

## Jeanie Justus' letter

James Franklin Justus was born August 5, 1862 to Wade Hampton Justus. Wade, James, and two sisters drifted over to Denton, Texas. James Justus and Celestine Delilah Stout, born January 27, 1876 were married, Thursday, May 18, 1893 at Denton, Texas. James and Celestine were settled on about two acres of land and operated a berry nursery, hauling water and berries to people in downtown Denton. This union had four children.

There was a picnic in Denton on a drizzling day in January, 1903. Celestine persuaded James to do. So they bundled the children up and took the event in. James got soaking wet and as a result he had the flu, and finally pneumonia. It was a sad day. James passed away and left his little family, January 18, 1903.

His obituary states he was member of the Christian Church of Denton, Texas and it speaks well of him, but it fails to state where he is buried. Economically things were tight.

Claude was only seven years old but he had to be a big boy now and help support his mother, brothers, and sister. Earlier they had a little wagon, maybe James had built it before his untimely death. Claude and his little siblings would gather coal that had fallen from the trains along the railway track that bordered their property. They would sell this coal to buy meager survival food for the little family. It seems Celestine left the children at home to fend for themselves because she had no recourse and worked in the hotel, cleaning rooms.

This went on for awhile and then Celestine married Mr. Marvin Edwin Mitchell, December 28, 1903. To this union was born three more children, Jewel, Lewis, and Mary Jo. This proved to be a mistake and soon after the third child, Lestine and Mr. Mitchell divorced, about 1908, whenever Jewell was about four years old. However, they did not obtain the divorce before the little family moved to Willow, Oklahoma.

Lestine's parents had moved to Willow, Oklahoma, to be near their son, Jim Stout. Mr. Mitchell and Lestine decided surely things would be better for her and their children near her family. They left their home in Denton and sold it for about \$500.00

When they arrived at Willow, near Mangrum, it wasn't a welcome sight for Grandma and Grandpa Stout. They had a large family, also, @ 12 children. Earlier her parents had lived in a dug out on Uncle Jim's place, one of their older sons, but by now they had moved into a little house near a large grove of trees. They probably filed on that land. The house was a two room house downstairs and the loft was converted into a bedroom. One large room with two beds at one end and two beds at the other end with a partition in the center. Girls on one end and boys on the other end. The staircase from the attic went into the kitchen. Grandpa and Grandma Stout slept downstairs in the living room. Jewel Stout commented, "Grandma had her bed so pretty with pretty, pillow shams."

Jewel Hood, Claude's cousin, said the family was pretty well grounded in the Church of Christ. She said that Grandma Stout was a remarkable woman. She was gentle and kind and trained her children in the

