

JOHN PARKER REID

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Submitted by Laura Reid Rudd to the Marshall County WVGenWeb.



John Parker Reid and wife, Mary Caroline (Cal) Quigley.

John Parker Reid was born February 4, 1860, the son of Edward and Harriet Custer Reid. His father Edward was the son of James and Ann Reid who had immigrated from Scotland and was a farmer in the Fork Ridge Community of Marshall County, Virginia.

When John was three years old, his father was killed in a timber accident. From the death of his father on, he was on his own and lived with whomever would take him in and as he grew older he worked for farmers in the area mostly for his room and board. By the time he was in his mid-teens, he was a full time hired hand on a farm earning room and board and \$8.00 per month.

When he was 22 years of age, he married Mary Caroline (Cal) Quigley, a union that lasted for 67 years and ended only by "Death Do Us Part", when Cal passed away at the age of 89 in 1949. John lived four more years, passing away at the age of 93 in 1953. They were the parents of nine children, two of whom, Lizzie and Effie, died in infancy.

After marriage, John and his bride began life together as tenant farmers in the Big Run Community. As years went by, through good management and hard work, they were able to buy land of their own and at one time were the owners of some 600 acres located on Reid and Fish Ridges in Liberty District, Marshall County.

One year in an effort to help his three sons, Rube, Ray and Frank get a start, he arranged with the boys to raise the wheat and oat crops on the shares. The crop had grown, ripened, was cut and had just been hauled in and stacked for the threshers. Upon finishing the stacking, John, who had been a pipe smoker for years, filled his pipe with tobacco, struck the match, lit the pipe and threw down the match. Before anyone knew what was happening, there was a raging fire in the dry straw and grain and the entire crop went up in flames. Accepting full blame for the loss, John threw his pipe into the fire and never smoked again.

After their own family was raised, John and Cal provided a home for many young people who found themselves without a home — some for a short time — others for much longer. Until they were well into their eighties they kept helping, without thought of payment, homeless young people.

In the early 1890's along with half dozen others, John Reid helped organize the present Big Run Christian Church. One of his contributions to the church, in addition to helping with the building, was to haul the logs donated by Alfred Turner, Flo Straight's father, to the sawmill and hauling the lumber back for the construction of the church building. During his life in the church, he served many years as a Sunday school teacher, he was Sunday School Superintendent for a stretch of more than 25 years. I remember he was given a rocking chair in recognition for that service. He was a member of the church board and served as a deacon and elder. He led songs when no one else would and his leading consisted of standing in the front of the sanctuary and moving his hymnal up and down. It is recalled that he became very upset with the minister one time when the topic of the sermon was "Honesty". During the course of the sermon the minister remarked, "Now there is John Reid, he is as honest as the day is long". Then he added in jest, "If the day isn't too long". John's prayers were numerous and long and he began every one with, "Kindly Heavenly Father, we thank thee****.

Today the descendents of John Parker and Mary Caroline Reid gather for a family reunion. As we begin our day we pay homage to John Reid who was a leader in his community, in this church, and in farming. We can all say, "Kindly Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the community that John Reid and Mary and others provided for us and for the principles that he passed on to his family, now scattered from coast to coast, border to border, and in foreign countries over the world.