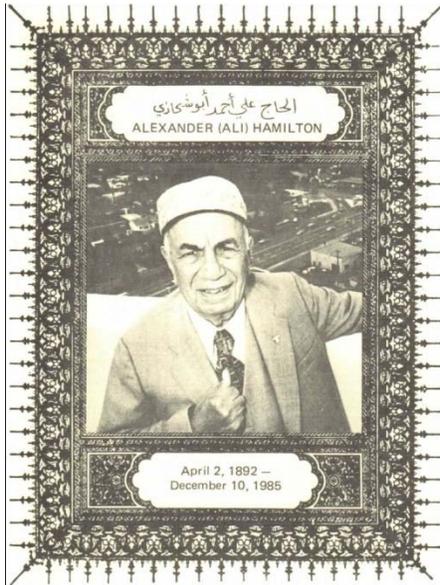


Biography of Alex Hamilton



Ali Ahmed Abouchadi, known as Alexander Hamilton, was born April 2, 1892 in Lala, Lebanon .

In 1905 he travelled to Canada with his Uncle Hussein Abouchadi. After a few days in Montreal they took a train to Winnipeg where Alex began to apply his entrepreneurial skills peddling fans at .10 each, acquiring a profit of .05 each.

Hearing "Young Man, Go West" Alex and his uncle moved to Edmonton in 1905, peddling dry goods from a suitcase.

Business was good and in 1906 Alex settled in Lac La Biche, peddling and trading furs with the Indians. These trips back and forth were made with a horse and buckboard buggy. After his uncle returned to Lebanon, Alex began operating a general store in the winter months to support the furtraders.

At age 17 he moved to Edam, Saskatchewan to homestead and for business reasons changed his name to Alexander Hamilton. After years of hard work he sold the homestead in 1912 and moved back to Lac La Biche resuming his trade with the Indians. A great demand for silver foxes encouraged breeding until WW I when money became scarce and the market collapsed.

From 1912 – 1938 Alex employed many people while operating a saw mill, gas station, agent for Ford Motor Co. and International Harvester. During this time he also built a floating store, travelling from Fort Mc Murray to the Arctic Ocean to sell his merchandise on the Mackenzie River. HBC didn't like the competition created by his floating store and soon the Government shut down his operation.

In 1936 he received the contract from the Government to build the break water and also began breeding mink and foxes which developed into a large industry.

Business was going extremely well and he built a new department store, which was later sold to HBC in 1946. News of Alex's success traveled back to Lala, encouraging many families to move to Canada, making Lac La Biche home.

During his lifetime Alex and his wife Josie travelled extensively around the world, including 5 trips to his homeland and 2 pilgrimages to Mecca.

Alex Hamilton had a Life Membership in the "Northern Alberta Pioneers" and the "Oldtimers Association". He was proud of his Arab background as well as taking pride in being Canadian, stating, "I've been around the world twice and I'm still proud of the fact that I am a Canadian".

Alex Hamilton passed away in Edmonton on December 10, 1985. He was an inspiration to all who came in contact with him.