



Jerry McKeivly's

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

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sandman43@att.net

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THE OLD PARKER PECAN ORCHARD

I think every home place ought to have two or three pecan trees. Pecans are one of my favorite nuts to eat and are used in many recipes. There's nothing much better than a perfectly baked pecan pie. The problem with pecan trees is they take a long time to grow. You need to plant one when you are young so you can be assured of having pecans to pick up during your retirement years.

I'm sure you could probably buy pecans cheaper than trying to grow your own, but it is nice to be able to harvest pecans from your own trees. Of course, most of the time, you have to share them with the squirrels or crows.

My parents purchased forty acres of land in 1970 from J. D. and Mae Parker Norman. This tract of land joined my dad's portion of my grandpa's old place in the Goose Ankle community in Nevada County. The land once belonged to Mrs. Norman's parents, James and Mary Parker. Anyway, on these forty acres is the old Parker pecan orchard. I suppose Mr. Parker planted this pecan orchard and I'm sure it was an enjoyment to them for many years.

When we purchased the land, the orchard had been neglected for years and was overgrown with timber and brush. My dad raised cattle and wanted the nice bottom land for pasture land for the cows, so one of our first jobs was clearing the brush from the flat land he wanted to convert to a pasture. Many hours were spent by the whole family piling and burning brush using our tractor equipped with a front-end loader. We decided to leave the old pecan trees since the cows could graze under them. The photo above shows what it looked like when we were finished.

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I don't know how old these pecan trees are but they have to be pretty old. Mr. Parker died in 1936 and the trees were mature when we got the land in 1970. I would guess they are close to 100 years old but I could be wrong. There were 47 pecan trees when we first cleared the land, but some have died since then. These trees produce what are called "native pecans". That means they are small and very hard to crack, but they taste better than most of the newer varieties of pecans.

Our trees didn't produce well every year. Some years there were no pecans at all, but sometimes there would be plenty for our use and enough to feed all the critters that lived near the orchard. We spent many enjoyable hours there picking up pecans. We even purchased one of those handy pecan picker-uppers to keep from having to bend over.

My father passed away in 1986 and soon afterwards we sold the cows and you guessed it--the pecan orchard was allowed to grow up in brush once again. I've wished many times that I had kept it bush-hogged. Now you can hardly find the pecan trees among the younger pine and hardwood trees that have overgrown the orchard. And of course, the pecan trees quit bearing because they do better in open areas. Some of the smaller ones have died from being choked out by the encroaching forest.

The farm at Goose Ankle was divided up again and my portion includes the old Parker pecan orchard. I had no interest in raising cattle, so the orchard went back to nature in a hurry. In just a few years, the pecan orchard was completely overgrown once again.

A few weeks ago, I drove through the old orchard; mentally kicking myself for letting it go back to forest after all the hard work we did in the old days to clear the land. I decided to clear the brush once again from under some of the best looking pecan trees, so I got my chain saw and went to work. I even cut down many small pine trees almost big enough to make pulpwood. I used the tractor to pile the trees I had cut so that I could keep the area under the trees bush-hogged. I don't expect the trees to bear many pecans, but I mainly did it for sentimental reasons. Anyway, I now have reclaimed seventeen of Mr. Parker's old pecan trees and if the Lord sees fit, maybe someday I'll be able to harvest a few pecans from them.

SLEEPING IN CHURCH

The Nevada News

May 21, 1914

Those who have a habit of sleeping through the minister's sermon should thank their stars that they were not living in England 300 years ago, for they would have been rapped over the head every time they dozed by men especially appointed to the task of keeping the congregation awake.

For instance, in one parish in Shropshire, 25 shillings a year was paid to a poor man to go about the church during the sermon and keep the people awake. He carried a thin, long wand in his hand, which he could conveniently stretch out over considerable space and rap offenders on the head or about the shoulders.

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With women he was always instructed to be gentler, to tap softly, but persistently until the slumber was broken. For women, it was learned, were not so amiable as men on being aroused from a comfortable nap, and, if gentle means were not employed were likely to get up and leave, causing no little commotion about them.

INDIA W. JOHNSON (from the 9-1-1921 issue of *The Nevada News*)

The families of the before-the-war Southern aristocracy are fast passing away. India W. Johnson was one of those noble women who when the need came rose to the aid of their country. She was born in Columbia, Fluvanna County, Virginia, Nov. 18, 1840, in the old stone house which is occupied today by her youngest brother and his family, and died Saturday morning, Sept. 27, 1921.

Raised in the luxury which the times afforded, with slaves to answer every call, considered the most beautiful girl of her county and the neighboring county of Albemarle, many stories have been told the writer of the dashing figure she made as she rode about the neighborhood on a very fine coal black horse, dressed in the beautiful riding habit of the period. This same black horse carried her brother through the war, and on Mrs. Johnson's last visit to her old home 33 years ago, was still living, almost blind, and past any use, but to be a pet for the children. In the third year of the war, she was married to her soldier lover, Daniel W. Johnson, of Albemarle County, Virginia. The next year their oldest daughter, Fannie, was born in the old home. By this time the war had reduced their fortune very much. When the war was over, they left their home with a wagon train of other Virginians and settled in Iowa. They lived there two years. During their residence there, C. V. Johnson was born. The cold of Iowa was too much for the Virginians, so the colony moved by wagon to Arkansas, and settled in Ouachita County, where they made their home until 1882, when they moved to Prescott, where Mr. Johnson engaged in the mercantile business. During their residence in Ouachita County, Hesterly, Phillip, Jack and Ben were born to them. In 1905, they moved to their farm, seven miles east of Prescott on Route 2 where she lived an active and useful life until her fatal illness struck her three weeks ago. After a short but touching funeral service by Dr. John C. Williams, at the home of her son, F. J. Johnson, Sunday afternoon, she was laid to rest at DeAnn Cemetery borne by her grandsons, Watson, White, Bill White, Jack, Cecil, William, and Archie Johnson.



We always called this a "case knife". I don't hear that term much anymore. I would be interested in your thoughts about how it came to be known as a "case knife". Send me your comments for the next issue.

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This appears to be a very old school photo, but I'm not sure which school it was. I was wondering if the hat in the foreground has any significance. It would seem that a professional photographer would have noticed the hat before he took the picture unless there was a reason for it being in the photo. It is right in the center of the photo like it was left there on purpose. One of the young boys in the front row is holding a hat and several of the older boys are wearing hats. Any ideas???

The Saint Paul Globe
St. Paul, MN
July 19, 1903

CAME BACK AFTER 19 YEARS ABSENCE

THE STRANGE FLIGHT OF AN ARKANSAS ENOCH ARDEN

Stephens, Ark., July 18--Nineteen years ago Jesse Dixon lived with his family, a wife and seven children, on his little farm, just three miles south of where Stephens, Ark. now stands, and about a mile from old Smackover Creek. He was well-to-do, had plenty of this world's goods, and a happy family. He was a prominent member of the Methodist church, and the old church house

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is standing yet where he led the choir in singing 1,000 times. Honored and respected, he was a good husband, a loving father, and apparently a good Christian. One bright Sunday morning a little over nineteen years ago, he got up as usual, attended to all the little things necessary about a well-regulated farm, ate breakfast, saddled his mule, and putting four or five ears of corn in his saddle pockets, laid them across his mule, told his wife, who was milking, that he was going down in the creek bottom to feed his hogs (hogs were wild then in the woods), and rode away while the happy wife and children were preparing for the enjoyment of Sunday's rest.

That was the last seen of Dixon for all these long years by any of his family. Night came on, but with it came no husband or father. The neighbors were notified, and a long but vain search began. His brother, Dave Dixon, a very prominent man in this part of the state, having been clerk of Columbia County for 22 years, was appealed to. He left his business and searched for days, but in vain. Had the earth swallowed him up, or had he evaporated in the air, the disappearance of Jesse Dixon would not have been more complete.

The heartbroken wife, worse than widowed, and innocent little children, worse than orphaned, were forced to carry on the battle of life without husband or father. All the children were small and the struggle for bread was begun, to last for many long years, but Mrs. Dixon was comparatively a young woman and full of energy and plenty of brain. She toiled as only a good woman with seven little children to feed and clothe can toil.

Sympathizing neighbors would occasionally lend a helping hand. The children began to grow healthy and strong and soon were able to work. Before long prosperity dawned and the old house was rebuilt and enlarged, acres were added to the farm, new barns were constructed, the sheep and cattle increased, and when the old man, feeble and broken in health, approached the old home he hardly recognized the stately residence that stands in front of the old, but he found the same good wife, who, through all these dark, dreary years has proved faithful to her first love. The little prattling children are now grown to womanhood and manhood.

A curious but interested crowd of old friends were at the depot when Dixon arrived. They were expecting him, as Willie, his favorite son when a child, had gone after him. He recognized many old friends and shook their hands cordially. He has been out in the Western country and has prospered, being worth many thousands of dollars. Why he went away, why he remained so silent, are questions that will probably never be answered. He was taken sick in his Western home, and asked for his son, Willie, and some man out there wrote here to him. While in doubt about it being his father, he went. Dixon was very much surprised at the changes. Where Stephens now stands, he used to hunt wild hogs, deer, and turkey. When he arrived at his old home, the family, one by one, came out to greet him. The names of his children, he had forgotten.

THE BIG FIRE AT HOT SPRINGS IN 1913

Almost every town has had a destructive fire sometime in the past, but in September, 1913, it looked for a time like the whole city of Hot Springs, Arkansas would be consumed by fire. The fire started in a small cabin in the eastern part of the city and spread rapidly due to 40 mile per

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hour winds. Many of the buildings at that time were made from wood and everything was dry from a recent period of dry weather. When it was all over, about sixty blocks of the city had been burned leaving 2500 people homeless.

The local fire department soon realized they needed help to fight the fire and sent an urgent message to Little Rock asking for assistance. Firemen from Little Rock boarded a special train and left for Hot Springs. The wind kept changing directions which made the situation worse. The fire was headed for the famous Bath House Row, a popular spot for tourists. Buildings in the path of the fire were dynamited and this is believed to be all that saved the bath houses and the famous Arlington Hotel.

About 250 citizens were sworn in as guards to assist in keeping order and helping those whose homes had been destroyed. A camp for the homeless was set up in the vicinity of the Oaklawn race track. Residents in the path of the fire lost all their belongings, barely escaping the flames with their lives.

The fire destroyed the Park Hotel, the Princess Hotel, the Moody Hotel, the water and light plant, Ozark Sanitarium, the new high school, Central Methodist church, the Garland Co. court house, and many smaller businesses and homes. The fire played no favorites, destroying the fine homes of the rich as well as the modest shacks of the poor. Since the water and light plant had been destroyed, the entire city was plunged into darkness. People had to drink water from the many cold water springs in the area. Officials predicted it would be thirty days before electricity could be restored to the city.

Governor Hays visited the city soon after the fire and was prepared to declare martial law if needed to keep order. Troops were sent to assist in keeping order. Despite the nature of the fire, there were no deaths reported although some people were injured. Many animals burned to death in the fire. One newspaper headline called it a modern day Sodom and Gomorrah referring to the Bible story of fire and brimstone destroying those cities.

The monetary loss from the fire was estimated to be about \$12 million dollars which was a lot of money in 1913. The area burned was about one and a half miles long and seven to ten blocks wide in the vicinity of Grand Ave., Malvern Ave., and Prospect Ave. Despite the great loss, city officials were happy that the main business district along Central Avenue was spared since this was the location of many of the bath houses and popular with tourists. Conditions slowly returned to normal in the months following the great fire and city officials sent out the word across the country that the city was still in business and invited tourists to visit Hot Springs.

Note: The thermal waters around Hot Springs were first protected by the federal government in 1832 when it was designated the Hot Springs Reservation. It became a national park in 1921 and is the nation's smallest national park. Over 1.2 million people visit the park each year.

RAINFALL RECORD

We received 4.3 inches of rainfall in January at my house. We got a light dusting of snow and a little ice but nothing serious. Rainfall so far in February--2.0 inches

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MORE ABOUT NAMES

In a recent article about names, I mentioned that some people were named for states, counties, or cities. Do a search for “baby names inspired by places” and you will find a long list of such names for both boys and girls. There is a person buried at Ebenezer Cemetery named Tennessee Tunnell and one at Bluff City Cemetery named Nevada Evelyn Grayson Hildebrand. My great grandfather, Jasper Newton Kirk was named that because he was born in a house that sat astride the Jasper-Newton county line in Georgia. Here are two more you may not have heard about.

Camden Marie Theriot

We all remember back in 2005 when Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans and the Gulf Coast area. Many residents were forced to evacuate. Some went to Texas and others headed north looking for a place to stay. Misty and Patrick Theriot and daughter Skylar from Louisiana made their way to Camden, Arkansas and stayed at the Umsted House. While in Camden, they participated in activities at the Methodist Church and said the love from the church and community gave them hope and strength during a difficult time in their lives.

About a year later *The Camden News*, the local newspaper, received a letter from the Theriot family announcing the birth of their daughter born in June, 2006. The letter stated that the family was so touched by the love in the community that they vowed to name their next child after the town. They kept that promise and named the child Camden Marie Theriot. The newspaper printed a portion of their letter in their August 29, 2006 edition.

Blevins William Samuel Stephens Westmoreland

That's quite a name. Blevins was born July 21, 2007 in Cypress, Texas and was named in honor of his maternal great-great-great-great grandfather, Hugh Armstrong Blevins, a native of Kentucky, who fought in the War of 1812 before coming to Hempstead County and settling the town of Blevins about 1835.

Young Blevins has many historical ties to Hempstead and Nevada counties. His paternal great-great grandparents, Jeremiah and Josephine Westmoreland settled along the Cale Rd. in Nevada County shortly after the Civil War and the Westmoreland family is well known in the area. Blevins' great-great-great grandfather, John H. Stephens, survived numerous battles in the Civil War and returned home, married, and raised twelve children. The old Stephens home is now part of the historic homes collection at Old Washington. Blevins' great-great grandmother, the late Irene Stephens Nesbitt, taught school at Blevins for 50 years. His maternal great-great grandfather, Christopher C. Hamby, was a state senator, lieutenant governor, and attorney in Prescott for many years. One of Christopher Hamby's sons was Rudolph P. Hamby who served as mayor of Prescott from 1912-1948.

An article in the August 15, 2007 issue of *The Nevada County Picayune* gives all the details.

Some of you might like this web site about country living on Sunrise Ridge in southwest Missouri-- <http://oldentimes.wordpress.com/>

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It's interesting to learn how towns got their names. Many towns are named after the person who first settled there. Some small communities were named after the storekeeper or the postmaster. Here is what I know about some of the towns in Nevada County (past and present):

Prescott--named for a county surveyor, W. H. Prescott or William Hickling Prescott, a friend of railroad officials

Cale--named for John Cale

Laneburg--named for Anna C. Lane; B. T. Lane had store there

Rosston--named for Henry Ross

Willisville--named for Willis Herring

Emmet--named for a railroad surveyor, an Irishman whose last name was Emmet

Morris--possibly named for W. Ephram Morris but I have no evidence to support this

Theo--named for Theodore Gulley

Irma--named for postmaster's daughter or storekeeper's daughter

Sutton--named for ____ Sutton????

Bluff City--named for its location on a high bluff

Zama--????--I wish I knew

Bodcaw--named for Bodcaw Creek

Falcon--????

Reader--named for Lee Reader who had a sawmill there

Lyda--????

Foss--????--was first called Byrd; James Neal Byrd Sr. had a store there

Boughton--????

Lackland--named for Allen B. Lackland

Glenville--????

Honeville--named after one of the Honeas

Mendenhall--named after Thomas J. Mendenhall

Weaver--Weavers lived there; not sure which one it was named after

Young--named for J. T. Young who had store there

Waterloo--named for T. P. Waters

Dill's Mill--named for J. W. Dill who owned the mill

Serepta Spring--named for a village in Phoenicia in Palestine; spelled Sarepta in the Bible

CONSUMER CORNER



According to many people, this tart cherry juice concentrate is really good for arthritis. Some people take one tablespoon per day straight from the bottle, but it can be mixed with water if you don't like it that strong.

If you can't find the juice, you can buy fresh cherries when they are in season and eat a few each day. The only store I know of that carries this is Kroger and it is found in the refrigerated case.

It is expensive. This quart bottle sells at Kroger for \$16.99. A 78 year-old man was working in the store when I bought this bottle. He said they have trouble keeping it in stock. He said he takes it and gets around like a teen-ager. It is called Fruit Fast Tart Cherry Juice Concentrate.