

Pruden – River Lot 67

The Prudens have been part of St Andrews history since 1827.

Reverend William Cockran married 16 year old Nancy Henry to 22 year old William Pruden on September 4, 1826 at St Johns Church. A little more than a year later, on November 4, 1827, William was a resident of St Andrews, celebrating the birth of his first child, Maria.

The census that year shows that William Pruden owned this HBC lot, just north of St Andrews Church. The fact that there is no record of his employment by the HBC means that unlike so many of the early landowners of that era in St Andrews, William had to buy his lot, rather than receiving it as a part of a retirement package after service to the HBC. The price, however, might have been quite low due to the influence of his father, John Peter Pruden, a highly valued officer of the HBC in the Northwest.

John Peter Pruden, was a fur trader who had been born in England and had served the HBC from age 13 in 1791. John Peter retired from the HBC as a Chief Factor in 1837 and settled in Red River. Altogether, John Peter fathered at least 7 children: William, Charlotte, Peter, James, Cornelius, John, and Caroline.

William must have been a very hard worker because by 1827, William and Nancy had a house, a canoe, two horses, a cow, a calf and 1 acre of land under cultivation. To sustain a family by farming on the frontier in that era, it has been estimated that an acre per person was needed. The challenge for any pioneer family was to clear and cultivate as much land as quickly as the family grew. Only by exceeding his family's basic food, fuel and fodder requirements could a farmer become rich.

By 1835, William was well on his way! He was cultivating 16 acres, but had only 6 in his family (himself, his wife, 2 daughters and 2 sons). He owned 10 cattle and so could provide milk, cheese and meat for his young family. He also owned two carts. These would be used to haul grain to the mill or wood and farm produce to sell at Lower Fort Garry.

His main buyer for fuel, produce, grain and cattle or horses would have been the HBC at Lower Fort Garry. The HBC shipped much of the local farm production to its posts across the Northwest. Farmers such as William were often in debt to the HBC for items like sugar, tea, powder and shot, and items (metal, glass, cloth) shipped from Britain. The production of this size of farm would have allowed him to pay off those debts and support his family. A surplus would allow him to build a large house, a barn and a sizable herd of cattle.

Unfortunately, William suddenly died in January, 1844 at age 39. At that time, he had 7 children and no son old enough to take over the workload of the farm. One immediate consequence of this change in the family's economy, was that 3 months later, in March, 1844, Maria, his oldest daughter married William Folster (the son of Orkneyman, James Folster). William Folster was a mere seventeen years old, but had assumed responsibility for his family's farm in St Paul Parish when his own father had passed away in 1841.

There is no doubt that this family endured much hardship as a result of the loss of their father. Nancy as a widow at age 33 had to maintain the family farm. The boys: Cornelius (age 13), William Albert (age 12) and John (age 6) had to do much of the daily labour on the farm, tending

crops and animals. The girls: Charlotte (15), Nancy (7) and Caroline (3) prepared meals, sewed clothing and cleaned. It is unlikely that any of these children attended school.

Just two years later, in 1846, daughter Charlotte, now age 17, married Thomas Lyons, son of John Lyons (one of the founders of Mapleton). Even with fewer mouths to feed, but with less help on the farm, Nancy and her children struggled to keep the farm afloat.

In 1847, Nancy herself re-married! She became the wife of Duncan Campbell, son of former Nor'wester, John Duncan Campbell. By him, she had 2 more children, both girls.

By 1850, the farm seems to have passed to William Pruden's nephew, also named William. An adjacent lot, River Lot 68 was added for William's younger brother (born 1807), Peter Pruden. **Peter Pruden** had been born in 1813. He married a French (Metis) girl, Suzette, and had five sons: William, Edward, James, Cornelius, and John.

By 1870, two Prudens are listed as landowners on River Road. Son, William and father, Peter at Lots 67 and 68.

One further reference is to the younger William Pruden joining the "army of St Andrews" in 1870. He marched with 300 other farmers and tradesmen from St Peters and St Andrews to Kildonan Church in opposition to Louis Riel.

Edward Pruden was born in 1839 and died in 1904. He married Mary Isbister, born in 1844, at Nelson House. She was the daughter of John and Franny Isbister. Edward Pruden and Mary had 12 children: Elizabeth, John Edward, Sarah Anne, William Louis, Peter James, Harriott Rachel, Beatrice Theodora, Albert, Alexander, Isabella, and Mary Jane. One baby died. Edward and Mary were married at West St. Paul, (Middlechurch) and farmed in the district for a few years before they moved to Mapleton. She was a midwife and worked with Dr. Ross delivering many babies. Known as "Aunt Mary", she gave a lot of her time nursing. She died at age 81.

Their daughter, Harriet Rachel was born in 1881 and married Sidney Palmer from Over Storrey, England. They had seven children, William, Mabel, Rose, Lillian, Margaret, Marie, and Allen, and three step-children, Valentine, Annie, and Evelyn.

Harriet was a very kind and well-liked person and helped nursing sick children. Her door was always open and she did a lot of church work. She passed away in 1961, age 80. Their daughter Rose Palmer was a music teacher.

John Peter Pruden's youngest son, also John Peter, was born in the North-West Territories in 1829 and was married twice: first to Sarah Ross, with whom he had 5 children and then to Annie Rowland with whom he had one son, Thomas. John Peter II had a homestead on the site of the Selkirk General Hospital where the Red River nursing home is now. John Peter II died on July 18th, 1897 at 67 years of age. His second wife died the next day. They are both buried in the St. Clements Cemetery.

Their son, Thomas Alexander Pruden, was born in St. Clements in 1869 near Pruden Avenue. He married Kate Johnstone in 1892 in Old St. Andrews on the Red. In 1912, Kate and Thomas, their nine children, and a dairy herd of

cattle moved to Wavey Creek Road. Tom was determined to make a good living and with the friendliness of the creek community, which he did.

Maude, his eldest daughter, born in 1894, married John Nordal and lived in Stonewall and later Winnipeg. They had five sons, John, Allan, Evan, August, and Barney, and two daughters, Muriel and Bernice. Maude died in 1975 and is buried in Old Kildonan Cemetery.

John, the eldest son of Tom and Kate, was born in 1896. He served in WWI and was wounded. John returned home and married Ruby Wilson and they farmed on Hill Road. They later moved to Winnipeg. John was a hairdresser. They had three daughters, Eileen, Laverne and Eunice, and one son, Jack. Eileen married Robert Schindler and lived in Clandeboye. After Ruby died, John married Irene Blackman and they had one son Archie, and two daughters, Joyce and Mae. John Died in 1940 and is buried in Wakefield Anglican Churchyard.

Paul, Tom and Kate's third child, was born in 1899. He served overseas during WWI and celebrated his sixteenth birthday in England. He was wounded twice, and when he returned home, he married Evelyn Erickson of Clandeboye. They had three sons, Lloyd, Kenneth, Earl, and two daughters, Carol and Marlene. Paul was a well-known hairdresser in Winnipeg. He died in 1978 and is buried in St George's Wakefield cemetery.

Annie, the fourth Pruden child, was born in 1897. She worked on Lake Winnipeg, on ships such as the S.S. Keenora and Wolverine. She married Barney Goodman and lived in Winnipeg. They had two sons, Donald and Kenneth. When Captain Goodman died in 1948, and Annie returned to Selkirk.

Edgar Pruden, the fifth son of Tom and Kate, was born in 1900. He married Emma Wilson. They had five sons, Bill, Ronald, Glen, Norman, Dale, and three daughters, June, Betty, Lynne. Older residents remember Edgar's Barber Shop near the old rink in Petersfield, a gathering place for men to swap yarns. He later moved to Clandeboye behind Walter Sutherland's store and then to Manitoba Avenue in Selkirk. He is buried in Wakefield cemetery. Emma retired in Red River Manor.

Glen and Alice's sons Michael, Gordon, and David live along Wavey Creek. Betty and husband Einar Torf own Wagon Inn in Petersfield.

Harold Pruden, the sixth child of Tom and Kate, was born in 1902. He married Nellie Masters and they had three children, Barbara, Tom, and Janet. They lived along Wavey Creek and were members of St. George's Wakefield Church for 46 years. Harold was a Vestryman and Nellie was an active member. Harold worked at the Manitoba Rolling Mill until he retired. Nellie worked for many years in the Selkirk General Hospital. Harold died in 1979 and is buried in Wakefield. Nellie now lives in Selkirk at Park View Manor. Barbara and Al Dorosh have lived on Wavey Creek Road since 1960. They have three children, Laurel (Mrs. Phillip Redman) of Delta, BC. Coral (Mrs. Wesley Pskebylo) of Greenwood, Nova Scotia. Barry of Burnaby, BC. Janet and Harold Tidler and children, Larry, Nola, and Liza are also residents of Wavey Creek Road. Tom, who lives in Stony Mountain now owns his father's property on the creek.

Malvina, the seventh child of Tom and Kate was born in 1904. While working on Lake Winnipeg boats, she met and married Beggie Doll, a lake fisherman. They lived on Hecla Island for many years. After Beggie's death in 1945, she moved

to Winnipeg. They had three children, Jonas, Wesley, and Maureen. Mavlina now resides in Park View Manor in Selkirk and has a summer home with her daughter and son in-law, Maureen and Jim White of Winnipeg, on Wavey Creek Road.

May, the eighth Pruden child, was born in 1906. She married Nelson Brady and they lived on Wavey Creek Road during the early years of their marriage. They had one son, Tom, and four daughters, Adeline, Joyce, Beth, and Adele. May died in 1954 and Nelson in 1955. They are buried in the St. James Cemetery.

Stewart, the youngest, was born in 1909. He married Violet Taylor and had two sons, Stewart Jr., and Roy, and five daughters, Lorna, Shirley, Doreen, Beverly and Joan. Stewart had a beauty shop in Selkirk for many years and both his sons helped him. They are buried in Wakefield Cemetery. Stewart and his wife Anne (Einarson) live on the original Pruden homesite and Violet lives next door.

Stewart and Anne have two daughters, Sandra and Carol. Lorna and Jack Alexander live on Wavey Creek Road and own the Clandeboye Store. They have four sons, Cam, Garry, Bruce, and Ed, and one daughter, Cheryl.

Shirley and Danny Danyleyko live on Wavey Creek Road and have two daughters, Kim and Darlene, and one son, Terry. Shirley works in the office at the R.M. of St. Andrews in Clandeboye. Beverley and Stan Lesnick live in Clandeboye with their four children, Tracy, Trevor, Tara, and Tony. Joan is married to Murray Wilkinson and also lives in Clandeboye.

Tom and Kate Pruden lived out their lives along Wavey Creek. Kate died in 1940 and Tom in 1945, both are buried in Wakefield. As faithful members Tom was a Vestryman and warden, and Kate was a life member of the Auxiliary. They left their descendants a strong sense of family unity and neighborliness which has carried on along Wavey Creek Road.

John Peter Pruden III was born August 4, 1856 on the banks of the Red River, at the place called Sugar Point, because they made sugar from the soft Maples. **He** lived with his father (John Peter II) and grew wheat. In 1889 they cut the wheat with a sickle or cradle and threshed it with a flail. It won first prize at the Selkirk Fair.

John (Jake) Peter played fiddle, as did his father and grandfather. His Aunt Caroline liked to dance. She was called Belle of the Red River at a ball at Lower Fort Garry in 1848, though she went against her father's wishes. There was a great deal of talk about a new dance, the polka which had been brought in from New York. J. P. Pruden II who was very strict had forbidden Caroline to dance it. She had been shown it by her step-mother (Ann Rowland) who could see no harm in it. When her father saw her dancing the polka, he made her put on wraps and then took her home.

John Peter Pruden III married Margaret Anne Johnstone and farmed at Petersfield. He built a house and other buildings, and lived in it for 44 years with his wife and six children. Robert and Edgar died at the young age of five and six, two days apart. Howard was killed in France in 1918 in WWI. Jessie married Bert Dickenson after the war, and she died 1971. The other two boys were Frank and Charles Stewart.

Charles married Maureen Ann Donohoe on June 14, 1939. Charles had taken over his father's farm in 1937 and farmed all his life as well as buying more land. He spent some winters away.

In 1927, he spent the winter in Los Angeles, USA, working and building bridges in Arcadia. Albert Angus lived near there and his father and mother had lived in Dunora (not far from Clandeboye) at one time. Charles's mother had worked for them as a young girl before she married.

Charles worked for Albert one winter picking cotton and rutabagas and helped look after his Purebred Black Angus cattle. He came home in time to farm and gave his father \$60.00 to buy seed oats for spring seeding. During the depths of the Great Depression, (August 18, 1933) Charles Pruden, Vernon St. Pierre, Frank Pruden, Tom Patton, and Paul Pruden left Petersfield to do harvest work in the Peace River district. They all found jobs along the way, stocking, threshing, and plowing. They found Edmonton a very pretty city but no work. Gas was \$.40 per gallon and bread was \$.09 per loaf. They went on to Peace River and found lots of work.

In 1936, Charles wrote an essay for A. L. Searle Grain Company and received an honourable mention and five dollars. He was one of five in Manitoba who received a prize for their experience on improved farming methods. Charles also won a diploma for flax in 1958 sponsored by the MB Pool Elevators of Netley. The diploma hangs on the wall of his eldest son, Donohoe Charles Pruden of Selkirk. Charles retired from farming in 1967. He was a member of MB Pool Elevators of Netley, Norwood School Board, and Dunhartwood Hall. He died November 11, 1980 at the age of 79.

Charles and Maureen Pruden had five children. Donohoe Charles Pruden was born August 29, 1940. He married Pat Willis in October, 1961 and they now live in Selkirk. They have two sons. One son, Troy, works at the Manitoba Rolling Mills and married Heather Cross.

John Peter Pruden IV was born November 2, 1941. He married Barbara Patton on December 8, 1962 and they now live in Petersfield. They have three children, Peter John (the fifth), who worked in Kansas as a combine driver, combining mostly wheat, and working his way back to Petersfield.

Brent Charles went to school in Selkirk and would go boxing three nights a week in Winnipeg. Cathy Helen also went to school in Selkirk.

Carole Lynn was born on October 12, 1945 and married Bill Arp on August 15, 1970. They live in Scarborough, Ontario with one daughter named Anke Lynn. Richard Kenneth was born July 1, 1948 and married Roberta Oddliefson on July 24, 1971. They still live in the area.

June Anne was born on November 12, 1945. She married Jeff Lawson on November 20, 1981. They live in Petersfield and work in Winnipeg.