

THE SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

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*****<http://sandyland.nevada.ar.us/>*****

TO THOSE WHO RECEIVE PRINTED COPIES

A few readers have problems with their eyesight and have trouble reading the smaller print. If you would like your copy to be printed with this size print, let me know. --Jerry

COMING TO AMERICA

This country is a nation of immigrants. Our ancestors at some point made the decision to leave the country where they resided for whatever reason and seek their fortunes in the New World. I'm sure they heard of the opportunities in America by word of mouth or maybe from some sort of advertisement urging people to relocate to America.

All Americans should have at least some interest in how their family managed to end up in America. Some don't have any idea where their ancestors came from and some are interested but not willing to put much effort into finding out the details. It does take a lot of time, money, and research, but the rewards are great and much satisfaction is gained by having a better idea of how it all happened.

I found the following paragraph on the Internet which has a good description of what a trip to America might have been like for our ancestors.

"Everyone that arrived on this continent from overseas had to come by ship. They had to endure five to six weeks on-board a sailing ship. These ships were not large and were primarily designed to fight wars or to transport goods from one place to another... When the migrations from Ireland started in 1714, vessels of all kinds were pressed into service for carrying passengers. Often times, 300 people were packed into a ship and assigned tiny cots lined up side by side to make maximum use of space. Extra floors were often installed so that more cots and hammocks could be set up to handle more people. The head room that resulted was barely enough to allow one to creep in a stooped position to an assigned cot. Men, women, and children were all crammed together. Exercise room was very limited. Food was eaten "in place" with no dining rooms available. Food after the first week was moldy and sour. Water became foul and undrinkable. Disease was all too often present with disastrous results. Death at sea was a common occurrence—as was childbirth. People dying at sea were just thrown overboard because there was no way to preserve bodies long enough to reach shore. One considering a sea journey had to look beyond just the comfort aspects of the trip – there was a very real chance that one would not arrive at all. Storms were an all too often occurrence as there was no way to predict the weather. Ships were often blown off course to arrive

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weeks late and to be forced into ports far from the original destination. Pirates were very common, operating without hindrance off the American coast.”

Source: http://www.doak.ws/the_voyage_to_america.htm

My Family's Story

The South Carolina Assembly had passed an act in 1761 to encourage settlers to come to the colony. The colonial government would pay four pounds sterling for the passage of every Protestant brought to South Carolina from Europe. The measure was a benefit to ship owners who received the bounty for the passengers they carried in their ships. This opportunity was evidently advertised in Europe and many people, for whatever reason, decided to take advantage of it. It was probably similar to the old saying “the grass is greener on the other side of the fence”.

Based on the research of others, I have discovered that my McKelvy ancestors first arrived in America in June, 1767. They had sailed from Belfast, Northern Ireland and landed in Charleston, South Carolina. I can only imagine their apprehension as they first boarded the ship *Nancy* for the long voyage across the Atlantic. Just the thought of being on the high seas with no glimpse of land for several weeks would be enough to make me think twice about undertaking such a trip. But these people were courageous, --or maybe they just didn't see any future staying in Ireland. The decision was made to go, the good-byes were said, the ship left the port, and there was no turning back.

There were eight members of the McKelvy family that survived that voyage to America—James and Margaret McKelvy and their six children—James (16), Alexander (15), William (14), Jane (8), John (5), and Hugh (2). The reason we know this is because the passenger records have been preserved which list the passengers and their ages. Not every family is lucky enough to find this information. Some passenger records were lost for one reason or the other.

It is said the ship *Nancy* was rated at 80 tons and therefore could reasonably expect to carry 80 adult passengers. However, the owners of the ship falsely reported it as 300 tons and then crammed 300 plus passengers onto the ship for the voyage. It was a sad sight when the ship arrived in Charleston in 1767. Even Henry Laurens of Charleston, who had engaged in the slave trade himself, wrote that he “never saw an instance of Cruelty in ten or twelve Years experience equal to the Cruelty exercised upon those poor Irish.”

The condition of these immigrants was so bad that the people of Charleston were asked to contribute to their relief. The following is part of an advertisement asking people to contribute to help relieve the suffering of those who had just landed in Charleston from the ship *Nancy*:

“On an information of the distress of many unhappy people, just landed out of a ship (the Nancy) from Ireland, we this morning made a visit to them at the Old Barracks, and found a dismal melancholy scene...which consists of 300, almost every one of them confin'd to their beds by a cruel Flux and Fever.”

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“We saw in several rooms two or three corps (corpses) at a time—many dying—some depriv’d of their senses—young children laying intirely naked, whose parents had expired a few days ago, and they themselves reduc’d by sickness, to a situation beyond any description.”

“Any person who would (con)descend to visit these poor people, in this their dreadful affliction, will find them to be such real objects as deserve immediately to have their sorrows sooth’d.”

Some of the passengers had signed a petition against Captain Hannah for his treatment of them on the voyage. They made it known that *“they had received very cruel usage from the said Captain Hannah during their passage and had also been pinched in their provisions.”*

The petition mentioned the *“unsufferable bad behavior of the said Hannah who after getting these poor souls on saltwater, not only nipped them of the provisions allowed them, but heaped them one upon the other to such degree in their berths that is must be absolutely impossible they could survive as appears by the mortality which rages amongst them to this day.”*

One particular incident mentioned involved a man named Peacock. *“This Peacock on some complaint being made on him which seems was of no consequence, was hauled upon deck by the mate and tyed up to the shrouds where he received a dozen lashes upon his bare back and the man was at the same time in a melancholy condition, having buried some of his children a little time before in the passage and not contented with the aforesaid cruelty, they afterwards made him ast to the ring bolts of the deck and there kept him till twelve at night it being about nine.”*

From the Council Journal—Page 204:

“Upon crossing the Tropic Line, it is customary to make strangers pay their Bottle and this Peacock being called upon was ordered to pay his, whereupon he answered and said he had not a penny, but they insisted on the matter, the poor man told them he had nothing to pay for the Bottle, and therefore brought his wife’s smock and offered it in pawn, which they refused and upon that footing, made a rope fast to him and let him drop from the yard arm into the sea three times a very melancholy spectacle to behold and the third time was almost intirely lost by reason of the tackles getting foul, that nobody expected his life being so long under water.”

After reading this description of how my ancestors were treated on the voyage to America, I have a greater appreciation of them. No doubt many other families suffered similar atrocities on their trip to America.

There is much more in the proceedings of the Council concerning the treatment of the passengers on Captain Hannah’s ship. Best I can tell from reading through it, it looks like the passengers were asking the owners of the ship *Nancy* to compensate them for the terrible treatment they received on the voyage. It was

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argued that other ships bringing in immigrants suffered even greater mortality than the *Nancy*, and therefore the owners were not required to pay damages to the passengers. In other words, they had contracted to bring the immigrants to America and had fulfilled their contract. After more discussion on the subject, the committee did deny payment to the ship owners, citing the expenses for the relief of the passengers and the expense of providing 76 coffins for those who died.

In the Belfast News-Letter of August 28, 1767 is this item: "*Charleston, June 2nd—A number of Irish settlers lately arrived here, being sickly, a subscription was opened for their relief, when nearly s200 sterling was almost immediately raised.*"

Although Captain Hannah was accused of mistreating his passengers on this voyage and even raping some of the women, he sailed again from Belfast on the *Nancy* for Philadelphia and Newcastle May 14, 1768, according to the newspaper.

All I can conclude from all this is that evidently many of the early settlers to America were subjected to all sorts of inhumane treatment. It was a money-making business for the ship owners. You can imagine what it would be like spending several weeks on a sailing ship with 300 or more men, women, and children on a ship designed to carry only about 80 adults and going to an unfamiliar land, knowing that they would probably never again see their homeland. Their only hope was that America would be a place to start anew and maybe have a more prosperous life for them and their children. I'm sure there were times when they wondered if they would ever make it to South Carolina. I wonder what would have happened to the children if James and Margaret McKelvy had died on the voyage?

Chances are your early ancestors had similar experiences on their trip to America. There may be no written record that tells of their hardships. You may not even be able to find what seaport your ancestors arrived at or what ship they sailed on. But who knows—one of these days someone may find some long lost record from which you may learn many interesting things. This is what makes it interesting.

The McKelvy family researchers are now faced with the challenge of tracing the different branches of the McKelvy family from that landing in South Carolina in 1767 as they migrated across this country. It gives some satisfaction in knowing that my branch went from Laurens Co., South Carolina, then to Coweta Co., Georgia for a few years, and then on to Ouachita Co., Arkansas in 1859. About 240 years have passed since that voyage to America. That means there are a lot of cousins still waiting to be discovered and lots of interesting facts to learn. The search goes on.

A KING RUNS FOR CONGRESS (from the June 24, 1932 issue of *The Camden News*)

When a congressman thinks he's King, it is not news, but when a real, honest-to-goodness "member of royalty—a monarch" runs for Congress—it's different.

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That is the situation here in the seventh district of Arkansas, for the king of the Bagos, a tribe in the Phillipines, is a candidate for that office.

The king candidate who has a “perpetual salary of \$1.25 a month” is none other than lawyer Wade Kitchens, an Arkansas lawyer from Magnolia, who tells many interesting tales.

Kitchens propped his feet on the desk in his office and began. “Yes sir,” he said, “I’m a dad-burned king. King of the Bagos is my title. I regret, however, they never gave me a crown. It would have been kind of sporty. I could have had my picture taken when I reigned in that bamboo palace.”

“It all began like this. I practiced law from 1903 to 1909 at Lingayan, Province of Pangasonan, Island of Luzon, Phillipines. I was sitting in my office when a troupe of dark-skinned natives filed in. I guess I said “How!” as they filled the room.

“The chief began by telling of how his tribe had worked 10 and a half years building a canal to irrigate their lands and how a group of Caciquea (land sharks in America) hired American and Filipino lawyers to enjoin them from diverting the water. An injunction was issued. It became final and there could be no appeal.

“The king said because of this they could raise no crops. He asked for help and the American commissioner said he could do nothing.

“Finally I went to the ‘Land of the Bagos’. They had a royal welcome—killed the fatted calf and such. I knew as far as the law went I could do nothing. So I took the tribe with me to where the water had been stopped.

“There we tore up the dam. Again water flowed through their fields. Well, the Caciques became angry. They went to court. We did too, but it was on a contempt charge.

“When the judge heard of the pitiful condition of the tribe and the real facts in the case, he dismissed us.

“Again I went back to the Bagos. They held another feast.” And, as Kitchens related, he was elected king. The Magnolia lawyer was given a bamboo palace (a grass covered hut), all the servants he needed, food, and above all, a perpetual salary of \$1.25 per month.

“In 1909 I got tired of being King,” the Arkansawyer said. “I left and returned home. If my Babos pals could write, I’m sure I’d hear from them.”

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MYSTERIOUS GRAVE FOUND NEAR HAMPTON (from the 2-24-1937 issue of *The Camden News*)

The remains of 21 people were discovered by J. R. Hall, a farmer who lives about 15 miles from Hampton, while plowing up an old orchard. He found 21 skulls, hands, feet, and arm and leg bones, but no ribs or backbones. The grave was 3 to 18 feet deep and about four feet square. It appeared that the bodies may have been cut up before burial. Some of the jaw bones were disconnected from the skull.

Historic authorities were notified about the grave in hopes that they might determine if the bones were from white people or Indians.

The area had been settled about 75 years earlier and nobody could recall a mass murder or any Civil War engagement in that area.

Indian bones had been discovered near Hampton several years earlier and a story had been written about that discovery. It appeared that the Indians buried there were from seven to eight feet tall.



One day as I was driving the rural roads of southern Ouachita County, I came upon a road blocked by a metal gate. On top of the gate was this artistic re-creation of a road runner made from railroad spikes. I had my camera with me and couldn't resist taking a picture.

A few months later, I decided to send the picture to *Country* magazine and was surprised when they published it in the April/May, 1995 issue. They even mailed me an extra copy of the magazine.

I don't know who created this interesting replica of a road runner, but if you know who it is, let him know that his work was seen and admired by thousands of subscribers to that magazine.

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CALHOUN COUNTY WOMAN DROWNS HER FIVE CHILDREN (from the 4-21-1881 issue of *The Columbia Banner*)

Mrs. Nutt of Calhoun County threw her five children in a well and drowned them last Saturday. Her husband and oldest son plowed until noon, when Mr. Nutt went to town and told his son to rest the balance of the day. After he had gone, his wife took the five children and threw them in the well.

The boy who was 11 years old tried to get away, but his mother pursued and caught him. After throwing them all in, she went to drown herself, and found the boy was not dead having his head above the water. She shoved him down and held him under until he was dead and then came out of the well deciding the water was not deep enough to drown herself.

When Mr. Nutt returned from town, she met him at the gate, shook his hand, and told him what she had done, adding that in sending the souls of her children to Heaven, she had doomed her own to hell.

A more horrible tragedy than this cannot be imagined.

A TONGUE TWISTER FROM A 1922 NEWSPAPER

A tree toad loved a she toad
That lived up in a tree;
She was a three-toed tree toad,
But a two-toed tree toad was he.

The two-toed tree toad tried to win
The she-toad's friendly nod;
For the two-toed tree toad loved the ground
That the three-toed tree toad trod.

But vainly the two-toed tree toad tried,
He couldn't please her whim;
In the tree toad bower;
With her three-toed power,
The she-toad vetoed him.

The Nevada News (May, 1909)

A crowd of 800 gathered at Piney Grove Cemetery for the unveiling of the Woodmen of the World grave marker of G. W. House. An interesting program of speeches, songs, and other features was rendered.

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Mrs. Bernadine Walker Gillespie of Oklahoma sent me the following recipe. She says she was at a singing in Bluff City one time when a meal was served and she thought this was one of the best pies she had ever tasted. She found that Wilma Starnes Knight had made it and got the recipe from her. She asked that I publish it in honor of Wilma Knight who passed away in 1990.

MILLION DOLLAR PIE

2 Graham cracker pie crusts
1 can Eagle Brand milk
¼ cup lemon juice (fresh or bottled)
1 small can crushed pineapple (drained)
1 8 oz. tub whipped topping

Bake Graham cracker crusts as directed and let cool.

Mix thoroughly 1 can Eagle Brand milk with ¼ cup lemon juice. Stir in drained crushed pineapple. Fold in gently the tub of whipped topping. Be sure this is all mixed well. Pour into two crusts and refrigerate until ready to serve. They can be frozen.

FRUIT SALAD

1 can chunk pineapple (drained)
1 banana, sliced
1 1/2 cups halved green seedless grapes
1 can mandarin oranges (drained)
2 cups strawberries, halved
1 pkg. instant vanilla pudding

Drain pineapple and mandarin oranges. Reserve liquid in small bowl. In a large bowl combine fruits. Sprinkle pudding into reserved liquid and mix until combined and slightly thickened. Fold into fruit until well combined. Garnish with Granola or nuts if desired.

Sandra Helsel Crist Genrich of Arizona