

## LUTHER HAGERDON



*Luther Hagerdon as a young man*

Luther Hagerdon was born on July 25, 1871 in Webster City, Hamilton County, Iowa according to his death certificate and obituary. In all the searching I have done, I have yet to find any evidence of a middle name or initial for Luther. Luther was the oldest of 8 children born to James Knox Hagerdon and Louisiana Wood Vawter.

The only Federal Census where we see Luther with his parents is the 1880 census. In this one we see them in 088, Union, Harrison, Iowa. James is farming and Luther at 8 is attending school.

The next official record we see is on January 20, 1893 Luther Hagerdon marries Lena Livermore in Onowa, Monona County, Iowa. I can't remember now who I obtained it from, but I do have a digital copy of Luther and Lena's marriage certificate signed by the witnesses and the Justice of the Peace.

We next see Luther in the 1885 Iowa Census. At this point he is listed in Grant, Woodbury, Iowa. He lists his occupation as a farmer. The census asks them to identify their religious beliefs and the Hagerdon family has "EV" listed. As an interesting aside, there are boxes in the census for people subject to military duty and those who are "entitled to vote". Only the men are eligible for either.

In the 1900 Federal Census Luther and his family are in District 0150, Floyd, Woodbury, Iowa. At this time they show that they have had four children, with two living. Luther is farming and they report that they own their farm home.

The 1910 Federal Census shows Luther and his family in District 0044, Coleridge, Cedar, Nebraska. At this point they report having had 7 children, with 3 living. Luther on this census lists his occupation as "Farm buyer". He lists that they live on a farm and that he owns his home.

The Coleridge Blade on Jan 9, 1913 lists the following in the Additional Local: "L Hagerdon has leased a building at Crofton and has shipped a portion of his household goods to that place. He will start a restaurant and bakery.....Mrs Hagerdon will soon show her capabilities as an excellent cook....."

This was a short lease as the same paper reports on April 17, 1913 that Luther has closed the bakery in Crofton. He does then open a similar business in Coleridge as we begin seeing advertisements for "Hagerdon Restaurant" in the paper. May 15, 1913 has the following in the Local and Personals: "All kind of confectionery at L Hagerdon's restaurant"

This business must have continued to transform as the Coleridge Blade on Jan 21, 1915 has a "Bakery Now Ready" advertising homemade bread, pie, pastry as well as lunches and short orders. They are also carrying candy, cigars, tobacco and canned good, "all perfectly fresh"

In the Aug 3, 1916 Coleridge Blade it is announced that Luther Hagerdon has bought restaurant stock and fixtures from SF Kirkpatrick. He plans to conduct a "regular hotel in connection with the short order and restaurant business"



*Luther Hagerdon and Lena Livermore*

There is a City Directory for Omaha Nebraska put out in 1917 that covers other communities. Coleridge is included and has Luther Hagerdon listed as a Confectionary. We also see here Holmquist Grain with Charles Gallagher as the agent.

The 1920 Federal Census reports the family in District 0049, Coleridge, Cedar, Nebraska. Luther

reports owning his home and that he is the manager of an elevator. He reports that he is a wage earner. Lena though, reports that she is employed in confectionary and that she has her own account, which I believe means that she is the business owner.

On March 22, 1928 the Coleridge Blade reports a near miss for Luther. ".....Mr Hagerdon was cleaning the elevator and as usual took the light up as far as it would reach and by the time he had swept down to the place he had left the light, so much dust had accumulated that he did not recognize the light and had forgotten all about putting it there and taking for granted that he was only one step from the floor stepped off into space going down fourteen feet. The wonder is how he came out whole"

The Coleridge Blade on Aug 23, 1928 runs an ad for the Holmquist Elevator listing Luther Hagerdon as the Manager.

The 1930 Census shows the family in District 0021, Coleridge, Cedar, Nebraska. Luther reports owning his home and that it is valued at \$3000. That value is equaled by one home, and surpassed by one home that is reported at \$3500. At this time Luther reports

his occupation as the elevator manager and Lena reports herself as a dressmaker. Both are recorded as wage earners. They do report that they own a radio set.

The Coleridge Blade on Jan 30, 1930 ran an article on Luther and his bee colonies in which he details that he will report on the census having 1,901,979 bees. He also discusses some of the logistics of the bee colonies and I will share that article.

The 1940 Federal Census lists the family in 14-21, Coleridge, Cedar, Nebraska. Luther is now 68 while Lena is 64. Luther lists that he works as the elevator manager and Lena does not report an occupation in this census. Lena does list that she is unable to work. Luther lists that he attended four years of High School and Lena attended through three years of high school. Luther lists an income of \$780. This was to represent the 12 months ending Dec 31, 1939. A quick calculation online shows that in 2021 dollars, \$780 would be equivalent to \$14,512. This is more than most people on the page are reporting, but the postmaster is reporting \$1800 which would be the same as \$33,490 in 2021 dollars. (Aside: I found it interesting that of all my ancestors in the 1940 census Luther is the only one who listed income. All the others were farming, self employed or retired. Maybe it was too hard to estimate or maybe they didn't want the government to know?) Please keep in mind that a census district change does not mean a physical move, and I believe that once Luther and Lena settled in Hartington they stayed in these same home.

In 1945 Luther resigned from the Holmquist Elevator as reported in the Coleridge Blade on May 24, 1945. It states that he has been the manager for nearly 43 years and that he has resigned partly for health reasons. This differs slightly from his obituary which states that he managed the elevator for 35 years. The obituary does state that the family moved to Cedar County in 1901 and that would be consistent with a 43 year term as elevator manager if he began that job shortly after arriving in Coleridge.



*Coleridge Elevator - Unknown date*

Luther died on April 21, 1951 in Wayne, Nebraska according to his death certificate and headstone. He is buried in the Coleridge, Nebraska Cemetery.

Luther Hagerdon is recognized as one of the Century Families in Nebraska through the Nebraska State Genealogical Society.



Luther and Lena had 7 children with 3 surviving to adulthood. The census reports 7 children born as does Lena's obituary, and I have not yet found any evidence of who those other two children may be or why we have headstones for two of the deceased children and not the other two.

- **Eva F Hagerdon (1894-1895)**
- **Edna Lavonne Hagerdon (1895-1987)**
- **Gladys Opal Hagerdon (1897-1991)**
- **Joseph Albert Hagerdon (1902-1903)**
- **James Eldon Hagerdon (1903-1971)**



*Gladys, Luther, Lena, Edna*

## LENA LEOTA LIVERMORE



*Lena Livermore Hagerdon*

Lena Leota Livermore was born on July 15, 1875 in Oto, Woodbury County, Iowa. This is recorded on her death certificate and in her obituary. Lena was the third of five children born to Zalmon Livermore and Olive Caldwell Hall.

The only Federal Census where we see Lena with her parents is the 1880 census where they are listed in 235, Wolf Creek, Woodbury, Iowa. Her father at this time lists his occupation as farming.

A large part of Lena's life is listed above with Luther, but there are a few things that can be added to what was apparently a great aptitude as a baker, dressmaker and business owner. We know that Luther had purchased restaurants and bakeries, but as he was the elevator manager, Lena had to be the person running these businesses.

We know from Lena's obituary that she was a lifelong member of the Methodist Church. We see this in some of the newspaper clippings from Coleridge with various quilting efforts and other things either at the Hagerdon home, or attended by Lena. There are mentions of the Dorcas Society and the Methodist WSCS (Women's Society of Christian Service).

There are numerous mentions in the newspapers of Pinochle games at the Hagerdon home.

Lena was my first opening to joining the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Mayflower Society as the family line has been well documented and researched. As soon as I proved my lineage to Lena, most of the work for my first DAR and Mayflower applications was done. That was exciting!

Lena died on September 20, 1948 in Coleridge, Nebraska and is buried in the Coleridge Nebraska Cemetery.

As a fun aside – Lena's sister Olive (or Ollie) had fallen in love with a young man named Hank Stetter. Her father "refused Mr Stetter his daughter's company" and as soon as Olive was of age she ran away and eloped with Hank. As far as I can tell, the two stayed together. We do have a picture of Lena with her sister Olive taken in North Dakota where Olive lived.