



#15: The Search for Pleasant Humble's Body

Pleasant Humble, the founder of our town. I wrote an article about him a little while back (eTribune, 07/10/2018). The big mystery about Pleasant Humble concerns his death. By 1910, Mr. Humble was becoming feeble and went to live with his sister in Hardin County. It is suspected that he died between 1910 and 1912. We have no way of knowing, because there are no more records of him after that time ... no death certificate, no more census records, no tombstone ... nothing.

Being the tenacious researcher I am, I decided to go look for it...as many others have done before me. The target of my journey? Hardin County. Specifically, the county seat: Kountze. So, I packed my car with maps, copies of my research, and snacks. My wife got in the car (she always gets included in my out-of-town searches), and we headed towards the Big Thicket. It wasn't too bad of a drive. We had some Elton John, ELO, the Moody Blues and a host of other great artists playing on the iPod. The weather was a perfect sunny afternoon...not too cool, and not too hot.

It took about an hour and a half to arrive in Kountze, and we headed immediately for the county courthouse. A search through the death records produced no death certificate, and nothing about his death was listed in any other county death record. That's not surprising actually. It wasn't until 1930 that death certificates were routinely produced across Texas...at least 18 years AFTER he died. Pleasant Humble was living with his sister at the time of his death, so I also searched for records with her last name (in case his name got mixed up). Still nothing. In fact, after FOUR more hours at the courthouse, I found absolutely nothing with his name on it in any of the vital records, land deeds, and other such important documents.

Okay. What am I missing? Let's go back over what we do know. His wife died in January 1906. They were living in Humble at the time, and word is that she is buried in the Humble Cemetery (at the corner of Old Humble Road and Isaacks Road). That makes sense, because they lived in Humble at the time. So, she is probably there, but we are NOT absolutely positive because there is no marker in the cemetery over her grave. Their son, Williams Humble, also died in 1906, but we don't know where he is buried, nor do we know the exact date of his death. Some people say Pleasant Humble is buried in the Humble Cemetery too. No proof of that, and I'm less inclined to believe it. I just don't see the townspeople of Hardin County sending his body to Humble for burial. And, he had no family left in Humble, Texas to bury him.

Back to Hardin County. We made a stopover at the Kountze Public Library. Nothing. Unfortunately, the Hardin County Genealogical Library was closed (those libraries are always good for these type of searches). No luck in finding any newspapers from that area in that timeframe. Next stop: Knupple Cemetery in Hardin. That is the rumored resting place of our Pleasant Humble. We walked through the cemetery and found members of his family, but no grave specifically marked for Pleasant Humble. We also visited several others cemeteries in the area.

So, what have we learned? We can't find the body! We did rule out lots of stuff, but we still lack information to find out exactly when he died, or exactly where he ended up. We did have a good day trip to ourselves, and had some great food while we were driving around. Clues to his final destination will probably be found in newspapers from the time, or perhaps in some old family notes from his sisters' family. Hopefully, the next inspired researcher will make some progress in determining his fate. Happy Hunting!

