



# ROOTS & BRANCHES

**WETASKIWIN BRANCH**  
**Alberta Genealogical Society**

*BRINGING THE PAST .....  
TO THE PRESENT .....  
FOR THE FUTURE! ©*

**Website:** [www.abgenealogy.ca/wetaskiwin-branch](http://www.abgenealogy.ca/wetaskiwin-branch)

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**JANUARY, 2024**

**VOL. 22 #1**

## **EXECUTIVE**

**President:** Alice Hoyle  
**Vice President:** Lorraine McKay  
**Secretary:** Pam Cooke  
**Treasurer:** Leroy Koop

## **BRANCH MEETINGS**

Third Tuesday of the Month.  
Except July, August, December

**January 16 2024**  
**Zoom, 7:00 pm**

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## **ROOTS & BRANCHES**

is published three times a year by and for the members of Wetaskiwin Branch of AGS. It is emailed to members and posted on our website.

## **COMMITTEES**

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- **Programs**  
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- **Publicity**  
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- **Historian**  
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## **BRANCH LIBRARY**

Located at City Archives!

For access call 780-352-0227  
(Heritage Museum)

If a local researcher is required contact  
[wetaskiwin@abgenealogy.ca](mailto:wetaskiwin@abgenealogy.ca)

## **PRESIDENT'S PONDERINGS** Alice Hoyle

Happy New Year to everyone. I hope that 2024 is a good year for all of you, and most especially a good year for the world in general. There are so many stressful situations around the world and sometimes it's difficult to understand the rationale behind these conflicts. Many of the tensions between countries, nationalities, tribal loyalties in third world countries, etc. have been going on for decades and centuries. How do you come to a peaceful solution with all this 'history' at the back of people's minds?

We are very fortunate to live where we do. Obviously, it is one of the reasons our ancestors left their home country to come to North America and eventually (or initially) to Canada. Thanks to our ancestors, we can enjoy a lifestyle that allows us to feel at peace, to allow our children the ability to attend school, to accept the differences in our neighbours and friends. Every Remembrance Day we celebrate and acknowledge those who fought in wars that resulted in the democracy that we live in. We should celebrate this on a daily basis: were it not for the vision of our ancestors and for those who toil to make sure we are safe and can live our lives without constant fear, our lives would be very different.

This coming year, let's be doubly thankful for our ancestors who (unless your ancestors were the original inhabitants of this land) decided to give up all they knew (land, possessions, family, history) to emigrate and hope for a better life here. It's one of the reasons we do our genealogical research – let's make this the year that we try new avenues of research, learn a new method of recording our discoveries, share our findings with extended family. It's a Leap Year: that means we have one additional day to be the best researchers we can be. ☺



Shortly after becoming our newsletter editor, I began emailing each issue to Library and Archives Canada. But sometimes I wondered if I was just sending our newsletter off into the ozone layer. It was reassuring to receive this email from them recently:

Hello Sharon Aney,  
Thank you for your email. We are definitely interested in continuing to receive the newsletter.

Please continue to send the PDF of the newsletter to the email address that you have already used:  
[depotlegalnumerique-digitallegaldeposit@bac-lac.gc.ca](mailto:depotlegalnumerique-digitallegaldeposit@bac-lac.gc.ca) Have a great day.

~~~~~

In this technological age, when we are constantly reminded that we must keep our online research and financial sites secure with ever changing, more complicated and unique passwords .... (lest we become a news story about being hacked and losing huge amounts of money....) ..... the news that "23andMe" has been hacked defies belief.

An interesting story by one of our members, on page 5, reminds us that deceivers/scammers/exploiters have been around for many years.

Stay safe out there!

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### October 2023

Nelda Layton gave us a presentation in which we learned about some of the new features of the Family Search website. In particular, the presentation outlined how the Memories portal has changed. You can now share family information on "living" people on your database, should you decide to do this.

### November 2023

It was too bad that technical issues did not allow the planned webinar to be shared.

However, we are overdue in recognizing the time and effort that Claudia Malloch invests in researching and presenting informative and helpful programs for us at every meeting. We look forward to more.

Thank you, Claudia!

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**SAVE THE DATE!**      *April 19, 2024*

### COLLECTIBLES MARKET!

A Wetaskiwin Branch project to support the Heritage Museum management of The City Archives.

See page 4.

More details to come as the time nears

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## **BRANCH NOTES and NEWS**

### **BITTERN LAKE RESOURCES**

On October 20, Mavis and I followed up on a promise made in June during the opening of our resource library at the Archives..... that we would visit the Town Office at Bittern Lake. At the time, the manager, Jill Tinson was proud to tell us about the Bittern Lake history book. We were delighted to accept a copy of "Bitter 'N Sweet", Vol. 2, which is an updated version of the first book. It has been placed into our resource Library.

She is also open to any of our researchers coming by to search in some other community history books that are in her office:

- The Bitter 'N Sweet, Vol 1
- Wheatlands and Wildflowers – Rycroft
- Where Friends and Rivers Meet – Flatbush and area
- Trails to Little Corner – Namaka and district
- Warner, Alberta
- Round Hill and District Salute the Pioneers
- Halkirk Home Fires, and District

Bittern Lake town office is open Tuesday to Fridays. If you would like to look into these books, please call ahead for an appointment. Interestingly, as Mavis was born in Wetaskiwin and has a large family presence in the area, she was able to come across several of "her families" just by doing a quick look through the index.

By the way.... I noticed that the library in the Wetaskiwin Seniors Centre has "Fairview and District" local history books, volumes I, II and III... if you need to go there to research.

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### **COLLECTIBLES MARKET – April 19, 2024 – a fundraiser for the Heritage Museum**

As you are aware, our branch had been advocating in favor of retention of the City of Wetaskiwin Archives since 2018. Our influence was part of City Council's decision to enter into a 5 year contract with the Heritage Museum to manage the Archives. In doing so, the Heritage Museum has encountered unexpected financial costs. Accordingly, our branch decided in May of 2023 that we would do a fundraiser in order to defray some of them.

We are asking our members (and friends) to donate any "collectibles" that no longer are of importance in our families. The market will be held at the Heritage Museum. Please do **NOT** see this as a request for your treasured family heirlooms!!!!

Some ideas: toys you have saved from your childhood, collections that you may have started and quit, souvenirs from sports events, concerts, etc, items that have a picture of a movie star, comic book hero or sports star, dated Christmas ornaments, etc.

Contact Bob Maynard or me if you have questions and with lists of items you can donate.

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## **Some ideas from Amy Johnson Crow if you can't concentrate on genealogy research:**

### ***1. Label Some Photographs***

You know you need to do this. Grab a handful of photos and a soft pencil or archivally safe pen and label the back of the photo with the "who-what-when-where-and-why". Record as much as you know about that image.

### ***2. Scan Some Photographs and Documents***

Now that you have some photos labeled, get out the scanner, camera, or your smartphone, and make a digital copy. This would be the perfect time to digitize those.

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## ***PICK A NAME, PICK A PROFESSION***

Alice Hoyle

Have you ever wondered how a very simple newspaper article could change a person's whole perspective about their family dynamics? Perhaps you've never really thought about it. I know I certainly didn't until it happened to me and to my siblings. So, what was this article and how could a few lines in a 1934 newspaper article make all of us sit up and take notice?

In order to answer this, I need to go back in time. I grew up in a loving family that consisted of my Mom, my Dad, and my 5 sisters. A brother had been born to my parents but sadly he died at 5 months of age. So, in essence we were a family of 6 girls and my parents. Unlike some families where the children didn't know their parents' birthdates or perhaps the year their parents got married, this sort of information was always available to us. We did not have any secrets where those vital statistics were concerned.

With the exception of one sister who disputed this, I and the rest of my sisters said we grew up poor, but we didn't know we were poor because we always had food on the table, a home, clothing to wear.....and our home was filled with love.

In 1986, tragedy struck when my Father died suddenly – one month before his 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday and just a few months after my parents had celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.

In the late 1980's my Mother paid me a visit and during that visit she said she had applied for a job that required her to give detailed information about her birth, any marriages, etc., and she revealed that she had been married before she and my Dad got married. W H A T??? To say I was gobsmacked would be an understatement. I asked her for details and I 'think' she told me the name of the person she was married to. I say "think" because I was so shocked I barely remembered any of the details she told me. I did remember that she said the marriage had been annulled and that 'he was a very bad person'. End of story.

Fast Forward 24 years: the President of the Wetaskiwin Genealogical Society had attended a provincial meeting and, as arranged beforehand, had purchased copies of the latest publications from the Camrose branch of Alberta Genealogical Society (AGS). She brought the copies to our June meeting and asked me to take them home for future inclusion in our Wetaskiwin branch resource centre. I was reluctant to take them home as I was not the committee chairperson for the resource centre. I conveyed this to her but she said "you should take them home over the summer – who knows, you might find some of your family in there". Of course, I silently

doubted this as none of my family lived in Camrose or in the Camrose area. So, the books came home with me, and they sat on a chair in our dining room for weeks.

At the end of summer, I decided to browse through the books – a compilation of Births, Marriages and Deaths as recorded in the Camrose Canadian newspaper. As genealogists, I'm sure we all do the same thing: search the index for the family surnames we are researching. I looked for my maiden name; nothing there. I looked for all the surnames relating to my Dad's family – nothing. So then I thought I'd see if there were any listings for my Mom's maiden name. My heart skipped a beat when I saw my Mom's name under 'marriages'. What on earth was this about?

There, in black and white, was a marriage record for my mother and a man named **Arthur Gordon**. I could not dispute that this was my mother because her mother and step-father were named and it was my grandparents' names. My world tilted sideways and I knew I had to do some digging.

I had a marriage date of November 8, 1934. I filled out a request with Alberta Vital Statistics to get a copy of the marriage certificate. The application came back, saying they could not find any record of the marriage. They supplied me with a 2-page questionnaire asking me to provide further information that might help with their search. I filled out the questionnaire and provided AB Vital Statistics with the information from the newspaper. A few weeks later I got a reply, advising that a manual search of the records could not find a record of the marriage. Very strange: after seeing the information in the Camrose branch publication, I had searched online and found the original article and that named the minister who had performed the ceremony and the fact that it had been performed by a United Church clergy. Why wasn't there a record of this at AB Vital Statistics? A hand-written note with the response from AB Vital Statistics suggested that because the marriage was performed by a United Church clergy, I should consider contacting the United Church Archives at the Provincial Archives of Alberta (PAA).

A phone call to the United Church Archives only yielded a message machine telling me that if this was a research question, I should contact the PAA. I then phoned the PAA, only to once again get a recorded message. I did leave a message, briefly outlining why I was calling and giving them a brief outline of the information I was looking for. The very next day, I got a call back and the person asked for more information. I told her the story, relating what we knew (or thought we knew) – she said she would see what she could find.

The same day, I got a call from PAA telling me they had found a record of the marriage and the divorce. What a surprise: I was not even looking for divorce records. As luck would have it, Wetaskiwin branch member Carole Koop had arranged for a tour of the PAA for branch members the very next day. I told the person at the PAA that I would be there the following day and she said she would leave the file at the front desk for me. I scarcely slept that night, anticipating what I would find in the files.

As I started looking through the file handed to me by PAA staff, I became quite confused. The documents listed a man named **Richard Thomas Thompson**. Who was this? Did I get handed the wrong file?

No, Alice.....read on.

The file contained an affidavit issued by my mother. Some of the relevant points in the affidavit were: the marriage took place on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of November, 1934. My mother hadn't known him very long: he was in the area where my grandparents and my Mom and her siblings lived – working on a threshing crew that had moved into the region. On or about the 12<sup>th</sup> of December, 1934 he disappeared. The RCMP were contacted and a result of this contact revealed that the 'groom' had resided in the province since 1932. In fact, he married another woman on the 30<sup>th</sup> of November, 1932 and was still legally married to her!

Information revealed: first marriage was conducted at Westlock, AB, 30<sup>th</sup> November 1932. According to the information on the Certificate of Marriage issued by the Province of Alberta at that time, the groom was **Arthur Garry Stevens**. He said he was born in Grand Forks, ND, USA. His parents were: Thomas L. Stevens and Fannie T. Buschoik. The groom's occupation at time of marriage was – **Mechanic**, and he says he is a Bachelor.

When he married my mother, he was now **Aurthur (sic) Eugene Gordon**. He was born in Langdon, ND, USA. His parents were: Edward Earnest Gordon and Mabel Helene Stapleton! The groom says he is a Bachelor, and his occupation at time of this marriage was – **Electrical Engineer**! A big step up in career status from 2 years prior.



After my Mother filed the paperwork, the RCMP started searching for this Mystery Man. It wasn't until 7<sup>th</sup> October, 1935 that he was found residing near Regina, SK. At that time, he was known to the Commissioner of Oaths in Holden, AB as **Arthur Gordon Stevens**. However, the affidavit served on him listed his name as **Richard Thomas Thompson**!

The PAA did have notations in the file about the court case, and I do have a photo of Mr. Mystery

Man. He has a very nice number pinned to his jacket: 8223!

Now you know why I gave this article the title "Pick a Name, Pick a Profession". Obviously, as a genealogy person, I have tried to find out more information about this mystery man. But where do I look? Do I look at information relating to any of the multiple fake names he used? I can't even try to dig deeper into this using his parents' names because those names also appear to be a figment of his imagination. I did order copies of both marriage registrations: although the 'groom' used different names, the one common denominator was that the letter "G" appeared at the start of either the first, middle or last name. When he signed the marriage licenses, he wrote the "G" in a very distinctive way. This allowed me to confirm that the same person signed both marriage licenses.

A few years after finding out all this information, I had a 'lightbulb moment'. When my Mother passed away, her collection of photos and photo albums came to me for archiving. I removed all photos from the sticky pages in early photo albums and created brand new albums, complete with identifying labels.





My mother had written very detailed information in her original albums: names, events, etc. However, there was one picture that always puzzled me: it was a picture of my Mother and a man, standing in front of a farmhouse. Under the photo, my Mother had written "Me and ?" It never made sense to me: why did all the other photos have such good captioning but she didn't know who was in the picture with her?

It all made sense now: she literally did not know who he was. What name could she possibly have put under the photo?

This whole revelation caused such sadness for me: to think that my Mother had to go through all this ordeal just before Christmas – a holiday that was always celebrated fully in our family. I cannot imagine the strength and determination she must have had in later years, making sure that the days and weeks leading up to Christmas were happy memories for her family.

I'm also sad that I didn't know any of this until after my Mother had passed away. I wish I could have given her a big hug and told her none of this was her fault. She had shown amazing strength and resilience in the face of this betrayal.

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## More ideas from Amy Johnson Crow if you can't concentrate on genealogy research:

### **3. Share With Family**

Social distancing doesn't mean no communication. Share some of those photos and documents with your family via email, Facebook, or even text. Not only does it get a copy of that image in another place (following the "Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe" principle), but it can also spark dialogue...

### **4. Index Records for FamilySearch**

Did you know that many of the records that you use on FamilySearch were indexed by volunteers—people just like you and me. FamilySearch has indexing projects for record sets around the world. (In fact, they're always looking for people who can read languages other than English. But don't worry, there are plenty of English-language records that you can work on, too.)

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*"Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow.  
The important thing is not to stop questioning."  
Albert Einstein*



## 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 Wm Hodgson Charged to Wm Hodgson Residence Wetaskiwin

|                                       |                           |                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Place of Death <u>near Wetaskiwin</u> | Casket, + Box, Plate,     | <p>Jan 4/32 By Cash, <u>40.00</u></p> <p style="font-size: 2em; transform: rotate(-45deg);">/</p> <p><u>40.00</u> <u>40.00</u></p> |
| 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>near Alberta</u>       | Grave, Digging, Trimming, |                                                                                                                                    |
| Occupation, <u>-</u>                  | Printing,                 |                                                                                                                                    |
| Residence, <u>Wet-</u>                | Attendance,               |                                                                                                                                    |
| Where Buried, <u>Duhamel</u>          | Shroud,                   |                                                                                                                                    |
| Date of Funeral, <u>Jan 8/32</u>      | Chairs,                   |                                                                                                                                    |
| Minister, <u>R. C. Church</u>         |                           |                                                                                                                                    |
| Physician, <u>Dr. Shillaber</u>       |                           |                                                                                                                                    |
| Style, <u>6.00 full pay</u>           |                           |                                                                                                                                    |

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### FUNERAL RECORD AND LEDGER

Ordered by Wm Hodgson Charged to Wm Hodgson Residence P.R. 2 Wetaskiwin

|                                   |                                    |                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Place of Death <u>Duhamel</u>     | Casket, + Box, Plate, <u>40.00</u> | <p><u>Oct 24/33</u> By Cash, <u>10.00</u></p> <p><u>Nov 16/38</u> chg. Mr. Simpson <u>5.22</u></p> |
| Cause of Death <u>Similarity</u>  | Hearse,                            |                                                                                                    |
| 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>                |                                    |                                                                                                    |
| Physician, <u>Rocher</u>          |                                    |                                                                                                    |
| Style, <u>6.00 full pay</u>       |                                    |                                                                                                    |

$$\begin{array}{r} 40.00 \\ 10.00 \\ \hline 50.00 \end{array}$$

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.

Page 1

THIS FORM, IF FILLED IN BY AN INDIVIDUAL, MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE REGISTRAR OF DEATHS, WHOSE OFFICE IS IN THE PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES, EDMONTON, ALBERTA.

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 Birth: **Wetaskiwin, Saskatchewan**

Regular Residence: **Wetaskiwin, Saskatchewan**

Length of Time: **40 yrs.**

Sex: **Female**

Age: **73**

Place of Birth: **Fort Pitt, Sask.**

Last Occupation: **Housewife**

Country of Birth: **Canada**

Name of Physician: **Dr. J. H. Moore**

Name and Address of Person in charge of Burial: **Moore's, Wetaskiwin**

I certify the foregoing to be true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Given under my hand and seal this **4** day of **Jan** 1933.

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

Registrar's Record No. \_\_\_\_\_ of 1933.

Page 1

THIS FORM, IF FILLED IN BY AN INDIVIDUAL, MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE REGISTRAR OF DEATHS, WHOSE OFFICE IS IN THE PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES, EDMONTON, ALBERTA.

PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

Record No. **2318** of 1933

**REGISTRATION OF DEATH**

Name of Deceased in full: **John Hodgson**

Date of Death: **26 8 day of October 1933**

Place of Birth: **Green Lake, Saskatchewan**

Regular Residence: **Wetaskiwin, Saskatchewan**

Length of Time: **40 yrs.**

Sex: **Male**

Age: **81**

Place of Birth: **Green Lake, Alberta**

Last Occupation: **Farmer**

Country of Birth: **Canada**

Name of Physician: **Dr. J. H. Moore**

Name and Address of Person in charge of Burial: **Moore's, Wetaskiwin**

I certify the foregoing to be true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Given under my hand and seal this **27** day of **Oct** 1933.

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

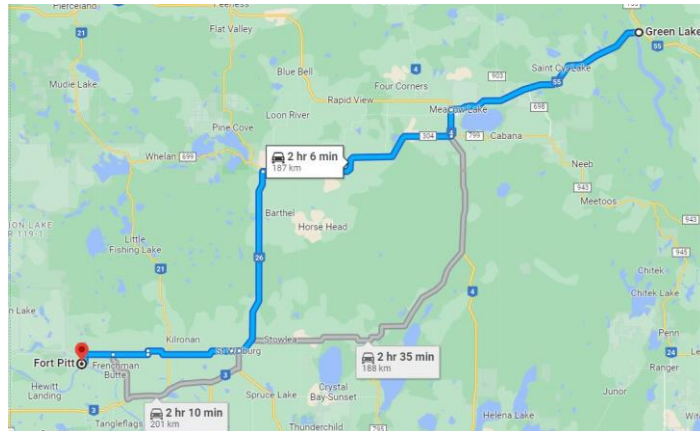
Registrar's Record No. \_\_\_\_\_ of 1933.



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."



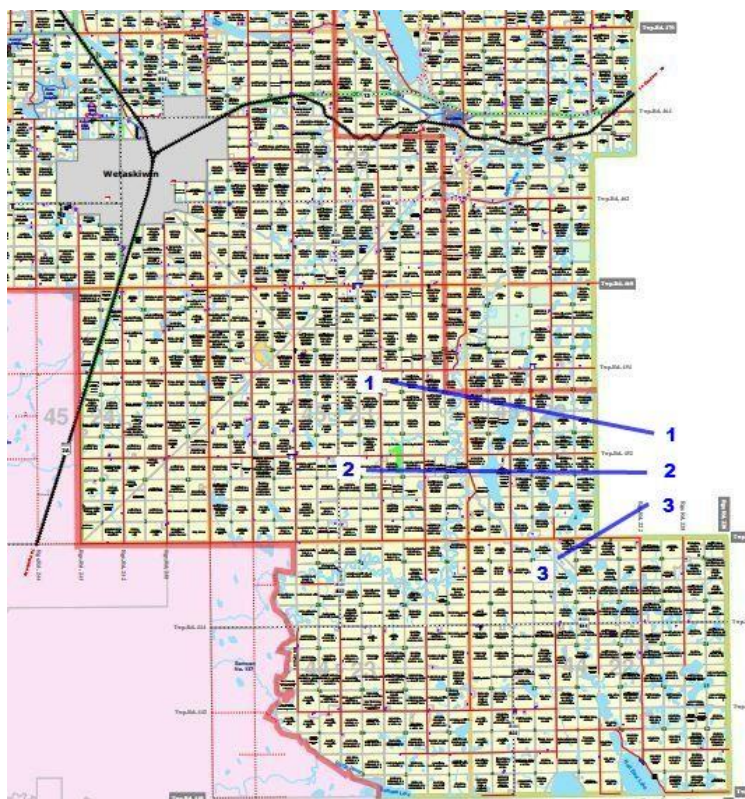
The Society did erect a two-sided Memorial Wall with names and years of death of all persons buried at this cemetery.



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:

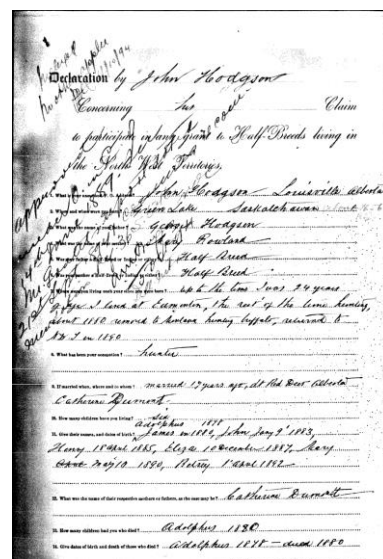
- 1) Why were John and Kathleen (Catherine) Hodgson's bodies prepared for burial in Wetaskiwin but buried in Duhamel?
- 2) Where were they living at the time of their deaths?



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.

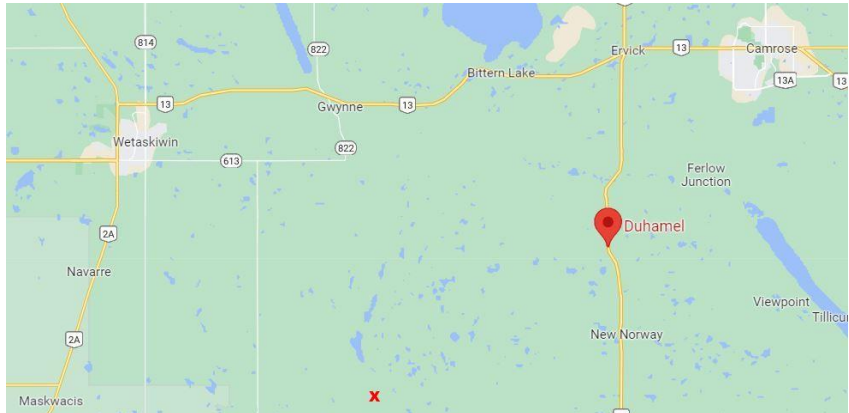
Homestead record applications can provide much more than just locations. In the 1894 homestead application it stated that John's parents were George Hodgson and Mary Rowland and that he was born at Green Lake, Saskatchewan. John was married about 1877 to Catherine Dumont (maiden surname) in Red Deer, 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.





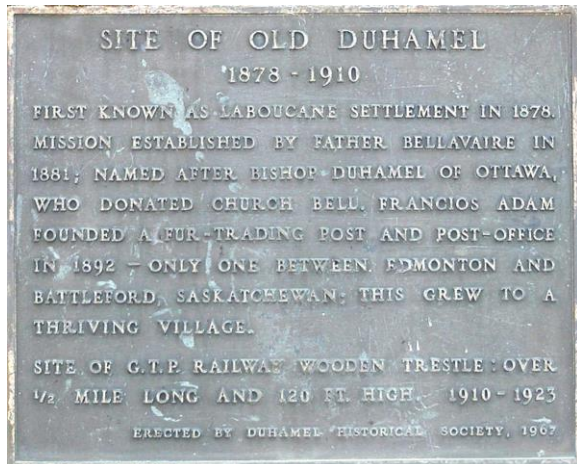
It should be noted that all three homesteads are in the County of Wetaskiwin, and that it is probably the reason why hospital and funeral home services were used in Wetaskiwin and not in, say, Camrose.

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 known as Duhamel. Perhaps this was the "home" congregation for John and Catherine Hodgson as John was apparently 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.

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## ***WOMEN OF ASPENLAND***

Re-printed with permission from the  
Women of Aspenland Exhibit at  
Wetaskiwin & District Heritage Museum  
<http://www.wetaskiwinmuseum.com/>

### **ESTOR (SOMERS) LAIDLAW**



I was born in Edmonton on June 17, 1916 and lived in Tofield with my parents until they moved to Wetaskiwin in April, 1922, after my father bought out the drug stores owned by Mr. Higgs.

There were three lots in all, with the house being on Stanley Street. There was an old barn with two stalls and a hayloft on the lot immediately north of the house. Later, Dr. Janzen built a house on that lot and the third lot west of the barn, with a garage on the northeast corner, kitty corner from the park. All was surrounded by a high board fence except for the southern part of the house lot. The whole thing made for a wonderful playground for children.

I remember that I had a merry-go-round on the barn lot and a playhouse built in the shelter of two big Manitoba Maples on the long street side of the third lot. Many a tea party was served in the shelter of those trees and many a bump occurred when someone fell off the merry-go-round. Not to mention the great adventures we had as kids exploring the dark corners of the barn. These two back lots Dad later let go for taxes when I grew beyond the need of such a playground.

I started grade one in the old parish hall with Mrs. Walker as teacher. Some classmates were Violet Parker, Nellie Bidinger, Ivy Baldry, Bill Odell, Vincent Cole, and Dudley Orr. We used the old brown-covered Alexandra Reader. I still have my copy and it says something for the modern way-I have yet to find the grade one student who can read it. My two kids couldn't begin to cope with it until grades five and three. It was a rather dreary building, with nothing 'bright or beautiful' in sight.

It was a relief to go to the big Alexandra School the following year. Not that it was a very cheerful place, but go to it we did for several years. For grades six and seven all those living west of the railroad tracks had to go to the King Edward School on the east side. Even using all the shortcuts we could devise, it was a long way to go home for lunch, especially in winter, and when your parents refused you crossing the tracks anywhere but at the main crossing on Pearce St. except for the business section of town, all sidewalks were wooden. They were fine for playing hopscotch and other games on, but not so nice to fall on. Many a splinter was plucked from knees, elbows, hands and various other parts of children's anatomies from those sidewalks. You had to be careful when you ran on them, for fear of stubbing your toes and suddenly finding yourself flat on your face.

Wherever anyone could figure out a shortcut across a vacant lot there usually was one. Most were quicker and quite safe unless you encountered a cow or some similar 'wildlife' tethered part way across one. Happen there was such an interception in my path, I usually opted for the

long way around. It was great in winter when everyone who could round up a pair of skates made use of the old open rink, whatever the weather. I can still remember how wonderful it was to thaw your toes and fingers around the old stove between skates. What luxury when the town finally built a covered rink.



We did try to get a swimming pool built. The Kiwanis Club sponsored a drive to fund one, circa 1930, and we all took part in a parade, with floats and bands and everything! The Northern Drug sponsored a float made like a huge galley. There were about a dozen pretty, older teenagers as rowers in it and because I was the boss's daughter I got to be a somewhat younger coxswain. Our best efforts were in vain as it was not until around 1950 that Wetaskiwin got its first pool.

Estor and her father, Wardie, 1929

The Depression and later the War put a crimp in all such frivolities. A date would maybe consist of going to a show on Friday night followed by lunch at the old Driard coffee shop. The show would cost twenty-five cents each, and you could have toast, a fruit Sunday, and coffee all for another twenty-five cents each. Thus by spending \$1, a boy would treat once a week from his total wage of \$5 per week clerking in one of the stores. Or we could double date at one of the homes and learn to play bridge or dance to the music of one of the big bands on radio. On Sundays if there was snow then we'd ski out to Peace Hill, make a fire to heat our lunch, and try to ski the rest of the afternoon. Then home for supper, on Sundays.

There were a minimum of extra-curricular school activities. Basketball practised at noon hours, and games always seemed to conflict with my piano lessons. Softball was played on the two vacant lots across from the school. My luck held for the scheduling of it too, so I played little of it. Golf you were on your own, and a few of us would rise early enough to play from four to seven holes before school.

Swimming was mostly done at the lake (Pigeon )if you were lucky enough to belong to a family that owned a cottage, and a Mother willing to spend most of the summer out there. Husbands and visitors were at the mercy of weather and roads.

There were Guides and Boy Scouts too. I belonged to the former. Dorothy Peart was my Patrol Leader, Mary Rasmusson the Company Leader and Eva Walker the Captain. I joined in 1928 and dropped out in grade eleven. Mrs. Palfrey rounded up a few girls that had also dropped out and organized us into the First Cat Rangers (not only in Wetaskiwin but also first in the Province). This group supplied and trained the girls as a Leader for the Guide Company and Brownie Pack for a number of years. I remember that Lorraine Sorenson and myself worked together helping Brownies for a short time and then later helping, eventually taking over as, Leaders from Marjorie Robinson in Guides.

Meantime the Depression kept going and going. Unemployment flourished. Since the course I yearned to take was unavailable in Alberta, my father suggested, with Mother backing him up,



that I take Pharmacy first and then take the other if I still wanted it, later, when hopefully conditions would be improved. This made sense and I was duly registered as an apprentice to my Dad. This was in 1933, after I had graduated from high school. This was simply celebrated then by writing your grade twelve exams and not returning to school in the fall. No such thing as a Grad, no ceremony, no dance, no nothing! If you were so minded, you said 'goodbye' to those teachers you liked and hoped you'd never see the others again. I apprenticed for the next three years.

Apprenticeship as always was a period of lots of learning, long hours, low pay. Dad had apprenticed and got his papers under the Northwest Territories, and the U of A didn't exist until 1912. He had started out in 1905 with old Mr. Cowles on Whyte Ave, in Strathcona. He did everything, including making ink and suppositories for five years and then writing the exams. He was one of the rare persons in the province to have such a diploma.

At the time I started out you apprenticed for three years and two years at University for a Diploma or two years apprenticeship and three years at University. Needless to say, in the depressed '30s the former course was the choice of the majority if only for financial reasons. It was a proud day when I went off to the U of A in the fall of 1936 and a prouder one when I graduated on May 13, 1938, at twenty-one years of age.

I continued to work in the Northern Drug, except for a couple of brief periods until I married in November 1943. My husband and I lived in Merritt, B.C. for the next two years and our son was born there. We returned to Wetaskiwin in late 1945, the doctor in Merritt having diagnosed "heart" instead of "gall bladder."

The next spring we went to Winfield where my husband had the Imperial Agency. In late 1948 Stuart went to work in Devon following the discovery of Oil. Dad had opened the drugstore in Devon in November of that year. I went to Devon in September 1949 to relieve in the store as Dad had not had time off in a year.

I stayed to help Mother get moved into their new home. She was moved in a week when she had a fatal stroke. We were looking for a place of our own, but Dad asked us to move in with him. We did so, and I still live in the same house. Dad had a stroke in 1966 and another fatal one in 1970. I ran the store alone while he was ill and operated a year on my own after his death. Then I sold the business in 1972 as arthritis had necessitated a second hip replacement. Following this I did relief work in other stores around the county for a number of years.

I was honored in 1988 at Kananaskis at the Pharmacy Convention as a fifty year member of the Alberta Pharmaceutical Association, on my seventy-second birthday. That also marked my official retirement from Pharmacy. As I have lived and breathed pharmacy all my life, I still maintain an interest in it. To my way of thinking, Mr. Klein's changes have thrown a wet blanket on this profession and I'm glad now to be out of it actually. I'll never forget the satisfaction of compounding a prescription from scratch though, or of dressing windows to display and sell goods, the pleasure of serving and helping customers with their problems, and the whole concept of pharmacy in those days. It was a good profession to be in, although I do think that the men were very slow in believing that a woman could do it!

Copied from typewritten submission by Estor Laidlaw, 1996

**For your information, CTV News carried the following story  
on Dec. 5, 2023:  
6.9 MILLION CUSTOMERS IMPACTED BY 23ANDME HACK: COMPANY  
CTVNews.ca Writer, Natasha O'Neill**



DNA testing company 23andMe has confirmed that a "threat actor" was able to access 6.9 million customers' profiles in an October data breach.

On Tuesday, the company said its investigation, assisted by third-party forensic experts, into how millions of "pieces of data" were stolen from 23andMe had concluded and that it was notifying customers that some of their data was accessed.

The DNA testing company uses information like saliva to create profiles on its dashboard and connect people worldwide.

In October, the company notified several customers of a breach into its "DNA Relatives" feature and said it was investigating the matter, Reuters reported.

Investigators concluded that the threat actor accessed roughly 5.5 million DNA Relatives profile files and roughly 1.4 million customers participating in the DNA Relatives feature had their "Family Tree" profile information accessed, "which is a limited subset of the DNA Relative profile information," a company spokesperson told CTVNews.ca in an email.

The threat was able to access a "very small" number of user accounts — 14,000 — when passwords and usernames that were on the 23andMe website were the same as on other websites that were previously compromised, the spokesperson added.

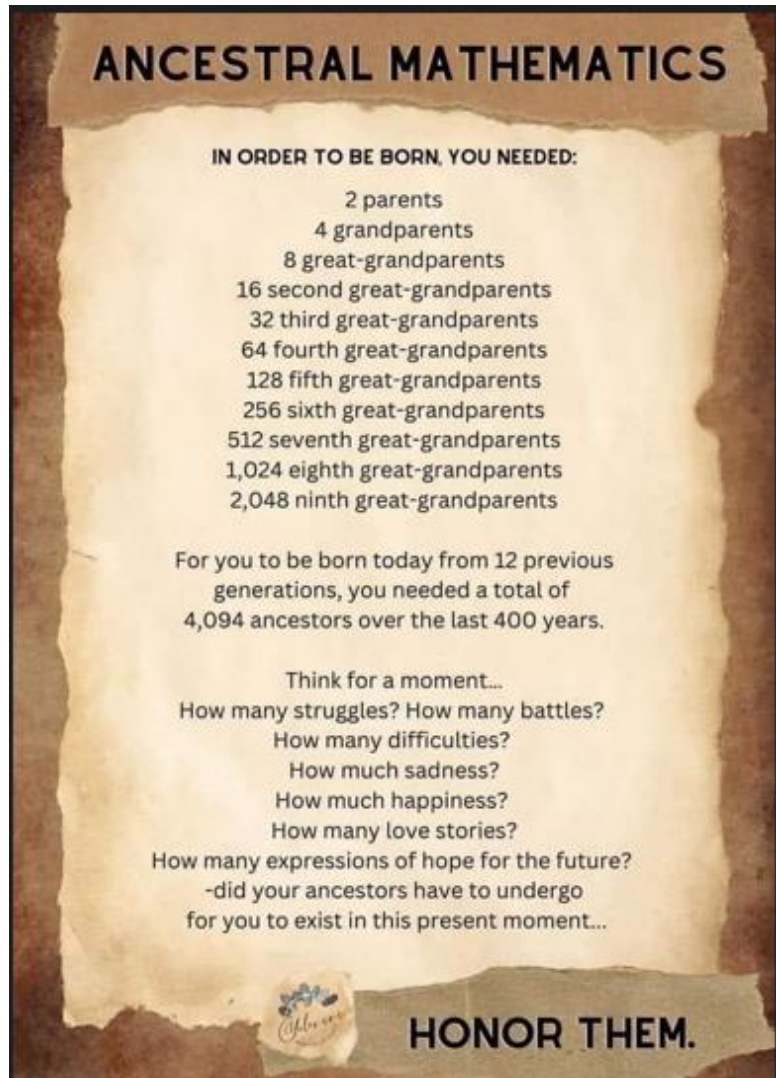
Profiles include information such as a customer's display name, how often the user logs in, their relationship labels, their predicted relationship and the percentage of DNA shared with their DNA Relative matches, the company said.

They also may include a user's ancestry reports and matching DNA segments, self-reported location, ancestor birth locations, family names, profile picture, birth year, a web link to a family tree they created, along with anything else they may have included in the "Introduce yourself" section of their profile.

Family Tree profiles, which are more limited, include name, relationship labels and could include birth year and self-reported location.

In a Dec. 1 email to CTVNews.ca, 23andMe said it had taken steps to "further protect customer data," including all users resetting their password and requiring a two-step verification for all new and existing profiles.

"The company will continue to invest in protecting our systems and data," a spokesperson for 23andMe said.



*“Let our New Year’s resolution be this:*

*We will be there for one another  
as fellow members of humanity,  
in the finest sense of the word.”*

Goran Persson