

JAMES WILSON MARTIN HOMESTEAD SITE

In 2005 Lloyd and Duane Martin had the honour of receiving the Century Family Farm Plaque for their grandparents' (James and Mary Martin's) homestead. It was their hope at the time of receiving the plaque and the granite plaque from the R.M. of Bon Accord #246 that the plaques would be housed on the old homestead so all the descendents of our grandparents would have access to view the plaques.

A site was chosen close to the grid road running along the old homestead. The directions to the location for the older generation would be approximately ¼ mile down Hynds's Road. To others the directions would be 3 miles east from the junction of # 15 and # 52 highways and ¾ of a mile south on the grid road. . A metal stand was built to house the plaques and some evergreen and maple seedlings were planted to give the area a small park-like atmosphere. Saskatchewan and Canadian flags have been erected and a walkway down from the grid road has been built.



Living in a community where culture has become so important for other ethnic groups, we felt it only appropriate that we preserve our heritage for future generations of our family along with knowledge of our family's background for the general public. We have therefore added an additional plaque with an edited version of our family's background. (A more complete history can be found in the two volumes of the Ituna history book.) The plaque reads as follows:

James Wilson Martin, Sr.

James immigrated from Northern Ireland in 1903 along with brothers Fred, Robert, and Isaac. Brother William immigrated at a later date. After landing in Halifax, James traveled by train to Toronto where he was employed by the Grand Trunk Railway for two years. He traveled West at the end of February 1905 with his brother William after hearing that there was good land for ranching in this area. They arrived at Balcarres and made their way to what is now the Ituna area.

On March 14, 1905, at age 27, James Wilson Martin, Sr. filed for the homestead rights on land location SW 36-25-11 W2nd. Thus began his short, but successful farming venture.

In December 1910 James along with his brother William returned to Toronto en route back to Ireland to seek brides. On arriving in Toronto he renewed his acquaintance with his old friend Billy Frizzell who introduced him to his niece Mary McNab Hynds from Ireland. After a short courtship they were married on February 8, 1911, returned to their homestead in early March and began their life together bringing into the world three children: sons Jim (May Thompson), and Jack (Isobel Robinson), and daughter Sadie (Bill Robinson).

James passed away in June 1915 due to complications from a tragic leg injury. His wife Mary continued to farm their homestead, first with the help from her brother, John Hynds, and later with the help of her sons. Mary passed away in March 1978.

Their eldest son, Jim, purchased the homestead from his mother in the late 1940s and actively farmed the land until 1976 when he handed the homestead over to his two sons, Lloyd and Duane Martin, with the request that the land be handed down to future generations.

