

## JOHN CORNELIUS GILLESPIE AND SARAH ALICE “SALLIE” MACKEY

On December 20, 1879, in Hernando, Mississippi, thirty-six-year-old **John Cornelius Gillespie (1843–1907)** married his third wife, twenty-two-year-old **Sarah Alice “Sallie” Mackey (1857–1911)**, who was the sister of his second wife, **Martha Frances Mackey (1847–1878)**.<sup>1</sup>

John Cornelius Gillespie was born near Birmingham in Jefferson County, Alabama. At about age two, in 1845, his family moved to Hernando, DeSoto County, Mississippi, just south of Memphis, Tennessee. By 1854 eleven-year-old John Cornelius Gillespie was living with his family near Pine Bluff, Arkansas.

On February 22, 1862, at age eighteen, John Cornelius Gillespie enlisted in the Confederate Army and served for seventeen months with Company K of the 18th Arkansas Infantry Regiment. His company was largely decimated while fighting in northeastern Mississippi during the first eight months of his Confederate service.<sup>2</sup> In late October 1862, the 18th Arkansas was sent to Port Hudson, Louisiana, to defend a Confederate fortification that, along with Vicksburg, Mississippi, controlled the lower Mississippi River. John Cornelius Gillespie was at the Siege of Port Hudson<sup>3</sup> (May 22–July 9, 1863), the longest siege in American military history. After the Union forces prevailed at Port Hudson, Confederate soldiers were paroled by the Union army. Thus, John Cornelius Gillespie returned home to Pine Bluff, where his father, **Samuel Edward Gillespie (1815–1863)**, had died a few months earlier.

In April 1864, John Cornelius Gillespie married his first wife, Martha J. Webb (1842–1869), who died at age twenty-seven, after five years of marriage. She left two sons, both of whom died in childhood. In March of 1872, after over two years as a widower, John Cornelius Gillespie married **Martha Frances Mackey (1847–1878)** of Hernando. She died of yellow fever at age thirty, after six years of marriage. Two of her four children survived her: **Margaret Lee Gillespie (1875–1951)** and **Robert Henry Gillespie (1876–1951)**. In 1879, after over a year as a second-time widower, John Cornelius Gillespie married Sarah Alice “Sallie” Mackey, the younger sister of his recently deceased wife.



*A formal photograph of the Gillespie family, c. 1905: (back row, left to right) Stanley Neville Purifoy, Ola Frank Gillespie Purifoy, Charles Brinkley Snowden, Margaret Lee Gillespie Snowden, Elizabeth West Gillespie, Robert Henry Gillespie. (Front row, left to right) John Lewis Gillespie, Sarah Alice Mackey Gillespie, William Thomas Gillespie, John Cornelius Gillespie, Emma Edith Gillespie.*

In the 1880 census, John C. Gillespie is recorded as a bricklayer living in Hernando with his third wife, Sallie, age twenty-three; his two children by his first wife: Maggie, age five, and Robert, age four; and Sallie's fifteen-year-old brother, **John Wesley Mackey (1865–1937)**.

*This photograph, rather faded and impressionistic today, depicts the Gillespies in Hernando, c. 1890: John Lewis Gillespie, age seven; John Cornelius Gillespie, age forty-seven, with Emma Edith Gillespie, age two, on his lap; Sarah Alice Mackey Gillespie, age thirty-three; and Ola Frank Gillespie, age nine. Seated in front of the family is Bristo, their nine-year-old dog.*



In January 1892, John Cornelius and Sarah Alice “Sallie” Mackey Gillespie moved with their three children to Jonesboro, Arkansas, about ninety-five miles northwest of Hernando. Their oldest child, **Ola Frank Gillespie (1881–1934)**, Neville’s grandmother, was ten years old at the time. In February 1892, John Gillespie purchased a home on south McClure Street in Jonesboro for \$500.<sup>4</sup>

John Cornelius Gillespie lived in Jonesboro for fifteen years. At age sixty-four, in 1907, he died of septic meningitis. His obituary<sup>5</sup> in the Jonesboro paper describes him as a well-known brick contractor and among the best citizens in the city.



Sarah Alice “Sallie” Mackey was born in Lafayette County, Mississippi, and was the seventh of ten children of **Dr. William George Mackey (1814–1898)** and **Martha Peterson Rives (1826–1868)**. Her family moved to Hernando when she was a young child.

At age twenty-one, on October 16, 1878, Sallie Mackey faced a tragic event: her sister Martha Frances Mackey Gillespie and two of her sister’s children died on the very same day. The children were Martha Frances’s eleven-year-old stepson, **James Edward Gillespie (1867–1878)**, and her five-year-old daughter, **Lou Ellen Kate Gillespie (1873–1878)**. All three were victims of the Great Mississippi Valley Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1878, which killed half of the residents of Hernando (about 400 persons) in six weeks.\* That yellow fever epidemic ended in October of 1878, when the first frost killed the mosquitoes.

One year, two months, and four days after her sister’s death, Sarah Alice “Sallie” Mackey married John Cornelius Gillespie, who had been her sister’s husband. After they married, Sallie raised her sister’s two children, ages two and three, and had four of her own. Her oldest child was Ola Frank Gillespie, Neville’s grandmother. Her second child was a son, **John Lewis Gillespie (1883–1970)**, and her third child was a daughter, **Emma Edith Gillespie (1888–1976)**, who was called Aunt Deedie by Neville’s family. John Cornelius and Sallie Gillespie’s youngest son was **William Thomas “Tom” Gillespie (1892–1962)**.

Sarah Alice “Sallie” Mackey Gillespie died in Jonesboro at age fifty-four on December 20, 1911. She and John Cornelius Gillespie were married for twenty-seven years; she outlived him by four years. A newspaper obituary and a handwritten obituary have been found in the family records.<sup>6</sup> Sallie and John Cornelius Gillespie are buried alongside one another in City Cemetery in Jonesboro.

*\*Yellow fever is a virus spread by bites from a mosquito species called Aedes aegypti. In 1878 over 20,000 people died of yellow fever in the southeastern part of the United States. After that time, it took more than two decades to learn the cause of the disease and develop vaccines to control yellow fever.*

## JOHN CORNELIUS GILLESPIE | SARAH ALICE “SALLIE” MACKEY

### PAGES 104–107

#### 1. THE THREE WIVES AND TEN CHILDREN OF JOHN CORNELIUS GILLESPIE

**John Cornelius Gillespie (1843–1907)**, Neville’s great-grandfather, had three wives and ten children. His first two wives died five and six years after their marriages. Four of his children died during childhood.

##### FIRST WIFE OF JOHN CORNELIUS GILLESPIE

John Cornelius Gillespie’s first wife, Martha J. Webb (1842–1869), was born on January 19, 1842, in Jackson County, in northeast Alabama. The couple married on April 26, 1864, in Jefferson

County, Arkansas, near Pine Bluff.

Martha Webb Gillespie died on August 16, 1869, in Hernando, DeSoto County, Mississippi, at age twenty-seven. She and John Cornelius Gillespie had two children.



*We believe this is a photograph of Martha J. Webb Gillespie, the first wife of John Cornelius Gillespie, with her second son, James Edward Gillespie, c. 1868. This photograph is owned by Ola Virginia Jackson Faulkner (b. 1926), John Cornelius Gillespie’s granddaughter.*

- **SAMUEL J. GILLESPIE (1865–1873)** was born on January 25, 1865, in Jefferson County, near Pine Bluff. He died on March 27, 1873, at age eight, in Jefferson County.

- **JAMES EDWARD “EDDIE” GILLESPIE (1867–1878)** was born on February 21, 1867, in Gibson County, Indiana, near Evansville. He died during a yellow fever epidemic on October 16, 1878, at age eleven, in Hernando.

## SECOND WIFE OF JOHN CORNELIUS GILLESPIE

John Cornelius Gillespie married his second wife, **Martha Frances Mackey (1847–1878)**, on March 7, 1872, in DeSoto County. Martha Frances Mackey was born on December 20, 1847, in Marshall County, Tennessee. She died during a yellow fever epidemic on October 16, 1878, at age thirty, in Hernando. She and John Cornelius Gillespie had four children.

- **LOU ELLEN KATE GILLESPIE (1873–1878)** was born on April 15, 1873, in DeSoto County. She died during a yellow fever epidemic on October 16, 1878, at age five, in Hernando.
- **MARGARET “MARGUERITE” LEE GILLESPIE (1875–1951)** was born on March 31, 1875, in Hernando and died on September 23, 1951, at age seventy-six, in Memphis, Tennessee.
- **ROBERT “BOB” HENRY GILLESPIE (1876–1951)** was born on June 1, 1876, in Hernando and died on October 7, 1951, at age seventy-five, in Memphis.
- **CORNELIUS GILLESPIE (1877–1877)** was born on August 7, 1877, in Hernando and died at birth.

## THIRD WIFE OF JOHN CORNELIUS GILLESPIE

John Cornelius Gillespie married his third wife, **Sarah Alice “Sallie” Mackey (1857–1911)**, on December 20, 1879, in DeSoto County. Sallie Mackey was born on August 13, 1857, in Lafayette County, Mississippi, and died on December 11, 1911, at age fifty-four, in Craighead County, Arkansas. John Cornelius and Sallie Gillespie had four children.

- **OLA FRANK GILLESPIE (1881–1934)**, Neville’s grandmother, was born on May 8, 1881, in DeSoto County and died on July 5, 1934, at age fifty-three, in Jonesboro, Craighead County.
- **JOHN LEWIS “LEWIS” GILLESPIE (1883–1970)** was born on October 15, 1883, in DeSoto County and died in June 1970, at age eighty-six, in West Helena, Phillips County, Arkansas.
- **EMMA EDITH “DEEDIE” GILLESPIE (1888–1976)** was born on August 2, 1888, in DeSoto County and died on March 3, 1976, at age eighty-seven, in Macoupin County, Illinois, near St. Louis, Missouri.
- **WILLIAM THOMAS “TOM” GILLESPIE (1892–1962)** was born on November 6, 1892, in Jonesboro, Craighead County, Arkansas, and died on June 13, 1962, at age sixty-nine, in Tampa, Hillsborough County, Florida.



**JOHN CORNELIUS GILLESPIE | SARAH ALICE “SALLIE” MACKEY****PAGES 104–107****2. JOHN CORNELIUS GILLESPIE IN THE CIVIL WAR**

On February 22, 1862, at age eighteen, **John Cornelius Gillespie (1843–1907)** enlisted for Confederate service with the Jefferson Rifles, a group formed in Jefferson County, Arkansas, where John C. Gillespie lived at the time. On April 2, the Jefferson Rifles traveled to De Valls Bluff, Arkansas, about sixty miles northeast of Pine Bluff, Jefferson County’s county seat. There they became Company K of the 18th Arkansas Infantry Regiment.\* Company K was led by Captain William F. Owen (1834–1875), and the 18th Arkansas Infantry Regiment was led by Col. David W. Carroll (1816–1905), who was a distinguished Arkansas judge after the war.

The 18th Arkansas Infantry Regiment traveled first by train to Memphis, Tennessee, and then by steamboat to Fort Pillow in Henning, Tennessee, fifty miles northeast of Memphis. Unfortunately, in its first month of existence, John C. Gillespie’s regiment was decimated, largely by an epidemic of measles. In fact, the 18th Arkansas Infantry Regiment had lost almost one-fourth of its original members by April of 1862.

On April 28, 1862, John Gillespie’s regiment was sent to Corinth, Mississippi, which was under siege following the Confederate loss at the historic Battle of Shiloh on April 6–7. Corinth is eighteen miles southwest of the Shiloh battlefield in Tennessee. The Siege of Corinth ended after the Confederates secretly withdrew their forces (about 65,000 men) to Tupelo, Mississippi, on the evening of May 29, 1862.

For the next four months, the 18th Arkansas Infantry Regiment fought in skirmishes in northeastern Mississippi. Although the regiment had not engaged in any major battles, its manpower had dwindled from 1,000 men to less than 400 in its first seven months of existence.

In September 1862, John Gillespie’s regiment formed part of the rearguard during the Battle of Iuka (September 19, 1862), which occurred in Tishomingo County, Mississippi, about twenty-two miles southeast of Corinth. Federal troops were victorious, and about 700 of the 3,200 Confederates engaged were casualties of the battle.

*\* The 18th Arkansas Infantry Regiment is also called Carroll’s Regiment. It should not be confused with another regiment formed on January 1, 1862, by Col. John S. Marmaduke (1833–1887), who later became the governor of Missouri. Marmaduke’s regiment was also briefly called the 18th Arkansas.*

On October 3–4, 1862, the Confederate Army returned to Corinth to attack the heavily fortified Federal troops there. Sometimes called the Second Battle of Corinth, it was a defining moment for the 18th Arkansas Infantry Regiment. With only three hundred men, Col. John Daly (1832–1862), who had replaced Col. Carroll, led his 18th Arkansas troops on a courageous charge, moving directly into sweeping gunfire. Col. Daly was mortally wounded in that display of rash heroism, and only forty-three of the three hundred members of the regiment answered the roll call after the battle. The official report lists twelve killed, thirty-four wounded, and eighty-two missing. John C. Gillespie was among the forty-three present at that roll call.

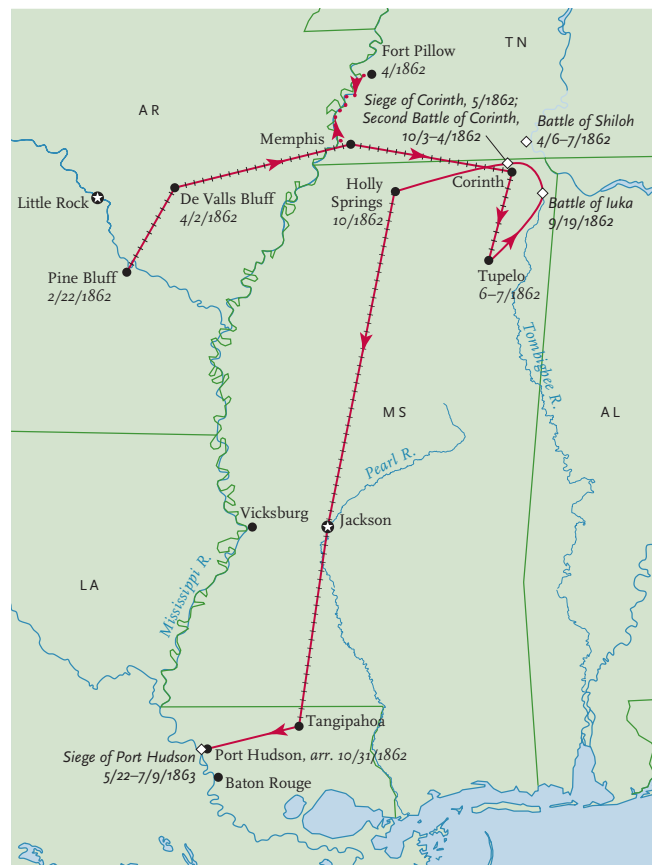
The Second Battle of Corinth was a major encounter, pitting 23,000 Federal troops against 22,000 Confederates; the Union was victorious. The Confederate defeats at Iuka and Corinth in 1862 were significant, for they cleared the path for Gen. Ulysses S. Grant (1822–1885) to move through Mississippi in his opening endeavor to capture Vicksburg in 1863.

On October 21, 1862, John Cornelius Gillespie's regiment was detached from its brigade and ordered to proceed to Port Hudson, Louisiana, a Confederate fortress on the Mississippi River, twenty miles north of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The entire regiment traveled by train, except for the final sixty-mile trek from Tangipahoa

("TAN-ji-pa-HO-uh") Louisiana, to Port Hudson. John Cornelius Gillespie arrived in Port Hudson on October 31, 1862. Seven months later, on July 9, 1863, the Siege of Port Hudson ended. John Cornelius Gillespie was one of about six thousand captured Confederate soldiers who were paroled on July 12, 1863. He returned to his home in Arkansas. His Confederate service had lasted about seventeen months, and he is recorded as present at every muster roll call during that period.

*This map traces John Cornelius Gillespie's path during the Civil War. John C. Gillespie's Confederate service with the 18th Arkansas Infantry Regiment lasted for about seventeen months—from February 22, 1862, until his regiment's capture on July 9, 1863, at Port Hudson, Louisiana.*

— on foot  
 + + + + train  
 ••••• boat







**JOHN CORNELIUS GILLESPIE | SARAH ALICE “SALLIE” MACKEY**  
**PAGES 104–107**

### 3. THE SIEGE OF PORT HUDSON, LOUISIANA

During the early summer of 1863, when he was barely twenty years old, Neville’s great-grandfather **John Cornelius Gillespie (1843–1907)** survived the Siege of Port Hudson, Louisiana. He was a private serving in Company K (also called the Jefferson Rifles) of the 18th Arkansas Infantry Regiment of the Confederate Army. Located in the Western Theater, Port Hudson was a Confederate fortification overlooking the Mississippi River, and located about 140 miles south of Vicksburg, Mississippi. It was the last Confederate bastion to fall along the Mississippi River.

By 1863 Port Hudson and Vicksburg were all that stood in the way of the Union’s complete control of the Mississippi River, as the Confederates had surrendered Memphis, Tennessee, and New Orleans, Louisiana, in 1862. For forty-eight days, between May 22 and July 9, 1863, between 30,000 to 40,000 Federal soldiers and sailors laid siege to Port Hudson, which was defended by about 7,500 Confederate troops. Over that time, the Union suffered almost 10,000 casualties, half from sunstroke and disease, while only about 1000 Confederates were casualties. A Confederate soldier penned these words about the Siege of Port Hudson: *“We eat all the meat and bread in the fort . . . eat all the beef—all the mules—all the Dogs—and all the Rats around us.”*

The Siege of Vicksburg, which lasted from May 18 to July 4, 1863, took place almost concurrently with the Siege of Port Hudson. At Vicksburg 77,000 Federal troops besieged 33,000 Confederates. Though outnumbered almost five to one at Port Hudson, and reduced to eating rats and mules, the Confederates there held out until they learned of Vicksburg’s fall. On July 4, Gen. Ulysses S. Grant (1822–1885) accepted the surrender of Confederate forces at Vicksburg. Five days later, the forces at Port Hudson surrendered as well. The longest siege in American history, thus, ended. The Union victories at Vicksburg and Port Hudson cut the Confederacy in half, and the Union gained complete control of the Mississippi River. Some historians believe that these victories were the turning point of the Civil War (1861–65). The rival for that distinction is, of course, the three-day Battle of Gettysburg, which, coincidentally, concluded on July 3, 1863.

About 6,400 Confederates were captured at Port Hudson, but less than one-half of them were able to stand at the surrender ceremony. The Confederate officers (about 400) went to Federal prisons in the North; the enlisted men were paroled just three days later.

Interestingly, at least to me, the ceremonial surrender of Confederate soldiers at Port Hudson is depicted in an original Currier & Ives\* print that has hung in the entrance hall of our home in Lake Bluff, Illinois, for the past ninety years. The print was created in 1863, shortly after the siege ended.



*This hand-colored Currier & Ives lithograph shows the ceremonial surrender of Confederate troops, led by Gen. Franklin Gardner (1823–1873), surrendering to Major General Nathaniel P. Banks (1816–1894) at Port Hudson, Louisiana, on July 9, 1863. In the background somewhere in this lithograph is a fortunate and youthful survivor, Private John Cornelius Gillespie, Neville's great-grandfather.*

As a parolee in July 1863, John Cornelius Gillespie went home to Jefferson County, Arkansas, to be with his widowed mother and her three young children. His father, **Samuel Edward Gillespie (1815–1863)**, had died less than four months earlier. One of John C. Gillespie's sisters, eight-year-old **Sarah M. Gillespie (1854–1863)**, died a few days after he arrived home. His last surviving sister, **Mary L. Gillespie (1841–1864)**, died at age twenty-two, just six months after his return. His only brother, **Samuel H. Gillespie (1857–1867)**, died at age ten, four years later.

John Cornelius Gillespie married his first wife, Martha J. Webb (1842–1869), on April 26, 1864, one day after his twenty-first birthday. Nine months later, his first child, **Samuel J. Gillespie (1865–1873)**, was born. Thus, John C. Gillespie was quite occupied with family matters during the last twenty months of the Civil War.

Meanwhile, back in September 1863, about two months after his parole, John Cornelius Gillespie's regiment had been part of a prisoner exchange, which made him eligible to return to service. In fact, he was supposed to report for duty no later than November 1863. However, his family needed him and he did not report for duty. That was a common occurrence. The 18th Arkansas was not reorganized, and apparently only one member of Company K did report. That soldier was assigned to the 2nd Consolidated Arkansas Regiment, which participated in three minor battles in Arkansas in 1864.

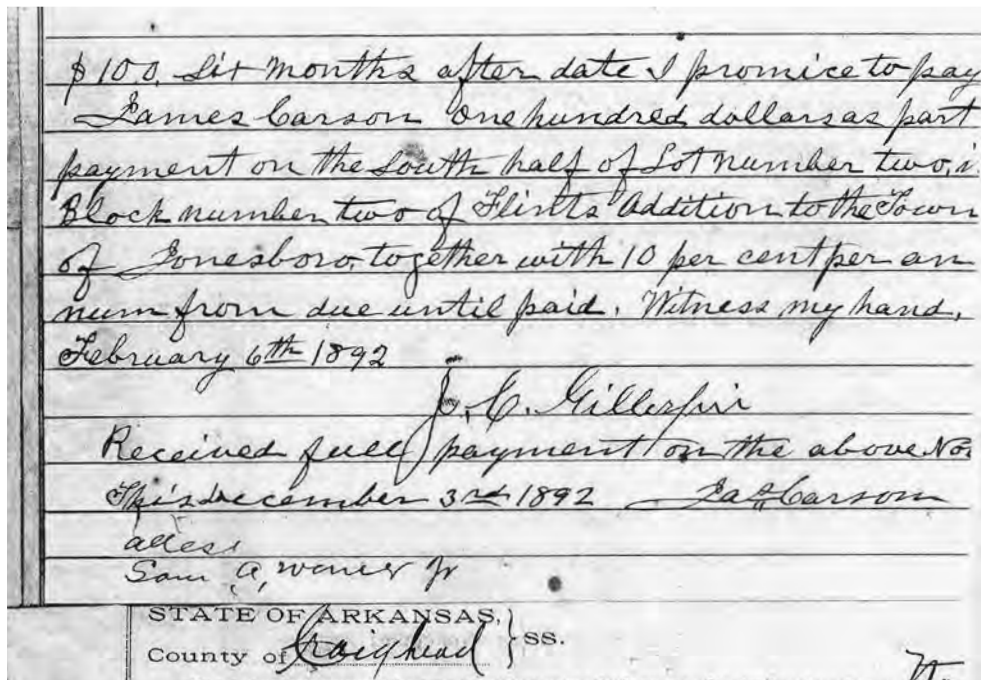
\*Currier & Ives was a New York-based printmaking firm that operated from 1834 until 1907. It produced about 7,500 different lithographic prints over those seventy-three years. The firm's original prints are collected today and often reproduced.

## JOHN CORNELIUS GILLESPIE | SARAH ALICE "SALLIE" MACKEY

### PAGES 104–107

#### 4. THE GILLESPIE HOUSE AT 307 MCCLURE STREET

In January 1892, **John Cornelius Gillespie (1843–1907)**, Neville's great-grandfather, moved with his family from Hernando, Mississippi, to Jonesboro, Arkansas. On February 5, 1892, he purchased a house and a lot at 307 South McClure Street for \$500. The lot had 100 feet of frontage on South McClure Street and extended for a depth of 196 feet. To satisfy the purchase price, John C. Gillespie paid \$400 in cash and executed a \$100 note, payable six months hence; he paid the note nine months later.



*Promissory note executed by John Cornelius Gillespie on February 6, 1892, for \$100, the final payment for his newly acquired Jonesboro, Arkansas, home at 307 McClure Street.*

John C. Gillespie lived at 307 South McClure Street in Jonesboro until he died in 1907. The house, which is no longer standing, was presumably sold when John C. Gillespie's wife, **Sarah Alice "Sallie" Gillespie (1857–1911)**, moved to live with her daughter **Ola Gillespie Purifoy (1881–1934)** sometime before 1910. In May of 1910, Sarah A. Gillespie is enumerated in the household of **Stanley Neville Purifoy (1879–1942)** at 812 West Washington Street, which is about four short blocks from 307 South McClure Street.



*John Cornelius Gillespie and his third wife, Sarah Alice Mackey Gillespie, with their four children in February 1896: (top) John Lewis Gillespie (age thirteen); (middle) John Cornelius Gillespie (age fifty-three), Sarah Alice Mackey Gillespie (age thirty-nine), and Ola Frank Gillespie (age fifteen); (bottom) Emma Edith Gillespie (age eight) and William Thomas Gillespie (age four). This photograph was taken on the front porch of the Gillespie house at 307 South McClure in Jonesboro, Arkansas.*



*Emma Edith Gillespie Jackson and her daughter Kathleen Jackson (1910–1957) in front of 311 South McClure Street, c. 1915. The John Cornelius Gillespie house at 307 South McClure Street was to the north of this house (to the right in this photograph). The porch columns on 311 South McClure Street, with their Victorian brackets, are quite similar to those pictured in the Gillespie family photograph above.*

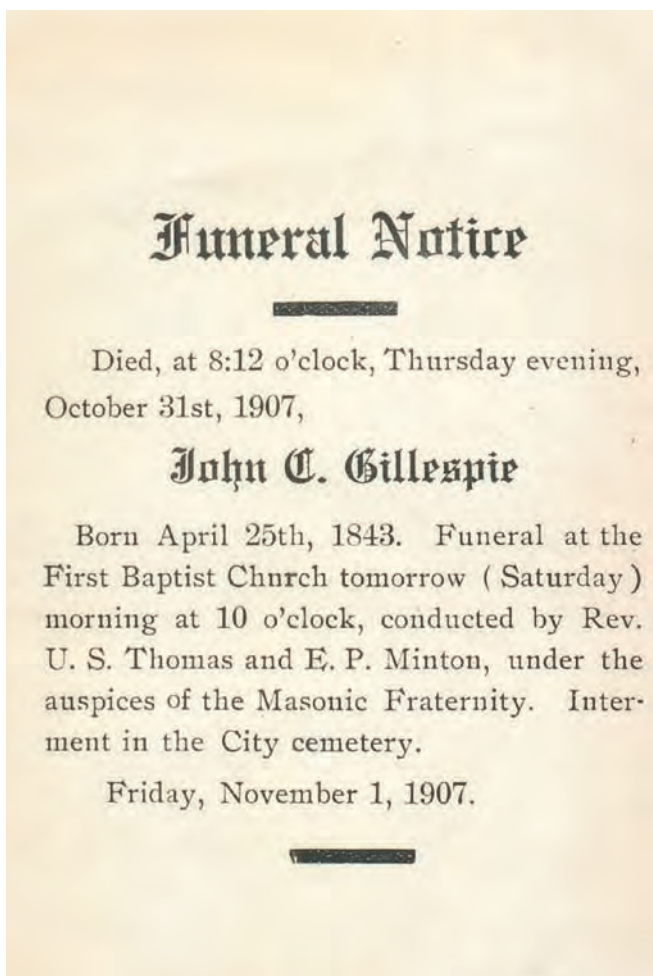


## JOHN CORNELIUS GILLESPIE | SARAH ALICE “SALLIE” MACKEY

### PAGES 104–107

#### 5. THE DEATH AND OBITUARY OF JOHN CORNELIUS GILLESPIE

Neville’s great-grandfather **John Cornelius Gillespie (1843–1907)** spent his lifetime confronting death. Between 1848 and 1867, every single one of his eight siblings died. At their deaths, they were between ages two and twenty-two. His father died at age forty-eight, in 1863, when John Cornelius Gillespie was only twenty years old. His oldest son died at age three, in 1868, and his first wife died the next year. John C. Gillespie’s second son, his second wife, and his first daughter all died on October 16, 1878, in the Mississippi Valley’s Great Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1878. And, of course, John C. Gillespie’s Civil War military unit faced a deadly measles epidemic, extremely high battle casualties, and the devastating Siege of Port Hudson, Louisiana.



*The printed notice for the funeral of John Cornelius Gillespie on Friday, November 1, 1907, at the First Baptist Church in Jonesboro, Arkansas.*

John Cornelius Gillespie's own death came at the relatively advanced age of sixty-four. (In 1907 the life expectancy for males in the United States was 45.6.)

John Cornelius Gillespie's death was caused by a seizure of meningitis on Friday evening, October 25, 1907. He died six days later. His death came after two days of unconsciousness. Meningitis is an acute inflammation of the protective membrane covering the brain and spinal cord. The more deadly form of meningitis is caused by bacteria. Bacterial meningitis occurred in about 3 to 5 out of 100,000 people in the early twentieth century. There was no treatment, and the death rate at that time was about ninety percent. Today bacterial meningitis occurs in 1.3 to 2 out of 100,000 people in the United States. The death rate is between ten and twenty percent.

John Cornelius Gillespie is buried beside his third wife, **Sarah Alice "Sallie" Mackey (1857–1911)**, in the City Cemetery in Jonesboro, Arkansas. They have matching gravestones.

In one of the last photographs of John Cornelius Gillespie, he has a somewhat "hang-dog" look while posing with his cow. Perhaps he is lamentably leading his favorite cow to the slaughterhouse.



*John Cornelius Gillespie  
with his cow in Jonesboro,  
Arkansas, at about age  
sixty-two, c. 1905.*

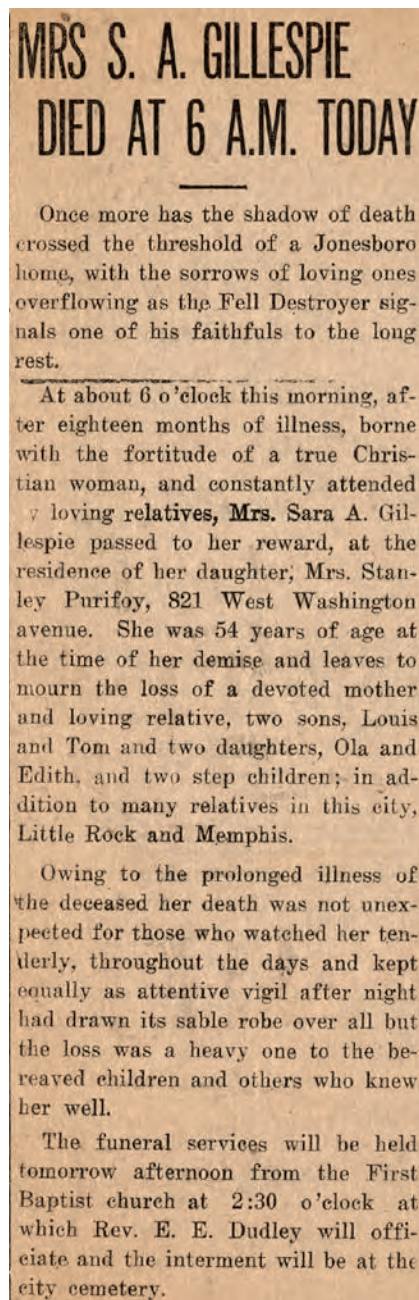


## JOHN CORNELIUS GILLESPIE | SARAH ALICE “SALLIE” MACKEY PAGES 104–107

### 6. OBITUARIES FOR SARAH ALICE MACKEY GILLESPIE

Neville’s great-grandmother **Sarah Alice “Sallie” Mackey Gillespie (1857–1911)** died on Monday, December 11, 1911, at age fifty-four. Her obituary states that she had been ill for the previous eighteen months. It is probable that Sallie Mackey Gillespie had some form of cancer, for the cause of her death is not stated in her obituary. In Sallie Mackey Gillespie’s time, the word *cancer* carried a stigma; it was effectively an obscene word.

Notably, Sallie Mackey Gillespie’s oldest daughter, **Ola Frank Gillespie Purifoy (1881–1934)**, Neville’s grandmother, died of cancer at age fifty-three, after about four years of illness. Ola Gillespie Purifoy’s cause of death is known but was never discussed. Sallie Mackey Gillespie’s mother, **Martha Peterson Rives Mackey (1826–1868)**, died at age forty-two, and her cause of death is also unknown. Sallie Mackey Gillespie died about four years after the death of her husband, **John Cornelius Gillespie (1843–1907)**. She was being cared for by her daughter Ola Gillespie Purifoy at Ola’s home when she died.



*Sarah Alice Mackey's obituary in a Jonesboro, Arkansas, newspaper.*

In family archives, there is a handwritten obituary, which is unsigned and unpublished:

*Mrs. Gillespie our sister who so recently went to that land where there are no more terrible nights of pain was loved by all who knew her. She was a devoted wife, a loving mother, a true friend and a good neighbor. Kind to all and ever ready to help those in distress.*

*She was reared in Hernando, Miss. Her maiden name was Sallie Mackey. She was married to John C. Gillespie in 1880 [the year was actually 1879]. They moved to Jonesboro in 1892. She gave her heart to Christ when a young girl and lived a gentle and consecrated life. The greatest sorrow of her life was the death of her husband 4 years ago.*

*The long watches of the night are over and she is gone; gone from her earthly home; gone from the society of those she loved; gone to live with the dear ones, "over yonder" and with Jesus. She was happiest when surrounded by her family and friends; But death called and she went away willingly. Part of her family had long since gone over, and were "waiting and watching" for her, and when the messenger came, she was ready to go.*

*And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.*

Sallie Mackey Gillespie is buried alongside her husband, John Cornelius Gillespie, in the City Cemetery in Jonesboro, Arkansas.