

Family Reunion

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

*Editor, Lucinda Wilcoxon
Lwilcoxn@onr.com*

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Ghosts of Christmases Past

So do you remember when you still believed in Santa Claus? I can remember one Christmas when I was probably about five. I don't think David had come along just yet. We were in Elgin and were eating supper in the back room around that long table (where to escape from the after-supper talk, Linda and I used to crawl out under the table).

I can't remember which grownups left the supper table and went into the back bedroom to get things ready for our Christmas Eve opening of presents, but I remember the intriguing noises that began to issue from behind the connecting door. I think it was my father and my Uncle Richard who took us young ones out for a ride to keep us occupied.

Naturally, on the way back I was repeatedly told to "look over there" in the night sky. Santa's sleigh was always being spotted from the front seat, but I

was never quick enough to get a look for myself. (I think the same trick worked on me the next year, during an *afternoon* ride no less. I was either really gullible at that age or I was not the brightest crayon in the box at that point. But then I've always been inclined to suspend belief when it's in my best interest to do so.)

Well, that was a lot of Christmases ago. When I stop to think about it, I don't even remember when I became aware of the truth about Santa. Lately I've been getting regular visits from a crop of two-year-olds we have in the office family. It's a lot of fun to be exposed to all that trusting innocence. I truly envy all you grandparents and great-grandparents who are reliving the Santa years.



Cindy with friend ca. 1958

Feed Sack Dresses by Nettie Hodge West

My first sewing lesson involved printed feed sacks. During the war years some inspired person conceived the idea of placing feed for livestock and poultry in cotton sacks made of material printed in various designs, some in calm patterns and colors, others a bit garish. Country women either went along to the feed store to choose or took whatever came home as the man's choice. A 100 lb. sack only contained about one yard of cloth, so it was necessary to find matching sacks to make most garments.

Mother decided when I was a teenager that it was high time I learned to sew. Her machine was a Singer treadle that she purchased second hand but barely used when she and Dad married in 1930. She made practically all the family clothing except overalls on that machine, and pieced dozens of

quilts on it as well. Many of those quilts included feed sack pieces. The steel feed dogs under the needle of that machine are now worn smooth from use.

I was somewhat less than enthusiastic about the project she chose for me, a simple flared skirt of pink floral print with white trim on the pockets. I did not object to the pattern or the print. I was scared of that machine. Every time I had ever tried to use it to make doll clothes or hem cup towels, it had defeated me by running off the edge of the material, or by running backward and breaking the thread. A treadle machine involved using both hands and a madly peddling foot working together. And stopping together.

Hundreds of broken threads later, I had my skirt. I even wore it a few times, but I never boasted of having "made it myself". That was obvious.

That skirt was the only thing, the last thing, I ever made on that machine. Mother was no quitter, but she was too wise to pursue a hopeless goal.

Years later when I married and had a daughter of my own, I decided to learn to sew if

it killed me. I bought an electric machine, a stack of inexpensive material, and a half-dozen Simplicity patterns. I learned to sew on my own and became a competent and confident seamstress. Motivation is everything.

After Mother's death, my siblings and I had the task of clearing out the old homestead and dividing up the furnishings. Not one word of disagreement passed between us. Then we came to the old Singer machine. I wondered if this was it. Relief washed over me when my youngest sister expressed a desire to take it if no one objected. I had not wanted to see it sold for junk, but I had no wish to have it myself. Some things hold too many memories.

Odd Internet Finds

Can you do genealogy research effectively on the Internet? Well, yes and no.

While more and more records hit the Internet daily, you have to be very careful of the information you find. Anybody and everybody with access to a server has thrown their personal genealogical research up for anyone who

cares to look. Sometimes you get lucky and find someone who has taken the time to post their sources along with their data. Unfortunately these are the rarities.

Most of the information out there at this point is transcribed rather than scanned images of original records. Don't get me wrong—I use transcribed information all the time, but only as clues to find the sources that can convince me that the information is correct. Too many folks out there take short cuts in their research, or just make mistakes when they enter data into their files.

Imagine my surprise recently when I discovered that my Mason research, the first to make the connection with the Masons of Pike County, Indiana, has been liberally posted all over the Internet. And not by me. I don't really mind that, since I feel comfortable with the research conclusions I have drawn in that line. However, I was appalled to find that one lady has posted a total mishmash of the data I provided to several fellow Mason-researchers. I don't know if she's to blame or if the person who

provided her with the information made the booboo, but somewhere along the way someone sliced and diced my information and has ended up with Burl's sister Hulda marrying their brother John. Yikes. How many people will mistakenly take her data as gospel and continue to perpetuate the error?

Genealogy sometimes resembles the old gossip game. Every time a file is passed along, something gets left out, slightly altered, or downright mangled. So you have to be careful out there.

The good news is that more and more original records are landing on the Internet. *Ancestry.com* is busily loading up scanned images of census records. Unfortunately, access to the records is priced fairly steep. But if you watch for their periodic free access trial memberships (especially around major holidays), you can get a lot accomplished online. For those who don't have access to a library with census microfilm, the subscription price for their services might be easily justified.

Also available at *Ancestry*, for a fee, are scanned images of pension

index cards. The actual pension records are not available, but you get enough information to order the correct file from the National Archives.

Other original records are available from many and varied sources. The Bureau of Land Management has posted scans of federal land grants for many eastern states. Many of the volunteers of the *UsGenweb.org* are uploading many and varied images, from photos of tombstones to census records, to pension records, to newspaper articles, *ad infinitum*.

The Genweb volunteer site for Bastrop County, <http://www.rootsweb.com/~txbastro/bastrop.htm>, is a good example of what you can find on the Internet when you get lucky. The new coordinator is busily posting both transcribed records (cemetery surveys, for example) and scanned images, including Bastrop County census records, an early plat of the County showing property owners (including my Masons and Lentzes), and numerous newspaper articles of both general and specific interest. One thing I did not expect to find when I went poking around on the

Internet was the scanned image of an article on my great-great grandmother's 94th birthday. But there it was, waiting for me to wander by and discover it. A transcription follows this article.

So, can you do real genealogical research on the Internet? Yes. It takes careful screening of data, a lot of good luck, and a healthy dose of cynicism when you find a sudden opening in that brick wall. Nothing replaces good old-fashioned grunt work in the library. But, thanks to the Internet, you can come up with a whole lot of possibilities to explore that might have taken you years to find through ordinary means.

Bastrop Advertiser
March 29, 1934

CELEBRATES 94TH –
BIRTHDAY MAR 18

McDADE, TEXAS, March 22

Children, grand children, great-grandchildren and friends of Mrs. Mary Caroline Mobley met at her home in McDade on Sunday, March 18 to help her celebrate her birthday on which she reached the age of 94 years. The gathering was planned as a surprise to Mrs. Mobley who received a number of nice gifts.

At noon boxes of good things to eat began to appear, and soon everyone was invited to the heavily laden table which held

for a center piece a huge angel food cake holding 94 pink candles.

The afternoon was spent in conversation and in listening to Mrs. Mobley tell some of the experiences of her long life. She came to Texas from Georgia a few years after the close of the Civil War, and settled, with her husband and two children in Bastrop County. She is the mother of seven children, six of whom are living. However only three were present to help celebrate her birthday. Her husband was "Uncle Joe" Mobley, a pioneer Baptist minister [sic] of Bastrop County. He has been dead 20 years.

Mrs. Mobley is quite active and enjoys perfect health despite her advanced age.

Late in the afternoon everyone went home wishing Mrs. Mobley many more years of life and happiness.

Those present were: W. F. Mobley, Mrs. Tinae Mobley and two children of Red Rock; Mr. and Mrs. Travis Mobley of Round Rock; Mr. and Mrs. Richard Dickerson and three daughters of Giddings; Mr. and Mrs. H. G. Hodges [sic] and daughter; Mrs. Nettie Mason; Mr. and Mrs. D. M. Branton of Elgin; Mr. and Mrs. G. R. Mobley, Mr. and Mrs. Ira Mobley, Mrs. Cora Hodge, Mrs. W. P. Sims and four daughters, Mr. and Mrs. T. J. Branton and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Branton and daughter, Mrs. M. E. Allen and Burke Harris of McDade.

note: Mary Caroline Mobley would die the same year, on December 11th. Cause of death was given as "simply worn out". Her death was noted in

the Advertiser on December 13th and her obituary appeared December 20th. Following are the two articles, transcribed from microfilm on file at the Bastrop Public Library:

*Bastrop Advertiser
December 13, 1934*

ONE OF BASTROP COUNTY'S
OLDEST CITIZENS DIES
AT McDADE

Funeral services were held in McDade at eleven o'clock Wednesday morning, for Mrs. J. S. Mobley, 95. Burial was in the McDade Cemetery, with the Rev. Mr. Holt, pastor of the Baptist church, officiating. A short talk was made by Dr. T. B. Taylor, who for so many years had been a close friend of the family. Death came to this aged woman at six p.m. Tuesday.

Mrs. Mobley was born in Georgia but had lived in McDade for the past 64 years. Her husband, the late J. S. Mobley was a pioneer Baptist minister.

She is survived by four sons, one daughter, 45 grandchildren, and 35 great grandchildren.

At the time of her death she was probably the oldest woman in Bastrop County.

*Bastrop Advertiser
December 20, 1934*

**Funeral Services Held Wednesday
For Mrs. Mary Caroline Mobley**

Funeral services for Mrs. Mary Caroline Mobley, age 94, were held Wednesday, December 12, at 11 o'clock from the Baptist Church with the Rev. T. E. Holt and Rev. W. E. Bunton of Marble Falls

officiating. Dr. Taylor, Bastrop; also spoke on the admirable characteristics of the woman whose family physician and very close friend he had been for many years. Pall bearers were her six grandsons. Interment was in the McDade cemetery.

Mary Caroline Mobley, daughter of John and Amanda Morgan, was born in Coweta County, Georgia, March 18, 1840. She passed away at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Cora Hodge, with whom she had lived for many years, Tuesday, December 11, 1934, following an illness of five days with pneumonia. Tender and willing hands of her loved ones and the kindly administrations of a niece, who is a trained nurse, did all that was possible for her comfort during her illness. Mrs. Mobley was twice married; on March 6, 1862, to G. W. Sewell and on July 15, 1866 to J. S. Mobley with whom she came to Texas November 1870 and settled in Bastrop county which has been her home for 64 years. She was a member of the Baptist church and her husband who preceded her in death 21 years ago was a pioneer Baptist minister. A son, T. R. Mobley of Red Rock died in July 1928. She is survived by one brother, Wesley Morgan of Atlanta, Georgia, and the following children, R. A. Mobley, Burnet; J. M. Mobley, Marble Falls; Mrs. T. M. Fariss, Lake Victory [sic]; W. F. Mobley, Red Rock; Mrs. Cora Hodge and G. R. Mobley, McDade. Friends and relatives from other places attending the funeral were Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Mobley and children, Rev. W. S. Bunton, Rev. and Mrs. R. Mobley, Mr.

and Mrs. W. F. Mobley, Marble Falls; Mrs. T. M. Fariss, Mr. and Mrs. Earl Fariss, Mr. and Mrs. Guy Zimmerman, Burnet; Mr. and Mrs. Truitt Mobley and son, Bertram; Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Mobley, Spicewood; Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Mobley and son, Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Black and children, Mr. Oran Mobley, Red Rock; Mr. and Mrs. Sam Aust an daughter, Miss Cleo Mobley, Mrs. Henry Sellers, Mr. R. E. Lewis, Austin; Mr. J. W. Jackson an daughter, Miss Olivee Jackson, Elgin; Dr. T. B. Taylor, Bastrop.

Christmas Kitchen

Chili Cheese Log

2 parts Velveeta cheese
1 part cream cheese
chopped pecans
garlic powder to taste
chili powder

Soften cheeses. Mix Velveeta, cream cheese, garlic powder and chopped pecans until well blended. Form cheese mixture into a log shape. Roll in chili powder until well covered. Serve with crackers.

Lucy Hodge's Orange Slice Cake

2 cups sugar
1 cup Crisco
4 eggs
1 tsp. soda
3½ cups flour
½ cup buttermilk
1 lb. dates, chopped
1 lb. orange slice candy,

cut into pieces
1 cup coconut
1 cup pecans, broken

Mix together sugar and Crisco. Add eggs, 1 at a time. Add dry ingredients and buttermilk and mix well. Stir in dates, candy, coconut and pecans. Pour into greased & floured tube pan.

Bake at 325 degrees for 1½ hours or until done. Glaze while still warm.

Glaze:

1 cup orange juice
½ tsp. rum extract
½ tsp. vanilla
2 cups powdered sugar
(Note: this makes a lot of glaze. Be careful or it will be all over the cabinet and the floor, as well as the cake. And it's the dickens to clean up. Guess how I know?)

Snickerdoodles

(Christmas without a batch of Snickerdoodles on hand might as well be skipped altogether.)

Sift together:
2¾ cups flour
2 tsp. cream of tartar
1 tsp. soda
1/8 tsp. salt

Cream 1 cup shortening and 1½ cups sugar. Add 2 eggs, beat well. Add dry

ingredients and blend well. Chill dough for 2 hours.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease cookie sheet.

Combine in small bowl:
2 T. sugar
2 tsp. cinnamon

Roll dough into small balls, dip in sugar mixture and place on baking sheet. Bake 10-12 minutes. (Cookie should appear slightly under done.) Cool on rack.

Makes 52 cookies, using small cookie scoop. Keep in tightly sealed container.

Christmas Fragrance

(non-edible recipe)
1 ginger root, split
3 cinnamon sticks
16 whole cloves
1 tsp. allspice
1½ T. pickling spice
2 bay leaves

Add all ingredients to 1 quart of water. Simmer on stove to fill your house with fragrance. Add water as needed.

Riddle Me This

What is greater than God,
More evil than the Devil,
The poor have it,
The rich want it,
And if you eat it, you'll die?

Answer, page 6

A Fine Looking Couple

Late October brought a package from Cousin Ray Burch in California. He sent several pictures, including this one of his parents, Rosa Mae Hodge and Lorie Owen Burch:



This is a wedding portrait of the young couple, taken in 1910. As you will recall, Rosa was the sister of our Elmo Hodge.

Rosa and Lorie had five sons: Ray Owen (my e-mail penpal), Edwin Booth, Luther Vance, John Lorie and Herbert Hodge. The family moved from Texas to California in the early 1930s.

Lorie Burch died in 1962 and is buried in Del Valle, Texas. Rosa died

in 1983 in Long Beach, California.

As always, if there's someone in your family that would like to be on my mailing list, drop me a line. I can be reached by e-mail at Lwilcoxn@onr.com, or by snail mail at 137 Briar Forest Dr., Bastrop, Texas 78602.

Riddle answer: *nothing*

Matthew 1

¹*These are the ancestors of Jesus Christ, a descendant of King David and of Abraham;*
²*Abraham was the father of Isaac; Isaac was the father of Jacob; Jacob was the father of Judah and his brothers.*
³*Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah (Tamar was their mother); Perez was the father of Hezron; Hezron was the father of Aram;*
⁴*Aram was the father of Amminadab; Amminadab was the father of Nahshon; Nahshon was the father of Salmon;*
⁵*Salmon was the father of Boaz (Rahab was his mother); Boaz was the father of Obed (Ruth was his mother); Obed was the father of Jesse;*
⁶*Jesse was the father of King David. David was the father of Solomon (his mother was the widow of Uriah);*
⁷*Solomon was the father of Rehoboam; Rehoboam was the father of Abijah; Abijah was the father of Asa;*
⁸*Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat; Jehoshaphat was the father of Joram; Joram was the father of Uzziah;*

⁹*Uzziah was the father of Jotham; Jotham was the father of Ahaz; Ahaz was the father of Hezekiah;*
¹⁰*Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh; Manasseh was the father of Amos; Amos was the father of Josiah;*
¹¹*Josiah was the father of Jechoniah and his brothers (born at the time of the exile to Babylon).*
¹²*After the exile: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel; Shealtiel was the father of Zerubbabel;*
¹³*Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud; Abiud was the father of Eliakim; Eliakim was the father of Azor;*
¹⁴*Azor was the father of Zadok; Zadok was the father of Achim; Achim was the father of Eliud;*
¹⁵*Eliud was the father of Eleazar; Eleazar was the father of Matthan; Matthan was the father of Jacob;*
¹⁶*Jacob was the father of Joseph (who was the husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ the Messiah).*

