



In 1882 a group of settlers made their way west from Deloraine, Manitoba across the bald prairies with no trees in sight. The prospect of new beginnings, free land, and adventure brought men by the names of Preston, Barker, Rowen, Lee, Pack, and Carnduff to what was then called the Assiniboia district. The men ventured north to check out the Moosomin district and then returned to this area. Believing it to be suitable, they drew lots with each other for parcels of land on which to stake their claim.

Rumours of a rail line travelling through the area were already being heard so most opted for homesteads near the correction line near where the train was anticipated to run. As more individuals arrived some chose to continue further west another 12 miles to select land closer to the river. Of importance to the history of our community are the homesteads which occurred on Section 2 of Township 3. This is where gentlemen by the name of John P Carnduff and James B Preston chose to stake their claim.

John Carnduff and his brother Richard who settled about 1-1/2 miles to the southwest both arrived in May of 1882. They, like their fellow settlers went to work building a sod shack and ploughing their first acres while sleeping under the stars or in tents for shelter in poorer weather. None of these early settlers had horses but they arrived with oxen to help with breaking ground. In June further neighbors including James B Preston and Gavin Middleton also arrived with Preston settling on the east half of Section 2.

With a supply of hay put up in preparation for the next spring, most settlers headed eastward to spend their winters in more comfortable surroundings with plans to return early in the spring ready to plant. With no barriers such as roads, fences or ploughed fields that we now take for granted, prairie fires occurred frequently, and the fall of 1882 was one of those years. Returning the next spring, many including Carnduff and Preston discovered they were starting over from scratch, the fire having wiped out everything in its path.

With limestone supplied by the farmers settling nearer the river, mortar was baked providing stronger foundations and walls for the newly re-built sod houses constructed on Section 2. The only available lumber was sparse trees near the Souris River to provide ridge poles for a peaked roof on the shacks. Most fuel for heat and fire was provided by dried buffalo chips which burned hot and odorless.

With housing complete in the summer of 1883, John Carnduff's wife and family arrived, followed by Mrs. Barker, Middleton among others and the settlement, not much more than a gathering of new settlers began to take shape. The

following year, 1884 truly marked a transition from neighbors to community. With worship and church an important focus for early rural families, Mr. Middleton began leading prayers in the community. Services were soon formalized in the home of J.C. Pack with Mr. Given as pastor.

That fall J.B. Preston recognized a need for a stock of groceries and other supplies within the growing district. Preston set off to Pilot Mound and with the \$110 proceeds of his first full crop stocked up on staples like tobacco, sugar, salt, bacon, flour, soap, and a few pairs of overalls to see his neighbours through the coming winter. He continued the practice each year and Preston's General Store was born.

By 1886, enough families were in the area to warrant consideration of a school. Classes were held in the upstairs of a granary at the home of Richard Carnduff. The Post Office was always eager to follow new settlements and set out a search for a postmaster in the new community. John Carnduff agreed to be postmaster temporarily. Plans were made that James Preston's wife would take over in 1887 after their marriage and her arrival. J W Connell was appointed a justice of the peace and his home was selected as the first headquarters of the Royal North West Mounted Police in the district.

In 1887 it was decided the post office would remain in the home of John Carnduff which also served as a stopping place for many people traveling through the area. With Mrs. Preston's organ having arrived with her, church services moved to the Preston home. Schooling became a more formalized affair with the first public school in southeast Assiniboia moving to a sod granary on the farm of John Carnduff. Whether by design or luck, by 1887 a community had formed on Section 2 complete with school, post office, general store and church services. It seemed natural that the Carnduff School District #86 was born that same year.

The first agricultural fair was held on the Carnduff farm in 1887 and the Orange Lodge began meeting at the home of John Lee. As some settlers opted to move from the area as their homestead duties were fulfilled others moved in to replace them. It wasn't long before the community also included the blacksmith shop of Bob Gordon and the harness shop of Sam Ballentine. When the school outgrew its location, a new school was built in the fall of 1888 with lumber to build it having to be hauled from Deloraine. Following this, Albert Shaw saw an opportunity and joined the growing community as a lumber merchant.

Despite thriving, a sense of frustration continued to build among the settlers as well. A railway had been promised for years and yet grain was still being hauled by wagon to Moosomin or Deloraine to sell. Treks to sell or buy needed items took a week or more. Nine years after the first settlers arrived, the rail

HBC 1882	HBC 1882	MSWCR 1907	MSWCR 1908	John Archibald Scott 1889-1890 H	Archibald S. Nichol 1882-1886 H	School	School	Albert N. Shaw 1888-1891 H	Eli Stover 1884-1900 S
8		9		10		11		12	
HBC 1882	HBC 1882	MSWCR 1908	MSWCR 1908	William H. Carnduff 1896-1900 H	John A. Scott 1889-1890 T.S.	School	School	Wesley Halstead -1909 H	Eli Stover 1884-1891 H
MSWCR 1908	MSWCR 1908	William A. Plews 1889-1902 H	John Lee 1891-1900 H	MSWCR Henry W. Lynne 1904	MSWCR John P. Carnduff 1897	John P. Carnduff 1892-1906 H	James Balmer Preston 1892-1895 H	MSWCR 1908	MSWCR 1908
5		4		3		2		1	
MSWCR 1908	MSWCR 1908	John Peck 1882-1887 H	John Lee 1882-1887 H	MSWCR Henry W. Lynne 1904	MSWCR John Porter Carnduff 1897	John P. Carnduff 1882-1891 H	James B. Preston 1883-1891 H	MSWCR 1908	MSWCR 1908

Township 3, Range 33

line finally came through. The Manitoba Southwest Colonization Railway had been taken over by CPR and talk began to float that the new owners wanted the town moved so they could sell lots on their own property for the new community. In the fall of 1891 when the line finally came through, the community of Carnduff moved to its present location including all of the businesses from the former location.

Traces of its past long gone, Carnduff's history will always remain rooted in these adventurous first settlers and Section 2 Township 3 Range 33.