

James Burriss Pruitt Family Reunion

The Anderson Intelligencer Sept. 22, 1897

Family Reunion.

Mr. Editor: On Tuesday, the 7th inst, a most happy day was spent at the home of our venerable friend, Mr. J.B. Pruitt, who lives in Martin Township, 13 miles southeast of the city of Anderson. That day had been selected by his children to meet and spend one more day at the old homestead and have a family reunion.

It was agreed by all the members of the family to congregate together near the old home and take the venerable parents by surprise. Neither Mr. or Mrs. Pruitt knew anything of the proposed occasion. Bright and early on the day set apart the children, with their respective families, assembled about one-half of a mile distant from the old home and formed a procession, the oldest couple and their little ones taking the front, and so on down to the youngest until all were in line. In this way they advanced on the old home. The aged father and mother soon saw a long line of carriages and buggies coming down the road. They were amazed and wondered what was the matter. The procession draws nearer and Mr. and Mrs. Pruitt come out to see it. In a few minutes they recognize the eldest daughter, with her husband and children, and then the eldest son with his family, and by the time the second and third daughters, with their families, drove up, the aged couple was so overjoyed that their eyes were moistened with tears. It was indeed a grand sight to see the meeting of all their children, grand children, sons-in-law and daughters-in-law. No one but God alone knows what a stream of happiness was fleeting through the minds of the aged couple as they met and greeted each of their loved ones.

The hours passed by too swiftly and were spent most pleasantly in various ways. In the mean time a long table had been erected in the beautiful grove in front of the dear old mansion, and the fair hands of the matrons and maidens soon had it loaded with the tempting viands that had been brought from their respective homes. Dinner being announced, the happy party with the invited guests gathered around the table and did full justice to the delicious feast spread before them. Enough was left to have fed thrice the number present. After dinner, the party scattered about in groups and spent the time in pleasant conversation and walking around under the giant old oaks, where they had so often in days gone by played ball, marbles and indulged in other childhood sports. Doubtless some of them may have thought they would love to live over those happy days again.

Mr. Pruitt is the seventh son of the late Wm. Pruitt, who died in 1855, and whose father was a soldier in the Revolutionary war. His mother's maiden name was Francis Tucker, who died in 1883 at a ripe old age. Mrs. Pruitt is a daughter of the late Robert Parker, who was a son of John Parker, a native of Ireland and brave soldier in the Revolutionary war. Her mother was Mary Gambrell, daughter of Henry Gambrell. The Pruitt family originally came from England and the Parkers from Ireland. Mr. Pruitt was born in 1831 near where he now lives. His wife is four years his junior. They were married in January, 1852, and have lived ever since where they now reside, except one year-1858-which they spent in Tippah County, Miss. They have had born to them six sons and five daughters. One son died in infancy, and all the other children are still living. They have twenty-nine grandchildren. Mr. and Mrs. Pruitt were lovers and play mates in childhood, their parents being neighbors. They joined the old Mt. Bethel Baptist Church in early life under the ministry of the late Rev. D. Simmons, who died in Texas some years ago, and still hold their membership at this Church. Their oldest daughter, Mary, married R. W. Drake, of Donalds; their eldest son, R. W., married Miss Minnie Riley, of Anderson; the second daughter, Mattie, married J. J. Findley, of Anderson; the third daughter,

Rosa, married J. L. Jackson, of Cooks; the second son, J., of Starr, married Miss Lula Long, who died some years ago; the third son, J.C., married Miss Anna Major, of Denver; the fourth son, E. J., married Miss Jett Scudday, of Anderson; the fourth daughter, Birdie, married Oscar Bowie, of Cooks. Miss Nina and Walter, the youngest son, are still domiciled in the old mansion trying to make the last days of their fond parents pleasant. All of these own good homes and have plenty of this world's goods.

Late in the afternoon all of the kindred and invited guests assembled in a group in front of the house, where stood Anderson's accomplished photographer, Mr. J. H. Collins, who made a picture of the entire party. Mr. Collins then took one of the venerable parents and the ten children in a group.

Thus ended a most happy occasion, which will be long remembered by all who were present. We hope Mr. and Mrs. Pruitt may be spared to have many more such reunions, and at last, when the Lord shall come, may they be an unbroken family in the Heavenly Kingdom.

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