

Jerry McKelvy's  
**SANDYLAND CHRONICLE**

Vol. 18 – No. 12

[sandman43@att.net](mailto:sandman43@att.net)

December, 2018

\*\*\*\*\*

## **ADRIFT**

Sgt. Charles Dean, a 1940 graduate of Fairview High School in Camden, was a gunner on a B-29 Superfortress bomber making raids over Tokyo, Japan in World War II. The bombing raid on December 3, 1944 didn't turn out exactly the way he expected. The defrosting equipment on the plane quit working during the flight causing the windows to ice over. The plane was forced to drop out of formation to avoid a collision with the other planes. The disabled plane was hit by Japanese fire, but they could not return fire because of the lack of visibility. None of the men were hit by enemy fire, but two engines were knocked out and the plane was forced to make a rough water landing at night in heavy seas. The plane broke into two pieces and most of it sank. The co-pilot went down with the plane, but the other ten men on board managed to survive by quickly getting into two rafts they had on board for just such emergencies. When daylight came, they were able to get in part of the damaged plane and retrieve another raft, a small amount of food and water, and a few other supplies.

The men knew they were in trouble and rationed the food and water as long as it lasted. They stayed near the area where the plane went down for five days hoping to be rescued. When no help came, they decided to drift with the current toward the Philippine Islands. Their only hope was to be spotted by an Allied plane or ship and the chances of that happening were pretty slim.

During the next few days, five planes flew over them at very high altitudes. Finally, after eleven days and nights adrift in the ocean, the men heard a plane flying low enough to see a flare. They fired two flares which the plane did not see and all they had left was a damaged flare that had previously not worked. They tried it anyway and this time the flare worked. The crew of the plane spotted the flare, circled above them, and dropped some rations to them along with more flares. The men felt much relief knowing that they would soon be rescued. The next day another plane flew over them and dropped a note saying they would be rescued in about one hour. It was a beautiful sight to see the Navy destroyer heading to their location to pick them up. Remarkably, the men were in pretty good shape and did not even need to be hospitalized even though they were very weak from lack of food and water.

The story of their rescue made the national news. The Camden News published a letter from Sgt. Dean written to his mother telling her of his experience. The letter appeared in the December 28, 1944 edition. Here is one paragraph from the letter:

*“Sure hope you didn't worry too much, Mom, because God was taking care of us all those eleven days and nights we were adrift. Without His watch and care, we'd have probably have given up long before the rescue. When things were looking tough, we always looked up, kept our faith, and He saw us through”.*

## SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

In the letter, Sgt. Dean described how they survived without food. He said he shot a sea gull with his .45 caliber pistol and said that raw sea gull was pretty delicious, although not much was left of it after ten men got through with it. He said they caught some fish which they ate raw. He said fish have a lot of water and they tasted really good.

Sgt. Dean reminded his mother of the little New Testament she had given him that he carried with him through the war. He said three more men had their own testaments and that reading these while they were adrift gave them much comfort during their ordeal.

He also told about the rescue and how well they were treated. They were examined and found to be in good condition considering what they had been through. They were slowly given fluids and food until their bodies returned to normal. He said he had lost 15 to 20 pounds during those eleven days, but was quickly regaining the weight back. Soon they were up walking around the ship and he mentioned how he had to adjust to the rocking motion of the ship.

Although it was tragic that the co-pilot lost his life, thankfully, these ten men were rescued. They did what they had to do to survive and gave God the credit for saving them.



Rescued crew of a Saipan-based Superfortress picked up by a Navy destroyer after aircraft spotted them in three life rafts eleven days after the B-29's crash in the Pacific are photographed after their return to the Bomber Command at Saipan.

Top row (left to right): Capt. Francis J. Murray, airplane commander, Brooklyn, New York; 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Franklin L. Tennyson, flight engineer, Washington, DC; Sgt. Clifton

L. Sewell, tail gunner, Baltimore, Maryland; **Sgt. Charles C. Dean, left gunner, Camden, Arkansas**; Cpl. Orville Cranneman, radio operator, St. Louis, Missouri; Cpl. Dale H. Cortes, right gunner, Madison, South Dakota

Bottom row (left to right): 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Alton Ayers, navigator, Corpus Christi, Texas; Cpl. Edward Yaegar, precision instrument specialist, Battle Ground, Washington; Flight Officer Thomas L. Waters, Long Beach, New York; Sgt. Franklin Moore Jr., central fire control gunner, Oshkosh, Wisconsin

# SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

## COINS LEFT ON GRAVE MARKERS

I have spent many hours in the cemeteries of Nevada County doing cemetery surveys. My wife and I started doing this in 1997 and have tried to keep the information up-to-date since then. There are about 100 cemeteries in Nevada County—some with only one or two graves deep in the woods and some very large cemeteries with over 1000 graves. The largest is DeAnn Cemetery in Prescott which has over 3500 graves followed by Snell Cemetery with about 1850 graves, Bluff City Cemetery with over 1600 graves, and Union Cemetery with over 1100. There are over 26,000 marked graves in Nevada County. As you can imagine, it takes a lot of time to do these surveys, type up the information, and keep the records updated. You can find our cemetery surveys online at the Depot Museum website at <http://www.depotmuseum.org/>.

It is interesting to see the different types of grave markers ranging from something very simple all the way up to very expensive markers. Many of the older graves have nothing but a rock for a marker and some have no marker at all. Some have unusual type rocks such as petrified wood. Some markers are home-made concrete markers. Some are decorated with colored marbles set in concrete. Some have some type of colored glass or a colored vase left at the grave. Just recently we saw an old enamel chamber pot with a few flowers marking a grave.

I have found many unusual objects left at graves. Families sometimes leave a small object that had some special meaning to the deceased. Some of the things I remember finding include a full unopened bottle of Classic Coke, a set of keys, small rocks or pebbles, deer antlers, and miniature toy cars, pickup trucks, tractors, and airplanes. I even once found an orange hunting vest draped over a tombstone.

A few times I have found coins left on grave markers, usually pennies, but sometimes nickels, dimes, or quarters. According to what I found on the Internet, coins are sometimes left at the graves of veterans. A penny left is just a message to the family that someone visited the grave. A nickel means the person trained at boot camp with the deceased. A dime means the person actually served with the deceased at some time and a quarter means the person was with the deceased when he died. I have only found coins at two cemeteries—Mt. Moriah and Piney Grove.

It is much more common to find coins at graves in military cemeteries. It is said that they collect the coins every so often and use the money to help maintain the cemetery or to pay funeral expenses for indigent veterans.

---

### 100 YEARS AGO (DECEMBER, 1918)

---Prescott Drug Co. advertised Valesco for TB, asthma, bronchitis, and pneumonia. A 16-ounce bottle cost \$1.00 and would be enough for six days.

---Customers received a 20-inch Dolly Dimple doll with every sack of Dolly Dimple flour.

## SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

---The medicine Castoria was said to be a harmless substitute for castor oil and paregoric. It was called “The Children’s Panacea”—the mother’s friend”. An advertising slogan was “Children cry for Castoria”.

---Wrigley chewing gum came in a pink wrapper to save tin foil for the war effort.

### 50 YEARS AGO (DECEMBER, 1968)

---Everett Ward announced plans for a shopping center across the street from Foodland with space for three or four businesses.

---Prescott Motor Co. offered 100 gallons of gasoline if you purchased a new 1968 Mustang, Galaxy 500, or LTD.

---A total of 125 legal bucks were harvested in Nevada County in the November deer season.

---Liberty Valu-Mart advertised three pounds of ground beef for \$1.28 and 10 pound of potatoes for 39 cents.

---Crime was up 19% from 1967 according to the FBI crime statistics.

---The state police began using an airplane to catch speeders on the major highways. They would radio information to troopers who stopped the speeders.

---One school lunch at Prescott schools consisted of chili, crackers, dill pickle, milk, pimento cheese sandwich, and apple cobbler. On another day the menu was lima beans, turnip greens, Harvard beets, peach half, cornbread, cookie, and milk.

---An epidemic of Hong Kong flu was sweeping the nation. Many schools and colleges were forced to cancel classes.

---Kroger advertised a three pound can of Crisco shortening for 49 cents.

---A business in Wisconsin offered to pay top prices for good squirrel tails.

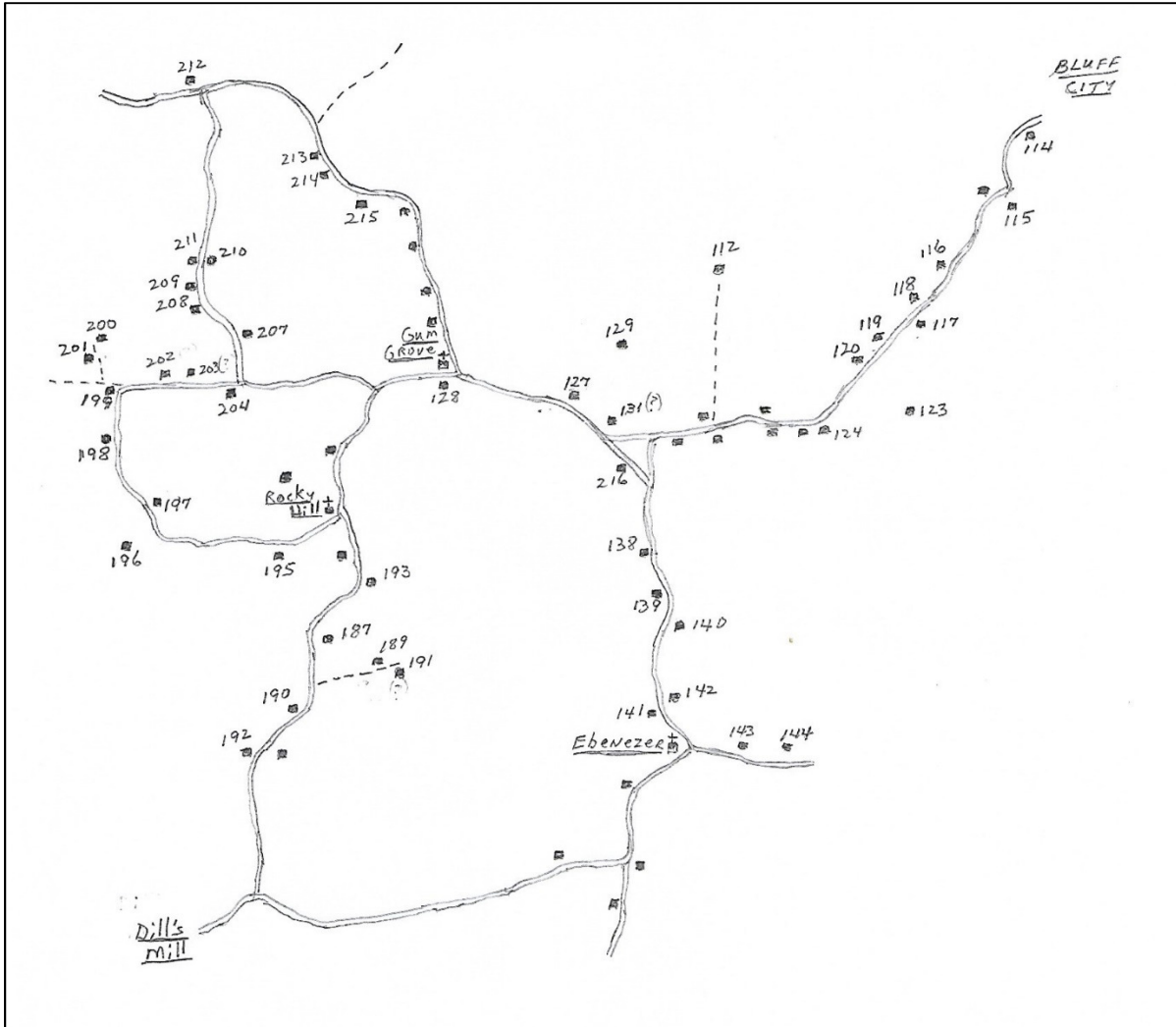


This tool pictured in the last issue is a pulpwood hook or what we always called a “billet hook”. A billet is a short stick of pulpwood (pine or hardwood) about five to six feet long which was loaded on a pulpwood truck to haul directly to the paper mill or to a wood yard where it was stored until being transported to the mill by large

trucks or by rail cars. A man on top of the load might use this tool to place the bundles of wood in the proper place when it was being loaded. Short pulpwood trucks were seen often in this area 35 or 40 years ago, but pulpwood is now hauled tree-length.

Those who contacted me with the correct answer were Norval Poe, James Nelson, Yvonne Munn, Tony Nelson, and Bill Sellers.

# SANDYLAND CHRONICLE



## MORE ON THE 1940 CENSUS

This is a hand-drawn map of a small part of northeastern Nevada County southwest of Bluff City (the Gum Grove, Rocky Hill, Ebenezer area). The numbers correspond to the number of the residence recorded by the census enumerator. I believe most of them are in the correct place. People moved a lot back in those days and I was not alive when this census was taken. See the following pages for more details about each of these homes including those listed as living there in the 1940 census.

Following each number is the letter "O" or "R". That shows whether the home was owned or rented. Following each name is the relationship of each person to the head of the household (H = head, W = wife, D = daughter, S = Son, etc.). **I'm pretty sure about those in bold print.**

Refer to the actual census records for more detailed information. You can find it on the depot museum website ([www.depotmuseum.org](http://www.depotmuseum.org)) or by doing a search for "1940 census family search". You will have to set us a free account to view it on that web site.

# SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

114 (O) – Starnes, Denton—H  
    , Mildred –W  
    , Wilma – D

115 (O) – Moore, Walter – H  
    , Julia – W  
    , Elsie – D

116 (R) – McKelvy, Ruel – H  
    , Geneva – W

117 (R) – Purifoy, Buck – H  
    , Esther – W  
    , R. J. – S  
    , W. R. – S  
    , R. W. – S  
    , Guartha – D  
    , Sheila May – D

118 (R) – Gulley, Willie Word – H.  
    , Guartha – W

119 (O) – Henry, Charles C. – H  
    , Minnie – W  
    , Charles – S

120 (O) – Martin, Berry – H  
    , Fannie – W

121 (R) – Hodnett, Butler – H  
    , Mary – W  
    , Milton – S

122 (R) – Purifoy, Thurman –H  
    , Novice - W  
    , Carlene – D  
    , John -- S

123 (R) – Gillespie, Ruel – H  
    , Inita – W

124 (R) – Purifoy, Edgar – H  
    , Lessie – W  
    , May Belle – D  
    , R. C. – S

125 (R) – Haynie, Junious – H  
    , Ruby – W  
    , Justeen – D  
    , Octina (?) – D

126 (R) – Purifoy, Ed – H  
    , Floridee – W

, A. D. – S  
    , Lessie – D  
    , Luelar -- D

127 (O) – Plyler, Tom F. – H  
    , Ibra – W  
    , Verda – D  
    , R. P. – S

128 (R) – Hunter, Shelby – H  
    , Jessie – W  
    , John D. – S  
    , James H. – S  
    , Thomas W. – S  
    , Donald S. – S

129 (R) – Bradley, John – H  
    , Sallie – W  
    , Percy -- S  
    , J. B. – S  
    , Frances – D  
    , Lois – S  
    , Malvin – S  
    , Calvin – S

130 (O) – Hunter, George – H  
    , Georgia – W  
    , Gloria – D

131 (R) – Sarrett, Dillard – H  
    , Lois – W

132 (R) – Patterson, Gordon – H  
    , Mary – W

133 (O) – Meador, Dan – H

134 (R) – Tidwell, Richard – H  
    , Sallie – W  
    , Landry – S

135 (R) – McNeely, R. – H  
    , Edith –W  
    , Bobby – S  
    , Bennie – S  
    , Harold – S

136 (R) – Purifoy, Jim – H  
    , Mattie – W  
    , Clara Mae – D  
    , Minnie Lee – D  
    , Alford -- S  
    , Nelda – D

# SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

- , Ermond – S  
, Emma Jewel – niece
- 137 (O) – Bever, Laura – H  
, Gwendolyn – granddaughter  
, Nadine – granddaughter
- 138 (O) – Barlow, Lige – H**  
, Elvie – W  
, Jesse -- S  
, Oleta – D  
, Donald – S
- 139 (O) – McKelvy, Lee Roy – H  
, Marie – W  
, Sophie – D
- 140 (R) – Hardwick, Homer – H  
, Exa – W  
, Agnes – D  
, Florine – D  
, Thomas – S  
, Marguerite – D
- 141 (R) – Parker, Troy – H  
, Georgia – W  
, Jimmie -- S
- 142 (O) – Griffith, Hildre – H**  
, Stella – W  
**Jobe, Zettie – D**  
, Dwight – grandson
- 143 ( ) – McBride, William W. – H  
, Ada – W  
, Millard – S  
, Lola – D  
, Lila – D  
, Myrtie – D
- 144 (R) – Sims, Louie – H**  
, Samantha – W  
, Bessie – D  
, Luther – S  
, Donnie – S  
, Ennis – S  
, Jessie – S  
, Lydia – D
- 187 (R) – Parker, Will – H  
, Jessie – W  
, Floyd -- S
- 188 (O) – Bevill, James J. – H  
, Scenie (?) – W  
, Otis – S  
, Lorene – D  
, Eloise -- D
- 189 (R) – McKelvy, Roy – H  
, Bertha – W  
, James Edward – S  
, Glen -- S
- 190 (O) – McMurray, Joseph – H**  
, Mary – W  
, Joseph – S  
, Mary – D  
, Silas – S  
, Daniel -- S
- 191 (O) – McKelvy, Orland – H**  
, Ollie – W  
, Harland -- S  
, Herman – S
- 192 (R) – Norman, J. D. – H**  
, Bertha Mae – W  
, Bobby Joe – S  
, James – S  
**Parker, Mollie – mother-in-law**
- 193 (O) – McKelvy, Betty – H**  
, Esther – D  
, Beulah – D
- 194 (R) – Chamlee, Sam – H  
, Edna – W  
, Sybil – D  
, Hazel – D  
, Glen W. – S  
, Jerry – D  
, Norma - D
- 195 (O) – McKelvy, Gee – H**  
, May – W
- 196 (O) – Dunn, Anne – H**  
, Edward – S  
, Thelma – D  
, Alvin – S  
, Howard – S
- 197 (O) – Johnson, Matthew – H**  
, Ada – W  
, Earl – S

# SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

, Ellis – S

**198 (R) – Irvin, Hartwell -- H**  
**, Myrtie – W**

**199 (O) – Irvin, Willie – H**  
**, Minnie – W**  
**, Arona – D**

200 (R) – Norton, Ira C. – H  
 , Grace – W  
 , Vivian – D

**201 (O) – Griffith, Adella – H**

202 (R) – Nelson, Earl – H  
 , Julia – W  
 , Jimmy – S

203 (R) – Westrope, Archie – H  
 , Myrtle – W  
 Hodges, Nellie – foster daughter)

**204 (O) – Irvin, Henry – H**  
**, Liza – W**  
**Johnson, Maybelle – step-daughter**

205 (R) – Rowe, Lonzo – H

206 (R) – Gulley, Clifton – H  
 , Dora – W  
 , John Lee – S  
 , Irma – D

**207 (O) – Barlow, Jeff – H**  
**, Ruth – W**

**208 (O) – Nelson, Frank – H**  
**, Verna – W**  
**, Harl – S**  
**, Claudis – S**  
**, Frances – D**

209 (R) – Otwell, Spurgeon – H  
 , Ardle – W  
 , Nelson – S

**210 (O) – Barlow, Minnie – H**  
**Greer, Annie Mae – D**  
**, Carl – son-in-law**

211 (R) – Crowell, Jack – H  
 , Blanche – W

, Ina – D

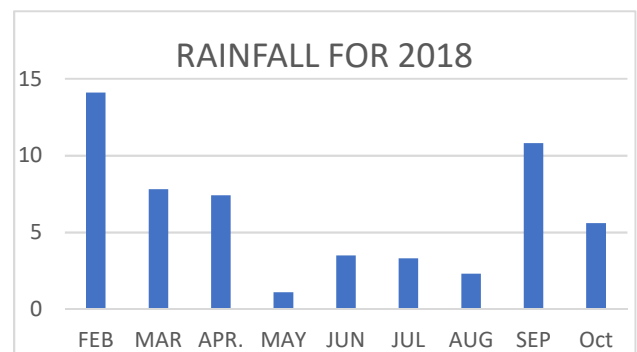
212 (R) – Krouse (Crouse), Roy – H  
 , Lydia – W  
 , Verna – D  
 , Bennie – S  
 , Jessie – S  
 , Aron – S

213 (R) – Eason, Solomon – H  
 , Willie May – W  
 Foster, Will – father-in-law  
 , Fannie – mother-in-law

214 (R) – Martin, Archie – H  
 , Abbie – W  
 , Odell – D  
 , Adell – D  
 , Eldon -- S

**215 (O) – Henry, Robert M. – H**  
**, Maxie – W**

**216 (O) – Hardwick, Georgia – H**  
**, Johnnie – D**



**Total rainfall in October was 5.6 inches making 59.4 inches received for the year so far. Normal annual rainfall for our area is 52 inches.**

**We were surprised in mid-November by an early snowfall—just enough to make things pretty. It was strange to see snow on the ground and green leaves on some of the trees.**