
FAMILY *Reunion*

News for Descendants of Henry Hodge, Joseph Mobley, Burl Mason & Albert McAfee

In This Issue: *Desperately Seeking Elmo...*

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Update--Huddleston

Since the article printed in the Summer 1998 issue, I have obtained new information on the Civil War service record of George Washington Huddleston.

According to the Confederate Pension Application filed by George's widow, Mary, George Huddleston served as a Private in Company F, 12th Regiment, of the Arkansas Infantry. He enlisted on July 26, 1861, and apparently served until his parole as a prisoner of war in July 1863.

The 12th Arkansas Infantry was organized at Arkadelphia, saw its first service at Fort Donelson, Tennessee, and was surrendered after the battle of Fort Donelson in February of 1862. Though Col. Gantt was confined as a prisoner, the men of the 12th were exchanged and reorganized at Jackson, Mississippi.

After the exchange of Col. Gantt, he resumed com-

mand of the 12th and was assigned to the garrison of Island 10 near New Madrid, Missouri, which fell in April of 1862. Again the men of the 12th were made prisoners of war. Some escaped, including G. W. Huddleston.

Eventually the 12th was exchanged and reorganized again and assigned the defense of Port Hudson, Louisiana, in October, 1862. Port Hudson fell in July 1863, and the enlisted men and noncommissioned officers taken prisoner were paroled. The officers, however, were sent to prison camp and the 12th Arkansas never reorganized after that.

G. W. Huddleston is one of the men listed as paroled at Port Hudson in July 1863.

Did you know?

The name *de Hodelston*, from which *Huddleston* is derived, originated in Yorkshire, England. Its literal meaning is "of the manor of Hod".

Family Calendar

April

Birthdays:

- 5 - Tyler Hodge
- 5 - Cindy Wilcoxn
- 11 - Taylor Rebecca Hodge
- 24 - Bettye Hodge Patton

May

Anniversaries:

- 4 - H.G. & Gail Hodge

Birthdays:

- 3 - Luther Dale Butler
- 5 - Lori Hodge Milburn
- 10 - Katie Elizabeth Milburn
- 10 - Jeffrey Ging
- 19 - Linda Hodge Ging
- 20 - Gail Maroney Hodge

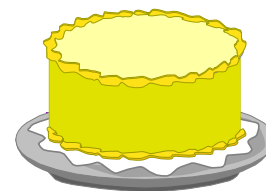
June

Anniversaries:

- 6 - Keri & Charles Pekar

Birthdays:

- 12 - Glenn Ging
- 13 - Larry Hodge



Searching for Elmo

I have many intriguing research projects simmering on the back burners of my genealogy stovetop. One of these is the *Mysterious Case of Elmo Elijah Hodge*.

Elmo lived only a brief 25 years, but his story is one of the first things I would like to get settled at that big family reunion in the great beyond. Official records of Elmo's life are scarce, but those I have found only make me more curious about this young man.

Elmo Elijah Hodge was born on August 1, 1884, in Cistern, Texas, the first-born of Henry Hodge and Mary Frances Huddleston. His sisters, Mollie and Rosa were also born in Cistern, in 1885 and 1888. I have found no official record of Elmo's birth, but Rosa filed a delayed birth certificate in later years, which substantiates the family's presence in Cistern.

Due to the unfortunate destruction of the 1890 federal census, the first official record I have for Elmo is the 1900 census. He is shown at age 16 in the home of his parents in

Bastrop County. Mention of his father's medical practice is made in the book *History of Paige*, by Doris Goerner Laake, indicating that the family resided there from 1898 to 1902.

In 1902, Mary Frances Huddleston Hodge filed for and obtained a divorce from her husband Henry and moved with her children from Paige to be near Huddleston family in Caldwell County.



Elmo Hodge

Elmo next appears of record in November 1904 when he executed a release of lien in Bastrop County as an heir of Henry Hodge. In 1905, Elmo and his sister Rosa executed a property conveyance in Fisher County, Texas, again as heirs of Henry Hodge. I have so far found no evidence that the family

ever actually resided in Fisher County, but I also have found no evidence to suggest why the family owned property so far from Bastrop County.

On November 26, 1905, Elmo married Cora Amanda Mobley at McDade, Texas. Presumably they would have met while the Hodges lived in Paige. Perhaps he even attended school or church at Ridgeway, where Cora's father was pastor.

I am not sure where the newlyweds set up their home, but their first child, Fayth, was born October 23, 1906, in Cedar Creek. Also in 1906 and 1907, Elmo and Rosa executed two more property conveyances in Fisher County. One deed tantalizingly refers to him as "Elmore". A clerical error or another clue?

The 1907 deed was executed at Del Valle, which confirms the family tradition that Elmo and Cora lived in Del Valle for a time. I have been told that Elmo worked as a store clerk.

Probably during 1907 is when the marriage began to crumble. Cora reportedly did not care for motherhood, or possibly

childbirth, and made the edict that there would be no more children. Mother Nature being the jokester she is, Cora became pregnant with Horace in 1908. What was done was done, but Cora made sure it wasn't going to happen again and went home to Mother.

One can only speculate about what transpired between the two at this point, but on December 28, 1908, Elmo enlisted in the U.S. Navy. And here is where the story gets really interesting.

In my early naive days of genealogy research, I discovered that you could request copies of service records from the National Archives. In a wild burst of enthusiasm I sent away for several service records. The first few I received popped my little bubble. A few meager lines that told me nothing more than I already knew. I wrote it off as a waste of money.

Until Elmo's records arrived, that is. The thick packet I received on Elmo Hodge justified all the money I had spent at the Archives.

No explanation is to be found in the file regarding

how the Navy discovered that the man who enlisted on December 28, 1908, at Denver, Colorado, under the name of Frank Stanford, was in fact Elmo Hodge. One might surmise that the discovery was made after examining the personal effects of Frank Stanford upon his death on March 10, 1909. In fact, a diary was returned to the widow Cora Hodge, who destroyed it. (Boy would I like to have access to that little book. It would probably answer all my questions.)

At any rate, most of the documents in the file pertain to the widow's application for survivor benefits and always refer to the deceased as "Elmo Hodge, alias Frank Stanford".

As Frank Stanford, Elmo signed up for a 4-year hitch as an apprentice seaman. He was assigned to the *Pensacola* and stationed at the U.S. Naval Training Station in San Francisco, California.

Twenty-four hours before his death, he was taken ill with symptoms indicating obstruction of the intestines. Surgery was performed, but

gangrene had already set in and death came swiftly. An autopsy was performed which indicated that he had suffered previous attacks of that nature. As the cause of death was unrelated to his time in service, the widow's pension was denied.

A thorough physical description is included in the file, indicating that Elmo stood 6 feet, with blue eyes and light brown hair. Also included is a detailed account of the size and location of all physical markings, such as moles.

One intriguing bit of data included is the name of "next of kin": Robert F. Stanford, an uncle, of Comanche, Texas. None of my research efforts have turned up any information on such a person, leaving me to wonder if this information was fabricated or if there is indeed a family connection to pursue. I have located some Huddlestons who settled in the Comanche area, but I'm still looking for that elusive Stanford family.

Identification of the deceased was made by Elmo's brother-in-law, John Morgan Mobley. I

have wondered if Johnny actually viewed the body, or made the identification through examination of the personal effects.

In later years, Johnny would tell Horace Hodge that Elmo was the closest to a genius that he ever knew and how much he thought of him.

A rumor persisted in the family that Elmo did not die, but instead returned to Texas. Since it could be ruled out that the U.S. Navy would be part of a deception of that nature, I find that hard to believe. However, I have done a little research in that area. So far, I have found nothing to substantiate that possibility, though I was interested to find an “Elmer E. Hodges” who lived in Fisher County, Texas. Elmer was conveniently the same age as Elmo, Fisher County was a confirmed Hodge family connection, and the possibility that Elmo had switched identities with Frank Stanford at some point was a romantically appealing theory.

As entertaining as this scenario is to contemplate, I have one piece of solid evidence which does not

support the theory—the fact that Elmer is shown in the 1910 census of Fisher County, living with a brother, Homer. That evidence, along with my doubt that Uncle Johnny would have participated in such collusion, leads me to the conclusion that the facts are probably just as they appear. Not that I’ll stop poking around. A good researcher always keeps an open mind.

Remembering When... Killin’ Time

by Nettie Hodge West

Just a generation ago, country children grew up taking for granted the practice of harvesting not only vegetable crops but the animal crop as well: yearling calves, hogs, goats, lambs, poultry and wild game such as deer, rabbits, and squirrels.

When the weather turns cold each winter, it brings memories of the yearly hog butchering on our farm. We usually killed two hogs as soon as the weather could be depended on to hover near freezing for longer than a few days.

Dad had trouble killing anything. He would hire a neighbor to administer the fatal shot, after which he would slit the throat of the animal to bleed it.



*Horace Hodge &
helper Warner Brown*

Before the deed was done, two iron washpots of water would have been heated to the boiling point. The hot water would be transferred to a barrel tilted at an angle. The hog would be dipped in the water until the hair was loosened and could be scraped away from the skin with sharpened knives. It took strong men to hoist a full grown and well-fattened hog, but they managed it with rope, pulleys, and a conveniently placed tree limb.

Scraped clean of hair, the hog would be cut into pieces by those who knew how to divide it into usable portions. One job that seemed to fall to the women was that of cleaning the small intestines for use in stuffing sausages later. Mother always insisted on extra rinsing, washing, and scraping (with a dull knife). Anyone who sniffed these things at the first washing knew why. You could buy casings ready-cleaned at groceries but homemade ones were better. You knew they were cleaned and not full of holes. Some faint souls refused to eat them, but there is no other sausage casing as good as the real thing.



*Lucy Hodge & Mary Brown
hard at work, while Larry
Hodge watches*

My brother and I were talking recently about Dad's sausages. We agreed on how heavenly they tasted and how nice it was to see a sputtering platterful coming to the table to be eaten with hot, buttered biscuits and syrup. We'll never know that pleasure again.

Dad had no written recipe. He seasoned according to the weight of the meat and how it looked when it was just right. We have tried many others, but none has ever matched the ones Dad made. I have the old sausage grinder he used, but have not the know-how to use it.

Of course, not all the meat was made into sausage. There were ribs, hams, shoulders, jowls, middlings, loin, backbones, and others. Some parts we did not use, such as the liver, heart, feet, tongue, lungs, and paunch. We fed these to the dogs, of which we always had two or three. We had one dog, Bobby, who would not touch raw meat. Mother always stuck a generous hunk of meat on a stick and cooked it over the fire for her. She could hardly wait for it to cool enough for eating.

The fresh meat was rubbed with heavy salt and

spices, and Morton's Sugar Cure, and much of it hung on racks in the smoke-house. Just about every homestead had a small building for this purpose. A smoky fire in a bucket or tub was kept burning for days, and soaked wood chips or corn cobs were added occasionally, until the meat was judged to be cured. Besides keeping insects away, the smoke added greatly to the flavor.

Nowadays the modern farmer or rancher takes his animals to the locker plant to be processed and quick-frozen. If you think I'm going to say that the old way was better, you are completely mistaken. It was hard work, done in miserably cold weather, and the only ones that really enjoyed it were the dogs.

Note: For a full discussion of hog dressing, see the *Foxfire Book #1*. The following recipe for sausage is not Dad's. It is taken from the *Foxfire Book of Appalachian Cookery*.

Sausage

10 pounds lean pork
¼ cup salt
½ cup brown sugar
2 tablespoons sage

2 teaspoons black pepper
2 teaspoons red pepper

Run meat and meat trimmings through sausage grinder. Mix in all ingredients well. With sausage stuffer on grinder, pack in sections of small intestine, tie off at both ends and hang from racks or joists of smokehouse for curing. It can also be packed in narrow clean white cloth sacks made by the farmer for this purpose.

Sign found at The Tap, Round Rock, Texas:

"When I die, I want to go peacefully in my sleep like my grandfather, not screaming in terror like the other people in his car."

..Lifted from John Kelso's column in the Austin American- Statesman

"Moral indignation is jealousy with a halo."

.....H. G. Wells

"A lot of people want to serve God, but only in an advisory capacity."

.....Debbie Macomber

"That it will never come again is what makes life so sweet."

.....Emily Dickinson

Traveling Texas - Part Deux

Larry Dale has been at it again. Fresh on your local bookstore shelves you should find his newest book on Texas travel, *Good Times in Texas, a pretty complete guide to where the fun is.*

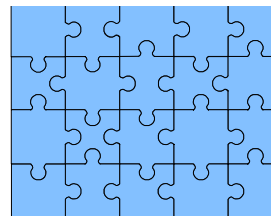
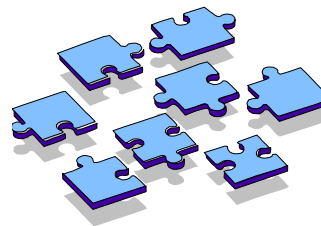
This time around he covers the odd and unusual sites and events that you may have overlooked in your travels around your home state and possibly your home town.

I'll give an A+ to anybody who provides me with the telephone number for Kris Kristofferson for that reason alone, but there is plenty here to interest everyone, even those poor souls who are not Kris converts. I have been inspired to plan a trip to visit the missions in San Antonio in the near future and I'm thinking of some other forays to places I didn't even know about until this book came along.

Also included along the way are healthy doses of that peculiar brand of humor which afflicts those of us with Hodge blood running through our veins. (Wonder which line contributed that to our genetic makeup?)

Hustle down and pick up your copy. If you have to order it, the ISBN number is 1-55622-685-3.

If there are other members in your family who would like to be added to my mailing list, I will be glad to do so. You can reach me by phone at (512) 303-0638, by mail at 803 Jefferson, Bastrop, TX 78602, or by e-mail at LWilcoxn@onr.com.



Acknowledgement: Much of the general information regarding Elmo & Cora Hodge was obtained through interviews with Lucy Mason Hodge conducted over a period of years.