

Jerry McKelvy's  
**SANDYLAND CHRONICLE**

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### THE OLD PLACE

This is a sketch of my grandparent's house in the Goose Ankle community near Bluff City. We have several pictures which show a portion of the house, but this sketch is the only photo we have that shows the whole house. It was drawn in 1967 by a friend of my first cousin who happened to have some artistic talent.

I don't know when the house was constructed, but I assume it was built about the time my grandparents married which was in 1908.

I have many memories from my visits with my grandparents when I was growing up. There was a porch swing on the front porch which was common in those days. There was an open hallway through the center of the house sometimes called a "dog-trot". This was usually a cool place in the summertime. A large front room to the left of the hallway was more or less a "guest bedroom" and was rarely used after the kids were grown. There was an old Victrola record player in this room which I enjoyed playing with as a kid. It was a tall cabinet model with storage space underneath for the records. A crank on the side was used to make the turntable spin the old 78 rpm records. The needles were about an inch long and were placed in the head of the arm which could be gently folded down to the spinning record. The record collection included such titles as "Birmingham Jail", "The Roving Gambler", "The Death of Floyd Collins", and "Little Mary Phagan".

Children sometimes do destructive things for fun. We soon discovered that we could make a substitute needle by holding a broom straw in our mouth with the other end against the spinning record while at the same time plugging our ears with our fingers and we could hear the music. I'm sure this wasn't very good for the records, but we figured the old record player was not being used much anymore and nobody would care. Of course, we didn't get permission to

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do this.

Another small room on the same side of the hallway was used to store seeds for planting, canning jars, and other assorted objects.

The front living room was on the right side of the hallway. In this room was the fireplace, chairs and couch. I don't think my grandparents ever had a television set in this house, but did have a radio in the living room. In later years a bed was also put in the living room probably to be closer to the heat on cold winter nights. The walls were covered with wallpaper and the rooms had high ceilings like many old houses which helped keep the rooms cool in the summertime. Light bulbs hung from long cords from the ceiling. An old time clock that chimed on the hour was located in a prominent place in the living room.

In his later years, my grandfather liked to lie on the living room floor using a straight-back wooden chair turned over with the back of the chair used as a back rest. He smoked a pipe with a crooked stem and carried his tobacco in small tobacco sacks with a draw string which he kept in a pocket in the bib of his overalls.

Further back was another large bedroom with a door opening to the hallway. My grandmother grew up during hard times and kept just about everything such as balls of string, jars of buttons, and anything else she thought might come in handy someday. The closet in this room was full of all sorts of useful things besides clothing.

At the back of the house was the kitchen with a door opening to the hallway. There was a wood cook stove in the kitchen, a large dining table, a pie safe, and wall cabinets. My grandmother had perfected her cooking techniques on the old wood cook stove, knowing just how to keep the fire going just like she wanted. Many good country meals were prepared the old fashioned way on this old wood cook stove. A refrigerator was added after the area got electricity in the late 1940s. Soon a butane cook stove replaced the old wood cook stove. Things were gradually getting more modern. Grandma didn't live long enough to see a microwave oven, but I think she would have been a bit suspicious of something that cooked with no visible flame.

Although it is not shown in the picture, there was a water well near the back of the house. Another well was across the road in front of the house mainly used for washing clothes and as a back-up well in case the main well went dry.

There were the usual out-buildings found on a farm. A smoke house was at the rear of the house where meat was smoked in the early days and was later used more for storage. An outdoor toilet was out back a good distance from the house. Across the road and a short distance down the road in front of the house was a barn with a loft for hay. Another building closer to the road had small cribs, stalls, etc. and also had a hallway where my grandfather parked his old pickup truck. A workshop nearby contained a forge used for heating metal to make things and tools to repair farm equipment.

Another building on the same side of the road as the main house was used for storing

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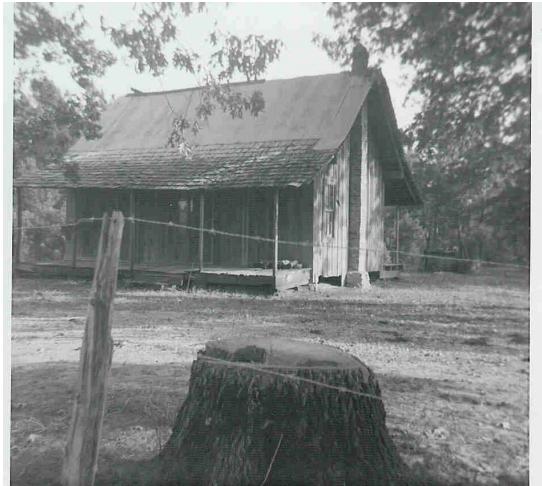
potatoes. My grandfather at one time grew sweet potatoes and these were cured and stored in this building. An orchard was in the same area with several peach and apple trees which furnished fresh fruit for the family as well as for canning.

My grandfather also had a sorghum mill near the main house where he made homemade sorghum syrup. Sorghum was a major crop grown in this area before about 1945. I never got involved in the sorghum growing business very much, but I know it involved a lot of hard work to cut the cane, transport it to the mill, and cook it into syrup. I do remember chewing on some of the sweet sorghum stalks brought in to be cooked into syrup.

The yard around the main house was pretty much bare of any grass. The soil had a lot of clay and with chickens running loose; grass didn't have much chance of getting a start. I can remember my grandmother sweeping leaves from her yard with a home-made yard broom which was just a bunch of small bushes of just the right size tied together.

A row of large sand rocks was used as a border along the gravel road in front of the house. Scattered flowers were found in the yard along with a pomegranate bush. We still have some of these bushes which were rooted from Grandma's old pomegranate bush.

I faintly remember Mr. Cross, the peddler from Rosston, coming by my grandparent's house on his rounds. It was always a thrill to see him coming with his truck loaded with basic things needed by farm families. There was always a chance I might get some candy if I had been good.



Down the road about a quarter mile from the main house was a smaller house on my grandparent's property that we always called "the little house". It was also nick-named "the weaning house" because it served as the first home to some of the kids after they married. Over the years several different families lived in this small house. Some families in those days moved around a lot, renting a place wherever they could find an empty house. The weaning house was on my father's part of the place when it was divided up. He finally tore the house down and used the lumber to build a barn.

The county road that passed by my grandparent's place is still passable, although it is only graded about once per year. It is mainly used these days by hunters and as a way to access timber land.

I have tried the last few years to learn as much as I can about this part of Nevada County since it was my family's home. The Goose Ankle community was a close-knit community of good people who first settled there sometime around 1850. The formal name of the place was Rocky Hill, but all the local folks called it Goose Ankle. How that name was chosen remains a mystery. I did find an item in the county newspaper written in 1908 in which the writer said he

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had always heard it called by that name during his lifetime.

Many families who lived in this community had already moved away or passed on before I was born. The names I am most familiar with are the McKelvys, the Irvins, the Johnsons, the Dunns, the Nelsons, the Odells, the Plylers, the Parkers, and the Sarretts. It all depends on where you draw the line between the Goose Ankle community and the neighboring community of Gum Grove.

The school was located at Gum Grove until 1929 when it was consolidated with Bluff City. It was the typical wooden school house for that time with an enrollment of about 70 students. The children from the surrounding countryside all walked to school. Gum Grove was a little over one mile from my grandparent's house. The school term was arranged into summer and winter terms so the kids would be available to help with the farm work at certain times. The length of the term also depended on how much money was available to support the school.

The church that served the community was the Rocky Hill Methodist church, appropriately named because of the large rocks in that area. The land for the church was donated by my great grandfather, Alexander Fletcher McKelvy in 1907. This church served the community for many years, but by the 1970s, the population had declined so much that it could no longer support the church. The building stood vacant for several years, finally being demolished in 2009.

The main activities in the early days involved farming or working with timber. Small saw mills called "ground-hog mills" were used to harvest the good logs growing in that area. I recently found a reference from 1917 about the Smoky Valley Milling Co. located at Goose Ankle, a name I had never heard before. It was probably one of those small saw mills that existed for only a short time. The newspaper reported that J. B. Parker was to be the "sawdust monkey" and my grandfather was to be a "general flunkey". The Reader Railroad was constructed through the area about 1920 which provided a way to transport the timber products to larger markets. I'm sure the sound of the whistle from the steam train made the residents of Goose Ankle feel they were more connected with the outside world. Many of the local men helped with the construction of the railroad through the Caney Creek bottoms.

The women mostly worked at home in the old days while the men usually worked in the fields or at a saw mill. The community had a church, a school, and a few small country stores at various times. I have found references about small stores at Goose Ankle operated by the Irvins, the Halls, and the Plylers. These little stores only carried basic necessities or maybe sold gasoline after the automobile came on the scene. People still had to make occasional trips to larger towns like Prescott or Bluff City, but these trips were only made when necessary to get supplies not available locally. Prescott was about 18 miles from my grandparent's house and a trip by wagon to Prescott and back was an all day affair.

I can only imagine what it was like living at Goose Ankle about a hundred years ago when my grandparents married. I wish I had asked my grandparents a lot more questions when they were living, but I was busy at that time being a kid. I am thankful for the memories I do have and have learned to appreciate the hard work my family and others did to raise their families in such a rural area. I think they did a good job considering the hardships they faced.

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**Photo of  
The McKelvy Family**

**James Columbus "Gee" McKelvy and Katie May Kirk McKelvy with their three children —Myrtie, Lee Roy, and Ruel (my father)**

**Date of Photo—About 1917**

My grandparents were already in their sixties when I was about eight years old. They had slowed down some from the hard work of their earlier days, so I don't remember too much about seeing them at work. I know they worked hard raising their family. They didn't have all the modern labor saving devices. Grandpa plowed with horses for long hours and used a horse-drawn corn stalk cutter and a horse-drawn mowing machine and hay rake. Hay was hauled in loose using pitchforks. Grandma put up vegetables for the family, cooked the meals, made quilts and clothes,

milked the cows, helped butcher the hogs, and anything else she could do to help.

When the children all married and had families of their own, my grandparents continued to live in the old home. Grandpa had an old truck, so they could get out when necessary. They continued to raise a garden. They still had a few neighbors around in the 1950s. The mail carrier brought their mail each day and the country peddler stopped by about once per week. They had no telephone or television, but did have a radio, electricity, and butane gas. The church was still active at that time, although the number of members was declining.



Gee & Mae McKelvy 1959

Christmas each year was a time when the family all gathered at my grandparent's house and enjoyed exchanging gifts, eating some good country cooking, and visiting. I got to visit more often than my cousins since we lived only a few miles away.

Because of illness, my grandparents spent some of their later years with their children. The old house which had been the center of their lives for so many years was now empty much of the time. Grandpa died in 1959 shortly after this picture was made and Grandma in 1963. The place was divided after their deaths with my uncle getting the old house with his part of the land. He later sold his part of the place to H. W. Ward who used the old house as a hunting camp. The house was destroyed by fire in the mid-1970s which was believed to have been caused by arson. The deer club has constructed another building in the same

location and is still active today.

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The Goose Ankle community has taken its place in history now. Most of the farm fields are now forests. All that identifies the old home places now are a few old shade trees, some annual flowers that have survived, or maybe an old water well. The Rocky Hill Methodist church is now gone. The few buildings that still stand are used mainly for hunting camps and only a few people still live in the area known as Goose Ankle, a community that once had its own local news column in the county newspapers.

I now own part of the original home place where my grandparents lived. I am part of the fourth generation of McKelvys to own this land which has been in our family for 140 years. We just call it “the old place”.

When I drive down the narrow county road past the hunting camp located at the former location of my grandparent’s home, I recall the memories of those days about sixty years ago when the old house was still standing. My grandmother might be resting in the porch swing or maybe practicing a new song she found in her hymn book. Grandpa might be taking an afternoon nap or be busy with some small chore that needed doing around the place. Time marches on, but sometimes leaves pleasant memories

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**Baseball Team from Prescott**

The initials on the shirts (T. A. H. S.) stands for Tom Allen High School. The date of the picture would be sometime around 1908-1912. Thanks to David Cummins for the photo. Let me know if you can identify any of these people. David says his father is in the top row, second from the left.

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## SEARCHING

Since 1997, my wife and I have canvassed 102 cemeteries in Nevada County. Some of these are old family plots and some are just a single grave found deep in the woods. Our goal is to locate and document all known burial places in Nevada County. Our cemetery surveys are all online at the depot museum web site. You can do a search for a particular name or call up the complete record for a particular cemetery. The web site address is:  
<http://depotmuseum.org/>

If you know of a grave marker or burial place off the beaten path, please let me know so that we can try and get it included in our records. I'm sure there are some we haven't found. If you own land containing a burial place, please see that it is protected and documented. If you sell the land, make sure the next owner knows that a cemetery is located on the property. Many of these type graves are forever lost due to logging activities. I don't think any reputable logger would intentionally destroy a grave marker, but it sometimes happens if they are not aware of the existence of a burial place.

Here is our latest find. This child's grave was found in the woods off Cale Rd. near Prescott. Thanks to Ronnie Vandiver for showing me this grave marker. There was no evidence of any other graves near this marker.



MARTIN A.  
Son of  
J. & L. J. BSHEARS  
Died  
Jan. 3, 1860  
Aged  
7 Ms & 29 Ds

"Suffer little children to  
Come unto me"

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## DR. T. W. McDANIEL

Duane McDaniel contributed this story about his grandfather, Dr. T. W. McDaniel of Boughton in Nevada County. Boughton is located about four or five miles north of Prescott on the railroad. The photo below is on file at the Nevada County Depot and Museum.



Dr. Thomas William McDaniel, Sr., my grandfather, was a brilliant man of few words. When he spoke, though, one listened. Never did I hear him raise his voice.

He was invited to practice at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, which was and is the premier hospital in the United States, if not the world. This did not transpire inasmuch as Lizzie, his wife did not want to leave Boughton and home.

He treated most of the folks in and around Nevada County and delivered hundreds of babies, both black and white, for it made no difference to him. Doctor lived a modest life and was often never paid for his services. Sometimes an occasional chicken or a mess of beans, greens or some other garden vegetables, but he never complained, rather, he made as if those gifts were more than ample payment.

Doctor Mac, as he was generally called by his patients, was a devout Christian and a deacon of the Boughton church, where he always sang in the choir. He had a deep bass voice that was quite melodious. Each day after lunch he would read for about an hour from the Bible and his Bible was underscored and frazzled with constant use.

To help make ends meet, he was postmaster of the village and one of my favorite memories was when I could go with him to hang the out-going mail and collect the in-coming mail that they threw off the mail train as it went whizzing by.

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He planted and tended a large garden, which was fertilized by the manure from the cows that Lizzie, his wife, always milked. Those were the best beans, peas, corn, and tomatoes I ever ate, and I ate plenty. He also grew some of the hottest peppers I ever tried to eat, but he loved them.

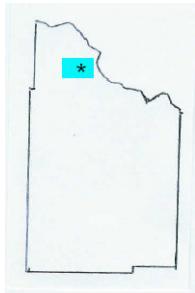
One night he was awakened by a knock on the screen door. Thinking some lady he was tending was about to deliver, he answered the knock. To his great surprise, a large caliber "hog-leg" was stuck in his belly and the man holding it said "Come with me!" Doctor said he would have to saddle his horse, but the man told him it was already saddled. After getting his black medical bag, they left. He was blind-folded and they went deep into the Little Missouri bottoms. Upon arrival, he noticed three other men, one of which was fairly shot up. He ministered to the wounded man and saved his life. Evidently their exploits had not been very fruitful, for they had little or no money. In gratitude, they gave him a stiff-back knife which had a small deer foot handle. Some said it was a remnant of the Dalton Gang. Unfortunately the knife was subsequently lost by a grandson playing in the woods.

Doctor and Lizzie had two sons: Thomas W. McDaniel, Jr. and Richard Elijah "Ted" McDaniel and four grandchildren--India Elizabeth, Duane M., Ted and Margie.

Doctor contracted cancer and after a valiant fight, went to meet Christ in 1949.

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### LOCAL NEWS ITEMS FROM BOUGHTON



Sept., 1885—Messrs. J. M. Price and company have increased the size of their storehouse.

Dec., 1885—Barham Bros. have put in a shingle machine in connection with their gin which is running at full capacity.

June, 1886—Messrs. Barham and Brainerd have greatly improved their mill facilities and are doing good work in the lumber business.

March, 1887—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.

1907---E. DeLaughter is the postmaster. The school is one of the best in the county and the two churches in the immediate vicinity afford ample places of worship. Drs. T. W. McDaniel and Dr. J. E. Cox look after the health of the community.

July, 1910—The new school at Boughton is nearing completion. Miss Hattie May Blake is one of the teachers

Jan., 1918—The Boughton school burns

March, 1919—DeLaughter Mercantile Co. of Boughton was burglarized

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Jan., 1932—The Boughton Colored School is mentioned with E. D. Douglas as principal and L. N. Lancaster, assistant.

### Comments from readers:

#### Re: Nicknames

I have a dear, dear male cousin who grew up in Hempstead Cty, Hope, AR all his life. (Our folks are from Nevada, Cty.) He now resides in Old Washington, AR in a lovely log house. We would come to visit to [Guernsey](#) in the summers from Hot Spring Cty, Malvern always on the 4th of July. My cousin Bill G. is my precious "Y.D." I have called him "Y.D." for YEARS. The story goes that I had asked him to do some favor for me, (we were about 5 and 10 years old). I promised him a YANKEE DIME if he would do whatever the favor was. (I don't remember.) Being the younger, less experienced of the band of cousins running barefoot through the summer, all he could see was an ice cream cone or Sugar Daddy purchased with that Yankee DIME. When the jig was up and time for payment, I gave him a big ole' watermelon-wet, juicy kiss right on the cheek. I'll never forget the look on his little face. "Where's my dime, he squalled." That's the kind that Yankees give, I assured him. "Yeah, but we're not Yankees!!!!" Don't know the origin of that term, but as a child I had heard some adult conversation somewhere, for sure. Used it to my advantage, but Cousin Bill was never "taken in" by me again!!! My "Y. D." (Y.-ankee D.-ime) is one of my most revered relatives and we faithfully share homemade bread and deer jerky through the winter. I still laugh about it. He never did think it was funny!

Dr. Annette B. Lemons (Cornelius)  
Branson, MO

*It's been a long time since I heard the term "Yankee Dime". One definition I found on the Internet is: A quick, innocent kiss. A peck. A child-like term used by/for children in the Southern United States. (More common in countryside-raised, 'older' southern families)*

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L. K. writes---My husband had a classmate with the nickname of Gink. Don't know where that came from but she still is called that to this day.

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*The 1948 yearbook for Bluff City School printed the nicknames of the students next to their school pictures—Coot, Hen, Buckie, Stroke, Shorty, Doodle, Slim, Sugar, Pill, Teen, Bully, Duck, Boone, Red, Midget, Bett, Robin, Jaybird, Goat, Collard, Rabbit, Pee Wee, Skunk, Cotton, Squirt, Turkey, Jesse James, Biscuit, Trout, Boots, Bozy, Buster, Chip, and Mud.*

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#### Re: Article about the 2010 census in last issue

C. W. writes---Too many people have had it too good for too long and are spoiled, reference trash. We need to decrease the population more. Do you have any land? If so, start some co-op farms. The only problem with the world is PEOPLE !!!