

# Family Reunion

A newsletter for descendants  
of Joseph Mobley, Albert McAfee,  
Henry Hodge and Burl Mason

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## **They Can Run – But They Can't Hide Forever**

Well, I'm hopeful that is true, because some of the ancestors continue to do a really good job of hiding. However, I have come to the conclusion that the records are out there if you can only figure out which door you need to open to find them.

This year has brought a lot of new information into the family archives. The pile of paper I've acquired teeters above me, threatening to fall over and smother me at any time. As fast as I file some of it, the remainder of the pile seems to procreate like bunnies.

A lot of questions were answered earlier this year when the Family History Library added images of early Texas birth certificates and an even bigger range of Texas death certificate images to their online databases. Distant relatives who were only names on my records before now have birth and death dates and I've even added some of their descendants who were heretofore unknown to me. I went through a ream of paper the week those came online.

Recently I discovered that some Texas County Clerks are adding indexes and, in some cases, images of their early deed and marriage records. For several years I have been aware that I needed to make a

trip to Brazoria County to abstract property transactions for Henry and Mary Frances Hodge, and I just never had the time to do so. Brazoria County has recently made images of their early deed records available for a small fee. I spent a couple of nights pouring over their indexes and pulling the deeds I needed, completing my Brazoria County research from the comfort of my home office. The bad news is that those records pointed to a few new Texas counties I need to check and those counties are not online. Yet.

A new Internet service has arrived called **Footnote** and is a collaboration of many agencies, including the National Archives. Images of Confederate Service Records have been loaded and they are now working on the Union records. The applications made to the Dawes Commission by persons seeking official recognition as members of the civilized Indian tribes are fully loaded. Revolutionary War Pension records are another valuable source they've made available. For a reasonable annual fee, I am now able to review and download copies of records that were not in my budget at the rates charged by the National Archives. And access is instant instead of a 3-4 month wait.

On the local front, the Elgin Historical Society is continuing their program of issuing

images of the *Elgin Courier* on CD, a year at a time, with 16 years' worth of various years between 1910 and 1945 now completed

It's a good time to be a genealogist, and it's getting better all the time!

## **Favorite Genealogy Sites**

### **Family History Library**

<http://pilot.familysearch.org/>

Free! Beta site and source for early Texas vital records

<http://www.familysearch.org>

Free!

### **U. S. Genweb**

<http://usgenweb.org/>

Free!

### **Footnote**

<http://www.footnote.com/>

Free search, images by subscription

### **Ancestry**

<http://www.ancestry.com/>

Some limited free access, but mostly by subscription

### **Cyndi's List**

<http://www.cyndislist.com/>

An organization of Internet links for genealogists. A great starting point.

### **FindaGrave**

[www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com)

Volunteer project for online memorials and tombstone photos

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*Old genealogists never die...they just hang out at the cemetery full time.*

### From the Editor's In Box

#### **Hodge**

I have been heavily involved this fall and winter with a new research project in the Hodge line. I am still in the process of organizing all the new material that has come into my possession and not yet ready to share what has been found in anything close to a coherent manner. I will just hit the high-points now and you can look for a special edition of the newsletter dedicated to the Hodge clan in the not too distant future. Or, it may turn into a book, at the rate it's going right now.

This year found the black sheep of the family getting even blacker. It's been a couple of years since I related the nasty details gleaned from the 1902 divorce proceedings between Henry and Mary Frances Hodge in Bastrop County. Mary Frances was Henry's second wife and it turns out that Henry's first marriage ended in a divorce that was every bit as acrimonious.

First wife Ailcey sued Henry for divorce in August 1877 in Crittenden County, Kentucky, stating they had been married in 1868, had moved to Clay County, Tennessee, in 1873 and that he had abandoned her there in the spring of 1875. She claimed repeated acts of adultery on his part and that when he left "with the intention on his part of never living with or returning to her again", he left her with no way to provide for herself and their 8 year old daughter. Ailcey sought alimony out of land Henry owned in Kentucky and gave a detailed list of the scant personal property he left in her possession. Several neighbors

gave depositions in support of Ailcey's petition, from which we get a description of Henry as one of "a rambling disposition (who) does not want to stay long in one place". Considering how many counties in Texas where Henry left a paper trail, I would say that was a pretty accurate statement.

Henry's brother-in-law described an incident some four or five years previously when Henry had left his wife for a period of several days and when he had come back and been rebuked by her for leaving her alone to worry, had replied that she should not be uneasy about him and that he would fool her worse than that some time. Nice guy.

Some nice tidbits were found in this case file that validated some of my theories about Henry. Henry's name was Aldolphus L. H. Hodge, "more commonly called by the name Henry Hodge", he had two daughters with Ailcey, one named Emma who had died in infancy and one named Laura Llewellyn, who was 8 years old at the time of the divorce. He was already involved in the practice of medicine, even though his diploma from Nashville Medical College would not be obtained until 1889.

Very recently I have been researching Henry's activities in Brazoria County, Texas, and have found a tantalizing record indicating that Henry took a third wife between June 1902, when the divorce from Mary Frances was finalized, and October 31, 1902, when he executes a deed to his present wife "Mary Anna Hodge". The hunt is on for record of this marriage.

Henry was not the only intriguing character in the Hodge family. Earlier this year I learned of a divorce petition that had been filed involving Henry's parents. Pursuing that record led me down a very interesting trail.

John Hodge actually filed three times for a divorce from his wife Mary, also known as Polly, before he finally got his freedom. The first petition indicates that Polly was a difficult person to live with, but it was the papers filed in the second pass through divorce court that contained the bombshell.

In 1874, Polly and their son James, Henry's older brother, were subjected to a lunacy inquest, adjudged by the court to be lunatics, and ordered confined to the Western State Lunatic Asylum in Hopkinsville, Kentucky. Included with the second and third case files are numerous depositions by relatives and neighbors detailing Mary's behavior leading to the commitment. There was no doubt in anyone's mind that she had detested her husband for the majority of their marriage, but her behavior had recently deteriorated to such a degree that the consensus was she was no longer in her right mind and should be confined. The third divorce case file includes a statement by the superintendent of the asylum to the effect that recovery was unlikely for Mary's deranged mind.

Until now I had assumed that Mary had died prior to John's remarriage in 1878. With this new information, I went back to the census records and found Mary as an inmate of the hospital in 1880. James is not listed.

The State of Kentucky has sealed all records pertaining to mental health and we are now exploring the possibility of getting a court order to release the records for Mary and James so that we might have closure for their stories.

More court case files involving John and Henry are still to be ordered (you are limited to ordering one at a time from the state archives). As each arrives, I begin to analyze for more clues. The stories of John and Mary/Polly and their sons promises to get even more interesting in the coming months.

**McAfee**

Newspaper research continues to bring new material into the family archives. This item recently surfaced about the son of Frank and Cora (McAfee) Rose. Cora was the daughter of Albert and Mary (Brock) McAfee and half-sister to Nettie Mason. Frank was the brother of Charles Jefferson Rose, Nettie's first husband.

**Rescue Try Believed Fatal**

Special to The Light  
**KENEDY**—Police have theorized here Alvin Rose, 60-year-old dairy worker, died in last Tuesday's flood while attempting to save a woman trapped by floodwaters in her auto. Investigators Friday had found Rose's auto in a creek located several hundred yards up Highway 70 from an auto driven by Mrs. John Berry, 46. Police said Rose apparently stalled his auto at one creek and was walking down the road when he came across the stalled Berry car. Mrs. Berry, however, also drowned. They were both Kennedy residents.

*The San Antonio Light*  
 October 28, 1960

**Mason**

This item was a pleasant surprise found in the *Courier* in 1945:



*The Elgin Courier*  
 April 5, 1945

Seaman First Class and Mrs. Willard Kunkel are expected to arrive soon for a 20-day visit with Seaman Kunkel's parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Kunkel. Married in November at Baker, Oregon, this will be Mrs. Kunkel's first visit in Elgin.

Willard was the son of Ellen and John Kunkel and grandson of Burl and Nettie Mason.

**Mobley**

John Henry Mobley, son of Hezekiah Mobley, must have been quite the character. In scanning the *Elgin Courier* newspaper CDs as each new year is released, I love to stop and read the weekly column written by John Henry about the events in the Fair Oaks Community in the early 1900s. The column is always full of the activities of the Mobley cousins, but John Henry was also a storyteller and would close some of his columns with the fictional activities of "Bill". One of the latest CDs is for the year 1918 and John Henry had

quite a few things to say to the Kaiser.

On March 15, 1918, a John Henry Mobley story turned up in a letter to the editor, written by "T. P. Blueeye", who I suspect may have been as fictional as Bill:

*McDade, March 11*

*Here is a true story which occurred near the home of Mr. J. H. Mobley, the philosopher of Fair Oaks, and as I am afraid he will not tell about it in his letter, I will relate it.*

*Mr. Mobley's dog treed something out in his pasture and was wildly barking. His son Burnice went to the dog expecting to find a mole or salamander, but soon came running and jumping barb wire fences, and told his father, who had just returned from a visit to the Knobbs, that he had found a rainbow down where the dog was barking, and added "I have always been told that at the end of the rainbow is a sack of gold".*

*J.H.M. grabbed a big meat box and ran down to the worried dog; he pulled out the bulk from the earth, threw it in his box and started home with his treasure. He had not gone very far when he threw the box down and said, "Son, that thing is alive and is getting bigger and heavier; go quick for Mr. Smith". When he looked up and saw Burnice in a tree, he said, "Stay up there, son, and I will go get him myself."*

*When they returned and investigated they found the mysterious thing to be one of those odd looking creatures, an armadillo. J.H.M. said, "Well, he is the color of gold anyway, so I will just simply take him home with me and he shall have a home as long as I live". But behold, when the sun went down the armadillo tore out of the box and returned to his happy home in the woods.*



## FOR PEACE ON EARTH★BUY WAR BONDS

From a 1943 newspaper ad. Rather ironic concept, don't you think?

### Our Boys in Service

The Elgin newspapers are a great source of information about the local boys who fought in the World Wars. Letters written home from abroad were brought in to the newspaper by parents and shared with the community. Casualties were front page news that hit the entire area hard.

During the years of World War II, a weekly column ran in the *Elgin Courier* entitled "Elgin's Roll of Honor" and would feature profiles of one or more of their boys in service.

On June 10, 1943, Herbert, Madison, Terrell and Osborn Cottle, four grandsons of John Henry and Dollie Mobley, and the great-grandsons of Hezekiah and Sarah Mobley were featured. On June 24, 1943, Willard Kunkel, grandson of Burl and Nettie Mason had his turn. On October 19, 1944, the three Hawthorne boys were in the spotlight. Wayne, Fayette and Winifred were the grandsons of George and Figgers Mobley, and the great-grandsons of Joseph and Mary Caroline Mobley.



### MOTHER GIVES FOUR SONS— THREE IN SERVICE AND A FOURTH IN DEFENSE WORK



HERBERT



TERRELL



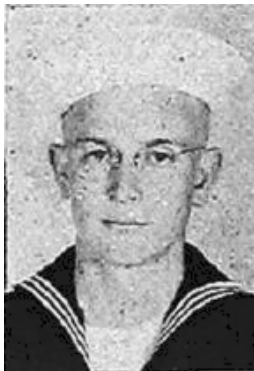
OSBORN

Pfc Herbert S. Cottle reported for active duty at Fort Sam Houston on December 18, 1942, and on December 26<sup>th</sup> left there for Sheppard Field, near Wichita Falls, where on February 21, 1943, he entered Technical Training School. He says this school is interesting and prepares the men for a special job to help speed the day when they can all return home to work and play as usual. He likes Wichita Falls and has made many nice friends there and at Sheppard Field, where he is still stationed. Pfc. Cottle is the son of the late Rev. H. H. Cottle and Mrs. Cottle, and has two other brothers in the service, and a third brother, Madison Cottle, is a welder and is engaged in Defense Work, at San Benito, Texas, at present.

Cpl. Terrell S. Cottle, youngest son of Mrs. Cottle, entered service April 2, 1942, and was stationed at San Antonio for a few days, then sent to Fort Francis E. Warren, Wyoming. In May, 1942, he came back to Texas to attend Normoyle MMTS at Normoyle Motor Base for six weeks and when he had completed his training there was sent to Oregon, in July, to the newly completed Camp White and was with the first soldiers to arrive there. He likes the west coast country and has enjoyed seeing much of the beautiful scenery out there. He has just recently been in the Redwood district of California and says those grand and mammoth trees are all that we read of them and more—a marvelous sight to behold.

Pfc. George Osborn Cottle enjoys the USO entertainments and the Sunday services held for soldiers by the different churches, wherever he is stationed and attends regularly.

Osborn was called to the army February 20, 1942, reporting to San Antonio. After a few days he was transferred to Camp Crowder, Missouri, and from there was sent to Duncan Field, Texas, on May, 1942. He later was transferred to Orlando, Florida, his present location. He was home the last of February, 1943, on a 10-day furlough. Osborn likes army life but still thinks there's no place like home!



Willard Eugene Kunkel Sea 2c, of Farragut, Idaho, volunteered and entered the U. S. Navy in March, this year. He is receiving his boot training in Idaho and was very lucky to receive a leave late in May, after only ten weeks in service, and came home unannounced for a visit with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Kunkel. He likes his station and is well pleased with life in the navy. A letter received Monday advised that he had been transferred to California and was at present a patient in the Oakland hospital, but getting along nicely.

Young Kunkel attended the local schools.



Tec.-5 Fayette E. Hawthorne, second son of Mr. and Mrs. Hawthorne, volunteered for the armed service September 23, 1942. He was placed with the Medical Corps and received his first training at Camp Berkeley, Texas. He was then sent to San Antonio for a 3-months course and then to New Orleans for more training in a Medical Station Hospital. In April, 1943 he was sent to Fort McClellan, Ala. In December, he went to General Hospital at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and on July 22, 1944, left for overseas.



Pfc. Wayne W. Hawthorne of McDade was inducted in the armed services February 13, 1942. He took his basic training at Camp Crowder, Missouri and was sent to Esler Field, La., Air Base in April of 1942. where he remained until December, 1943, when he was transferred to the Air Base at Laurel, Miss. He was married February 23, 1944, while at home on furlough to Miss Emmie Wheelless, of Lexington, Texas. He is now in Key Field AAF, Meridian, Miss, having been transferred there in May, 1944.

Pfc. Hawthorne is the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Hawthorne, of Giddings.



Winifred L. Hawthorne, the youngest brother of the trio, chose the navy. He entered service in April of 1943 and took two months boot training at San Diego, California, from which place he was sent to the South Pacific. His rating is seaman second class.

All three of the brothers attended school at Paige, Texas, and were reared on a farm between Paige and Bastrop, where their parents lived many years, moving to Lee County when their farm was needed as part of the Camp Swift reservation.

Military records are a rich source of information for the genealogist, particularly the pension applications for the men who served in the Civil War and their widows. The draft registration cards of 1918 have filled in blanks for many birth dates and places. The World War II enlistment records have recently been added to the records available through online services. Access to these records and news items has added much color to my files for these families.

We have these and many more in our family who have served their country in military service. Some are in active service today.

Always stop for a minute on Memorial Day and Veterans Day and consider the contributions our ancestors and relatives have made during the major military conflicts and be proud to be related to them! From the Revolutionary War to the current conflict in Iraq, our family has been represented in the armed forces.



***How many genealogists does it take to change a light bulb?***

***Answer: 5***

***1 to check the packaging and determine when and where the light bulb was born.***

***1 to look up the census tables for bulbs living near by with a similar name***

***1 to take a digital photograph of the bulb, post it to the Internet and ask if anyone recognizes it.***

***2 to argue whether the spelling is light-bulb or lite-bulb***

### *On the Road Again*

This past April, my travel buddy Lana and I made another research road trip, this time to parts of Alabama, Tennessee and Kentucky. We traveled through Lauderdale County, Alabama, where the Huddlestons lived for several years. We visited the Shiloh battlefield, where Charles McAfee (Albert's brother) fought on the side of the Union, was captured and spent 3 months as a prisoner of war. We then headed north, cutting through Tennessee and making our way to the ancestral home of the Hodge family in Crittenden County, Kentucky. Cousin Marty Hodge, who descends from John's brother Asel, is a police officer in Marion, Kentucky, and treated us to a personally conducted tour of the cemeteries where his and my ancestors are buried and other points of Hodge his-

torical interest. One of the highlights for me was getting to stand on the banks of Claylick Creek. In fact, I slipped in the mud and came very close to being baptized in its waters. The original land grants obtained by the Hodge and Reese patriarchs almost always reference Claylick Creek as one of the boundaries. I felt like I was visiting hallowed Hodge ground, which, by the way, consists of beautiful, green, rolling pastures bordering that burbling water. Somehow, I felt right at home.

Marty has become a central clearing house for Hodge research and has been diligently acquiring copies of original records for all the families that tie in to the William Hodge line. It is his efforts and the help of a professional genealogist who works in the area, Brenda Joyce Jerome, that have been so instrumental in the recent

escalation of my Hodge research. I don't know what I would have done without them and their specialized knowledge of the records in Western Kentucky. It would have taken me many months and possibly years to acquire all the records they've helped me locate over the past few weeks.

Marty has established a great web-site containing a wealth of information on the Hodge family. Be sure and visit <http://henryhodge.com/>, and tell him Cindy sent you.

We have not planned any out of state research trips in this next year, but rather have decided to spend a year taking care of some Texas research issues that have long been simmering on the back burner. You can bet that at each stop we will be checking to see if Henry Hodge passed through!



*Cousins Marty Hodge and Cindy Wilcoxon  
On the banks of Claylick Creek, near Marion, Kentucky*

### Ninety Years Ago

The economy is certainly at the forefront of the news these days. I went back to the memoirs of my grandmother Lucy Mason Hodge and found a story that gives a good contrast between now and 1919, just after World War I.

“Dad bought our first car in 1919 or 1920. It was called a Ford touring car. The wheels had wooden spokes. The gas tank was under the front seat. When you got gas, everyone had to get out and stand back, the gas fumes were so strong. It was several years after we got our first car that you could get gas except in Bastrop. We had the only car in the county.

“There was no battery or starter. Sometimes you could have walked wherever you were going before you could get the thing started. It cost him \$400 new. (*Note: that would be about \$5000 in today's dollars.*) Gas anywhere from 7 to 10 cents a gallon. (*About \$.83 to \$1.19 today.*) When you had a flat you stopped and patched the tube. No one thought of carrying a spare. But you better be sure to carry plenty patching...”

“I can remember when few country people used banks. They kept their money hid around the house. It was all silver coins. My folks had gallon buckets that they kept the money in. They had holes dug up under the house. I can remember crawling under the house and putting the bucket in a

hole and smoothing the dirt over it. (*After the last few months, that doesn't sound like such a bad idea.*) In the fall when the cotton and calves were sold, there would be several buckets of silver dollars at a time.

After we got our first car, they started using the bank in Bastrop. But it was some time before they used checks. In the fall when we would have people picking cotton, Dad would have to go to Bastrop on Friday and get money to pay the pickers at quitting time. He had a sack that Mother made, about a foot square, with a drawstring top. Made from cotton sacking. He would take it to the bank and get the cash in silver dollars. After more people got cars and could go to town, they began to use checks.”



*Annie Mae Mason Byrum and Jim Byrum in front of a car about the right vintage. Could this be that Ford touring car?*

### What's Next?

For the present, the newsletter will continue on an annual basis, though I hope at some point to increase the frequency of their appearance. I am pondering just how to proceed on documenting the John and Henry Hodge story and at the moment I don't know if that will be through special edition newsletters or a booklet

you will be able to order from me. I'll keep you posted.

Many of you know that I maintain a web log (blog) called *Woolgathering* where I spout off about various and sundry topics. Everyone is welcome to come join the fun, but I warn you – there's no telling what you will find me talking about.

Recently I started a second blog that is dedicated to genealogy topics. On *Build-*

*ing Blocks*, you will find bios, obituaries, photos, and miscellaneous family history articles. I hope you will visit.

*Woolgathering:*

[www.lswilcoxen.blogspot.com/](http://www.lswilcoxen.blogspot.com/)

*Building Blocks:*

[lswilcoxenlegacy.blogspot.com/](http://lswilcoxenlegacy.blogspot.com/)

See you next year, same time, same place. And, if you come across any old photos or old family papers that need a good home, give me a holler!

### Honorable Discharge From the United States Army

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to Certify, That Jesse J. McAfee A.S. 2230019  
Prvt 1st Cl. Inf. Unassgn'd (Art. 1st Cl.) Co. 15th 39th Inf. Camp Sherman, O.)  
as a Testimonial of **HONEST AND FAITHFUL SERVICE**, is hereby **HONORABLY DISCHARGED**  
from the military service of the **UNITED STATES** by reason of Auth. Cont. in Cir. 106  
W.O. 1919 for cons. of Govt. per to.

Said Jesse J. McAfee was born in Austin  
in the State of Texas. When enlisted he was 29 1/2 years of age and by  
occupation a Farmer. He had Blue eyes, Light hair, Light  
complexion, and was 5 feet 10 inches in height.

Given under my hand at Camp Bowie Texas  
this 21 day of January one thousand nine hundred and Nineteen

Jack Shelton  
Major Inf. Comdg Casual Camp No. 2  
Camp Bowie, Texas

#### Enlistment Record

Name: Jesse J. McAfee Grade: Prvt. 1st Cl.  
Inducted Sept. 21, 1917, at Prairie Texas W.H.  
Serving in First  
enlistment period at date of discharge. Prior service None

Noncommissioned officer: None

Marksmanship, gunner qualification or rating Not Qualified

Horsemanship Not Mounted Battles, engagements, skirmishes, expeditions:

A.G.F. May 10, 1918 to Dec 30, 1918  
Chattanooga & Sherry Aug. 15, 1918

Knowledge of any vocation: Farmer Wounds received in service: Gun Shot Wound Left  
Foot in St. Paul, 15-1918

Physical condition when discharged: Good Typhoid prophylaxis completed Oct 15, 1917

Paratyphoid prophylaxis completed Oct 15, 1917 Married or single: Single

Character: Very Good

Remarks: Soldier Honorably Discharged for cons. of Govt.  
per to Auth. Cont. in Cir. 106, 1919  
No A.W.O.B. or absence under 30, 31/2 or 45/4

Signature of Soldier:  
Jesse J. McAfee

J.W. Curtis  
Capt. Inf. U.S.A.

Commanding Co. Camp Bowie

Jessie J. McAfee was the son of Albert and Mary (Brock) McAfee. He survived the horrors of World War I, having served in France where he was wounded, only to die from typhoid shortly after his return home.