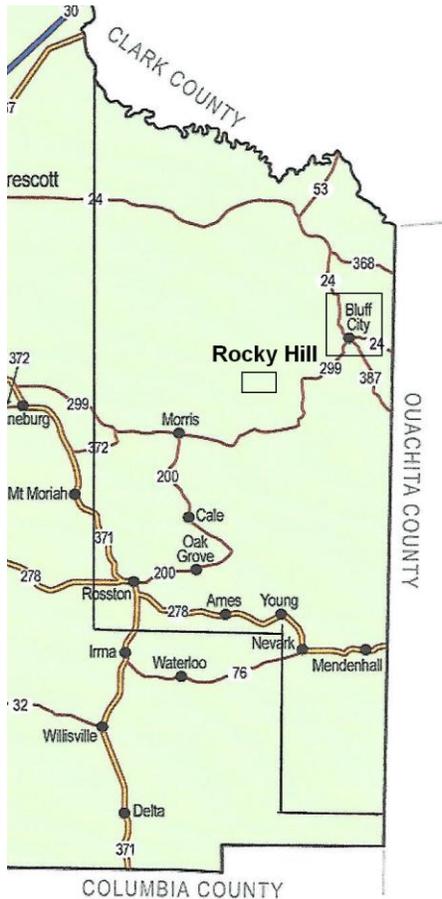


ROCKY HILL



The Rocky Hill community was located about four miles southwest of Bluff City (see map). The first settlers arrived in the 1850s and the area was in Ouachita County until 1871 when Nevada County was created.

The land around Rocky Hill is hilly and rocky which explains why it was so named. The local people called the place Goose Ankle, a name which dates back to at least 1909. Why it was called Goose Ankle is not known.

Some of the family names associated with Rocky Hill are McKelvy, Irvin, Nelson, Dunn, Sarrett, Johnson, Parker, Plyler, Otwell, Barlow, and several others.

The center of the community was the Rocky Hill Methodist Church which was established in 1907. My great grandfather, Alexander Fletcher McKelvy, gave two acres of land for the church at that time. The church was active until the 1970s and the building stood vacant for many years after that date. A few years ago, the building was demolished and all that remains today are the concrete steps at the intersection of County Roads 40 and 404.

The children of the community went to the Gum Grove School until 1929 when that school was consolidated with Bluff City. I found one reference of a McKelvy School in the early 1900s, but its location is unknown.

The land just west of Rocky Hill borders the Caney Creek bottom. The whistle from the old Reader Railroad steam train could be heard as it made its way through this creek bottom on its journey from Reader to Waterloo and back. A large saw mill was located on the railroad near Rocky Hill and this mill provided employment for some of the men of the community.

Only about ten people still live in the area close to Rocky Hill. Most of the old farm fields are now forest and all the old homes I remember from my childhood are now gone. Rocky Hill joins the list of old communities that no longer exist.

Written by Jerry McKelvy

Rocky Hill Methodist Church pictures through the years:

