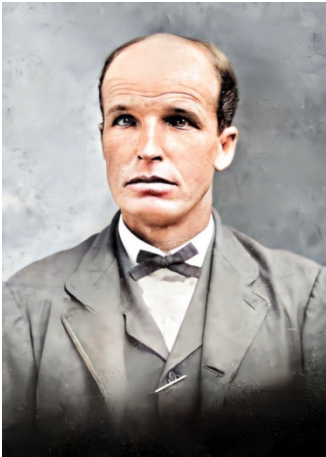


The Campbells are Coming, Hurrah!

An imagined Hollywood film proposal based on my paternal grandfather, John Paul Campbell, Sr.

SYNOPSIS



My grandfather John Paul Campbell Sr. is born in 1870 in Jackson Parish, Louisiana. He inherits his renowned disputatious personality from his paternal ancestral line of pompous, quarrelsome, and holier-than-thou Scottish settlers in America. Feuds with neighboring families are common. He served on the Parish Police Jury. Three Campbell generations produce a combined total of 35 children. My grandfather's youngest child, with "good Christian" wife Naomi Jordan Campbell, is my father John Paul Campbell Jr.—their 13th child.

CHARACTERS

John Paul Campbell
2nd Great-Grandfather
(1790-1845)

John Paul Campbell is born 1790 in Orange County, North Carolina. In 1814 he marries Rachel Lee, also born in North Carolina. During their marriage they have twelve children. He is apparently well-educated, as there are later recollections

that he possessed many books, including complete volumes of Shakespeare.

Albert Russell Campbell
Great-Grandfather
(1820-1895)

Albert Russell Campbell is born in 1820 in Pike County, Mississippi, to parents John Paul and Rachel Lee Campbell. By 1840, he is living in Caldwell Parish, Louisiana with his parents and siblings. In 1847, he moves with his family to Jackson Parish. In 1857, at age 37 he marries 17-year-old Matilda Jane Gilcrease and they have 10 children. His primary occupation is as a cotton farmer, but he studies medicine from local physician Dr. Elijah Hearn. He becomes a traveling country doctor throughout Jackson Parish and Ouachita Parish, and he is called Dr. Campbell. He dies in 1895 at age 75; his wife in 1907 at age 67.

John Paul Campbell Sr.
Grandfather
(1820-1895)

John Paul Campbell Sr. is born in 1870 in Jackson Parish, Louisiana, to parents Albert Russell and Matilda Jane Gilcrease Campbell. In 1891, he marries Ella Naomi Jordan, age 18, in Jackson Parish. John Paul and Naomi establish a cotton farm in southern Ouachita Parish.

STORYLINE

ACT I

Scene 1: After their North Carolina marriage, my 2nd great-grandfather John Paul Campbell and Rachel, as well as two of his brothers, move to Nashville, Tennessee. In 1820, he and Rachel move to Pike County, Mississippi. In 1828, they are living in Marion County, Mississippi. In 1835 they move to Louisiana, where he teaches astronomy and law, first at a college in Covington, Louisiana, and then in New Orleans.

Scene 2: While in New Orleans, he is almost drowned when a ship is wrecked in a storm on Lake Pontchartrain. He lashes himself to a piece of floating wood and is rescued. He finds it difficult to recover from this experience, however, and decides that he should go to the hills of North Louisiana to become a farmer.

Scene 3: In the early 1840s, he and his family take a riverboat to the little town of Copenhagen in Caldwell Parish, Louisiana, settling near the Ouachita River, about 35 miles south of Monroe. They live in the hills, but they farm in the flat land to the east. He becomes a Justice of the Peace for Caldwell Parish.

Scene 4: A family story goes that he had been having troubles with bears getting into his field, eating, and destroying his crops. Late one afternoon in 1845, he takes his shotgun, gets on his horse and rides down to the field to check on the bears.

When night comes and he has not returned home, members of the family go to look for him, fearing the worst. They find his body on the ground and his horse standing nearby. It is believed that he had a heart attack or stroke and died suddenly.

Scene 5: In 1846, his widow Rachel Campbell wins a lawsuit for custody of her two-year old grandchild Henryetta Campbell [daughter of recently deceased parents Wilson Alexander Campbell and his wife], launched by the child's maternal grandfather. Losing the case on appeal by a corrupt judge, in 1847 Rachel and her children take the granddaughter in the night and flee to nearby Jackson Parish, where they establish new lives. Rachel Campbell dies in 1859.

ACT II

Scene 1: In 1913, as a Justice of the Peace in Ouachita Parish, John Paul Campbell Sr. becomes engaged in a feud with nearby neighbors over an arrest of a family member. While John Paul is out riding a horse, a teenage son of the neighbor family rides up behind him and slits John Paul's throat with a knife, nearly killing him. In revenge, John Paul orders his eldest son, Sam Houston (age 21), to kill the neighbor's son. Sam Houston rides out to the neighbor's farm and shoots and kills the teenager. In response, the neighbors vow to kill John Paul and his entire family.

Scene 2: In the dead of night, the Campbell family (now including 12 children) pack up what belongings they could and,

abandoning their homestead, all leave by wagons for West Carroll Parish, in northeast Louisiana, where a brother of John Paul has a farm. Naomi Campbell is pregnant with my father during the trip. Homeless, they live for a time in an abandoned train car, where my father is born—their 13th child.

Scene 3: In 1914, John Paul Campbell Sr. purchases land east of Oak Grove, Louisiana, and establishes a successful cotton farm. He serves as president of the West Carroll Parish police jury and as an officer of local civic and national religious organizations.

Scene 4: He also gains a local reputation as a tempestuous neighbor and overbearing father:

---He spends most of his free time studying the Bible, not for religious inspiration, but to outshine and humiliate local ministers with his superior Biblical knowledge. He is asked to leave congregation after congregation.

---His son Sam Houston, while serving in World War I in Europe, sends his father all the salary he makes for safekeeping as a nest egg upon his return. However, his father spends all of it, later telling his son “your money is my money!”

---He digs a storm shelter behind their house to ease his mortal fear of tornadoes. When dark clouds appear from the west, he would descend into the shelter with all his children. But he would insist that his wife Naomi remain in the house to pray. He would tell his children: “Your mother is such a good

Christian woman that God would never harm her; but He would surely try to kill me!”

---He campaigns in the 1930s throughout West Carroll Parish on behalf of the Huey Long political machine. But due to his inept political tactics, his expectations for a political appointment or other reward go unrealized.

Scene 5: In 1939, Sam Houston Campbell would lose his first wife Lena and young daughter Annette. Their car plunged into a flooded river from a collapsed bridge. In 1982, at age 90, my uncle Sam Houston tearfully whispered to me from his hospice bed that God had punished him for killing that boy in 1913.