



TARRANT COUNTY

TXGENWEB

Barbara Knox and Rob Yoder, County Coordinators

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Civil War Veterans of Northeast Tarrant County

Elias James Hysmith

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Elias James Hysmith was a Union veteran of a Tennessee cavalry regiment. He lived at several places in Tennessee and Texas, before finally moving to Oklahoma. He served as Postmaster at Keller for several years around 1900.

Several family genealogists have placed information on Mr. Hysmith and his family at ancestry.com. They agree that he was born in Wayne County, Tennessee on August 26, 1844. Some add the fact that his nickname was “Bully.”

Mr. Hysmith was nineteen years old when he was mustered into the Union service at Bolivar, Tennessee on November 12, 1862. He had enlisted the previous August 25 at Bethel, Tennessee for a term of three years. He served in Co. B, 6th Tennessee Cavalry.

Entries concerning him in an undated company descriptive book say he was nineteen years old, five feet eight inches tall, with a fair complexion, blue eyes, and dark hair. He was born in Wayne County, Tennessee and was a farmer.

He was on detached service at Helena, Arkansas during some time in March and April, 1864, by order of General Hurlburt. He was absent sick at some point in September-October, 1864. He was in the General Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee beginning on October 7, 1864.

His file contains a torn and partially unreadable order, dated December 2, 1864, for himself and one other soldier to go from Cairo, Illinois to New Albany, Indiana. At the time the order was issued, he was still in a hospital in Memphis, Tennessee.

Mr. Hysmith was mustered out of the service at Pulaski, Tennessee on July 26, 1865, at which time he still had one hundred dollars in enlistment bounty coming to him.

In McNairy County, Tennessee on December 27, 1866, Mr. Hysmith was married to Hercilla Barham. Her name is found in family and public records as Arcella, Percilla, and other spellings. Family sources say she was a daughter of Thomas N. Barham and his wife, Margaret Amanda Blakely. They also say Hercilla was born September 17, 1847 and died December 27, 1876.

Mr. Hysmith appears in the 1870 census in the Sixteenth District of McNairy County, Tennessee, in the area served by the post office as Purdy, Tennessee. He appears in that year as James E. Hysmith. With him were his wife, "Percilla," and their two sons, William and Logan.

Mr. Hysmith was married second to Elizabeth Jane Williams in Hardin County, Tennessee on December 15, 1878. Her headstone in the Farmersville IOOF Cemetery in Collin County, Texas shows her dates of birth and death as December 10, 1846 and May 24, 1906. Family sources show Elizabeth Jane Williams was born in Hardin County, Tennessee, and was a daughter of Robert J. Williams and Sarah Ann Curtis. She was previously the wife of William Alfred Musser (1832-1876). Mrs. Emily Jane (Williams) Musser brought three children to her marriage to E.J. Hysmith. They were Ida Ann Musser, Cecilia Elizabeth Musser, and William Edger Musser.

By 1880 the family lived in the Eleventh Civil District of Hardin County, Tennessee. With him were his wife, Elizabeth, and his children William T., Logan G., Charles B., Emma J. and Flora Hysmith. Also with the family were the three children of Mrs. Hysmith's from her first marriage.

On November 26, 1880, Mr. Hysmith filed an application for an invalid's pension based upon his Union Civil War service. It was granted, and was supplanted in 1904 when he became eligible for further benefits based upon his age.

Family sources say the family moved to Texas about 1898. He served as Postmaster of Keller in northeast Tarrant County from September 21, 1897 until October 6, 1904, when he was succeeded by another of our veterans, John M. Pipkin.

Mr. Hysmith and his family appear in the 1900 census at Keller, Texas. Mr. Hysmith said both his parents were natives of Georgia. Mrs. Elizabeth Hysmith said she had given birth to nine children, seven of whom were still alive. Charlie Hysmith, Elias's son from his first marriage, lived with the family and was working as a telegrapher. The other children with the family included Flora, Maggie, Bessie, and Daisy Hysmith.

After the death of his wife, Mr. Hysmith moved to Oklahoma and settled in Latimer County there. In 1910, he lived alone there and worked as a janitor in a public school.

Most family sources say Mr. Highsmith died on September 2, 1915 in McNairy County, Tennessee. According to his Union pension index card, Elias J. Hysmith died on that date at Wilburton, Latimer County, Oklahoma. He has a military headstone standing in Malone Cemetery, east of Finger, McNairy County, Tennessee.

Family sources report that in his first marriage, Mr. Hysmith was the father of four children: William Thomas Hysmith, Logan G. Hysmith, Charles Barham Hysmith, and Emily Jane Hysmith.

William Thomas Hysmith was born October 3, 1867. Logan G. Hysmith was born September 6, 1869. Further information on him is presented later in this biography. Charles Barham Hysmith was born October 28, 1872.

Emily Jane (or Jean) Hysmith b. 30 Nov. 1874. Emily Hysmith was born November 30, 1874. She married Jim Johnson. She died February 6, 1936, in Precinct 3 of Fannin County, Texas, and was buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery. Her mother's name is shown on her death certificate as Hercillie Barham.

The second Mrs. Hysmith had at least four children with Mr. Hysmith. Judging from the statement she made to the 1900 census taker, she must have had at least two children who died young, but we have not been able to determine in which of her marriages they were born. Her four Hysmith daughters were Bessie, Maggie, Flora, and Daisy Hysmith.

Flora Hysmith was born in August 1883. She married Gus Howard and lived in Kansas City, Missouri.

Maggie Hysmith was born in August 1885. She married Homer Hovencamp and lived in Amarillo, Texas.

Bessie Hysmith was born in November 1886. She later lived in Wilburton, Oklahoma.

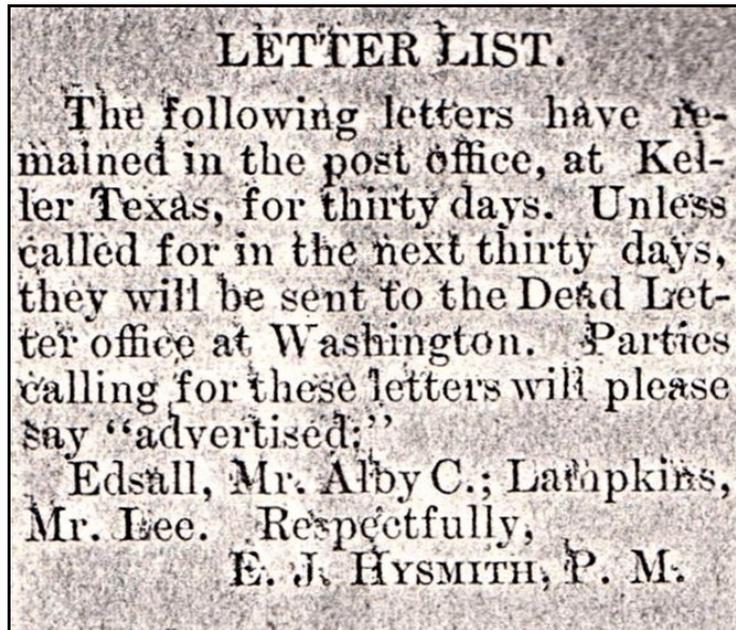
Daisy Hysmith was born in July 1889. She married John F. Roberts and lived in Hugo, Oklahoma.

Because it may be of interest to Hysmith descendants, the following account of the life of Logan G. Hysmith is included. It appeared in Luther B. Bill's A HISTORY OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA, Volume II, published by the Lewis Publishing Company, of Chicago and New York in 1909: ***“LOGAN G. HYSMITH, postmaster of Wilburton, Latimer county, and for some years pervious to his appointment thereto (in 1902), identified with railroad work in eastern Oklahoma, dates his advent to what was then the Indian territory from the year 1899. At that time he located at Hartshorne, as an employee of the Choctaw, Oklahoma & Gulf Railroad, but the following year was transferred to Wilburton as the agent of the road at that point. After two years of service in that position, he was urged by his Republican associates to seek the postmastership, the office becoming vacant upon the death of Millard F. Campbell. The result was that in July, 1902, Mr. Hysmith received his commission, and his record for the succeeding four years earned him a re-appointment, and he is now in the seventh year of a service which the local public has found most satisfactory.***

Postmaster Hysmith is a native of McNairy county, Tennessee, born on the 6th of September, 1869, and is a son of Elias J. Hysmith, born in the state named in 1846. When a young boy the grandfather, William Hysmith, was apprenticed to a North Carolina man and accompanied his master's family into Mississippi, where he was reared. He married in that state, but finally settled in McNairy county, Tennessee, and lived there many years engaged in farming. His wife was a Miss Davis, by whom he had the following children:--William, Elias J., John, Edward, Samuel; Aby, wife of Calvin Plunk; Malindy, who married John Gray, and Teanie, who became Mrs. John Smith. The father, Elias J. Hysmith, passed his early life on the family estate in Tennessee, and

at the outset of the Civil war, then a boy of sixteen years, joined the Sixth Tennessee Cavalry of the Union army, commanded by Colonel Hurst. As a regimental unit of General Rosecrans' corps that command participated in the battles of Shiloh, Corinth, Franklin and Nashville and was not mustered out of the service until the conclusion of the Rebellion. After the war he settled as a farmer in McNairy and Hardin counties, Tennessee, and from the latter locality migrated to Texas, settling at Celeste, Keller and other places in the state. Although in a Democratic stronghold, he continued to be a firm Union Republican, and at one time was postmaster of Keller, Texas. Later, he brought the remnant of his family to Wilburton, which has since been his residence. His wife, who was formerly Miss Hersilla Barham, daughter of Thomas Barham, a McNairy county farmer, died in 1877, mother of the following: William T., Logan G., Charles B.; and Emily, wife of James Johnson, of Leonard, Texas. For his second wife Mr. Hysmith married Miss Elizabeth Musser, and by this union is the father of Flora, wife of Gus Howard, of Kansas City, Missouri; Maggie, who married Homer Hovencamp, a resident of Amarillo, Texas; Bessie, of Wilburton, Oklahoma, and Daisy, wife of John F. Roberts, of Hugo, also in that state.

Logan G. Hysmith, of this biography, was educated in McNairy, his native county, his final training as a student being obtained in the Adamsville High School. After an experience of one term as a country school teacher, in 1899 he came to Oklahoma in the employ of the C. O. & Y. R. R. in whose service he remained until the commencement of his term as postmaster in 1902. He has made an admirable record as a government official and as a public spirited citizen of Wilburton. He is a member of Wilburton Lodge No. 108 A. F. & A. M. and has held the chairs of junior and senior warden. On December 23, 1900, the postmaster married Miss Lettie McGinnis, who died in 1905. On January 1, 1908, he wedded as his second wife, Miss Rose Edwards, daughter of Mrs. Mary Edwards, of Denison, Texas. Mrs. Hysmith was born February 12, 1880, at Santa Rosa, California."



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