



The Pritchard homestead at Alcoue, Quebec, reputedly built in the 1840's was likely the second residence of James & Judith (Ferguson) Pritchard, who settled in the north half of lot 1, 5th Range of the Township of Wakefield about 1834. By 1842 James had cleared 40 acres and produced 20 bushels of wheat, 500 bushels of oats & 200 bushels of potatoes. His stock consisted of eight head of cattle, two horses, five sheep & five pigs. The sheep provided 13 pounds of wool.

In all, James & Judith had nine children, six successive sons, then three daughters. Son Andrew appears to be the next member of the family directly concerned with the homestead. Andrew married Mary Edey, born in Aylmer, Que. Andrew was industrious, enterprising and imaginative, motivated by the challenge of developing the area, undoubtedly for personal gain. Whereas the other members of the family concentrated on farming, Andrew was primarily a business man who owned farms, flour & grist mills, a tavern on the Richmond Road and a hostel opposite the site of the present Parliament Buildings.

James & Judith were Presbyterians, Andrew & Mary Wesleyan Methodists. In 1861, Andrew had a meeting house at Alcoue which would hold 100 persons and was valued at \$150. In 1889 Mary donated land for a Methodist Church. The church was built largely by volunteer labour at a cost of \$800. One man donated 6 days, drawing materials from Ottawa. The church is still in use, almost a century later, being now the Alcoue United Church.

Andrew & Mary had nine children, of whom the youngest was James, born in 1869. James, from aged 12, was educated at a boys' academy in Coburg, Victoria College, Toronto and McGill University, Montreal. He graduated, in 1897, with a gold medal in medicine. After practising for a short time in Old Chelsea he returned to Alcoue in 1897. Dr Pritchard married Maude Pratt and raised a family of six, five sons, one of whom died young, and one daughter. Two of the sons followed their father and became doctors. Dr Pritchard conducted his practice from an office in the homestead as well as from offices in Low and Wilson's corners. He became well known throughout the Gatineau Valley for both his medical skills and for his interest in community affairs. In 1906 Dr Pritchard was instrumental in developing the single wire telephone line up the Gatineau, to Barretton & Low, and eventually to Kagabazua by 1915.

Following Dr Pritchard's death in 1918 the homestead ceased to be used by the family as a year-round residence. It was used by Mr & Mrs Fox as a summer resort until the middle thirties, and by the R. B. Pritchard family during the summers of 1938 and 1940.

Since 1945 Mary (Mrs James S. Thompson), the fifth of Dr & Mrs Pritchard's children, and only daughter, has owned the old home. It has been used as a summer residence by the Thompsons since then and warm hospitality continues to be tendered their friends and members of the widespread Pritchard family.

