Charged to <u>Wm Hodgson</u>		Residence <u>P. M. 2 Wetaskiwin</u>	
Place of Death <u>Duhamel</u>	Casket, +	Box,	Plate,	<u>40.00</u>	<u>Oct 24/33</u> By Cash, <u>10.00</u>
Cause of Death <u>Senility</u>	Hearse,			<u>Nov 16/38 chg. to Simpson</u> <u>5.22</u>	
Name, <u>John Hodgson</u>	Automobiles,				
Age, <u>81-7-26</u>	Crape,	Gloves,	Ribbon,		
Died, <u>Oct 26 - 1933</u>	Embalming,				
Where Born, <u>Alberta</u>	Grave,	Digging,	Trimming,		
Occupation, <u>Farmer</u>	Printing,				
Residence, <u>Duhamel</u>	Attendance,				
Where Buried, <u>Duhamel</u>	Shroud,				
Date of Funeral, <u>Oct 28/33</u>	Chairs,				
Minister, <u>-</u>	<u>40.00</u>		<u>40.00</u>		
Physician, <u>Rosher</u>					
Style, <u>6.00 incl py</u>					

Kathleen Hodgson died on January 3, 1933 at the age of 73 years and the funeral was on January 5. She resided in Wetaskiwin (city or county ?) and was buried in Duhamel. John died on October 26, 1933 at the age of 81+ years and the funeral was on October 28. He resided in Duhamel at the time of his death and was buried there as well.

Two newspaper obituaries were found for Kathleen.
One was found in the Wetaskiwin Archives' collection:

DEATH OF KATHLEEN HODGSON

We report the death of Kathleen beloved wife of John Hodgson, of the Duhamel district, who passed out of this life from cancer, at the age of 73 years—Deceased had been a resident of the place for a considerable period—She leaves to mourn her departure a husband and grown up family. Her end came January 3rd and interment was made January 5th in the Roman Catholic cemetery at Duhamel. JAN 11, 1933

The other one was from the PEEL collection, the Wetaskiwin Times, January 5, 1933:

DUHAMEL

One of the earliest settlers of this district passed away on Tuesday in the person of Kathleen, beloved wife of John Hodgson, at the age of 73 years. She had been a patient sufferer with cancer for some time. Deceased was born in Saskatchewan and came to the Duhamel district about forty years ago with her husband. She leaves to mourn her demise a sorrowing husband, and one son, besides a host of friends in the community. The funeral takes place on Thursday, the interment taking place in the Roman Catholic cemetery at New Norway.

The Death Registrations for both Kathleen and John were ordered from the Provincial Archives of Alberta, in part, to determine where they were born. The registration for Kathleen confirmed the death date and the place of burial with Moore's in Wetaskiwin in charge of the burial. She was born at Fort Pitt, Saskatchewan. John's registration confirmed his death date and that Moore's in Wetaskiwin was in charge of the burial in Duhamel. John was born in Green Lake, Saskatchewan.

Form 1. If placed in an archive marked "Provisional Records" the number for reference will be 1000, and all entries in the Province of Alberta will be subject to the provisions of the Act in force at the time of the registration.

CANADA
PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

Record No. 8 of 1933

REGISTRATION OF DEATH

Name of Deceased (In full)	Kathleen Hodgson		
Date of Death	Jan 3 1933		
Place of Death (Street and No., if not at Home or Village)	Wetaskiwin, Saskatchewan		
Regular Residence of Deceased (If different from above)	Wetaskiwin		
Length of Time (In Years or Months or Days)	40 yrs		
Sex (Male or Female)	F		
Age (Years, Months, Days)	73		
Place of Birth (City or Town, State or Province)	Fort Pitt, Sask		
Last Occupation (If any) attending Fatal Illness	Housewife		
Country of Birth of Parents (If in Canada, give province)	Saskatchewan		
Cause of Death	Cancer of rectum		
Name of Physician (If any) attending Fatal Illness	H. H. McLeod		
Name and Address of Undertaker or Person in charge of Burial	E. L. Moore		
Place of Interment (Name of Cemetery)	Duhamel		

I certify the foregoing to be true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.
Given under my hand at Wetaskiwin this 4 day of Jan 1933
Kathleen Hodgson Registrar

I hereby certify the above return was made to me at Wetaskiwin on the 4th day of January 1933.
H. H. McLeod Registrar

Registrar's Record No. 8 of 1933

Form 1. If placed in an archive marked "Provisional Records" the number for reference will be 1000, and all entries in the Province of Alberta will be subject to the provisions of the Act in force at the time of the registration.

CANADA
PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

Record No. 2318 of 1933

REGISTRATION OF DEATH

Name of Deceased (In full)	John Hodgson		
Date of Death	26th day of October 1933		
Place of Death (Street and No., if not at Home or Village)	Montgomery Municipality		
Regular Residence of Deceased (If different from above)	Montgomery Municipality		
Length of Time (In Years or Months or Days)	40 yrs		
Sex (Male or Female)	Male		
Age (Years, Months, Days)	81		
Place of Birth (City or Town, State or Province)	Green Lake, Alberta		
Last Occupation (If any) attending Fatal Illness	Farmer		
Country of Birth of Parents (If in Canada, give province)	England		
Cause of Death	Cardiac failure (second day)		
Name of Physician (If any) attending Fatal Illness	Dr. H. H. McLeod		
Name and Address of Undertaker or Person in charge of Burial	E. L. Moore		
Place of Interment (Name of Cemetery)	Duhamel		

I certify the foregoing to be true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.
Given under my hand at Wetaskiwin this 27 day of Oct 1933
John Hodgson Registrar

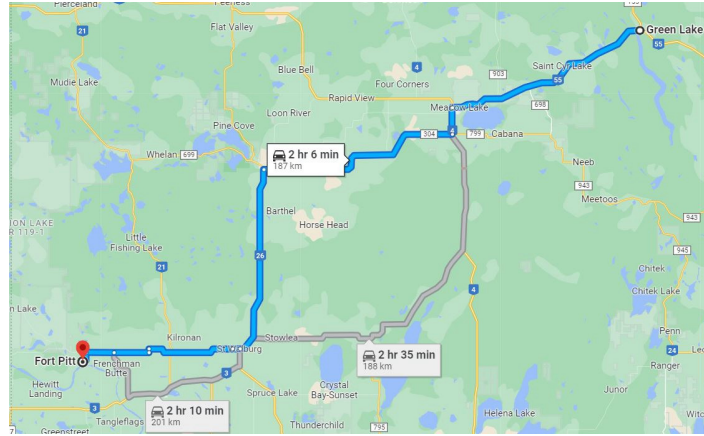
I hereby certify the above return was made to me at Wetaskiwin on the 27th day of October 1933.
H. H. McLeod Registrar

Registrar's Record No. 2318 of 1933

Here's the GOOGLE map which shows Fort Pitt and Green Lake in Saskatchewan.

Both places are well north of North Battleford. In modern times with a fast car it would take over 2 hours to get from one to the other. Amazing that Kathleen and John would have met in the 1870's and begin a family.

It was easy to discover that Kathleen and John were buried in the St. Thomas Roman Catholic Church Cemetery a few miles north of the present hamlet of Duhamel. The Alberta Government designated the Church a Historical site in 1980.



The Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton was contacted to find out about this church. This is part of what was passed on:

"Because of its history and antiquity, the 1883 Duhamel St. Thomas Church has now been taken over by the Duhamel Historical Society. It is now a museum in memory of Father Hippolyte Beillevaire who is remembered primarily for his ministerial work with the Indigenous community initially, and in later years, with the white settlers who came to Battle River Settlement. The responsibility of the cemetery was transferred to the Duhamel Historical Society 31 May 1990."

Trying to contact the Duhamel Historical Society via email and phone didn't result in any communications. It was discovered, though, that no plot map existed for this cemetery. Where John and Kathleen Hodgson were buried is , and will always be, a mystery. It has been reported that the wooden crosses and fences that originally marked the graves were either destroyed by fire or the passage of time. The Archdiocese further stated that "Sacramental burial records do not include the plot location of the grave."



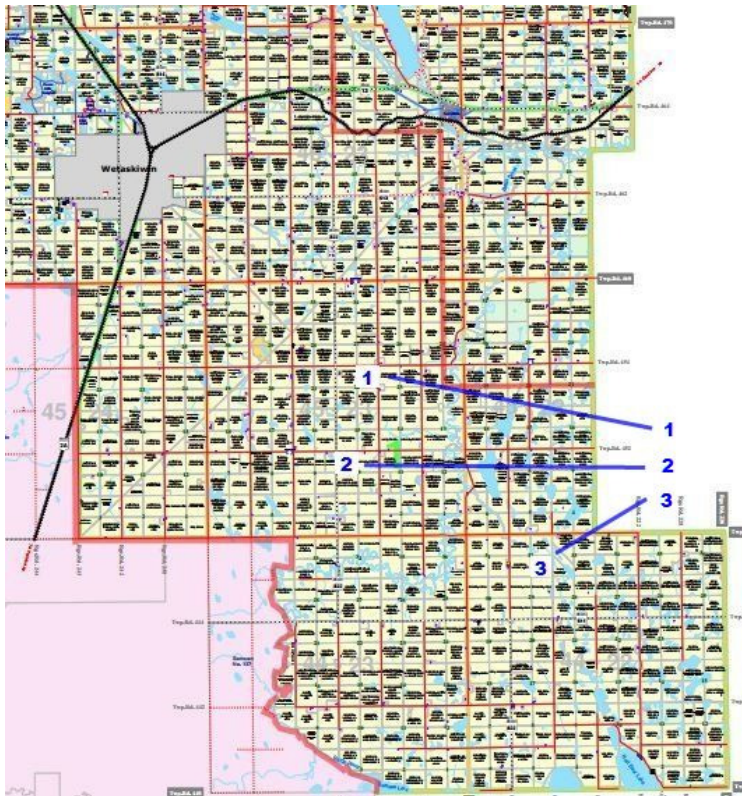
The Society did erect a two-sided Memorial Wall with names and years of death of all persons buried at this cemetery. John and Kathleen Hodgson are both listed under 1933 on the panel to the right. Further



research showed that Kathleen's name was really Catherine and John's surname, Jodgson, was obviously misread from the church records.

Although the research didn't conclude with what Marie L. was looking for, other interesting questions materialized; questions such as:

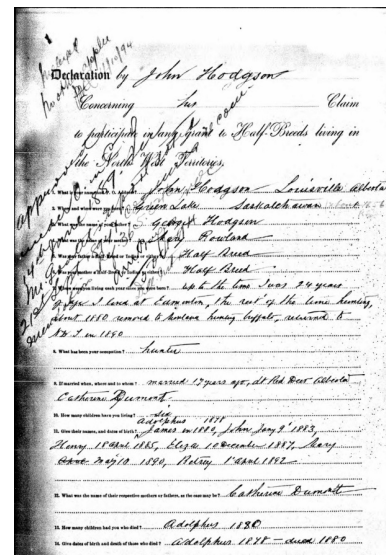
- 1) Why were John and Kathleen (Catherine) Hodgson's bodies prepared for burial in Wetaskiwin but buried in Duhamel?
- 2) Where were they living at the time of their deaths?



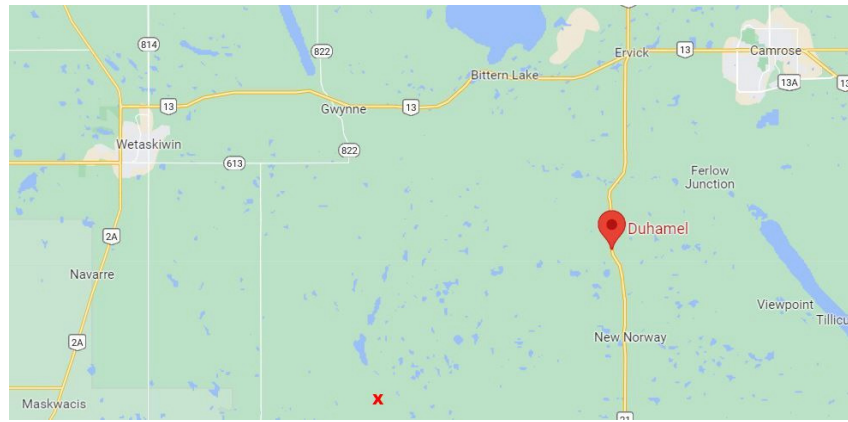
The 1931 Canadian Census shows that John and Catherine were residing at a farm at 32-44-22-4. The head of the household was William Hodgson, John and Catherine's son. The 1921 Canadian Census showed that John and Kath were operating this farm. Homestead records were searched. John and Catherine were involved in at least 3 homestead applications under the Scrip rules. In 1894 they applied for NE22-45-23-4 (#1 on map). In 1895 they were dealing with NW10-45-23-4 (#2 on map). In 1896 they applied for SE32-44-22-4 (#3 on Map), the farm where they resided when they passed away.

Homestead record applications can provide much more than just locations. In the 1894 homestead application it stated that John's parents were George Hodgson and Mary Rowland and that he was born at Green Lake, Saskatchewan. John was married about 1877 to Catherine Dumont (maiden surname) in Red Deer, Alberta. John listed 6 children on the application, two with birth years only, the other four with birth dates. John also stated that he lived in Montana from 1880 to 1890 and his job was that of a buffalo hunter.

It should be noted that all three homesteads are in the County of Wetaskiwin, and that it is probably the reason why hospital and funeral home services were used in Wetaskiwin and not in, say, Camrose.

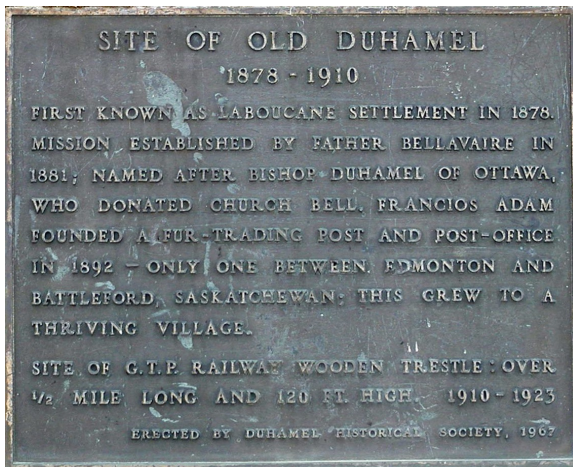


The red **X** on this map shows the approximate location of the Hodgson farm. The farm is definitely closer to Wetaskiwin than Camrose.



But now comes a third question:

3) Why did the burials of John and Catherine take place in Duhamel?



The site of Duhamel was originally named the Laboucane Settlement in 1878. The plaque on the left is on the monument which is located just off Hwy 21 and Twp Road 461 advertising the historical site which includes the St. Thomas RC Church. Another big display billboard at this site states: "Before the disappearance of the buffalo in the 1880's, this land had long been used by the First Nations people as a staging point for engaging in the buffalo hunt."

Although it is an assumption, one can probably say that John Hodgson, a buffalo hunter, met with many friends, fellow hunters and even other family members on a yearly basis in the Laboucane Settlement, later know as Duhamel. Perhaps this was the "home" congregation for John and Catherine Hodgson, John, apparently, being a "staunch Catholic".

A visit to the St. Thomas Church Cemetery showed monuments placed along the long pathway and only a few (probably more current burials) further out. It may be that families have erected monuments to honour the family members even though the exact locations of burial sites are unknown.

It was suggested to Marie L. that she might want to contact the Duhamel Historical Society with a paper letter delivered by postal mail and ask if monuments can be placed in the cemetery to honour family members even if plot locations are unknown. Since several of John and Catherine's children are also buried here, it was further suggested to place one monument with all family names and birth and death dates if known.