THE ALLISON FAMILY PRIVATE CEMETERY
INTRODUCTION

The Allison Family Private Cemetery is a small, private cemetery located in the countryside near Princeton, British Columbia. It is in a pasture beside Castle Rock and surrounded by a white picket fence. Family permission is required to visit this cemetery as it is private and is on private property.
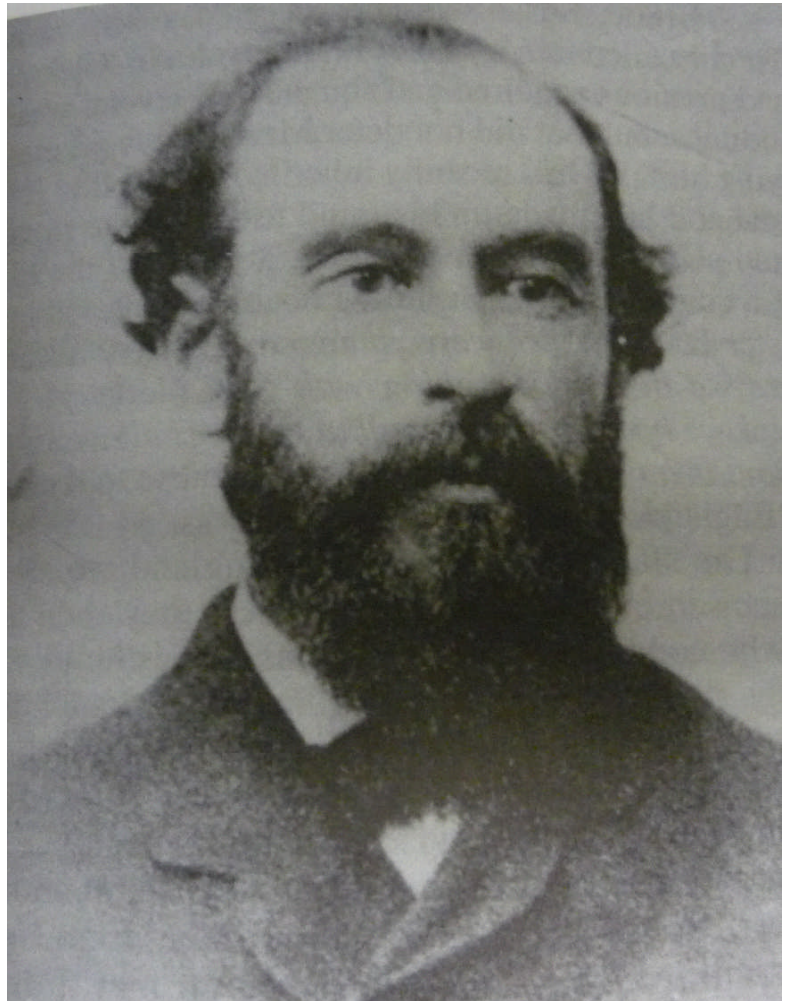

Wear good shoes and long pants in this cemetery. The ground is uneven, as usual, and the grass and nettles can be long. The cemetery was walked from the west side, with rows running from south to north. So row 1, stone 1 is in the southwest corner or to the right of the gate.

The cemetery is beside Castle Rock because John Fall Allison had asked to be buried on top of the rock. But as it was winter when he died and the rock was covered with snow and ice and had no soil on top, his wife established the cemetery at the base of Castle Rock instead. Family members known to be buried in this cemetery have an * after their names. It is thought that other family members, especially First Nations members, are buried along the eastern side but no names are known.

John Fall Allison* was born January 6, 1825 in Leeds, Yorkshire, England, the eldest son of Robert and Sarah (Briggs) Allison. He had two brothers (William and George) and two sisters (Elizabeth and Carolyn). His father was a house surgeon at the Leeds Infirmary and his mother was a social worker. When John Fall Allison was 12 years old, the family immigrated to Oriskany, New York. John Fall began but did not finish medical education at Turner Junction Illinois. In 1849, he caught gold fever and sailed for northern California. Later he moved on to Victoria. He learned to speak Chinook, Indian trade language, and began placer mining on Trafalgar Flats near the present day Hope, BC in 1859. He explored a route over the Cascade Mountains to the Similkameen River (about 75 miles from Hope). Allison Pass, the highest point on the Hope-Princeton highway at an elevation of 1352 meters, is named in his honour.

In the fall of 1860 he preempted 320 acres at Vermilion Forks (later Prince Town then Princeton). He was the first white settler in the Princeton area and in addition to cattle ranching, he staked claims for gold, copper and coal.

John Fall and his first wife, **Nora Yakumtekum**, had four children. The eldest child, **Lily** was born in 1863 and died in 1945 or 1946. For many years there was much controversy as to whether Lily was an Allison. When she married, she was pressured into using the surname Thomas (not sure why this name) so that the Allison name would not appear in the marriage announcement. Today she is accepted as being an Allison – either by birth or adoption as she lived with the Allison family until she left to be married. She married **John Norman** in Penticton in 1902 – this was the first wedding in Ellis Church, later St Saviour's Church. John and Lily had five children: Leila (Anderson), Grace (Coyne), Flora Florence (Haig), Maggie (DuVall) and Jack.

The second child, **Albert**, known as Bertie, was born in 1865 and died July 1933. His first wife was **Millie Nehumpcheen** and together they had four children: Maggie (Terbasket), Matilda (Gabriel), Mary (Allison) and Edith (Holmes). His second wife was **Cecile Nehumpchen** who had three children: Albert Robert, Felix and Barnett.

John Fall and Nora's third child was Charles, known as Charlie or by his native name of Enoch. Charlie was born in 1867 and died August 1913. He married **Millie Price**, daughter of Barrington Price and had one child: Charles, Jr..

After Nora Yakutekum and her four children returned to live with her people, John Fall married **Susan Louisa Moir*** (1845-1937) on September 3, 1868 in the Church of England, Hope, BC.

Susan was the daughter of **Stratton and Susan Louisa (Mildren) Moir**. She was born on August 18, 1845 in Columbo, Ceylon. Her father, Stratton, was the son on **William Moir** of Elgin, Scotland, son of John Moir who came from Stirlingshire to Aberdeen married to **Helen Roy**, granddaughter of "**Rob Roy**". Susan had one sister, Jane Shaw Moir born 1843 in Ceylon, and one brother, Stratton born 1842 in London and died in 1866. Their father, Stratton Moir, owned a plantation. Before Susan was 5 years old her father died and the mother and two daughters returned to London, England where they lived with relatives who enabled the children to attend good schools, where they learned French, Latin and Greek.

In 1860, Susan's mother married a Scotsman, **Thomas Genie**. Together the family immigrated to British Columbia where Thomas planned to assume the life of a country squire. The family arrived in Hope, BC in time for Susan's 15th birthday. Her sister, Jane Shaw Moir married **Edgar Dewdney**.

Susan and her mother were living in Hope when Susan and John Fall first met. At the time of their marriage, Susan was 23 and John Fall 43 years old. They married on September 3,1868 at Christ Church in Hope. They left for their honeymoon 2 hours later. The honeymoon consisted of riding by horseback to the Similkameen, Susan riding side-saddle. As Susan says in her later recollections, "Then began my camping days and the wild free life I ever loved."

In the winter the Allison family spent winters at Sunnyside (Westbank) in the Okanagan. This is where the cattle were taken for winter pasture. In 1874, John Fall reopened an Indian trail from Osprey Lake to drive his cattle to and from the Okanagan. This road can still be traveled today. In 1877 John Fall had an accident alone on the cattle trail – he fell from his horse and remained unconscious for an estimated 30 hours or more. He was never a healthy man again.

In 1882, the Allison house burned to the ground while John was away driving cattle. The family moved into the cowboy's shack. Upon his return four days later John Fall immediately began construction of a new house. In 1896 their house was destroyed a second time, along with 14 outbuildings by a flood of the Similkameen River. The following year John Fall developed pneumonia while roofing an addition to the barn/home. On October 28, 1897 John Fall Allison died at the age of 72. In addition to cattle ranching and mining John Fall was a Justice of the Peace and a Gold Commissioner in the Similkameen Country of the Southern Interior of British Columbia. Allison Lake, Allison Creek and Allison Pass are all named for this pioneer

Susan remained in Princeton until 1928 at which time she sold much of the property to her son-in-law Dickson Sandes, who subdivided the land and sold the first town lots in Princeton. In 1928 Susan moved to Vancouver to live with one of her daughters. At the age of 92, Susan Louisa Allison died in Vancouver on February 1, 1937.

Together they had fourteen children. The eldest child, Edgar Moir, known as Ed was born July 4, 1869 in Princeton. He had three wives. His first wife was Emily Sicamen, a native woman from the Lower Nicola Indian Reserve. Emily's father, Tom, worked with Edgar's father, John Fall, moving cattle to Yale. Ed and Emily had two children: Nellie* and Christine. Edgar married his second wife Louise Murphy on June 15, 1882, Yale District – they had one child: Perrsie Ed. Edgar's third wife was Margaret Janet Miller. They were married on December 22, 1897 at Chilliwack. Edgar died at Mount Baker Road, Chilliwack on December 23, 1943.

The second child was **Robert Wilfred,** known as Will. Will was born in Hope on January 30, 1871. He married **Arshell (Rachel) Matilda Sxwultkw**, daughter of Chief Quinesco. The spelling of Arshell's name was determined by Susan Louisa Allison as the Indians did not have a written language. Together Rachel and Robert had ten children: Henry, Herb, Huey, Wilfred* (Buck), Susan (Dennis), Harry, Johny, Edward*, Mary Rose* (McFarland) and Margaret. Will died in Princeton on June 24, 1926. Rachel died in Princeton on April 29, 1957.

The third child was **Beatrice Jane (or Jean)** who was born at the Hudson's Bay Trading Post at Keremeos on January 20, 1872. Beatrice became a teacher before traveling to Korea, then to Japan where she met her future husband, **Charles Eustace Bruce-Mitford,** also a teacher. The couple married in 1904 in Japan where they set up their own European school. They had four sons: Terence, Alaric (Alic), Vidal and Rupert. They returned to England in 1912, where Beatrice spent the rest of her life. She died about 1956. Her family still lives in England.

The Allison girls, from left to right, Louisa, Beatrice, Rose and Freda.

The fourth child was **Susan Louisa*** known as Louisa. She was born in Westbank on January 22, 1874. She married **Albert Everst Johnstone***, on May 8, 1902 at Allison (Princeton). They had four children: Stanley, Ida (Meldrum), Douglas, and Alberta (Parsons). Albert and Louisa lived at Wolfe Creek, outside Princeton. Albert died in Vancouver on April 21, 1950 and Louisa died on May 1, 1955 in Princeton.

The fifth child was **Rose Isabella**. Rose was born August 30, 1875 in Westbank. She married **Samuel Dickson Sandes** in 1898. They had one son Samuel Dickson Jr. whom they called Dickie. Rose died aboard the *Cassiar* in route from Victoria to Vancouver on December 5, 1902.

The sixth child was **John Stratton** known as Jack. Jack was born in Westbank on June 4, 1877. He married or had a relationship with **Matilda Surprise** and had a son Jack in 1897. Jack died on August 11, 1908 as a result of a logging accident in the Queen Charlotte Islands.

The seventh child was **Caroline Elizabeth*** know as Carrie. Carrie was born in Westbank on September 10, 1878. On March 3, 1904 Carrie married **William Heald Thomas** known as Bill. William Heald Thomas was born in 1873. Carrie and William had four children: Alfred Stratton, Clover Rita*, Ross Arthur*, and Roy Edward. Carrie died in Princeton on December 26, 1975 and Bill died in 1959.

Thomas brothers and their families: W. H., (Bob) S. H., Alfred, Caroline (Allison), Tessie on knee, Charles, Clover, Bill (C. W.), H. H. (Bert), Phyllis, Evan (H. E.) on Grace's (Allison) knee, Babs, Ross, and Ernie.

The eight child was **George Mortimer** who was born at Westbank on October 27, 1879. He married **Violet Winnifred Keiffer (nee O'Reily)**. They had three children: Sheila, Glenn, Colleen (Margo). George took ill at Ocean Falls and died in Vancouver on January 1, 1948.

The ninth child was **Elfrida Flora** known as Frida who was bon on August 26, 1881 in Princeton. In Victoria she married **G. F. Holmes** who was an officer on an English ship. They lived in Epsom, Surrey, England and had four children: Patric, Jack, James, and Arthur. Frida died in Epsom in 1951.

The tenth child was **Alfred Edward***
who was born on May 28, 1883 in
Princeton. He married **Isabella Martin**
on August 8, 1906. They had twin
daughters Gladys (Archibald) and Grace
in 1907. Grace died at birth. Gladys
turned 101 in 2008. Bell died when
Gladys was young and her Martin
grandparents raised her. Alfred's
second marriage was on August 31,
1922 in Princeton to **Florence Edna
Duhamel** who had three children from a
previous marriage. Alfred died on
August 12, 1954 in Princeton.

Alfred Allison, wife Belle (Martin) and daughter Gladys
(Archibald)

The eleventh child was **Valeria
Helen Grace***, known as Grace.
She was born in Princeton on
November 17, 1884. She married
Herbert Heald Thomas* on
October 27, 1902 in Vancouver.
Herbert Heald Thomas was born
in 1874 in Barnwood,
Gloucestershire, England. As a
youngster he sang as a chorister
in the Gloucester Cathedral.
Grace and Bert had 7 children:
Grace* (died in infancy),
Constance Alice (Babs Story),
Phyllis Angela* (Miller), Stephen
Heald* (Bob), Charles Wilfred (Bill)*, Teresa Mary (Buehl), Herbert Evan*, and Helen Virginia*
(Ashe). Grace died in Princeton on May 6, 1969. Bert died in 1973.

The twelfth child was **Harold Archibald*** known as Harry. He was born on December 24, 1886 in
Princeton. He married **Kate O'Maley** at Princeton on November 11, 1919. They had five children:
Margaret (Freding), Harold, Ronnie, Susie (Young), and Betty (Ashe/Russell). Ron and Susie are
twins. Harry died on May 6, 1951.

The thirteenth child was **Aurelia Angela*** known as Angie who was born in Princeton on February 26, 1889. On August 16, 1908 in Hedley she married **Charles Henry McDiarmid*** of Pictou, Nova Scotia. They had nine children: Jean* (Francis), Hugh*, Bruce*, Jack, Alan, Frida* (Francis), Alister*, Dick and Beryl* (Plecash). Angie died on May 27, 1982. She was the last surviving child of John Fall and Susan Allison and at the time of her death she had living children, grandchildren, great grandchildren and great-great grandchildren.

The fourteenth and last child was **Alice Olivia Ashwick*** who was born in Princeton on August 28, 1892. She married **Albion (Cy) Perkins***. They had eight children: Evadne* (McKenzie), John*, Allison, Claudia* and Claudius* (twins who died in infancy), Roderick L.*, Elvie* (Sisson), and Susan (MacGregor). After the death of Cy, Alice married Edward Wright. In her later years her mother, Susan Louisa, lived with Alice and her family until her death. Alice died in Summerland on August 1, 1971. Her marker is in the name of Alice Olivia Perkins.

Kate (Maley), Alice (Allison) Perkins Wright, Carrie (Allison) Thomas, Grace (Allison) Thomas, Angie (Allison) McDiarmid, Florence (Duhame) Allison.

Much of this introduction was taken from Lori Thomas' family history in *Princeton, Our Valley* and from Sue MacGregor who walked the cemetery with us and told us about it occupants. The black and white photographs are all from the book *Princeton, Our Valley* and with the permission of Lori Thomas. I greatly appreciated their help.

For further information on this pioneer family consult:

The Princeton Archives, Vermilion Ave, Princeton, BC, V0X 1W0   phone: 250-295-7588

Princeton, Our Valley, Friesens Corporation, Altona, Manitoba, 2002

A Pioneer Gentlewoman in British Columbia: The Recollections of Susan Allison, University of BC Press, Vancouver, BC, 1976

Sue MacGregor in the Allison Family Cemetery October 21, 2008