

- **March 25, 1982**

By Nell Quesenbery

THE DEAR ANGELA LETTER: Part 1

It's been a few years since my mother's glamorous cousin, Richard Austin "Dick" Yoakum, and I finished our work on the "Yoakum Papers."

Just recently, Dick, who lives in Morristown, Tennessee, visited me in Lone Mountain. Now he wanted us to assemble our information in good order and present our work to the state archives.

I agreed. Shortly before Dick's planned return to Lone Mountain, a bullet tragically pierced our son Jackie's bowels. I wrote to Dick, asking him to put off our project until we could see Jackie through his second major operation, March 25, 1982, at St. Mary's Hospital. Hopefully, this operation will restore Jackie to normal.

Still, in-between the operation, I began to sort through the papers. I came upon a letter that Dick had written me after an early fall visit in 1977.

On this visit Dick brought a blond, handsome young man from Morristown. The man, Charlie Evans, was a descendant of the Lone Mountain Hodges-Jennings and the Evans that were raised on the south side of the big Sycamore Creek near Tyes Branch. Charlie was also descended from the Haynes of Union County that lived near Walker's Ford. (Before the TVA, Walker's Ford joined the Bear Creek section of Claiborne County with Union County.)

Charlie liked my husband, Jack, who was his cousin. Jack's mother, Margaret "Mag" Quesenbery, was a Lone Mountain Hodge. Charlie also met Jack's uncle, Horace "Mule" Hodges.

Dick and I took Charlie to visit the old Hodges Cemetery, now called Payne's Cemetery and Mrs. Tom "Imogene" Rose, whose father was Frank Evans.

Then Dick and I went to one of our favorite visiting places, Clay and A. Evans. Clay is kin to Jack and Charlie through the Jennings and Hodges. Dick and I don't have a Hodges line, but we are kin to Clay through our Jennings line.

Inside Dick's letter to me was a copy of another letter that he'd written to Charlie's young daughter, Angela. He had also sent her information he'd compiled on the Lone Mountain Hodges.

THE DEAR ANGELA LETTER: Part 1

Richard A. "Dick" Yoakum

Box 116Morristown, Tenn. 37814

October 20, 1977

Dear Angela,

I have just found how frustrating it is to try to trace your genealogical background with nothing to start on. I have been working on mine and have found out much about yours in the process. I want to share it with you because some day I am sure you will be curious about your ancestors and will have no way of finding out.

I know a good many of your relatives, and you can well be proud of them, merchants, physicians, lawyers, farmers and other professions. About all of them are from Lone Mountain and Tazewell in Claiborne County, Tennessee.

John P. Davis III is a prominent lawyer in Knoxville; his brother Sidney is a fine lawyer and good citizen in Clinton, Tennessee.

Their great uncle was Dr. Jeff Hodges, who practiced in Granby, Mo. No family tree is perfect, and Dr. Jeff had a feeble-minded brother, Scott Hodges. I knew Scott. He was a happy harmless fellow that had to be taken care of. Dr. Jeff paid for it as long as he lived.

Another brother, Hugh Hodges, was a wit and an insurance man about Tazewell. Uncle Hugh would read and roam all night and sleep all day. He was a night person.

John Davis I married Lucy Hodges. John Davis I, II and III were all prominent lawyers.

You also have a group of ministers in your background. You can find their names inscribed on a marble slab at the old Springdale Church about five miles south of Tazewell.

Going from Morrystown to Tazewell, the church is about five miles past the Clinch River bridge on U.S 25. There is Thomas Hurst I, who with the help of Rev. Tidence Lane built the church in 1795. Tidence Lane is buried near Whitesburg.

There are always interesting tales about relatives; for instance, your great, great uncle Jessie had a daughter named Edna Evans, who married Harry Clay, a fellow that I knew well. He was a Clark Gable-looking fellow with a magnificent physique. He could take a hundred pound sack of feed in his strong white teeth and sling it across his shoulder never touching it with his hands.

He was a dark handsome curly haired fellow with a thin mustache that men hated and women adored.

Often he exhibited his strength and played the fiddle for square dances. When a carnival came through and the side show invited someone to come up and fight their unconquered vicious

fighter, Old Harry would go up and brush him off. The carnivals finally left that part off when they came to Tazewell.

Harry finally got to traveling with the shows. He was likable and had a flashing smile. He has two sons still around, J.P. and Glen Clay.

(I will continue with Dick's letter to Angela next week.)