

Schooner E.O. Gladys & Riverboat Winona by Patrick Achee
Rewritten and edited by Murphy Miller, Jr., September 2019



Joseph Nunez Miller
(Patrick Achee photo)

Joseph Nunez Miller was a seaman. He piloted a schooner around the turn of the century, in the early 1900's.. Then he piloted a river boat the "Winona" from about 1911 to 1942. His wife Edna also had a river boat license and served with him on trips to New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, Lake Arthur and other stops. He served in the Coast Guard at Grand Chenier during WW II. J. N. Miller and his wife, along with Emma Nunez Miller, mother, and Oma Miller, sister, survived Hurricane Audry in Grand Chenier, LA., on June 27, 1957. They huddled in the upstairs of the old home place of Alcide Miller. They then moved to Lafayette, LA.

Schooner E. O. Gladys



Edna Theriot (Oma McCall
photo)

The schooner E. O. Gladys was named after Papa's Mother and his two sisters.(Emma, Olive and Gladys). I really don't remember when Papa got the schooner. I believe he had gotten it before he and mama were married. Charlie Nelson took Papa on Capt. Nelson's schooner to Galveston to get the schooner.

The first thing I remember about the schooner was we could tell when he was getting close to home. His old dog, Rover, would begin barking and Mama would say, "Papa's coming." Going outside

at the old homeplace, we could see the masts of the schooner. It appeared to be around Lower Mud Lake. In those days there were not many trees & plenty of farming.



Olive & Gladys Miller

The only mate I knew that worked for Papa on the schooner was Jack Mongue. I remember going on a trip on the schooner with Papa, Mama, and Raphiel Miller. When we got in the Gulf, Mama and I stayed in the hold until we reached

Galveston. Most of Papa's trips were to Galveston. On one of Papa's trips to Galveston he lost his rudder and had to steer by letting out a long heavy rope.



Raphiel Miller, Abt. 1918 (Oma McCall photo)

Years later on a trip to New Orleans on the Winona, Mama showed me the place where the schooner came to rest in a bayou (seems like it might be Schooner Bayou). Joe said he thought it was common to junk old boats in remote areas like that.

Riverboat Winona

The Winona was built on the Mermentau River in Papa's yard by Mr. Waterman. A boat builder from some south Louisiana city, I believe it was Franklin. It took 1 year to build. It was built parallel to the river and it was launched into the river sideways. I saw it being launched and was frightened it made such a big splash. I was seven when it was finished, 1917.

The original engines were gasoline, but in the summer of 1922, Papa took the boat to Lake Arthur at Lezay Roy's wharf and changed the engines out. He replaced them with two, 30 horsepower, 2 cylinder, Callenburg diesel motors. I was out of school at that time and stayed on the boat with Papa and Mama. I slept on deck under a mosquito netting, while Papa and Mama slept in the cabin.

Papa first worked between New Orleans and Grand Chenier; and hauled cotton and cotton seed. Bales on deck and seed in the hold. I went on

several trips to N.O. on the Winona. Papa took different routes. You or John would know the routes better than me. Sometimes it was in the Gulf to Vermilion Bay, then through bayous to Bayou Black and on to the Mississippi River near New Orleans. Other trips were into Bayou Plaquemine into the Mississippi near Baton Rouge.



Schooner E. O. Gladys

Later (1920 - 1925) Papa made passenger and freight trips to Lake Arthur. Some of the freight were cars, lumber, caskets, whatever people needed.

Between 1925 - 1929, he worked between Lake Charles and Grand Chenier. Freight only. After that he brought oil and gasoline from Port Arthur to Grand Chenier, until about 1940. He left the Winona tied up in the pasture until 1943 when Adam Nunez bought it. Adam made a tug-boat out of the Winona. It finally sank in the Gulf off the coast of Galveston. That's about all I remember about Papa's boats.



Winona Miller with son Patrick Achee. 1941
(Patrick Achee photo)

Winona Miller Achee is the daughter of Joseph Nunez Miller and Edna Theriot. Patrick is Winona's son. Patrick Achee is the 3rd great grandson of Michel Miller and Hiacinthe Lejeune. The family book for the Michel Miller and Hiacinthe Lejeune Family can be purchased at www.Lulu.com

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