

Biography of Frank Mohamed Nashim

Mohamed Ahmed Najmeddine (Mohamed Frank Nashim) was born in Lala, Lebanon in the Bekaa Valley during the late 1800s or early 1900s. He came from a family of 3 brothers and 2 sisters. At the age of 18 he fled Lebanon and went to Argentina with his 2 brothers, Ali and Hussein. He then made the long journey through the United States to Halifax, Nova Scotia. Upon arriving in Canada, Canada Immigration gave him his Canadian name, which was Mohamed Frank Nashim. His brother, Charlie, who had immigrated to Canada previously was given Nashman as a surname.

Mohamed Frank Nashim worked for farmers in Nova Scotia. He eventually made his way to Fort St. John, BC where he and a friend ran a general store. Shortly thereafter he purchased land in Fort St. John.

Around 1926 Charlie contacted Frank to come to look after his farm near Tofield, AB, as Charlie planned to go back to Lala to find wives for himself and Frank. Charlie returned with a new bride and a 3 month old son, Willie. However, he was unsuccessful in bringing a wife for Frank.

After leaving the farm in Tofield Frank became a travelling salesman, carrying his goods on his back. Once he had made enough money he purchased a horse and buggy and continued to travel and sell his goods out of the buggy. He eventually travelled to Wabasca where he opened a general store and pool hall. Frank soon left Wabasca due to the unfavorable conditions. He then journeyed southeast to Lac La Biche and found employment on a mink ranch, working for Alex Hamilton. Eventually, Frank partnered with Alex in purchasing furs in the North and the Arctic. Once Frank had earned enough money he started his own mink ranch and became very successful. Excelling at mink ranching, he won the Silver Cup and other rewards for several years for producing high quality pelts in Alberta.

Through his hard work and efforts, Frank and two other gentlemen were able to purchase a township of land on Lac La Biche Lake. Eventually this township was subdivided and sold. During this time, being a well established man, he began another chapter of his life. He married Lottie and raised four children, Robert, Mae (Pears), Frank Jr., and Marie (Wychope). To date 17 grandchildren and 21 great grandchildren. Being a very family-oriented man, he passed down the homestead to Frank Jr. and another parcel of land to Robert.

Frank was an exceptionally compassionate and generous man. He was always willing to help his family and his peers and all of the community. He regularly sent money back to his sister in Lala, who was raising ten children. He supplied the community with various items, such as a parcel of land to Fish and Wildlife in order for them to build a freezer for the other mink ranchers use. Being of the Muslim faith Frank

frequently sent money to Edmonton to help construct a mosque as there was no mosque in Lac La Biche at that time.

Mohamed Frank Nashim passed away on August 12, 1962 in Lac La Biche. Frank's remaining family continued to operate the mink ranch for a short time after which all the mink were sold.