

Collection #
P 0884

**MARK T. AND SUSANNAH PRUDEN JOHNSON COLLECTION,
CA. LATE 1920S-1940**

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 folder of photographs

COLLECTION DATES: Ca. late 1920s–1940

PROVENANCE: Gift from Davied Engelking of Batesville, IN, November 2004

RESTRICTIONS: None

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RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2005.0052

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL / HISTORICAL SKETCH

Mark T. Johnson and Susannah Pruden married in Dearborn County, Indiana, on 21 January 1870. They farmed in the Logan Township of that county until 1929, when they moved to Bright in the same county. They had five daughters and two sons. It was reported that Susannah liked to tell about when, as a young teen during the Civil War, she rode horseback ahead of Morgan's Raid to warn others of the Confederate soldiers' approach.

Susannah "Susie" Swales Pruden Johnson was born on 25 September 1849 in West Harrison, in the Harrison Township of Dearborn County. Her parents were James Keen Pruden and Sarah Swales Pruden. At the time of the 1850 census her father was working as a lumber dealer. By 1860 the family had moved to Logan Township where they farmed.

Mark Thompson Johnson was born in Logan Township on 9 January 1843 to Joseph and Rebecca Grubbs Johnson. His father was a farmer. Mark developed an interest in politics and was a lifelong Democrat. He was often at the courthouse to serve on a jury or as an officer of the court. He was a member of Bright Presbyterian Church where he was a trustee and elder.

Mark and Susie's children were: Clara (Woods) (1870–1950); George William (1872–1873); Alice W. (Startsman) (1874–1951); Bertha M. (Sykes) (1877–1966); Geneva Belle (Hudson) (1879–1971); Iva (Hurley) (1886–1980); and Earl Joseph (1887–1976). By the time Mark and Susie celebrated their sixtieth wedding anniversary in 1930, they had seven granddaughters, seven grandsons, and three great-grandsons. Mark died on 2 June 1930 in Bright. Susie died on 28 April 1932 in Madison, Jefferson County, Indiana. They were both buried in the Gibson Cemetery in Bright.

Morgan's Raid was an infiltration of Confederate cavalry into Union states during the Civil War that covered more than a thousand miles from Tennessee to northeastern Ohio, going through Kentucky and southern Indiana. The raid took place from June 11th to July 26th, 1863, and was named for its commander, Brigadier General John Hunt Morgan.

Morgan's penetration into Ripley County, Indiana, on July 12th alarmed farmers in adjacent Dearborn County. Around 11:00 on Monday morning, July 13th, just before Morgan entered Ohio, his soldiers crossed the oak bridge over the Whitewater River, and after the last man passed, it was set on fire. According to newspaper accounts written decades later on the occasions of Mark and Susie's sixtieth wedding anniversary and Susie's death, thirteen-year-old Susie Pruden, at the behest of her father, rode horseback to warn residents of Harrison, Ohio, of Morgan's approach. She was the last person to cross the bridge over the Whitewater ahead of Morgan's men burning it down.

Sources:

Items in the collection

Ancestrylibrary.com (Accessed 13 May 2024):

Find a Grave
Indiana, U.S., Death Certificates, 1899–2017

Indiana, U.S., Marriages, 1810–2001
United States Federal Census, 1850–1930

Horwitz, Lester V. *The Longest Raid of the Civil War: Little-Known & Untold Stories of Morgan's Raid into Kentucky, Indiana & Ohio*. Cincinnati, OH: Farmcourt Publishing, Inc., 1999, pp. 98–104.

“Mark T. Johnson Dies at Age Eighty-seven.” *The Lawrenceburg Register*, 5 June 1930, p. 1.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection is composed of a photograph and newspaper clippings pertaining to Mark Thompson Johnson and Susannah “Susie” Pruden Johnson of Dearborn County, Indiana, and their family. The collection consists of three color reproduction photographs of one black-and-white portrait of Mark and Susie Johnson and five newspaper articles. The newspaper clippings include an article on the occasion of the Johnsons’ sixtieth wedding anniversary in 1930, which features a photograph of them with their six adult children, and obituaries for Mark and Susie. Two of the articles mention Susie having ridden horseback to warn people of Morgan’s Raid during the Civil War.

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Portrait of Mark and Susie Johnson seated in chairs, with a car behind them [possibly a 1928 Model A Ford], [ca. late 1920s] (color reproduction of a black and white photograph).

Color photograph of newspaper clipping: “Well Known Residents of Bright Celebrate Sixtieth Wedding Anniversary,” includes a photo of Susie and Mark Johnson with their five daughters and youngest son [from *The Lawrenceburg Register*, 20 February 1930, p. 1].

Color photograph of four newspaper clippings [all from *The Lawrenceburg Press*]:

- 1) “Bright” (mentions the death of Susie Johnson), [5 May 1932, p. 3].
- 2) “Mark T. Johnson” (obituary), [19 June 1930, p. 2].
- 3) “Incident of Civil War Days Is Recalled In the Passing of Mrs. Susanah [sic] Swales Pruden Johnson,” [5 May 1932, p. 3].
- 4) “Miss Ada Nowlin Weds J. L. Sykes” [John L. Sykes was the brother of George Sykes, who was married to Mark and Susie Johnson’s daughter, Bertha], [25 October 1940, p. 1].

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