



Muskogee County Genealogical Society Quarterly

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**Our
30th
Year**

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Finding Hester



Genealogists often seem to be as much detectives as researchers. Such is the case when I received a request to locate the original location for an orphan tombstone.

The only evidence presented was the Georgia marble stone itself. In almost perfect condition, the small and lovely, expertly carved little obelisk bore the inscription:

H.M. Wife of

D.H. McCrady

Born Aug. 7, 1855

Died Nov. 20, 1886

The back was carved with the following epitaph:

Kind angels watch her sleeping dust,

Till Jesus comes to raise the just,

Then may she wake with sweet surprise

And in her Saviour's image rise.

The person making the request had served as a dorm director at a large university in the 1970's. He found some of his residents with the stone one evening and asked what they intended to do with it. They indicated that they might use it as a boat anchor. Using his powers of persuasion, he rescued it from its own watery grave. But this posed a problem. What does one do with a tombstone without a grave? So he stored it at his parents' rural home for several years until he contacted me to see if I could find where it should be and/or some descendants.

I mentioned the problem at a meeting of the society board and then sent the inscription, not sure if the surname was McCrady or McGrady. Super sleuth Mary Downing jumped on it as I also did some research. We did not consult with each other, but came to the same conclusion through using Ancestry's U.S. Census Collection, plus other online resources. It was helpful that the surname McCrady is relatively unusual.

We found a David H. McCrady and wife Hester M. (Bryant) McCrady. They were married July 3, 1870, in Maury County, Tennessee. They appear as newly weds on the 1870 U.S. Census in Maury County, Tennessee, living with his family members, William M. and Rebecca McCrady, ages 59 and 56. David is 23 and Hester is 17.

Hester is found with her family in 1860, also in Maury County. Her parents are J.J. and Martha A. Bryant, 45 and 32. Age 6, she is listed with five siblings ranging in age from 1 to 12.

By 1880, Hester is listed with children in the household of her parents in Maury County, Tennessee. She is 26. The McCrady children include: Jas., 8; John, 7; Fred, 5; Robt., 3; and M.E., 10 months. Her husband may have been away finding a location in Texas for the family.

Sometime between 1881 and 1886, Hester died in Lamar County, Texas. D.H. McCrady and E.M. Foster were married Feb. 1, 1887. David H., age 52, and Ella M., age 35, are listed on the 1900 U.S. Census for Lamar County with six children, ages 4, 9, 12, 19, 20 and 25. The older three are probably the children of Hester: Annie, age 19; Mary, age 20; and Oscar, age 25.

This seems to fit the dates and information on our orphan tombstone. The only "hitch" was that Hester had a tombstone located in Antioch Church Cemetery, Lamar County. Thanks to the excellent Lamar County Genweb site, we found not only the burial listing, but a photograph of the other stone. Buried beside her was a child from the second marriage. But the dates did not match exactly, 1848-1885. However, the style of this stone seemed to be fit more in the 1930-1940 era.

Now, how do we find descendants who will hopefully want the stone? Thanks to the same Genweb site, the marriage of daughter Mary McCrady was found. She married Frank Slusher on Nov. 1, 1903 in Paris, Texas. Dates were found for other McCrady children. Family Search and Genweb provided the death dates for David McCrady and his second wife, plus a son. Death certificates were available on both Family Search and on Fold3.

A simple Google search for the names Frank and Mary Slusher yielded a family genealogy page for the Penny family. This provided valuable information since Howard Slusher, the son of Frank and Mary, married Lottie Penny in 1929 in Chickasha. It revealed that the Slushers moved to early day Grady County, which happens to be my home county. This is where I started recognizing names. Both the Slusher parents and Howard are buried in Rose Hill Cemetery in Chickasha. Another Google search yielded a recent story on Howard's widow, Lottie, who was celebrating her 100th birthday and an obituary since she died the day of her birthday. This listed descendants. The birthday story featured a beautiful photograph of Lottie Slusher with her granddaughter who resided in Chickasha. Find a Grave not only has listings, it had obituaries for the family members, including the daughter and son-in-law who were the parents of the granddaughter.

This is where the project halted for a time. I just couldn't bring myself to make contact, especially since Mrs. Slusher's death had been so recent. But I was recently nudged into completing the project and wrote a letter to the granddaughter who still lived in Chickasha. She immediately replied and graciously agreed to receive the stone which we delivered June 23. She had prepared a place for it in the shade of a tree nestled in a bed of ivy. When placed in its new location, the little stone looked as though it was home.

But the mystery remains as to why Hester has a newer stone and where did the college students get the original?

The granddaughter had mentioned a cousin whose family had owned the local monument company for at least two generations. When we visited Rose Hill Cemetery later that afternoon to locate the grave of one of our favorite college professors, we realized that we were parked directly in front of the graves of the family, the ones who had the monument company. It was then that we realized that the daughter of

Mary and Frank Slusher, also named Mary, had married Ira Elledge, the original owner of the monument company. Could it be that they had created a newer stone for grandmother Hester to replace the original (which had broken off its base) and brought the little stone back to Chickasha? Since it was small and could be moved by one person, maybe the boys liberated it on a visit to Chickasha and took it back to their university dorm.

We often slave for years to complete just one aspect of our genealogy. But there are other times when things just seem to fall into place. Genealogists talk about serendipity, but being rather practical I often shrug this off. But it was almost as if Hester wanted her tombstone back in the family as the research fell into place like falling dominos. The path led from Lamar County, Texas, where one branch of my family lived at the same time. This branch migrated to Grady County, Oklahoma, my home county. I knew who the family was from living in the area most of my life. The grandparents and granddaughter lived within six blocks of the college where both the rescuer of the stone and I attended college. Both the father of the granddaughter and the rescuer's father were ministers in the same denomination and both had served as ministers at the same church at different times.

We will probably never know how Hester's stone came to a university dormitory. But, serendipity or not, Hester got her stone back, or at least her family got it. AND, she should be pleased since the original stone makes her six years younger than the replacement. What more could a girl want?

This research information submitted by Nancy Calhoun, Supervisor of the Genealogy and Local History Department (Grant Foreman Collection) in the Muskogee Public Library.



Dear Ancestor:

Your tombstone stands among the rest neglected and alone.
The name and date are chiseled out on polished, marbled stone.

It reaches out to all who care; it is too late to mourn
You did not know that I exist. You died and I was born.

Yet each of us is part of you in flesh, in blood, in bone.

Our blood contracts and beats a pulse entirely not our own.

Dear Ancestor, the place you filled on hundred years ago
Spreads out among the ones you left who would have loved you so.

I wonder if you lived and loved. I wonder if you knew
Someday I would find this spot and come to visit you.

Author Unknown



Tombstone dedication ceremony for my great grandfather, James Lycurgus D. Smith. April 13, 2013, Shawnee. Rifle group from Duncan SCV (Sons of Confederate Veterans).



JAMES LYCURGUS D. SMITH

James Lycurgus D. "Babe" Smith was born in November, 1844, the son of John and Ann Smith of McMinnville, Warren County, Tennessee. He was the grandson of John and Jane Smith. His father was one of the larger land owners in the county, a justice of the peace, and a member of the Tennessee Legislature when Tennessee joined the Confederacy.

On September 1, 1862, he joined Company D of the 16th Tennessee Infantry, following his older brother Jerome in joining its ranks. His enlistment came in time for the Battle of Perryville and also the Battle of Murfreesboro. His service records indicate that he was "Wounded at Murfreesboro and ordered to hospital," "severely wounded." According to his records, he was last paid in August 1863. His brother served for most of the war and was one of 53 taken prisoner at Charleston, Tennessee, in late 1863 and sent to the infamous Rock Island Prison.

All his siblings and his parents had died by the mid 1880's, including his brother Jerome. He married Rachael Milraney on June 19, 1870, in Warren County. They joined many in making a move to Texas in the early 1880s where they lived southwest of Ennis in Ellis County. It was there that their twin daughters, Daisy Annie and Lela were born October 20, 1882. The year 1888 brought joy for the family when their only son, James Allen Smith, was born May 30, 1888. But loss followed in 1889 when one of the twin daughters, Lela, died September 19.

By 1896, J.L.D. "Babe" Smith had claimed a homestead in the Dale area of Pottawatomie County, now Oklahoma. He relinquished that homestead shortly before his death on February 25, 1901. He was one of the earliest burials in Fairview Cemetery, Shawnee.

His wife, Rachael, claimed a homestead in southern Shawnee in her own right following his death. She married William Bobo "W.B." Mavety on January 23, 1902, in Oklahoma City. She died December 19, 1910, in the Geary, Oklahoma, depot while enroute from Gracemont to Oklahoma City for surgery. She is buried in the Gracemont Cemetery.

Daughter Annie Smith Darnold died October 3, 1915, and is buried northwest of Shawnee in Centerville Cemetery with her young daughter Ona who died October 25, 1917. Her other known children included Raymond Orin, Crystal, Lois, and Lillian.

Son Jim married Della Mattie Hendrix on June 19, 1913, in Anadarko. Their four children who lived to adulthood were Raymond Smith, Ann Smith Calhoun, Gerome Allen Smith, Erma Loraine Smith Hyde. Their family included eight grandchildren,

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RAILROAD LIFE IN INDIAN TERRITORY DAYS

TOLD BY WALTER P. JOHNSON, 2601 OKLAHOMA AVE. MUSKOGEE

Ella Robinson, Field Worker

I was born on a farm in Johnson County, Missouri, in 1862. Was reared in Saline County, Missouri, near Slater. Lived there until young manhood. In 1879 the Chicago and Alton Railroad came through, building from Mexico to Missouri to Kansas City. It ran through a part of our farm. Railroad work appealed to me and I applied for a job and was given my first job by W. H. Lane in 1882. I am glad to say that Mr. Lane is living in Muskogee at the present time and is employed by the Pure Oil Refinery. I stayed in the employ of that railroad until I was attracted to the Indian Territory.



I came to Muskogee in 1886 to work on the M.K. & T. railroad as car inspector and repairer. I was also the wrecking foreman. Mrs. Carl G. Paterson was the Yard Master. Dan Harvey was foreman of the roundhouse. William Miller was freight and passenger agent and Tom Miller was express agent. The switch engine at that time was M.K. & T. No. 1. Tom Stanton and Kurt Parsons were the two engineers, each working a twelve hour shift. John Grunwalt, now living on Cherokee Street in Muskogee, was hostler. Mr. ?rutsinger was the foremen of the stockyards. Andy Roburg and Pete McElmele were the other member of the crew. Mr. Peterson and Andy Roburg and myself work eleven hours a day, Pete McElmele worked thirteen hours a day. At that time the M.K. & T. had four passenger trains a day: Nos. 1, 2, 3, & 4. However, they operated as many as twenty-five to thirty freight trains in twenty-four hours. The engines were small and eighteen and twenty cars was a full train. As the cattle business was at its heighth cattle shipping was heavy. Through trains ran from Fort Worth to Kansas City and St. Louis. There were five tracks that ran through the main yard, which extended from Fondulac Street on the North to a little south of where Okmulgee Avenue now is. The freight house was just north of Broadway and the passenger depot where the baggage room now stands. The roundhouse was l little north of the viaduct. The water was taken from the Katy Pond, an im-

mense pond constructed in the low section on North Second and Third Streets, where business houses now stand.

Mr. Peterson, the foreman, received a salary of \$75.00 per month and the rest of the crew got \$2.00 a day. The eighteenth was pay day (and still is) and it was a happy time when the old pay car rolled in and was switched to the side track. We were paid monthly in silver and gold and some green backs. The money was carried in a safe on the car. No guards accompanied it and no one had cause for any uneasiness. When the paymaster had vanished they hooked the car on behind the next train and traveled on.

A little house that we called "the shanty" was used as an office and was the place where I kept my tools. It stood near the freight depot and between the two main tracks.

A little ice stood in the yard and ice for our own use was brought in every morning from Parsons on No. 1. As the ice supply for the town was s limited, numerous times I went to the ice house in the middle of the night for a neighbor girl who was ill with typhoid fever. I acted on the principle that what the railroad company didn't know wouldn't hurt them. She still contends that it was the ice that saved her life. Manufactured ice was an unheard of thing in Muskogee at that time.

As the regular hotel in Muskogee had burned, the trains stopped at Eufaula for meals. Later the Adams House was built, with John Adams as manager, and the trains again stopped in Muskogee for meals.

At that time there were only two railroads in the Indian Territory. These were the M.K. & T., running north and south, and the Frisco from Fort Smith to Paris, Texas, crossing a portion of the Choctaw Nation. The Frisco also ran from Monet, Missouri, to Tulsa.

After sixteen years of service I was made foreman of the car repairing and inspection business. Our wrecking equipment consisted of a wheel car and a clearing car with which we cleared the tracks. If the wreck was on the Cherokee Division, a wrecker from Parsons was called. If on the Choctaw division, a wrecker was called from Denison, Texas.

There was a station and a small village at Choteau. The towns of Wagoner, Checotah and Crowder had not been started; neither was there any town at South McAlester.

When I came in on a morning train and reported to Mr. Peterson for work he took me across the street to a boarding house run by Newt Scrimcher to engage board. H said he could give me meals but had no beds. A sour looking Indian man sitting in the corner said, "if it will help you fellows any, he can share my room. I work at night and sleep in the day, and if he works in the day and sleeps at night, we can make it all right." SO we made that arrangement. That was Bud Kell, an officer here for many years, and he was always my friend.

United States Troops were stationed at Fort Gibson when I came here.

There were four dry goods stores in Muskogee at that time. They were run by J. A. Patterson, J. E. Turner, F. B. Severs and Moss, Wade and Company.

There was one drug store, owned and operated by Dr. M. F. Williams, who was also a practicing Physician and a minister; often filling the pulpit at the Presbyterian Church.

C. W. Turner had the only hardware store, and Sam Yates the only tin shop. It stood between Second and Third on Broadway.

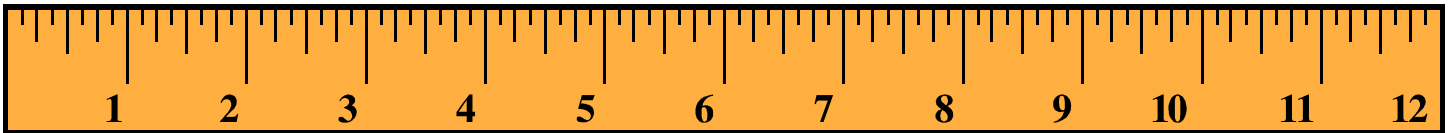
W. N. Martin was the postmaster.

Charley Thomas had the livery stable and ran a mail and passenger hack from Okmulgee to Fort Gibson, and furnished rigs for all the traveling salesmen who made the Territory.

Ex-Senator Owen of Oklahoma as Indian Agent and D. W. Wisdom as his chief clerk. His office stood where the Montgomery Ward store now stands.

Mr. J. Brazil was the photographer.

In 1901 I married the best woman in the world and we built our little home on Callahan Street; buying a lot in Mr. Joshua Ross' corn field. We paid for it out of my princely salary and were as happy as any two people could be with our two little girls. Our neighborhood was like one big family, although we got along better than some families. We shared our joys and sorrows together with our material substance. In time of sickness we stood by, ready to render any assistance possible. I served the railroad company for twenty-five years and was appointed superintendent of water works, which place I held for twenty-five years. I served several terms as a member of the city council and went through all the ups and downs of a rapidly developing little city. Take it all in all I have really had a busy life and a happy one. But from now on let the other fellow do the work.



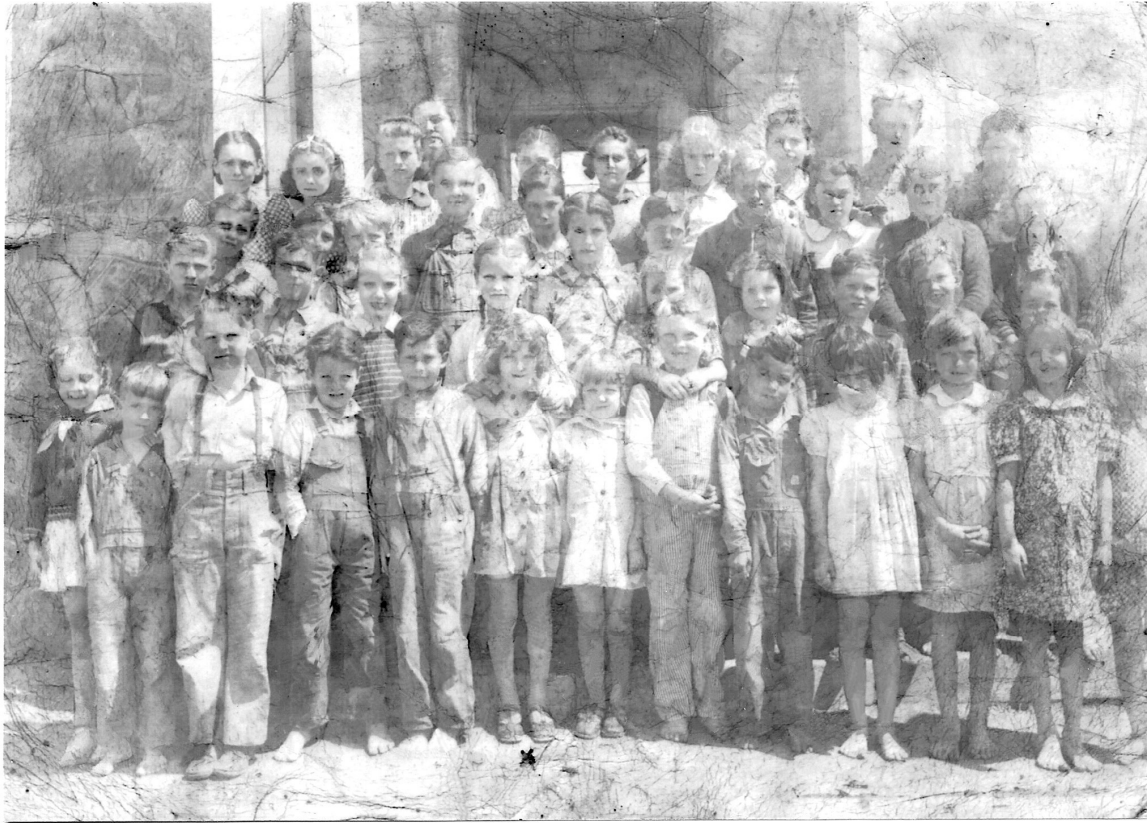
Elm Grove School



This is the best picture I've seen of the old Elm Grove school that was torn down this year.

The white building in the back was part cafeteria in the front and a classroom in the back for grades 1-4. The rock building in the front had an area with a stage on the right (south) side and classroom on the left (north) side for grades 4-8. A hall and/or storage ran across the front. My husband Jay's family lived directly across the road and he attended school there. The school building was eventually turned into a residence as shown in this picture.

Submitted by Linda Stout,
MCGS Secretary



1940 Elm Grove School

Back Row (L-R)

Anna Jean Jones
Henrietta Parker
Evie Gaither (teacher)
Fern Goff
Ara Henderson
Wanda White
Cowan (boy)
Cleda Goff
Cowan (boy)
Gene Carroll

Next Row (L-R)

Willis Dale White
Erton Lee White
Donald Webb
Junior Crawford
Bill Weaver
Dorothy Gilbreath
Doug Scott
Jessie Gilbreath
Rebecca Jones
Cowan (girl)

Bottom Row (L-R)

Nadine Walker
"Ras" Everett Murry
Joyce Chandler?
Marcellus Webb
Jack White
Dorothy Faye Murry
Wilma Chandler
Charles Chandler
"Nub" Donald Scott
Wilma Weaver
Thelma McDonald
?
?

Names provided by
Dorothy Murry
Clark May 27, 2013

Marriage Record Updates



Muskogee County Marriage Records for 1896-1907 have now been indexed alphabetically by Surnames of both the Groom and Bride. This index is now available on the MCGS web site. Copies of the original marriage record can be obtained by submitting a Re-

Muskogee County Marriage Records for 1907-1948 are now in the process of being indexed by surnames. Grooms records for surnames A and B have now been alphabetically indexed and will soon be available on our web site. Until this project is completed, you can always research the records at the Genealogy and Local History of the Muskogee Public Library. Requests can still be made by submitting a Research Request form, available at the site.

Muskogee County Genealogical & Historical Society

MEETINGS: MCGS meetings are held at 6:00 PM on the fourth Thursday of each month (except July and August) in the Grant Foreman room at the Muskogee Public Library, 801 West Okmulgee, Muskogee, OK. . The Board of Directors meetings are held the third Tuesday at 5:30 PM in the library's Genealogy and Local History department. All members are invited to attend the Board meetings.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in MCGS is open to anyone promoting the purpose of the Society. Individual or family membership is \$20 per year due each January 1.

OUR PURPOSE:: The MCGS was formed in 1983 for the purpose of promoting the general study of genealogy through workshops, seminars, and monthly programs; and to discover and preserve any material that may establish or illustrate the history of Indian Territory and Muskogee County and its families.

BOARD MEMBERS 2013: President, Alissa Hill; Vice President, Stacy Blundell ; Secretary, Linda Stout; Treasurer, Mary Downing; Past President, Jere Harris; Newsletter Editor: Barbara Downs; Quarterly Editor, Nancy Lasater; Webmaster: Sue Tolbert, **APPOINTED POSITIONS:** Research, Barbara Downs; Library Liaison, Nancy Calhoun; Three Rivers Museum Liaison, Sue Tolbert.

OUR RESEARCH POLICY: Outlined on our website <http://www.okgenweb.org/~mcgs/> or you may write to us for a Research Request Form at: Muskogee County Genealogical Society, c/o Muskogee Public Library, 801 West Okmulgee, Muskogee, OK 74401.

PUBLICATIONS: MCGS publishes books of genealogical interest, focused on Muskogee County and Muskogee Indian Territory history. A current price list of our publications is provided on our website.

QUARTERLY

The MCGS Quarterly is published online four times a year: March, June, September, and December. Beginning in 2012 issue, current issues are published on-line. Copies and back issues of the can be ordered on request by mail or through our website.

NEWSLETTER

Beginning January, 2013 we began publishing a monthly newsletter to provide members and guest viewers with current and scheduled meetings and news.