

Catherine Harradence

“two favourite seasons in the year: Christmas and Gull Lake”



Catherine Letitia (Richardson) Harradence, U.E., with her daughter Catherine Cecilia Harradence in the late 1990s Photo courtesy of Catherine Harradence

Catherine was born in Western Hospital, one of the 4 hospitals in Calgary where her father worked as a surgeon.

While she was growing up in Calgary, the family lived at 815 Prospect Avenue in a home that Catherine's father had built in 1918-19 for a cost of about \$20,000.

They also had a cottage at Gull Lake, Alberta, that was one of Catherine's favourite locations. Catherine has this to say about Gull Lake in the book, *Once Upon a Summertime*.

My dad bought our cottage in 1928.....They told my brother and me that the water level was within 50 feet of the front of the cottages on Aspen beach. They used to boat out over the reeds to get to clear swimming water. The fishing was excellent.

During my youth, my mother, brother and I spent all of July and August at the Lake. My dad would come as often as he could on weekends and maybe have a two week holiday during the summer.....My mother entertained at tea many times.

I remember milk deliveries by the Hug family and wood and ice from the Ott and Jenkins family. In later years, the Lacombe Creamery delivered milk, and one Lacombe meat market sold meat door to door. The local farmers sold fresh vegetables, fruit and baking door to door.²

Catherine attended Earl Grey elementary school, a sandstone building that has since been replaced. She fondly remembers teachers such as Miss Braithwaite, her grade 4 teacher, who visited her weekly when she was home sick for one year with rheumatic fever. During that time there was a sign on the front door saying that there was rheumatic fever in the home and the milkman would deliver milk to the back door but would never pick up the empty bottles. When she was well, Catherine played baseball at school.

Catherine had one sibling, a brother, Tom, who was 10 years older and he became an orthopedic surgeon.

From Earl Grey school, Catherine attended St. Hilda's School for Girls (12th Avenue and 8th Street S.W.) where Miss Shand was the head mistress. St. Hilda's School (1904-1949) had both resident students and day pupils and they taught young women fine arts and higher education. During World War II, the School took students from England and at one point, they had a population of 130 students with 12 teachers. Ten years after the closure of St. Hilda's, Tweedsmuir, an independent day School for Girls, was opened and then in 1971 a large donation from St Hilda's trust fund was used to amalgamate Tweedsmuir with Strathcona School for Boys.

In 1950 Catherine married Asa Milton Harradence (b. 1922: d.2008) who had arrived in Calgary from the University of Saskatchewan Law School in 1949 and together they had three children; 2 sons who later died in tragic accidents and a daughter. Catherine was kept busy as a mother and a wife to a man who was a family man, pilot, politician, lawyer, and judge.

She was a member of the Junior Service League of Calgary (later becoming the Junior League of Calgary), the Pioneer Association of Calgary, and the Calgary Branch of the UELAC (United Empire Loyalist Association of Canada) where she served as secretary in 1970. The Junior League is an organization of women committed to promoting volunteerism, developing the potential of women, and improving communities. Catherine's father, Dr. Richardson, was a president of the Calgary Branch of the UELAC for several years after Clifford Jones, K.C. in 1928 when the Calgary Branch was first organized. Catherine

accompanied her father to meetings and was an active member herself, helping to organize banquets and communicate with members.

Catherine has been a member of Knox United Church (built 1912-13) all her life: she and her children were christened there, she taught Sunday school there, she and her daughter, Cathy, were each married there, and her husband's and one son's funerals were held there.¹

LOYALIST ANCESTOR INFORMATION^{3,4}

Generation 1: **Catherine Letitia Richardson Harradence**

Generation 2: **James Wilson Richardson** (b.1882; m. 1917; d. Sept. 1, 1979) and Elizabeth Ann (Skinner) Richardson (b.1891; d.1961 or 1962) Photo of James Wilson Richardson is to the right. Photo courtesy of Catherine Harradence.

Elizabeth Ann's father was T.J.S. Skinner who was an early Calgary settler. According to Skinner Management's web site, he arrived on horseback in the small village of Calgary in 1883. He became very successful in the real estate business as can be seen by the home (photo below) that he built in Mount Royal in 1912. Catherine says that T.J.S. Skinner first delivered mail to the workers on the C.P.R.¹



Tor Haven meaning "house on a hill" as seen in the early 1900s" Photo courtesy of Catherine Harradence.

Generation 3: **Letticia Wilson** (b. 1846; m. March 19, 1865; d. June 8, 1884) and Albert Richardson (b. 1842; d. July 7, 1909)



Letticia (Wilson) Richardson with her daughters, Annie (left) and Sarah (right)

Albert Richardson, James Wilson Richardson's father, died of pancreatic cancer during his son's third year in medical school at McGill. Albert Richardson was of loyalist descent through his mother, **Elizabeth Jackson**. James Wilson's mother was Letticia Wilson (b. 1846; m. March 19, 1865; d. June 8, 1884), also of Loyalist descent.

Generation 4: **Elizabeth Jackson** (b. October 12, 1803; m. about 1831) and John Voux Richardson (b. August 19, 1807) They lived in Mountain, Ontario. Elizabeth applied for a land grant on March 9, 1837 and again on June 29, 1837.

Generation 5: **James Jackson** (b. 1744) was a Loyal Ranger P.L. 1786 of the 7th Company of Jessups Rangers. He was born in 1744 in England and moved to Chester County, New York, in 1770. A biography states,

*Jackson was employed by Joseph Galloway as a scout before the Battle of Brandywine Creek, receiving twenty guineas for that service. In 1779 he was arrested on suspicion of possessing forged currency, but released on bail. Jackson learned of Cornwallis's surrender while he was bringing dispatches to him; as a result, he decided to go to New York, where he received 12 pounds and ten shillings per quarter until his departure for Digby, Nova Scotia in 1783. In 1784 Jackson returned to Pennsylvania to retrieve his family. There he was tried but acquitted on the charge of forgery. He returned to Digby in 1785, and estimated his loss at 78 pounds sterling. Jackson's property was confiscated.*⁵

Jackson lived in Augusta Township and later in Ernestown and Mountain Twsp. He had 11 children.⁴

EMIGRATION WEST OF ONTARIO

Catherine's father, James Wilson Richardson was born on June 5th, 1882, in Hallville, Ontario. He practiced medicine and surgery in Calgary from 1911 to his retirement in 1972.

In his life story written for his children, he describes the house he grew up in Hallville as a small almost square (about 18 foot by 20 foot) unpainted two-story frame house with a lean-to on the back that was used as a woodshed. He writes that their farm was about 50 acres with about 20 acres cleared. Money was scarce and they had no saddle horses. His mother died when he was 2 years of age and his father remarried. Of the nine children in his family, only 5 survived to adulthood and of those, 4 became teachers. Education was highly valued by the family and Wilson decided at a young age to become a medical doctor. Wilson's summer jobs when he was a student were many and varied: he worked in a blacksmith shop, a cheese factory, as a carpenter, as a farm labourer, and as a seller of fruit trees. He was sent to High School in Kemptville at the age of 18 years where he roomed for \$1.50 per month. Following High School, he went for 3 months to Model School at Cornwall to become a teacher and he enjoyed his two and one-half years of teaching. His teaching pay was \$350.00 per year and he saved what he could for use in his first year at Medical School at McGill in 1906.

Wilson's first job as a Doctor out of McGill was in Grand Falls, Newfoundland, where he worked as a Doctor's assistant and received a wage of \$100 per month plus room and board. Luckily, he liked to travel and enjoyed the train ride to Sydney N.S., the overnight boat to Port Aux Basque, and the train to Grand Falls. He records a comment made by one of his patients in Grand Falls; *Hi have a pain in my kink-horn and I can't gluch.* (The translation was, "I have a sore throat and I can't swallow.")

After graduation, on June 10th, 1910, Dr. Richardson arrived in Calgary, Alberta, where his sister Sarah Storey, lived and where there were 12 practicing doctors. During his first week, he wrote council examinations and at Church, he met Dr. Lindsay (secretary of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta) who told him about a temporary job in Carmangay which he took.

In 1913, at a house party in Calgary, Elizabeth Ann Skinner caught his eye and they agreed to become engaged. However, they were not married until July 12th, 1917 because Wilson wanted to do postgraduate studies in Britain which he did and received an F.R.C.S. from Edinburgh. Before returning

to practice in Calgary, he served with the Royal Army Medical Corps where he had command of an ambulance train and later, served as a surgical specialist.

In 1917, Elizabeth Ann and James travelled to Alaska for their honeymoon where they studied the Chilkoot (goldrush) Trail and Lake Bennett. More travels followed including a European trip with Catherine in 1957.

Dr. Richardson, M.D.C.M. ⁷ (McGill), F.R.C.S. ⁸ (Edinburgh), F.R.C.S. (Canada), F.A.C.S. ⁹ (USA), practiced as a doctor and a surgeon. He was highly regarded both in Calgary and the Province and he was made a Senior Life Member of the Alberta Medical Association. Of him they said,

The sturdy virtues which distinguish this pioneer, the energy, the sincerity of purpose, high integrity, are component parts of Dr. Richardson's character, making him not only a most able and conscientious surgeon but also one of the most truly beloved men in Alberta. ⁶

James Wilson's sisters were Sarah (Sadie) Richardson Story (b.1872 ; d. 1962) and Annie Richardson McMartin (b. July 27, 1870; d. March 17, 1960). Both were teachers. Sarah was in Calgary when James Wilson arrived - probably the reason that he moved to Calgary. Annie and her husband homesteaded in Saskatchewan. The Storys had no children but the McMartins had many. According to the family oral history, Annie McMartin was instrumental in establishing a school for the area children but, as was required at the time, all documentation was in her husband Peter's name. ¹⁰



Left photo: Annie Richardson McMartin Right photo: Sarah (Sadie) Richardson Photos courtesy of Eleanor McMartin Friesen (Annie's great granddaughter)

Annie wrote a story about homesteading in Saskatchewan that received a first place prize in 1926 in the Grain Grower's Guide homesteading story competition. The first two paragraphs are printed below:

It was the death of a much needed and valuable horse, away back in early spring of the year 1905, which settled the question for my husband and me regarding coming West. During the winter months we had several visits from a young western man sojourning in the east for the winter, and he drew pictures of the West with its vast opportunities so enticingly to my husband that he was almost persuaded. So when our horse suddenly died and we could not see the where-with-all to replace him, and also as our lease was expiring that spring, for we were just renters, we decided in favour of the West.

It was very hard for us to come to that decision as we were by no means strong or healthy, and we had a family of seven children between the ages of 2 and 14, who, we felt to a certain extent, would be deprived of their chance of an education. Also we were leaving our dearly beloved relatives behind us, but as we had reached our decision my husband proceeded to call an auction sale, at which we disposed of our stock and implements and all household furnishings which were not really necessary for me to carry on with until such time as I could join him in the West. One morning in April, my husband and our first born, a lad coming 15, packed their kit, which contained a good Colt revolver, for were they not going to the "Wild and Woolly West," and got on board for the West, which they reached in due time. ¹¹

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