

Jerry McKelvy's  
**SANDYLAND CHRONICLE**

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### **A WINNING TEAM**



Most of the Prescott students today do not know that Prescott's football team was once known as "The Aggies". Pictured to the left is Coach J. T. "Tate" McGill, probably the most famous coach in Prescott school history. Coach McGill had graduated with honors from the University of Arkansas where he had played football for four years. He was in his second year of coaching at Prescott in 1922.

That was the year Coach McGill and his team put Prescott on the map. Almost everyone was surprised when the Aggies from the little town of Prescott defeated the Little Rock Tigers in a football game

The Little Rock Tigers had not lost a game since 1917 and were feeling invincible when they played Prescott. The Little Rock team had some bad breaks in the first four minutes of the game and Prescott took advantage of their misfortune leaving the Little Rock players wondering what had just happened. The game went downhill from there for the Little Rock Tigers. Coach McGill played the same eleven players for the entire game. The final score was Prescott 22 and Little Rock 14.

A Little Rock sportswriter compared the Prescott team to a pack of "curly wolves" in an article he wrote about the game for the Arkansas Gazette newspaper.

The name Curly Wolves struck a chord with the Prescott folks. Later, the student body of PHS was given the task of choosing a new name for the Prescott team and the name "McGill's Curly Wolves" was the winner. It was later changed to "Prescott Curley Wolves". Early newspapers spelled it "Curly Wolves", but soon the spelling was changed to "Curley Wolves". The team has been known by this name since that time.

The people of Prescott were very proud of their football team and the coach and team members were honored by local businesses. Prescott defeating the largest school in the state had a psychological effect on other teams scheduled to play Prescott. The Prescott team completed the season undefeated.

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Coach McGill resigned as coach at Prescott in 1923 to take a job in the junior college at Beebe, Arkansas. He later returned to Prescott. His wife taught in the grade school at Prescott until about 1940. Their son, Joseph Tate McGill Jr. later served as mayor of Prescott in the 1980s.

## **A SAD POSTSCRIPT TO THIS STORY**

About 1942, the McGills left Arkansas and moved to Leesville, Louisiana where both the coach and his wife were employed at the local post office. In July of 1943, Mr. McGill shot his wife in the head with a pistol and then killed himself. One of his three children, a 16 year-old girl, witnessed the shootings.

Reports were that Mr. McGill had been despondent since the death of their six-year old son while they were living at Beebe. Friends said they saw a marked change in his demeanor after the child's death.

Mr. and Mrs. McGill are buried in Traskwood Cemetery in Saline County, Arkansas.

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## **THE PRESCOTT GOODFELLOWS CLUB (from the February 8, 1917 issue of *The Nevada News*)**

The Prescott Goodfellows Club was organized to provide relief in and near the community of Prescott to people who were in dire need of physical necessities. The club also helped transients stranded in Prescott. Cases were investigated by two club members and help was rendered as far as the merits and funds justified.

The officers of the club were M. L. Moore, president; C. C. Calhoun, R. L. Blakely, and D. L. McRae, finance committee; I. A. Blakely, secretary.

In the month of January, the club had disbursed \$86.23 for clothing, \$3.75 for fuel wood, \$30.17 for groceries, \$3.00 for school books, \$12.48 for railroad tickets and lodging, and \$3.10 for toys. The club had also given out \$50.00 worth of second hand clothing.

The club had \$9.83 on hand at the time the article was printed and was asking for donations.

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## **Rainfall Record**

January – 4.7 inches    February – 6.5 inches    March – 12.7 inches    April – 6.4 inches

May – 1.3 inches    June – 2.3 inches    July – 4.8 inches

August—9.9 inches (through August 23)

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This “Burying Box” was built by Samuel J. Neal at his southwest Arkansas home in Nevada County before his death in 1906. A coffin-maker, Samuel made small chests like this for people to keep their “burying” clothes in so as to be ready for when they died. The box would be kept under the owner’s bed. This one was built for Samuel’s personal use in 1906, and also his wife, Jemima (Adams) Neal, three decades later. This “Neal Burying Box” is now owned by Samuel & Jemima’s Great-Granddaughter, Rose (Adams) Burroughs, of Springfield, Arkansas. The hand belongs to Samuel’s Granddaughter, Joy (Neal) Brown, of Springfield, Missouri. She’s touching something her grandfather touched over 100 years ago!



## THE BURYING BOX



Ken Brown sent me these pictures and the story behind this piece of family history concerning the Neal family who once lived near Bluff City. The picture to the left is Samuel J. Neal’s grave marker at Bluff City Cemetery. Samuel served in Co. B of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Arkansas Infantry in the Civil War.

Have you ever heard of a “burying box” like this?

# SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

## Dad's Safe Journey

*The values I assimilated during those trips remain with me today – economy, courtesy, and love for family.*

by  
[Don Mathis](#)

No matter where Dad was stationed during his 20 years in the Army, we would always visit my grandparents every summer.

In order for him to use the maximum amount of annual leave, Dad would visit headquarters at midnight to sign out.

My four brothers and I would be rustled from sleep for a ride to the office so 'Sergeant Mathis' could leave his signature – and then we would begin miles of night driving.

On the old maps of America, the main highways were marked in red and the back roads in blue. Daddy loved traveling on 'Blue Highways' – and I do too.

Camden, Arkansas, might be 84 miles from Texarkana (just a little ways from Louisiana.) We would sing along the way. If we were living in Killeen or San Antonio, we would have hours of night driving.

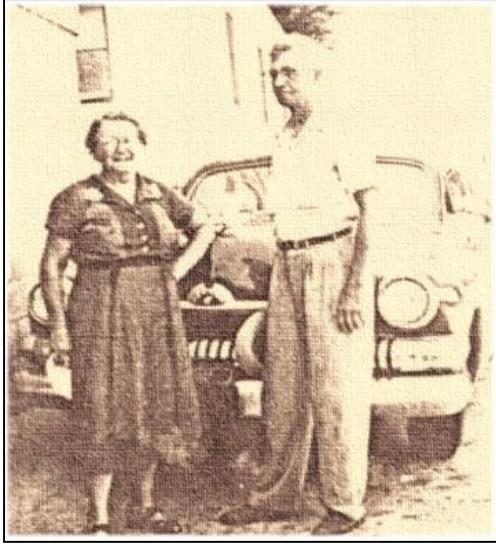
Daddy knew the rules of the road. He would blink his head-lights, letting the big truckers know it was safe to pull back in. Daddy would flash his tail-lights to say, "Thank You," to a farmer who pulled onto the shoulder to let us pass.

The miles would fly by—the air rich with the aroma of coffee from a Thermos. The ember of Dad's Lucky Strike cigarette would glow as brightly as the lights on the dashboard—as luminescent as the dim lights of a distant city.

We kids would doze and dream. And when we awoke, our dreams would become true—as Grandmother and Granddaddy would welcome us with kisses and hugs.

Thank you, Dad, for the safe journey.

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Alice Hearnberger Mathis & Walter Eugene Mathis



Thomas Jefferson Walker & Rose Dumas Walker



Dan Mathis & Family –(from top left) –Matthew, Daniel, Bernadine, Don, Jeff; (bottom left)—Benny, Ted

## LOCAL NEWS TIDBITS FROM 1892

(from the Nevada County Picayune)

Laneburg Leaflets (1-7-1892)

To say the Carouse levee is bad now is putting it too light. The English language, as far as my knowledge of it goes, fails to furnish a word to suit the occasion. (*Note: Carouse is a fractured spelling and pronunciation of Terre Rouge, the creek a few miles south of Prescott*)

Prof. Honea with John Purtle, his assistant, has a full school of 60 pupils.

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Laneburg Leaflets (1-21-1892)

Bad roads—Very few people try to get to Prescott from here in a wagon. Mr. Andy Weaver bogged down his wagon on the levee, threw off his cotton, and returned home.

Laneburg Leaflets (2-18-1892)

The young men have organized a literary club which will meet each Saturday night.

Laneburg Leaflets (2-25-1892)

A petition is being circulated to move the county seat to the center of the county.

Bluff City Chat (3-10-1892)

J. D. Nichols has moved into his new store on Adams Street and opened up a choice line of spring goods.

Rosston Racket (4-21-1892)

For fear some of the neighborhood might think one of the James boys is here teaching school, I will correct an error made in last week's issue of the Pic. Mr. W. J. Jarvis is the man teaching school here, and not W. J. James as stated last week.



Several readers were familiar with this tool from the last issue. A small rope is attached to the handle and the tool is placed in a bull's nostrils which will make even an old ornery bull cooperate if you needed to lead him somewhere. It is known by various names—bull tongs, bull nose tongs, bull nose pliers, nose pincers, nose tongs, etc. Those with the correct answer were: James Nelson, Bill Carman, Bill Meador, Yvonne Munn, and Linda Kucera. One reader thought it was a tool used by blacksmiths. Another thought it was used to pull teeth.

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## DIPPING VATS

By the year 1916, farmers were becoming convinced that dipping their livestock was a good idea to control ticks. A representative of the state department of agriculture brought to the Prescott Hardware the material to be used in making the dip solution. In the April 6, 1916 issue of The Nevada News, there is a list of the 26 dipping vats in Nevada County at that time.

Enough solution was distributed to dip 3,000 head of cattle and another shipment was scheduled for two weeks later. There was no charge for the dip solution. A stock dip law had been passed requiring this, but the article stated the law would not be enforced

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in 1916, but dipping cattle would be compulsory in 1917. Here is the list of the 26 dipping vats in Nevada County in 1916, with many more expected to be constructed.

Barlow Bros. – Sayre

J. U. Brown – Prescott, Route 5

Scott Bros. – Prescott

J. E. Eaves – Emmet

J. V. Hulse – Emmet

Jno. Hamilton – Emmet, Route 2

H. Neimeyer-- Emmet

James Paul – Prescott, Route 6

Robert Wylie – Emmet

J. T. Adams – Emmet, Route 2

F. Phillips – Prescott

H. W. Greeson – Prescott

Ben Phillips – Prescott, Route 5

F. P. Harris – Prescott, Route 5

Wesley Gordon—Prescott, Route 6

Frank Dobbin – Prescott, Route 6

Vern Buchanan—Prescott, Route 5

D. L. Daniels – Prescott, Route 4

O. R. McDaniel – Prescott, Route 1

J. A. M. Smith – Prescott, Route 1

Denman & Loomis – Prescott, Route 1

Sam Gautsche – Prescott, Route 1

DeLaughter & Britt – Boughton

W. A. Hannah – Prescott, Route 2

J. C. Riggins – Prescott, Route 2

J. R. Williams -- Prescott

Dipping cattle became a yearly chore for farmers in Nevada County. I'm sure getting the animals to the dipping vat location was a big job. I don't know if they hauled them or had something like a cattle drive and herded them to the vat location. Each community had a dipping day, much like we have today when a veterinarian comes to a community to give rabies shots to dogs. Dipping vats were still being used as late as 1931, because I found this poem written by J. M. Bennett about the dipping day at Sutton published in the May 7, 1931 issue of *The Nevada County Picayune*:

## DIPPING DAY AT SUTTON

Early Thursday morning  
The mules began to bray  
And the cows began to bellow  
Because it's dipping day.

Every fellow's in a hurry  
To be the first on the ground  
The bellowing and hollering  
They make a doleful sound.

Talk about your liberties  
And all the like of that  
But tell me where's your freedom  
At the doggone dipping vat.

Still I'm glad to live in Arkansas  
Land of the free and brave  
Where everything you own is taxed  
From the cradle to the grave.

Only two things are excepted  
And I'll tell you what they are  
One of them is the water  
And the other one is air.

So, just stop your grumbling  
And never more complain  
Remember, good old dipping day  
Will soon be back again.

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My name is Donald Edward Mathis.

I am honored to be the son of Daniel Hearnberger Mathis.

And I am proud that for ten years, I was the step-son of General Foy Gillespie.

I am the grandson of Walter Eugene Mathis (Grandpa) and the grandson of Thomas Jefferson Walker (Granddaddy).

I am the great-grandson of George Washington Mathis (of English heritage) and Benjamin Brawner Hearnberger (of German stock) on my father's side.

And I am the great-grandson of David Crockett Walker (of the Scots-Irish culture) and Charles Gray Dumas (of French decent) on my mother's side.

I am the father of Thomas Charlie Mathis (who has Indian blood).

And I am the future grandfather of Lynnea Gwen Garnet Mathis (of African ancestry) who will be born in October 2016 and is destined for great things in life.

To all the members of my family of origin and my family of destiny, I wish a Happy Grandparent's Day.



GRANDPARENT'S  
DAY  
SEPTEMBER 11

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## HOW TO PRESERVE EYESIGHT

(from the 11-19-1885 issue of *The Nevada County Picayune*)

After trying to read some of the old newspapers on microfilm from the late 1800s, I can understand why folks back then worried about their eyesight. The print in those old papers was very tiny. It's like they were trying to cram way too much material into one issue of the paper. Trying to read those old newspapers must have been quite a chore even in the bright sunlight. It would have been almost impossible to read them by the light from a coal oil lamp. We must remember that most people at that time didn't live much past seventy years old. It really makes me feel old when I see a 65 year old man referred to in the paper as "an aged man".

1. Avoid all sudden changes between light and darkness.
2. Never begin to read, write, or sew for several minutes after coming from darkness into a bright light.
3. Never read by twilight or moonlight, or even on dark, cloudy days.
4. When reading it is best to let the light fall from above obliquely over the left shoulder.
5. Do not use the eyesight by light so scant that it requires an effort to discriminate.
6. The moment you are instinctively to rub your eyes, that moment stop using them.
7. If your eyelids are glued together on waking up, do not forcibly open them, but apply saliva with the finger. It is the speediest dilutant in the world; then wash your eyes and face in warm water.

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## IRMA

Some of you older readers may have heard of a place in Nevada County called Irma. It was located at the intersection of Hwy. 371 and Hwy. 76 about two miles south of Rosston. In case you are wondering how it got the name, here is an item from *The Nevada News* in September, 1906:

*Irma post office was established a number of years ago by Louis Waters and named for Mr. Water's daughter and run in connection with his store. The store still operates, but the post office has been abolished and patrons are served from Rosston. Mr. Waters carries a splendid stock of general merchandise. He owns a handsome house situated on the public road which is a convenient stopping place for travelers and everyone receives courteous treatment at his home.*

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## A PRESCOTT TIDBIT FROM 1885

July 23, 1885--Prescott needs better water facilities. The one well on West Main is not sufficient. If water could be gotten, it would be a great improvement to have our streets sprinkled every day. (from *The Nevada County Picayune*)

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## PRESERVING HISTORY IN ART

Zettie Link, daughter of Hildre and Stella Griffith, recently celebrated her 97th birthday with her family in Bearden. She is known for her artistic talent of painting the history of home places and local historical buildings. She is shown here with a painting of the old Bearden depot, which was recently moved back to town to be used as a library and museum. Her latest hobby is painting "thunder" gourds. She is shown here with a "thunder" gourd painting of the old Gammil house in Bearden.

