

A TRIBUTE TO OUR GRANDFATHER, JOHN HERSCHEL KELLY

Sybil Kelly Cunard

When Rose asked me to write a foreword to her transcription of our granddaddy's diary, I was somewhat apprehensive since I never knew him personally. He passed away in December 1940 before I was born in July 1941. However, this journey to get to know him through those of you who did has been such a blessing. What a dear and remarkable man he was and how privileged we are to have him as our heritage.

Thanks are due to all of you who shared such valuable information with me. Aunt Bill and Cousin Ruth were both a great source of information (Rachel graciously went to Cousin Ruth several different times with my questions), as were Carolyn, Jacqueline, Joyce and Johnny (who is my age but who had paid attention and retained much of what was said about Granddaddy over the years). I am so grateful for your help and love you all dearly.

Our grandfather was apparently a very spiritual man, as evidenced by the fact that he often walked on Sunday from their home to Prospect Church, which has to be a distance of at least two miles, possibly three. He was also for a period of time the treasurer of the church, and if parishioners failed to pay their tithes, he would pay a personal collection call on them!

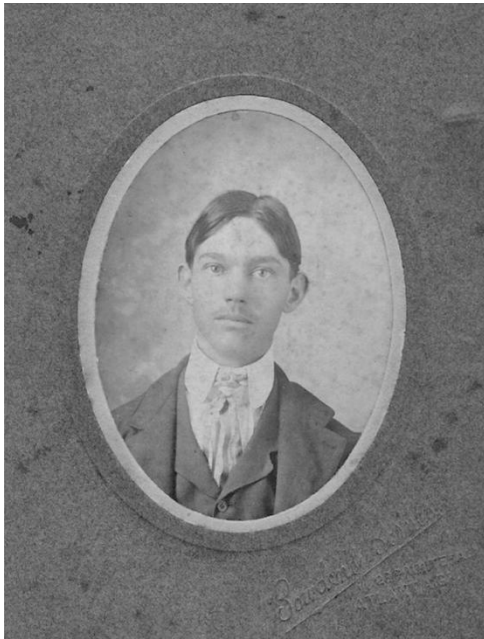
That story conflicted somewhat with the consensus expressed about his personality, which was that he was a very quiet, humble, sweet, gentle man. He is said to have been a practical joker of sorts, as well as an extraordinarily gifted gardener. According to Aunt Bill, he made the prettiest gardens she had ever seen before or since and apparently was very creative in using some horticultural techniques that he himself devised. He was also apparently an encourager, spending time while the family members were working in the field telling each one what a good job he or she was doing.

He was also an animal lover, having created a pet cemetery adjacent to the family cemetery across the road from their home. Aunt Bill said he marked each grave with rocks and could tell all about each dear pet resting there. He also had a horse or mule (I couldn't quite get a majority opinion on that question) named Tony that he apparently prized as well. So, you see, our love of animals is a genetic thing, and we just can't help it!

He subscribed to the daily paper (I assume that would be the Atlanta paper) and read it religiously each day, as well as working the crossword puzzle. I believe that some of his children did the same (I know my daddy did), and some of my generation are news junkies as well. He apparently also loved politics, and that is certainly a gene that runs rampant among us.

The description of his physical appearance was a little difficult to pinpoint, with different ones referring to Uncle Leon or my daddy or a combination of the two, but cousin Ruth said emphatically that Benny looks just like him, except that Benny is taller. He was apparently about Colin's stature, and everyone said that he was very handsome. So that, dear cousins, explains where we get our good looks!

Our grandfather was a good man who apparently was held in high esteem by everyone who knew him and especially his children and grandchildren. May the Lord bless his memory and may each of us so live that we have the privilege of either seeing him again or getting to know him in Heaven.



John Herschel Kelly
b. 9/8/1879—d. 12/14/1940



Georgianna Cook Kelly
b. 7/22/1879—8/15/1957