

The Knowles Story

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Forward

The whole of *The Knowles Story* provides a framework of our Knowles, Black, and Wallace families. Their story includes what I could find of their origins in Scotland and Ireland and their independent migrations to Canada. The challenge, in particular is that many records such as the most Ireland Census Records were lost in a fire in 1921 thus making genealogy research in Ireland difficult. This is especially so if they had common surnames and moved frequently from place to place. This was our situation with relatively common names such as Black, Knowles and Wallace.

Our *Black* family arrived in Canada in the early 1850s possibly in Saguenay and with time settled in Montreal. *William Knowles* arrival can be narrowed to between May 1872 and May 1873. He then enlisted and was a charter member of the North-West Mounted Police. By the mid-late 1880s, William, wife Isabella and his family, followed by a few of the Black family children moved from Montreal to Chicago. Their offspring led to our extended Jordan and Leonhardt families.

While *The Knowles Story* has many chapters, I would like to draw your attention to a very interesting section which resides in the *Appendices* and that is the many letters and historical records relating to William Wallace Knowles years in the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP).

William was a sub-constable at the beginning of this newly formed organization and he along with some 300 others made a long trek across Canada in the winter of 1873 and summer of 1874. The letters in the *Appendices* include some written in William's own hand. In addition, I have created a side-by-side table correlating known NWMP events with where William was at the time. He likely participated in the construction of Fort Macleod in Alberta and Fort Walsh in Saskatchewan, and certainly was at Fort Calgary. He certainly interacted with many Indians and challenging situations with whiskey traders and rustlers. There are many more records and diaries which can provide further information about what William encountered in this interesting three year period of his life. William is also an interesting character as he seems to have taken charge of his life and set it off in new directions several times, always seeking to improve himself, and at times seemingly to re-invent himself into a new person along the way.

There is limited data within showing that our William Wallace Knowles's father also named William Knowles was a *Pensioner* at his birth and that his grandfather also named William Knowles was a member of the British Army. One or both may have been in the *British Army* and the matching records may someday be found. The British in the 1800-1850 period were in many conflicts and it would certainly be interesting to know how our William Knowles family was involved.

Dave Jordan
December 2012

Introduction

As follows is *The Knowles Story*, a compilation of what I have learned over three decades about the history of my Jordan family line. It is a long and complicated story but one I am sure you will enjoy.

This *Introduction* provides some background and housekeeping for this and related documents along with the relationship with the associated web pages.

For ease of use, the above [Table of Contents](#) includes active links along with a simplified genealogy chart to assist in selecting items of interest. Merely touch the line or page number to move to a section of interest.

In order to help preserve our Knowles family history and to make that history more widely available, [Our Knowles Family Web Pages](#) was created in the early years of the 21st century.

While quite successful in its goals, it became clear with the passage of time, that a web site with many hundreds of pages was not easy to print or to electronically download. Thus in the later part of the first decade of the 21st century, I began to compile various categories of information such as *Knowles Family Addresses*, *Knowles Family Census Records*, *Knowles Genealogy Source Records*, and *the Knowles Stories* into pdf documents.

Such pdf files will make it easier to download files for preservation on our many computers and they will also allow much easier printing of pages and for studied analysis as desired. As part of this effort, a [Knowles PDF Downloads](#) web page was created. From this page, all currently available pdf's from [Our Knowles Family Web Pages](#) can be accessed.

You are encouraged to download the various Knowles pdf files, not only for your own study but to also help preserve for future generations hard to obtain data and information about our common Knowles and Jordan origins and history. Files are updated every once in a while, and checking about once a year is a reasonable frequency. Version dates are shown at the beginning of the [Table of Contents](#).

File Information

Master File Name: Stories_Knowles

Author: Dave Jordan

Creation Date: about 2003

Modified: 10/10/2007, 12/24/2012, 11/6/2014, 10/11/2017

Contact

If you wish to comment, add information or just say hello, please contact [Dave Jordan](mailto:djgenealogy@me.com) at djgenealogy@me.com.

What's New

Going forward it is intended to briefly describe what major items were added since the last version of this document.

1. 10/11/2017: Various format updates.
2. 11/6/2014: Miscellaneous updates to *Readers Tips*, *Origins of Our Black Family*, *Our Families in Ireland: William and Jane Chapters*, *Our Families in America: Thomas and Margaret Black Chapters*, *Williams and Isabella Knowles Family*, *The Move to Chicago*, *Unexpected Deaths*, *William W. Knowles Obituary - March 1897*, *Why They Came*, and *Changing the Course of History*.
3. 11/6/2014: Added *Robert Wallace and Jessie Knowles Chapter* along with major updates for the *Wilfred Washington Knowles Chapters*.
4. 12/24/2012: Updated many sections with improved information or better wording. Added scans of William Knowles's NWMP related letters. In addition, there were significant formatting changes and fixes of a number of typos.

File Connections

As follows are other files that connect with *The Knowles Story*. All are available at [Knowles PDF Downloads](#) as individual pdf documents with titles and file names as listed below.

1. *The Knowles Story*
File: Stories_Knowles.pdf
Summary: *The Knowles Story* provides a written history of the origins of our Knowles family. As part of this story there are many appendices and sections.
2. *Historical Knowles Family Addresses*
File: Addresses_Knowles_Historical.pdf
Summary: Contains chronological address listings for various families in the Knowles/Black/Wallace line.
Linkage: James Oscar Jordan married Margaret Jane Knowles
3. *Knowles Family Census Records*
File: Census_Knowles_Historical.pdf
Summary: Contains census transcriptions for various families in the Knowles/Black/Wallace line.
Linkage: James Oscar Jordan married Margaret Jane Knowles
4. *The Jordan Story*
File: Stories_Jordan.pdf
Summary: *The Jordan Story* provides a written history of the origins of our Jordan family. As part of this story there are many appendices and sections.

Continued on next page.

Prelude

In January 1979, I wrote *The Story of James and Margaret Jordan*. Since that time, much new information has been found. In addition other stories about other branches of the Jordan and Knowles family have become available. With the creation of [Our Knowles Family Web Pages](#), I have decided to update and expand the various stories into a larger framework. The resulting, *The Knowles Story*, is a collection of short stories about different chapters and branches in the lives of descendants of William and Isabella Knowles. With time, others may contribute their own stories leading to a growing work on the origins and history of our Knowles family.

The Knowles Story is divided into six major parts.

5. The first *Origins* focuses on early roots in Scotland and Ireland.
6. The second part *Our Families in Ireland* provides in-depth information about our Knowles and Wallace families who resided for many years in Cavan County, Ireland.
7. The third part *Our Families in America* provides in-depth information about our Knowles and Black families who resided for many years in Canada. Similarly this chapter provides in-depth information about the Knowles family in Chicago.
8. The fourth part *Closing* wraps up with some overall thoughts, a bibliography of suggested reading, and acknowledgements.
9. The fifth part is an *Appendix* which contains transcriptions of letters to various relatives seeking information about the Jordans.
10. The sixth part is a listing of *Associated Documents* that are related to *The Knowles Story* which exist as separate documents. These include detailed address data, census data, and genealogy records, voyage records, historical family letters, and other stories or articles.

While readers may wish to initially focus on stories in their branch, for those interested in every nugget of information on the life and times, you may wish to read the other stories to gain additional insights and find connections between them.

File Information

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Modified: 11/26/2009, 12/24/2012
Contact: [Dave Jordan](#)

Reader Tips

The Knowles Story has been placed on *Our Knowles Family Web Pages* for easy distribution and updates.

The home address for *Our Knowles Family Web Pages* is:
<http://www.jordanstuff.net/ourhistory/Knowles/index.html>

Frequency of Updates

Current stories may occasionally be updated with new information and a date tag will show the latest date of the various stories. As new stories become available they will be added. Readers may wish to check the *What's New* page to easily identify when material has been added.

Printing

After being available for many years on-line, it was recognized that it was difficult to print the html version of our various family history web pages. To improve this situation, various sections of the html web version our family history are being made available as pdf files. These downloadable pdf files will allow preservation of our family history on our personal computers and will also allow better printing of various stories and genealogy data.

Related Information

While it's possible to just read *The Knowles Story*, there is much companion information contained in the Topics Section on *Our Knowles Family Web Pages*. Topics include: *Address Data, Census Data, Family Overview Pages, Family Charts, Genealogy Source Records and Photos*.

Connections

Many readers will most likely be offspring of one of the Knowles, Black, Leddy or Leonhardt families. It may be helpful to consult *Our Knowles Family Overview* page to figure out which family you are from and to learn some of the names and relationships. My purpose was not to create a detailed genealogy of all the offspring, so you may need to do a little research to first work your way back to a couple of original families. If you can't figure it out, drop me a line and I may be able to get you onto the right family.

The key families included in *The Knowles Story* are:

1. **The William Knowles and Isabella Black Family:** William and Isabella's children are Margaret (1878), Muriel (1886), and Wilfred (1888).
2. **The James and Margaret Jordan Family:** James and Margaret's children are Herbert A. (1898), Frances F. (1901), Edward A. (1902), Charles J. (1903), and Art S. (about 1904). Their current offspring is estimated in the hundreds.
3. **The Robert and Muriel Woodbury Family:** Robert and Muriel's only child was Dolores (1910).

4. **The William and Muriel Leonhardt Family:** William and Muriel's children are Granville (1916) and Richard (1919).

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Origins

The Knowles Branch

Origins of Our Knowles Family

Our earliest known Knowles is William Knowles who was born in 1798 in Scotland or Ireland. His wife was named Jane and probably for the majority of their lives they lived in Ireland. Williams died on September 10, 1879 at age 81 at Killyfassy in Cavan County, Ireland. He had been suffering from a fever for two months and anemia for 3 days. He was a farmer and had rights to the land and his wife continued living there after his death.

Additional information about the national origins of the Knowles family comes from varied sources. The grandson of William Knowles, William Wallace Knowles was born in 1848 in Ireland. However, both the 1881 Montreal Census and his burial record indicate that William Wallace Knowles was of Scottish origin. In addition William Wallace Knowles' unpublished 1897 obituary indicates that was active in Scottish organizations in Chicago and that he was born in Ayrshire [County] Scotland.

Years later in 1977, Thomas Black's g-grandson, Chuck Jordan wrote to Dave Jordan the following which supports both an Irish and Scottish origin.

I believe there were several Blacks scattered over the country, all of them born in Canada and the U.S.A. They originated in Ireland, County Armagh. The Knowles family came from the same part of Ireland, although I had been told that when my Grandfather Knowles died that the death notice in the paper gave his birthplace as Edinburgh, Scotland.

One possibility is that both an Irish and a Scottish origin are correct. How is this possible? This is possible if our immigrant Knowles ancestors were originally Scottish and had been for many generations, then moved to Ireland for one or more generations and then moved to Canada. If so, this could explain the confusion of our oral history that suggests both Scottish and Irish origins for the Blacks and Knowles families. In the early 1800s, the English government and the landowners of the Scottish Highlands decided that much of northern Scotland was needed to raise sheep. As a result many Scottish tenant farmers were evicted in a policy known as the *Clearances* to open up grazing land. Many of the *crofters* were crammed onto ships and exiled to Ireland and the New World (Canada), their cottages burned down so that they would have no place to come back to. Thus it is possible that our Black and Knowles families moved from Scotland to Ireland to Canada, always carrying with them their older Scottish origin. Furthermore, it appears that some of them married Irish woman during their long stay in Ireland and Canada, adding to the confusion of national origin of the offspring.

There certainly is some confusion over the origins of the Knowles family. Williams Wallace Knowles claimed he was Scottish and claimed both birth in Ayrshire and Edinburgh, Scotland. His birth record showed though that he was born in Kildrumferton, Cavan Co., Ireland. It is possible that that all the locations Ayrshire, Edinburgh, and Ireland are all valid locations for the Knowles, but just not for a single individual. And with the passage of time and pride in national origin, the blurred family recollections merged this conflicting data into fewer individuals.

File Information

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Author: Dave Jordan

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Contact: [Dave Jordan](#)

The Black Branch

Origins of Our Black Family

Our earliest known member of the Black family is Thomas Black who was born about 1823 presumably in Quebec but his parents were probably of Scottish or Irish origin. The 1851 Census of Chicoutimi, Quebec was used to establish his year and place of birth. Additional information about the national origins of the Black family comes from varied sources. Other data indicates the year and place of birth as: 1828 in Ireland (1861 Census), 1822 in Ireland (1871 Census) and 1823-24 in Scotland (Burial Record). In addition, the 1881 Montreal Census indicates that his daughter was of Scottish origin.

Years later in 1977, Thomas Black's g-grandson, Chuck Jordan wrote to Dave Jordan the following which supports both an Irish and Scottish origin.

I believe there were several Blacks scattered over the country, all of them born in Canada and the U.S.A. They originated in Ireland, County Armagh. The Knowles family came from the same part of Ireland, although I had been told that when my Grandfather Knowles died that the death notice in the paper gave his birthplace as Edinburgh, Scotland.

Not all the information from Uncle Chuck has been verified in particular the origin in County Armagh. And in one case, his Grandfather William Wallace Knowles was found to be born in Kildrumferton, Cavan Co., Ireland instead of Edinburgh though it is possible it might have been a more distant Knowles.

Some of the confusion about claims of Scottish national origins for the Black and Knowles families may be explained by the [Scottish Highland Clearances](#)¹, whereby tenants of land practicing agriculture in various areas were lost their leases as a result of a switch by the owners to sheep raising. The *Clearances* occurred in the 18th and 19th Century and resulted in the movement of Highlanders to the Scottish Lowlands and sometimes to Northern Ireland or North America.

In our Knowles's case, it is probable that there was a movement of a distant Knowles family from the Scottish Highlands to the Lowlands and thence to Cavan County Ireland over one or more generations beginning perhaps in the late 1700s with arrival in Ireland by the 1820s. Given they were probably with friends, relatives and others in the same situation, they probably saw themselves as Scottish even after years or generations in Ireland. With Williams Wallace Knowles's move to Montreal in 1872 and thence to Chicago in the mid-1880s, he still saw himself of Scottish ancestry even though he was born and grew up in Ireland.

¹ The link is to a Wikipedia Article providing some history of the Clearances. The article is quite useful in understanding in a broad sense of what happened to our Scottish Ancestors.

Similarly in the Black's case, there was probably a distant Black family from the Scottish Highlands to the Lowlands and thence to perhaps Armagh County Ireland over one or more generations beginning perhaps in the late 1700s with arrival in Ireland in the early 1800s and thence to Canada.

After the Williams and Isabella (Black) Knowles mid-1880s arrival to the then very cosmopolitan Chicago, their children began a gradual break with their long Scottish identity. With the children's (Margaret, Muriel and Wilfred) marriages to spouses outside the Scottish Irish diaspora, the strong cultural link to Scotland began to fade and perhaps the last of it was Margaret Jordan Graham's burial service at the the Wee Kirk o' the Heather at Forest Lawn in 1959. For those of us several more generations removed, it has been a journey of discovery to know our deep cultural roots were not Canadian or Irish so much as Scottish from long long ago.

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Contact: [Dave Jordan](#)

Our Families in Ireland

William and Jane Knowles Chapters

The William and Jane Knowles Family I

The William and Jane Knowles Family II

Our earliest known Knowles was William Knowles who was born in 1798, probably in Scotland. However, he later lived in Ireland and at the time of his death he owned property in the Townland of Killyfassy in the Parish of Ballymachugh. Our William Knowles died at age 78 in Killyfassy on 10 September 1879. He was a farmer and his wife was named Jane. Killyfassy is in Cavan County, Ireland, a beautiful area with relatively rough terrain, filled with forests, bogs, and lakes.

William and Jane Knowles had a son, who was also named William. For convenience he will be referred to as William Jr. Since the father William Knowles was born in 1798, it is presumed the son William Knowles Jr. was born about 1820 in either Scotland or Ireland though no record of birth or location has been found..

In the 1840s, William Jr. met Jane Wallace of Duffcastle, (sometimes spelled as Duff Castle), Kildrumferton, Ireland and they were married on 15 November 1847 at St. Patrick's, Kildrumferton, Cavan County, Ireland. She was 28 years old and was living in Duffcastle in the Parish of Crosserlough at the time of her marriage.

Jane Wallace was born in 1819 and was baptized at St. Patrick's Church in Kildrumferton on 23 May 23 1819. From other records, it appears that children were baptized within days of birth and thus she was probably born in May 1819. Jane Wallace's parents were John and Mary Wallace and her father was a pensioner at the time.

William Knowles Jr. was about 30 years old when he married. Shortly before, he was living in Granard, which is located in the Barony of Granard in the County of Longford. Granard is just south of Cavan County. William Knowles Sr., the father was a farmer at the time of the marriage of his son.

The 1857 *Griffith Survey* (10 years after the marriage) indicates only a single Knowles in all of Longford County. His name was George Knowles and he lived at 55 The Hill in Granard. It is possible that our William Knowles was related to him.

William Knowles Jr. was a pensioner at the time of his marriage. This is of some interest as it is usual that one would be quite old to be a pensioner and William Knowles Jr. was only about 30. Thus he may be older than guessed or perhaps he attained a military pension at a young age. Muriel Leonhardt's genealogy notes suggest that either he or his father was in the British Army.

So now we have two generations of men named William Knowles married to women named Jane. To minimize confusion, I decided to

name these families William and Jane Knowles Family I and William and Jane Knowles Family II.

It might be possible that William Knowles Sr. born in 1798 was actually the William Knowles that married Jane Wallace in 1847. He would have been age 50 at the time and Jane Wallace was 28. While this is possible, it is not thought to be so, but will be kept under consideration and of course it would explain two generations with the same name for the husband and wife.

William and Jane Knowles Family II had at least two children. They were:

1. **William Wallace Knowles:** William Wallace Knowles born 27 December 1848 and baptized a few days later on 31 December 31, 1848 at St. Patrick's, Kildrumferton, Cavan County, Ireland.
2. **Robert Knowles:** Robert Knowles born about 1853 probably in Duffcastle, Kildrumferton.

These are their only known children.

The time period of the William Knowles Jr. and Jane Wallace marriage in 1847 was a particularly difficult period for farming in Ireland. During the four-year period between 1845 and 1848, potato crop failed three times because of a fungus. That event and the resulting decline since the early 1800s in the value of export cereal grains to Europe caused great economic stress and large numbers of people from Ireland emigrated to other parts of the world. Cavan County was particularly hard hit between 1845-1847. The population of the county fell from around 240,000 in 1841 to about 175,000 by 1851 due primarily to the famine and resulting movement to other locations. However, in the midst of all this, the William and Jane Knowles Family II stayed and held several pieces of property as did his father.

Based on the Griffith Survey of 1857, a William Knowles was a tenant on land he leased in Killyfassy, Ballymachugh from the Honorable Somerset Maxwell. This land included a house, office and 16+ acres. It is unclear whether this was William Knowles Sr. or Jr., but probably Williams Knowles Sr. as at the time of his death, William Knowles Sr. owned property in Killyfassy.

A William Knowles was also the owner of two pieces of property in Duffcastle, Kildrumferton (Crosserlough). One was a small farm of just over an acre and the other was the house and garden next to it which he rented out in 1857. It is thought that the owner is William Knowles Jr. as his wife Jane Wallace was from Duffcastle and also that son William Wallace Knowles was born in the parish of Kildrumferton which is where Duffcastle is.

Confusing matters is that Testimonial Letters for William Wallace Knowles indicate that he managed his father's farm in Killyfassy until 1872 and thus either William Knowles Jr. had also purchased land in Killyfassy or had already taken over the everyday workings of the farm from William Wallace Sr.

In 1872-73, son William Wallace Knowles then about age 24 decided to emigrate to Montreal, Canada. His parents William and Jane Knowles remained in Ireland, but possibly later traveled or settled in England. It is not known when or where William and Jane Knowles died.

Probably in the 1870s, son Robert Wallace Knowles relocated to Liverpool where he became a licensed victualler which was essentially an owner or manager of a pub. Here he married Jessie Grayston and about 1884 migrated to Chicago.

There are portrait photos of William and Jane Knowles in the *Knowles Photo Collection* taken in Liverpool in 1884 and it is possibly these were taken just before Robert emigrated to the USA. There is also an unusual picture taken with the *Society of Buffaloes* in Stonehouse, Devon, England.

Between the loss of Ireland records in a 1922 fire and the use of three generations of men named William Knowles of which two had wives named Jane, it has been difficult to sort out the Knowles story in Ireland. Perhaps one day, something will show up that will clarify who was who.

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Contact: [Dave Jordan](#)

Our Families in America

Thomas and Margaret Black Chapters

The Thomas and Margaret Black Family

Thomas Black who was born about 1823 presumably in Quebec but his parents were probably of Scottish or Irish origin. The 1851 Census of Chicoutimi, Quebec was used to establish his year and place of birth. Additional information about the national origins of the Black family comes from varied sources. Other data indicates the year and place of birth as: 1828 in Ireland (1861 Census), 1822 in Ireland (1871 Census) and 1823-24 in Scotland (Burial Record). In addition, the 1881 Montreal Census indicates that his daughter was of Scottish origin.

His wife Margaret Leddy was born about 1832 presumably in Limerick, Ireland. The 1851 Census of Chicoutimi, Quebec was used to establish the year and place of birth. Other data indicates the year and place of birth as: 1834 in Ireland (1861 Census), 1835 in Quebec (1871 Census), 1836 in Quebec (1881 Census) and 1832 in Ireland (Burial Record). It is thought that the 1851 Census data for Limerick, Ireland is probably correct given it is the earliest record and the location of Limerick being so specific.

Thomas Black married Margarite Leddy on 26 July 1851 at the Parish of St. Francois Xavier, Chicoutimi, Quebec, Canada. The marriage Record states: "marriage between Thomas Black, of the religion Protestant and Margarite Leddy, Catholic." The original St. Francois Xavier Church, Chicoutimi was established in 1847. It has been rebuilt 3 times and is currently a Cathedral. The location is: 514, rue Racine Est, Chicoutimi, QC and overlooks the old port area of the town. Chicoutimi is the most populous borough of the city of Saguenay in Quebec, Canada. Chicoutimi was founded as a city in 1842 at the confluence of the Saguenay and Chicoutimi rivers.

The marriage record was in French as was typical of Catholic Churches in Quebec and used the name Margarite, though usually it would have been Marguerite and in English, Margaret. It was a great surprise to both find the record but also to find that Margaret Leddy was Catholic as the 1861, 1871 and 1881 Census records indicated she was Protestant as = her husband and children.

Then what was more surprising was to find that Thomas Black remarried Margaret Leddy 26 October 1851 on Grosse Ile, Quebec, Canada at a presumed Anglican or Presbyterian church as the original records state they were previously married in a Catholic Church. The date of 26 October 1851 is a little over three months later. Grosse Ile is about 200 miles by water upstream from Chicoutimi, Quebec, Canada and about 30 miles east of Quebec. At the time it was the place where immigrants landed to be processed. Shortly before, particularly 1847 many Irish immigrants died there due to contagious diseases. It is presumed Thomas wanted to also be married in his own church. But I also wonder whether

their journey there might also be a nostalgia visit to Margaret's possible arrival there from Ireland or if it might be connected to her parents in some way.

It is not known when either of their families arrived in Canada but if a Quebec origin for Thomas Black is correct, the Black family must have arrived before the 1820s. Margaret Leddy could have arrived shortly before her 1851 marriage as it was the time of the potato famine in Ireland and possibly she came on her own or with family. However, no other related Leddy relatives have been found living near her in Canada. But no matter their arrival date, either they or their parents would be my earliest ancestor to arrive in North America.

Chuck Jordan's 1977 letter provides some possible insight into where they were from:

I believe there were several Blacks scattered over the country...
They originated in Ireland, County Armagh.

Thomas and Margaret Black had at least 10 children. They were:

1. **Thomas Black** born 1851 in Chicoutimi, Saguenay, Quebec, Canada; died before 1857
2. **Isabella Catherine Black** born 30 November 1853 probably Chicoutimi, Saguenay, Quebec, Canada; married William Knowles on 25 January 1877 at St. John Evangelist, Montreal, Quebec, Canada; to Chicago in late 1887 or 1888; died 1 September 1892 in Chicago.
3. **Margaret Ellen Black** born 12 January 1856 in Lévis, Quebec, Canada; died 23 March 1872 in Montreal
4. **Thomas Henry Black** born 15 November 1857 in Lévis, Quebec, Canada
5. **Unknown Male Child** born 1860 in St. Jean (John), Quebec; died after 6 days
6. **George Robert Black** about 1861 in the Province of Quebec, Canada
7. **Mary Black** born 12 May 1863 in Saint Lamberts, Quebec, Canada; married John Cameron in Montreal
8. **Elizabeth Black** born about 1864 in Montreal; married Richard Shannon on May 27, 1891 in Chicago
9. **John James Black** born 9 May 1867 in Pointe-Saint Charles, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
10. **Arthur William Black** born 26 May 1869 in Montreal; died 29 May 1869 in Montreal

Of the 11 Thomas and Margaret Black children, at least four (Thomas (the first), Margaret, the Unknown Male, and Arthur) did not reach adulthood. Two Isabella and Elizabeth migrated to Chicago as a result of William Knowles establishing his Tailoring business there in the late 1880s. Others may have migrated to the USA or stayed in Montreal.

The earliest that Thomas Black born about 1823 can be placed in Canada is his marriage in 1851 though the 1851 Census indicates he was born in Quebec. By the time of his marriage he was a blacksmith and about 28 years old. Blacksmithing was a valuable skill at the time and Thomas must have learned it much earlier, perhaps from his father and probably went through an apprenticeship.

From the same 1851 Census it was learned that Margaret was born in Limerick, Ireland. In her case, it is guessed that she was a recent arrival just before he marriage and perhaps prompted to emigrate as a result of the potato famine. She was about 19 at the time of her marriage. Given such precise information as Limerick, Ireland was stated as her place of birth on the Census, one might presume she provided the data for the family. And thus the answer of Quebec as her husband's place of birth might be what she thought and not consistent with answers for later censuses.

It is of course with much interest and curiosity that theirs was a mixed religion marriage, his being Protestant and hers being Catholic. Certainly for the times it had to be unusual and especially so in heavily Catholic Quebec. And while sometimes marriages are moved along by an unexpected child, it is difficult to say for sure as young Thomas's baptismal records have yet to be found. But based on the 1851 Census Record, he had to be born before January 12, 1852, the date of the 1851 Census. Thus suggesting a marriage prompted by an unexpected child, but one that would last until Thomas's death in 1878 almost 27 years and 10 children later.

Using the birthplaces of their children, one can following their continuous movement upstream over the years toward Montreal. Specifically places the Thomas and Margaret Black family lived were:

1. Chicoutimi, Saguenay, Quebec on or before 1851
2. Lévis, Quebec about 1856
3. St. Jean, Quebec by 1860
4. Saint Lamberts by 1863
5. Montreal by 1865

Lévis is a city in eastern Quebec, Canada. It is located on the south shore of the St. Lawrence River, opposite Quebec City. It was here that Thomas and Margaret Black lived from about 1856 to at least 1859. It is about miles by water from Chicoutimi.

St. Jean (John) is another 170 to 180 miles upstream from Quebec City and is across the river and about 20 to 30 miles or so southeast of Montreal.

Saint Lambert is an off-island suburb of Montreal, Quebec, located on the south shore of the St. Lawrence River.

Thus over 14 years, the Thomas and Margaret Black family regularly moved towards Montreal which is where they finally settled for the rest of their lives. It is not known the purpose or objective of any of their

moves. If the purpose was to be near a larger city, certainly Lévis was only across the river from Quebec. If the purpose was economic, then it is possible they moved to various towns trying to find a better place as a blacksmith, but it would seem that for that profession, it might be better to stay in one place and establish customers. It is possible they were trying to connect with family and it does seem that possible brothers James and William who were found in the Montreal Directory, see below were magnets for where they went.

But another possibility for their moves was both religious and trying to fit in or be closer to communities with a Scottish Irish heritage. If one follows the baptismal records of their children and also the Censuses of 1861 and 1871, one begins to see perhaps a religious struggle between Thomas and Margaret. Their youngest children, Isabella Catherine and Margaret were baptized at St. Patrick's in Quebec City in 1857 and 1856 while the family lived in Lévis which was across the river. Margaret Ellen Black's baptism was 22 January 1856 by a vicar of St. Patrick's Church of Quebec City. The Baptismal Record notes that the parents were of the parish of Notre Dame de Lévi, or more fully Notre Dame de la Victoire de Lévis, a Catholic Church located in Lévis, Quebec. St. Patrick's of Quebec City is the only English-speaking Catholic parish in the Archdiocese of Quebec. Founded in 1832, the parish has occupied several different buildings as the population of English-speaking Catholics, primarily Irish, in Quebec City has swelled and shrunk. Thus it appears that Margaret Leddy Black and other Irish Catholics would have religious ceremonies performed at St. Patrick's Church since the ceremonies were in English though they were parishioners of the French speaking Notre Dame de la Victoire de Lévis which is where they lived. Of note is that the father, did not attend the baptism. One can imagine the difficulty that Margaret Leddy Black might have as an Irish Catholic only being able to attend Catholic Church services which were in French (though Mass would have been in Latin) except for the occasional journey across the St. Lawrence River to St. Patrick's.

Their next child, Thomas Henry Black's baptism was 15 November 1858 at the Church of Scotland Lévis, Quebec, Canada. After Thomas Henry Black's baptism, all their children to come were baptized as Protestant and many in Scottish focused churches. What might be surmised is that Thomas wanted to both follow his Scottish and Protestant orientations, and that both Thomas and Margaret would find it easier to practice religion if the services were in English. The Censuses of 1861 and 1871 indicate that both Thomas and Margaret and all their children were Protestant. While this religious change does not fully explain why they continued to move up-river toward Montreal, it does perhaps suggest they were seeking a larger Scottish Irish English speaking community, which is what they found in Montreal.

The earliest possible address in Montreal is at 22 Bleury Street, Montreal. His occupation is listed as "black and whitesmith". A whitesmith is a silversmith and this is the only reference to silversmith for Thomas and thus may not be our Thomas. Also shown for the same year is James Black, boilermaker at St. Patrick near Columban. No

additional reference to James has been found but this James could be Thomas's brother or father.

By 1865 Thomas and the family had moved to Grand Trunk near St. Francois and was employed as a boilermaker. Then in 1867 the family moved to 121 Magdalen where Thomas's occupation again was blacksmith, an occupation he followed for the rest of his life, except for possibly a briefly as a grocer in 1875. The grocer occupation was listed only once in the Montreal Directory and it is so different than his usual blacksmith career that it is likely a typographical error for the 1875 publication.

In 1869 Thomas and family moved to 363 Wellington. Then over the next 9 years, Thomas moved up and down Wellington Street every few years, first at 363, then 365, 357 and finally 383 Wellington.

A William Black, machinist is also at 363 Wellington in 1869 and for various other years on streets nearby the Thomas Black family. Possibly this is a brother of Thomas.

The Leonhardt family has a document showing that T. Black, presumably our Thomas Black was a Sergeant in the No. 6 Company, 6th Battalion Active Militia of Canada also known as the Hochelaga Light Infantry. This was a rifle company. The date is not clearly written but appears to be either August 20, 1875. This led to the discovery of various Canadian paymaster records showing: 1) Thomas Black as a Private in the 2nd Battalion, Queen's Own Rifles, a Canadian Volunteer Militia for 1865 with paymaster record possibly signed at Toronto (see below²), and 2) Thomas Black as a Sergeant in the 6th Regiment, Hochelaga Light Infantry for 1876, 1877 and 1878 in Montreal.

In January 1877 Thomas and Margaret's daughter Isabella Catherine, married William Wallace Knowles and the newlyweds lived at 445 Wellington just a short distance from Thomas and Margaret at 383 Wellington. William Wallace Knowles had just returned from his three year tour with the Northwest Mounted Police and was a descendant of the same Scottish Irish diaspora. On April 18, 1878, the first grandchild Margaret Jane Knowles was born. Then sadness occurred as Thomas

2 Some history of the 2nd Battalion, Queen's Own Rifles indicates segments from Montreal were blended with Toronto units for form the 2nd Battalion. Of some interest from their history is the following: "In 1865, Canada was threatened with invasion from the United States by the Fenian Brotherhood, and militia soldiering became a serious matter. Several provisional battalions made up of drafts from various militia battalions, including the 2nd, were placed on full-time duty on the frontier. In March, there was a general stand to of all militia units; but the provisional battalions were released from duty once the threat of invasion appeared to subside. Suddenly, on 31 May, a force of Fenians crossed the border near Fort Erie. The militia was mobilized and the Queen's Own proceeded to the threatened area at 4 AM on 1 June 5". Whether our Thomas Black was part of this force is unknown. The pay record appears to be dated for December 1865, but other records may be found someday.

Black died from paralysis of the brain (probably a stroke) a few months later on June 30, 1878 at the age of about 55.

Margaret continued to live at the same general area of Montreal for another 21 years. There were still young children at home when her husband Thomas died. Son Thomas was 20, George about 17, Mary 15, Elizabeth about 14, and John 11. Margaret did not remarry and most likely she was helped by her son-in-law William Knowles, her husband's brother(s), a possibly brother Michael and her children to get through the inevitable hard financial times of a young family and no husband.

Margaret died on March 28, 1899 at 148 Bourgeois Street in Montreal of a contagious disease at age. She was about 66 years old.

Thomas and Margaret are both buried in the Thomas Black Family Plot in the Mount Royal Cemetery³. The plot is located in Section C, Grave 853-G&H. Also in the Thomas Black Family Plot are:

1. Thomas and Margaret Black's 3-day old son Arthur William, and their 16 year old daughter, Margaret Ellen
2. Three Williams and Isabella Catherine Black Knowles children: 3-day old Isabella Maud, 22 day old William Thomas, and 1 year old William Ralph Knowles, and
3. John and Mary Black Cameron's 10 year old John A. Cameron

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³ During the summer of 1994 on a family trip to Montreal the Jordan family tried to find the grave. The Mount Royal Cemetery is a beautiful old cemetery high on a hill to the north and a little west of downtown Montreal. Unfortunately, the official grave markers in this area of the cemetery are very hard to find. Since we had so much trouble, we asked for help from the office and they kindly went out with us. After much searching we believe we found the spot, but it was covered in overgrowth. No grave marker was found and there was no close cemetery property marker to reference to. It is possible we were in the wrong place. We did take a picture of where we thought the spot was and said a prayer for our relatives from long ago.

William Wallace and Isabella Knowles Chapters

William Wallace Knowles's Years in Ireland

William Knowles was born on December 27, 1848 in Kildrumferton, Cavan County Ireland. A few days later on December 31, 1848, he was baptized at St. Patrick's in Kildrumferton. His parents were William Knowles and his mother was Jane Wallace. His parents were married a year earlier and it appears they settled in or around her hometown of Duff Castle, Kildrumferton. William's grandfather on his father's side was also named William leading to three generations of William Knowles' living in close proximity and thus William later began using the name William Wallace Knowles. The middle name was his mother's maiden name. The family on the male side claimed Scottish origins and the name William Wallace was a connection to the famous Scot hero of 13th century, popularized in the movie Braveheart. If needed for clarity in the text, the three generations of William Knowles's are referred to as William Knowles I, William Knowles II, and Williams Knowles III.

William Wallace Knowles probably had a number of brothers and sisters, but only one is known at this time. Brother Robert was born in 1856 in Duff Castle, Kildrumferton.

Little is known of their early years, but their parents did own several pieces of property in the area. In the late 1860s, William was working and managing his father's farm.

As today, it was important for a young person to be involved in activities and establish a reputation as a good person and reliable worker. In those days, a church minister or landowner might write a testimonial letter, which the individual would keep and carry with him and present when looking for a job in another city. We are fortunate to have three of William's testimonial letters.

Farming in Ireland during this time was difficult. The potato blight continued and the price for other grains was not high. Many Irish left for Canada, the United States, and Australia. The most difficult times were in the late 1840s, but the Knowles stuck it out and seemed to increase their land holdings. By the early 1870s, young William, perhaps restless and wanting to move on, decided his fate and future was in Canada. Robert would also leave Ireland and the two met up again almost twenty years later in Chicago. At the time he left, it was unclear whether his parents were still living nearby. It almost appears that they were traveling or living elsewhere.

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William's Early Years in Canada

William Knowles arrived in Montreal from Ireland between May 1872 and May 1873. Most likely it was during the summer of 1872. It is not known if he came with friends or knew others who had gone before him, but in general there is usually a link to someone there already that says it's great, why don't you come. Shortly after his arrival he became a member in the City Police of Montreal.

About the time of his arrival the government began exploring the creation of a new police force to patrol and keep peace in the Northwest Territories. There were more settlers in Manitoba and Saskatchewan and there were incidents of unlawful whiskey trading with the Indians. They called this new police force the North West Mounted Police (NWMP) and they were the forerunners of the later Royal Canadian Mounted Police. In 1873, the government began to look for recruits. William probably heard about the opportunity through the City Police of Montreal and through the newspapers. In May 1873 he wrote two letters to inquire and offer his services. His application was successful and he signed up for three years with the newly formed North West Mounted Police beginning in October 1873.

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The William and Isabella Knowles Family

In late 1876, William returned to Montreal from the Fort Walsh in Saskatchewan and was discharged from the North West Mounted Police. Early the following year, on January 25, 1877, he married Isabella Catherine Black at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church in Montreal. St. John the Evangelist is known as the *Red Roof Church* and has an Anglo-Catholic orientation. The choice seems somewhat unusual as the Black family used St. Matthew's Presbyterian Church with a Scottish orientation for the baptism of their son John James Black in 1867 and William and Isabella used the same for the baptism of their first child Margaret Jane in 1878. Perhaps the choice of St. John had to do with Isabella being baptized as Catholic.

The young couple moved to 445 Wellington Place, in the southwest quadrant of the city and just a short block from her parents and siblings at 383 Wellington.

It is not known how William and Isabella met. While he may have arrived in Montreal some time in 1872, the first confirmation is his May 19, 1873 letter to Sir John Macdonald volunteering to join the Northwest Mounted Police. He would leave Montreal by early October of that year for three years of duty. If he had met Isabella and was interested, it would seem unlikely he would volunteer to leave Montreal for three years hardship duty half a continent away. Upon his return in early November 1876 there was less than three months before their marriage. The time seem short but William was then 28 and Isabella 24 and both old enough to settle down. William having in the NWMP for three years probably had saved some money and had secured a job as a policeman given his skills with the mounted police. One possibility is they met at St. Matthew's Presbyterian Church, the church with a Scottish orientation and a magnet for Irish Protestants.

Given William's training in the North West Mounted Police, he became a policeman in Montreal upon his return from the North West Territories. By 1881 he was promoted to Police Sergeant. His wife was a skilled seamstress and appears to have started her own business about 1879. William must have liked the business aspects of her endeavors and about 1883 in his mid-30s, he changed professions to be a tailor. In fact it appears they opened a shop at 369 Wellington and called it *Merchant Tailor and Gents Furnishings*. They lived next door at 369 1/2 Wellington.

William and Isabella Knowles had at least 6 children. They were:

1. **Margaret Jane Knowles**⁴: born 19 April 1878 in Montreal; married James Oscar Jordan on 30 December 1896 in Chicago; separated about November 1911; divorced 19 June 1919 in Chicago; married Robert Graham on 28 June 1920 in Chicago; moved to California about 1934; died 20 August 1959 in Glendale, California

⁴ Margaret Jane Knowles appears to be named after both of her grandmothers: Margaret Leddy Black and Jane Wallace Knowles.

2. **Isabella Maud Knowles**⁵ born 24 August 1879 in Montreal; died 28 August 1879 in Montreal at age 3 days.
3. **William Thomas Knowles**⁶ born 5 December 1880 in Montreal; died 27 December 1880 in Montreal at age 22 days. He was named after his father and paternal grandfather and maternal grandfather.
4. **William Ralph Knowles**⁷ born 22 July 1883 in Montreal; died 24 March 1885 in Montreal at age 1 year 8 months.
5. **Muriel Eulalie Knowles**⁸ born 20 March 1886 in Montreal; married Robert Woodbury on 19 September 1905 in Chicago; divorced 1911-1914 in Chicago; married William Leonhardt about 1915 in Chicago; died 14 July 1975 in Harvey, Illinois
6. **Wilfred Washington Knowles** born 14 March 1888 in Chicago; possibly an early marriage before 1907, then married Mabel Darlinger or possibly Mabel Bender 5 May 1919 in Chicago; married Gertrude Wolfenden before 1937, possibly on 5 November in Rock Island; died May 1965 in Bradenton, Florida

The three deceased young children Isabella Maud, William Thomas, and William Ralph Knowles are buried in the Thomas Black Family Plot in the Mount Royal Cemetery. The plot is located in Section C, Grave 853-G&H.

In 1888, William and Isabella completed their move to Chicago. However, William Wallace appears to have arrived years earlier as he appears to have begun establishing his business there. The 1900 Census record indicates Muriel arrived in the United States in 1888. The particular reason is not known, but Chicago then was a fast growing dynamic city with plenty of opportunities.

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⁵ Isabella Maud Knowles appears to be named after her mother. It is not known who Maud is, but Maud is a variant of Matilda. Perhaps an aunt or g-grandmother.

⁶ William Thomas Knowles appear to be named He was named after his father and/or his paternal grandfather and maternal grandfather

⁷ William Ralph Knowles appears to be named after his father and paternal grandfather. Perhaps the name Ralph was a distant relative.

⁸ Muriel Eulalie Knowles was probably named after someone, but it is not known who. Both forenames are unusual. Eulalie was the name of a woman in an Edgar Allen Poe poem.

The Move to Chicago

It appears that William may have started a series of work related visits to Chicago around 1884 as he established a business there along with lodging. However the Knowles maintained a residence in Montreal, as daughter Muriel was born 20 Mar 1886 in Montreal. In 1888, it appears that the entire family had finally moved to Chicago as son Wilfred was born in Chicago on 14 March 1888. Transportation from Montreal for the family and their things would have been via the railroad as Chicago was a major railway hub. It is believed that not only William but also his wife and daughters may also have traveled back and forth occasionally between Montreal and Chicago over the years 1884-1887.

William's earliest presence in the Chicago Directory appears to be at 3400 Emerald on Chicago's south side in 1887. He was working as a tailor. The *October 1890 Registered Voter's List* indicates William W. Knowles lived in Cook County for 3 years (implying 1886-87) while the *October 1892 Registered Voter's List* indicates 8 years in the County and State (implying 1883-4). It is not known how to interpret this except that there appears that he made early temporary visits to Chicago to decide whether to move and set-up business.

By 1889, William Knowles established his Tailor Shop at 3724 S. State Street and he had moved to 172 Egan. Of significant interest is that in 1888 and 1889, a Robert Knowles, a laborer is living at 3427 Halsted. Halsted is just one block west of Emerald and the proximity appears to be too close for coincidence. Robert Knowles was never found in the Montreal Directory, thus it appears that the two brothers were reunited in Chicago. Voter's Registration data for 1892 imply Robert lived in Chicago as early as 1886, and in Illinois as early as 1884. Thus it is possible that William and Robert were together in Chicago around 1886 and perhaps as early as 1884 and perhaps they had an organized plan to meet and work together.

By 1890, William moved to a permanent home at 5734 Wabash. His new home was 20 blocks south of his tailor shop at 3724 S. State Street where he was the manager. Wabash is just a block east of State and he probably took a horse drawn streetcar down State Street to work. Robert Knowles is listed in the Chicago Directory as the President of the Liverpool Cooperative Tailoring Co. at 3724 State, the same address as William's tailor shop.

In 1891, William Knowles is still the manager at 3724 State and he still lives at 5734 Wabash. However, there are a few other Chicago Directory entries of interest. Isabella Knowles, his wife is listed as a dressmaker at 5734 Wabash (their home) and Robert Knowles is listed as the Secretary of the Liverpool Cooperative Tailoring Co. at 3724 State and Robert also lives at 5734 Wabash Av.

In 1892, William Knowles is still the manager at 3724 State with his home at 5734 Wabash. His wife is still working at home as a dressmaker, but Robert is now listed as a tailor at 3724 State.

In summary, William and Isabella Knowles, and their children, 9- year old Margaret Jane, 1-year old Muriel finalized their move to Chicago from Montreal in late 1887 or early 1888. William appears to have come several years before to begin setting up a business and periodically went back to Montreal to be with his family and perhaps the family also made earlier trial visit to Chicago.

Elizabeth (Lizzie) Black, Isabella's younger sister born about 1864 also appears to have come with the Knowles family from Montreal and learned the dressmaking trade from Isabella. William's brother, Robert also arrived in Chicago about 1884 or so from Liverpool.. After a fashion it appears they all lived and worked together in the tailoring business. Robert Knowles's career from 1889 to 1892 is a little unusual as he went from laborer to President of the Liverpool Cooperative Tailoring Company to Secretary to tailor to policeman to painter.

In retrospect, William Wallace Knowles found an interest in the tailoring business while working with his wife in Montreal. Together they established and grew a tailoring business. Later they moved the business to Chicago, a fast growing city at the time. Isabella brought her sister Elizabeth Black into the business as a dressmaker and William brought his brother Robert in.

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Unexpected Deaths

William Knowles made the uniforms and kilts that the Irish and Scotch wore in the parades and shows of the 1892 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Chicago was the place to be in those days and the town was expanding and the Exposition brought in huge amounts of business opportunities. William was involved in numerous city organizations. Business was good, the three kids were young and growing, William had been reunited with her brother. And Isabella's sister Lizzie had found a beau Richard Shannon, whom she married in May 1891. All was well with this close group of Knowles and Black family members and they were about to embark on a better life with their successful business and the growth of the city.

Then just as things were going so well three disasters struck. In late August 1893, Isabella Knowles, William's wife became ill with cholera, probably from bad water or food. The disease is characterized by severe diarrhea and death is generally caused by dehydration. In those days, most of the people who contracted cholera died and this was the case with Isabella. After four days of suffering, she died early in the morning of September 1, 1892. She was only 38 years old. They were a young family. William was 43 and the children Margaret, Muriel and Wilfred were 14, 6 and 4 years old respectively. It had to be a shock as a life expected to go on for years to raise the children and to enjoy their new prosperity was taken in a few days.

There are no notes of how the children were cared for during this period, but it would make sense that Lizzie Shannon, Isabella's sister probably helped out. She had been close to her sister, and she lived and worked with them until her marriage the previous year. In addition, William's brother Robert and his wife Jessie probably also helped out.

By 1893, William moved his business to 215 Herald Building, thought to be in the Chicago Loop and Robert was out of the tailoring business and he became a policeman. Perhaps this had to do with his tailoring work from the Chicago World's Fair.

In 1894, William moved his business back to State Street, but further south to 4654 S. State.

In 1895, William moved his business once again to 301 W. 63rd Street. He had been alone for a couple of years and he married Sarah White. In the 1895 Directory, she is listed as a tailor, suggesting that she was previously in the trade and he met her in the course of business. In fact it is conceivable that she was in business at the 301 W. 63rd Street location. No Chicago marriage record has been found for their marriage, even after repeated searches. It is not known why this is so, unless she was someone he knew from Montreal and they were married there or she wanted to be married outside of Chicago, such as in her home town. Robert appears to have moved to 853 34th Place, which is near where he lived in the late 1890s. Most likely this was the result of the new wife, Sarah moving into William's 5734 Wabash home.

By 1896, Sarah Knowles became William's business partner as they renamed their 301 63rd Street establishment W. W. & S. Knowles. Robert moved again to 7633 Jackson and became a painter.

Things again seemed to be going well for the Knowles. William had found a new spouse, business partner, and mother for the young children. He had been Captain of the *First Regiment Royal Scots of Chicago* and had established himself as an important local citizen.

Then disaster struck again. Sometime in early 1896, William contracted tuberculosis, a contagious disease of the lungs. Tuberculosis was common in those days, contagious and essentially untreatable. People were told to breathe fresh air and get moderate exercise. Some people recovered but most died. His disease lingered for a year. Sarah probably ran the business and raised the children, in fact the children may have been sent to their Aunt Lizzie's given the contagious nature of the disease. It was during this period that William's 18-year old daughter Margaret married James Oscar Jordan. They were married on December 30, 1896 and James and Margaret moved to 837 W. Garfield (55th Street) about a mile west of where her father lived at 5734 Wabash.

William went rapidly downhill in early 1897. He and Sara prepared an obituary/eulogy of his accomplishments in January 1897. William died at home on March 27, 1897. As was the custom in those days, the wake was also held at his home. He was 48 years old.

Although he died young William had a varied and interesting and life. He lived in three countries and was a charter member of the *Northwest Mounted Police* where he rode across the middle section of Canada during the summer of 1874. In 1874 and 1875, he helped establish or staff Fort MacLeod, Fort Walsh and Fort Calgary. Over the years he was a farmer, a policeman, a sergeant, a tailor and a businessman. He joined numerous organizations and had a role in the *Columbian Exposition* of 1892.

When he died in 1897, the children were once again orphaned. But they were a little older this time. Muriel was 11 and Wilfred was 9. Sarah, their stepmother continued to provide care for a short while and there was probably help from their Aunt Lizzie Shannon, their older sister, Margaret Jane Jordan, and Uncle Robert Knowles and his wife Jessie. The 1989 letter from Charlotte Leonhardt indicates that the prime care went to Jessie, the children's aunt via Robert Knowles. Charlotte's letter also indicated that William had left \$1000 a piece for the children's care, quite a bit of money for the times.

Then once again there was death in the Knowles family, the third in six years. On July 26, 1898, William's brother Robert died from injuries resulting from being struck by an engine of the *Illinois Central Rail Road*. It is thought that this happened at Grand Crossing, which is at 79th and Stony Island. Thus at this point, Robert's wife Jessie provided the care for Muriel until her marriage in 1905 and for Wilfred until he was older, probably around 1906-08.

William, Isabella and Robert Knowles are buried in the William Knowles Family Plot in the Oak Woods Cemetery in Chicago at 67th and Cottage Grove. The plot is located in the Linden Hill section J1-314 and is marked by a 1'10" x 1'10" by 5' high concrete marker in the shape of a small Washington monument. There is only one inscription on the marker. Chiseled in are the words "In memory of Isabella C. beloved wife of William W. Knowles born November 30, 1854⁹ died August 31, 1892."

Sarah Knowles was involved in the funeral arrangements in 1898 for Robert Knowles but after that there is no trace of her. She is not in the Chicago Directory after 1897 and was not found in a 1900 Census search for Illinois. It appears that she moved on.

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⁹ Other data support a birth year of 1853 for Isabella Catherine Black Knowles.

William W. Knowles Obituary - March 1897

Background

Chuck Jordan's November 1977 letter to me about the Jordans and Knowles included some information about William Wallace Knowles's obituary.

..... The Knowles family came from the same part of Ireland, although I had been told that when my Grandfather Knowles died that the death notice in the paper gave his birthplace as Edinburgh, Scotland. I do not know how to confirm this, although I was given to understand that he was a joiner, i.e., being a businessman he belonged to all the organizations that helped his business grow, such as: The Masons, The Orangemen, etc.

No obituary was found in a search of the Chicago Daily News and Chicago Tribune for March 25-29, 1897. However, the following obituary/eulogy was part of a cache of documents saved from that period by the Knowles/Leonhardt family. It appears to be part obituary, part eulogy.

Obituary

Jan 27

William Wallace Knowles, ex-Captain of the *First Regiment Royal Scots of Chicago* and one of the most prominent Scottish residents of the City died last night at his home, 5744 Wabash Avenue. He had been in ill health for a year, and during the past three months grew rapidly worse. Mr. Knowles was born forty-six years ago in *Aershire County, Scotland* and came to Canada when a boy. During the Louis Riel rebellion he was a *Sergeant of the Manitoba Mounted Police*. About nine years ago, Mr. Knowles came to Chicago and engaged in the tailoring business, which he has since followed. Since 1889 he has lived in Englewood.

The deceased leaves a widow, two daughters, Mrs. Margaret Jordan and Muriel age 10 and a son Wilfred 9. Besides his connection with the *Royal Scots*, he was a member of the *A.F.A.M Knights of Pythias, Odd Fellows, Independent Foresters* and *Knights of the Red Cross*. Funeral service will be held Saturday afternoon at the house, Rev. F. J. Walton, Pastor of Trinity Reformed Episcopal church officiating. The remains will be interred at Oak Woods Cemetery.

March 27th, 1897

Comments

1. William Wallace Knowles died of tuberculosis on March 24, 1897 and was buried on March 27, 1897. The date on the top of the obituary/eulogy is January 27 but the date at the end of the document is March 27th 1897. The phrase "died last night" and "Funeral Service

will be held Saturday" suggest this document was intended as an obituary since he died March 24th. However, the March 27th date suggests the document could also be part of an eulogy at his funeral. Probably it was some of both. Written initially on January 27th, William probably knew he was dying of tuberculosis with no hope of recovery. Thus probably he and his 2nd wife, Sarah collaborated on an obituary, and changes were made along the way.

2. Spelling is as it is in the original document. The current spelling of Aershire is Ayrshire.
3. William Knowles was born December 28, 1848 making him 48 and not 46 years old at the time of his death. William was born in Kildrumferton, Cavan County, Ireland and not Ayrshire County, Scotland. However, it is believed he is Scottish and Ayrshire may well be the place of birth of his father or grandfather. A place of birth in Ireland even though of Scottish heritage might not be what William wanted to portray.
4. It is known that William was in the *North West Mounted Police* from 1873-1876. It is unclear why Manitoba Mounted Police was written, as there was no such organization. The Louis Riel rebellion is quite famous and took place in 1885. This was a major rebellion in Saskatchewan and the *NWMP* were called upon to help the local militia. Given the urgency of the crisis, it is possible that William was re-activated almost 10 years after he was discharged from the *NWMP*. He would have been about 35.
5. The phrase "About 9 years before" suggests that William arrived in Chicago about 1887. A William Knowles (Tailor) is listed at 3400 Emerald for 1887 in the Chicago Directory, and a William Knowles (Tailor) is listed at 5734 Wabash for 1890. The 5734 Wabash address is in Englewood and is the home he stayed in until his death.
6. Muriel Knowles was born March 20, 1886 in Montreal and Wilfred March 14, 1888 in Chicago. If the text were written on January 27, 1897, Muriel's age would be correct as age 10, but Wilfred still be age 8 and not age 9..
7. The *First Regiment of Royal Scots*, organized in 1893 was a kilted drill corps that was a Scottish pipe and drum band.
8. There does seem to be a certain change from known data in William's obituary. In particular his place of birth in Ireland, arrival time in Canada was not as a boy, and lack of mention of his charter membership in the *NWMP* and mention of the Louis Riel rebellion instead.

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Robert Wallace and Jessie Knowles Chapters

The Robert and Jessie Knowles Family

William and Jane Knowles Family II had at least two children. They were:

1. William Wallace Knowles: William Wallace Knowles born 27 December 1848 and baptized a few days later on 31 December 31, 1848 at St. Patrick's, Kildrumferton, Cavan County, Ireland.
2. Robert Knowles: Robert Knowles born about 1853 probably in Duffcastle, Kildrumferton.

These are their only known children. A baptismal record has not been found at St. Patrick's in Kildrumferton not anywhere else as of October 2014. It was known that Robert did migrate to Chicago in the 1880s and did live with and near his brother William Wallace Knowles, but little was known before that.

In May 2014, a marriage record was found indicating Robert Wallace Knowles and Jessie Grayston were married 18 June 1879 at St. Nicholas Church in Liverpool. The location seemed a bit unusual but it was recalled that there were photos of his parents taken in Liverpool in 1884. And in addition, "Aunt Jessie" was the lady that took care of William and Isabella Knowles's children Muriel and Wilfred after their deaths. Robert's father on the record was shown William Knowles, farmer which is also a match. Thus many pieces of data suggest this is our Robert Wallace Knowles. Robert's profession was shown as a *Licensed Victualer*, which meant he probably managed a pub. Jessie's father was Alfred Grayston, a master mariner.

On April 3, 1881 Robert and Jessie Knowles were found in the 1881 Census. They lived at 44&46 Standish, Liverpool, probably the location of the pub and their home. Robert was born in Ireland as expected. Of some interest is a niece, Gertrude Williams, age 7 born in Vienna Austria who was living with them. It is presumed Gertrude is the daughter of a sister of Jessie Grayston Knowles since there are no known sisters of William and Robert Knowles.

Through analysis of Chicago Directories and Voter Registrations, Robert appears to have arrived in Illinois as early as 1884 and in Chicago by 1886. This is in the same timeframe as his brother was establishing his tailoring business in Chicago. Robert had a variety of jobs in Chicago, first as a laborer, then in 1890 as President of the *Liverpool Cooperative Tailoring Co.*, then in 1891 as Secretary of the same company, then as a Tailor in 1892 and then as a Policeman in 1892-93, then as a Painter in 1896 and then as a Laborer in 1897. One wonders why he left what appears to have been a good position as *Licensed Victualer in Liverpool*, except that he planned to team up with his brother William in Chicago. His position for the *Liverpool Cooperative Tailoring Co.* certainly does link him back to Liverpool and while located close to William's Tailoring business, it was probably a separate venture.

Brother William Wallace Knowles died on March 24, 1897 and he had arranged for his young children Muriel age and Wilfred to be raised by brother Robert and his wife Jessie. Muriel had just turned 11 and Wilfred had just turned 9. It was said that William had left \$1,000 per child to help raise them. Daughter Margaret Jane Knowles was 18 and had married James Oscar Jordan the previous December. It is believed Robert and Jessie had no children of their own.

On July 26, 1898, William's brother Robert died from injuries resulting from being struck by an engine of the *Illinois Central Rail Road*. It is thought that this happened at Grand Crossing, which is at 79th and Stony Island. Thus at this point, Robert's wife Jessie provided the care for Muriel until her marriage in 1905 and for Wilfred until he was older, probably around 1906-08.

For the 1900 Census, Jessie Knowles was living at 7906 Chauncey in Chicago and was widowed and head of her household. Muriel and Wilford (Wilfred) were living with her as was Gertrude Williams, the same niece that lived with her in Liverpool.

Of significant interest is that Jessie and Muriel Knowles and Gertrude Williams arrived immigrated to the USA in 1888. This is the same as the birth year for Wilfred Knowles suggesting that 1888 was the year both Knowles families finally settled in Chicago. It appears that William and brother Robert arrived around 1884 to get started. And at least in William's case he went back and forth to Montreal over the years until established his working business in Chicago. Perhaps Jessie was also living in Montreal with Isabella for some time.

There are portrait photos of William and Jane Knowles in the *Knowles Photo Collection* taken in Liverpool in 1884 and it is possibly these were taken just before Robert emigrated to the USA.

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Muriel Knowles Chapters

The Richard and Muriel Leonhardt's Family

Possible future section.

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Wilfred Washington Knowles Chapters

The Early Years

Wilfred Washington Knowles was born 14 March 1888 in Chicago. He was the last of six children of William and Isabella Knowles and is the only male child that survived. He had two older surviving sisters, Margaret Jane and Muriel Eulalie Knowles. While the other children were born in Montreal, Wilfred was born just after the Knowles had finalized their move to Chicago where his father had established his new tailoring business.

Wilfred's mother, Isabella died when he was four in 1892 and his father William died in 1897 when he was nine. He was then raised by his Uncle Robert Knowles and Aunt Jessie. But then Uncle Robert died in 1898 when he was ten. Aunt Jessie then raised him until he set out on his own.

The Wilfred and Margaret Knowles Family

From family recollections and genealogy records, William appears to have married three times. His first marriage was to Margaret E. Rardin. The evidence comes from a number of interrelated sources. The first being the marriage record itself, which shows a Wilfred W. Knowles age 21 to a Margaret E. Rardin age 17 on June 11, 1908 in Chicago. The uniqueness of the name Wilfred and a year of birth close to his actual of March 14, 1888 in Chicago support this as our Wilfred Washington Knowles.

The marriage appears to have been prompted by Margaret's pregnancy and birth of their son. The boy, named Harold A. Knowles was born sometime in 1907 in Chicago, but died 6 July 1908 shortly after the June 11, 1908 wedding. The death record index indicates the boy was one year old and born in Chicago about 1907 and the cemetery was Oak Woods. The death index also indicated that the father's birthplace was Chicago and the mother's was Indiana. Wilfred W. Knowles was born in Chicago and Margaret Rardin was born in Indiana which will be confirmed shortly. Wilfred would have been around 18 and Margaret around 15 when she became pregnant. One might imagine that they were too young at the time of birth to be married and perhaps Margaret just went home to live with her parents after the early 1907 birth until they were finally married in June 1908.

I had known since the late 1970s, that a child Harold A. Knowles died 6 July 1908 and had been interred in the *William Knowles Family Plot* at Oak Woods Cemetery in Chicago. Wilfred's father and mother, William and Isabella Knowles and also his Uncle Robert are buried in the *William Knowles Family Plot*. The interment information indicates that Harold A. Knowles was age 1 year and 6 months and born in Chicago. Thus his birth was probably around January 1907. The "kindred" stated on the interment record were *W.W. & Margaret Knowles*. It had been thought Margaret was a typo as at the time only Wilfred's marriages to Mabel and Gertrude were known. However, the marriage in 1908 to Margaret Rardin confirms the interment record name *W.W. & Margaret Knowles* as correct. The place of death was 7919 Woodlawn. Thus the *William Knowles Family Plot* data ties together Harold A. Knowles with Wilfred and Margaret (Rardin) Knowles. Usually the parents name a child after someone in the family. On the Knowles side there are no Harolds and the middle name beginning with "A" does not link to any male either.

Eight months after the wedding on 4 February 1909 in Chicago, a 2nd child was born to Wilfred Washington Knowles and Margaret Elizabeth Rardin. The child was named Robert Benson Knowles. The birth record indicates the father's name as Wilfred Washington Knowles, age 21 with a birthplace as Cobourg, Canada. Cobourg is certainly incorrect. However, it is possible Wilfred, just didn't know as he was so young when his parents died. While one might surmise this is not our Wilfred Washington Knowles, other evidence does confirm him as our Wilfred. The birth record also indicates the mother of Robert Benson was Margaret Elizabeth Rardin, age 17 and her birthplaces was as Kentland,

Indiana. Robert Benson Knowles was probably named after Wilfred's uncle, Robert Knowles. The middle name, Benson, is unique and was helpful in finding Wilfred Knowles in the 1910 Census. It is not known who this Benson surname was associated with, but it is not on the Knowles side.

Robert Benson Knowles only lived a few months and died on 24 April 1909. But his place of death was quite unexpected. It was in the town of Golden, Michigan in the county of Oceana. Golden is very near the eastern Lake Michigan shore and about as far north as Oshkosh, Wisconsin, but on the opposite shore. Wilfred Knowles was listed as the father and his birthplace as Illinois. His occupation was farmer. Robert's mother was indicated as Margarette Rardin and her birthplace as Indiana. The young boy's age was shown as 2 months and 20 days which certainly links to the same boy's birth in Illinois. The informant was W. Knowles whose address was Mears, Michigan. Mears is a small town about two miles east of Golden and there was probably a hospital or medical facility in Golden.

About a year later, during the 1910 Census, Wilfred Knowles was found living in a household in Golden, Michigan with Eduard and Jesse A. Dearmond. It is very hard to read the script and it is possible that the surname is not Dearmond. The data for this family was taken on May 3, 1910. Wilfred's age is shown as 22 which is correct. His father's birthplace is shown as Ireland and his mother's as Canada both of which are correct for our Wilfred. Who Eduard and Jesse are became clear when relation to head of household was shown as nephew. Jesse is his Aunt Jesse who had been married to his Uncle Robert Knowles. Robert Knowles had died in 1898 and Aunt Jesse Knowles raised Wilfred and his sister Muriel in Chicago. Thus Jesse Grayston Knowles must have married Eduard Dearmond. The census indicates they had been married 8 years and if so, Wilfred must have also known Eduard quite well. There is a discrepancy on Jesse's date of birth. She is shown as age 39, but it is probably closer to age 49. I tried to find a marriage record for Eduard and Jesse Dearmond in the Chicago indexes but could not find one. It is possible the spelling of Dearmond is incorrect. Finding the marriage record would help confirm that this is Wilfred's Aunt Jesse.

Robert Benson Knowles's death in Golden is quite curious, especially since he was born just two months before in Chicago. It is also curious that no Margaret Rardin Knowles is not shown in the 1910 Census for Golden, Michigan with Wilfred.

Possibly Margaret E. Knowles died during childbirth in Chicago and Wilfred took the child to Golden to be with his Aunt Jessie since he needed a woman to care for the child? Unfortunately, the 1910 Census record is a little unclear as to Wilfred's marital disposition. There are several entries on the same page that indicate Wd for Widow. Wilfred's appears to be S for Single but the script is so bad it could be D for Divorce. The designation is definitely not M for Married. Assuming, Margaret E. Knowles died during or shortly after childbirth, a search was made for a death record in Illinois, Indiana and Michigan between 1909-1910 but none was found. However, it is possible all the State

death indexes are not yet complete. A search was also made for Margaret's parents James and Sarah Rardin for the 1910 Census on the assumption, Margaret E. Knowles might be with them if she lived. But while her parents James and Sarah Rardin were found in the 1900 for Chicago, they could not be located for the 1910 Census.

There is one curious entry though for a Margaret Knowles for the 1910 Census in which many data entries match what is known but the location is quite unusual. That entry is for Hudson, County of Weld, Colorado for May 25, 1910. Hudson is a small town about 35 miles northeast of Denver. A Margaret Knowles is shown as Head of her own small family of herself and a daughter Eva C. Knowles. What matches with what is known of Margaret Elizabeth Rardin Knowles is the age of 18, that she was born in Indiana, that her father was born in Illinois and that her mother was born in Indiana. These are exact matches with Margaret E. Rardin's entries on the 1900 Census in Chicago when she was an 8 year old and lived with her parents James and Sarah Rardin. The data also indicated that Margaret was married 2 years (and still married) and that she had 3 children and only one living. The "2 years married" almost matches a June 11, 1908 marriage in Chicago as only off by a couple of weeks. The Margaret E. Rardin Knowles married to Wilfred had two children, both deceased and Eva C. Knowles would have been a third. A review of other names on the census page do not reveal any names of sisters or brothers of Margaret Rardin. So while much of the data matches Margaret E. Rardin Knowles of Chicago, there is not enough to know for sure. Retrieval of the birth record for Eva C. Knowles would be useful as it would provide the father's name. Further searches for Eva C. Knowles were negative at this time.

The age of Eva C. is shown as 2 months, suggesting a birth sometime in late March 1910. Given Robert Benson Knowles was born February 4, 1909, it is theoretically possible for Wilfred and Margaret to have conceived another child. But if Margaret and Eva Knowles are the wife and daughter of Wilfred Knowles, why are they in Colorado and he in Michigan for the 1910 Census.

In summary, Margaret E. Rardin Knowles either died during childbirth or shortly thereafter or Wilfred and Margaret had begun to Separate and Divorce. No confirmed evidence of additional offspring of Wilfred W. Knowles and Margaret Rardin has been found beyond 1908. And no evidence has yet been found of Margaret E. Knowles entering into another marriage. There is however a death of a Margaret E. Rardin who died in Chicago on March 7, 1960. Without obtaining the actual certificate it is difficult to know if this is the same that married Wilfred Knowles. Thus for the present, the mystery of why Robert Benson was moved from Chicago to Michigan shortly after his birth is unknown as is the mystery of whether Wilfred and Margaret had another child Eva C. Knowles and what Eva's disposition is.

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The William and Mabel Knowles Family

After the death of his son Robert Benson Knowles in Golden, Michigan and Wilfred's stay 1910 as a farmer with his Aunt Jessie, Wilfred Washington Knowles decided to move back to Chicago.

Wilfred Knowles's June 5, 1917 WWI Draft Registration places him in Chicago at an address on the South Side. The actual address script is unreadable, but it appears to be 7xx4 at an unreadable street name. His occupation is Street Car Conductor for the *Chicago Surface Lines*. His date of birth, March 14, 1888 in Chicago is an exact match with what is known. His marital status is shown as *Single* and he answered *No* to "any dependent children under 12." Thus by June 5, 1917 Wilfred was either widowed or divorced and had no dependent children. Since his age was only 29 it is possible that he served in WWI.

Two years later, on May 5, 1919 in Chicago, Wilfred Knowles, age 31 married Mabel Bender, age 25 who was born about 1894. Recollections by the Leonhardt family (offspring of Muriel Knowles) recalled that Mabel had been previously married a man named Darlinger and brought one or more children into the marriage.

A search for Darlinger and Mabel Bender marriage resulted in finding that Joseph Darlinger and Mabel Bender were married on November 1, 1915 in Chicago. Mabel was 20 and thus born about 1895. Joseph was 24 and thus born about 1891. The search also turned up a son, Edward Joseph Darlinger born December 4, 1915 in Chicago. The parents were Joseph Darlinger, age 24 and born in Chicago and Mabel Abigail Bruder, age 21 born in Chicago. It is thought that Bruder was misread by the record indexer and it is actually Bender. Thus the Darlinger/Bender marriage took place just a month before birth. The marriage doesn't appear to have lasted long as Mabel married Wilfred Knowles on May 5, 1919. Joseph Darlinger served in WWI and enlisted April 30, 1918 and was released October 14, 1919. He died December 17, 1976. He was born March 8, 1891.

Eight months after their marriage on January 8, 1920, Wilfred and Mabel Knowles were listed on the 1920 Census at 10914 Edbrook Ave in Chicago, though Wilfred is shown as William as age 33 and born about 1886 in Illinois. This is two years too soon but still very close. Mabel was shown as age 25 and thus born about 1894 in Illinois. What doesn't match with what is known is that William Knowles is shown as having a father and mother born in England which is incorrect. However, sometimes the spouse provided the responses while the other was away and sometimes the spouse does not know. While it is possible this is not our Wilfred and Mabel Knowles, a fortunate result is that next door to William and Mabel Knowles at 10922 Edbrook resided Edward Bender, a widow, age 63. Presumably Edward Bender is Mabel's father. But also fortunate for identification as our Wilfred and Mabel Knowles is that in their household is a son, Edward Knowles, age 4, and thus born in 1915. The name of Edward and his age match with Edward Joseph Darlinger born December 15, 1915 in Chicago. And it also appears he is named after his grandfather (Edward Rardin) and his father (Joseph). It is

possible for purposes of the census that the son was listed as a Knowles or perhaps being so young, Mabel just switched his surname. Thus it appears the William and Mabel Knowles at 10914 Edbrook Ave in Chicago are our Wilfred and Mabel Knowles and that Mabel had separated and divorce Joseph Darlinger shortly after her marriage to him in 1915.

A 1922 Kankakee Directory listing indicates Wilfred W. and Mabel Knowles lived in the rear of 930 Cobb Blvd in Kankakee. Wilfred was a Steelworker for Empire Front Car Co.

On January 4, 1928, young Edward Joseph Darlinger died in Chicago. He was just 12 years old. It is not known whether Mabel and Wilfred were still married or whether they lived in Chicago or if that is where Edward was taken to be treated. Edward J. Darlinger's burial though was in Onarga Cemetery. Onarga a small town south of Kankakee, thus suggesting that Wilfred and Mabel Knowles still lived around Kankakee in 1928.

At some point, the Wilfred and Mabel Knowles marriage ended. Possibly it was divorce or perhaps Mabel died. But sometime in the 1930s, Wilfred moved to Rock Island, Illinois and eventually married Gertrude Wolfenden.

To date, neither Wilfred or Mabel Knowles have been found in the 1930 Census. In addition, the Leonhard family has no memory of any children both to Wilfred and Mabel Bender. And while searched for, no record of children has been found either.

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The William and Gertrude Knowles Family

As mentioned in the previous section, it is unknown what became of Mabel Bender Darlinger Knowles. Perhaps after the death of her son Edward J. Darlinger Knowles, the marriage became strained or perhaps she passed away.

But by sometime in the 1930s, William Knowles married Gertrude Wolfenden. The year is unknown, but it appears to be before 1935 and possibly on 5 November in Rock Island. Gertrude was born December 10, 1905 in Wisconsin. She was about 17 years younger than Wilfred.

Wilfred and Gertrude Knowles were known to have a farm and a trucking business in Rock Island in the 1930s and 1940s. As a teenager of 14, my father, Edward Jordan stayed with Wilfred and Gertrude Knowles during the summer of 1937. Ed recalled Wilfred and Gertrude taking him to a store to buy new clothes on his arrival since the Jordans were so poor. Young Edward had fond memories of that summer including being stung three times by a hornet while picking grapes on the farm, a story we heard many times. When the summer was over, Wilfred and Gertrude asked Ed's parents if they could adopt him as they had no children, but Ed Jordan's mother said no.

In the early 1940s, Wilfred and Gertrude helped a young girl Karen who had a young boy born November 9, 1941 in Rock Island. The Knowles were kind and helped her out. And after a few years, the girl decided to let Wilfred and Gertrude adopt the boy. He was called Robert (Sonny for short). Either he was already named Robert or they named him after Wilfred's Uncle Robert. His name became Robert W. Knowles. The Leonhard family indicated that Wilfred and Gertrude had no other children.

As early as 1945, Wilfred and family were spending some time in Florida, presumably over the winters. Wilfred Knowles applied for his Social Security in Florida in 1953 and perhaps had moved to Florida by then. Wilfred Knowles died in Bradenton, Florida in May 1965 at age 77. It is unknown if Gertrude remarried after Wilfred's death. She was about 59 at the time.

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Closing

Why They Came

Americans and Canadians are a nation of immigrants and occasionally we wonder who were my immigrant ancestors, where did they come from and why did they come. If you are in our Knowles or Black lines, a review of *Our Knowles Family Web Pages* can narrow down who your immigrant ancestors were and where they were from. The question *Why Did They Come?* is a little harder since generally the answers aren't written down. Helping our plight, though, is that people generally don't move from place to place without a lot of thought and the reasons they move tend to be just a few. Below is the information that has been collected for our Knowles and Black families.

1. **William Wallace Knowles:** William Wallace Knowles was born in Kildrumferton, Cavan County Ireland in 1848. In the late 1860s and early 1870s he managed his father's farms in Ireland but about 1872 he immigrated to Montreal, Canada and became a policeman. In 1873, he volunteered for the newly formed *North West Mounted Police*. After his three-year tour out west was complete, he returned to Montreal and married Isabella Black in January 1877. It appears from his testimonial letters that he was doing well as a farmer in Ireland but the letters give a hint that he was trying to do something else. After his immigration to Montreal, he never farmed again so it is likely he wished a different kind of life. His application letters to the *North West Mounted Police* indicate an interest in Irish police methods, so perhaps he dreamed of a police position in Ireland and couldn't get it. After his time in the *Northwest Mounted Police*, he became a Montreal policeman and then with his wife, they began a tailoring business. It appears that William may have started a series of work related visits to Chicago between 1884 and 1888. Isabella may have also gone back and forth between Montreal and Chicago in this time period, but she was in Montreal for the birth of daughter Muriel one 20 March 1886. However, son Wilfred was born 14 Mar 1888 in Chicago. Thus by 1887-1888, it appears that the entire family had finally moved to Chicago. It is not known why William left Montreal. It appeared that his business was doing well, but at the time Chicago was well known as a fast growing dynamic city and William may have seen more opportunity. There is also some evidence that he may have been recalled into the *Northwest Mounted Police* due to some disturbances in the Canadian West and this may have also entered into his decision. William and family would have traveled by railroad from Montreal to Chicago.
2. **Thomas and Margaret Black:** The best information known for Thomas Black is that he was born in Quebec around 1823. His family appears to be of Scottish, then Irish origin. It is likely that his parent s or g-grandparents arrived in Quebec because of the Scottish Highland Clearances which took place in the late 1700s and early 1800. Margaret Leddy Black was were born in Limerick, Ireland and

possibly immigrated on her own or with her parents around 1850. This was the time of the great potato famine which might have been the reason she/they immigrated like so many other Irish at the time.

3. **Isabella Black Knowles:** Isabella Catherine Black was born in 1853, probably in Chicoutimi, Saguenay, Quebec, Canada. In 1877 she married William Wallace Knowles. She then emigrated with William and her 3 children to Chicago about later 1887 or early 1888.
4. **Elizabeth Black Shannon:** Elizabeth Black was born about 1864 in Montreal to Thomas and Margaret Black. From an 1888 letter to her, it appears that she emigrated to Chicago with or shortly after the Knowles came in 1887. By 1888, she was learning the dressmaking business for the Knowles tailoring business on the south side of Chicago. She was unmarried when she arrived in Chicago and most likely she was looking for a change and perhaps a little adventure. In May 1891 she married Richard Shannon. Elizabeth would have traveled by railroad from Montreal to Chicago.
5. **Robert and Jessie Knowles:** Robert Knowles left Cavan County Ireland for Liverpool, England probably in the mid-1870s. There he married Jessie Grayston in 1879. Around 1884, it appears to migrated to Illinois and then Chicago. It is unclear why he came, except perhaps to link up with his brother William Knowles who was establishing a tailoring business in Chicago.

In summary, Thomas Black and his parents were the first of our ancestors to immigrate to Canada. If Thomas was born in Quebec, then his parents or grandparents probably arrived in the late 1700s or early 1800s. Thomas's wife Margaret Leddy is guessed to have arrived around 1850, possibly as a result of the potato famine in Ireland. William Wallace Knowles immigrated to Montreal about 1872-73 and married Thomas and Margaret Black's daughter, Isabella. William most likely immigrated to Canada seeking work opportunities other than farming and perhaps a little adventure, which he found in the *North West Mounted Police*. About 1887-1888, William and Isabella Knowles and their family, and Isabella's sister Elizabeth Black finalized their move to Chicago from Montreal.

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Changing the Course of History

Perhaps the title is a little melodramatic, but there are a few events in our family history that if the event hadn't happened, many of us wouldn't be here. Sometimes it was an unexpected death, sometimes an unexpected child, and sometimes the decision to move to a new location.

1. Perhaps William Wallace Knowles's desire for a change and some adventure may have caused him to emigrate Canada, however, nothing is known about this except reading between the lines in his *Testimonial Letters*.
2. Certainly, William Knowles's decision to move to Chicago influenced the lives of his daughters Margaret and Muriel and their son William. In Chicago both daughters met their 1st and 2nd husbands and had their children. And Wilfred met his three wives also. Thus this decision led to many Jordans and Leonhards as a result.
3. While Isabella's and William's deaths were untimely, all the children were already born, so while it may have changed part of their lives, it didn't change where the children lived and who they met.

Thus some adventure, better opportunities, unexpected deaths, difficult marriages and major move relocation decisions are part of what have led to us. We are not only the result of day-to-day family love and caring by each generation but also the results of a number of events that took place long ago, any one of which would have led to a very different family history.

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Bibliography

As follows is a bibliography identifying a few books that provide background about the life and times of our Knowles and Black ancestors. A few of these documents are in the author's possession.

1. *The Origins of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police*, Gendarmerie Royale du Canada Service central des relations publiques, 1985. This short booklet provides a well organized and concise history or the early Northwest Mounted Police
2. *Report of G.A. French, Commissioner N.W.M.P. to the Minister of Justice, January 1875*, 28 pages. This provides an overview, but still detailed account of the events of 1873 and 1874 for the Northwest Mounted Police by the Commissioner of the N. W. M. P.
3. *Diary of G.A. French, Commissioner N.W.M.P., 8th July 1874, departure, to 7th November, 1874 arrival*, 56 pages. This provides an overview, but still detailed account of the events of 1873 and 1874 for the Northwest Mounted Police. This diary provides a daily view of events on the Long March across Canada.
4. *The North-West Mounted Police 1873-1893*, Turner, J.P., Ottawa, Edmond Cloutier, C.M.G., B. A., L. Ph., King's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1950. This is a two-volume set; the first volume focuses on the early years when William Knowles was in the force. It is a highly readable book that provides information about day-to-day life for the early North-West Mounted Police. There is an excellent large pull out map of the path of the journey in the 2nd volume.
5. *The NWMP and Law Enforcement 1873-1905*, R. C. McLeod, University of Toronto Press, 1976. This book traces the history of the Northwest Mounted Police from 1873. It is written as an interpretive history of the NWMP. Several excerpts describe the "Long March" which William Knowles participated with 300 other men from Fort Dufferin to southern Alberta in 1874. It also includes excerpts from a diary and provides numerous references for additional information.
6. *Diary of Regimental No. 247, Trumpeter Fred A. Bagley, North West Mounted Police, 1874 to 1880, '81 & '84*, transcribed at Banff, Alberta 1938. Copies of the Diary can be obtained from the Glenbow Museum Archives in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. It is 120 pages and it is typed. There are several appendices including a very useful map made by the author of the various routes different Troops took throughout 1874.
7. *Diary of James Finlayson* in particular for 1874, the year of the Long March of the Northwest Mounted Police. Copies of the diary can be obtained from the National Archives of Canada in Ottawa, Ontario. The call number is MG 29, E58 (21 pages).
8. *Notes de Voyage, Suvere Gagnon, Sub-Inspr. N.W.M.P, 1874*. This is the diary of Suvere Gagnon for 1874, the year of the Long March of the Northwest Mounted Police. It is totally in French. Copies of the

diary can be obtained from the National Archives of Canada in Ottawa, Ontario. The call number is RG 18, Volume 3, File Number 18-75 (17 pages).

9. *Diary of Henri Julien*. Henri Julien was an illustrator for the Canadian Illustrated News. He accompanied the more force during the summer of 1874. Thus much of what he wrote and his sketches are what our William Knowles saw and experienced. This diary is on-line and contains his many sketches.
10. In the 1920s, J. O. Curwood wrote a set of popular fictionalized books about the exploits of the North-West Mounted Police.
11. The story associated with the film *Dancing with Wolves* took place about 1868 in North Dakota and the story associated with the film *Son of the Morning Star* took place in the 1870s in North Dakota and Montana. Both these films provide a feel for the times and the issues in the same period as the formation of the *North-West Mounted Police*. Both these films though focus on what happened in the United States versus somewhat different experiences in Canada by the *North-West Mounted Police*.

File Information

Master File Name: Stories_Knowles
Author: Dave Jordan
Initial Web Publication Date: 4/1/2003
Modified: 6/5/2003
Contact: [Dave Jordan](#)

Acknowledgements

Many people were instrumental in providing research, stories, recollections, letters, memorabilia, and enthusiasm for *The Knowles Story*. Without their efforts, we would not have such a comprehensive story. In particular, I would like to acknowledge and thank the following for their contributions.

1. I wish to thank my dad, Edward C. Jordan for helping me get started on the Jordan and Knowles genealogy. He carefully provided initial information. Later he patiently chatted with his mother to try to help her recollect things from the past. When I was stuck he suggested that I write his Uncle Charles Jordan, and that was the hint that really got me going.
2. I wish to thank Charles Jordan, son of James Oscar Jordan for the lengthy letter he wrote me about the Jordan and Knowles history. It clarified so much, provided interesting tidbits about family lore, and gave me the hints that were helpful ten years later in tracking down who was who and where we were from.
3. I wish to thank Elizabeth M. Jordan for sending me letters and chatting on the phone about remembrances of her husband's family.
4. I wish to thank Muriel Leonhardt for the pioneering genealogy research she did on the Knowles and Black families in the 1930s. Her notes and letters were instrumental in knowing whom to look for and where. Without her research, documentation and her first hand access to recollections by her sister Margaret and her Aunt Lizzie, many of the events we know about the Black and Knowles families would not be known.
5. I wish to thank Charlotte Leonhardt and the Leonhardt family for the treasure of information and photos made available to me in the late 1980s about the Knowles and Black family. Charlotte is Muriel's daughter-in-law. Information included Muriel's letters, notes, pictures, and old letters.
6. I wish to thank Pat Check for her genealogy research on the Knowles and Black families and for her submissions of key information to the International Genealogy Index (IGI).

File Information

Master File Name: Stories_Knowles

Author: Dave Jordan

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Modified:

Contact: [Dave Jordan](#)

Appendices

Letters

William W. Knowles Testimonial Letter - January 25, 1869

Background

This is the first testimonial letter that William Wallace Knowles copied in his own hand as an attachment to his May 29, 1873 letter concerning application in the Police force for the N.W. Territories, later called the North West Mounted Police (NWMP).

Fortland,
Mount Nugent
Jan 25th, 1869

I certify that Wm. Knowles is a son of a tenant of my brother, Lord Fordham. I have known him and his family for some years and I believe them all to be strictly honest individuals and well conducted.

It will give me pleasure to hear that Wm. Knowles obtains the situation for which he seeks.

R. Maxwell
[I.] P. D. L.
Co. Cavan

Notes

1. In July 1989, a request was made to the National Archives of Canada for information about William Knowles and his constabulary position in the Mounted Police. In August, the archives responded that two file groups were found. The first was in Record Group 18, file 18-73 and consisted of letters of recommendation, dated 1873, regarding William's appointment to the Manitoba Police Force (7 pages).
2. The above letter was from Record Group 18, File 18-73, Page 6.
3. The letter was transcribed as accurately as possible. Letters and words in brackets [] are best guesses. Any spelling and punctuation changes were made to improve readability.
4. Scan of script letter from Xerox follows.
5. Author/Last Update: - [Dave Jordan](#)/December 21, 2012

Script of the January 25th 1869 Letter discussed above

Portland Mount Stuart

Jan 25th 1869

I certify that ~~the~~ Knowles is a son of a tenant of my brother Lord Granham I have known him and his family for some years & I believe them all to be strictly honest ⁱⁿ industry & well conducted

It will give me pleasure to hear that ~~the~~ Knowles obtains the situation for which he seeks

R. Hapwell

L. P. D. D.

W. W. Knowles

William W. Knowles Testimonial Letter - March 17, 1871

Background

This is the second testimonial letter that William Wallace Knowles copied in his own hand as an attachment to his May 29, 1873 letter concerning application in the Police force for the N.W. Territories, later called the North West Mounted Police (NWMP).

Killefassy,
Mount Nugent
17 March 1871

I have known Mr. William Knowles for ten years as my parishioner during which time I had ample opportunity of observing his character and conduct and am happy to certify that both are praiseworthy.

He has had the management of his Father's farm for some years and seems to have a considerable knowledge and taste for agricultural pursuits. I am informed he has produced some five Specimens of the Ordinary crops.

He is anxious to obtain the situation of Land Steward which I have no doubt will be suitable to his taste and capabilities.

He writes a legible hand and is a fair acct.

Robt Beaty C. L. K.
Vicar of Ballymchugh

Notes

1. In July 1989, a request was made to the National Archives of Canada for information about William Knowles and his constabulary position in the Mounted Police. In August, the archives responded that two file groups were found. The first was in Record Group 18, file 18-73 and consisted of letters of recommendation, dated 1873, regarding William's appointment to the Manitoba Police Force (7 pages).
2. The above letter was from Record Group 18, File 18-73, Page 6.
3. The letter was transcribed as accurately as possible. Letters and words in brackets [] are best guesses. Any spelling and punctuation changes were made to improve readability.
4. Scan of script letter from Xerox follows.
5. Author/Last Update: - [Dave Jordan](#)/December 21, 2012

Script of the 17 March 1871 Letter discussed above

Killefarye
Mounthugent

17 March 1871

I have known Mr William Knowles for
ten years as my Parsonage during which
time I had ample opportunity of observing
his character & conduct & am happy to certify
that both are praiseworthy.

He has had the Management of his Father's
farm for some years & seems to have a considerable
knowledge & taste for agricultural pursuits
I am informed he has produced some fine
specimens of the ordinary crops

He is anxious to obtain the situation
of Land Steward which I have no doubt
will be suitable to his talents & capabilities

He writes a legible hand & is a
fair acct

Robt Beate C. S. K
Vicar of Ballymoghugh

William W. Knowles Testimonial Letter - May 21, 1872

Background

This is the third testimonial letter that William Wallace Knowles copied in his own hand as an attachment to his May 29, 1873 letter concerning application in the Police force for the N.W. Territories, later called the North West Mounted Police (NWMP).

Arly Cottage
Mount Nugent
Co. Cavan
May 21, 1872

I have known Mr. William Knowles for three years as a member of the young men's Sabbath Class instructed by me. He is an intelligent and for his position in life a well educated young man. He has had the management of his father's farm and from his good character and habits has I doubt not a competent knowledge of farming.

Having much self reliance and [finish] in his temperament he is likely to get on in life which I most ardently wish may be the case.

R. S. Dobbs
Major General

Notes

1. In July 1989, a request was made to the National Archives of Canada for information about William Knowles and his constabulary position in the Mounted Police. In August, the archives responded that two file groups were found. The first was in Record Group 18, file 18-73 and consisted of letters of recommendation, dated 1873, regarding William's appointment to the Manitoba Police Force (7 pages).
2. The above letter was from Record Group 18, File 18-73, Page 7.
3. The letter was transcribed as accurately as possible. Letters and words in brackets [] are best guesses. Any spelling and punctuation changes were made to improve readability.
4. Scan of script letter from Xerox follows.
5. Author/Last Update: - [Dave Jordan](#)/December 21, 2012

Script of the May 21, 1872 Letter discussed above

Argy Cottage, Mount August

Colarua May 21. 1872

I have known Mr William Knowles for three years as a member of the young mens Sabbath Class instructed by me, he is an intelligent & for his position in life a well educated young man, he has had the ~~was had the~~ management of his fathers farm & from his good character & habits has I doubt not a competent knowledge of farming

Having much self reliance & push in his temperament he is likely to get on in life which I most ardently wish may be the case

R. S. Dobbs

Major General

William W. Knowles's Letter to Sir John Macdonald – May 19, 1873

Background

This is the first letter William Wallace Knowles wrote about application in the Police force for the N.W. Territories, later called the North West Mounted Police (NWMP).

26 Bronsdons¹⁰ St.

Montreal

May 19th [1873]

Sir, John A Macdonald

Hon. Sir,

I respectfully beg you will inform me of the [fray] of the Police force of the N. W. Territories. I am at present in the City Police of Montreal and am a Native of Ireland and thoroughly [fevsted] in Irish Police duties and equipment. I respectfully beg you will also inform me who are the proper authorities to apply to for admission into said force.

Awaiting your reply I have the honor to be, Sir, your honors most Obet Serv.

William Knowles

P. C. No. 37,

Bronsdons St. 26

Montreal

Lower Canada

Notes

1. In July 1989, a request was made to the National Archives of Canada for information about William Knowles and his constabulary position in the Mounted Police. In August, the archives responded that two file groups were found. The first was in Record Group 18, file 18-73 and consisted of letters of recommendation, dated 1873, regarding William's appointment to the Manitoba Police Force (7 pages).
2. The above letter was from Record Group 18, File 18-73, Pages 1-2.
3. The letter was transcribed as accurately as possible. Letters and words in brackets [] are best guesses. Any spelling and punctuation changes were made to improve readability.
4. The date of this letter May 19, 1873 and the last testimonial letter May 21, 1872 narrow the time of immigration to between May 1872 and May 1873. Within this time he decided to leave Ireland and travel to Montreal and then obtained a job with the Montreal Police Force.
5. Sir John Macdonald was the first prime minister of the newly formed Canada. In May 1873, there was discussion in Parliament about

¹⁰ Bronsdon was in the St. Lawrence Ward of Montreal. The St. Lawrence ward was heavily Irish at the time.

forming a police force for the North-West Territories. And the Act was approved on May 23, 1873. Our William Knowles applied during the discussion stage.

6. It is interesting to note that none of William's testimonial letters mention his police work in Ireland. William lived in a very rural area and would have spent most of his time farming. Perhaps he embellished his background or he just had an interest in Irish Police duties and learned from spending time around the local constabulary in his spare time. But the focus of his mentioning the Irish Police duties in the letter was likely prompted by the fact that the North-West Police was to be modeled after the Royal Irish Constabulary, a civilian paramilitary armed police force with both mounted and foot elements. Given his background in farming and work with animals in Ireland and at least his police work in Montreal, William Knowles most likely saw himself as a good match for the emerging North-West Mounted Police and moved quickly to enlist.
7. William Knowles's P. C. No. 37 is probably Police Constable No. 37.
8. Scan of script letter from Xerox follows.
9. Author/Last Update: - [Dave Jordan](#)/December 21, 2012

Script of the May 19, 1873 Letter discussed above

1873
Wm Knowles
Montreal
May 19. 73

Constable
~~Wm~~

26 Biondsdons St.
Montreal May 19th

Sir, John A. Macdonald

Hon. Sir,

I respectfully beg
you will inform me of the
pay of the Police force of
the N. W. Territories. I
am at present in the
City Police of Montreal
& am a Native of Ireland
& thoroughly vested in
British Police duties & equip-
-ment. I respectfully beg
you will also inform me
whom the proper author-
-ities to apply to for admission

Continues on next page.

Continuing Script of the May 19, 1873 Letter discussed above

into said force
awaiting your reply
I have the honor to be, Sir,
your Honors most Obedt
Sert

William Knowles
P.O. No. 37, Brossedons St. 26
Montreal
Lower Canada

1873
No. 18

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
POLICE MAGISTRACY.

W. Knowles
Montreal

For appointment
as a Constable in
Manitoba Police
Force.

The Letters by William Knowles
and his Letters of Recommendation are
in RG 18, File 18-73, Volume 3316
The above file was obtained Oct. 12, 1989

William W. Knowles's Letter to the Minister of Justice – May 29, 1873

Background

This is the second letter William Knowles wrote about application in the Police force for the N.W. Territories, later called the North West Mounted Police (NWMP).

26 Bronsdons Street
Montreal
May 29, 1873

To the Minister of Justice, Your Honor,

Feeling there may be a vacancy as Constable in some department in connection with the Police force of the N.W. Territories, I respectfully beg to offer myself as a candidate.

I am 24 years old and am at present a member of the Montreal City Police. I respectfully beg to enclose you three copies in my own handwriting of testimonials I brought from the Old country. One from the Hon. R. Maxwell, one from General Dobbs and one from the Reverend R. Beaty, clergyman of the parish in which I lived. I also beg to say I will enclose you a copy of my discharge from the Montreal Police force as soon as I am instructed to resign.

Should you think me eligible and kindly give me an appointment, I will as in duty bound use my very best exertions to merit your approbation. Awaiting your reply I have the honor to be

Your Honors

Obet Servt
William Knowles

Notes

1. In July 1989, a request was made to the National Archives of Canada for information about William Knowles and his constabulary position in the Mounted Police. In August, the archives responded that two file groups were found. The first was in Record Group 18, file 18-73 and consisted of letters of recommendation, dated 1873, regarding William's appointment to the Manitoba Police Force (7 pages).
2. The above letter was from Record Group 18, File 18-73, Pages 3-4.
3. The letter was transcribed as accurately as possible. Letters and words in brackets [] are best guesses. Any spelling and punctuation changes were made to improve readability.
4. This is a follow-up letter concerning William Knowles's interest in the Police Force of the N. W. Territories. It is unclear if the May 19th letter was answered or if William received new information on where to apply. He may have simply been covering his "bets". He also very cleverly indicated his seriousness by indicating "I will enclose you a

copy of my discharge from the Montreal Police force as soon as I am instructed to resign."

5. It is interesting to note that he made copies of the testimonials in his own hand. There were no Xerox machines then and such original letters of recommendation would have been very valuable to a person seeking a new position. They would have been copied over and over throughout life.
6. The formation of the North West Mounted Police and their journey was of historical significance. Because it was so and important men were involved, William's letters and testimonials were saved as part of their papers. Eventually they were archived and indexed in the National Archives of Canada. I wrote the Archives thanking them for the preservation of these records along with a donation.
7. Scan of script letter from Xerox follows.
8. Author/Last Update: - [Dave Jordan](#)/December 21, 2012

Script of the May 29, 1873 Letter discussed above

26 Bronsons St

Montreal May 29. 1873

To the Ministers of Justice

Your Honor. Feeling there may
be a vacancy as Comtable in some depar
tment in connection with the Police force
of the N.W. Territories I respectfully beg to
offer myself as a Candidate

I am twenty four years old and
am at present a member of the Montreal
City Police. I respectfully beg to enclose you
three ^{copies in my own hand writing.} testimonials I brought from the Old coun
try one from the Hon R Maxwell one from General
Dobbs & one from the Revd A Beatty a clergyman of
the Parish in which I lived I also beg to say
I will enclose you a copy of my discharge
from the Montreal Police force as soon as I
am instructed to resign.

Should you think me eligible & kindly
give me an appointment I will as in duty
bound use my very best exertions to merit
your approbation.

Awaiting your reply I have
the honor to be

Yours Honors

Obdt Servt

William Knowles

William Knowles Letter to J.M. Walsh at Fort Walsh – October 28, 1876

Background

As follows is a letter William Knowles wrote to his Commanding Officer, J. M. Walsh at Fort Walsh, Saskatchewan requesting that monthly net pay credited to him while a constable in the North West Mounted Police be deposited in the Bank of Montreal in Guelph, Ontario. J. M. Walsh was the founder of Fort Walsh in 1875.

Fort Walsh
October 28, 1876

Sir

I hereby request that communicate with the office of the Secretary of State authorizing him to withdraw the money which he deposited to my Credit in the Post Office Savings Bank at Ottawa and place it to the Credit of W.S.G. Knowles at the bank of Montreal in Guelph.

I am Your
Obed Servant
Const. W. Knowles

Insp. J. M. Walsh
"B" Division
N.W.M.P

Received Stamp is Secy of State, Canada, N.W. Police Nov 18,
1876

Script of the 28 October 1876 Letter discussed above

Post Walsh
28th Oct 1876

NOV
18
1876
CANADA

Sir

I hereby request that
communication with the Hon
the Secy of state authorizing
him to withdraw the money
which he deposited to my
credit in the Post Office Savings
Bank at Ottawa and place
it to the credit of W. S. G.
Knowles at the bank of
Montreal in Guelph.

I am Your Obedient Servant
W. S. G. Knowles

W. S. G. Knowles
"B" Division
N. W. M. P.

Background for November 1, 1876 Letter

In this next letter, Inspector J.M. Walsh, a commanding officer at Fort Walsh tries to get Constable William Knowles a disputed \$20. It is not clear that William was in the same troop as J.M. Walsh. From his Service Record it appears that William was discharged on September 9, 1876 from Fort MacLeod and was making his way back to Winnipeg and may have just asked his former commander from Troop B to make arrangements for his credited pay.

Fort Walsh
Cypress Hills
Northwest Territory
November 1, 1876

To Frederick White Esquire Department of Secretary of State
Ottawa

Sir,

In reply to your letter of the 6th of October 1876 in reference to the amount deducted from Constable le Knowles pay and placed in the Post Office Savings Bank at Ottawa, I beg to refer to pay sheets for January, February, March, April, May and June which state that \$20 for each month had been deducted making the sum of \$120 and not \$100 as set forth in your letter.

I beg further to state that I have received the enclosed letter from Constable Knowles stating that he wishes the money to be withdrawn from the Post Office Savings Bank in Ottawa and placed to the Credit of W.S.G. Knowles in the Bank of Montreal at Guelph.

I have the honor to be
Sir

Your obedient Servant
J. M. Walsh
Inspector Police,
Commanding
Fort Walsh

Received Stamp is Secy of State, Canada, N.W. Police Nov 18,
1876

Additional Documentation on Pay Issue for William Knowles

The following are summary notes written on Case 361, 1876 by the Department of Secretary of State concerning "Mounted Police".

1876
No. 361
Department of Secretary of State
"Mounted Police"

Pay of Constable Charles Knowles
B Division N W made at Department.

Letter to Insp Walsh that under authority of [...] received at Dept at various times \$100 was sent to Merchants Bank at Guelph on the of Con. C. Knowles but was returned on account of there being no record of that bank there. The Sec of State therefore directed the amount to be paid into the P.O. Savings Bank and Knowles so informed October 6.

Letter from Insp Walsh [...] that the amount deducted for Con. C. Knowles to be paid in Canada to 30 June was not \$100 and enclosing letter from Knowles requesting that the amount be withdrawn from Savings Bank and placed to credit of W.S.G. Knowles MMB of Montreal at Guelph.

Notes

1. The above three letters were found December 12, 1990 at the National Archives of Canada in Record Group 18, Volume 11, File No. 361-376.
2. The letter was transcribed as accurately as possible. Letters and words in brackets [] are best guesses. Any spelling and punctuation changes were made to improve readability.
3. William's use of W.S.G. Knowles is a mystery. The "W" is probably William, but the use of "S. G." is not known. It does not match his mother or father's name and this is the only instance it has been seen. Later in life he used W.W. Knowles for William Wallace Knowles, the middle name being his mother's maiden name.
4. The Constable C. Knowles is also a mystery, but was probably a misunderstanding due to the recipient not being able to read the handwriting.
5. It is not known if the MMB in MMB of Montreal in Guelph is of any significance.
6. Not all of the letters for the above transactions were found.. Periodically, a request should be sent to the archives to determine if more items have been added. There was no more correspondence identified on as of 1990, but it is worth checking every few decades or so. It is hoped that William eventually got his money.
7. Author/Last Update: - [Dave Jordan](#)/December 21, 2012

E.M.'s Letter to Elizabeth (Lizzie) Black - November 10, 1888

Background

This letter was in Muriel Leonhardt's genealogy collection. This letter is to Elizabeth (Lizzie) Black from a friend. Elizabeth Black was Isabella Knowles' sister. Lizzie later married Richard Shannon in Chicago in 1891. The author didn't use sentence punctuation marks so blank lines were inserted to improve readability.

Stratford
November 10th 1888

My Dear Miss Black,

I thought as I was writing I would just drop a line for old acquaintance sake to ask how you were getting along

Are you at the dress making or are you just learning the cutting and fitting Do you ever see Frank

Now I often think of the times we went to him going up and down on the cars.

Does Frank still go to see Katie now tell me all about your beans when you write.

Have you heard from your sister Mary

Since I left I have forgotten her address. Send it to me when you write. I will write her.

Have you ever been to the Boston Oyster House since I was there

Dear Lizzie I wish you could come this far with me and make a visit with me

I had a funny gentleman hear a few evenings ago and he fell in love with your picture and I told him he should see the original and he wanted to know if I could not coax you to come for a while

Now do try, he would be a good catch

I am terribly sorry to hear [about] Mr. Knowles It's a mercy he was not killed outright

Good night and god bless you Love to all

Your friend E. M.

Notes

1. The phrase "Dear Lizzie" suggests that the recipient is Elizabeth Black. Elizabeth (Lizzie) was born about 1864. Her sister Mary was born about 1862.
2. William and Isabella Knowles left Montreal about 1887 for Chicago where they established a tailoring business. It appears from the letter that Isabella's younger sister Elizabeth (Lizzie) then about 24 came

with them and was learning to be a dressmaker. Thus Lizzie was in Chicago in 1888.

3. It is unknown who Frank was. Maybe he was an old friend from Montreal that also moved to Chicago. It is also unknown who Katie is.
4. It was difficult to read the word thought to be "beans" in the phrase "tell me all about your beans when you write." Perhaps it was an expression such as "spill the beans" about what was going on between Frank and Katie.
5. There was a famous *Boston Oyster House* in Chicago which opened in 1875 and appears to have been around until the 1890s. The letter implies E.M and Lizzie went there..
6. There are many cities named Stratford around the world. Given that E. M. and Lizzie knew each other in Montreal, two of them are more likely. One is Stratford, Quebec, a small town about 100 miles east of Montreal and almost to the Maine border. The other is Stratford, Ontario about half way between Toronto and Detroit. Stratford, Ontario appears more likely.
7. It appears that Mr. Knowles, probably William Wallace Knowles was in an accident, perhaps he was hit by a vehicle or something fell on him.
8. E.M. signs the letter as "your friend" which suggests she is a friend and not a relative. She is probably an old friend of Lizzie's from Montreal who has also moved on to a new city to make a living and find a husband.
9. Elizabeth (Lizzie) Black married Richard Shannon in Chicago May 27, 1891.
10. Author/Last Update: - [Dave Jordan](#)/December 21, 2012

Protonotaire's Letter to M. K. Leonhardt - April 2, 1931

Background

Muriel Knowles Leonhardt had a long time interest in her family genealogy and searched for years for information about her parent's ancestry. This letter was part of her genealogy documentation. The original letter from the Bureau du Protonotaire to Muriel Leonhardt was in French, but Muriel had it translated to English. The date on the letter appears to be April 2, 1931; however, it could be 1951.

Bureau du Protonotaire
District du Saguenay

4/2/31

Mrs. M. K. Leonhardt
5952 S. Morgan
Chicago, Ill

Dear Madam,

I received your request for the baptismal certificate of your mother. Will you please tell me in what district of Saguenay your mother was born, and what is her age. Otherwise it will be impossible for us to answer your request, for the district Saguenay today comprises about 200 different places, and to make inquiries in all these places would certainly cost you much.

Will you please send also with your reply \$2.00 to cover the cost of research and of the certificate. If there is any surplus we shall return it to you.

Notes

1. This letter implies that Muriel knew that her mother was born in the district of Saguenay, Quebec.
2. Unfortunately, as the letter states, Saguenay is very large and contains numerous towns. It appears that Saguenay is not a town, but a district in the province of Quebec. It is similar to a county.
3. It is not known if Muriel followed up on the search, but it appears that it would be useful to try another search in the District of Saguenay. With the passage of time, new indexes to the baptismal records have hopefully been created.
4. Spelling is as in the original letter. There are minor punctuation improvements.
5. Author/Last Update: - [Dave Jordan](#)/December 21, 2012

Muriel Leonhardt's Letter to the RCMP – July 29, 1935

Background

This is the first letter Muriel Knowles Leonhardt wrote to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) requesting information about her father William Knowles.

6325 S. Justine
Chicago, Ill.
July 29, 1935

Commissioner of Police

Dear Sir,

I wonder if I could prevail upon you to send me a copy of my Father's discharge papers. He was in the Mounted Police Force in the year of 1877. Where he left the outfit I do not know. My step-Mother has the original and I have not seen her since my Father passed away. I was a very little girl. I also wonder if you could give me any information as to where my Father was born and who his Mother or Father were. Anything you can send me will certainly be appreciated.

Thanking you,

I am Sincerely

Muriel Knowles Leonhardt

Background for Next Letter

Since she did not mention William's name, it appears she attached the following letter to her July 29th letter.

Fathers Vance,

William Wallace Knowles

His death notice states he was a Sergeant of the Manitoba Mounted Police.

I do hope you can grant me this request as I am very anxious to know something about him for my children's sake.

Thanking you again.

Notes

1. In July 1989, a request was made to the National Archives of Canada for information about William Knowles and his constabulary position in the Mounted Police. In August, the archives responded that two file groups were found. The second was in Record Group 18, file O.S. 68 and consisted of correspondence between the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Mrs. Muriel Leonhardt (8 pages).
2. The above letter was from Record Group 18, O.S. 68, Pages 1-2.

3. The letter was transcribed as accurately as possible. Letters and words in brackets [] are best guesses. Any spelling and punctuation changes were made to improve readability.
4. William Knowles's unpublished obituary states that he was a Sergeant in the Manitoba Mounted Police during the Louis Riel Rebellion. This is probably why Muriel thought he was in the Manitoba Mounted Police.
5. The first letter has one stamp that reads Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Montreal P. O. The month and date are unreadable but the year is 1935.
6. This second letter has two stamps on it. On top is Aug 1935, the exact date is too light to read. On the bottom is a stamp stating: The Commissioner, R.C.M. Police, Ottawa, Ont. Sir: Forwarded. It is postulated that Muriel attached this second note with information about William Knowles to her July 29, 1935 letter.
7. Author/Last Update: - [Dave Jordan](#)/December 21, 2012

RCMP Responses to Muriel Leonhardt's July 29, 1935 Letter

RCMP Letter to Muriel Leonhardt - August 6, 1935

As a result of Muriel's July 29, 1935 letter to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) requesting information about her father William Knowles a series of letters resulted.

The first was a confirmation letter back to her where the Adjutant presumed she meant the Manitoba Provincial Police instead of the North West Mounted Police. By way of background to the reader, William was in the North-West Mounted Police in the 1870s, which was a forerunner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The confusion on the Manitoba Mounted Police comes from William's unpublished obituary that states he was a Sergeant in the Manitoba Mounted Police during the Louis Riel Rebellion. This rebellion took place in 1885. Possibly he was activated into service when the country responded to the Rebellion. It is possible that he was put into the Manitoba Mounted Police for only that event. The rebellion was over very quickly. William may have mentioned the Louis Riel Rebellion in his obituary instead of his three year service in the N.W.M.P because the Rebellion was a better known event.

6th August, 1935

Mrs. Muriel K. Leonhardt
6325 Justine Street
Chicago, Illinois U.S.A.

Dear Madam:

Your letter of the 29th, having reference to your father, the late William Wallace Knowles, had been duly received.

It is noted that you state your father in addition to having served in the R.C.M Police was also at one time a member of the Manitoba Mounted Police. Presumably you refer to the Manitoba Provincial Police. Inquiries are being made in Winnipeg concerning your father, and as soon as a report is received from our Commanding Officer at that point, you will be further communicated with.

Yours truly,

(V. A. M. Kemp) A/Supt. Adjutant

RCMP Internal Letter - August 6, 1935

Below is the internal letter the Adjutant wrote requesting inquiries as to whether William Knowles was in the Manitoba Mounted Police.

6th August 1935

Memorandum to:

C. C., "D" Divn.,

R.C.M. Police

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Re: William Wallace KNOWLES – Inquiry

I am instructed to forward herewith copy of communication received from Mrs. Muriel K. Leonhardt of 6325 Justine, Chicago, Ill, U.S.A., in which she makes inquiry concerning her father, the late William Wallace Knowles. A copy of this office reply is also enclosed.

Will you kindly have inquiries made in Winnipeg for the purpose of determining whether this man served any time in the Manitoba Provincial Police, and advised this office of the result of your inquiries.

(V. A. M. Kemp) A/Supt.
Adjutant

RCMP Internal Letter- August 10, 1935

Below is the internal response letter indicating William Knowles was not in the Manitoba Mounted Police but providing a key new piece of information that he was in the North-West Mounted Police.

Winnipeg, Man.

August 10, 1935

The Officer Commanding,
R.C.M.P, "D" Division,
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Re: William Wallace KNOWLES – Inquiry

In reference to memorandum by the Adjutant of the 6th instant. I note that Mr. Knowles was in the N.W.M.P. in the year 1877. He would have been too old to be taken on the Manitoba Provincial Police Force at the time of its inauguration in 1920. This man was never on the Manitoba Provincial Police. He may have been a member of a troop of mounted police organized by the Province of Manitoba for the purpose of controlling the border situation about 1906. This force only lasted a short time and I find that upon enquiry of the Department of the Attorney-General all records as to personnel have been destroyed and that the only information one could get would be as to whether the individual of a certain name had or had not been a member of this force by a search of the public accounts.

Supt.

H. J. Martin

O. C., Winnipeg Sub-Div

RCMP Letter to Muriel Leonhardt - August 16, 1935

Below is the response letter to Muriel indicating that William was a member of the North-West Mounted Police along with key dates and locations.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police

August 16th, 1935

Mrs. Muriel K. Leonhardt

6325 Justine Street

Chicago, Illinois U.S.A.

Dear Madam:

Further to my letter of the 6th instant re your father, the late William Knowles, we are now in receipt of a report from Winnipeg to the effect that he was never a member of the Manitoba Provincial Police. As he was a member of this Force so many years ago, our records are rather meager with regard to his service, but it would appear that he engaged at Montreal on October 6, 1873, and during his term of engagement served at the under mentioned places:

Dufferin

Fort Walsh

Fort MacLeod

Calgary

He was discharged "Time expired" on September 9th, 1876, when he proceeded to Winnipeg.

It is regretted that no further information can be given to you.

Yours very truly,

(V. A. M. Kemp) A/Supt.

Adjutant

Muriel Leonhardt Letter to RCMP- August 21, 1935

Below is Muriel Leonhardt's thank you letter back to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. She opened a wonderful chapter of information on William Knowles's role in the North-West Mounted Police. However, part of her objective was to gain information about when and where William Knowles was born. Eventually I found out where he was born during my research in the late 1980s. Sadly she passed away in 1975 at age 89 just months before I began my genealogy research.

8/21/35
Commissioner
R.C.M. Police
Ottawa, Can

Dear Sir

Wish to thank you for information you sent me in regards to my late Father. What I desired most was to find out where he was born. But I guess it is useless, knowing so little about him.

Thanking you again. I am sincerely,

Muriel Knowles Leonhardt
6325 S. Justine
Chicago, Illinois

Notes

1. In July 1989, a request was made to the National Archives of Canada for information about William Knowles and his constabulary position in the Mounted Police. In August, the archives responded that two file groups were found. The second was in Record Group 18, file O.S. 68 and consisted of correspondence between the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Mrs. Muriel Leonhardt (8 pages).
2. The above letters were from Record Group 18, O.S. 68, Pages 4-8.
3. The letter was transcribed as accurately as possible. Letters and words in brackets [...] are best guesses. Any spelling and punctuation changes were made to improve readability.
4. Author/Last Update: - [Dave Jordan](#)/December 21, 2012

William Knowles's N.W.M.P Service Record

Background

It is believed that Muriel Knowles obtained the following service record information about her father, William Knowles as an enclosure with the August 16, 1935 Royal Canadian Mounted Police letter. A copy of what was received follows.

Knowles' N.W.M.P. Service Record

1. Knowles Wm. Sub-Const. (B. Troop.)
2. Engaged Oct 6 1873 at Montreal
3. Service Nov 3rd, 1873 - Nov 3rd 1876
4. Served at Dufferin 24-5-74
5. Fort Walsh and Fort MacLeod with "F" Division, March 1875, also with "F" Division at Fort Calgary March 1876 (was also with "F" Div. Oct. 1876)
6. Became an Acting/Constable whilst with "B" Division but reduced to Sub-Constable when in "F" Division at Fort MacLeod Dec. 20 1874
7. Discharged Ft. MacLeod, September 9th, 1876. Time Expired. Proceeded to Winnipeg.

Interpretation

It appears that William started in B Troop in October 1873 as an acting Constable. It is believe that he was with the first group of 150 men.

Then he was transferred to F Troop (Division) on December 20, 1874 and was reduced to Sub-Constable. This was after the long march west.

It appears that he remained with F Troop until his discharge in 1876.

Knowing William's Troop letter and which dates is helpful in following this three years tour across Canada as there were six Troops and at times were split off to different destinations. Through route maps, diaries, and Commanding Officer Reports it is thus possible to know where William was at various times along with events he witnessed as a charter member of the the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP).

Notes

1. In July 1989, a request was made to the National Archives of Canada for information about William Knowles and his constabulary position in the Mounted Police. In August, the archives responded that two file groups were found. The second was in Record Group 18, file O.S. 68 and consisted of correspondence between the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Mrs. Muriel Leonhardt (8 pages).
2. The above information is from Record Group 18, O.S. 68, Page 3.
3. The letter was transcribed as accurately as possible. Letters and words in brackets [...] are best guesses. Any spelling and punctuation changes were made to improve readability.

William Knowles N.W.M.P. Service Record discussed above

Knowles.Wm. Sub-Const. (B.Troop.) Number 68.Old Series.

Engaged Oct 6th 1873.at Montreal.

Service Nov 3rd.1873 - Nov 3rd.1876.

Served at Dufferin 24-5-74. Fort Walsh and Fort MacLeod with "F" Division, March 1875, also with "F" Division at Fort Calgary March 1876, (was also with "F" Div. Oct. 1876)

Became an Acting/Constable whilst with "B" Division but reduced to Sub-Constable when in "F" Division at Fort MacLeod Dec. 20th 1874.

Discharged Ft. MacLeod. Sept. 9th. 1876. Time Expired. proceeded to Winnipeg.

Knowles Genealogy Notes - 1930s

Background

Muriel Leonhardt, daughter of William Wallace Knowles and Isabella Black had an interest in her family genealogy. During the 1930s, Muriel requested a number of records from Canadian archives. Her letters and responses are shown above. It is also likely that she queried her older sister Margaret and her Aunt Elizabeth Shannon (nee Black) who lived in Chicago. Elizabeth Black Shannon was born about 1864. Muriel's daughter from her first marriage, Dolores Woodbury also had an interest in the family genealogy; Dolores painted the picture of William Knowles in his kilts.

After Muriel and Dolores died, their genealogy paperwork was saved by the Leonhardt family. The following short note is a transcription of a note one or both wrote; a copy of the script note follows the Notes section.

Transcription of Dolores Woodbury Note

Grandma Knowles

Jane Wallace of Duff Castle

Parish Killthrumferton

County Cavan

Ireland

Great Grand Father served in Army British

Notes

1. Charlotte Leonhardt wrote that these were Dolores Woodbury's notes. However, there appears to be two different handwritings. The italics/plain text above indicates which appear to be different.
2. Using the information in this note and from two other sources: 1) the newspaper marriage notice for William and Isabella Knowles that indicated that William Knowles was from Cavan County, and 2) William's letters of recommendation, I pursued birth and marriage records for Knowles and Wallace in Kildrumferton, Cavan County. Kildrumferton is the correct spelling. Their use of Killthrumferton may have been a phonetic spelling of Kildrumferton.
3. I then found that Jane Wallace married William Knowles November 15, 1847 in Kildrumferton, Cavan County, Ireland. The marriage record indicates that Jane Wallace lived in Duff Castle. Thus there is a good match between the above note and the marriage record data. Grandma Knowles (Jane Knowles - nee Wallace) is Muriel Knowles's grandmother. Jane Wallace Knowles owned property in Duff Castle including a home. How she acquired it is unknown.
4. In regard to *Great Grand Father*, if Muriel wrote the italics, then *Great Grand Father* would be the father of the William Knowles that married Jane Wallace. If Dolores wrote the italics, then *Great Grand Father* would be the husband of Jane Wallace. On the William Knowles and Jane Wallace 1847 Marriage Record, William Knowles is listed as a pensioner, which probably means he was in the Army.

But his father could also have been in the British Army also. In either case, it is very useful information to pursue at a future date.

Script of the Dolores Woodbury Note discussed above

Grandmother Knowles
Jane Wallace of Duff Castle
Parish Killtrimfartin
County Cavan
Ireland
Great Grandfather served in Army
Bristol

This was written by Dolores Woodbury; however it makes more sense if Dolores' mother, Muriel wrote it (or said it). Jane Wallace was William Wallace Knowles' mother

Chuck Jordan's Letter to Dave Jordan - November 1977

In August 1977 at my dad's suggestion, I wrote a letter to his Uncle Chuck Jordan. Chuck was one of the four sons of James Oscar and Margaret Jane Jordan. My dad thought that his Uncle Chuck had tried to compile a family history in the 1930s and by then Chuck and his sister Florence were the only children of that marriage still alive as Art, Ed, and Herb had already died. Below is a transcription of Chuck's letter to me in response to a request for information about the Jordan and Knowles families.

November 1977

Chas Jordan
1060 Chinguapin
Apt. #8
Carlsbad,
California 92008

Dear David,

Hope you have some success with your family tree. I will shake the cobwebs a bit and see if I can remember some things that may help you. I'll start with your family history.

My father James Oscar Jordan [was] born [in] London, England. My birth certificate [is for] Chicago, Illinois, October, 16, 1903 and it gives my father's age as 30 and my mother's as 25, and her birth date was March 19th, 1878 [in] Montreal Canada. I have no knowledge of [my] father's birth date. He had a brother James in Madison, Wisconsin, younger than he; also a brother (Charles or Charley) in between. We have a picture of the three brothers with their bicycles transferred onto a pillow cover (circa about 1895 or 1893).

Now the similarity of names can really open a can of worms. I was a very small boy, when first I heard some talk about my father being the son of his mother's first husband. This was not a topic of conversation to be bandied about, as I soon learned. However, from other branches of the family, there leaked out, their version of my grandmother's secret.

To wit, her first husband had his own boat, sail and auxiliary steam, a small cargo ship as I remember the story. Now the plot thickens. He was in the Mediterranean when he was set upon by pirates, who tried to steal his cargo. Of course, they wouldn't give up without a fight, and a few heads got busted. An Egyptian warship captured them and took them into the port of Alexandria claimed they were smugglers and pirates.

Those were pretty rough days and they were never seen again. The story got back to London that they were all hanged as pirates. The ship and cargo was confiscated as contraband. As soon as grandmother was convinced that she was indeed a

widow with two boys to support, she married and had another boy James Jordan (Madison, Wisconsin). He was born in London, England. We always refer to Madison because that's where he spent most of his life in [the] U.S.A.

On November 11, 1911, my mother gathered her five kids (Herbert, Frances, Edward, Charles and Arthur) and separated from my father. She got her divorce in 1919 and married Robert Aaron Graham shortly thereafter.

My mother's maiden name was Knowles. She had one sister, Muriel Knowles [and] one brother, Wilfred Knowles. My mother was born in Montreal, Canada. Muriel and Wilfred were born in Chicago, Illinois. My Grandfather Knowles died in Chicago and I believe he is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery, 67th and Cottage Grove Avenue. There should be one grave left vacant, as you had to have the name Knowles, to be buried there. Who else is buried there is not clear to me.

My Grandfather Knowles was married in Canada to Isabell Black, who died in Chicago about 2 years before grandfather did. She may be buried in Woodlawn Cemetery also. Isabell Black had a sister Elizabeth Black, who married Richard Shannon in Chicago. I believe there were several Blacks scattered over the country, all of them born in Canada and the U.S.A. They originated in Ireland, County Armagh. The Knowles family came from the same part of Ireland, although I had been told that when my Grandfather Knowles died that the death notice in the paper gave his birthplace as Edinburgh, Scotland. I do not know how to confirm this, although I was given to understand that he was a joiner, i.e., being a businessman he belonged to all the organizations that helped his business grow, such as: The Masons, The Orangemen, etc.

He had a tailor shop and haberdashery somewhere around 39th and State Street and made all the uniforms and kilts that the Irish and Scotch wore in the parades and shows during the World's Fair and Columbian Exposition in 1892. My Grandmother Knowles died shortly after the World's Fair and about 2 years later he married a woman by the name of White. My Grandfather Knowles' brother Bob was killed by a train at Grand Crossing. I believe it was 79th and Stony Island Avenue. I believe my Grandfather Knowles died shortly before or after my Mother and Father got married in 1896. Now the records may show a lot more people in Woodlawn Cemetery than I have knowledge of [and] you would do well to investigate that end.

Now the Joseph Steward that you mention. I always thought he was my [Great]-Grandmother Steward's son, who was my Grandmother Jordan's brother. He went to San Francisco and made little effort to stay in touch with family; after the quake of 1906, he was never heard from again.

We are about to move again soon [and] will keep you posted of our new address through some part of [the] family. Would like to hear how you make out on this.

Uncle Chuck

Notes

1. The year of birth for Chuck's father, James Oscar Jordan was found to be 1868.
2. Later research indicated that Muriel was born in Montreal.
3. It is believed that Grandmother Steward should be Great-Grandmother Steward.
4. Woodlawn Cemetery was later called Oak Woods Cemetery; the address is correct.
5. Minor spelling and punctuations changes were made in the transcription to improve readability. Brackets [] were used to add words where it was thought that readability would be improved.
6. An important new view emerged from studying about this letter. That view was that if James Oscar Jordan and James Jordan of Madison had the same mother but different fathers, then at birth they should not have had the same surname. Previously, my father had told me that he had thought that James Oscar Jordan and James Jordan of Madison were half-brothers. Half-brothers implied the same mother or the same father. If it were the same father, then the surnames at birth would be identical. Uncle Chuck's letter indicated that the half-brothers had different fathers. What was confusing was they had the same last name.
7. It was later found that Elizabeth's second husband was name James Jordan and her first husband Knut Oscar Scholdberg, the man I called Mr. X for so many years. So somewhere along the line our Oscar changed his name from Scholdberg to Jordan. I later found he changed much more than that.
8. Before I knew who Mr. X was I asked several relatives what they thought or could remember about the then unknown name and only one could remember any discussion of there being a different name for the Jordans and that was my Grandmother Jordan, the wife of Herbert Arthur Jordan. Grandma Jordan said that she only heard it once. Margaret Graham, the former wife of James Oscar Jordan told it to her one day. All Grandma Jordan could remember was that it sounded like a Swedish name. Years later when I found the name it did turn out to be Swedish.
9. Chuck wrote Alexande instead of Alexandria. This and the sea story turned out to be a great lead, although the pirate story looks like it was made up. Without the hint of Alexandria I never would have found where the first husband, Knut Oscar Scholdberg died.
10. Muriel and brother William Knowles were born in Montreal.

Charlotte Leonhardt's Letter to Dave Jordan – February 26, 1989

Excerpts

When William Knowles died in 1897, Muriel was about 9 years old and Bill two years younger. They were raised by their aunt Jessie (who was not their real aunt but married to their uncle). She was supposed to have received one thousand dollars a piece for their care.

After William died, his widow Sarah White had little contact with the family. The building William owned on 63rd and Wentworth, rumor had it, was sold for unpaid taxes. The purchaser was Sarah White's [Knowles] brother.

There was supposed to be a family bible with name and dates in it. After Isabella died, her sister Elizabeth Shannon had it, one of her daughters Nadine or Beatrice may have it.

Notes

1. It is unclear who Aunt Jesse was married to. William had a brother Robert, but it is thought that he was unmarried. On the Isabella Black side, it is known that Elizabeth (Lizzy) was in Chicago since the late-1880s and lived with the Knowles before she was married. Isabella had three brothers, Thomas (1857), George (1860) and John (1866). So perhaps one of them had moved to Chicago and was married to Jesse.
2. Sarah White Knowles was the contact for Robert Knowles's internment in July 1898 at Oak Woods. Robert was William Knowles's brother. I could not find her in the 1900 Chicago Census.
3. It would be helpful to find the mentioned family bible. If Elizabeth Shannon had it, it would be for the Black and Leddy family lines and would be quite helpful in learning about when Thomas Black and Margaret Leddy were married and where.
4. Author/Last Update: - [Dave Jordan](#)/December 21, 2012

NWMP History and William Knowles

Introduction

By Dave Jordan

The North-West Mounted Police was created in 1873. Shortly afterwards the initial Force was formed and began a long march westward with an initial mission to intervene between the American whiskey traders and the Indians followed by establishing long term security and the law to the the then North-West territories. Much was accomplished during the period 1873-1876 including the the building of many forts, that are today well known names such as Fort Calgary. Our William Wallace Knowles part of the Force during these early years.

The history of the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP) is well documented and a few of the many references can be found in the [Bibliography](#). As follows are a series of side-by-side tables which highlight an event in NWMP history and our William Knowles's relation to it. These tables provide a way of placing and following our William Knowles in the larger historical setting of the newly formed North-West Mounted Police. Correlation with other documents such as diaries could further refine what William Knowles might have encountered in his three year service. If you choose to review some of the diaries or other documents and wish to correlate with our William Knowles it is important to understand that different Troops went in different directions at different times. Dates our William Knowles was in Throop B and F are shown in [William Knowles's N.W.M.P Service Record](#). A Map showing various locations in 1874 is included in the sequence below.

NWMP History and William Knowles

1. NWMP History and William W. Knowles – May 1873
2. NWMP History and William W. Knowles – August 1873
3. NWMP History and William W. Knowles – October 1873
4. NWMP History and William W. Knowles – November 1873
5. NWMP History and William W. Knowles – Late 1873
6. NWMP Map of March Across the Great Plains - 1874
7. NWMP History and William W. Knowles – Spring 1874
8. NWMP History and William W. Knowles s – July 8, 1874
9. NWMP History and William W. Knowles – July to September 1874
10. NWMP History and William W. Knowles – Sept to December 1874
11. NWMP History and William W. Knowles – 1875
12. NWMP History and William W. Knowles – 1876

Author/Last Update: - [Dave Jordan](#)/December 21, 2012

NWMP History and William Knowles – May 1873

As follows is a comparison of North-West Mounted Police events and William Wallace Knowles in particular.

May 1873	
From the History Books	From Knowles' Records
<p>Synopsis: On May 23, 1873, the Canadian Parliament passed legislation to form a Mounted Police Force for the North West Territories. The pay was \$.75 per day for Sub- Constables and \$1.00 per day for Constables. The term was set at 3 years. The goal was to stop the liquor traffic with the Indians.</p> <p>"On May 23, 1873, the Canadian Dominion Parliament passed an act to provide for the establishment of a "Mounted Police Force for the North-West Territories." The Force was recruiting men between the ages of 18 and 40, of sound constitution, able to ride, active, able bodied, and of good character. The pay was set at 75 cents per day for sub-constables, \$1.00 for constables. Furthermore the men were required "be able to read and write either the English or French language."</p> <p>The Command was to be divided into Troops. The Commanding Officer was to be termed "Commissioner." The term of service was set at three years. The force was to be para-military. Its immediate objectives: to stop the liquor traffic among the Indians, to gain their respect and confidence, to break them of their old practices by tact and patience, to collect customs dues, and to perform all the duties of a police force."</p> <p>Source: <i>The Origins of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police</i>. See Bibliography.</p>	<p>William Knowles wrote Sir John Macdonald on May 19, 1873 inquiring about the Police Force of the N.W. Territories and where he may apply. One would presume the discussion on whether to establish a force and its progress in Parliament was written in Montreal newspapers. Sir John Macdonald was the first prime minister of the newly formed Canada.</p> <p>On May 29, 1873 William Knowles wrote the Minister of Justice offering himself as a candidate for the Police Force of the N.W. Territories. His letter begins: "Your Honor, Feeling there may be a vacancy as Constable in some department in connection with the Police force of the N.W. Territories, I respectfully beg to offer myself as a candidate."</p>

NWMP History and William Knowles – August 1873

August 1873	
From the History Books	From Knowles' Records
<p>Synopsis: The North-West Mounted Police was formed August 30, 1873. It was authorized for 300 men, but initially only three troops of 50 men each or 150 men were formed. In the fall they would travel the Dawson Route to Stone Fort also known as Lower Fort Garry, about 20 miles south of Winnipeg, Manitoba.</p> <p>"The North-West Mounted Police, as it was soon called, actually came into existence on August 30, 1873."</p> <p>"The authorized strength of the Force was 300 men. Initially, however, only three Troops of 50 men each were formed. These troops were quickly organized after the government received reports from Cypress Hills that white wolf hunters had massacred a band of Assiniboine Indians. In the Autumn of 1873, they were sent west over the Dawson route. They reached Red River in late October and proceeded to Lower Fort Garry, or the Stone Fort, 20 miles down river from Winnipeg."</p> <p>Source: <i>The Origins of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police</i>. See Bibliography.</p>	<p>Information from the RCMP indicates that William Knowles was in this first group of 150. He was initially in "B" Troop as a Sub-Constable. His identification number, No. 68, also seems to imply he was in the first group of 150, and given 50 men in each troop also implies he was in "B" Troop.</p>

NWMP History and William Knowles – October 1873

October 1873	
From the History Books	From Knowles' Records
<p>Synopsis: In early October, the men were assembled at Collingwood along with their equipment. They were to travel westward over water to upper Lake Superior and then via overland via the <i>Dawson Route</i>. On October 4th, the first contingent left. The second group left October 10th and met with the first group. Both groups then traveled over 500 miles by land to their destination.</p> <p>"The men were recruited in Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto and other places." "They were to be sworn in and attested upon reaching Manitoba."</p> <p>"Eventually all were assembled at Collingwood on Lake Huron, to which port the equipment and stores were being forwarded. Before sailing each man received a few articles: haversack, knife, fork, spoon, tin plate, tin cup, towel, soap, greatcoat, straps and two blankets. Further equipment: tents, camp kettles, frying pans, chopping axes, were to be provided at the head of Lake Superior. No uniforms were to be worn en route. The journey westward, by water to the head of Lake Superior and beyond was by the <i>Dawson Route</i>, was to be made in several contingents.</p> <p>On October 4, an advance party of one officer and 40 men in charge of supplies left Collingwood on the steamer Cumberland.</p> <p>On October 10, two officers and 62 men boarded the steamer <i>Chicora</i> at the same port and left in late afternoon. After a stormy passage, they arrived at Prince Arthur's Landing (Port Arthur) and immediately left with the first group of wagons over the initial section of the <i>Dawson Route</i>, a distance of 50 miles. Beyond lay a stretch of 385 miles of alternating rivers and lakes with many portages and a final stretch of 110 miles by land, a total of 545 miles. This route was practically impossible to travel during the winter months."</p> <p>Continued next page.</p>	<p>Records indicate that William Knowles engaged service at Montreal on October 6, 1873. He probably traveled by rail to Collingwood, Ontario.</p> <p>Port Arthur is now incorporated into Thunder Bay, Ontario.</p> <p><i>Dawson Trail</i> Description (with thanks to Wikipedia):</p> <p>The Dawson Road refers to roads in southeastern Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario that once comprised the <i>Old Dawson Trail</i>, the first all-Canadian route that linked the Great Lakes with the Canadian prairies. It was a water and land route that began at Fort William (now Thunder Bay, Ontario) and ended at St. Boniface (now Winnipeg, Manitoba). The total distance of the trail was approximately 530 miles (853 kilometers). Travelers were required to load and unload their freight as many as 70 times the journey.</p> <p>William Knowles must have been in one of the two October 10th groups leaving Collingwood since he engaged on October 6, 1873, which is after the October 4 group left.</p> <p>It is not known if he was in the 2nd or 3rd contingent that left on October 10th. He was initially in "B" Troop but it thought the Troops didn't form until after the Nov. 3 swearing in ceremony.</p> <p>Thus he could have arrived at Port Arthur on the <i>Chicora</i> and then joined the 1st group for the overland passage. These two group had 102 men and 3 officers. If the Troops were formed though with about 50 man Troops and being in "B" Troop with No. 68, it would suggest William was in the 2nd contingent which joined the 1st as they left Port Arthur.</p>

NWMP History and William Knowles – October 1873

October 1873 - Page 2	
From the History Books	From Knowles' Records
<p>Synopsis: The first and second contingents had good weather for the overland journey from Lake Superior to the Red River. They reached St. Boniface, opposite Fort Garry on October 22. The third group left later on October 10 but had more difficulty. There was a severe snow storm before reaching Thunder Cape. And when they traveled overland, they encountered significant weather related hardships.</p> <p>"After dark on October 10, the final contingent of three officers and 53 men left Collingwood on the steamer Francis Smith. ...Comparatively fine weather favored the first and second contingents through the overland journey between Lake Superior and the Red River, but the task was an arduous one, especially on the innumerable portages along the way, from Lake Shebandowan to Rainy River. Small tugs, scows and open boats which had been provided facilitated the passage on the larger waterways. At the northwest angle of the Lake of the Woods, several carts were supplied for the last section of the road. St. Boniface, on the east side of the Red River, opposite Fort Garry, was reached on October 22.</p> <p>Source: <i>The North-West Mounted Police 1873-1893</i>. See Bibliography.</p> <p>Continued next page.</p>	<p>But it is possible that William Knowles was in the 3rd contingent of 3 officers and 53 men which left Collingwood on the <i>Francis Smith</i>. The 3rd contingent had a more difficult journey to Stone Fort/Lower Fort Garry in Manitoba, Canada.</p>

NWMP History and William Knowles – October 1873

October 1873 - Page 3	
From the History Books	From Knowles' Records
<p>The third contingent was less fortunate. The trip up Lake Superior in the teeth of one of the worst storms known for years put many on the sick list. Seasickness attacked most of the travelers, and general relief was felt when Thunder Cape at the head of the lake was sighted. The 50 mile trail to Shebandowan was negotiated without incident, but from there on the weather turned cold with heavy snowfalls, which called for strenuous labor to reach Fort Frances, a Hudson's Bay post on Rainy Lake. After waiting three days for the expected steamer to turn up, passage through the Lake of the Woods was made. On the western shore a furious blizzard set in; the tents were thoroughly soaked, then frozen so hard they could not be unpacked. Several days were spent in reorganization, the men making the best of the open bivouacs. The thermometer dropped to below zero, and a 20-mile march through deep snow was made in clothing better suited for summer than winter wear. Many of the men wore sacking or other cloth material on their feet rather than risk wet and frozen boots."</p> <p>Source: <i>The North-West Mounted Police 1873-1893</i>. See Bibliography.</p>	<p>But it is possible that William Knowles was in the 3rd contingent of 3 officers and 53 men which left Collingwood on the <i>Francis Smith</i>. The 3rd contingent had a more difficult journey to Stone Fort/Lower Fort Garry in Manitoba, Canada. Either way he had quite a journey.</p> <p>Perhaps records exist in Officer's Reports or elsewhere who was in the various contingents.</p>

NWMP History and William Knowles – October 1873

October 1873 - Page 4	
From the History Books	From Knowles' Records
<p>Synopsis: Later in October the first and second contingent crossed the Red River and went by sleigh to Stone Fort also known as Lower Fort Garry. Meanwhile the third contingent arrived at St. Boniface where they rested after their arduous journey. The weather was very cold and the Red River froze over; eventually they traveled over it to Stone Fort.</p> <p>"After crossing the Red river with the aid of scow ferry, the first two contingents had gone some twenty miles by bobsleighs to the Stone Fort, or Lower Fort Garry, which had been leased from Hudson's Bay Company and put in shape for the Force by the Department of Public Works.</p> <p>Upon arrival at St. Boniface on a cold and stormy night, the third contingent was quartered in a large wooden shed, heated by a huge Carron stove. Straw had been thrown on the floor near the walls, and with an outside temperature of 40° below zero, all hands reveled in the comfort thus provided. The Red River had frozen over. The following morning, the Hon. James McKay of the Manitoba Legislature crossed the ice from Fort Garry with a number of halfbreeds, bringing cowhides and long ropes. All the duffle was loaded on the hides which were then hauled across. A fine hot breakfast awaited everybody at the Hudson's Bay Company's quarters. Teams and sleighs stood ready for the last lap to Stone Fort."</p> <p>Source: <i>The North-West Mounted Police 1873-1893</i>. See Bibliography.</p>	<p>Our William Knowles thus then spent the winter at Stone Fort/Lower Fort Garry in Manitoba, Canada.</p>

NWMP History and William Knowles – November 1873

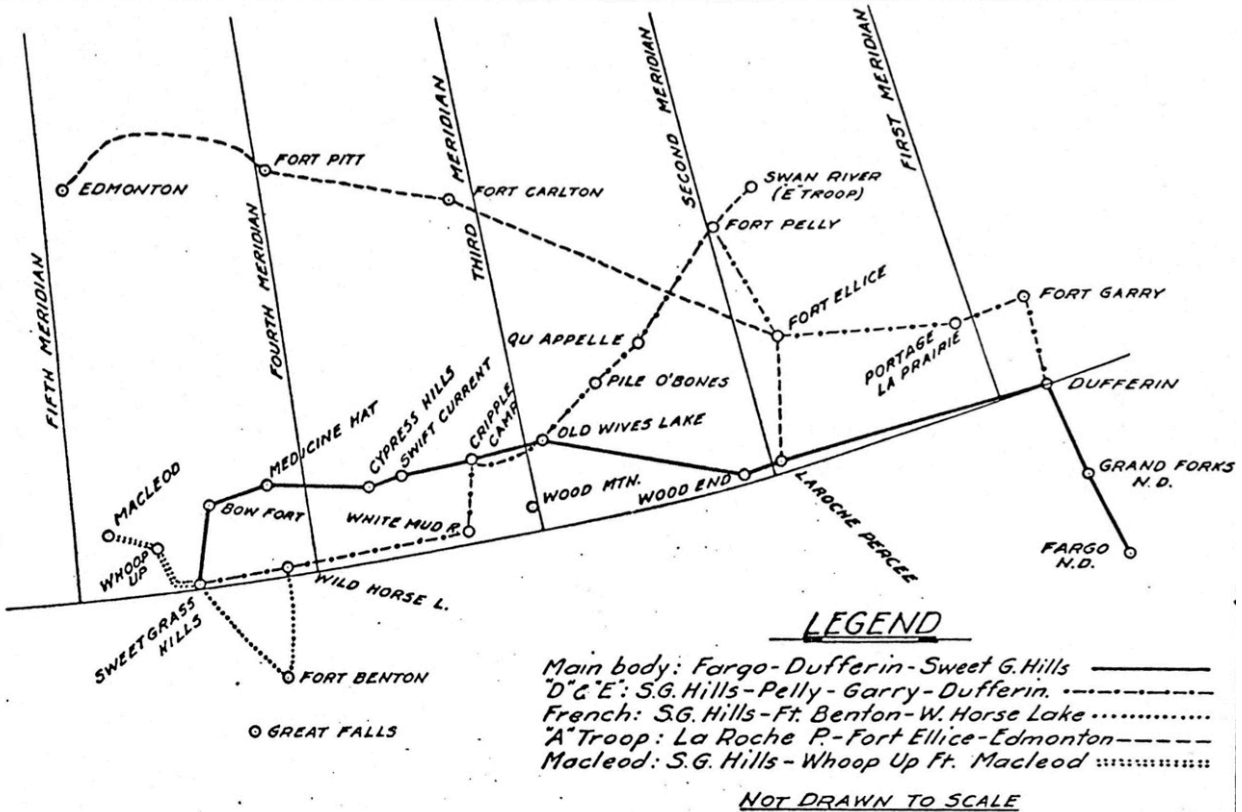
November 1873	
From the History Books	From Knowles' Records
<p>Synopsis: The enlistment oath was administered to the men on November 3, 1873. They signed a register.</p> <p>"On November 3, the enlistment oath, quoted below, was administered by the temporary commissioner, Lieut.-Col. W. Osborne Smith. Each man was given a warrant bearing his name and rank."</p> <p>"We, whose names are herewith subscribed, declare that we have taken the Oath of Allegiance to the Sovereign, and we do hereby severally, voluntarily, agree, to and with the Commissioner of Police, to serve in the Mounted Police Force established for services in the North-West Territories, under the provision of the Act of Parliament of Canada, 36 Victoria, Chapter 35; that such service shall be for three years, and that we will not leave the Force, or withdraw from our duties unless dismissed or discharged there from, nor, after the expiration of the said three years, until we shall have given six months notice in writing to the Commissioner. That during such service we will, well and faithfully, diligently, and impartially, execute and perform such duties as may from times to time be allotted to us, and submit to such penalties as may at any time be imposed on us by law, and will well and truly obey and perform all lawful orders and instructions given to, or imposed on us; that we will take care of and protect all articles of public property which shall from time to time be entrusted to us, and make good all deficiencies and damages occurring to such property while in our possession or care, except through fair wear and tear, or unavoidable accident."</p> <p>"The first three to sign the roll, in the order given, were Arthur H. Griesbach, Percy R. Neale and Samuel Benfield Steele." Source: <i>The North-West Mounted Police 1873-1893</i>. See Bibliography.</p>	<p>William Knowles' records indicate that he began service in the Northwest Territories Mounted Police on November 3, 1873. It is believed he was initially in "B" Troop. It is thought the Troops were formed after the swearing in ceremony.</p> <p>A copy of the signing list should be obtained to get a list of the men, probably positions, troops and to see William Knowles' signature.</p> <p>William Knowles service ended on November 3, 1876 when his time expired. This was three years from the date of the swearing in ceremony.</p>

NWMP History and William Knowles – Late 1873

Late 1873	
From the History Books	From Knowles' Records
<p>"The recruits from Eastern Canada.... were soon comfortably quartered at the Stone Fort about 20 miles below the village of Winnipeg."</p> <p>"This nucleus from which the North-West Mounted Police grew was not lacking in the variety of its make-up. The personnel embraced clerks, tradesmen, soldiers, farmers, telegraphers, sailors, gardeners, lumberjacks, professors, bakers, butchers, surveyors, university students and one bartender. Some had served in the Royal Irish Constabulary and the Canadian Artillery. Service counted from the swearing-in in Manitoba. Superintendent W. D. Jarvis of "A" Troop, who was the senior superintendent, was placed in command.</p> <p>The uniforms, clothing, arms, accoutrements and stores failed to reach the Stone Fort until some time later. However, Lieutenant -Colonel Smith was able to supply fatigue (serge) uniforms, warm clothing and arms from the militia stores at Fort Garry.</p> <p>Native horses, broncos, were purchased; drills and equitation commenced; there were instructions in police procedure. Riding school exercises and squad drills occasionally gave place to a field day, for variation. Everything possible was done to prepare the men for the task ahead."</p> <p>The following is some of the equipment issued to the men: 1) the Universal British Army saddle, 2) a short Snider-Enfield carbine, usually carried in the saddle bucket in the rear of the right leg, 3) a Deane and Adams revolver, long model, in holster on the left side, and 4) a flint and steel to be carried in every man's fire bag. The Force also brought along two 9-pounder muzzle loading field guns and two brass mortars. In addition a special troop, organized temporarily for the purpose, carried lances during part of the march westward in 1874, in order to impress the Indians"</p>	<p>It is not known if William was a member of the Royal Irish Constabulary; however, his application letters states:</p> <p>"I am at present in the City Police of Montreal and am a Native of Ireland and thoroughly [fevsted] in Irish Police duties and equipment,"</p> <p>"I am 24 years old and am at present a member of the Montreal City Police."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Source: <i>The North-West Mounted Police 1873-1893</i>. See Bibliography.</p>

NWMP Map of March Across the Great Plains - 1874

MAP
SHOWING MARCH OF THE N.W.M.P. ACROSS THE GREAT PLAINS IN 1874



Notes

1. This map was part of *Fred A. Bagley's Diary*. However, I have also seen the same map in other sources.
2. It is believed William Knowles wintered 1873-74 first at Fort Garry then Dufferin. He then departed in July 1874 with the *Main Body* from Dufferin. After the arrival of the *Main Body* at Sweet Grass Hills in September 1874, different Troops went different directions and also to some places not shown on the map.

NWMP History and William Knowles – Spring 1874

Spring 1874	
From the History Books	From Knowles' Records
<p>Synopsis: In the spring of 1874, an additional 150 men from Eastern Canada were recruited forming three more troops. In June 1874 they traveled from Toronto by rail through the USA to North Dakota and then marched over the border to Fort Dufferin.</p> <p>"It was soon realized that 150 men would be insufficient... Commissioner George A. French, recruited an additional three troops, totalling 150 men from Eastern Canada during Spring of 1874. These recruits left Toronto in June 1874 traveling by rail through Chicago to Fargo, North Dakota. Here they disembarked and marched northward across the border to join up with the original 3 troops at the small boundary settlement of Fort Dufferin."</p> <p>Source: <i>The origins of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police</i>. See Bibliography.</p>	<p>William Knowles traveled with the initial force of 150 men in the fall of 1873.</p> <p>Records indicate William Knowles was at Dufferin on May 24, 1874. However only A, B, and C were at Dufferin on this date, thus implying that William was in the original group since the second group didn't arrive until June.</p>

NWMP History and William Knowles – July 8, 1874

July 8, 1874	
From the History Books	From Knowles' Records
<p>Synopsis: The Northwest Mounted Police began their journey on July 8, 1874 from Fort Dufferin, Manitoba. They numbered 300 men. It would take over two months and 800 miles to reach the Bow and Belly Rivers in southern Alberta where they would attempt to locate the whiskey traders.</p> <p>"On July 8, 1874, the force of 300 Mounted Police left Dufferin, Manitoba and headed west toward the junction of the Bow and Belly Rivers over 800 miles away, in what is today southern Alberta. Their objective was to locate Fort Whoop-up, notorious stronghold of the whiskey traders, and destroy the whiskey trade."</p> <p>Source: <i>The origins of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police</i>. See Bibliography.</p>	<p>William Knowles traveled with this force of 300 men.</p> <p>Fort Dufferin is south of Winnipeg, Manitoba on the Red River near the U.S. border. The Bow and Belly Rivers are in southern Alberta.</p>

NWMP History and William Knowles – July - September 1874

July - September 1874	
From the History Books	From Knowles' Records
<p>Synopsis: During the summer the group traveled across the plains with horses, carts, and equipment. Some troops split off and traveled different directions with different objectives. Except for Troop E and part of A, the group rested in Sweet Grass Hills.</p> <p>"For two months the cavalcade of ox-carts, wagons, cattle, field pieces and agricultural equipment crawled steadily westward. At La Roche Percee, the contingent split."</p> <p>The greater part of Troop A proceeded northwest northwestward toward Fort Edmonton.</p> <p>"The remainder of the force, ragged and weary, its horses starved and parched, toiled on in pitiable condition to the Sweet Grass Hills, near the International Boundary. There, the Commissioner and the Assistant Commissioner led a small party south to Fort Benton, Montana, to replenish stocks of food and purchase horses.</p> <p>"On his return from Fort Benton, the Commissioner set out with two troops for Swan River, the newly appointed headquarters of the Force."</p> <p>Source: <i>The Origins of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police</i>. See Bibliography.</p>	<p>La Roche Percee is in southern Saskatchewan near the U.S. border.</p> <p>Since William Knowles was in Troop B, he rested in Sweet Grass Hills, which is in southern Alberta near the U.S. border.</p> <p>Swan River is in the reverse direction back towards Manitoba.</p>

NWMP History and William Knowles – September - December 1874

September - December 1874	
From the History Books	From Knowles' Records
<p>Synopsis: With all the troops except Troop E and part of A, Commissioner Macleod located Fort Whoop-up. In October they began building Fort Macleod.</p> <p>"Assistant Commissioner James F. Macleod, commanding "B", "C", "D" and "F" and the remainder of "A", continued westward to the foothills. Macleod, with the assistance of Metis scout Jerry Potts, located Fort Whoop-up, but the whisky traders had fled. The column finally halted on the banks of the Old Man River, where in October 1874, they began building the first police outpost in the far west. It was called Fort Macleod. In the months that followed, the whisky trade was smashed and lawlessness sharply declined. By 1875, the police had erected additional posts at Fort Saskatchewan, Fort Calgary and Fort Walsh. Law and order was firmly established on Canada's western frontier."</p> <p>Source: <i>The origins of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police</i>. See Bibliography.</p>	<p>Since William Knowles was in Troop B, he continued with Macleod and was thus likely involved in the construction of Fort Macleod.</p> <p>Records indicate that William Knowles became an Acting Constable while with "B" Troop but was reduced to Sub-Constable when in "F" Troop at Fort Macleod on December 20, 1874. Possibly he was Acting Constable since the beginning of the Long March. It appears that he moved to "F" Troop permanently at this point.</p>

NWMP History and William Knowles – 1875

1875	
From the History Books	From Knowles' Records
Fort Calgary on the Bow River in Alberta and Fort Walsh in the Cypress Hills in Alberta and near Montana were established.	Records indicate that William Knowles was at Fort Macleod, Alberta with "F" Troop and also at Fort Walsh, Saskatchewan with "F" Troop in March 1875. Thus he was probably there for the construction of Fort Walsh. However, there is no record that he was at Fort Calgary until 1876.

NWMP History and William Knowles – 1876

1876	
From the History Books	From Knowles' Records
<p>Synopsis: The battle of the Little Big Horn took place in June 1876 in Montana. The situation made the Canadian authorities try to peacefully acquire title to the nearby territory in Alberta and Saskatchewan. The work of the Mounties had helped these matters. Within a few short years there were settlements, telegraph lines and the railroad in 1881.</p> <p>"The climax of the Sioux resistance came at Little Big Horn, Montana in June 1876, with the annihilation of five 7th United States Cavalry troops under the command of Lieutenant Colonel George A. Custer."</p> <p>"In the Spring of 1876 hostilities between the American Sioux and the United States Army made Canadian authorities anxious to peacefully acquire title to most of the territory held by the Saskatchewan Indian tribes and the Blackfoot Confederacy. Also in 1876, Treaty No. 6 was concluded between the Canadian Government and the Cree and Assiniboine Indians. The Crees and Assiniboines surrendered their title to 120,000 square miles of central Saskatchewan and Alberta by agreeing to this treaty. The presence of the NWMP in their scarlet tunics played an important role in the negotiations with the Indian tribes."</p> <p>"The march west by the NWMP opened up the territories to civilization. In 1874 the white population of the territories numbered only a few hundred, mostly traders, missionaries, Hudson's Bay personnel, plus a few settlers. By 1878 there was a village of several hundred persons adjacent to Fort Walsh and in 1876 a telegraph was installed to Battleford and in 1877 to Edmonton. The rail link of the Canadian Pacific Railroad (C.P.R.) from Winnipeg was begun in 1881 and reached Edmonton by 1883, bringing with it thousands of workers and settlers."</p>	<p>William Knowles' Records indicate that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. William Knowles was at Fort Calgary and in "F" Troop in March 1876. 2. William Knowles while at Fort Macleod was discharged on September 9, 1876 as time had expired and was to travel to Winnipeg (he would have 3 years of service in November). 3. William Knowles was in "F" Troop in October 1876. <p>On October 28, 1876 William Knowles sent a letter to Inspector J. M. Walsh, B Division NWMP at Fort Walsh requesting the transfer of money from the Post Office Savings Bank in Ottawa to credit the account of W.S.G. Knowles in the Bank of Montreal at Guelph.</p> <p>There was a follow-up letter from J. M. Walsh on Nov. 1, 1876 to the Department of Secretary of State to reconcile the matter of a \$20 error in W. Knowles' back pay and the request for the transfer of funds.</p> <p>Records indicate William Knowles' service ended on November 3, 1876, which was three years of service.</p> <p>On January 25, 1877, William Knowles married Isabella Catherine Black at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church in Montreal. He then continued his career with the Montreal Police Force.</p> <p>It is not known if William met Isabella before he left Montreal in 1873 or whether they met and had a brief courtship of a couple of months after he arrived in Montreal about November 1876.</p> <p>Source: <i>The origins of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police</i>. See Bibliography.</p>

Associated Documents

There are a number of additional documents on [Knowles PDF Downloads](#) that are available or will be shortly as pdf documents. These are listed as follows to provide an inventory.

Additional Stories

To date there is only one companion stories to *The Knowles Story* that are published separately on [Our Knowles Family Web Pages](#)

These stories and articles are available at [Knowles PDF Downloads](#) as individual pdf documents with titles and file names as listed below.

1. *The Knowles Story*
File: Stories_Knowles.pdf
Summary: *The Knowles Story* provides a written history of the origins of our Knowles family. As part of this story there are many appendices and sections.
2. *The Jordan Story*
File: Stories_Jordan.pdf
Summary: *The Jordan Story* provides a written history of the origins of our Jordan family. As part of this story there are many appendices and sections.
3. *Recollections of the Jordans*
File: Recollections_Jordan.pdf
Summary: *Recollections of the Jordans* provides a collection of short anecdotes and memories of our Jordan family. Also contains some recollections of the Knowles family.

Knowles Records Collections

To discover our Knowles and Black family history, much research took place and many documents were obtained. The following documents include transcriptions, organized listings, and occasionally scans of original documents that helped to define our history and develop the various stories.

Each document in its own way provides a next level of detail about what they were doing and when and where. As an example, the *Historical Knowles Family Addresses* might at first glance appear to be an uninteresting document, but perusal of the chronological addresses for each individual provides a fascinating look at where they were, what jobs they held, and how their lives changed and improved as time went along.

These stories and articles are available at [Knowles PDF Downloads](#) as individual pdf documents with titles and file names as listed below.

1. *Historical Knowles Family Addresses*
File: Addresses_Knowles_Historical.pdf
Summary: Contains chronological address listings for various families in the Knowles/Black/Wallace line.
Linkage: James Oscar Jordan married Margaret Jane Knowles
2. *Knowles Family Census Records*
File: Census_Knowles_Historical.pdf
Summary: Contains census transcriptions for various families in the Knowles/Black/Wallace line.
Linkage: James Oscar Jordan married Margaret Jane Knowles

Additional Letters

Within the Appendix section of *Knowles* there are a number of transcribed letters. This section contains a listing of additional letters which are available as downloadable pdf files at *Knowles PDF Downloads*.

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1. None at this time. Check back in future years.

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1. None at this time. Check back in future years.