

THE SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

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Vol. 5 – No. 3

March, 2005

Editor's Note--This article was copied from a microfilmed newspaper dated about 1910

Note: This story is founded upon fact. John Powell, a member of the Camden Knights, sent a small cedar tree to his mother from Aquia Creek, Virginia in 1861, and it is now a large, beautiful tree on the lawn of Mrs. W. E. McRae's residence, which was formerly the Powell home.

TREE WAS A MONUMENT TO HER SOLDIER SON

When the famous company known as the Camden Knights left to go to war in 1861, young John Powell was among their number. He was a typical Southern boy of the old aristocratic class. Next to his devotion to the cause for which he finally gave his life, was his love for his mother.

While encamped near Aquia Creek, Virginia, thinking of his mother and loved ones at home, he dug up a tiny cedar tree and sent it to them. He wrote his mother to plant the little tree in front of her window, that she might have a constant reminder of her soldier son before her eyes. Mrs. Powell planted the tree and it soon began to thrive in its new home. The fond mother would gaze on it daily as she sat by her window.

Young Powell was afterward killed in battle. His mother had never seen him after he left with his company to fight for the cause. During her whole life, she regarded the growing cedar as a monument to her boy. The present owners of the property feel much the same sentiment toward the tree. It will doubtless stand for many years. It has grown from the tiny slip to a great tree, and daily throws its shade across the window where the mother sat to think of her boy in battle and as buried in a soldier's grave.

THE STORY OF THE CEDAR TREE

When I first began to notice things around me, I was a very tiny little tree, growing just as near to my father and mother as I could possibly get. All around my home were many tall, beautiful cedar trees. We grew not very far from Aquia Creek in Virginia, and I used to think, in fact I yet think, that Virginia is the loveliest home in the world. It is no wonder that the trees stand up so straight and sturdy, and put forth such luxuriant foliage in the spring, and it is no wonder that in that pure and bracing air so many girls and boys grow into such splendid womanhood and manhood.

The first thing I can remember is how impatient I used to be, and how I wished to grow taller so I could look out in the world and see more that was going on, but there came a day when I was glad to be small. I will tell you about that day. It was in the springtime, and although the birds sang and the flowers were blooming, it seemed to me as if there were a shadow over the land. When the south wind blew softly through the trees, there seemed to be mingled with its music a note of sadness and sighing, such as comes from the hearts of

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sorrowing mothers, and ever and anon would be heard the words, “War! War!”, from the lips of the passersby. Then one day I knew something important was about to happen, for some men came to the place where I was growing, and after looking around, said, “Yes, this is the best place to camp.” I wondered what a camp was, and soon began to find out when I heard the tramp, tramp, tramp of many feet and the sweet notes of a bugle, and by and by a band playing such beautiful music that all the trees nodded their heads and rustled for joy, and the birds went off and hid themselves in the forest because they were ashamed to think they could not sing any music so sweet. Afterwards, I came to know that tune very well—it was “Dixie”. As the sounds came nearer that day, I could hear voices of the men, and finally I could distinguish their features. I saw that they were young and fair, and their eyes sparkled with joy, as if they were sure of victory. As I listened to their talk, I found that they were called “The Camden Knights”, and that they had come from far off Arkansas. Their uniforms were new and their bayonets bright and shiny, and each man had a big knife, called an “Arkansas toothpick” stuck in his belt. Strange to say, not one of them stepped on me. I was growing as near to my mother as I could, and it happened that when the tents were put up one of the stakes which held a tent was near enough to protect me on the other side. So there I stood, a tiny little tree, wishing with all my might to grow bigger. Especially did I wish this during the long, dark nights when I could hear the old trees talking to one another about how glorious it was to be permitted to stand guard over the sleeping heroes, and how happy they were as they stood holding out their thick branches to ward off the chilly mountain air.

Hearing the roll call every day, I soon grew familiar with the names of the men, and many of them I remember yet—Crenshaw, Hogg, Darnell, McCollum, McMahan, Ponder, Puryear, Scott, Stinson, and Ward. One of these names afterwards became very familiar to me, and this name, Powell, has much to do with the time when I was glad to be a tiny little tree. John Powell was the name of one of the soldiers who slept in the tent nearest to me. Every morning as he came out, he would be very careful not to pass me too roughly, for he loved all plants and growing trees. One day he opened the flap of the tent and sat down to write a letter to his mother; I know it, because as he began to write, he took from his pocket a picture and kissed it saying, “God bless my dear mother!”

After writing awhile he stopped and looked at me a moment and said, “Little Cedar Tree, how would you like to go to Arkansas and live with my mother? She is so kind and gentle, and loves growing plants and trees, and every day you can tell here how I love her and how I am standing up straight and strong and doing my duty to God and my country.”

Oh, that was the day and hour when I was glad to be a tiny little tree! I was so happy that I fairly trembled with joy from the top of my green, glossy head to the tips of my feathery branches. I kissed his dear, kind hand as he took me so carefully, loosening the Virginia soil with his “Arkansas toothpick”. He wrapped me in wet moss and packed me neatly for my journey, and although it was a long, tiresome time before I reached here, still I was happy to think of the beautiful message I was carrying. At last I found myself taking a good, long breath of Arkansas air, and lying in the soft hand of the mother. I felt her tears dropping here and there on my tiny branches, yet as I looked in her sweet face she was smiling.

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Soon there was a cozy little place prepared for me just outside her window. She was even thoughtful enough to put some small stones in the soft earth where I was to grow, for she knew I came from a place where the soil was rocky. After that I grew so rapidly that in a year's time my own mother would not have known me. I was very happy, for every day I could see the dear mother and give here the message from her boy, and I'm sure she understood.

But one day—one sad, heartbreaking day—the news came that the soldier had fallen in battle, and when the dear mother came to where I was growing, she knelt down and, looking at me with her sad eyes, said: “Oh, Little Cedar Tree, he is dead, he is dead!” And I stood up as straight and tall as I could and repeated my message over and over again, and when she was calm I added, “He is living, he is living!” and she understood. And from that day until the day she went to meet him in the Better Land, I continued to whisper the two messages—and she always understood.

For many years since then I have lived in Camden. Many wreaths have been twined from my branches to decorate the graves of Southern heroes who sleep in the Camden cemeteries, but I have never forgotten the one who found me in Virginia. All these years he has been sleeping in an unknown grave, while I have lived in his childhood home, happy in the thought that I, too, did my duty in those days. And now, as the little children play around me, I like to whisper to them:

“Be brave, be true! Remember the heroes who died for you.”

FEEDBACK FROM READERS

I was reading your article entitled “When the Movie Stars came to Goose Ankle” in the January, 2002 issue. This brought back memories of my adventure with David Carradine and Barbara Hershey.

I was married to a girl from Cale at the time. We were visiting from Hot Springs one weekend and I was sitting on the front porch, rocking away, as I was want to do frequently, due to the fact that the setting out there in the country was so serene and peaceful (compared to the hectic hubbub of Hot Springs). Anyway, a new car drove into the driveway, disturbing my serenity. I got up and went out to the car and inquired of the driver what I could do to assist him. It turned out to be none other than David Carradine...Kung Fu! Sitting beside him was a gorgeous, dark-haired girl whom, I found out later, was Barbara Hershey.

It seems that their two dogs, "Bluebird" and "Buffalo" were missing somewhere in the bottoms around Dills Mill. Not knowing the lay of the land, Mr. Carradine asked if I would please drive them around the countryside and assist them in locating their dogs. I quickly agreed and away we went, the two of them sticking their head out each side of the car. "Buffalo"! "Bluebird"!, they yelled repeatedly. We drove around for what seemed a hundred miles, over a two hour period, them each taking turns yelling the dogs' names. Finally, as it was getting dark, we had to give up the search.

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One somewhat humorous incident was the fact that I had seen Mr. Carradine in many episodes of "Kung Fu" and recognized him immediately. Unfortunately, for whatever reason, I had not seen, or heard of Ms. Hershey. I asked her directly if she, too, was a movie star! That didn't set too well with her and, as such, she didn't thank me for my help. David did. He even offered to pay me for my time and fuel, to which I flatly refused! "We folks down here in Arkansas help other folks without expecting any gratuity!", I responded. He was sincerely grateful and the two of them left, heading back to Camden, where they were staying in a hotel.

I just wanted to pass this little tidbit on to you, as I read in your Chronicles about another group who encountered those two rather likable celebrities. I'll never forget that incident, or the names of their dogs. I often tried to contact Mr. Carradine, to no avail. I didn't try to contact Ms. Hershey, for fear that she'd remember the "doofus" who didn't recognize her as being equally as famous as her co-star in Boxcar Bertha! ---James Hairston

HOW TO STAY YOUNG

By George Carlin

1. Throw out nonessential numbers. This includes age, weight, and height. Let the doctor worry about them. That is why you pay him/her.
2. Keep only cheerful friends. The grouches pull you down.
3. Keep learning. Learn more about the computer, crafts, gardening, whatever. Never let the brain idle. "An idle mind is the devil's workshop." And the devil's name is Alzheimer's.
4. Enjoy the simple things.
5. Laugh often, long and loud. Laugh until you gasp for breath.
6. The tears happen. Endure, grieve, and move on. The only person who is with us our entire life is ourselves. BE ALIVE while you are alive.
7. Surround yourself with what you love, whether it's family, pets, keepsakes, music, plants, hobbies, whatever. Your home is your refuge.
8. Cherish your health: If it is good, preserve it. If it is unstable, improve it. If it is beyond what you can improve, get help.
9. Don't take guilt trips. Take a trip to the mall, to the next county, to a foreign country, but NOT to where the guilt is.
10. Tell the people you love that you love them at every opportunity.

AND ALWAYS REMEMBER: Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away.

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AD FOR CAMPBELL SHOWS (APPEARING IN PRESCOTT FOR ONE WEEK) From The Prescott Daily News—January 19, 1912

- “Bob”- the only boxing kangaroo in the world (he boxes 3 rounds with a lady)
 - The Lizard Girl- the strangest creature on earth
 - A \$10,000 Jumping Horse
 - Russian dancing girls
 - Jungle Land- strange animals from the jungle
 - Little George- the midget and his wife and baby
 - Biggest and strongest Ferris wheel ever carried by a traveling show
 - Free band concerts each day
-

AN UNUSUAL GRAVE MARKER

We were visiting a cemetery in Missouri recently looking for the graves of some of my distant McKelvy relatives. We found the grave marker below and couldn't resist taking a picture of it. I never knew Mr. Wally F. Hanebrink (1903-1986), but this simple grave marker with the inscription “A Man of Iron” gives a distinct impression of the man and his life.

The marker is located in McGee Chapel Cemetery in Bollinger County, Missouri.



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A LOCAL NEWS ITEM FROM THE WILDCAT RD. NEWS COLUMN The Nevada News—March 18, 1926

It's got so nowadays everybody tries to find out if you don't make whiskey. If they can't find out any other way, they will try to get the little children to tell them if daddy don't make a little in the old coffee pot while mother gets breakfast. People should ask an adult about such matters and not be asking children. Always let the other fellow's business alone and keep your own hands clean before God and man and this will be a much better world to live in.

FROM THE PRESCOTT SCHOOLS CATALOGUE OF 1911-12

Before completing first grade the student should be able to:

- Write all the letters of the alphabet
- Write his or her name well
- Write his or her post office address
- Write his or her township, county, and state
- Write the names of familiar objects
- Write a long list of words from reading lessons
- Write short sentences using periods, comma, and capital letters where needed.

The second and third grades will complete a nature study. In the autumn, they will study birds, with a close study of the blue jay and sparrow. They will study the dog, cat, horse, pig, and rabbit. In the winter, they will study birds that migrate and also do a close study of the robin. In the spring, they will study the birds that return to the area and do a close study of the goose, duck, and crow. They will observe Bird Day and study the life of John James Audubon. They will also learn about processing food by canning and drying and learn how to prepare for the winter season.

OLD TIME FIDDLER'S CONTEST AT ROSSTON FEBRUARY 13, 1915

The annual Fiddler's contest held at the Rosston Public School Building was a great success. The building was filled to capacity.

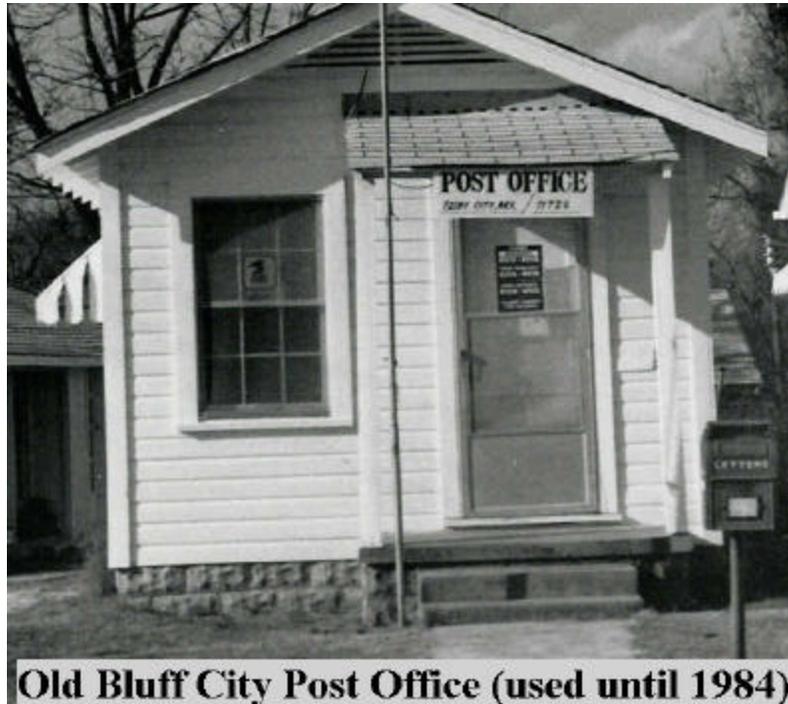
The music made by the contestants was of superior quality and was appreciated by all lovers of music.

The sum of \$81.15 was realized out of the contest which will be utilized for the benefit of the school.

The following contestants were awarded prizes: Mr. Clarence Dunn, best single fiddler (first prize) and Mr. J. D. Taylor (second prize); Mrs. J. D. Taylor, best lady single fiddler

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(first prize) and Miss Mollie Luck (second prize); Mr. Sorrells, best left-handed fiddler; Miss Mollie Luck, best looking lady fiddler; Mr. Jim Sewett, oldest fiddler; Mr. T. H. Whitehead, fastest fiddler; Mr. Owen McKissack, youngest boy fiddler; Mr. T. H. Whitehead, fanciest fiddler; Mr. Clarence Dunn, best player of "Casey Jones"; Mr. Parris Atkins, best player of "Home Sweet Home"; Mrs. Alta Warmack, best lady player of "Home Sweet Home"; Mr. Jim Sewett; longest nose fiddler; Rosston Band, first prize; Willisville Band, second prize; Willisville Band, old time music (first), Rosston Band (second).



This post office was located at the home of Foy and Gladys Nelson on the north side of Hwy. 24. Gladys Nelson was the postmaster until her death in 1982. Wilma Knight then became postmaster at this office and at the new post office which opened in 1984 at the present location. This small building was then moved behind a neighbor's house.

HOW DID WE LIVE THROUGH IT?

Looking back, it's hard to believe that we have lived as long as we have.

As children we would ride in cars with no seat belts or air bags. Riding in the back of a pickup truck on a warm day was always a special treat.

Our baby cribs were painted with bright colored lead based paint. We often chewed on the crib, ingesting the paint.

We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, doors, or cabinets, and when we rode our bikes we had no helmets. We drank water from the garden hose and not from a bottle.

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We would spend hours building our go-carts out of scraps and then rode down the hill, only to find out we forgot the brakes. After running into the bushes a few times we learned to solve the problem.

We would leave home in the morning and play all day, as long as we were back when the street lights came on. No one was able to reach us all day.

We played dodge ball and sometimes the ball would really hurt. We ate cupcakes, bread and butter, and drank sugar soda, but we were never overweight; we were always outside playing.

Little League had tryouts, and not everyone made the team. Those who didn't had to learn to deal with disappointment.

Some students weren't as smart as others or didn't work hard so they failed a grade and were held back to repeat the same grade.

That generation produced some of the greatest risk-takers and problem solvers. We had the freedom, failure, success and responsibility, and we learned how to deal with it all.

Author Unknown-

A bride and groom ordered their wedding cake and requested a particular scripture verse written on the top with frosting. It was to be 1 John 4:18 - "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear." Unfortunately the baker didn't know the Bible all that well, and put on John 4:18 - "You have had five husbands and the one you have now is not your husband..."

PHILADELPHIA "3 STEP" CARAMEL PECAN CHEESECAKE

2 pkgs. (8 oz. each) Philadelphia cream cheese, softened
½ cup sugar
½ tsp. vanilla
2 eggs
20 caramels
2 Tbsps. milk
½ cup chopped pecans
1 graham cracker crumb crust (6 oz. or 9 inch)

Mix cream cheese, sugar, and vanilla with electric mixer until well blended. Add eggs and mix until blended. Melt caramels with milk on low heat, stirring frequently until smooth. Stir in pecans. Pour caramel mixture into crust. Top with cream cheese batter. Bake at 350 degrees for 40 minutes or until center is almost set. Cool. Refrigerate three hours or overnight. Makes 8 servings.