

Jack Jordan (taken from a history of Fort MacLeod)

JOHN K. JORDAN, SPRING POINT — by Anna Jordan Gross

John K. Jordan, known as "Jack" to his friends, was born September 18, 1972 in Elgin, Ontario, the third son of John Jordan of Wexford County, Ireland and Johanna Nolan of Phillippsville, Ontario. His father came from Ireland with his parents as a young boy in the middle of the 19th Century and they settled on land near Elgin. His mother was born in Phillippsville, Ontario of Irish parentage.

Jack had four brothers, Michael, James, William and Joseph and three sisters, Mary, Margaret and Theresa. Margaret is the only one living — she is 89 and she and her husband had their 70th wedding anniversary in September 1976.

Jack attended school in Elgin and after taking a course at Queen's College in Kingston, Ontario, apprenticed four years to learn his trade of carriage maker. He later had a shop at Phillippsville and worked at his trade until coming to Edmonton, N.W.T. in June 1900. Here he worked as a mechanic for the C.P.R. and his first job was on the railroad bridge there.

About 1903, Jack bought property at Leduc and built a shop (which I am told still stands bearing his name burnt across the roof), and a house. There was lots of work there — welding, making new parts for vehicles, setting tires, horse-shoeling, etc. Oftentimes while customers were waiting they would play horseshoes beside the shop. After work some of the men would meet there and have a friendly game.

Jack made a sixteen inch sword, a dagger-like weapon for the famous "Sword Swallower", Alex Bush, who performed this feat at fairs. His best show was put on while the Strathcona Band played slow music as the sword gradually slid down his throat. Alex stood on a barrel right in the midst of the crowd to show there was no trickery about it and swallowed the thing.

Jack was a good marksman and in the fall the young men would choose sides for a hunt. Whichever side brought in the most evidence of the day's hunt (i.e. gopher tails, crowsfeet, magpie feet, etc.) were treated to a supper by the losers.

On June 27, 1905 he and Ann Cecella Doyle of Chaffey's Lock, Ontario were married in Calgary. After their honeymoon they returned to Leduc and lived there until 1910.

In December 1909, they and their son, Arnold, went to visit their parents and friends in Leeds County, Ontario for three months.

In the spring of 1910 they sold their property at Leduc and moved to Macleod, where Jack was employed by the Alberta Government in bridge building. The Mackenzie Bridge at Fort Macleod and the North Fork Bridge were built in this era.

Since Jack always liked farming and ranching he filed on a homestead in 1913 in the Spring Point district. The same summer he bought another quarter with a house and other

buildings from Mr. Carson. They lived there until the dry summer of 1919 when the well dried up. They decided rather than haul water it would be better to move the buildings to the north adjoining quarter which had a flowing spring. They had bought this for pasture.

It was so dry that summer of 1919 that there were no crops or hay and very little pasture for the stock. The following winter was severe — it was cold with lots of snow. Jack hauled feed from Macleod (twenty miles away) for the stock with a team and wagon and many of them died from eating slough grass mixed with ice. In May he had bought seed wheat and was ready to plant it when a north blizzard struck, dumping a lot of snow everywhere, and he fed the wheat to the cattle to keep them alive. It took years to replace the losses of the winter of 1919-20.

Jack had a shop on the farmstead and did repair work for many of the neighboring farmers, as well as for himself.

He was road foreman for Local Improvement District 100 for many years, retiring at age 70. He was also school trustee for Spring Point for several years while his children attended school. Mr. and Mrs. Jordan retired to live in Fort Macleod in 1948.

Mr. and Mrs. Jordan had three children: Arnold born in Leduc, Alberta who married Madelene Reid, a widow with two children; Diana and Danny, in 1947. They have two children: Kenny and Linda. They lived on the family farm until 1972 when they sold it and retired to live in Fort Macleod.

Anna, born in Macleod, married Henry Gross in 1943 and lives in their home (the former home of the late Dr. and Mrs. G. S. Mills of Macleod) in Pincher Creek, Alberta. Henry died February 18, 1972 after a lengthy illness and is buried in Fairview Cemetery, Pincher Creek.

Eileen, also born in Macleod, married George Martinuk in 1952 and they live in Lethbridge, Alberta. They have two sons, John and Joseph.

Jack Jordan died in 1953 in his 81st year and is buried in Union Cemetery, Fort Macleod.

Ann Jordan lived with her daughter, Anna, and son-in-law, Henry in Pincher Creek until her death in 1962. She is buried in Union Cemetery, Fort Macleod beside her husband.



Mr. & Mrs. John K. Jordan.