

Jerry McKelvy's
SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

Vol. 19 – No. 6

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June, 2019

**MY CONNECTIONS
TO THE
JOHN GULLEY PLANTATION**

Over the last few years, I have done quite a bit of research on the area where I grew up. I learned much about the history of the area and the people who first settled there. I learned that the area was once a part of Ouachita County until Nevada County was created in 1871. I wish I had been more interested back when some of the older people were still living. Now I have to rely on records that have been preserved, old newspapers, and research done by others.

Back in the mid-1800s, one of the biggest landowners in the area was John Gulley. The land where he settled had some fairly large level fields. The sandy loam soil was excellent for growing cotton and other crops and it became known as the John Gulley plantation. About forty years ago, I discovered an excellent book written by someone named Paul John who had researched the Gulley family. The name of the book is "John Gulley Genealogy – A Planter in Alabama and Arkansas and His Descendants". Much of the following information comes from that book.

BACKGROUND

John Gulley was born in North Carolina in 1788 where he spent his early years. By the time he was 19, he was a substantial landowner after his father gave his 363 acres of land.

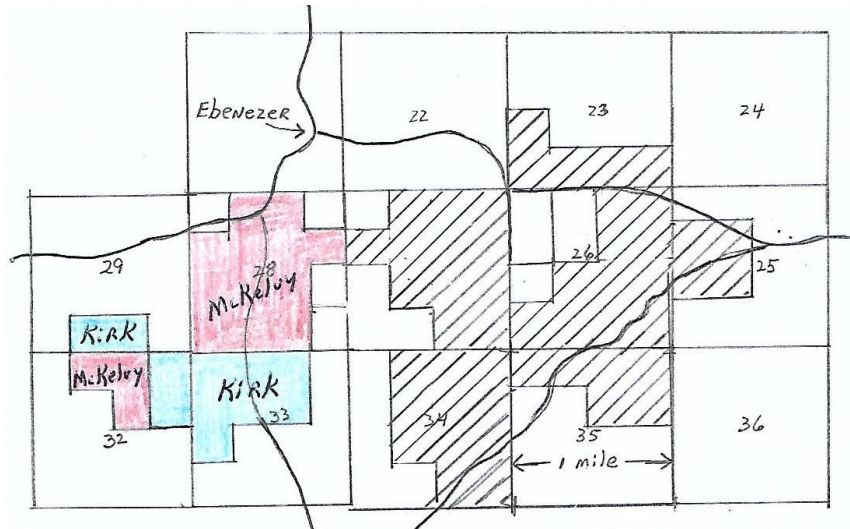
John Gulley married at age 20 to Nancy Bissell who was 17. Over the next 26 years, they had fourteen children born to them.

About 1818, John and Nancy sold their land in North Carolina and moved to Alabama where he acquired more land. In the mid-1840s, they moved again—this time to Arkansas. By this time, they had seven children. They settled in Ouachita County where they remained until they died. The Gulleys became one of the more prominent families in the area and their plantation was well known throughout the area in the days before the Civil War.

NEIGHBORS

My McKelvy ancestors came to Arkansas from Georgia in the late 1850s and also settled in Ouachita County. As it turned out, my great-great grandfather, Jabez McKelvy, had land that bordered the John Gulley plantation, so I'm sure they knew each other. Also, my great grandfather, Jasper Newton Kirk, also settled in the same area. The map on the next page shows their property in 1861 (taken from tax records).

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The cross-hatched land is the Gulley plantation in 1861 (1960 acres). I'm sure the John Gulley plantation was affected by the Civil War which lasted for four long years. Many of the men enlisted in the army leaving the management of farms to their wives and children. John Gulley was 73 years old when the war started, so he was already in his declining years and had most likely turned the operations of the farm over to his sons.

John Gulley died in 1865 as the war was ending. He was 77 years old. He was buried at a spot on his plantation that would become the Gulley family cemetery. His wife, Nancy, died in 1870 at age 78 and was buried beside her husband. These grave markers replaced the original markers which were broken. The name is spelled Gully on these markers. Later members of the family spelled it Gulley.



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SAMUEL LUTHER GULLEY

Samuel Luther Gulley was the seventh son of John and Nancy Gulley and was born in Alabama. He married a woman named Kitturah Emiline Godley and they were living in northern Louisiana when the Civil War started. Samuel enlisted in the army. Records show he was hospitalized in 1862 with hepatitis and in 1863, he was captured by the Union army and held prisoner. He was discharged in 1865. His wife died in 1864 while Samuel was in service. They had one child (a daughter) born in 1860, so more than likely, she never knew her father since he was away at war. It is thought that the child was sent to live with her mother's folks after her mother's death in 1864.

After his father's death in 1865, Samuel came to Arkansas to help his mother manage the large farm. Samuel was a slave owner and even though his slaves were freed after the war, they came with him to Arkansas to work on the Gulley farm. They took the Gulley surname. They lived in the area and raised their families and some of the descendants of these black Gulleys still live in the area today.

Here's where I have a connection to the Gulley family. Samuel married again to Matilda Adlissa Georgian Kirk (my great-great aunt). She was a sister of Jasper Newton Kirk, my great grandfather. The Kirks had settled a short distance from the Gulley plantation. Samuel was 37 years old and Matilda was 17 when they married. About this time, he began to be called Luther instead of Samuel.

After his mother died in 1870, Luther acquired the farm from the other heirs and it became known as the Luther Gulley farm.

Luther and Matilda (known as Georgia) Gulley continued to live on the farm and operate it until his death. The couple had nine children, the youngest born in 1892. Samuel Luther Gulley died in 1900 and was buried in the Gulley family cemetery on the farm. His grave is marked with a CSA marker.

THEIR CHILDREN

Since Samuel Luther Gulley married my great-great aunt, I would be distantly related to all their descendants. As I said before, the couple had nine children.

1. John Marion Gulley (I think he would be my first cousin once removed). He married first to Mary Arrant and they had three children (Elma Gulley who married Charlie Starnes, Luther A. Gulley who died young, and Zada Gulley who married Andrew Byrd). Both John Marion Gulley and Luther A. Gulley were buried in the Gulley family cemetery.

After his first wife's death, he married Mary C. Henry. Here's another connection since Mary Henry was my great-aunt, a sister of my grandfather Charlie Henry. They had two children (Vera Gulley who married Walter Carter and Exa Gulley who married Ralph Bell).

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2. Nettie Idella Gulley. She married James McDaniel and they had three children (Ruby McDaniel who died young, Russell McDaniel, and Samuel McDaniel). Ruby was buried in the Gulley family cemetery.
3. Nannie Elizabeth Gulley. She married Lemuel Henry (my great-great uncle) after the death of his first wife. They had no children.
4. Haywood Luther Lee Gulley. He died at age 19 after being involved in a fight with a Negro over a fish basket. The incident was mentioned in a letter written by Theodore Gulley in 1896. He wrote "*On May 15 inst., Lee Gulley and a Negro by the name of Ely Fort got into a row about a fish basket at H. Mark's mill. The Negro struck Lee on the side of the head & on the 17 about 2 o'clock Lee lay a corps from the lick. The Negro is in jail to wate his doom. Lee died at J. N. Byrd's. It was a sad affair.*"
5. Ewell Jackson Gulley. He married Agnes Hardwick. Since I am also related to Agnes Hardwick, I would be double kin to their children. Whew, it's getting confusing. They had seven children (Theo Gulley, a daughter who died young, Florence Gulley who also died young, Gladys Gulley who married Ebbie Smith and later Harry Allen, Lyda Gulley who married Sam Nucholls, Lottie Gulley who married Lawrence Purifoy, John B. Gulley who married Margaret Blakely, and Ewell Jackson Gulley Jr. who married Marzelle Moseley). Both Theo and Florence Gulley were buried in the Gulley family cemetery.
6. Robley Byron Gulley. He married first Annie Mitchel and they had five children. He married second Bessie Almond and they had one child who died young.
7. Hattie Belle Gulley. She married C. W. Morris and they had one child who died young
8. Jesse Ansley Gulley. He married Carrie Schooley and they had five children.
9. Calvin Linus Gulley. He married first Myrtle Cross and they had two children (Carrie Gulley who died young and Buhrman Gulley). Carrie was buried in the family cemetery. He married second Ruby Swilley, a widow with one son. They had four children and then divorced. Ruby then married John David Gulley, a nephew of Calvin's.

I'm discovering many new distant cousins as a result of the marriage of Samuel Luther Gulley and Matilda Kirk.

THE DEATH OF MATILDA ADLISSA GEORGIAN KIRK GULLEY

After Samuel Luther's death in 1900, his wife (my great-great aunt) continued to live on the farm until her death in 1921. The author of the Gulley book states that is likely that she was buried in the family cemetery, but they could not be sure. During my research in old newspapers, I discovered that she was indeed buried there. This item was found in the local newspaper:

We report the death of one of our pioneer citizens, Mrs. Georgia Gulley, who came to Arkansas in 1854. Her parents were Mr. and Mrs. James Kirk, and she was a member of the Missionary Baptist Church of Pleasant Hill No. 1 for 27 years. She was among the first settlers of Nevada County and is buried in the Gulley family cemetery.

Her grave is not marked, but we know it should be next to her husband's marked grave.

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THE GULLEY FAMILY CEMETERY

It started with the burial of John Gulley back in 1865, followed by his wife in 1870. Other family members were buried there over the next fifty years. There is a total of 27 marked graves and 3 graves marked by rocks. At least one grave is unmarked.

The cemetery was neglected for about 50 or 60 years, growing up in weeds and brush. Many cedar trees had been planted in the cemetery. Older folks sometimes planted a cedar to mark a grave. These cedar trees had grown into nice sized trees. Someone decided they needed some cedar for some purpose and cut the cedars damaging some of the grave markers in the process. One of my distant cousins, John B. Gulley, became interested in family history and after several attempts, he located the old cemetery about 1975. He was very distressed to see the cemetery in such bad shape. He was in the sawmill business at that time and brought part of his mill crew down to clean it up and remove the debris from the cedar trees which had been cut. He also straightened some of the markers that had been damaged when the cedar trees were cut.

I grew up a few miles from the old Gulley plantation and used to ride the old roads. I never knew about the old cemetery since it was not visible from the roads. When I started doing cemetery surveys of Nevada County cemeteries in 1997, I visited the cemetery and recorded the names of those buried there. I didn't realize at the time that I was related to some of them. Here is a picture I took of the cemetery at that time. As you can see, there are no trees left standing in the cemetery, but at least it is fenced and being maintained.



WHAT HAPPENED TO THE GULLEY PLANTATION?

A small community known as Theo developed at the south end of the old Gulley plantation. It was named for Theodore Gulley and at one time had a school, a church, a grist mill, and a general store. My great-aunt, Mary C. Henry Gulley and her husband, John Marion Gulley, had a general store there at one time and she was the postmaster. A good spring known as Bluff Spring was nearby which provided plenty of water for the community.

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Some of the Gulley land ended up in the hands of three of my cousins (the granddaughters of John Marion Gulley) –Zada Gulley Byrd, Vera Gulley Starnes, and Exa Gulley Bell. In the late 1970s, these three ladies decided to sell their land to International Paper Co. which wanted to develop a nursery for growing pine seedlings. The company had been searching for available land that would be suited for a nursery. They wanted a place with well-drained soil with enough level ground to grow the seedlings. Their search brought them to Bluff City which already had a seedling nursery operated by the state forestry commission.

It took a lot of work and expense to develop the new nursery. Timber had to be removed, fields leveled, an irrigation system developed, buildings constructed, and personnel to be hired to run the nursery. A nice home was built for the nursery manager's family. The old road from Hwy. 299 at Ebenezer to the nursery site had to be improved and electric and telephone lines had to be extended to the nursery.

So, for the last forty years, part of the old John Gulley plantation has been used to grow millions of pine seedlings which are planted all over south Arkansas. The fields are irrigated by water piped from nearby White Oak Lake.

One of the conditions of the land sale was that the paper company would fence the old cemetery and maintain it.

I was working for International Paper Co. at the time the nursery was developed and spent several days working there. I didn't know at the time that I had distant relatives buried in the old cemetery or that some of my Kirk and Henry relatives had married into the Gulley family.

The nursery is now called Arbor-Gen Supertree nursery and is well-known for growing good quality genetically improved fast-growing pine seedlings. I wonder what John Gulley would say if he could see his old plantation today.

MRS. MARTHA GREER THOMPSON CELEBRATES 100TH BIRTHDAY

Occasionally we hear of a person these days reaching the age of 100 years and that is a milestone worthy of celebration, but back in 1946, it was almost unheard of for a person to reach that age. Antibiotics used to treat diseases such as pneumonia were unheard of back then and a person was considered to be "old" if they attained the proverbial age of "threescore and ten".

Mrs. Martha Greer Thompson celebrated her 100th birthday in 1946. She was living at Waterloo at the time with her daughter, Mrs. W. S. Martin. Mrs. Thompson was the daughter of John M. and Amelia Wood Greer. She was born in Mississippi and came to Nevada County when she was three years of age. She spent the rest of her life in Nevada County and was the oldest resident of Nevada County when she died December 21, 1948 at the age of 102 years, one month, and five days. She was blind for the last 30 years of

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her life, but remained physically active and mentally alert maintaining a lively interest in current affairs and enjoying the companionship of her neighbors and friends.

Mrs. Thompson married Captain W. C. Thompson in August, 1885 and ten children were born to that union. Five survived to see her celebrate her 100th birthday. She also had 25 grandchildren, 36 great grandchildren, and one great-great grandchild. Her husband, Capt. W. C. Thompson was an officer in the Confederate Army and served with marked distinction during the entire period of the Civil War. Official military history reveals that Capt. Thompson was the only Confederate officer who submitted accurate reports of casualties suffered by the men under his command. Capt. Thompson succeeded his father as the second justice of the peace for Nevada County and received his appointment from Andrew Johnson, President of the United States.

At her birthday celebration in 1946, Mrs. Thompson received many gifts including the orchid award presented by Tom Brennaman's Breakfast in Hollywood Club. The citizens of Prescott presented her with a radio. The celebration was attended by well over 200 people. L. L. Mitchell, Darrell Marsh, and G. C. Murray attended the celebration and extended congratulations on behalf of the people of Prescott to this Grand Old Lady of Nevada County. Mr. Marsh took several photographs of Mrs. Thompson which were to be reproduced in papers all over the state.

Completely ignoring prevailing shortages and high prices, the tables were literally groaning under the weight of good things to eat. One prominent member of the legal profession, upon being urged to refrain from again passing his plate, was heard humming that current popular song, "Give Me Five Minutes More". After five additional helpings, he changed it to "I Surrender, Dear".

It was an extremely happy occasion for all relatives and friends who came to honor Mrs. Thompson, a lady of quaint charm and gracious manner who had achieved the century milestone in a life of Christian faith and service.

Mrs. Martha Greer Thompson and her husband, Captain W. C. Thompson are buried at Ebenezer Cemetery near Bluff City, Arkansas.

Information for this article was taken from articles appearing in The Nevada News (11-21-1946 and 12-23-1948 issues)

A YOUNG HERO'S ACT KIT SCOTT SAVES THE LIVES OF THREE PEOPLE (copied from old microfilm—date unknown)

Camden -- Last Monday, the family of Mr. J. J. Sullivan of this city, and Mrs. McCorkle of Little Rock, (sister of Mrs. Sullivan), and her children went to a point on the Ouachita River about three miles above Camden for the purpose of enjoying a week's fishing. The party

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was accompanied by young Kit Scott, a son of Coroner Frank T. Scott, who lives in the country a short distance from Camden.

Everything went well until shortly after the noon hour when the little son of Mrs. McCorkle, a boy between 8 and 9 years of age, commenced to amuse himself by wading in the water close to the bank. The Ouachita River is noted for its treachery, and before the little fellow knew it, he came to a step-off and went into water several feet deep. His sister, a little girl two or three years his senior who was playing on the bank nearby, seeing her brother's danger, went to his rescue when she too became ??? by the water. Fortunately, a heavy board was within reach of the little girl which she had the presence of mind to grasp and succeeded in placing one end of it within reach of her little brother, who also grasped it.

In a boat, fishing nearby, was the mother of the children, a large, fleshy lady, who upon seeing the danger of her children jumped into the water, but being unable to swim, was in the act of drowning when young Scott who was standing on the bank, noticed her danger and without a moment's hesitation sprang into the water and swam for the boat, knowing that it would be necessary to accomplish the rescue of the endangered people. As soon as the boat was reached, he put about to save Mrs. McCorkle, and after a severe struggle he succeeded in landing her in the boat, her life almost extinct from the terrible experience she had undergone. This done, young Scott rowed to the spot where the children were still clinging to the board and succeeded in landing both of them safely in the boat with their mother. The children were not injured by their experience in the water, but Mrs. McCorkle's condition was critical, and as quickly as the party could be landed, a Negro was dispatched to town for a physician, while Mr. Scott and others present set about to resuscitate the almost drowned lady. Dr. S. C. Garber quickly responded to the call for medical assistance, and several gentlemen accompanied him to the scene, and after hard work, succeeded in placing the lady's life beyond danger.

The week's fishing program was abandoned after the unfortunate experience and the party returned to their homes.

Kit Scott is a slender youth, and the feat he accomplished in rescuing Mrs. McCorkle and her children was almost miraculous. It was a brave and heroic deed, and he is entitled to substantial recognition for his unselfish act in risking his own life to save others.

RAINFALL RECORD

Jan. (5.9 in.)	Feb. (5.0 in.)	Mar. (4.0 in.)	Apr. (13.5 in.)
Total for first four months of 2019 – 28.4 inches			

WORD OF THE MONTH

HECTARE – A metric unit of measurement of area equal to 2.47 acres

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Daddy Acrostic Dictums

An Acrostic Father's Day Tribute – Don Mathis

An acrostic is generally a poem or phrase in which the first letters spell out a word. It is Father's Day. How many of these old sayings apply to you? How many apply to your dad? Acrostics below were created by Don Mathis; axioms were written by children and fathers across history.

Determined About Development

He didn't tell me how to live; he lived, and let me watch him do it. – Clarence Budington Kelland

Daily Activities Duplicated

Being a great father is like shaving. No matter how good you shaved today, you have to do it again tomorrow. – Reed Markham

Difficulty About Defining

I felt something impossible for me to explain in words. Then, when they took her away, it hit me. I got scared all over again and began to feel giddy. Then it came to me... I was a father. – Nat King Cole

Definitely A Deity

Father! – to God himself we cannot give a holier name. – William Wordsworth

Debts Are Destroyed

Henry James once defined life as that predicament which precedes death, and certainly nobody owes you a debt of honor or gratitude for getting him into that predicament. But a child does owe his father a debt, if Dad, having gotten him into this peck of trouble, takes off his coat and buckles down to the job of showing his son how best to crash through it. – Clarence Budington Kelland

Destitute And Delighted

A father carries pictures where his money used to be. – Author Unknown

Dear And Departed

My father, when he went, made my childhood a gift of a half a century. – Antonio Porchia

Dad As Director

Dad, your guiding hand on my shoulder will remain with me forever. – Author Unknown

Define A Daddy

My daddy, he was somewhere between God and John Wayne. – Hank Williams, Jr.

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Dearer After Death

Old as she was, she still missed her daddy sometimes. – Gloria Naylor

Deliver Alternative Dialogue

Fathers represent another way of looking at life – the possibility of an alternative dialogue. – Louise J. Kaplan

Duel Any Duration

There must always be a struggle between a father and son; one aims at power and the other at independence. – Samuel Johnson

Do And Don't

It's no use saying do this, do that, don't do that ... it's very easy when children want something to say no immediately. I think it's quite important not to give an unequivocal answer at once. Much better to think it over. Then, if you eventually say no, I think they really accept it. – Prince Philip