

# ADA HARRIET BRETT nee GARRETT LIFE STORY

Vers. 5.0, 31 Oct 2019

Born 3 January 1868, Ryde, Isle of Wight, Hampshire, England - sixth of seven children

Parents John Garrett and Sarah Garrett nee Attrill

Died 22 September 1950, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Born 3 January 1868: in parents' home on Nelson Street, Ryde, Isle of Wight, Hampshire, England. Father John Garrett, Born 16 July 1834 and mother Sarah Attrill, Born 1828.

Ada was the sixth of seven children. She had two brothers and four sisters.

Little is known about her life growing up on the Isle of Wight. From the 1861 census, her father was a Superintendent of Piers Porters business in Ryde with seven employees; her mum was a Lodging Housekeeper, and they had one servant. They were living on the same property as the Governor's House on Nelson Street, Ryde in Happy Cottage.

In the 1871 Census: Ada Harriett Garrett is now three years old with the family living in a cottage at one end of Cemetery road. Her father is a Builder's Clerk in Ryde; her sister Elizabeth Ellen, age 13, is now living and working as a servant in Angelena House, Buckingham Road, Ryde.

Sister Sarah Ann Tasker nee Garrett age 21 dies 6 February 1880, a month after the birth of her son Louis Henry Tasker.

In the 1881 Census: Ada Harriett is in school at age 13. Her dad continues to work as a Builder's Clerk, and they have an 11-year-old boarder, Nina Harriett Rowe. Sarah Ann Tasker nee Garrett's widowed husband Louis Tasker and his two children are in the home. Her sister Emily Alice is not in the home but still living in Ryde, Isle of Wight with cousin Rosa F. Tutton and a boarder, 11-year-old Ellen Rowe.

Sister Jessie Katherine marries in 1883 leaving younger brother Arthur, age 13 in school, older brother John, a carpenter who is still with his mother in the 1891 census and possibly 15-year-old Ada in the home with the parents. All of her sisters are out of the home.

The John and Sarah Garrett family lived in the same house in 1871 and 1881. In 1871, eight people resided in the home and in 1881, ten people, including Ada and two brothers. The rest were relatives and a boarder.

Ada's father, John Garrett passed away suddenly on 15 November 1886 of cerebral haemorrhage at the age of 52.

There is no more verifiable written evidence of Ada anywhere between the 1881 census in Ryde, Isle of Wight and the next official record of her marriage to Robert Henry "Bob" Brett in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada 16 August 1888.

There are many mysteries about Ada which cannot be completely resolved.

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One mystery is why she told both her daughter, Dorothy Grace Wadds nee Brett and her granddaughter, Ethel Ada Brooks nee Wadds, that she came from the Isle of Man. She entered Isle of Man as her birth country on the 1911 census form in Canada yet we definitely know she was born on the Isle of Wight in 1868 and showing up on 1871 and 1881 English census with her parents on the Isle of Wight.

Another mystery has to do with her musicality, love of reading and the importance she placed on education. In short, she had class. She did not acquire these attributes in the wilds of British Columbia in the mid-1880's. She told her granddaughter, Ethel Ada Brooks nee Wadds that music was part of her family life on the IoW. From family stories, we know she owned and played a piano when living in Nelson, BC, Canada in the early 1900's.

Another mystery is when and how she arrived in British Columbia, Canada. In the mid-1880's, emigrants normally arrived on the east coast of North America then dispersed by rail to their final destination.

My mother told me that her mum, Ada Harriett, arrived in Vancouver with her piano and furniture via the "Horn." Mum had semi-nude figurines in our home in the 1950's that she described as her mother's which were also in the Nelson home. Apparently, these figurines were very distracting to the beaux that came courting her sister, Constance Ida Gibson nee Brett. My sister and I each have one "Queen Ann" chair that also supposedly came with Ada when she emigrated to Canada.

It is unlikely furniture came with her when she emigrated, but again, how did she acquire such refined things? Certainly not in the years being a nanny nor after marriage living on the homestead or living in the frontier towns of Slocan City and Nakusp, British Columbia.

Her granddaughter, Ethel Ada Brooks nee Wadds recounts being told that Ada's home in Nelson circa 1906 through 1918 was filled with music. Ada and daughter Dorothy Grace played the piano, daughter Constance Ida played the cello, son Arthur Harold played the violin and brother-in-law Charlie Brett played the violin and harmonica. The silver figurines rested on the piano in that home.

I found a Miss Garret listed as a passenger arriving first class in September 1884 with a rail ticket to Ottawa. Ada recorded her year of arrival as 1886 in the 1891 census, as 1885 in the 1911 census and as 1884 in the 1921 census. And I found a Miss Garrett leaving Liverpool, England 28 October 1886 stopping in Londonderry, Ireland, arriving Quebec City, Canada 8 November 1886 on the SS Parisian traveling second class.

I have a vague memory of my mum saying Ada was a nanny in Vancouver prior to marriage. Neither she nor her parents had money to pay her way. Skilled and recommended young white domestic women had some bargaining power, so her passage was likely paid for and there is a possibility she could have brought additional things with her.

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The 1886 arrival date makes the most sense. 1884 and 1885 are too early for Canadian Pacific Railroad Trans Canada passenger rail travel. The rails were completed in November 1885 but through passenger service did not begin until March 1886. Prior to March 1886, North American transcontinental rail travel was through the United States then by ship up to Vancouver. The 1884 and 1885 travel years are possible particularly with the last leg by ship to Vancouver, matching my mother's version of her arrival. It just does not make sense that a sixteen or seventeen-year-old single girl would undertake a trip of that length alone. There is a possibility she traveled as a nanny with a wife and children moving to British Columbia to join a husband already there. A final reason for my doubts of an 1884 or 1885 arrival is that single white domestic workers were pursued by literally hundreds of single men. It was extremely difficult for employers to hang onto their white female domestic workers even if an indentured contract was in place. Usually these ladies were married within a year. There are reports of them being married weeks after arrival and Ada was a very beautiful young woman.

I cannot determine conclusively which year she arrived in Canada but what evidence I have found suggests 1886 over 1884 and 1885.

Why would Ada leave the Isle of Wight? Her prospects were: early marriage, poverty, domestic work for a roof over her head and crowded living conditions. From birth she lived in crowded homes with an older sister working and living out of the home as a servant at age thirteen and another sister boarded out to make room for relatives.

The Garrett name is a well-known Isle of Man surname. There is some faint evidence that Ada's sister, Emily Alice, lived on the Isle of Man. I have been unable to confirm this, but with the belief of my mother, Ada's youngest daughter, and my sister, her granddaughter, Ada arrived in Canada from the Isle of Man. It is a strong possibility that she traveled to and lived for a number of years on the Isle of Man. She could have boarded the SS Parisian in Portsmouth after coming home for a final visit with her parents, or boarded in Londonderry, Ireland.

Ada told my sister, Ethel Ada Brooks nee Wadds that she had two suitors when she chose Robert Henry "Bob" Brett. He was a 30-year-old, big, rough, Irish railroad brakeman living in a boarding house down by the tracks in Vancouver. Ada told a grandson that she had read an article in the newspaper about the Brett brothers who had struck it rich in the Cariboo Gold fields and had sold up and were in town. [true] So when she found Robert Henry "Bob" Brett, she thought he was one of the Brett brothers who had struck it rich. He wasn't but he did have a 125 acre homestead up the Fraser River.

Ada and Robert Henry "Bob" Brett were married 16 August 1888. His best man, Jackson Abray was the fourth Vancouver City policeman hired by the city who became a famous Hotelier in the Cariboo Gold country. Her witness was Mary Margaret McFarlane.

After the marriage they moved to 208 Oppenheimer Street, Vancouver, where they remained while he continued to work as a Brakeman for the Canadian Pacific Railway and probably

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worked on the homestead as well. The original small log cabin was not suitable for a wife and child which was quickly expected. By the time of the 1891 census, they were living on the homestead in a one story, four room frame home.

Their first child, Constance Ida Brett was born in Vancouver 11 June 1889. Husband Robert Henry "Bob" Brett is recorded on the Birth Registration as living on the homestead at Hatzic Island.

30 August 1880: Constance is baptized in the Anglican Church on the Fraser River Indian Mission near Mission, BC. This is probably the closest church to their homestead at Hatzic Island. This is evidence that they have moved onto the Hatzic homestead.

23 May 1891: Census listed Robert, Ada and two-year-old Constance Brett.

27 June 1891: son Allen Garrett Brett was born. No Birth Registration or Birth Certificate can be found for Allen. The only record is his Death Registration when he passed away 24 December 1898. He was remembered as a "sickly" child.

31 October 1892: Crown Grant for the homestead land is granted. They now own the land which is promptly mortgaged for \$600.00.

9 January 1893: Son Arthur Harold is born on the homestead on Hatzic Island. Again, no Birth Registration or Certificate at the time of birth. On 30 August 1924, Ada submits a Birth Registration form for the birth of Arthur Harold Brett recording the attending doctor as Dr. Bodington. It is noted in the "Local News" section of the Mission newspaper of 5 August 1893 that the Brett family has moved into town from Hatzic. Why the relocation? Possibilities include: son Allen's health issues, the 1893 economic crash which had a devastating effect on agriculture, the four room house at Hatzic homestead now too small for the growing family, or did husband Robert Brett find part-time work back with the CPR? Husband Robert is still recorded as a farmer in Hatzic in the 1893 Henderson's Directory. Ada and husband Robert, as well as brother Thomas A. Brett are listed in the Mission City newspaper as members of the "Order of Good Templars," an International organization to reduce harm from drugs and alcohol.

The family remains in either Mission or the homestead from 1890 until 1896, although during this entire period, husband Robert is listed as living on the homestead in the BC directories of the day. They receive the land patent [ownership] in 1892; sixty fruit trees and gardens are planted, a four-room wood frame single story house, stables, fencing and a hen house are built. They suffered through the economic downturn in 1893 and the devastating floods of 1894. They took out a farm loan of \$600.00 in 1892 requiring full repayment in 1898 with two semi-annual payments of \$35.00. They were able to keep up the payments through January 1895 but had no revenue prospects or funds to make the June 1895 and 1 January 1896 payments.

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The Hatzic Homestead was comprised of 125 acres of meadow land and the south end of Hatzic Island on the north bank of the Fraser River east of Mission, British Columbia. There was no road access. The Transcontinental railway tracks ran through their homestead and there was probably initially a pack trail to the telegraph station at Hatzic a mile west along the tracks. The community of Mission was further west. The daily river steamers could land cargo stock or people onto the homestead riverbank and they, in time, probably had a horse and wagon. In the early years they had a yoke of oxen for clearing and working the land. The homestead was remote with a few neighbors to the west.

1896: The evidence that this is the year the family leaves the Hatzic Homestead is in the 1897 British Columbia Henderson Directory for Nakusp, BC recording that husband Robert Henry "Bob" Brett is a railway brakeman in Nakusp and his 28 April 1896 application in New Denver, BC, [New Denver is a short train and steamer ride from Nakusp and on the route to Slocan City] for a Free Miners license. He notes on his application and mineral claims that his residence is Slocan City, BC. By June of 1896 he had staked four claims on Lemon Creek south of Slocan City. It is also likely that wife Ada Harriet, daughter Constance Ida, sons Allen Garrett and Arthur Harold arrived in the Slocan Valley setting up a home during the summer of 1896 on Brandon Street, Slocan City so that the three children could enter school in September 1896.

In 1896, the CPR Railway Company bought out the Columbia & Kootenay Navigation Co. including seven steamboats and 10 barges working on the Slocan, Arrow Lakes and Columbia River. The newly constructed railway from Revelstoke to Arrow Head on the Upper Arrow Lake has been completed. The CPR now had complete control of transportation in the central Kootenay region including the Nakusp to Slocan Lake line at Roseberry. Nakusp became the transportation hub of the Kootenay country. Gold and silver ore came from Sandon by rail to Nakusp then via steamers down the Columbia River to the smelter in Trail. Steamers were built in the shipyard at Nakusp. The Genelle saw mill in Nakusp was a major producer of lumber for the region. The CPR needed experienced railway workers which explains why Robert Henry "Bob" Brett was able to find employment in Nakusp with the CPR Railroad. The family was in a difficult financial situation with no revenue from the homestead, no money to pay the mortgage and Ada and the three children to support. The population of Nakusp in 1897 through 1898 reflected an extreme male community. There was no accommodation for Ada and the three children. Husband Robert Henry "Bob" Brett probably boarded in one of the three hotels, the Grand, Leland or the Nakusp House when in Nakusp. In 1897 he became a charter member of the just formed Nakusp branch of the Independent Order of Foresters. All male of course.

Ada and children Constance Ida, Allen Garrett and Arthur Harold Brett lived in Slocan City. Travel between Nakusp and Slocan would be free for Robert and family members as he was an employee of the CPR. The population in Slocan City was around 800, schools existed and some health care from Nelson existed via the newly opened South Slocan to Slocan City line, which was operational. Children Constance and Allen were enrolled in the Slocan School with grades

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published regularly in the Slocan Drill newspaper. Ada and the children remained in Slocan City until about 1900.

Ada's brother-in-law Charles Fredrick Brett, younger brother of her husband, boarded with Ada and the children in Slocan City. He had a barber shop there for a few years beginning in 1898 and was an accomplished athlete and musician. Some time prior to 1902 when the Slocan tax rolls were first published, Ada and brother-in-law Charlie jointly purchased a building lot in Slocan City. In 1904 it reverts to the City for taxes.

1897: A formal family photograph of the three Brett children, Constance, Allen and Arthur was taken in Alliston, Ontario. Son Arthur Harold writes that the photo was taken on a family trip that Robert Henry "Bob" Brett, wife Ada and children had taken to visit his parents Richard and Sarah Brett. This trip to the Brett family home in Alliston, Ontario is also confirmation that he is a full time CPR employee entitled to a family rail pass. He would never have been able to afford this family trip after abandoning the homestead and only prospecting without a CPR rail pass. The CPR railway line between Slocan Junction [South Slocan] and Slocan City is officially opened 6 December 1897. Rail travel is now available between Slocan City and Nelson, BC and beyond to Spokane, Washington via the Spokane Falls & Northern or as it was known locally, Nelson & Fort Shepard railway.

4 June 1898: Brother-in-law Charlie advertised his Slocan City Pioneer Shaving Parlour in the Slocan Drill newspaper but later this year, for a short period of time, he moves to Brooklyn, BC [a CPR railway construction supply centre that sprang up on the western side of the lower Arrow lakes to support railway construction between the Arrow Lakes and Christina Lake] working as a barber. 5 October 1898, Charlie was on a Coroners Jury in Brooklyn reviewing the death of a worker blasting on the CPR right of way.

24 December 1898: Ada's son Allen Garrett Brett passes away. He and sister Constance and brother Arthur Harold were all enrolled in school, but he was not doing well physically that fall. Valvular Disease of the Heart is recorded as the cause of death. Allen was buried in the Slocan City cemetery two days later on Monday, December 26. Daughter Dorothy Grace was told that a white dove flew from the roof of their home when he died.

1900: Husband Robert Henry "Bob" Brett and brother-in-law Charlie Fredrick Brett build a new home on land leased from the CPR on the Nakusp waterfront. Ada and children Constance Ida and Arthur Harold move to Nakusp with Robert's brother Charles boarding with them. Husband Robert Henry is now a Freight Conductor working on the Nakusp to Sandon, BC run. Charlie is a Brakeman. Nakusp now had more families living in the community, the Henderson's Directory estimates a population at 300. Houses were being built, churches and schools were functioning. This home, on land leased from the CPR railway company, could only be sold to another CPR employee. We do not know exactly when it was sold and who received payment. One hopes that Ada received her husband's share if both brothers were the owners of the

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lease. On 20 October 1909, Ada and brother-in-law Charlie jointly purchase a home in Nelson at 918 Silica Street.

20 February 1901: Daughter Dorothy Grace is born. A mid wife is initially involved but according to her daughter, the birth was complicated and Dr. Brouse was called to Nakusp to deal with the issues. Ada suffered from the after effects for years afterwards. The 1901 census records Ada, Constance, Arthur Harold, Dorothy Grace, Robert Henry "Bob" Brett and brother-in-law Charlie Brett, living in the home.

1901 to 1906: Ada and the three children live in Nakusp. Husband Robert leaves for a new Conductor position with the Great Northern railway in Saskatchewan on 11 March 1904 as recorded in the 17 March Slocan Drill Newspaper. It appears that his younger brother, Charles Fredrick Brett, remains in Nakusp boarding with Ada and the three children. Constance Ida and Arthur Harold attend school; Dorothy Grace is too young. At the end of the 1904 school year Constance Ida took her three-year-old sister, Dorothy Grace, to school so that she would be included in the year end class photo. This photo survived and we can see her squished into the front row just in front of her sister. A family story is that Arthur Harold was having significant difficulty in school, so he was taken out of school. Doctor Brouse's advice was to let him go wild for a school year. The year is unknown, but he is in school photographs in 1904 and 1906 but not 1905. He liked to fish and one day, while fishing, a serious storm blew in and he disappeared. Search parties were sent out. They found his rowboat beached but no sign of him. He was discovered walking into town soaking wet carrying his fishing rod and fish. My mother, Dorothy Grace, had a collie dog who was very protective of her. When the family went to the beach, her dog would grab her bathing dress when she went into the water and drag her back to shore.

Ada and daughter Constance are recorded in the 20 September 1905 Daily News of Nelson, BC newspaper arriving and staying in Nelson's Hume Hotel and again on 6 January 1906 they are recorded as staying at the Grand Hotel. There is a Nelson newspaper school article referencing daughter Constance's school exams in Nelson in 1906 and a December 1905 Nakusp newspaper article recording that Constance was home for the holidays which coupled with her absence in the 1906 end of term Nakusp School picture, suggests that she boarded in Nelson and attended a school there for the 1905-1906 school term. It is understandable that Ada would accompany 15 and 16-year-old Constance for the trip to and from Nelson which included two different railways and a lake steamer down Slocan Lake.

It is obvious that Ada's marriage to husband Robert Henry "Bob" Brett ended with his departure for Saskatchewan. There are no divorce records. Census reports record her as married and in BC City Directories she has self identified herself as married and once as a widow. The two oldest children, Constance and Arthur hated their father decades later and never reconciled with him. The youngest daughter, Dorothy Grace, did reconnect with her father. There is a possibility that

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Ada, Constance & Dorothy's European 1913 four-month trip was on Robert's railway pass or more likely on brother-in-law, Charles Fredrick Brett's, CPR railway pass.

During the years that Robert Henry "Bob" Brett lived in Slocan City and Nakusp he prospected for gold and silver and claimed, owned and developed mineral claims. This mining enterprise was possible because of the "Spare Board" process of assigning railway shifts. It would be easy to skip a shift or to schedule one's time on or off.

Local newspapers like the two Sandon newspapers, Sandon Mining Review and Sandon Paystreak, the Slocan Drill and the Nelson Daily Canadian provide a glimpse into the lives of the Brett family.

For example: 21 May 1901, Ada and Bob Brett in in Midway, BC boarding with Mrs. A. F. McCully, returning to Nakusp 27 May. 18 February 1902, the 27 Nakusp CPR employees fund and organize an Invitational Ball. 12 July 1902, Ada and Bob are staying at the Reco Hotel, Sandon. 2 August 1902, Robert "Bob" Brett falls and smashes his finger when coupling ore cars in Sandon. 16 August 1902, Bob Brett is recorded as assisting the passengers involved in the train wreck south of Nakusp. 27 December 1902, Constance Brett is staying at the Reco Hotel in Sandon. Charlie Brett and niece Constance are staying at the Reco Hotel in Sandon Saturday, 31 January and Saturday, 7 March 1903. The dates suggest that Uncle Charlie is taking Constance to the Opera.

21 March 1903, the Sandon newspaper notes that Conductor Bob Brett is on the coast for a two-week vacation, and on 20 June 1903, he is again on vacation. On 10 July 1903, the Slocan Drill announces that Constance Brett has passed her exams with a score of 572. On 3 September 1903, husband Bob Brett is in a train wreck but unhurt between Sandon and Three Forks. Charlie Brett competes in every Dominion Day sports event from 1898 through 1907 as recorded in various newspapers. He competes in sprints, foot races, broad jump, hose reel races and plays soccer. His obituary notes that in later life, he trained young sports people.

1906: Nakusp was a small frontier community with limited school opportunities and health service as compared to Nelson. Son Arthur Harold had to miss a grade and year, daughter Constance left town for high school in Nelson in September 1905 and daughter Dorothy Grace would enter school in the fall of 1907. Ada had lingering health issues from Dorothy Grace's birth. It makes sense that she moved to Nelson, BC. Brother-in-law, Charles Fredrick Brett, had already transferred to Nelson with the railroad as evidenced by a 20 May 1906 newspaper article noting that he had joined a Nelson social club and in a 4 July 1906, newspaper recording Charlie scoring a soccer goal for the Nelson Churchman soccer team. The Nelson newspaper "The Daily Canadian" records that Mrs. and Miss Brett arrive in Nelson and are staying at the Queens Hotel on 7 August 1906. They are in Nelson to find a place to live for 17-year-old Constance and 13-year-old Arthur Harold Brett and enrolling both in high school. It is not known when all the family settled in Nelson, but we do know that Charles boarded with them

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until his marriage to May Richardson in 1918. Ada could have rented a home in Nelson at any time after enrolling Constance and Arthur in September 1906. Constance and Arthur could be living or boarding with Uncle Charlie Brett with Ada and daughter Dorothy Grace remaining in Nakusp until their home sells. Subsequently, Ada and Charlie jointly purchase a large home at 918 Silica Street on 20 October 1909 for \$1,750.00. The family had to leave Dorothy Grace's beloved collie dog in Nakusp. Three weeks later the collie appeared in Nelson. Brother-in-law, Charlie Brett, spun the story to my mum that the dog had made its own way to Nelson from Nakusp. The truth is more likely that he, being a CPR railway conductor, made arrangements for the dog to be delivered to Nelson. The trip would require a train from Nakusp to Roseberry on Slocan Lake, a steamer from Roseberry to Slocan City, and then another train to Nelson. The dog story also confirms that Charlie and Ada both end up in Nelson sometime between the spring of 1906 and the summer of 1907.

1907: Daughter Dorothy Grace enters grade one at a Catholic primary school in Nelson which had just opened 4 September 1906. Her hair had never been cut and was very long. The nuns objected to her waist long hair and cut it off. She hated nuns well into her 60's. She was then put into the public school system to finish grade one [division 11 in those days] then later in a 1910 school class photograph we see her in what appears to be a private school because she and all the children are wearing uniforms. By 1910 her hair had grown out to shoulder length. Another newspaper article records Charles F. Brett, Conductor, being sent to a railway conference in Georgia then, before returning, spending time with his parents in Alliston, Ontario. Early in the years when the family lived in Nelson, Dorothy Grace Brett started taking dance lessons. Her teacher quickly realized that she had talent and encouraged her to pursue a dance career. This teacher was excellent and able to train Dorothy Grace to a level that she was able to make dance a lifelong career. She went on to dance in Vancouver, Tacoma Washington, Toronto and New York and later taught dancing wherever she lived including North Battleford Saskatchewan, Rossland, Trail and Nelson, BC. According to a newspaper announcement daughter Constance Ida is writing provincial intermediate school exams 27 June and 19 July 1907. She is one of a number of young ladies helping at St Andrews Anglican church Altar Guild spring tea. 11 October 1907 son Arthur Harold Brett is listed as winning at broad jump during a school sports event. It is clear that the family including brother-in-law Charlie are living in Nelson in 1907, but there is not clear evidence where they were living from the fall of 1906 to the fall of 1909.

1906 to 1909: The children and Uncle Charlie Brett are repeatedly mentioned in newspaper articles during this time period participating in school and sports events. See attached addendum.

1911 Census: On his Saskatchewan homestead, Robert Henry "Bob" Brett records a new wife, Edith, similar age, birth country and emigration year as Ada including his children, Constance, Harold and Dorothy. On his 1912 homestead Annual report, he records his home as 12 feet by 12 feet. In Nelson, Ada records Robert Henry "Bob" Brett, herself, Constance, Arthur and Grace

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living at 918 Silica Street, Nelson. We know that brother-in-law Charles Fredrick is living with the family but is not listed by name. Constance's occupation is listed as "At home", Arthur's occupation is "Bookkeeper" at age eighteen. Husband Robert Henry Brett is listed with wages of \$1,800 per annum which I assume is in reality brother-in-law, Charles Fredrick Brett's wages. Family sources advise that he boarded with the family from about 1898 to 1918 and helped them financially. Husband Robert Henry "Bob" Brett's inaccurate recording of a new wife and his children likely has to do with the Homestead regulations that require homestead applicants to be a family unit.

Charlie Brett is listed in the 1911 census living with two other CPR railway workers four blocks away from 918 Silica Street in a very small house at 604 Josephine Street, Nelson.

1913: Son Arthur Harold remains in Nelson working as a Realtor while mum Ada takes Constance Ida and Dorothy Grace on a four-month trip back to her birthplace on the Isle of Wight. In addition to visiting siblings and at least one niece, they tour England, Scotland, Ireland and France. She ostensibly is looking for a music school to send son Arthur Harold to. He plays violin in his six-piece orchestra.

Photos exist which were taken on the Isle of Wight, Scotland, Paris, France and in Ireland at the Giants Causeway and Kilarney. Dorothy Grace spoke of a river trip in Ireland which was advertised as a trip through rapids which, were in her opinion, mere ripples, nothing compared to the rapids on the Kootenay, Slocan and Columbia rivers of her home province of BC. They traveled on a railway pass which would cover all travel and I assume some accommodation. Whose pass is unknown but probably her brother-in-law, Charlie Fredrick Brett, as husband's Great Northern railway may not have had family pass privileges on the CPR system at this time.

1914 1915: The Henderson's BC Directory has everyone living at 918 Silica Street in Nelson; Ada, Constance, Arthur Harold [Secretary Treasurer Western Provinces Co-Realty Co] and Charlie F. Brett, Conductor. Dorothy Grace would be in the home but too young to be recorded in 1914 but does appear in 1915. Also, in the 1915 Directory Arthur Harold Brett is listed as one-half owner, with partner H. Y. Anderson of both the Gem and Starland Theaters. There is a bit of a mystery with daughter Constance Ida Brett. She is recorded as living in Nelson in the Directories of 1914 and 1915. Family history has her having met and become engaged to Monro Maurice Gibson prior to his being shipped overseas to England as a soldier. Constance is recorded 5 December 1914 arriving in Revelstoke, BC from Nelson and catching the train to Toronto. Six weeks later Monro enlisted 20 January 1915 in Toronto, Ontario and by 4 May 1915 he is landing in France with the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

She chose to wait until his return before marrying him which she did. She appears to reside at #17 McRay Street, Niagara Falls, Ontario waiting for his return. There is no record of her returning to live with her mother Ada Brett in Nelson, BC although that is possible. He was a graduate Civil Engineer. He enlisted as a trooper and was promoted to Lieutenant while serving in France. He returned to England in 1916 for medical care, found unfit for future combat and

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was sent home to Canada on medical leave. Constance and Monro married 24 October 1916 in York, [Toronto] while apparently living in Niagara Falls, Ontario. He was under military medical care at the time of their marriage. They lived in the Toronto area until he was demobilized in 1919. There is no evidence of where they met other than a photograph of both Constance and Monro in Nelson taken in the fall of 1914. Monro was born, raised and attended university in Toronto and Nelson is most likely where they met as the mining and smelting industry was booming. As a Civil Engineer, he could readily find employment in BC. Sister Dorothy Grace, my mum, often spoke of the many beaux that courted Constance when they all lived in Nelson. Mum recounts that when the suitors came calling, mum would hide behind the chesterfield and listen in. Another standard dating activity would be going rowing in an evening. Dorothy Grace was annoyed that her older brother Arthur Harold Brett insisted that she had to be back to the wharf by 9:00 pm, dusk, when out on the lake on a date while Constance was allowed to stay out after dark.

17 April 1915: Son Arthur Harold with his 6-piece orchestra accompanies 14-year-old sister Dorothy Grace Brett in a dance routine "Hunting Dance" at the "Gem Theater" in Nelson to raise funds for The Canadian Red Cross Society.

1916, 1917, 1918: There are no available Directories for Nelson for 1916 but the 1918 Directory lists Arthur Harold Brett as the manager of the Starland Theater. Ada, Arthur Harold and Grace Brett are still together during these three years. The family stories are that Arthur Harold had a 6-piece orchestra for several years and in addition to playing for dances and events they played music in the theater for silent movies.

1918: Brother-in-law, Charles Fredrick Brett, married widow May Halliday 17 December 1918. Ada's son Arthur Harold moves to Vancouver where there were better economic opportunities living in the Marshall Rooms, 647 Seymour Ave. Ada continues residing in Nelson through 1919 according to the Nelson Phone Book

27 May 1918: Dorothy Margaret "Peggy" Gibson is born to daughter Constance Ida in Toronto. She is the first grandchild. After Ada's experience with Dorothy Grace's birth it is likely that she was in attendance for the birth of her first grand child and the subsequent grand children.

19 February 1919: Daughter Dorothy Grace Brett is visiting or living with her father Robert Henry "Bob" Brett in North Battleford, SK.

1920: Ada is recorded as living in Nelson in the 1920 Directory. 5 October 1920, she and brother-in-law Charlie Brett sell the 918 Silica Street home in Nelson and Ada moves to Vancouver to live with her son Arthur Harold Brett.

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1920 – 1927: Late 1920 or early 1921, Ada, son Arthur Harold & Dorothy Grace Brett rent a residence at 753 W 20 Ave Vancouver. Dorothy Grace is in and out of the home thru 2 September 1924 when she marries George Morris “Bill” Wadds of Rossland, BC. She began her dancing career in Nelson and worked in Vancouver, Tacoma Washington, Toronto and New York and visited or lived with her father in Saskatchewan and her sister Constance Ida in Toronto. She traveled back and forth between the west coast, Saskatchewan and Toronto frequently on her father, Robert Henry “Bob” Brett’s, railway pass. Arthur Harold, when living in Vancouver, continually upgraded his employment starting out in 1918 as a Bookkeeper for Burrard Tug and Barge, renting a room at Marshal’s rooming house. In subsequent years he worked for J.V. Ford as a salesman twice, a broker or salesman for Yorkshire Canadian Trust and Welch and Welch.

5 September 1922: Della Viola Morey gives birth to a son out of wedlock, Arthur Brett. He was sired by Arthur Harold Brett. The son was adopted out and named Arthur White.

18 September 1922: Constance Hope Gibson is born to daughter Constance Ida Gibson nee Brett in Toronto. It is likely that Ada is again there to help the family. In this year daughter Dorothy Grace Brett is in Toronto working as a dancer.

March 1923: Ada is either living with son Arthur Harold in Vancouver, BC or in Toronto helping daughter Constance Ida with her two children when on 9 March brother-in-law Charles F Brett’s newborn daughter Marjory Jean Brett dies 6 days after birth. Then, his wife May passes away on 31 March. Dorothy Grace was living with her father Robert Henry Brett in North Battleford, Saskatchewan and was sent to comfort and care for her uncle Charles Fredrick Brett in Rossland, BC. Dorothy Grace opens “Grace Brett Dance Studio” in Rossland and quickly becomes part of the “in crowd.” She and husband to be, George “Bill” Wadds are mentioned almost weekly in the “About Town” column in the Rossland Miner newspaper attending parties and events with other young people. It is obvious from newspaper reports, family stories, photographs, his father’s position as the Post Master and wealth, that George “Bill” Wadds is also part of the Rossland “in crowd.” Reading between the lines of all the party and get together newspaper reports, it is readily apparent when they become serious in the summer of 1924.

2 September 1924: Daughter Dorothy Grace Brett and George Morris “Bill” Wadds elope to Kamloops, BC from Rossland, BC to marry. Ada sends photos of daughter Dorothy Grace on her honeymoon at the 70 Mile Road House, to niece Trilby Clark nee Perfect in England whose relatives return copies to the author almost one hundred years later.

29 September 1924: Son Arthur Harold Brett marries Jessie Grieve Fergusson in Vancouver only twenty-seven days after his youngest sister Dorothy Grace marries. I believe, but have no

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records, that Ada continued to live with son Arthur and wife Jessie. The Henderson's Directory lists Arthur Harold living at 1079 Melville Street Vancouver in 1925.

In 1925 the 753 W 20<sup>th</sup> address has new and different tenants so it is clear that Ada has moved out as well. Dorothy Grace and Constance Ida are married and not living in Vancouver. It is logical that Ada is living with Arthur Harold and Jessie.

1924 - 1928: There is no evidence found as to where Ada was living in this time period but knowing that in Ada's family, members look after each other, it is logical that with the birth of Arthur Harold's first four children that Ada would be living with him and his growing family in Vancouver.

23 April 1925: Constance Bethia "Betty".

10 April 1926: Twins Charles Douglas and John Garrett.

28 January 1928: Jessie Winnifred.

24 August 1928: Ada likely was in Trail, B.C for the birth of daughter Dorothy Grace Wadds nee Brett's first child, Ethel Ada 'Billie' Wadds.

1928 - 1938: There is no direct evidence as to exactly when and where Ada was living except for family photographs which can be dated by the age of Grandchildren.

From direct recollections of grandson, Paul Brett, we know that she lived with son Arthur Harold Brett's family from 1938 until her passing in Winnipeg, Manitoba, 22 September 1950. In the 1930's Ada appears to have lived extensively with eldest daughter, Constance Ida, and husband and children in Corbin, B.C. and Field, B.C. Family photographs document her living with both daughters at different times in 1930, 1932, 1937 and 1942. Her granddaughter, Ethel Ada 'Billie' Wadds recalls Ada taking her on more than one visit to various Brett relatives in BC which suggests that Ada was staying with her daughter Dorothy Grace more than once in the 1930s.

1929: Husband Robert Henry "Bob" Brett retires from his Freight Conductor position with the Canadian National Railway in North Battleford, Saskatchewan and returns to the Arrow Lakes. He resides in Burton, BC and resumes prospecting.

22 April 1930: Grand son Harold Jeffery Brett is born in Medicine Hat, Alberta to Jessie and Arthur H Brett.

14 October 1933: Grandson Conrad Paul Brett is born in Regina, Saskatchewan to Jessie and Arthur H Brett.

1935? Daughter, Dorothy Grace Wadds nee Brett, organizes a Brett family reunion at Shields on the Lower Arrow Lakes, water access only. To the consternation of everybody, she invites

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both her mother, Ada, and father, Robert Henry “Bob” Brett, who have been estranged since 1904. They both attended and the reunion went well. Daughter Constance and family and brother-in-law, Charles F. Brett, were also in attendance.

5 March 1935: Brian Dudley Brett is born in Winnipeg, Manitoba to Jessie and Arthur H Brett.

28 September 1938: Husband Robert Henry “Bob” Brett passes away in the Nakusp BC Hospital from internal injuries received while prospecting in the Cariboo country. He was buried in the Burton community cemetery which is now under water due to the construction of the Hugh Keenleyside Dam. Ada returns to live with eldest son Arthur Harold Brett and family in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

10 April 1940: Morris Esling Wadds is born in Trail, BC to George Morris “Bill” Wadds and Dorothy Grace Wadds nee Brett.

22 September 1950: Ada Harriett Brett nee Garrett, passed away in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

Grandson Conrad Paul Brett, son of Arthur Harold Brett who lived with Ada for seventeen years submits the following:

Ada, explorer, adventuress, pioneer, mother of four, grandmother and great grandmother, lived a demonstrably full, exciting, and productive life. She left her home seeking a meaningful and a desirable future; first, it is thought, as a young girl to act as a domestic or nanny with relatives on the Isle of Man. Then as a single, eighteen-year-old girl on a Liverpool ocean liner bound for a different life altogether, across an ocean and a continent by one of the first trains to cross the newly federated country of Canada. Then to the wilds of British Columbia and the small town of immigrants, Vancouver, BC, which was comprised largely of males, all bent on finding better lives in a new land.

A tribute to Dorothy Grace Wadds nee Brett by her son Morris Esling Wadds

From personal experience, I will describe daughter Dorothy Grace Wadds nee Brett, my mother, raised by Ada. When I was young, I was surprised that mum was “bush wise,” but as an adult and knowing so much more about the family history, I know why. Mum was well schooled by her mum Ada Brett. She knew how to clean fish and game. Her practice was to hang grouse by the neck until it fell off the branch before cooking. She could paddle a canoe, row a boat or run a power boat and was fearless on the water. Her dream was to build a float home in her retirement and live on it on the Arrow Lakes. She got close when she convinced her husband to purchase the CPR tug, “Columbia.” Unfortunately, it sank before they could convert it into a home. She had excellent, long distance eye sight and could readily spot movement in the bush. She taught me how to be aware of my surroundings and be safe. When picking wild berries,

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she would always carry a can with pebbles in the bottom to rattle as she picked or walked so that wildlife heard her coming and would not disturb her.

She learned to ride a horse at an early age and under the tutelage of her Uncle Charlie in Nelson, BC, she became a superb horsewoman and trainer. From her early teens, she helped train his horses and rode them in races around the Kootenay country in southeast BC. For horse races they would dress her like a boy to reduce the likelihood of her being whipped in the face by the other jockeys.

She had a love of reading, art and music. She played the piano and was performing dance routines on the stage at age 14 and was a professional ballet dancer by age 18 who by age 21 was teaching dance wherever she lived. Dancing was not only a passion but a means of survival as a young woman and again in her forties when her marriage broke up. For protection when on the road, she carried long hat pins in either her hat or hair. I can recall them sitting on her dresser when I was a kid.

She had a wicked sense of humour. As a young woman, she was way beyond her time in her outlook and behavior. She enjoyed partying, drinking and smoking. She was out of her home by eighteen, living in Toronto and earning her living as a chorus girl. With her father's railway pass, she frequently traveled back and forth from Vancouver to Toronto to New York. She eloped from Rossland, BC to Kamloops to marry her boyfriend then honeymooned at the Cariboo road 70 Mile Road House. The roadhouse was a log building built for respite for those traveling on the only wagon road accessing the north.

I can attest to her male child upbringing philosophy which was, little boys had to be "toughened up". She probably developed this attitude watching her mum Ada, dealing with her brother Arthur Harold Brett.

At a time when there were no veterinarians, she was the cat doctor, the person who was called upon to assist cats in labour or to deal with pet injuries. I can recall ladies coming to the door asking to have their fortunes told. Mum would put on the kettle for tea and bring out the cards. She could read palms, tea leaves or the cards, just what ever the person was most comfortable with. She and I have ESP, not always but certainly we have experienced ESP in stressful and difficult situations. We both took an ESP test sponsored by the "Star Weekly" in the 1950s. We failed miserably. She was furious! Superstitions ruled her life, left sock and shoe on first, if a sweater was put on backwards it cannot be removed are two that I recall. Her best friend was clairvoyant, a Hungarian princess who spoke very little English yet they could sit for hours visiting. When this lady looked you in the eye, you knew she was reading your mind.

Mum strongly believed in education. She took her divorce settlement and sent my sister Ethel Ada Brooks nee Wadds through university while she and I lived well below the poverty line in a two room basement apartment on her dance lesson earnings. When I was single she pestered me to find a woman who loved cats, marry her and produce a grandson. Ada raised her children to enjoy life, work hard and persevere. I must note that son Arthur Harold was also "bush wise". He was a hunter of some renown, an athlete, a musician and an excellent white-water canoeist, competitive rower and most importantly, a fantastic father and a mentor to myself and my sister.

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Ada was a beautiful, strong, intelligent, well read and musical woman with a sense of humour. Attributes that she passed onto her children and grandchildren. My grand children, Ada's Great Great Grand children are both athletes, both musical with one at age 13, an exceptional fiddler. She and her three children appear to have been abandoned by her husband in the small, remote community of Nakusp, BC when he left for a position on the Canadian Northern railway in Saskatchewan. There was no road access to the rest of BC. She was able to survive and raise three successful children, instilling in them values of giving back to the community, personal responsibility, respect to all and even the importance of good manners at the dinner table. She remained close and supportive of her children until the day she passed. She kept in contact with her sisters in England and was able to visit some of them in England in 1913. Oddly, both daughter Dorothy Grace and son Arthur Harold were known by their middle names, Grace and Harold. Both Ada and her daughter Dorothy Grace Wadds nee Brett displayed nude portraits, Ada, had a semi nude portrait in her bed room in Winnipeg and Dorothy Grace had a series of tasteful nude portraits of herself in her home.

Ada had four children (Allen passed at age seven in Slocan City 4 December 1898), twenty-three grandchildren, sixty-three great grandchildren and fifty-four great great grandchildren.

Prepared by:

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