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# Plain Brown Rapper

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News for the Tandy and Grace Brown Family

May 2001

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## An interview with Lilly Davis-Hamby

On a trip to Arkansas to learn as much as possible about our mother's family, we went to the Historical Society of Carroll County in the little town of Berryville, Arkansas. One of the items we found while we were there was an interview with Lilly Davis-Hamby, a sister of our Grandmother, Mary Elizabeth Davis-Eidam.

Mary (always known as Molly) was the oldest child in a family of twelve children: Rose E, T.M., Claude, Oliver G., Coy, Lena, Fred, Cora, Lilly Caroline, Lovie and Hugh.

Grandmother Eidam's father was James B. Davis and her mother was Caroline Caledonia (Callie) Hall-Davis. James' father was Turner Davis and there is record of a James Turner Davis who is probably the same man. Turner Davis was married to Caroline Prince Jackson. Caroline Caledonia (Callie) Hall-Davis's father was Thomas Hall and her mother was Lonigry. No maiden name available.

Lilly Davis Hamby gave two interviews, one in 1961 and one in 1975. The information is rather interesting and gives us a little insight to life in the area surrounding Eureka Springs, Arkansas when mother was growing up.

### THE 1961 INTERVIEW

Lilly was asked about her grandfather coming to Eureka Springs during the Civil War.

**Lilly: "My father came to Huntsville, Arkansas with his parents Turner Davis and Caroline Prince Davis, at the age of one year. My grandfather loaded up his ox wagon and went right on to Springfield, Missouri to the Hospital there and Doctored the soldiers for one year there. My grandmother didn't see him or he didn't see the baby for one year."**

Lilly was then asked about her grandfather Turner Davis who was a licensed physician and how he made his medicine.

**Lilly: "Well, he went into the woods and dug herbs and he would go down on the branches and gather what he called sassaparilla and he would put that in the chimney. He had places in his chimney where he could lay those herbs in and dry them and then he'd beat them up and powder them up and he took a corn cob and made a little measuring cup and as ta' yet it must be in the family somewhere. I haven't got it and so he'd measure those doses out and give to the soldier boys as he thought they needed."**

At this point the interviewer said: "Now, your grandfather was a licensed physician and that he had his medical training back in Tennessee and they arrived in Huntsville (Arkansas) at the beginning of the war then - and then of course ah - then what about the family. How many boys were there in that family or how many children?"

**Lilly: "They were Bob, Rich, Green, and ah-Bob, Rich Green, Jim, and Bell and Sis. Now Bell and Sis married. One married Jim Hailey and the other married Joe Hailey. Both women deceased in the early 1880's and left the family of children which my grandmother reared and there were Al Hailey - now do you remember those - Al Hailey, Stuke Hailey, Martha Hailey, Leonard Hailey, Ella Hailey and all have deceased except Leonard Hailey and he's now in California."**

She was then asked about Caroline Prince Jackson.

**Lilly: "Well, she was my grandmother, she was Turner Davis's wife and she was the first cousin of General Jackson." (General Stonewall Jackson)**

She was then asked about how long her grandparents lived.

**Lilly:** *"Yes, they did (live to a ripe old age). Grandfather, I think, as I remember, was 93. He died on what is known now, his house at that time, the Mister John Walker Property real estate out on Dry Fork and she died in my home on Dry Fork, just above the Al Hawkins Mill."*

Interviewer: "Now, Mis Hamby, you have had an opportunity to get some of this background or some of this early history from your grandparents because they lived one- your grandmother 92 and grandfather to be 93. Now we've heard a lot about the old Hawkins Mill out there an' it was not built by Hawkins. According to your information, tell us something about that old mill.

**Lilly:** *"Well, when grandfather returned from his work, his practice in medicine, they decided to build the mill on Dry Fork Creek and my grandmother, at the time was operating a carding machine. So grandfather took a broad ax and took his four boys and they went out in the woods and got those- and cut down those saw logs and they had oxen that they'd drag those saw logs down to the mill for the foundation and they took broad ax and hewed those logs out with broad ax."*

Interviewer: Well now, the mill was built with hand tools- Now besides the broad ax and the old fashioned chopin' ax that we still have, as- perhaps they used some other tools. Can you think of some other tools they might have used in building the mill?"

**Lilly:** *"Big augers, for one thing. I had one at home. Big augers and home made screwdrivers and I remember, and home made hammers."*

Interviewer: "Then they also had chisels for cutting out those large holes, to mortise those hogs together for the mill dam. So your folks built that mill, but we knew it in later years the name the Hawkins Mill."

**Lilly:** *"Well, they sold it. My grandfather sold it to the Hawkins family."*

Interviewer: "And of course, the Hawkins people had mills other places and were well known for their work in milling. Now things have changed a little bit since then. At one time they didn't save all that ah- there was some waste from the grain. Could you tell us a little more about that?"

**Lilly:** *"Yes, they took the bran and threw it down in the water, down in the mill dam. They didn't save it, they didn't know how valuable it was."*

Interviewer: "So that is something we've learned over the years, the bran did make good feed for the livestock. They saved it then and of course, that gave them a little more profit. Now you told me the miller never had a stove for heating and one think might seem strange to us. Handling so much grain, he never had any scales to weigh the grain. Will you explain a little about that?"

**Lilly:** *"No, they had toll, what they called toll box, peck toll box, half bushel and bushel toll box, n' they were all hand made."*

Interviewer: "So, this little box was used instead of weighing the corn and weighing the wheat to determine-. So did they grind both corn and wheat at that Hawkins Mill there at Dry Fork?"

**Lilly:** *"Yes, they did. They made whole wheat flour. It made excellent light bread. I made light bread from the whole wheat flour."*

From here the interviewer asks more about the mill and the other mills in the area. Then he goes back to the family and asked about someone serving as a licensed mid-wife.

**Lilly:** *"My mother, Callie C. Hall Davis."*

Interviewer: "How many babies did she deliver?"

**Lilly:** *"1500."*

Interviewer: "And, she had a license. She was a licensed mid-wife that served her community and the people of the surrounding communities over in that section of Carroll County and out, I believe, that took in a section of Madison County."

**Lilly:** *"Oh, yes, yes, it did."*

(Our mother, Grace Parker Brown, told us Grandma Eidam often assisted her mother, Callie, with the deliveries.)

From here the interviews asks Lilly about a time when the Mill on Dry Fork Creek blew up.

Lilly: **"Yes, the boiler blew up in 19 and 17 and killed Hugh Hamby and it injured several other people, but hospitalize them and ah- there was one lady by the name of Foster had just started into the grist mill. They were operating a little grist mill then and she had started in to get her little grindings now and the mill blew up and it knocked her down and injured her back."**

Interviewer: "I believe that according to the information I have, that boiler blew up and was blown about 300 feet and in later years it was down there in a hole of water. Someone told me that some fella collecting scrap iron back during World War II, when scrap iron became more valuable, pulled that old boiler out and sold it for scrap iron. Well, do you remember any other details about this incident there? What do you think caused it?"

Lilly: **"Well, I've been informed that he was - he had too much fire and the boiler was dry and he put cold water in it and it exploded. That's the way the information we got."**

Interviewer: "And according to information someone gave me, the boiler shot out from under the shed, just like a rocket. Was that about the way you heard it?"

Lilly: **"Yes, that was right."**

(They continue on for a bit about the Mill and Hugh Hamby being killed but nothing more about our family until she talks about their way of life.)

Interviewer: "Now, I want you to tell a little bit about the way the people lived back there. You planted your corn, cleared your land, and of course did those things we don't see today. But most of all I'm interested in the old ash hopper. Have you ever made soap through that process?"

Lilly: **"Yes, I have. They- want me to explain how you made those-, The men would go out in the woods and would get a hollow tree and they would cut out the top of the tree, one side of it and then they would get boards and put down in each side so they would fill up and make a hopper and then we would put in some shucks in the bottom and as we would take out ashes from the fire place, we would let them all cool down and we'd pour them up in the hopper. When we got the hopper full, we'd pour water in the hopper for about 12 hours. Then the lye would start and we would catch it in the jar and we'd save the intestines of the hogs and we'd save all the scraps and we would weigh so many pounds of the scrap soap grease and so many gallon of the lye and we would mix it together and boil it outside in a big kettle. It made what was known as soft soap which we enjoyed very much and was very good to wash with."**

End of 1961 interview.

### THE 1975 INTERVIEW

Interviewer: "When were you born?"

Lilly: **"October the 9<sup>th</sup>, 18-90."** (10-09-1890)

Interviewer: "How old are you now?"

Lilly: **"81"** (Interview took place on August 22, 1975 which means she would have to be 85 if she was born in 1890)

Interviewer: "Who was your mother?"

Lilly: **"My mother was Callie C. Hall, she's Thomas Hall's daughter and they lived in Berryville. She was raised here in Berryville."**

Interviewer: "And your father?"

Lilly: **"Was Davis, he was Turner Davis's son. Turner and Caroline Davis. Turner was a doctor."**

Interviewer: "Your fathers name was what?"

Lilly: **"Jim"**

Interviewer: "Jim Davis. And he had brothers, what were their names?"

Lilly: **"Robert Davis and ah-Rich Davis, he had two."**

Interviewer: "So there were three brothers of that family and then they were the sons of Turner Davis."

Lilly: **"That's right."**

(The 1961 interview mentions sisters and an additional brother)

Interviewer: "Now tell me somethin' about Turner Davis. I believe that you said he was a Civil War medical Doctor or Herb Doctor!"

**Lilly: "Herb Doctor, he dug his herbs and he went to Springfield, Missouri and there's where he had his patients and he stayed there with them and doctored them with herbs."**

Interviewer: "Now he was a doctor for the soldiers for the confederate soldier for the war then."

**Lilly: "That's right."**

Interviewer: "And, how did he get his medicine?"

**Lilly: He got herbs, he went out and dug herbs and pulverized it and beat it up with a hammer. He didn't have anything other than what he'd get out an dig."**

Interviewer: "And how would he dry these roots or herbs?"

**Lilly: "Had a hole, had a brick took out of the fire place and he'd put them up in this brick and dried them in the heat by the fire place."**

Interviewer: "How did he know what was a dose of medicine for a soldier when he'd give a soldier some medicine. How'd he determine that?"

**Lilly: "Well, he had a little spoon, now, I had one of those spoons but it got away from me and now they'd give a little spoon full so at certain hours."**

Interviewer: "He also had a corn cob measure, didn't he?"

**Lilly: "Yes, he had that."**

(The interview continues on about the mill and how they ground their flour and is about the same as in the previous interview until she talks again about her mother being a mid-wife.)

Interviewer: "Now you told me the it seemed like there was something else handed down from your family, or some other background for helping people and your mother, Miz Callie Davis, Callie Hall Davis was what they called a mid-wife."

**Lilly: "She was a licensed one."**

Interviewer: "And how many babies did you say she dressed?"

**Lilly: "About 500!"**

(In her earlier interview she had said Callie delivered 1500 babies, so your guess is as good as mine.)

Interviewer: She dressed 500 babies then! Now she was a licensed mid-wife."

**Lilly: "That's right."**

Interviewer: "She took some training. Did you say she took a correspondence course?"

**Lilly: "She took one and then she went over here somewhere to her school and was gone 2, 3 or 4 days, and she got her license and she'd come back and went to work."**

Interviewer: "How did she get out to the homes where these babies were born?"

**Lilly: "They'd come and get her horse back or mule back or in a wagon, sometimes wagon and team. I remember one old man that lived down, way down on the Kings River drove an old team and wagon up there after her when the snow was on the ground. His wife was going to have a baby. My mother went and stayed two days and two nights and my daddy got awful mad."**

Interviewer: "And now sometimes they would go a little bit early, I believe, and she'd have to stay 'til the baby was born."

**Lilly: "Yes, that's right."**

Interviewer: "Sometimes she would ride side saddle on a mule."

**Lilly: "That's right."**

Interviewer: "What was the name of that mule she rode was it --?"

**Lilly: "It belonged to him, he'd bring it, I don't know."**

Interviewer: "I thought your mother had a mule you called 'Patsy'?"

**Lilly: "O' my mother, Oh yes, my mother did, Un huh."**

Interviewer: "So she'd ride Patsy to the homes a lot of times then."

**Lilly: "Yes, she did."**

Interviewer: "Was it true that the women of the community some of them would be there to help her with the birth of the child?"

Lilly: "As a rule they were."

Interviewer: "And the mid-wife was often referred to as the 'Granny Woman'."

Lilly: "That's right."

Interviewer: "So it might be called the mid-wife or Granny Women then."

Lilly: "Yes."

Interviewer: "Now out in the Dry Fork community where I live, the mid-wife was not used much after about 1935 or 1950, along in there somewhere."

Lilly: "That's right."

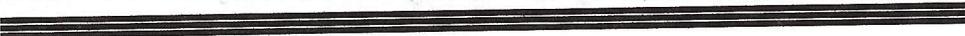
The interview ends with her talking about meeting her husband at a "Box Social" and being married by the preacher. It also talks about the Fourth of July Celebrations and Christmas Celebrations.

It is my hope that you find this as interesting as I have. A look into life during the time Grandma Eidam was growing up. As I have told you before, Grandma Eidam left Arkansas to come west when our mother was about 6 years old. Which was about the turn of the century, 1900. The area around Huntsville, Berryville and Eureka Springs is beautiful. If you have gone to Branson, Missouri, chances are, you have been to Eureka Springs.

On the highway coming into town, there is a sign stating the population in Eureka Springs is 1900, it is my guess the sign is wrong, there are about 1900 motels in that little town. It is a major tourist stop on the way to Branson.



As a humorous footnote regarding Hugh Davis (not the Hugh Hamby mentioned in Lilly's interview), Vivian said she thought Hugh was killed when the "still" blew up. Do you think there could have been some "moonshiners" in our family? Surely not!



Recently I received an inquiry from the Gwinnett Historical Society regarding our Great Grandfather, Tandy William Brown. He had many brothers and sisters and if your are keeping track of them, here is the information I have just received. His oldest sister would be Sarah, she married John Harris and she was born in 1812. Next would be Sterlen, born in 1820, Then Tandy, born in 1824, Mary born in 1827 (she married William Hazelrigs), Elvira, born in 1834 (no record of a marriage) and Seaborn, born in 1836.

Fun to receive new information. Frank has done such an outstanding job of keeping our family record and I'm sure can give you much more information than I can.



We need to keep Vivian in our hearts and prayers as she goes through a very tough time. She has incurred an infection which is spreading throughout her body and cannot be controlled. All they can do at this time is keep her comfortable and keep the pain abated. Our hearts and prayers go to Bob Beardslee and Nancy Beardslee Ekdahl as they maintain a vigil at her bedside. We all thank you for your constant and tender loving care you give to our sister. As I write this, I am told Vivian has rallied a little and seems to be gaining on the infection. We still need to keep her in our hearts and prayers as she tries to get better. You can contact them at Bob's home in Austin. 1-512-282-1426 or their home address: 9109 Chisholm Ln, Austin, TX 78748.

**SOME MOVES TO REPORT**

**Roy and Alice** are moving to a smaller home in Newburg, Oregon. They are leaving a home with an absolutely gorgeous yard which Roy has taken care of for all this time. His roses are some of the best and of course he has many, many other flowers and trees and he will miss all but the hard work which it takes to have a home such as They are leaving.

Their new address is: **Roy and Alice Brown, 1716 Johnson Drive, Newburg, Oregon, 97132.** Their phone number remains the same: **1-503-538-0606.**

**Dick and Marty** are leaving Arizona to return to Wyoming for the summer. They will be at home in their new house in Saratoga, Wyoming. They are very excited about their new location behind the Saratoga Inn, close to the Platte River and just off the 1<sup>st</sup> Tee of the Saratoga Inn Golf Course. Won't they be surprised when we all decide to run over to play a little golf and enjoy the scenery.

Their new address is: **Dick and Marty Brown, P O Box 1248, Saratoga, Wyoming 82331.** They have a physical address of 703 Arrowhead, however the Post Office does not deliver mail so you have to send anything to the P O Box 1248. Their phone number is: **1-307-326-5945.**

**SOME OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS TO REPORT**

**Roy and Alice's** two grandsons, **Brent and Kirk Brown** (sons of **Richard and Kathy**) are proving to be excellent athletes.

**Kirk**, a Freshman at Whittier College in Southern California (he is attending on Golf and Tennis Scholarships) is racking up some pretty impressive golf achievements. He was named #1 Freshman golfer at Whittier and finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the League Tournament. Congratulations Kirk, your golfing Great Uncles will all be watching you as you make it to the PGA!!!

**Brent**, a Junior at Newburg High School plays baseball for the Newburg HS "Tigers." They have just won the League Championship at the Regional Tournament and are their way to the State Tournament on May 22, 2001. Because of their impressive play, they will get a great place in the Tournament. Congratulations and I hope someone will let us know how they do. Although I'm sure they will be the State Champs!!!!

Congratulations are in order for all the Graduating Seniors in the class of 2001. If you will sent me their names and any information you might like me to have, I would love to recognize them in this family newsletter.

**June's** granddaughter, **Mary Kerns** is graduating with honors from Natrona County High School. At a banquet held on April 29<sup>th</sup> at the Parkview Hotel, she was one of 75 students in the entire body of graduates in Natrona County (all high schools within the county) receiving the honor as graduating in the "top ten" percent of the class. Mary is the daughter of **Kirk and Terry Smith**. She is not only a scholar, she is also a budding artist with several shows to her credit. Congratulations Mary for your outstanding High School Career and Best Wishes go with you as your embark on your college career at the University of Northern Colorado, at Greeley, Colorado.

**June's** grandson, **Gabe Smith** is also graduating. While I do not have the name of his High School, I know Gabe is active in many activities, including drama and the performing arts. June said he loves acting in High School Plays and Community Theater. Congratulations to Gabe and Best Wishes as you embark on your College Career.

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if you think Washington Politics is funny, you should talk to Charles about his adventures in El Paso County Politics. The Mayor (a long time acquaintance of Charles and LaVena) recently introduces him at his "Black" Counterpart, Ed Jones. The newspaper took the ball and ran with it and enclosed are some of the comical aspects of this "mis-step" on the Mayor's part. Enjoy!!!

# Mayor, you can call me Rich — I've been called worse

I'm lousy with names. Last week, for example, I saw ex-City Council candidates Tim Pleasant and Tom Gallagher in a store (Cheap Whiny Law-suits 'R Us) and accidentally called them "Buffalo Bob and Howdy Doodly."

(Tim got mad and yanked on a string, which caused Howdy . . . I mean Tom, to lift his arm and slap me.)

And I'm always mixing up El Paso County Commissioners Ed Jones and Chuck Brown — probably because they look identical.

The only difference is that Ed is 6-foot-3 and Chuck is 5-foot-10.

And Ed is 60 and Chuck is 73.

Oh, and Ed is black while



**COMMENT**  
by Rich  
Tosches

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Chuck . . . well, Chuck is so white that the Chicago Cubs once hired him to be the third-base line.

The point is, they're pretty hard to confuse. Unless you're Mayor Mary Lou Retton . . . I mean Makepeace.

But that's what happened Tuesday at the swearing-in ceremony for our new City Council members.

Mayor Peggy Sue introduced Commissioner Ed Jones. She then motioned toward Commissioner Brown several feet away and — I'm not kidding — introduced him as "Ed Jones" too.

There was a long pause, and Commissioner Brown said, "I'm Chuck Brown!"

(At this point Commissioner Duncan Bremer was so confused he believed he was Duncan Hines and scurried off to bake a cake.)

Mayor Retton quickly apologized to Commissioner Tom Jones and Commissioner James Brown ("The hardest-working man in small county government.")

Then the mayor did a perfect dismount from the un-

even parallel bars and landed on new City Councilwoman Sallie Clark-Kent.

No, the mayor actually made a joke about the name mixup, which made our police chief, Lorne Greene, spit a mouthful of Hop Sing's soup onto his son, Little Joe.

(Who was played by Michael Landon. Or Michael Jordan.)

Here's the best part: Right after confusing everyone in the room, Mayor Centerpiece unveiled her latest campaign, urging us to get to know the children in our neighborhood.

The program is called — I swear I'm not kidding — *Know My Name*.

(This shouldn't be confused with City Manager Jim

Mullen's campaign: *Know Thy Name*.)

Afterward I actually spoke with Commissioners Ed "Too Tall" Jones and Chuck "Sweet Georgia" Brown about the incident.

Here, as best I can remember it, is that conversation:

Ed: She called me Ed then called him Ed.

Me: Who?

Ed: Chuck.

Me: I thought you were Ed.

Ed: She called Chuck Ed.

Chuck: She called me a what?

Ed: Ed.

Chuck: I'm confused.

Ed: Me too. Why's Duncan Bremer wearing that apron?



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