



I was born at Salem and spent my boyhood days roaming the fields and woods near my father's home at the intersection of the Pinckneyville and Cedar Grove Roads. I attended the elementary school at Salem and graduated from Livingston Central High School at Burna. When I was fifteen years old I started researching my family roots. Luckily I found a copy of Barbara Knox's book at the public library in Marion when I was seventeen. Her research was quite different than what my father had told me as a child. I would eventually own my own copy of Barbara's book when Donald F. Hodge so graciously gave me an extra copy that he had hidden away. Don is a soft spoken man and deeply religious, the other side of the coin so to speak in my upbringing. He has worked all his adult years in gaining insight to the Hodge clan. He and Barbara Knox are undoubtedly two of the best Hodge researchers that I have had the honor to work under and have dedicated this website to them.

My father was a second generation miner having worked in the spar mines and coal fields of Western Kentucky and Southern Illinois. Like most of the old miners that I knew as a child they were hard drinking and known for their far flung tales. My father was no different. His family tales were at times so outrageous that I began to question them. His favorite nesting spot was under the sugar maple in the front yard and while drinking and telling his tales would occasionally wave at his buddies who were driving by on their way to the local bootlegger. He died in 1996 from cancer and black lung, but I can still to this day hear him telling his tales in the front yard.

I joined the Army as an infantryman during my senior year and after graduation served 12 months overseas on the Demilitarize Zone in Korea and at Ft. Polk, Louisiana. After 4 years in the regular army I transferred to the Kentucky Army National Guard and returned home. I served in the Guard until my retirement in May 2006 at the rank of Sergeant First Class. I served 12 months in Iraq as the Truckmaster of the 2113th Transportation Company out of Paducah and proudly call myself a "Fighting Kentuckian!" I will never forget the fortitude and bravery of those fine outstanding citizen soldiers that I had the honor to serve with, nor the soldiers who gave the supreme sacrifice in our War against Terrorism.

I met Miss Nancy Weldon from the Forrest Grove Community in 1989 moved to Marion. After our marriage I was fortunate to land a job with the Crittenden County Fiscal Court and helped with the Enhanced 911 System. After completing that job in 1993 I was hired as a deputy under Sheriff Floyd Andrews. I served as Sheriff Andrews' only full time deputy until September 1996. I was then hired by Mayor Mick Alexander as a patrolman for the city police of Marion and attended the Department of Criminal Justice Training at Richmond. I am still at Marion and Mick Alexander is still mayor, funny how things never change in a small town.

When not patrolling the streets of Marion or talking to tourists during the summer months, I am knee deep in family research and constantly talking to other researchers and family members who have the genealogy bug.