
Hooks - Holland

22 June 2014

The Periodic Newsletter on Family History and Genealogy of
Bennett Hardy Hooks (1890-1929) and Bertha Gertrude Holland (1896-1991)

Issue number 004

When Harold Edgerton Joined Our Family

I've written before in this occasional newsletter about the circumstances leading up to Bertha Holland Hooks being widowed and later re-marrying at the height of the Depression. (See Issue number 2, June 2012.) This time I will pick up the story from there, recounting how Harold Jackson Edgerton became a truly wonderful part of our family.

Bertha was widowed June 12, 1929 with the death of her first husband B. Hardy Hooks at the age of 38. She was alone, 33 years old, with four children ages 4 to 15 to support and with just a sixth-grade education. Her oldest child, Louise, quit high school and became a stenographer in an Apex doctor's office, and Bertha became a domestic, cleaning other people's houses, in order to put food on the table and to pay the \$5 a month rent on their house on Hunter Street.

Sometime after 1930, she met the handsome new butcher in town, Harold Edgerton (shown in the photo below on the right behind the counter), and in November of 1933, they were married. If there was initially some push-back and resentment from Bertha's children about this "new daddy," over time Harold's sweet demeanor and unconditional love for his new family won everyone's heart. When we grandchildren arrived, he was the only grandfather ("Pa-Pa") we ever knew on that side of the family, and



we could never have asked for better. Here, then, is Pa-Pa's family history as I have been able to find it.

HAROLD'S ANCESTORS

Early history of the Edgerton family is somewhat shrouded in speculation and scant records. According to some researchers, whose work woefully lacks sources and proof, Harold's Gr-Gr-Gr-Gr-Gr-Grandfather was John Edgerton, born about 1679 in Colledine, County Wexford, Ireland. John's third and last son, Thomas (1710-1768), came to the

American colonies, settled in Haddonfield, NJ, married twice, had a total of 11 children, and died in Philadelphia.

Our knowledge of the family is bolstered by slightly more complete records beginning with Thomas Edgerton, Jr. (1735-1794), who was born in NJ, and married his first wife, with whom he had six children before her death in 1776. He then moved to North Carolina where he married again in 1778, fathered five additional children, and died in what is now Wayne County.



Left: Sometime between 1930 and 1933, Harold Edgerton moved from Raleigh to Apex to continue his career as a butcher. In this photo, he is posing behind the counter of a grocery store in downtown Apex. This could be H.C. Benton's store, which was located at 115 N. Salem Street. Benton would later witness the signing of Harold's will.



Above left: Harold (right) poses with brother Marcus, in a photo taken around 1910. Above right: A dapper young Harold in the 1920s, in what I have come to refer to as his "Dick van Dyke photo."

GR-GR-GRANDPARENTS

Thomas Edgerton III (1785-1863) was born, raised, and died in Wayne County, NC. Like his father, he was a devoted member of the Society of Friends (Quakers), and he was affiliated with the Wayne County Contentnea Meeting. Records show it was here that he wed Absilla Pike in 1806, to whom he would be married for 57 years, and with whom he would have ten children. Here is the contemporary hand-written Contentnea document of their wedding. (I have added commas, semicolons, and parentheses, which were absent in the original, for easier reading.)

Whereas Thomas Edgerton and Absilla Pike, both of Contentnea monthly meeting in Wayne County N.C., having declared their intentions of marriage with each other before several monthly meetings of the people called Quakers, whose proceedings were approved by said meetings, consent of Parent being first had. Now these may certify whom it may concern that, for a full accomplishing of said intention, this 16th day of 4 mo. 1806 the said Thomas Edgerton and Absilla Pike appeared in a public meeting at said meeting house. The said Thos. Edgerton, taking the said Absilla Pike by the hand, did declare that he took her to be his wife, promising through Divine assistance to be unto her a true and loving husband until death shall separate them. And then the said Absilla Pike did, in like manner, declare that she took Thos. Edgerton to be her husband, promising through Divine assistance to be unto him a true and loving wife until death separates them. As a further confirmation thereof, the said Thos. Edgerton and Absilla Edgerton (she, according to custom of marriage, assuming the name of her husband) did to these present set their hands; and we whose names are here under subscribed being present have, as witnesses, set our names the day and year above written.

Thomas Edgerton (signed)
Absilla X Edgerton (her mark)
[18 witness signatures]

A quick aside: It was for landowner and entrepreneur Nathan Pike (1760-1844), Absilla's father and Harold's gr-gr-gr-grandfather, that the town of Pikeville, in Wayne County, NC, was named.

GREAT-GRANDPARENTS

Nathan Edgerton (1809-1881), Thomas and Absilla's second child, apparently married his first cousin, Arcada Pike (his mother Absilla's brother's daughter). Arcada was 15 when she married the 22-year-old Nathan, and she had 16 children before she turned 44 years old. Arcada was 61 when she died, and Nathan passed away two-and-a-half years later at age 71.

GRANDPARENTS

The fifth of Nathan and Arcada's brood was Exum Pike Edgerton, who married Bertha Holland's first cousin twice removed, Elizabeth "Betsy" Holland. (See family tree and article "Bertha & Harold were (3rd) Cousins" below.) Exum and Betsy had ten children, including the delightfully named Demetrius Woodard "Mutt" Edgerton. Exum fought in the Civil War, enlisting in Company I of the NC 16th Cavalry Battalion of the CSA.

Below: Harold with his sister Agnes Edgerton Hoffman and her husband Edwin H. "Dawgy" Hoffman. The photo was taken in 1961 beside Harold & Bertha's house. Bottom: A career military man, Edwin is buried alongside Agnes in Arlington National Cemetery.



Below: A 1920's Edgerton family portrait

(l to r) father Ivey (1870-1935), Marcus (1907-1981), Agnes (1908-1992), mother Sallie (1870-1929), and Harold (1903-1968)



PARENTS & SIBLINGS

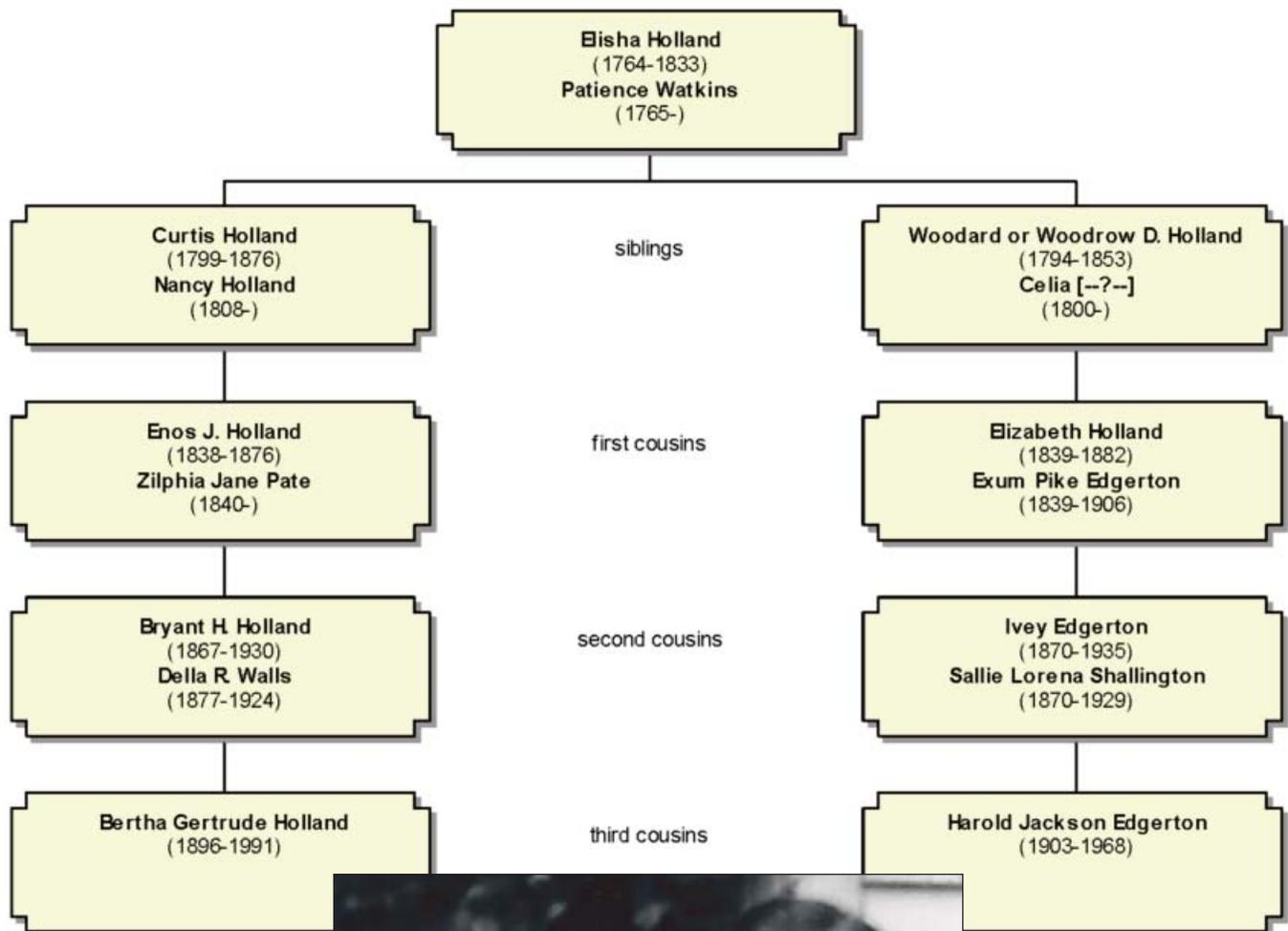
Exum's seventh child, Ivey Edgerton (1870-1935), married Sallie Lorena Shallington (1870-1929). They had a total of five children, only three of which survived childhood. Harold Jackson Edgerton was the oldest of those three, and his siblings were Marcus Turlington (1907-1981) and Agnes Myrtle (1908-1992). By 1930, mother Sallie had died, and Ivey was living at 2005 Clark Street in Raleigh with his son Harold and his daughter Agnes. (That's where the First Citizens Bank is now in Cameron Village.) Harold was a butcher for Pender Stores, and Agnes was the secretary for the Treasurer of N.C. State College.

Marcus married Frances Whitfield, had two children (one of whom died at birth), and they lived their married lives in Durham, NC. Agnes and Edwin Henry ("Dawgy") Hoffman married in 1937, and lived at Ft. Bragg, NC in 1940 where Edwin was a career officer in the U.S. Army. They died within a year of each other in

1991-92. Both Agnes and Dawgy are buried at Arlington National Cemetery (Section 59, Grave 2095; see photo previous page).

WIFE & FAMILY

At age 30, Harold married 37-year-old widow Bertha Holland Hooks on Thanksgiving Day, November 30, 1933. (Lincoln established the day for Thanksgiving as the last Thursday in November, and it was not changed to the fourth Thursday until 1939 by FDR. Harold and Bertha celebrated their anniversary each year on Thanksgiving, on whatever day it fell.) Harold acquired four Hooks step-children, Louise, Alma, James, and Edna Ruth, and when grandchildren started to arrive, Bertha and he became known as Ma-Ma and Pa-Pa. Harold Jackson Edgerton has two namesakes in the family, one grandson (David Jackson Hooks) and one great-grandson (Daniel Jackson Allen). He died of cancer in 1968 at the age of 65.



Not that it matters, but...

Bertha & Harold were (3rd) Cousins

And they weren't the only cousins, as it turns out.

The chart above shows that Bertha Holland and Harold Edgerton had the same great-great-grandparents (4 generations back) — making them third cousins. His great-grandfather was a Holland, and his grandmother, Elizabeth Holland, married Exum Pike Edgerton, thus joining the families.

Both the Holland and Edgerton families hailed from northern Wayne County, around the Great Swamp area, but Bertha's parents moved to Apex where she was born.

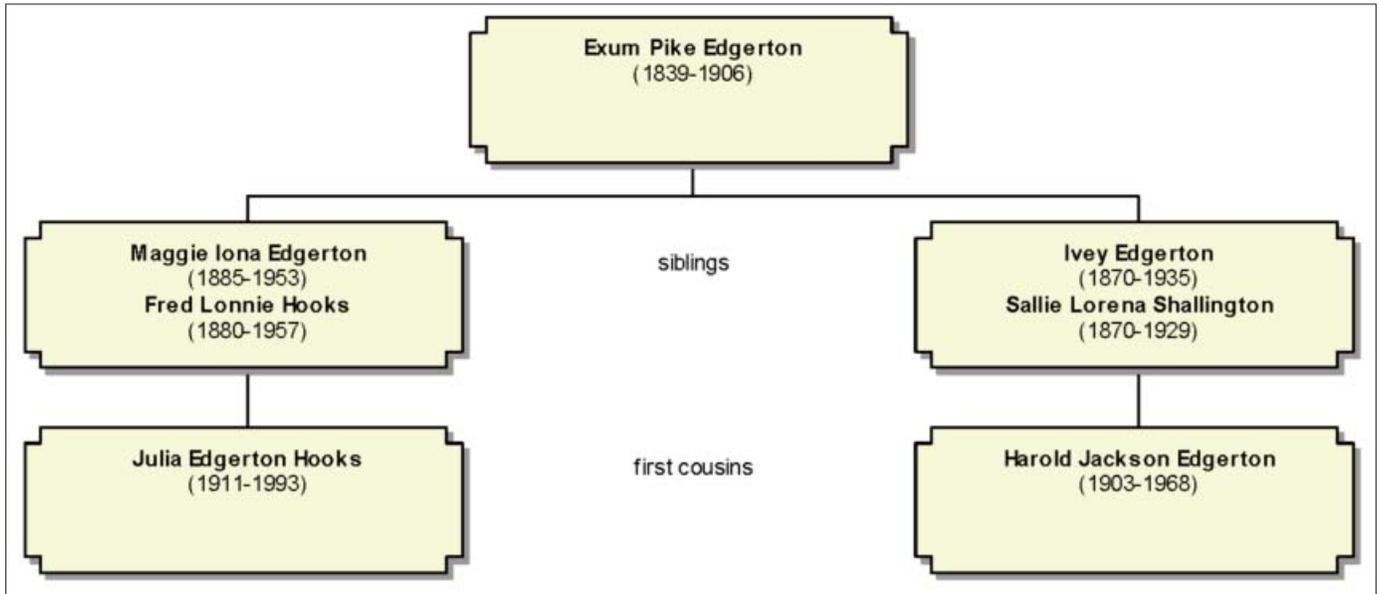


Bertha Edgerton and Harold Edgerton, in about 1940

My parents used to travel to Fremont, NC to visit two sisters there, Julia Hooks Overman and Aileen Hooks. They were related to Bertha's first husband, Bennett Hardy Hooks — second cousins once removed. (See next page.) But mother always told me that "Aunt Julia" and "Aunt Aileen," as I called them, were more closely related to Harold Edgerton than to Bennett Hardy Hooks.

And they were. Julia's full name at birth was Julia Edgerton Hooks, Her mother was Maggie Edgerton, sister of Ivey Edgerton — making Julia and Aileen first cousins of Harold Edgerton.

If you think working out this interconnected family web hasn't been difficult, enlightening, and rewarding, then think again. Harold Edgerton wasn't blood related to us, but there surely were lots of connections!



Julia Edgerton Hooks Overman served as something of a linking point between the families of Bertha Holland's two husbands — not really surprising given her "Edgerton" and "Hooks" names. The top chart shows that she was a first cousin of Harold Edgerton. And below, she is shown to have been a second cousin once removed to Bennett Hardy Hooks. The two men, however, were not blood relatives. As shown on the previous page, though, Bertha and Harold were blood relatives, meaning that all of her grandchildren and Harold are third cousins twice removed. Welcome to the South.

