William Pruett of Caroline County, Virginia

DNA Family Group A

William Pruett of Caroline County( formed from King and Queen in 1727) was the earliest Pruett in our DNA Family Group A. William Pruett of Caroline County was born in 1651 and died in 1748 in Caroline County. William’s age was based on a court case in 1746, where William was a witness, stating he was 95 at this time. There is no evidence at this time for or against William being the son of Thomas Prewitt of Charles River County, Virginia(b 1616).

Although Pruett is spelled 12 different ways in the Caroline County records the Pruett variant seemed to be preferred in this county. The Pruett family stayed mostly in Caroline between 1700-1800, but William did own a 200 acre farm in Spotsylvania County that his son Daniel apparently managed until William’s death.

The will records of Caroline County and King and Queen County were burned in the Civil War, but William had four children: John, William, Daniel, and Mary. John and William stayed in Caroline, but Daniel moved to Halifax in 1752 and Mary is thought to have married Thomas Shirley and moved to KY.

From the court records it seems the Pruetts were associated with the gentry of Caroline County. The Pruetts were picked for many juries which had wealthy land owners. Some of the Pruett family lived next door to Edmund Pendleton, signer of the Declaration of Independence, who wrote a letter asking about the health of Richard Prewit who was at Valley Forge, PA during the bitter winter of 1778. Richard died of health reasons in the extreme conditions the army experienced.

William’s grandson was John, Jr. who appeared in several court records. John, Jr , who disappeared from the land tax records in 1787, is thought to be the father of Elijah Pruett( b ca 1770 d 1816.) Elijah Pruett had three sons, James, John and William. John and William used the name John repeatedly in their lines in the 1800’s. John named his son John Alexander Pruitt and John Alexander named his son John Constantine Pruitt.

In 1820 John Pruitt decided to leave Caroline County and move to KY and then Missouri. Descendants of John now live in five States, but mostly in the Lake Charles/Sulphur area of Louisiana.

John’s brother William decided to stay in Caroline and his descendants lived there until 1923 and now reside in Richmond, Virginia. Descendants of John and William have very close DNA.

Reuben Pruett, who was born in 1760 in adjacent King and Queen County, settled in TN after he served in the Revolutionary War. Reuben’s line which now lives in TN, has close DNA to the other Pruett lines from Caroline County.

Archibald Pruitt, who was born in 1819, has a documented family line which now lives in TN and also has close DNA to the Caroline County Pruetts.

Another line of Pruitts with DNA close to those of the Caroline County lines is Joseph Pruitt of KY. Joseph was the father of Meredith and Redmond Pruitt(b 1805 in KY). This line is well documented from Joseph to the present.

Unfortunately Reuben, Archibald, and Joseph’s origins can’t be linked to specific Caroline County Pruetts except through DNA. The DNA from all members of this group is close and is vastly different from all the other Pruett/Pruitt DNA Family Groups. This group’s DNA’s haplogroup is R1b1a2a1a1b4 and originally came from the British Isles or Normandy.

The Caroline County Pruetts might have higher numbers today if they wouldn’t have had mostly daughters. The 1810 CENSUS shows five families of related Pruetts which had 16 daughters and 6 sons. William Pruett, son of Elijah, had 10 daughters and 3 sons. A disaster occurred in October 1961 when William’s family lost two of his sons and four daughters to diphtheria. William’s only surviving son, John, was in the Civil War when the diphtheria outbreak occurred.

One of the possible countries of origin of the Pruetts in Caroline County comes from an article posted by the French Huguenot Society. (William Pruett’s descendants did marry into the Seal, Chenault, Durrette, and Beasley families of Caroline.)

**The 1700 Huguenot Emigration**

In 1700, four ships arrived within a few months of each other, coming from London: The [*Mary and Ann*](http://ftp.rootsweb.com/pub/usgenweb/va/shiplists/shipva01.txt)[,](http://olivetreegenealogy.com/ships/hugship01.shtml) the [*Peter and Anthony*](http://huguenot-manakin.org/brock2.htm#LIST2)[,](http://huguenot-manakin.org/brock2.htm#LIST2) the [*Nassau*](http://huguenot-manakin.org/brock2.htm#rolle), and a fourth whose name and passenger list do not exist today (see below). Though [many of these settlers went to Manakintowne,](http://huguenot-manakin.org/brock2.htm#list4) several went to Williamsburg (Contess, Marot, LaPrades, for example) and others settled on the Rappahannock River (Parson Latané and others). This site is primarily devoted to [those who settled at Manakintowne](http://manakin.addr.com/huguenothist.htm).

**The Huguenots on the Mattaponi River**

Passengers on the fourth ship settled on the Mattaponi River. Here is an excerpt from an article by Cameron Allen taken from *Genealogical Research by the American Society of Genealogists* (1971, 2 volumes).

"The Mattapony group settled in what was then King William County, perhaps attracted by the fact that a Huguenot clergyman, James Boisseau had settled there a decade or so earlier. Later the Mattapony area was cut off as Caroline County. Here we know that another Huguenot clergyman, the Rev. Francis Fontaine, served in St. Margaret's parish, Caroline County,1721-1722. Unfortunately the county records of both King William and Caroline (save the Order Books of the latter) have been destroyed, as have the Church of England Parish Records. Among the Huguenots resident in this settlement were the families of Seay, Peay, Derieux, Desmaizeau, Dismukes (originally DesMeaux, it is said), Jeter, Mallin, LaFoe, Chenault, DeJarnette, Micou, Flippo, Duval, Vigon, Micalle Debusie, and DeShazo (DeChazeau). The Mattapony settlement seems never to have been as strong as Manakintown, and there was some tendency to gravitate from the first to the latter....Contact between the two must certainly have been maintained for decades. Families from both participated and were closely associated in the development of Amelia County." (II, 283)