

Red Cloud Cemetery

Gerald Tuck, 99, returned to the land he loved

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It was a homecoming of sorts for Gerald Delbert Tuck, 99, former resident of the small hamlet of Red Cloud. Now a "ghost town" in the northwest corner of Cramahe Township, the once-bustling community is recalled by the Red Cloud township road and the Red Cloud Cemetery, a prairie grassland preserve.

Gerald Tuck's ashes were scattered at Red Cloud Cemetery August 21 with family from throughout North America gathered to witness the last wishes of the former Cramahe Township resident. Although he had been away for over 40 years making his life elsewhere, he yearned to be near Russ Creek and the Red Cloud School he



Gerald Delbert Tuck, August 1960

attended.

But the cemetery is no longer permitted to accept burials. In fact, Gerald's

father, John Frederick Tuck may well have been the last burial held in the quiet spot in 1942.

But Gerald wanted his remains to remain in Cramahe Township. The family made enquiries and learned the scattering of ashes would be permissible.

"So that is what happened," Barry King of Cobourg, great-nephew of Gerald, explains. "Over a year after Gerald's death, everyone got together and held a ceremony at Red Cloud Cemetery."

Gerald's roots were deep in Cramahe Township.

Born at Oak Heights, just across the Cramahe Township boundary in Haldimand Township, Gerald was one of 13 children born to John and Mary Howard Tuck, the fourth generation of Tuck's to live in the area.

The Tuck family began its history in Canada with arrival of James and Martha from Norfolk, England. With their children, they settled on a farm at the corner of what is Durham Street and County Road 2 today.

One of the children who emigrated with parents from England was Thomas, who married Drucilla. Their son John, who married Mary Howard, was the father of Gerald Tuck. Mary's father, Thomas William Howard was a mariner at Lakeport. He served in the Confederate Army in the American Civil War, suffering a gunshot wound for his patriotism. Mariner Howard's father, also Thomas, was a stonemason employed to work on the first mill constructed in the village of Colborne. He was originally from Hertfordshire, England.

John and Mary Tuck and their ever-growing family



Great-nephew of Gerald Tuck, Barry F. King, right, at the Red Cloud Cemetery with his father Frank King of Cobourg. An August 21 ceremony scattered the ashes of Gerald Delbert Tuck near the gravestone (above) of his father John Tuck.

Photo by Mandy Martin

lived on a farm at Oak Heights, just off Dawson Road and County Road 29. He played and roamed on the Russ Creek River banks when he wasn't helping with chores and helping the family find ways and means to support themselves. When Gerald's grandmother died, his father, John Tuck, moved to the family to what is now Algonquin Park where he worked as a logger. He also

helped build the Bigwin Inn and Royal Muskoka Hotel in those years.

"There was quite a division in the ages of the children who lives," Barry explains. "There were five older children. Then, five of the then younger children died in a diphtheria epidemic. They are all buried at Red Cloud Cemetery. After them, there were three younger children, and Gerald was one of them. He was born May 8, 1898."

Following the Algonquin



Living in Algonquin Park: Gerald's parents John and Mary Ann Howard Tuck, left, in front of their log cabin with four of eight surviving children. Gerald is seated in the middle on the bench.

Photo courtesy Barry F. King

