

# Pratt

Fred and Isabel Pratt owned the property across Thelwell Road and immediately north of the Russells. Both properties had been part of the original 160 acre Smith property, but it had been subdivided and the Pratts owned the portion north of the Joe Rich Road. The Pratt children were Ken, Diane, Jimmy and Doug.

In 1968, the Department of Highways began planning the building of the present Highway 33 and decided the best route was right through the middle of Mr. Pratt's property. Negotiations took place, but Mr. Pratt was not happy with the offer and refused to let the highway cross his land. He put up a large threatening sign and warned all who would listen that he would shoot any highway employees who tried to cross his property. But the Department of Highways was determined to follow what they thought was the best route, even if it cut Pratt's property in half. According to other Joe Rich residents, the highway people didn't show much respect for the opinions or property of local people affected by the construction.

Never intending to use it, the highway planners surveyed a phoney route through Serwa's and Russell's property and up the old Joe Rich Road (now Thelwell) passing only a few feet in front of Mr. Pratt's front door. Their ruse worked. Mr. Pratt finally agreed to let them cross the middle of his property where the highway goes today. His property was eventually subdivided to separate off what is now the Muttit's property on the north side of the highway.

# Preston

William Preston was the first to hold title to the property on which Joe Rich had squatted and built his cabin. He appears to have obtained the land as two Crown Grants, Grant Number 4598 in 1910, and Grant Number 6169 in 1913.

Prestons were also the first to sell milk and butter in Joe Rich. Cyril Weddell and Duncan Stewart bought his quarter section and divided it into what is now the Weddell's home property and Bob Murphy's horse ranch.

Mrs. Preston always referred to her husband as "Mr. Preston", and he referred to her as "woman".