

## Bouquet to Mothers

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The idea of celebrating a special day for mothers was inaugurated in the early 1900s and Mother's Day was officially proclaimed by President Woodrow Wilson in 1914. The observance has since spread to nearly every country in the world although not all celebrate it on the second Sunday in May.

The word "mother" reminds us of all that is near and dear and the very presence of a dearly beloved mother gives joy, comfort and a feeling of security. Perhaps no other being, this side of Heaven, brings such devotion or merits lasting love more than the ideal mother. Such are the sentiments of the children of Mrs. E. R. Johnston, shown on this page surrounded by her daughters (pictured clockwise), Mrs. Harold (Winona) Starns, 2451 St. Lewis; Mrs. Frank (Ruth) Kutilek, 9301 Birch Lane; Mrs. James (Ernestine) Felts, Arlington, Calif.; Mrs. Alfred (Lucille) Fields, Salina; Mrs. Lyman (Josephine) Criser, Omaha; Mrs. Edwin (Ruby) Bell, 3202 Downtown Drive; and Mrs. Jimmie (Rufina) Holstegge, Goddard. Mrs. Starns is the eldest child and Mrs. Bell the youngest, being 30 minutes younger than her twin, Ruth.

Seemingly symbolic is the number seven in the Bible, and for the E. R. Johnston Bible reading family, the numeral seven has significance. Mr. and Mrs. Johnston, 824 University, are the parents of seven daughters (who also are mothers) and are the grandparents of seven granddaughters, and also 21 grandsons.

Honoring Mrs. Johnston on this Mother's Day are her husband, her four daughters who live in and near Wichita, the sons-in-law and a host of grandchildren. Later this summer the other three daughters and their families will join the Wichita group making a total of 44 relatives to attend their first family reunion since last year.

Mr. Johnston and the former Rufina Teague were married Sept. 11, 1922 in the First Baptist Church of Wichita. (Incidentally, five of the daughters also have been married in the same church; the other two had home weddings.) Mrs. Johnston was born in Marshall County, Kan., and her husband was born at Isabell. They have lived all their married life in Wichita and Mr. Johnston has been an employee at the Wichita Eagle for more than 43 years.

Rearing seven daughters seemingly has been a joy for the Johnstons. They tell of a happy home life and many humorous incidents concerning Mr. Johnston's patience living with eight women. It was a well established rule in their household before the girls' marriages, that "daddy" had first access to the bathroom each morning enabling him to escape the early morning massacre amid cosmetics, endless dressing, re-dressing, and exchanging of dresses.

Music has been one of the family's favorite hobbies. There is an old-fashioned pump organ in the home, which the mother plays, and until the daughters became so busy with their own families, Mrs. Johnston and three of the girls sang as a quartet for many occasions. All the daughters are musically inclined, they all play the piano and sing. Perhaps Ruby and Rufina have better trained voices, both having had formal musical training. Lucille taught in elementary schools before her marriage and Winona currently is a teacher at Franklin.

Mrs. Johnston says that church always had a prominent place in the family's life. The group habitually has held family altar, and reading the Bible and telling religious stories was a daily part in rearing the

children. The mother explained that she always has endeavored to follow the golden rule as her philosophy. The apparent happiness and success of her children seem to attest such an ideal.

With such a busy life rearing so many children, Mrs. Johnston has had little time for activities outside of the home and her church. She did take an active part in Parent-Teacher Association projects while her children were in school and since their marriages, she and her husband devote much of their spare time to raising flowers. Before her own marriage the youthful grandmother was a teacher in Idaho schools. Last Friday night she and her four daughters and five granddaughters received special recognition at the mother-daughter banquet in First Baptist Church.

The wearing of flowers has long been a symbol of Mother's Day and with this "bouquet of carnation-surrounded mothers" we salute all the wonderful mothers everywhere. It has been said that "the hand that rocks the cradle, rules the world." If this be true, may they rock with a prayer on their lips, and rule with love in their hearts.

Photo caption:

It's a lively celebration of Mother's Day today in the E. R. Johnston household and granddad is showing his calming influence as he gathered 14 of the grandchildren and his favorite pet dog, Trixie, for a Mom's Day photo. In back row, from left, are Donn Holstegge, Pat Holstege, Mr. Johnston holding the youngest member of the celebrants, Eddie Vern Bell; Carol Ann Starns, and John Starns. Seated in center row are Craig Holstegge, Susan Starns, Frankie Kutilek and Kandace Kutilek. Standing in front row, at left, is Ken Kutilek and seated are Kenneth Bell, Karen Kutilek, Dough Kutilek and Chuckie Bell – [Eagle Staff Photos.]