



**Jasper-Yellowhead  
Museum & Archives**

## Hindle Update

Some of you may recall a letter that was published in three parts a few months ago. It was a letter written by a Mr. Fred Hindle, a Grand Trunk Pacific Railway survey engineer, to Constance Peterson, the Jasper Yellowhead Historical

Society's historian and president. Shortly after the letter was published, Mr. Bob Baxter came to visit me at the archives. He handed me three small books that were satiny to the touch. They were three volumes of Robert Service poetry. I taken by the books immediately, solely on the notion that they were portable volumes of Robert Service's poetry, but then Mr. Baxter told me that Mr. Fred Hindle had been a friend of his father's and that Mr. Hindle had given his father the little books and had even taught Mr. Baxter Sr. magic tricks; then, Mr. Baxter opened to the back of the book where previously blank pages to show me page upon page filled with meticulously printed poetry. Could it be the personal verses and longings of a lonely survey engineer? Who had to live along the seemingly endless line of railway camps, constantly in the company of uncouth bachelors, without the soothing presence of the gentler – sex?

Unfortunately, Mr. Hindle typed all his correspondence with Mrs. Peterson, so we were unable to compare the printing, but Mr. Baxter and I were sure that the pristine penmanship was surely the hand of a survey engineer, whose life was dedicated to mathematical accuracy and painstaking precision. We looked at a couple of Hindle's survey photographs already in the archives and the printing on the front seemed to be a match, but we needed more samples to be sure. Mr. Baxter then informed me that he knew a couple in Edson, the Grants, who looked after Mr. and Mrs. Hindle during their old age, as the Hindles had no children. The Grants had inherited the Hindle house as well as their belongings. He would take the books to Edson and see if they had any samples of Hindle's printing to compare.

The Grants were in possession of a small canvas portfolio, which contained over 100 negatives of Hindle's life in various railway camps along the Grand Trunk Pacific line; but most importantly, in the back of the portfolio was an itemized list and description of each negative in the same perfect print as the poetry. The Grants generously sent the negatives back with Mr. Baxter for me to scan at the archives and although many of the negatives have deteriorated beyond use, I thought perhaps the rest of Jasper

would be interested in some that have survived and to catch a unique glimpse of life along the line.

I hope this story will inspire those of you who may hold pieces of Jasper's history to consider donating them to the Jasper Yellowhead Museum and Archives and making it available to researchers world wide and ensuring that it will be preserved for generations to come.