

Joel B. Anderson
1832 - 1833

Joel B. Andrew Anderson

b. 31 August 1781, Cumberland Co., VA

d. 30 December 1852, Williamson Co., Franklin, TN

Buried: W.B. Anderson Cemetery – *Goose Creek Rd.*

W. Moss Farm in Franklin, TN – 10th District, E. of Franklin, TN.

md 1st Anna Shasteen – d. VA - Lived in Cumberland Co., VA

then moved to Williamson Co., TN near Franklin, TN.

Rev. Joel B. Anderson & Rev. Andrew Craig were ministers

at the Church of Christ Leiper's Fork near Franklin, TN.

md 2nd Franklin Co., VA, Sarah Davis Greer - b. 5 November 1784 -

d. 7 November 1844 – d/o Benjamin Greer & his 2nd wife, Mary Haynes

Benjamin Greer was the s/o John Greer, of Scotland & Sarah Davis. John

Greer direct descendant of Lord George Benjamin Greer of Scotland.

Joel md 3rd Susan L. Pruse

Joel lived in Cumberland Co., VA then moved to Williamson Co., TN near Franklin, TN. Rev. Joel B. Anderson & Rev. Andrew Craig were ministers at the Church of Christ Leiper's Fork near Franklin, TN.

After organizing the church at Leiper's Fork both Joel B. Anderson and Andrew Craig preached for the Franklin Church, which was started in 1833, Franklin, TN.

Joel Anderson was born in Cumberland Co., Virginia, in 1781 and came to Davidson Co., Tennessee, in 1809. Later he moved to Williamson County where he remained until his death in 1852. Before the age of nineteen he became a member of the Baptist church and was an influential minister in that church for many years. After hearing the preaching of the Restoration plea, he embraced it, and worshiped at Leiper's Fork, Friendship, and Franklin for the remainder of his seventy-one years. The following is quoted from his obituary:

Strict integrity, and high moral worth, formed the prominent features of his character through life; and in the church, of which he was no ideal, or pseudo member, but a consistent and faithful servant of Christ. Truly may it be said of him, that his death was a correct exemplification of the good man's end. His conduct and conversation, his exhortations and admonitions to his family, relatives and friends, in his last illness, bore the most ample testimony that he had lost no time in the acquisition of every trait of character which constitutes the soldier of Christ. And now that he had met his last earthly enemy, (according to the promise of his great leader,) he quailed not, but stood firm, evincing no symptom of fear, yielding a ready obedience to the law of Nature, decreed by Nature's God. "To him, to die, was gain." A kind husband, an affectionate parent, and a devoted Christian, he has gone ot the rest prepared for the people of God. Surely he shall reap his reward. And "With us his name shall honored live, Through long successive years; Embalmed in all that we can give, Our praises, and our tears." ¹⁴

Joel is buried in the W. B. Anderson cemetery near Franklin, TN. Anderson fathered eleven children. Most of them married into families well known in this area of Franklin,

TN. The Western Weekly Review of January 19, 1855, carried a notice of the fire that destroyed the house of Joel A. Anderson Jr. "about 6 miles south of this place, together with all its contents....The loss is a heavy one." Joel Sr.'s Frances married John A. Jackson and spent part of her married life in Pulaski. She was, however, widely known in Franklin for her charm and vivaciousness; her obituary describes her as "a daughter of Elder Anderson of the Disciples' Church and a most remarkable woman" and as "a devout Christian woman and a blessing to the community." A granddaughter of Anderson, Sallie Anderson Neely, was a member of the Franklin Church when she died in 1899, leaving two sisters who were also members and a daughter, Sister Lee Carl, according to the obituary written by Hall L. Calhoun. Frances March Nichols Brevard, the granddaughter of Joel Jr., was a member of the Franklin Church until her death in 1981 at the age of ninety-eight. In her memoirs she stated, "I can't remember when there were not descendants of Joel Anderson, Sr. in the church (Fourth Avenue Church of Christ)." So far as is known to this writer, there is now one descendant there, the great-great granddaughter of Catherine Anderson Kirkpatrick.¹⁵

Anderson's associate in the work at Leiper's Fork and at Franklin, Andrew David Craig II, had a background similar to those of many settlers in the area. His father, David, came from Ireland and settled in North Carolina. There he married Mary Foster in 1776. He received two land grants along the French Broad River. Andrew, the son, was said to have been the first male white child born between the Holston and the Cumberland Rivers. David and family, however, migrated westward and acquired large land holdings along the Big Harpeth River. Among other large bequests in his will was one to his son Andrew: "the tract of land whereon I now live, which shall remain to him and his heirs forever."

Andrew married Jemina Crafton in Williamson Co., TN in 1810. After her death, he married Martha, daughter of the famous Thomas Hardeman. After figuring prominently in the churches at Leiper's Fork and Franklin, he moved with his family to Perry Co., in 1843. He had received a land grant there- for service in the War of 1812 – of 535 acres. They settled in the Chestnut Grove community. He continued his work of preaching and establishing churches in Perry Co. He reared a large family as did most of his descendants. J. Howard Trull in two articles in Buffalo River Review (October 1 and October 8, 1980) lists several families with children numbering in the teens. He mentions several families in the town of Linden and the surrounding area as being Craig descendants. Additionally, there are Vaughns, Godwins, Kittrells, Beasleys, Dentons and Headys, among others.

One son, Andrew III, served as a commissioned officer in the War between the States and surrendered with General Robert E. Lee at Appomattox. He served in the Tennessee Legislature and once entertained the Governor of Tennessee as an overnight guest at his home on Coon Creek. He also preached. He was the father of sixteen children, many of whom settled in Texas along with their father, who moved there in 1891.

¹⁴ Brevard files, Williamson County Historical Society.

¹⁵ Louise King Scivally Graves.

(This story was taken from the book, Landmarks - The Restoration Movement And The Franklin Area by Mary Trim Anderson - pgs. 43 & 44.).

pg. 39, 40 & 41 - Landmarks - The Restoration Movement And The Franklin Area by Mary Trim Anderson:

Two other men who were prominent in the church in Franklin in the early 1830's were Andrew Craig and Joel Anderson. However, before they worked and preached in Franklin they were active in another part of the county. In the village of Leiper's Fork, seven miles southwest of Franklin there was a house of worship named Union. Hugh Dobbins had given the land for a building to be used freely by all denominations in the community who cared to use it. Since few cared to use the building, it was used chiefly by Primitive Baptist, who were the dominant group in the community as they were in much of the county. In 1820 Craig and Anderson, who had preached for this group, were withdrawn from by neighboring Baptist congregations for preaching "Campbellism." Somewhere they had come in contact with Campbell's preaching or writing. (*referring to Alexander Campbell*). They had preached the New Testament record of conversion and had urged listeners to do just what the apostles, guided by the Holy Spirit, had taught. After their exclusion by the Baptist, on January 2, 1830, they assisted in forming a congregation from the excluded Baptists of that community and the vicinity. Thus this congregation is older than the one in Franklin and is, in fact, the oldest congregation of the Church of Christ south of Nashville, TN.

These men published a declaration of their beliefs and gave the names of their fellow members:

We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, being the professed disciples of Jesus Christ in the vicinity of Leiper's Fork do hereby agree to live together as a congregation of the Lord, to be denominated "The Church of Christ on Leiper's Fork", and we do hereby agree to take the Bible to be the word of God in such a sense as to hold ourselves bound to believe all it declares, do all that it requires of us as Christians, as well as faith and practice in matters of religion. So there is no occasion for any other judge of controversies, or for creeds, confessions of faith, traditions, or acts of councils, to supply its supposed defects. We take the Book for our creed in all matters pertaining to us as a church and individuals.

(Signed) Jacob Carl, Nancy Brown, Mary Huggins, Frances Potter, Polly Meador, Elizabeth Allen, Merritt Brown, William Sparkman, Bird Dodson, Judas Dodson, Polly Walker, Elizabeth Hunter and Margaret Dodson.⁶

Two of those added to this church in the next year were Seth Sparkman and his wife Rebecca. A relative left this hand-written account of the event:

Old Brother Andrew Craig, who had been excluded from the Baptist for heresy, was preaching through the country and on the first Lord's Day in March 1831, they marched from a meeting house near where the Leiper's Fork, meeting house now stands, down to the water singing – "Reform and be immersed etc" and were baptized. Both (Seth and Rebecca) were taken in the water at once and she was baptized first, she being the first

person and he the first man baptized for remission of sins south of Nashville. They became charter members of the church of Boston, Tennessee.⁷

The fact of their baptism is recorded on their tombstones in the Sparkman Cemetery at Boston, TN.

The congregation at Leiper's Fork became a strong force in the Restoration movement in this area of the state. It grew steadily in spite of persecution. Early histories of the church state that in 1855 some of the members decided to form another congregation at Boston. However, some recent research by Richard Warwick reveals a different story. On September 17, 1832, George W. Graham deeded to George Burns, Michael Robinson and Seth Sparkman one-half acre of land "for a meeting house" on Old Natchez Road. This was on the ridge, removed from where a new Boston church was later built. On July 18, 1854, Seth Sparkman deeded to Littleberry Beasley, Jesse J. Sparkman, G.W. Cone, William Burn and, Seth Sparkman one and one-fourth acres for "a meeting house now being erected."⁸ In addition, Seth Sparkman, in 1858 sold to most of the same men "seven and one-half poles" for a school lot next to the Boston church.⁹

Twenty-one years later, some of the members from Leiper's Fork turned to the other direction- toward Franklin, TN – and established a church at Berea. This, as was the earlier one, was a friendly division; through the years there has been Christian fellowship among the three congregations.

⁶Gospel Advocate, 1930, 1196.

⁷Memoir of Z.A. McConnico now in possession of Nancy Fry, Nashville

⁸Richard Warwick, examination of deed.

⁹Ibid.

Pg. 75 - Landmarks - The Restoration Movement And The Franklin Area by Mary Trim Anderson:

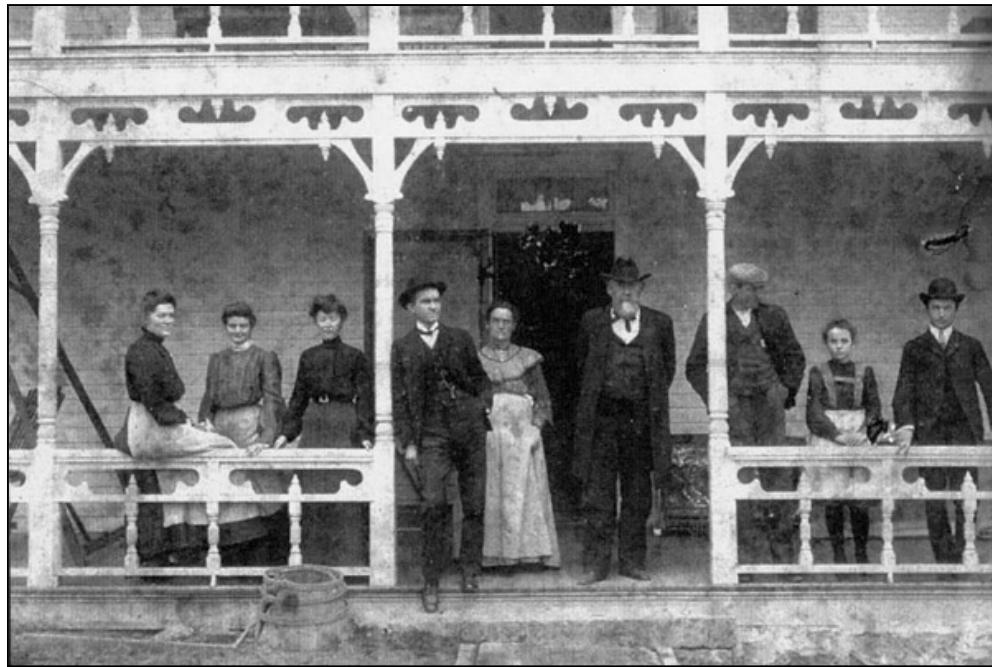
As if mission work, evangelization, and hiring preachers, were not enough to test the reasoning and judgement of leaders, along came the matter of slavery. Of course, many Southerns who could afford them and profit from their labor owned slaves, including many who have been mentioned in this history. Both Joel Anderson and Andrew Craig included slaves in bequests to their heirs.

Pg. 81 - Landmarks - The Restoration Movement And The Franklin Area by Mary Trim Anderson:

One Franklinit mentioned earlier was Frances, daughter of Joel Anderson. She married John A. Jackson and lived most of her married life in Pulaski. Even though her husband was a Union man, she tried to aid the Confederate cause and was safer than most women who did so. Fascinating and tactful, she had considerable influence with the Federals. She is said to have saved the life of one Frank Herron. Her great disappointment, (and her great sorrow) however, was not being able to save the life of Sam Davis. In her later years she would not discuss the matter.¹⁸

¹⁸Obituary in the Brevard files, Williamson County Historical Society, The obituary also states: "She did more for the people there (Pulaski) than any other woman."

*See *A Short History of The Church of Christ at Leiper's Fork, TN.* * See Chapter 3 & Story of Joel B. Anderson - 'The Jackson Co. Family History Book.'



Gainesboro, 1905, Anderson home: Mae Anderson, Mattie Meadows, Georgia Carter, Joel Anderson, Mr. and Mrs. J.T. Anderson, Jim Anderson, Nell Anderson, and Jim Cox. This house is now known as the Montgomery house.

Picture on pg. 78 of the book: Jackson County Tennessee 1801-2001 – Jackson Historical Society.

Resident Preachers, Church of Christ, Franklin, TN - pg. 234 of the book: Landmarks - The Restoration Movement And The Franklin Area by Mary Trim Anderson

Andrew Craig 1832-1833
Dr. W. J. Barbee 1845-1848
L. S. Barrett 1866-1867
George A. Bethurum 1884-1901
George Cowan 1900-1901
F.W. Smith 1908-1930
Myron Keith 1963-1991

Joel Anderson 1832-1833
Joseph F. Brown 1854-1869
E B. Cayce 1867-1905
A.M. Growden 1885-1888
E.A. Elam 1901-1902
J.L. Jackson 1931-1951
Eddie J. Millier 1992 –

James C. Anderson 1841-1842
Jesse Sewell 1865-1866
M.H. Northcross 1870-1905
F.W. Smith 1891-1896
J.P. Slayden 1902-1903
J.M. Powell 1951-1958

Adolphus Morse 1843-1844
Elisha Sewell 1865-1866
J.M. Trimble 1877-1880
Hall L. Calhoun 1896-1900
James E. Scobey 1904-1907
Homer Reeves 1958-1963

Note: Though the name does not appear on the "official" list, the Gospel Advocate, Volume XVIII, Number 3, page 72, carries this announcement: "A.L. Johnson will labor for the church at Franklin during the year 1876."