

## Adele Louise Wawruck (Gorchynski) 1909 - 2002



Adele was born to teach. For more than six years this was her vocation, and she taught in rural classrooms. But for all her life, teaching was her avocation and her natural inclination. After the birth of her first child, she returned to teaching in the classroom, but only briefly because the work of being a farm wife and a mother, with a second child three years after the first, demanded another occupation. When the family moved to town in Hubbard, she returned to teaching, but now from her home as a 4H Homecraft Club Leader. For 15 years, a parade of young women from the district learned from Mrs. Wawruck the craft of sewing and the sense of self esteem and dignity that came with the diligent management of a household. In Regina, she again taught, through the Church organization, giving Ukrainian language lessons to children in the parish.

But among family and friends, Adela never stopped being a teacher. For her children, grandchildren, and any others who indicated a spark of curiosity or desire, a lesson was provided at a moments notice. How to write an Easter egg. How to stitch a seam. How to bake a pie. How to start a plant from a slip. She always made time for a patient explanation, a guided practice with words of encouragement, and a celebration of the result.

Adele was a lifelong resident of Saskatchewan, born December 5, 1909 on a farm near Hamton, 25 miles north of Yorkton. She was the eighth of eleven children born to Maria Urbanowski (1874 – 1942) and Joseph Gorchynski (1866 –1943), pioneers from

western Ukraine (1897). She attended Oleskow School, a distance of 4.5 miles from the homestead. Her parents, fluent in Ukrainian and Polish, taught Adele to read and write in both languages.

She attended high school at the Yorkton Collegiate and then trained as a teacher at the Normal School in Regina. Her graduation coincided with the Depression years when there were approximately five teachers for every job opening. Men were favoured for any positions, and salaries were low – school grants were in the \$325 - \$350 range.

Adele obtained her first formal teaching position at the country school of East Wexford, near Burgis, approximately nine miles from her parent's home. In this and other schools she taught grades 1 to 8 and tutored students taking their Grades 9 and 10 via correspondence. Enrolment of 45 students was not uncommon, with a grade consisting of one student in some cases. Adele lived in the teacherages - small houses beside the schools, provided by the school boards. Commuting was unknown and the duties of the teacher included complete caretaking - starting fires in the morning, filling water pails and bringing in a supply of coal, to name a few. Fortunately for Adele there was always an extra pair of hands to help – a student, a nephew or niece, or young neighbour who boarded with the teacher.

Adele's role as a teacher went beyond the classroom. She organized CYMK (Ukrainian Youth) clubs and other extracurricular activities for local groups of young adults. Her students remember her with great fondness and respect. She served as a role model for many, especially young women. Her formal teaching career lasted for approximately six and a half years, and included the schools Ukraina in the Canora area, Chernowetz in the Theodore area, and Forest Nook near Jedburgh.

It was while she was teaching in the Jedburgh area that met Walter Wawruck, her husband of more than 62 years. Upon their marriage on July 21, 1940, Adele and Walter settled on the Wawruck homestead near Hubbard. Five years and two children later, Adele and Walter moved four miles into Hubbard, and established a lumber yard and construction business.

In Hubbard Adele gave birth to two more children, managed the household, and gave to the community. She served on the executive of several Hubbard women's organizations and the local Ukrainian Women's Association; she taught Ukrainian school; and she organized community concerts. She served as a 4-H Homecraft Club leader for over 15 years and for this she received formal recognition from the

province of Saskatchewan. The informal recognition continues – virtually all of the young women in the district spent time in her home – learning how to sew, and cook, and more important, taking up her example as they became young women developing a sense of self esteem and dignity, characteristics that equipped them to confidently take their place as adults and leaders. Today, they remember and credit Adele.

In 1967 Adele and Walter made another move. This time to Regina. Curiosity about the world around them, launched them into many travels: all over North America, Europe, Ukraine and the USSR. Ties with the Hubbard - Ituna community remained strong. Adele and Walter continued to be members of the Holy Ghost Ukrainian Orthodox parish in Ituna, and seldom missed an important church event or celebration in the area.

In Regina, Adele continued with her Ukrainian church and community involvement, again working with children and adults. Through the Descent of the Holy Ghost Church she gave Ukrainian language lessons to parish children. She was a contributor to the best selling Ukrainian Daughters Cookbook prepared by the Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada, Daughters of Ukraine Branch, Regina. She served as Recording Secretary, then as Corresponding Secretary, to the Women's Association over a period of seven years. She has been a life long supporter of many Ukrainian Canadian endeavours: including Mohyla Institute, St. Andrews College, and the Ukrainian Canadian Museum.

Adele, was a beautiful person, inside and out. She was always an optimist, solid in her beliefs and confident in herself, allowing her to participate actively and fully in contemporary society, and

always preparing for the next adventure. In her long life, she was many things: a dedicated teacher, a devoted wife, a fantastic cook, a gardener, a world traveler, a talented seamstress, a community volunteer, a pysanka and embroidery artisan, and a trusted friend and confidant.

For more than 90 years, family and friends were attracted to and intrigued by her. In her quiet and respectful manner, she touched and changed the lives of many. In the words of her eldest grandchild, Dr. Catherine Cherneski: *"I know that whether Baba is alive or not, she will always be with us, a part of our lives forever."*

On November 9th 2002, Adele Louise Wawruck passed away in her 93rd year, leaving to remember her with love her husband Walter, their four children and nine grandchildren. She is buried at the Holy Ascension Cemetery four miles north of Hubbard.

Iris M. Bradley and Walter A. Wawruck, October 27, 2022.

