

Family Reunion



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

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Going to Mecca

Every genealogist has the goal to someday get to Salt Lake City and take advantage of the fantastic resources of the main Family History Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. It took several years of planning, but my friend Lana and I finally got our wish and spent a week in April researching ourselves into a stupor.

It's hard to explain the library in Salt Lake. It has to be experienced. There is no other library in the United States that has so many genealogical records available in one location. The first day will boggle the mind as you try to figure out just where to go first. There are four floors in the main building containing thousands of books and reels of microfilm. Down the street in another building is another full floor—half of it containing nothing but family histories and half containing book after book of family group sheets that have been placed on file by members of the Church. Quite a smorgasbord of

research opportunities. And in addition to yourself there are several hundred fellow researchers on site, bringing to mind a very busy ant hill.

The trip was a huge success, even though I came back twice as tired as when I left. With only a couple of afternoons off for sight-seeing, we really worked ourselves down and I, for one, am still sorting out the material I copied and brought back with me—about a 5-inch stack of paper.

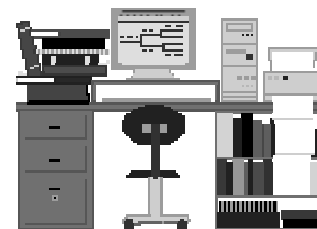
The busiest and most profitable day for me was the next-to-last day when I began to uncover a series of deed transactions involving our Hodge ancestors in Kentucky. Terrified that I would not be able to get it all in the short time left, I stayed glued to a microfilm reader from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., only breaking for meals. I don't recommend this kind of activity for relaxation on your next vacation. You have to be a genealogy addict to put yourself through that kind of torture.

But it paid off and I was able to prove that several of my Hodge descent theories

were correct, which made all that hard work worthwhile.

I came back with material on all my research lines, making the week a most satisfying experience. We also ate some good food, saw the Mormon Tabernacle Choir rehearse, and rode the mass transit line to get in a little shopping. We're already planning a repeat trip and next time we'll be old pros at finding our way around.

This issue we'll cover a small portion of the new information I picked up for the Hodge line. It all started when I decided to find out what property our Henry Hodge owned in 1870 that the census taker valued at \$2500 for real estate and \$600 for personal property. I also was hoping to find out his middle name. I thought I would be looking at a couple of deeds. Little did I know....



A reminder of the Hodge line of descent:

Henry Hodge Sr. & Catherine Bryant
 ↓
William Hodge & Nancy Josephine Dancy
 ↓
John A. Hodge & Mary Ann Reese
 ↓
Henry A. L. Hodge & Mary Frances Huddleston
 ↓
Elmo Elijah Hodge & Cora Amanda Mobley
 ↓
Horace Hodge & Lucy Mason

Henry Adolphus, or Adolphus Henry?

When I first started researching our Hodge line, I had very little to work with. I knew the name of my great-grandfather Elmo, that he had two sisters, Rosa and Mollie, and that he had died while in service the same year that his son Horace was born. Rosa's family had moved to California and contact with her family had been lost. Mollie had died young, unmarried. We descendants of Elmo were all that was left of our particular Hodge line in Texas.

My first move was to order Elmo's service records. (See *Family Reunion* Vol 2, No. 2). From those records I learned that Elmo was born in Cistern, Fayette County, Texas. On a trip through

LaGrange I stopped at the courthouse, hoping to find Elmo's birth certificate. No record for Elmo was found, but I did find a delayed birth certificate for his sister Rosa. (A delayed birth certificate turns up for those folks who were born prior to the onset of State record keeping. When Social Security came on the scene and the first generation to qualify for benefits began to need proof of their birth, many filed delayed birth certificates. These delayed birth certificates can provide some bonuses. Included will be affidavits from persons who can swear to the facts of the birth. In the case of my Grandfather Wilcoxon, the affidavit was signed by his own mother.)

Rosa's certificate gave me my first knowledge of her and Elmo's parents, Henry Hodge and Mary Frances Huddleston. The hunt was on.

From family tradition, I knew Henry Hodge was a doctor. I began to look for verification. The Texas Medical Association was able to provide me with a small obituary from their records that indicated that Henry Hodge had been born in Crittenden County, Kentucky, in about 1847. Next step was to check the 1850 census.

In the 1850 Crittenden County, Kentucky, census there is only one Henry Hodge listed. A two-year-old in the home of John and Mary Hodge. I took a huge leap of faith and decided this was probably my Henry. (I don't recommend these gut leaps of faith to other researchers because they generally don't work out.) I began to look around for records for John and Mary Hodge.

One of the next breaks I got came through an Internet message board reply from Barbara Knox, who has been researching our Hodge family line for years and who has published a Hodge family history. She centers her book on the line descending from Robert Hodge of Livingston County, Kentucky, the uncle of the John Hodge living in Crittenden County in 1850. She does not go into great detail on the collateral lines of Robert's brothers, but she does give a lot of detail on the previous generations and had enough information to definitely tie a Dr. Henry Hodge in Texas to the John Hodge I had found in the census. So far, so good, but she was unaware of a marriage to Mary Frances Huddleston or of any children born in Texas.

Going back to the census records, I trailed both John and Henry. In 1850, John & Mary Hodge and their two sons James and Henry are living in Crittenden County, Kentucky, directly adjacent to Livingston County, where John's uncle Robert owned a great deal of land and many slaves.

Following the family to 1860, John and Mary are still living in Crittenden County with their two sons. Two interesting facts surface with the 1860 census record: 1) Henry is shown with the middle initials "A. L.", and 2) James is shown with the status of "idiot", probably indicating a case of retardation.

In 1870, John and Mary are again in Crittenden County with son James, but son Henry has married and established his own household. He, wife "Aley" and daughter Laura are also in Crittenden County. An intriguing fact that comes from the 1870 census record concerns the value of property owned by Henry and John. In 1860 John was shown with real estate of \$3500 and in 1870 his real estate value had dropped to \$200. Henry, on the other hand, was in 1870 in possession of real estate valued at \$2500. In the back of my mind, I wondered whe-

ther John had conveyed his property to Henry.

It was when I discovered the 1870 census record that I began to question whether I was indeed on the correct trail of our Henry Hodge. Until now, I had no reason to suspect that Henry had been married prior to his marriage to Mary Frances Huddleston. And, in that part of Kentucky, Henry Hodges were about as common as John Smiths anywhere else in the country.

So I was prepared that day in Salt Lake when I sat down at the microfilm reader for the possibility that I had spent a number of years on a wild goose chase. Happily, I report that I found the proof I needed to tie all the loose ends together and make a complete picture from the pile of assorted puzzle pieces. And I found a few unexpected surprises as well.

My theory that John had transferred his property to Henry was proven correct in short order. In Volume D, Page 164, of the Deed Records of Crittenden County, Kentucky, is recorded the transfer of three parcels of property totaling approximately 220 acres from John A. Hodge to his "infant son Adolphus L. H. Hodge" in consideration of the "love and affection of the said John A. doth have

and hold toward my infant son". The deed was executed by both John and Mary Hodge on April 21, 1854, when Henry would have been about 5 years old. [Henry would transfer the property back to his father in 1870 for the consideration of \$1500. The 1870 transaction occurs between "Henry Hodge" and John A. Hodge, both of Crittenden County, Kentucky. All doubt is removed that these are the same parties and property due to the inclusion of a reference to the "Deed of Gift" in 1854 to Henry from John and Mary Hodge.]

So two of my initial goals were accomplished, and I had a new unknown. On the one hand, I had proof that John had transferred his property to his son and I knew the "A" stood for Adolphus. On the other hand, I had a new dilemma. Did I descend from Henry Adolphus L. Hodge or from Adolphus L. Henry Hodge?

My attention was soon diverted from that particular issue, however, when I noticed a secondary document that was filed with that 1854 Deed of Gift. On the same date of the property transfer in 1854, an agreement was executed between John A. Hodge and wife Mary to the effect that they would

no longer live together as man and wife, but live "separate" and "stay aloof the one from the other and never again recognizing each other as husband and wife". Mary agreed to "never become a charge" on John and to not look to him for any portion of her "support, maintenance or raiment". In return, John relinquishes all claim to any property which had come to his wife through her father **Elisha Reese**, and also relinquished all claims to the household, the kitchen furniture, and all cattle on the place (with the exception of one cow and calf), and also all the bacon in the meat house save 10 pounds.

Wow. Two surprises in one little piece of paper. Since John and Mary had continued to be counted together in the censuses through 1870, there had been no reason to expect this kind of information to surface. And I got a nice little confirmation of Mary's father, a man I had already penciled in on the family tree.

Returning to the Deed of Gift, one other item of note was an almost unreadable provision that the proceeds from a particular parcel of land were to be applied to the support of J. E. Hodge, "infant and idiot son of John and Polly Hodge", for as long as he lived. To

date, I have been unable to find any information on James Hodge's death. He disappears from record after the 1870 census.

When I got to the 1880 census, I discovered John had a new wife named Isabelle and a new infant son named Jewell Jackson. Also new to the household were two stepsons and a step-daughter. James and Henry are nowhere to be found in Crittenden County.

At this point I deduced that Mary Hodge had probably died, but I have not yet found any record of her death. (The last record I have for Mary is a Deed Record dated November 19, 1872, wherein "Polly Hodge, wife of John A. Hodge" relinquishes her dower rights to a parcel of land sold earlier by John and Henry.)

I also made what proved to be an erroneous deduction – that Henry and wife Aley had moved to Arkansas, where Henry would marry Mary Frances Huddleston in 1882.

The Deed Records of Crittenden County had another surprise in store for me.

Henry might have relocated to Arkansas, but Aley was alive and well in Crittenden County. In Volume N, Page 508, a deed dated December 20, 1877, conveyed a parcel of

land and a portion of crops and livestock from John A. Hodge to his daughter-in-law Ailcy B. Hodge and granddaughter Laura L. Hodge. In return, Ailcy B. Hodge agrees to dismiss her petition for alimony against certain Hodge lands. Surprise, surprise. Henry's first marriage ended in divorce.

This deed specifies that if Aley/Alcy/Ailcey remarries, the property is to transfer to her daughter Laura. However, Laura Hodge would die in 1885 and be buried with her sister Emma in the Union Church Cemetery. The land was transferred back to Henry Hodge after Laura's death by Ailcey and her second husband Robert Frizzell.

One more Deed Record helps tie all these little pieces together. On May 26, 1885, in Volume T, Page 90, John A. Hodge and wife Isabell E. Hodge of Crittenden County, convey 30 acres to Henry Hodge of Caldwell County, Texas, for the consideration of \$50 and the "love and affection said J. A. Hodge hath for his son", and also all rights in the lands occupied by Bell Frizzell and her husband Robt. B. Frizzell. At this point in time, the Huddleston family had moved to Caldwell County, Texas, which ties in

nically. But wait, there was more proof to come.

On November 1, 1885, a parcel of land is conveyed from Mrs. Josephine Elder to Henry Hodge, both of Crittenden County, Kentucky. This same land was transferred on December 10, 1888, by Henry Hodge and M. F. Hodge, his wife, to their two children Elmo E. Hodge and Mollie E. Hodge. Voila! The final proof I needed.

To make things even more interesting, and one can only speculate what their motivations were, this same parcel of land was transferred again on March 23, 1889, by Henry Hodge acting as trustee for "infant children Elmo E. Hodge and Mollie E. Hodge, all of the County of Taylor, Texas" to G. W. Huddleston of Caldwell County, Texas. The transfer was made in consideration of \$70, and the deed was notarized in Fayette County, Texas. The land would switch hands again on December 24, 1892, when Geo. W. Huddleston, of Caldwell County, Texas, transfers ownership to his grandson Elmo E. Hodge, of Caldwell County, Texas. The tract of land finally leaves the family on August 25, 1904, when E. E. Hodge, of Comanche County, Texas, sells the property to L. F. White. This deed is of particular interest

due to an attached affidavit signed by M. F. Hodge attesting that E. E. Hodge is her son and is of legal age.

Other Deed Records for John and Henry are on file in Crittenden County. Not all yield new data, but one set of deeds does give additional confirmation.

On May 29, 1888, Henry Hodge and M. F. Hodge, his wife, of Crittenden County, sell to Jas A. Shreve 78 acres on Claylick Creek that was previously owned by Mary Hodge (probably that land she received from Elisha Reese). A month later John A. and I. E. Hodge convey 120 acres to the same Jas A. Shreve. In August, Henry and M. F. Hodge relinquish any interest in the lands conveyed by John A. Hodge to J. A. Shreve.

Many genealogists relegate Deed Record research to the list of things to check when all else fails. In the case of my Hodge research, I would not have gotten very far without those title transfers.

All of these discoveries made my Salt Lake City trip a success, but there were some frustrations along the way that I will need to address, including one in the Hodge line.

Thankfully I found enough information in the Deed Records to make my case for the relationship between John A. and

Mary Hodge and our Henry and Mary Frances Hodge. If I had stopped at the Probate Records, we would still be wondering.

John A. Hodge died on December 5, 1898, and his will was duly filed in the Probate Court of Crittenden County. Neither Henry or James are directly mentioned in the will. Provisions are made for wife Ebie and children Jackson and Donie. (Dona Francis Hodge was born to John and Isabelle "Ebie" Hodge in 1883.) An intriguing provision is included that excludes "Kird" who "has already received his share". My theory is that "Kird" refers to Henry, but I have no explanation for the use of this name. I continue to look for an answer.

New Surprises at the Courthouse

Not long ago I spent an afternoon at the State Library in Austin, wandering idly through microfilms of various Bastrop County courthouse records. As usual when I indulge in this activity, I unearthed a couple of items that I had no idea existed.

The first was a book wherein was recorded "Declarations of Intention to Marry". There I found my grandparents. H. G. Hodge, "age 21 of McDade" and Lucy Mason, "age 20 of Red

Rock”, who filed their Notice of Intention to Marry on November 6, 1930, the day they obtained their license. Almost a year later, on August 30, 1931, Lucy’s cousin Beulah McAfee and fiancé W. D. Martin, both of Cedar Creek, filed their Notice of Intent.

On this same trip I discovered that soldiers who had served from Bastrop County in World War I had filed copies of their discharge papers at the Courthouse. And in those records I found Jessie McAfee, son of Albert and Mary [Brock] McAfee. Included in the records were details from his enlistment, providing me with the only biographical data I’ve ever been able to find for Jessie.

Jessie enlisted on September 21, 1917, at Paige, Texas. He states in his enlistment that he was born in Austin and that his occupation was farmer. His physical description is given as 5 foot 10 inches tall, light complexion, light hair, and blue eyes. He was 29 and 9/12 years of age at the time of enlistment.

Jessie served as a private 1st class in Co. “B” of the 39th Infantry out of Camp Greene, North Carolina. His involvement in “battles, engagements, skirmishes or expeditions” include Chateau Theirry

on August 15, 1918, and A.E.F. from May 10, 1918 to December 30, 1918. He suffered a gunshot wound to the left foot instep at Chateau Theirry on August 15, 1918. He was never AWOL or absent and received his honorable discharge at Camp Boure, Texas, on January 26, 1919.

A note of irony is found in these records. Jessie is shown as having completed the typhoid and paratyphoid prophylaxis treatments on October 15, 1917. Less than two years later, Jessie died of typhoid fever on August 16, 1919, at home in Cedar Creek. His funeral was handled by the Bastrop Furniture Company and he was buried in the Upper Cedar Creek Cemetery. He was 31 years old.

In my assortment of family memorabilia are two small empty medicine vials – odd, perhaps morbid, souvenirs of Jessie’s fatal illness. But these little bottles give me a tangible connection to this young man and I’m glad to have a little better picture of his life, thanks to these forgotten records.



Jessie J. McAfee

New @ Wilcoxen.com

The family website continues to evolve. There are several new additions this quarter, including:

- 1) All back issues of **Family Reunion** are now online and can be viewed and printed if you download the free *Adobe Acrobat Reader*;
- 2) Vital Records now include scans of the marriage records for Nettie McAfee & Charley Rose and Cora McAfee & Frank Rose; and
- 3) You can take a virtual tour of gravesites of many of our relatives at various cemeteries I’ve visited. Eighteen cemeteries are now online and I hope to have the project completed within a few weeks.

If you have any questions or comments about what you find at www.wilcoxen.com/family, please drop me an e-mail. And if there’s anything you would like to see added, please let me know. You can reach me at Lwilcoxen@austin.rr.com.



Perhaps they are not stars in the sky, but rather openings where our loved ones shine down to let us know they are happy.

Eskimo legend