

## COPLAND, Thomas, Mary and Jessie



Thomas Copland was born in Scotland in 1842. Public records are somewhat contradictory about his early years. A lengthy biography at the time of his death in 1906, published in *The Phoenix*, Saskatoon's newspaper, stated that he came to Canada from Kirkcudbright, Scotland at the age of 26. A biography printed in *History of the Province of Saskatchewan, Vol. 2*, published in 1913, states that he was born in Kudgunzeon, Scotland, and came to Canada at the age of 19.

What isn't in conflict is that he was trained as a chemist and druggist, worked in Hamilton, Ontario, where he and his wife had three to five children (depending on which source is used) and that all the children but one died of diphtheria.

Sometime in the 1880s, Thomas Copland became a stockholder in, and a driving force of, the Temperance Colonization Company. He, his wife Mary, and surviving daughter Jessie were among the first settlers in Saskatoon, and in 1890, he was appointed Resident Agent of the Temperance Colony in Saskatoon. He also served as interpreter and home guard during the Northwest Rebellion.

The Coplands farmed their original homestead (where the University of Saskatchewan is now located) until approximately 1900.

Mr. Copland was also active in real estate and insurance sales. He was the first Justice of the Peace for the new colony, as well as the first Secretary of the School Board and the first President of the Agricultural Society.

Although he lost a bid for the position of Mayor in 1904, he was elected to the Town Council for Ward 2, and was Chair of the Finance Committee. He was active on the Board of Trade, the Board of Managers of Knox Church and President of the St. Andrew's Society. He also served on the Hospital Board and was a member of the Imperial Order of Oddfellows.

Thomas Copland died around midnight on Thursday, July 19, 1906, after suffering for only a short time from Bright's Disease. His funeral was said to have been the largest known in the city at the time. He was survived by his wife, Mary.

The inscription on the monument that he shares with his wife says:

“Thomas Copland  
Born Mar. 17, 1842  
Died July 19, 1906  
"Blessed are the dead  
Which die in the Lord."

Mary Elizabeth Randall was born in Hamilton, Ontario on February 26th, 1842. It was there that she met and married Thomas Copland.

During the Northwest Rebellion, the Coplands helped to take care of wounded soldiers, and it is speculated that their last child, Jessie, contracted the illness that killed her from one of the wounded soldiers.

Mrs. Copland was a leader in the community and an active and faithful member of Knox Church, who gave greatly in many charitable ways, even more so after the death of her husband.



Mary Copland died on October 15, 1914. A lengthy biography, published in the October 16, 1914 edition of the *Saskatoon Phoenix*, under the heading “*CITIZENS LOSE A BENEFACTOR AND A FRIEND*” begins:

*"By the passing of Mrs. Thomas Copland at her residence on Eastlake Avenue at an early hour yesterday morning, Saskatoon lost another member of that hardy band of pioneers who made their home here more than 30 years ago. In the 31 years since she came to the west she had exerted a great influence in the community, and the news of her death will bring to many minds a sense of personal loss."*

Mrs. Copland's inscription on the monument says:

“Mary Elizabeth  
Relic of the Late Thomas Copland  
Born Feb 26th 1842  
Died Oct 15th 1914  
At Rest”



Jessie Copland died of diphtheria at approximately five years of age in 1885, and was buried in the Nutana Cemetery. The grave was moved to Woodlawn Cemetery in 1907, next to her parents' grave, with a stone marker that simply says, "JESSIE", with carved ivy decorating it. The base that the stone is mounted on says, "COPLAND".