

## **The First Baby Doc Ever Delivered**

Today marks the anniversary of the first baby Dr. Noel "Buck" Copp and his wife and nurse, Gaye, delivered. On June 26, 1931, Dr. Copp delivered Eulice Gillihan. He was the first of over 1,000 babies they delivered in their medical career. But, the practice began 85 years ago today.

Dr. Copp graduated from Calico Rock High School in 1920, from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in 1930 and completed a one-year medical residency at St. Vincent Infirmary. His wife, nurse, and partner, Gaye Sanders Copp, graduated as a Registered Nurse from St. Vincent Infirmary in 1926. They were married in 1931 shortly before returning home to Calico Rock.

It was hard for folks to adjust to the hometown boy being a doctor. In fact, when it was time for Eulice to be born 85 years ago today, someone came to town to fetch Dr. H.H. Smith. He wasn't available so Dr. Copp and Miss Gaye went to the house.

When they got there, a lady came out on the porch and said, "We don't need no company. We got sick folks here."

Dr. Copp told her they were there to deliver the baby and that is exactly what he did.

Dr. Copp kept two medical bags--one for regular medical calls and one for delivering babies. He kept his baby bag by the front door next to a table where Dr. Copp would fill out yellow death certificates and blue birth certificates. The certificates were placed on the table ready for Gaye to mail them.

He operated an office out of the second floor of the bank building and a small office in the back of Evans Brothers Drug Store, both on Main Street. He was responsible for recruiting the town's first dentist, Dr. Hildred Meade who had retired to Calico Rock and opened a dental office in the Riverview Hotel.

Dr. Copp's influence on the community extended beyond medicine. He led a Boy Scouts Mule Train to Blanchard Springs every year, became an ambassador for the town by riding his huge horse in every parade anywhere around, served on the school board and bank board.

Today, we pause to honor two great Calico Rock heroes on the 85th Anniversary of their medical practice...Dr. Noel "Buck" and Mrs. Gaye Sanders Copp.