



George, Edna and Mutt Cooper

## **GEORGE WASHINGTON COOPER**

**Oct. 13, 1882 - May 17, 1945**

George Washington Cooper was born on October 13, 1882 at the family homestead near the Blackwater River. He was the second of eleven children of James F. and Lucyann Cooper. He grew up working on the family farm near (what was once known as) Oscar, FL, between Holt and Milton.

George married Mary Edna Adams on September 29, 1907. Mary Edna, born November 9, 1888, was the first child of Alexander and Susan Bishop Adams. They had one son, Morris Bryant (Skinny) Cooper born April 10, 1909. Morris married Pansy Hartless in March 1928 and they had one son, Max, born in July 1944.

George was always concerned about civic affairs. The town of Holt was incorporated in 1913 and he was one of the councilmen. When Okaloosa County was created in 1915, he was appointed as a member of the Elections Board of District 9, Holt. In 1916 his name appeared on the Clerk of the Courts list of those "being suitable for jurors". Also in 1916, he qualified and ran for Sheriff of Okaloosa County. He was a member of the New Hope Masonic Lodge, # 175, and also a leader in the Woodman of the World chapter in Holt.

The following newspaper article appeared in the Okaloosa News Journal, Crestview, FL, August 15, 1919, Vol. 4, #45; " Mr. George W. Cooper and Dr. Jack Adams were business visitors to Crestview, FL from Holt."

The following by their daughter-in-law, Pansy H. Cooper, are remembrances of them: "Early 1920's - My earliest memories of him were that he seemed to be a very personable person. He and his father, Jim, owned a store building and contents in Holt. They also owned and operated a boarding house. He was a trader and trafficker of real estate properties, livestock and buildings. It seemed to me that, at that time, he had the nicest car in Holt - a blue Nash touring car. Later on, in the '20's he sold some of the buildings and built a real nice 6-room house and a building with 3 compartments on the South side of the house.

He built another building on the North side for a store. The compartmented building fronted on the main highway - the "Old Spanish Trail" and he rented it out as a garage and café. Edna never called George by his first name; I never heard but one pet name she used, 'sweet'. Mr. C. always called her 'Edny'."

In 1928, due to 'the great depression', he sold most of his holdings and moved to south Florida to work as saw foreman for a lumber company headquartered near the Choctawhatchee River. The man who had bought the buildings went bankrupt so he came back to Holt for a while, but soon left again with the same lumber company. This time, he went further south on down to the Lake Okeechobee area, still as saw foreman. When they moved back to Holt, he took a job as Prison guard Captain in Baker. He bought an old farm place and hired a man to farm the land.

In the early 1940s, his son Morris and Pansy bought some land along Log Lake Road and built a house. George and Edna moved a house from the Santa Rosa / Okaloosa county line area adjacent to Morris's house and built an addition to it. He bought several acres of land adjoining the house and farmed it. Along about the same time, he became a steady Church member and was so delighted when his grandson, Max, came into the family.

He passed away in Holt on May 17, 1945. His death was due to a heart attack.

After, George's death, Edna went to work at Eglin AFB in the commissary and food services and worked there until the early 1950s. She kept the farm going with a few head of cattle. After 'retiring' from Civil Service, she milked the cows and sold the milk to the local residents who still liked their milk unpasteurized. She enjoyed going fishing with her brother, Hosea (Hose).

She passed away in Holt on December 30, 1969, at the age of 81, from pneumonia.

They are both buried in the Holt Cemetery near his father, and brothers.

*Compiled by: Max Morris Cooper, grandson of George Washington Cooper.  
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