

Mantooths have long, distinguished history in Angelina

by Annie Jewel Royle, Mary Jane West and William C. Royle

The Mantooths came to Angelina County in 1857 when Thomas J. Mantooth brought his family from Tennessee, made the journey by wagon, crossed the Mississippi River at Natchez and located first on the county seat of Angelina County.

Thomas was elected Chief Justice of Angelina County in 1858 and served in this capacity until 1862. In 1858, after Joseph Herrington relinquished his office of Chief Justice to Thomas J. Mantooth, the county clerk wrote: "A large number of inhabitants of said county applied by petition to the Chief Justice for removal of the seat of Justice from Jonesville."

Mantooth set a Nov. 22, 1858 election and a 147 vote majority finally sent the courthouse to Homer. He accepted the office of Probate Judge. Thomas Mantooth opposed secession until Texas left the Union and he lent his moral aid to the cause of the South.

Thomas Mantooth was born in North Carolina on Sept. 30, 1808. He married first Mary Sisk of Cocke County, Tenn, and they had the following children: Albert Mantooth, who married Mary Richard Hall; Eveline Mantooth, who married Austin Vinson; John Mantooth; and Calvin Mantooth. Mary Sisk Mantooth died in Tennessee but all of their children accompanied him to Texas.

For his second wife, Mr. Mantooth married Lydia Dillon in Cocke County Tenn. Thomas and Lydia had the following children: Lafayette, Edwin, James, Lucinda, W.B. (Blackburn), Florence, Hester Samantha, and Thomas Crittendon.

Thomas, Lydia and their daughter Lucinda all died the same day, July 28, 1865. They were accidentally poisoned by the doctor and died at the same time. A casket was also made for their youngest son, Thomas, and their bodies were held over awaiting; however; he recovered.

Thomas's grandson, Albert Edwin Mantooth, said their deaths were due to smallpox. He described how all of the things were burned to get rid of the smallpox germs. He said, "The medicine could have poisoned them, but I believe death was also from smallpox."

Thomas's first son, Albert, married Mary Richard (Hall) Haynes Colver on Nov. 26, 1870 at Homer. Mary Richard Hall had moved with her mother, Elizabeth Ann Hall, and her sister, Sarah, to Homer in 1855.

They had been living in Douglass Nacogdoches County, Texas, where her father, Richard G. Hall, had been Justice of the Peace and Postmaster. After his death, they moved to Homer. Mary R. Hall had three husbands: Robert Lee Haynes, who died in the Civil War in 1863, W.F. Colver, and Albert Mantooth.

Mrs. Albert (Mary) Mantooth and her son, Albert Edwin Mantooth, were charter members of the Christian Church that was organized in Homer, Texas around 1884. This church later became the First Christian Church when it was moved to Lufkin in 1894.

In 1893 Albert became ill and he and Mary moved from Homer to Lufkin, where he could be treated by his brother, Dr. Lafayette Mantooth. Albert and his brother, Calvin Mantooth, had owned a general mercantile store in Homer for approximately 30 years.

Albert died on August 30, 1893 and Mary continued to live in their home on the corner of Paul and 5th Streets until she passed away Feb. 9, 1916. A historical marker from the Daughters of the Republic of Texas was placed on the grave of Mary Richard Hall Mantooth for being born during the days of the Republic of Texas (1841).

Albert and Mary's oldest son, Albert Edwin Mantooth, was born Feb. 9, 1874 in Homer. A.E. (Eddie) Mantooth met his first wife, Sarah Annie Atkinson, at Sulphur Springs Arbor Revival.

Sulphur Springs, located near Zavalla, was a popular place for families to bring their tents and camp out in the summer. There were two springs in Sandy Creek that ran into Shawnee Creek. People from miles around would come to drink the sulphur water and take baths in the cove for health purposes.

Also, brush arbor revivals would be held during the summer. Eddie Mantooth lived at Homer but would ride his horse to Sulphur Springs for these revivals and to visit his aunt that lived near there. He and Annie Atkinson met and were married on June 16, 1897.

Eddie and Annie started their life together in a big log house between Homer and Huntington. They had two bedsteads, two mattresses, quilts and sheets. They bought a little four-eyed stove for \$6 and six wooden chairs for \$3.

In 1900 they moved to Lufkin where all their children were born. Three of their children lived to adulthood: Ethel Mantooth (Mrs. Ernest P. Medford), Annie Jewel Mantooth (Mrs. Willie C. Royle), and Rennie Mae Mantooth (Mrs. Milton Hickman Sr.).

From 1908 until 1920 Eddie Mantooth was tax assessor and Collector for Angelina County. In the 1930 he became an appraiser for the Lufkin National Bank and continued at that job for 35 years, retiring at age 85.

Annie Mantooth died on June 21, 1914. Eddie Mantooth's second wife was Oleva Wisely whom he married on Jan 4, 1920. Oleva Mantooth died in 1964. Both Eddie and Oleva Mantooth were very active in the First Christian Church, he being a charter member.

Descendants of Thomas Mantooth that are still living in Angelina County: Annie Jewel Mantooth Royle, Rennie Mae Mantooth Hickman, and Frances Mantooth Malone are 4th generation in Angelina County; Robert E. Medford (married to Audrey Fuller), Janice Anne Royle Rowe (married to Ernest E. Rowe Sr.), and William C. Royle (married to Phyllis Moore) are all 5th generation; Mary Jane Medford West (married to Jim West), Laura Royle, and Clark Royle are 6th generation; and Rebecca West and Scotty West are 7th generation citizens of Angelina County.

The generations that grew up in Angelina County but have since moved away are John Milton Hickman Jr. (5th), and Julie Jumper Morris, Charles Andrew Jumper, and Nancy Jumper Herde (6th).