



THE
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Harry Hodgson

Reno County Genealogical Society members Darren McMannis, Becky (Hodgson) Mladnick, and Jerry Dean are descendents of the Hodgson family which settled west of Hutchinson in 1871. Hetherington Hodgson, Jr. ("Harry") was one of five Hodgson siblings to settle on Section 20. The homestead remained in the family for 102 years, until 1973.. The Reno County landfill south annex now covers the site where generations of Hodgson weddings, births, & funerals took place. This is Harry Hodgson's story, compiled in Tribute by Darren McMannis.



Hetherington Hodgson Jr. was born in Taunton, Massachusetts, on February 19, 1848. He attended grammar school in Taunton until the age of 9. He was commonly called Harry.

He then moved with his family to Steele County, Minnesota, in the spring of 1857. There he continued his education in the rural schools of Steele County, taught by his sisters Mary & Jane (Jennie) Hodgson.

In the fall of 1871, at the age of 23 years, Harry moved with his younger brother Thomas and younger sisters Mary & Jennie, by covered wagon to homestead Section 20 in what would soon become Reno County, Kansas. Harry's was the northeast quarter of the section. His application # 5337 for the north ½ of his quarter section was filed April 18, 1906.

When Reno county was organized in December, 1871, "Harry Hodgson was nominated Clerk of the District Court without opposition." In 1872, Harry Hodgson ran as a Republican in the Nov. 7 election for the first Clerk of District Court for Reno County. He won the election against Democrat J. H. Brehm, by a vote of 231-133 (The Hutchinson News, November 5, 1874). In the next election, held November 3, 1874, he ran against another Republican by the

name of Beatty, winning by a vote of 516 to 254. (Hutchinson News, November 5, 1874).

"The first political convention in Reno County was held at Hutchinson, February 1, 1872, in a room over Young's shoe store. At this meeting occurred the nomination of the first county officers, who were subsequently elected. Regarding the second political convention held in the county, the following appeared in the Hutchinson News, of August 3, 1872: "Pursuant to a call, published in the News, the Republicans of Reno County met in the court house last Saturday. The meeting organized by electing W. W. Updegraff, chairman, and H. Whiteside, secretary. Secretary read call for a meeting, and H. Hodgson and C. W. Ellis were chosen as a committee to report a list of names for county central committee." ¹

On August 9, 1872, the Hutchinson Grant and Wilson club was organized. J.L. Penny, W.W. Updegraff, and Harry Hodgson were elected Vice Presidents, to promote the interests and election of the Republican Party candidates.

¹ William G. Cutler's History of the State of Kansas (1883)

THIS ISSUE: RENO COUNTY PIONEERS

The first term of the District Court for Reno County was opened August 14, 1872, in temporary court house erected by the county, Judge W. R. Brown presiding. There were also present L. Houk, County Attorney; H. Hodgson, District Clerk... The first case taken up was that of Chas. Meyers, indicted for running a gambling house. Only two or three important cases were tried during the period.²

On January 24, 1874, "A mass meeting of indignant citizens was held at the court house and strong resolutions were passed condemning the Santa Fe Railroad for refusing to pay their taxes. Harry Hodgson, P. Shafer, William Astle, & J. W. Kanaga as resolution committee signed the same. J. Rhoades, another member of the committee, refused to sign" (The Hutchinson News, January 25, 1874.)

In the October 22, 1874 issue of the Hutchinson News, Harry Hodgson writes a lengthy answer in response to a letter from "Mr. H.W. Beatty" which begins, "When his well known penchant for rushing into print on every possible pretext betrays him into statements of conversations with me, which are purely figments of his own imagination, the matter becomes of sufficient gravity, to demand a disavowal." The letter concludes: "And in reply to the question "whether it is necessary to the progress and well being of our county that H. Hodgson should have some office?" I will say that it is not, but that whenever the people indicate, either directly or indirectly, that they no longer want my services, I am willing to bow to their high behest. Can Mr. Beatty say as such? If so then he is peculiarly unfortunate in the selection of the terms in which he has expressed himself."



In the same issue is found a notice, "As there is to be no election of county clerk in November, the undersigned friends and supporters of Harry Hodgson respectfully urge him to become a candidate for Clerk of the District Court of Reno County, and promise him in the event his acceptance a hearty support. (Followed by a column list of names, concluding, "For want of space a large number of names is not inserted").

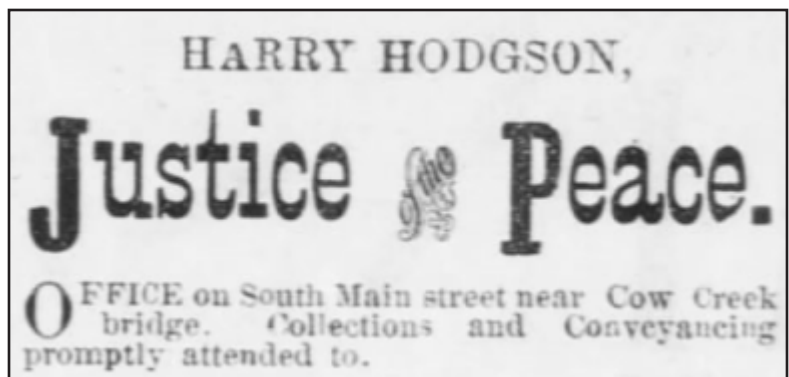
In 1875, the Hutchinson News reported, "Harry Hodgson is building himself a new house on his farm west of town, which reasons, no doubt, that this county will, before long, lose one of its bachelors" (June 3, 1875. Page 3). While Harry's farm home burned to the ground in 1927, by then owned by Harry's nephew, Will Hodgson, this is the same family farm where RCGS members Darren McMannis, Becky (Hodgson) Mladnick, and Jerry Dean lived and visited until 1973, when the Reno County Landfill forced the sale of this century farm through the poisoning of the water table serving the farm.

The July 6, 1876 edition of the Hutchinson News stated, "It will not be invidious, in this connection to name, among county officers, Harry Hodgson, who will soon have served five years as clerk of the district court with great efficiency and acceptableness, having been one of the earlier settlers and held the office from the beginning, and Houston Whiteside, who has served ably and energetically for nearly four years as county attorney." The same article later mentions Harry's sister, Jennie Hodgson, who taught the first school in a small frame building on Main Street in 1872 (the building actually owned by Harry Hodgson).

At the age of 27, Harry married **Helen Miskimin Lindsey**, age 30, on August 23, 1876 in Hutchinson. They were married by G. V. Ricksecker, Probate Judge.³ Helen had been previously married to John R. Lindsey in Guernsey County, Ohio,⁴ and had a son, Cliff Lindsey, born in November 1866. J.R. Lindsey was the teacher of the Hutchinson Public School in its 2nd term, with an enrollment of 80 students. "In Hutchinson, Helen Hodgson taught school during the first term of Obee School after it was opened."⁵

2 William G. Cutler's History of the State of Kansas (1883)
3 Early Marriages of Reno County, Page 114. Reno County Marriage Certificate 1-72.
4 Index to Marriage Records 1810-1951, Guernsey County, Ohio Probate Court. Marriage December 28, 1865.
5 Theiss family genealogy, copy provided by Eugene Theiss.

“Harry Hodgson has moved into town and contemplates a cattle ranch upon the Medicine,” says the Hutchinson Herald on January 25, 1879. He sold his farm to his brother, William Hodgson, moving to his home at 163 East 1st Street. His contemplation turned to satisfaction, as it is said, “Harry Hodgson, Esq., has been down on the Medicine for a week or so, looking after his cattle interests” (The Hutchinson News, August 7, 1879).



On February 3, 1880, Harry Hodgson was elected as Justice of the Peace. He received 270 votes, against George Barclay (243 votes), T.F. Halveson (239), and J. McMurry (211), in “what was probably the most hotly contested election for the same office that has ever been witnessed in the Valley” (The Hutchinson Herald, February 7, 1880).

Harry only served in this role for 5 months, however. The Hutchinson Herald reported, “J.A. Higley, the well known young attorney, has been appointed Justice of the Peace since Harry Hodgson resigned. It is a good selection, and Mr. Higley will make a No. 1 J.P.” (July 24, 1880).

It is not known why Harry & Helen chose to leave their relatives behind in Hutchinson, but their first move took place on July, 1882. “Harry Hodgson has sold his residence on First avenue to George A. Woodard. The consideration was \$1,000. Mr. Hodgson will hereafter reside in Caldwell” (The Hutchinson Herald. July 14, 1882). The deed for this sale was recorded on June 30, 1883.⁶

The Hutchinson Heald reported on July 14, 1883, “Harry Hodgson, so long and favorably known in Reno County, has been in our city most of the past week. His friends are glad to see his smiling face for even so short a time. For the past two years he has spent most of his time in the Indian Territory, where he has kept a large herd of cattle. He leaves in a few days for Montana where his cattle are now being driven, to make that his future home. He leaves behind him a host of friends, who regret his departure and follow him with many good wishes for future prosperity.”

Prosperity did follow Harry & Helen Hodgson. Several years later under the heading, “A Former Citizen Honoured” the Hutchinson News reported, “The many friends of Harry Hodgson in Reno county, will be glad to learn that he has been nominated for State senator in his district in Montana, and all will wish him success. He was clerk of the district court of this county a number of years ago, and was a popular and efficient officer. He will make the people of Montana a good member of the State senate” (September 9, 1892).

“Harry Hodgson of Montana, one of Reno county’s earlier settlers, is in the city. Mr. Hodgson is now one of the cattle kings of Montana, and Reno county cattle men can get pointers from Mr. Hodgson if they meet him” (The Hutcinson News. December 3, 1898).

On Thursday, September 25, 1908, Harry Hodgson was killed in a train collision. He was 60 years old. According to his death certificate, Col. H. Hodson “died September 25, 1908, killed instantly in Railroad collision at Youngs Point, Montana.” His body was removed to George Setzler Furniture &

⁶ Reno County Register of Deeds. Volume 8 Page 144, Warranty Deed from Helen M. Hodgson to George Woodard for Lots 1, 3, & 5 on 1st Avenue East. Filed June 30, 1883.

**Are There Pioneers In Your Reno County Ancestry?
Tell Their Stories Here!**

Undertaker of 2824 Montana Ave, Billings. An article appeared in the Hutchinson News on September 28, 1908:

“Word has been received here by Mrs. W. J. Sponsler, living southwest of town, that her brother, Harry Hodgson, was killed in a railway accident on the Northern Pacific railroad last Thursday night. The dispatches had it that “Colonel Dodson” was killed but it was learned after that it was Harry Hodgson, a former old resident here. The message received was from his step son, Dr. Clifton Lindsey. The home of Mr. Hodgson was in Midvale, Idaho. The message stated that the remains would likely be shipped here for burial, although it is not known now when this will take place.

“Harry Hodgson came to Hutchinson in the fall of 1871 and was therefore one of the earliest settlers. He was the first clerk of the district court of Reno county, being elected in March, 1872. He served two years in that capacity just after the county was organized. He was well known here for a great many years, being associated for a long time with the early residents. He was at one time the proprietor of the Reno House and was married here. He had for a long time a very fine farm across the Arkansas river from town and lived on it for some time. He left Hutchinson in 1882 and had lived in the West since that time.

“The wreck which caused his death was a collision between a passenger and a freight train during a heavy snow storm, making it impossible for the engineers to see the approach of the other train.”

The Billings Daily Gazette on September 29, 1908, reported: “The funeral of Col. Hodgson was held yesterday afternoon from the home of his step son, Dr. Cliff Lindsey. The services

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at the Church were conducted by the Rev. Fritche, while those at the grave your conducted by members of Asher Lodge, No. 29, A.F. & A.M., the funeral being in charge of the Masonic Fraternity, of which the deceased was a member at Malad, Idaho. There were many beautiful floral tributes sent by loving friends, among them being a handsome pillow sent by the First National Bank of Lewistown, of which Col. Hodson was stockholder.”

Harry Hodgson’s nephew, William Crandall, assumed ownership of the Montana property and Mrs. Hodgson moved to Los Angeles, California, to their property located where the Hollywood Bowl later stood. On December 16, 1922, the Hutchinson News reported the death of Helen Hodgson:

“Word has been received by relatives here of the death of Mrs. Helen Hodgson, a former prominent Hutchinson girl, in the pioneer days, who passed away at Los Angeles, Cal. Thursday (December 14, 1922). She will be remembered by many of the old settlers as Miss Helen Miskimen, who came here in 1874, and was prominent as a girl in Hutchinson of the early ‘70’s. In 1876 she was married to Harry Hodgson. She and her husband traveled much and visited in Hutchinson frequently with relatives and old acquaintances.”

Harry & Helen’s bodies were cremated and placed in the Hodgson vault in Rosedale Cemetery-Los Angeles.



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HONORING ALL WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE US

AS ALWAYS, YOUR RENO CO. SUBMISSIONS ARE WELCOMED & ENCOURAGED