

Jerry McKelvy's
SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

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MAN AND WIFE SENTENCED TO HANG ON SAME DAY

There was an interesting criminal case in Sevier County in southwest Arkansas in the fall of 1910. John Ford and his wife, Leila Ford were arrested for the murder of Will Nichols, a prominent farmer, lawyer, and a former state legislator. The Fords were tenants on Mr. Nichols' farm which was located near Lockesburg.

There had been some bad feeling between the parties for some time. The Fords accused Mr. Nichols of taking down a fence and driving a team into their pea patch. According to witnesses, Mr. Ford had threatened to "cut Nichols' throat" if he destroyed his pea patch.

For whatever reason, Mr. Nichols did drive his team into the pea patch which resulted in Mr. Nichols being struck several times by Mrs. Ford and then stabbed four times by John Ford with a Barlow pocket knife which caused his death. The Fords were arrested and taken to the jail in DeQueen.

This crime happened on September 30, 1910, and in those days justice was swiftly carried out. Trial was held at DeQueen in November, 1910, less than two months after the crime. The attorney for the defendants requested a change of venue since they didn't think the Fords could receive a fair trial in Sevier County, but this request was denied by the court.

During the trial, the defendant's eight year old son played in the courtroom. The jury heard witnesses and then began their deliberations. Thirty minutes later, they had reached a verdict—both John and Leila Ford were guilty of first degree murder. Normally, there was a two-day wait between the decision and sentence being passed, but the Fords waived that waiting period and sentence was handed down the same day. The young boy was sitting with his parents when the verdict was read. Mr. and Mrs. Ford were sentenced to be hanged side by side on January 20, 1911. There was no reaction from the couple as the sentence was read.

The attorney for the Fords immediately filed an appeal to the state supreme court which meant the execution could not take place until the appeal was heard. That appeal was heard on March 6, 1911. The Arkansas Supreme Court found that the lower court had made an error in not granting the change of venue and therefore, the decision of the lower court was reversed and a new trial was ordered.

I wish I could tell you the results of the new trial, but I don't have that information. I only found out about this case because it was mentioned in the Nevada County newspapers. Maybe someone reading this will do a little more research in the Sevier County newspapers and let us know the verdict in the second trial.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

I recently received this article from Helen Shuptrine about a reunion in 1966 of students of the old Marlbrook School in Hempstead County near Blevins. This gives some history of that area and may be of interest to some.

REUNION STUDENTS OF MARLBROOK SCHOOL 1912-13

There have been homecomings at the Marlbrook Church for some years now, but for the first time a reunion will be held at the Marlbrook School near Blevins on Sunday, May 15. Those who went to school at Marlbrook in 1912-13 are spearheading the event, but anyone who ever went to the school is invited and many are expected.

The history of the school, which was consolidated with Blevins in 1929 or 1930, is closely associated with the church history of the area. The Marlbrook Presbyterian Church was organized about 1890 by a preacher named Dr. Wallace, who also gave the land for the church. The present building was erected in 1900, but it is no longer functioning at this time.

Marlbrook School District No. 23 was organized about the same time, and the land for the school was donated by Mrs. Drucilla Williams who was the mother of the late Dr. J.C. Williams, pastor of the Washington and the Prescott Presbyterian Churches on different occasions.

Early settlers and patrons of the Marlbrook School were families with names like Bonds, Williams, Bell, Richardson, Ross, Wickers, Wade, Yarberry, Wallace, Austin, McCaskill, Hendriz, Brooks, Marlow, Mayfield, Peyton, Cullins, Wood, Bolt, and Carter.

In about the 1905 some families from Nevada County were moving to the Indian Territory. When they got to the Marlbrook Community, they liked it so well they decided to stay. These include people named Sampson, Hart, Smith, Honca, White, Chambless, and Loe. They were members of the Nazarene Church, and they soon organized the Bell's Chapel Church. The land for the church was donated by the late Dr. Minto Bell, father of the Rev. Will Bell of Kerrville, Texas, and the grandfather of the Rev. Wayne Bell. The latter is the current pastor of the church and will bring the sermon at 11 a.m. on the day of the reunion.

Some of the teachers in the Marlbrook School District No. 23 were: M.A. Matlock, Miss Maud Ward (now, Mrs. Maud Bartell of Hot Springs, and she plans to attend), Joe Reynolds, S.B. May, Frank May, R.W. Bonds (now of Blevins), Otis Landers, Miss Nannie Bell McCaskill, Miss Pauline Stewardt, Miss Emma Phillips, Miss Edna Nesbitt, Miss Mary Bonds, and Miss Carrie Bonds (mother of Olin Lewis of Hope).

The old Marlbrook Community is rich in history. About 8 or 10 Civil War veterans, and 8 or 10 World War 11 veterans are buried at the Marlbrook Cemetery. But memories aren't buried so deep they can't be revived, and this will be done in fine style on May 15.

The 50 to 75 people who are expected from many parts of the country will probably recall when the school was one room and then, became two rooms. Water had to be brought a quarter of a mile, and two buckets were used with dippers. One was for the boys and the other one for the girls.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

The students had to march inside in separate lines - one for the boys and the other for the girls. This made courting a little difficult until after school, for the teacher really lowered the boom for a wink or a whisper.

The reunion of all former pupils of the Marlbrook School was the idea of Mrs. Essie Bonds White, now living in Tempe, Arizona, but many have worked hard on its promotion. These include Art Brooks, of Nashville, Lester Wade, Mrs Ira Brooks, Mrs. Floyd Brooks, Roy Bonds and Dale Bonds, all of Blevins.

* This article was taken from the Hope, Arkansas newspaper. Saturday, May 7, 1966.

HOW TO KNOW YOU'RE GROWING OLDER

Everything hurts and what doesn't hurt doesn't work.

You feel like the night before and you haven't been anywhere.

The gleam in your eye is from the sun hitting your bifocals.

Your little black book contains only names ending in M. D.

You get winded playing chess.

Your children began to look middle-aged.

You join a health club and don't go.

You began to outlive enthusiasm.

Your mind makes contracts your body can't meet.

You know all the answers, but nobody asks you the questions.

You look forward to a dull evening.

Your favorite part of the newspaper is "25 years ago today".

You sit in a rocking chair and can't get it going.

Your knees buckle and your belt won't.

Your 17 around the neck and 42 around the waist.

You stop looking forward to your next birthday.

Dialing long distance wears you out.

Your back goes out more than you do.

A fortune teller offers to read your face.

You turn out the light for economic reasons rather than romantic ones.

You remember today that yesterday was your wedding anniversary.

You are startled the first time you are addressed as "old timer".

You burn the midnight oil after 9 p. m.

You sink your teeth into a steak and they stay there.

Your pacemaker makes the garage door go up when you see a pretty girl walk by.

You get your exercise acting as a pallbearer for your friends who exercise.

You have too much room in the house and not enough room in the medicine cabinet.

The best part of your day is over when the alarm goes off.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

RECIPES FROM 1910

BAKED BANANAS I

Remove skins and place in shallow pan with two tablespoons melted butter. Dredge with sugar and add juice on one lemon. Bake about a half hour and serve with meat.

BAKED BANANAS II

Take four bananas from peels, leaving peels as whole as possible. Halve the bananas and place in baking dish. Pour over them the following sauce: 2 tablespoons melted butter, 2 tablespoons lemon juice, and 1/3 cup sugar. Bake 15 minutes, then place bananas in skins and pour the sauce over them. Serve on lettuce leaf.

THE PRESCOTT ICE & MILLING COMPANY

(This information comes from the business section of the August 30, 1912 issue of *The Nevada County Picayune*)

One of the most important businesses in Prescott a hundred years ago was Prescott Ice and Milling Co.. The company was established in September, 1909. Officers were G. F. Cress, president, M. W. Greeson, vice-president, A. H. Smith, secretary and treasurer. These three men along with John A. Davis were the leaders of this industry.

Mr. Cress, the president, was a native of Iowa and had come to Prescott from Kansas in 1905. Mr. Smith, the secretary, was born in Illinois and had come to Prescott from Nebraska in 1905. These two men were first involved in the manufacture of furniture but the factory burned. They then purchased the local telephone system which they operated until they organized the Prescott Ice and Milling Co.

The company employed 16 people in 1912 and had four large wagons for delivery of their products. Shipments were made by rail and wagon to practically every town within a 30 to 35 mile radius of Prescott.

Water for the plant was supplied by two 200 foot artesian wells. The water was distilled and filtered before use in the plant. Two 60 horsepower Atlas boilers provided power to the large engine which ran the plant. N. L. Drake was supervisor of the plant. He came to Prescott in 1911 for his wife's health. She was an invalid and had to be carried on board the train for the trip. A few months later she was strong and healthy and able to do her own housework. They credited the healthy climate at Prescott for her recovery.

The company also operated a bottling plant which was started in April, 1911. Frank White was in charge of the bottling plant which produced 200 gallons of ice cream each day and 200 cases of bottled drinks.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

The plant boasted cleanliness and invited the public to visit the plant to see it in operation. Each bottle was washed and disinfected in boiling water. A revolving brush removed all dirt from the inside of the bottle which was then rinsed again in boiling water.

According to an article written in 1912, the plant was expected to triple its capacity within the next twelve months.

Here is a list of the flavors of bottled soda water produced by Prescott Ice and Milling Co. They came in half-pint bottles which sold for \$1.00 for a case of 24 bottles:

Hop Ale	Orange
Plezol	Vanilla
Lemon Sweet	Ginger Ale
Lemon Sour	Pineapple
Cream	Cherry Blossom
Root Beer	Gay-Ola
Blackberry	Afri-Cola
Jersey Creme	Chocolate
Strawberry	Hot Tom
Peach	Grape

The company also sold the famous Red Cross Mineral Water from Grand Rapids, Michigan in half-gallon bottle and five gallon bottles. They also sold distilled water in half-gallon and five gallon bottles. Empty bottles could be returned for a refund of 40 cents per case and 50 cents for the half gallon and five gallon bottles.

I came across an ad in 1918 for Schlitz Famo produced by the Prescott Ice Co. This was one of the non-alcoholic beers manufactured by various companies during Prohibition days. The ad stated "Schlitz Famo is more than a drink. It is a food. Every time you take a glass, you take something to eat. Every compound essential to the human body is present. It repairs and builds up broken down tissues, is non-intoxicating, healthful, refreshing, and satisfying. It has the wonderful hop aroma.

NEVADA COUNTY NEWS FROM LONG AGO (From *The Nevada County Picayune*)

10-27-1886

Laneburg--Mr. John Evans Jr. has been quite low with slow fever at his father's residence near Serepta church.

Laneburg--Patent seats and desks have been ordered for the Harmony Institute.

Antioch--Mr. Duncan Cook, formerly of Antioch, is now working in a large dry goods house in Bluff City.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

Emmet--Dr. L. J. Gillespie, with the assistance of Drs. Arnold and McSwain, last Saturday amputated the left arm of fellow townsman, J. L. McGough, who has been suffering for some time with a tumor which formed upon the wrist.

11-24-1886

Bourland's Store (Rosston)--Business dull and merchants blue.

Willisville--Two drummers are in this burg this week.

Willisville--Mr. Pickens Mitchell of Paris, Texas, is here with a drove of Texas ponies. He has them of all sorts and sizes to suit the purpose.

Willisville--Our town is on a boom. I think we will have a nice little town if it keeps on. We have everything we need at the present except a good doctor. I wish that some good doctor would move to this place, as there is none nearer than Rosston, which is 7 miles. That is too far to go for one if we could do any better.

Laneburg--Prof. Wooten has a fine school--between 50 and 60 students in regular attendance.

2-9-1887

Delta--Mr. R. W. Johnson of Delta, gave us a pleasant call yesterday and gave us the following items from his neighborhood: Married--Mr. James Blackman and Miss Lon Malone, daughter of Mr. W. P. Malone; also Mr. J. E. Waldrep and Miss Ella G. Lollar; also Mr. Seth Williams and Miss Alice Alder, and more to occur soon. Health good and farmers going ahead preparing for another crop. Prof. Clement has a good school at Pleasant Hill.

Laneburg--A new Baptist church was organized the 5th Saturday last month at a school house near Mr. E. W. East's place. It will be known as Bluff Springs church.

2-23-1887

Prescott--We regret to learn that Mrs. J. L. Godley is lying very sick and not expected to live. For a long time she has been almost an invalid from rheumatism.

Prescott--Mr. J. J. Duval has purchased a 65 horsepower engine, boiler, and new sawmill machinery. He will locate a big mill about five or six miles north of Prescott and run a tramway and car to the railroad somewhere between here and Boughton.

3-2-1887

Rosston--Dr. Sam Carlton will locate at our little town.

Laneburg--Prof. Jordan has closed his school on account of measles.

Laneburg--Mr. B. T. Lane has been using in his blacksmith shop coal that is found in large quantities in this neighborhood. He says it burns well enough to heat iron all right.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

3-9-1887

Boughton--Dr. J. S. Cannon is already getting about all the practice he needs.

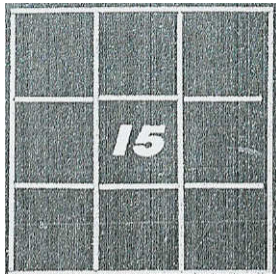
3-16-1887

Boughton--Boughton has a new store, a new saw mill, and a new doctor and is smoothly gliding over the rugged hills of hard times with the express purpose in view of landing safely on the shore of prosperity in the near future.

Antioch--The young folks had a "hop" at Davis Andrews Thursday night.

4-6-1887

Caney--The Caney school is flourishing under the tutelage of Miss Marion Marsh. *(Note: This is not to be confused with the community of Morris which is also called Caney)*



MAGIC 45 PUZZLE

Reed Music Co. of Camden had a contest in 1909 using this puzzle. The prizes for the correct solution were a \$100 organ and a ladies' gold watch awarded to the first two people who sent in the correct solution.

Directions: Take any of the numbers from 1 to 19 and place them in the nine squares in such a way that the horizontal, vertical, and diagonal lines each number 45. A number cannot be used more than once.

Those of you who like puzzles might try your luck with this. Just draw the puzzle on a separate piece of paper and get a pencil with a big eraser. I don't have a prize to offer, but if you can solve the puzzle, I'll let everyone know in the next issue.

TIME MARCHES ON

The year is now over half gone. Seems like time passes faster as I get older.

At least we have had more rainfall this year than in the past couple of years. The grass has been growing so fast we can hardly keep up with it. People in the Bluff City area rarely complain about rainfall since the sandy land sucks up the moisture very fast.

Maybe someone can explain a phenomenon regarding the weather I heard about recently. We installed a medical alert system for my elderly stepmother about two years ago. Since that time lightning has run in on the telephone line and destroyed the system four or five times even though it is connected to a surge protector. So far the company has replaced the unit but they

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

can't understand why it is being hit so much by lightning. The telephone repairman told us that for some unknown reason, places with deep sandy soil are more prone to lightning strikes. He said most of their problems occur in those areas. There must be an explanation for this but I have no idea what it is. So, in order to protect electronic equipment, we try to unplug it before a thunderstorm.

R & R Barbecue which recently located at the Ouachita-Nevada county line has moved their business to Prescott. We hate to lose any type of business from this area. What we need is a little store to sell the basic necessities of life. You have to plan carefully on your shopping when you have to drive fifteen or twenty miles just to get a jug of milk or loaf of bread.



**NEW BRAGG LAKE PAVILION
(completed July, 2014)**

A new pavilion has been constructed at Bragg Lake. I have been trying to find a picture of the old pavilion but so far have not found one. Someone told me the other day that there was a huge alligator in Bragg Lake so be careful.

Thanks to the city of Bluff City for putting the large garbage dumpster in town so people could clean out their sheds and get rid of lots of unwanted trash. The dumpster was soon filled to overflowing and saved many trips to the landfill. There was a time when trash like that would have been dumped in a ravine along the roads. Maybe next year we can do it all over again.

RAINFALL RECORD

January – 1.2 inches

February—3.6 inches

March—5.0 inches

April – 5.8 inches

May—5.5 inches

June—4.0 inches