

THE SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

Jerry McKelvy, Editor

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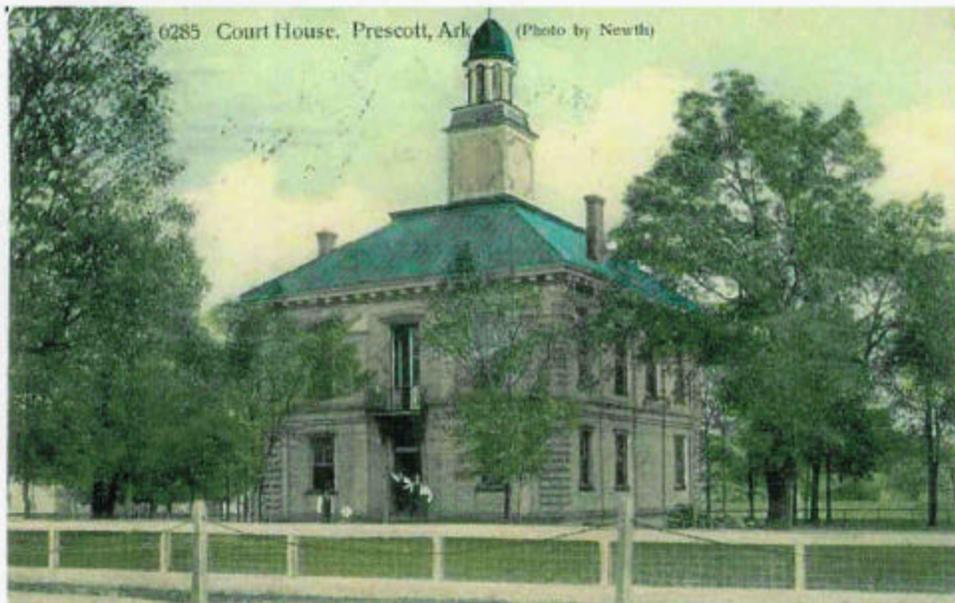
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LANDMARKS OF LONG AGO

When the county seat of Nevada County was moved from Rosston to Prescott in late 1877, I'm sure efforts soon began to build a county courthouse. According to the information I have, a "commodious two-story courthouse was built in 1884 at a cost of \$20,000. I came across the picture below on the Internet of this early Nevada County Court House that was pictured on a post card. The web site was called "Penny Post Cards of Arkansas".

I am not sure of the date of this picture. It was taken by Mr. Newth, a well-known photographer in Prescott. As you can see, it was a handsome building.



The courthouse square is usually found near the center of a town and the courthouse usually stands out as the most prominent structure in town. It is the people's building where the county records are kept and people go to tend to their legal matters. Notice the hitching posts along the fence for the horses and wagons.

There are always some people who will not obey the laws. When they are arrested and held for trial, the courthouse becomes a popular place. In the early days of Nevada County, trials were held only a few weeks or months after the crime was committed. A murder trial would bring a large crowd of people to the courthouse square and sometimes the person would be found guilty and sentenced to be hanged.

There are records of a few public hangings that took place in Prescott. The last "legal" hanging in Nevada County was June 14, 1906 when Squire Smith was hanged for the murder of John and Count Gleghorn (see the Jan. 2002 issue of *The Sandyland Chronicle*). That hanging more than likely took place near the courthouse pictured above, although the record states it was at the old jail.

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About 1910, it was decided that the courthouse was inadequate for the growing population and even though the building was only 26 years old, it was razed to make room for a new and larger courthouse. (*Note: The county's population in 1910 was 19,344 compared to 9,955 in the 2000 census*)

In the Prescott Daily News of May 10, 1912, there is an article about the completion of the new Nevada County courthouse. County Judge A. M. Denman and the architects were congratulated on the fine job that was done. The paper stated that this new courthouse cost about \$60,000 and was considered money well spent. The building was said to be fire-proof.

As you can see from the picture below, this new courthouse was also a handsome structure that the people could be proud of. Notice all the trees around the courthouse at that time. This is the building I remember as I was growing up in Nevada County.



In 1963 County Judge Mack Hillery informed the citizens of Nevada County that the courthouse had been declared a "hazard to public health and safety". The building was said to be unsafe and could not be repaired. The county received a grant of \$159,500 to be used to build a new courthouse. The county would have to match the grant dollar for dollar, so an election was held to increase taxes to pay for a new courthouse. The measure passed by a margin of four to one.

The courthouse pictured above was torn down and a new building was constructed on the same site. That building is still in use, although it too is showing signs of wear. The trees were removed when the new courthouse was constructed and the present building has a flat roof. Even though it cost about \$300,000, it is my opinion that it cannot compare in elegance to the two courthouses pictured here. It won't be long until the citizens of Nevada County will be faced with the task of building another courthouse or repairing the existing one which is now 39 years old. Since the population continues to decrease, it may be difficult to finance any new construction in the near future.

HE RETIRED AT AGE 90

J. R. Woods, custodian of the Nevada County Courthouse in Prescott for the past 17 years and 4 months retired January 31. On February 1, he celebrated his 90th birthday anniversary. A native of Ouachita County, Mr. Woods moved to Prescott in 1927. He worked for Paul Argo in the sawmill business for a number of years and later worked with Mr. Ed Moseley on the dray (?). Mr. Woods only missed three weeks of work due to illness.

Mr. Woods and his daughter, Mrs. Mattie Robinson plan to make a trip to the valley in the near future and after that he intends to spend his time working in the yard and garden. His smiling face and friendly manner will be missed by all who have seen him day after day for so many years. *(from The Nevada News of 1956)*

Mr. Woods' retirement was a short one. He died April 10, 1956

OBITUARY (from the 4-12-1956 issue of The Nevada News)

James R. Woods, aged 90, died April 10th at his home in Prescott. Mr. Wood had been custodian of the Nevada Co. court house for 17 years and retired on his 90th birthday.

He is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Mattie Robinson of Prescott; two grandsons, Elwood Robinson of El Dorado and Denton Robinson of Longview, TX; and four great grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted April 11th at 2:30 at Bluff City. Burial was in Bluff City Cemetery by Cornish Funeral Service.

Pallbearers were Billie Roe, Dick Bright, Phles Orren, Everett Ward, Ivan Hildebrand, Jack Anderson, John Eagle, and Carl Mitchell.

**518 POUND MAN SEEKS A WIFE
(from the 4-30-1925 issue of The Nevada News)**

Providence, RI—Nick Tartaglione, a 42 year old restaurant proprietor who weighs 518 pounds is willing to accept a bride.

Nick wants a wife, a traveling companion, someone to hand him his shoes in the morning, and someone to sit at the table and hold his left hand while he tucks away four pounds of steak, a chop or two, a side of roast beef, three or four helpings of macaroni, some vegetables, and a mess of fruit.

The biggest man in New England has had several chances to join circuses. He expects to begin a tour of the United States within a few months, traveling in special trains, spending weekends in the best hotels, and having a good time. Money is no object with Nick. He has plenty. He owns an automobile, a tenement or two, and a place at the beach. An old fashioned girl is Nick's desire. Girls with bobbed hair need not apply.

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Nick’s clothing is tailor made. Seven and one half yards of cloth are required to make him a suit. His shoes are custom made. One pair costs \$18. He wears a 22 collar.

Nick has been a widower for two years. He has eleven children living.

**A TALL TALE (from John Tweezer column about mosquitoes)
The Nevada News - April 6, 1909**

When I was a boy, I carved my name and the date on the hull of a half-grown mosquito and liberated it. While turkey hunting last spring, I found what I supposed to be a flushed gobbler, but on closer examination, I found my turkey was featherless and bore the inscription I had carved on its hull some twenty years ago.

FROM THE NEVADA COUNTY PICAYUNE (JULY 30, 1885)

It is suggested that the city purchase a dump cart and mule and run a regular scavenger cart daily to cleanse our streets of all filth and rubbish.

FROM THE NEVADA COUNTY PICAYUNE (SEPT. 24, 1885)

The large rattlesnake at Mr. N. T. Richard’s store shed its outer coating for the second time this season. Although the snake has been imprisoned for twelve months, it has not eaten anything, though it drinks water occasionally.

FROM THE NEVADA COUNTY PICAYUNE (DEC. 3, 1885)

These post offices were in Nevada County in 1885:

Bell’s Store, Bodcaw, Boughton, Bourland’s Store, Bluff City, Caney, Clayton, Delta, Emmet, Falcon, Honeaville, Laneburg, and Prescott. Prescott is a money order office.

A SERIOUS RUNAWAY (PRESCOTT DAILY NEWS- MAY 21, 1907)

Yesterday morning while W. H. Bull, rural route carrier for Rosston Rt. # 2, was attending to some business at Fincher’s store two miles north of Brisbane, his horse attached to his mail cart became frightened and ran away. In its course, the horse ran into a buggy containing Mrs. Dr. Weaver and Mrs. Sel Mason, completely demolishing their vehicle and dislocating the shoulder of Mrs Mason. No harm was done to the mail cart and its contents.

LOCAL NEWS ITEMS FROM THE PRESCOTT DISPATCH (MAY 19, 1881)

Mrs. Isaac Moore has filled up an elegant ice cream saloon in the Reppy House.

Ladies, call and see the nice lot of perforated card board at Howell and Majors Drug Store.

Companions Smoote, Warren, and McRae constitute the choir of the Legions of Honor and the music they furnish hath “charms to soothe a savage, melt a rock, and split a cabbage”.

Common Sense

Today we mourn the passing of an old friend, by the name of Common Sense.

Common Sense lived a long life but died recently in the United States. No one really knows how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape.

He selflessly devoted his life to service in schools, hospitals, homes, factories helping folks get jobs done without fanfare and foolishness.

For decades, petty rules, silly laws, and frivolous lawsuits held no power over Common Sense.

He was credited with cultivating such valued lessons as to know when to come in out of the rain, why the early bird gets the worm, and that life isn't always fair.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you earn), reliable parenting strategies (the adults are in charge, not the kids), and it's okay to come in second.

A veteran of the Industrial Revolution, the Great Depression, and the Technological Revolution, Common Sense survived cultural and educational trends including body piercing, whole language, and "new math."

But his health declined when he became infected with the "If-it-only-helps-one-person-it's-worth-it" virus. In recent decades his waning strength proved no match for the ravages of well intentioned but overbearing regulations.

He watched in pain as good people became ruled by self-seeking lawyers. His health rapidly deteriorated when schools endlessly implemented zero-tolerance policies. Reports of a six-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate, a teen suspended for taking a swig of mouthwash after lunch, and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student only worsened his condition.

It declined even further when schools had to get parental consent to administer aspirin to a student but could not inform the parent when a female student was pregnant or wanted an abortion.

Common Sense lost his will to live as the Ten Commandments became contraband, churches became businesses, criminals received better treatment than victims, and federal judges stuck their noses in everything from the Boy Scouts to professional sports.

Finally, when people, too stupid to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot, were awarded a huge settlement, Common Sense threw in the towel.

As the end neared, Common Sense drifted in and out of logic but was kept informed of developments regarding questionable regulations such as those for low flow toilets, rocking chairs, and stepladders.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust; his wife, Discretion; his daughter, Responsibility; and his son, Reason. He is survived by two stepbrothers: My Rights, and Ima Whiner.

Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone.

How well do you know your abbreviations?

- _____ ESP—John says he has ESP.
_____ GNP—The GNP of the United States is rising.
_____ VIP—Several VIPs will be present.
_____ ETA—The ETA of Flight 920 is 4:00.

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A LITTLE TOWN

By Kirby Able

A little town is where you don't have to guess who your enemies are. Your friends will tell you.

A little town is where few people can get away with lying about the year they were born. Too many other people remember.

A little town is where people with various ailments can air them to sympathetic ears.

A little town is where, when you get the wrong number, you can talk for 15 minutes anyhow.

A little town is where the ratio of good people to bad people is 100 to 1. That's nice to know.

A little town is where it's hard to walk to work for exercise because it takes too long to stop and explain to people in cars who stop, honk, and offer a ride.

A little town is where city folks say there's nothing to do, but those who live there don't have enough nights in the week to make all the meetings and social functions.

A little town is where everyone becomes a "neighbor" in time of need.

A little town is where those same businessmen dig deep many times to help with countless fundraising projects.

A little town is where many teen-agers say there is nothing to do and are surprised to learn their big city peers are saying the same thing.

A little town, when all is said and done, is a nice place to live.

INSIDE-OUT STUFFED PEPPERS

**This is a good one from Taste of Home magazine
(said to be created by a 14 year old girl)**

1 pound ground beef
1/2 cup chopped onion
1 can (16 ounces) stewed tomatoes, cut up
1 large green pepper, chopped
1/2 cup uncooked long grain rice
1/2 cup water
2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1 cup (4 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese

In a skillet, brown ground beef and drain. Transfer to a greased 2 quart casserole dish. Add the next eight ingredients. Cover and bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour or until rice is tender. Uncover and sprinkle cheese on top. Return to the oven until cheese melts (about 5 minutes).