

# THE SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

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\*\*\*\*\*<http://sandyland.nevada.ar.us/>\*\*\*\*\*

## NO PUBLIC FUNERALS ALLOWED

A global influenza epidemic (or pandemic) hit the United States in the fall of 1918 and continued for several months. More people lost their lives to this disease than in World War I which was just ending about that time.

It has been called “the most devastating epidemic in recorded world history”. It killed more people in one year than died in four years during the Black Death bubonic plague in the 1300’s. It was called the Spanish flu or La Grippe. Most deaths occurred in the 20-40 age group, which was unusual since most influenza outbreaks strike the elderly and very young. About 28 percent of Americans were infected and about 675,000 Americans died.

In December, 1918, it was reported that there were 300,000 cases of influenza in Arkansas alone. Physicians were powerless in their efforts to combat the disease. This major health crisis prompted the public health officials to issue the following order regarding funerals:

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A recent order issued by Dr. Garrison, state health officer, prohibits public funerals while the influenza epidemic prevails over the state. No public funerals are to be held either at churches or at the home. The attendance of the immediate relatives and pall bearers are permitted, but no outsiders are allowed to attend. This order is in effect now and much embarrassment will be spared the undertakers if due notice is taken and the provisions of the order followed. The physicians everywhere are convinced that the spreading to the disease has been due largely to the congregation of people at funerals at the homes and in churches.

Mr. J. D. Cornish, funeral director at Prescott, Arkansas, received this order from R. B. Magee of the U. S. Public Health Service:

An order has been issued by the state and federal authorities that no public funerals over which you have charge shall be held either in the open or at churches or residences during the influenza epidemic.

You are hereby notified that all funerals of which you have charge shall be private and attended only by the immediate family, minister, and pall bearers.

Funeral directors will be held responsible for the enforcement of this order and will be prosecuted if the order is violated.

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We think of this as an extreme measure, but considering the circumstances in 1918, any gathering of people was an opportunity for the disease to be easily spread. Even today, we are being warned that a similar type influenza pandemic called the bird flu is very likely to happen in the near future. Let's hope and pray that it doesn't happen. With airplane travel between countries, a disease could spread very fast around the world. If such a thing were to happen, we would probably be faced with very strict public health orders concerning our activities.

I wonder if Americans these days would be willing to be quarantined in their homes for an extended period of time. Can you imagine the effects on our economy? We are accustomed to getting some antibiotics to help us when we get sick and they are wonderful medicines. But what if no antibiotic or medicine was available that would work? We would be in the same circumstances as those people back in 1918-1919. Hopefully scientists are busy working on new medicines because sooner or later, we could be faced with a health catastrophe even in these modern times.

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## FOUR THINGS TO AVOID

Those of us who are familiar with "The Sandyland" have learned about several things to avoid. Of course, there are a lot more than four. We have wasps, hornets, yellow jackets, ticks, scorpions, snakes, alligators, and other such creatures. We know that all dogs are not friendly and it's best to be cautious around a dog we are not familiar with. But these four things come to mind—three of them have been around for generations and the other one has more recently come on the scene to torment us.



**1. SAND BURS**—We always called them grass burrs, but no matter what you call them, this is something to avoid. They love to grow in sandy soil and they are sometimes hard to see when they are mixed in with the other grasses. This picture shows them when they are green, but as fall approaches, they will turn brown and will easily attach themselves to your clothes, and they are particularly fond of tennis shoes. We sometimes went barefoot when we were growing up and nothing hurt worse than having one of these burrs stuck in the bottom of your foot. It usually only took a quick pull to remove it, but the process was very traumatic for a young child and was usually accompanied by plenty of sound effects (crying and screaming) as the burr was removed. The fine specimen in the photo was found on top of a recently dug grave in Bluff City Cemetery.



**2. BULL NETTLES**—This interesting looking plant grows well in our sandy soil. If you accidentally touch it, you will instantly feel a stinging sensation and bumps will form quickly on your skin. The plant will sometimes get three feet tall, but it doesn't matter how tall it is. It stings just as bad

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when it is small. In the fall, the round seed pods will mature, but they are also covered with stickers. I can remember breaking a stick and using it like a pair of pliers to pull these seed pods off the plant, cleaning them, and eating the seed kernels. I guess we were just bored and had nothing better to do. I know we were not that hungry growing up.



**3. PRICKLY PEAR** – This cactus plant also likes our sandy soil. It sometimes will get started in your lawn and is hard to get rid of. It is covered with tiny stickers that are very hard to see. If you get these in your foot, it will keep you occupied for quite a while. You can feel them but getting them all removed is very difficult. Since most folks wear shoes these days, it's not too much of a problem, but it is still a plant to avoid. If they come up in your lawn, it's best to get them under control as soon as possible, because the mower will cut them and scatter the pieces all over the lawn and most of these will make new plants.

**4. FIRE ANTS** – These pests are the subject of much conversation in these parts. When we were growing up, we were concerned only with the tiny ants that sometimes got in our houses, especially the kitchen, and some large red ants that were found around the house. They made large flat mounds, but didn't cause much problem and were interesting to watch as they went about carrying things into their nest. My grandmother's remedy for these large red ants was to pour boiling water into their nest. She thought those ants were bad, but she didn't live to see the plague of fire ants that we have today. They affect most of the southern United States and are spreading rapidly. We spend much money each year trying to keep them under control, but nothing seems to work very well. The practice of going barefoot outside is now a thing of the past and you have to watch where you stand because you might be in one of these ant hills. Once they get to stinging, you will almost certainly stop what you are doing and start brushing, slapping, swatting, or whatever it takes to get some relief. These ants will build nests around just about anything left on the ground and especially like electric out-lets and air conditioners, sometimes causing them to short out. The sting causes a pustule to form on your skin that will take days or weeks to completely disappear. A nest of these ants could kill a new-born calf or a small child who happened to get in the nest. They get in our gardens and suck the life out of the garden plants. If I could eliminate just one of these four things, the fire ant would be my choice.

I wonder what new pestilence is headed our way. There is already talk of "killer bees" being found in some counties in southwest Arkansas.

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If you are searching for a name for a new baby, you might want to check out the following list. These are names of people buried in the cemeteries of Nevada County, Arkansas. These are all from Caucasian cemeteries. Even more unusual names can be found in the African-American cemeteries.

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It seems people in the 1800's used a little more imagination in selecting a name than people do today. Of course there were the usual names like John, James, William, Edward, George, Mary, Elizabeth, and Sarah, but sprinkled in among the common names were these names which are a bit unusual.

### MALE NAMES

|         |            |           |
|---------|------------|-----------|
| Pirl    | Dilmus     | Septimus  |
| Raybon  | Ambers     | Thorgan   |
| Beaura  | Zeno       | Amzie     |
| Basil   | Augustinus | Ichabod   |
| Minus   | Romeo      | Brilliant |
| Welcom  | Spurgeon   | Barcus    |
| Fratrus | Ramson     |           |

### FEMALE NAMES

|              |                     |            |
|--------------|---------------------|------------|
| Tahlaulula   | Musetta             | Halcyone   |
| Elchanor     | Louisiana           | Lameta     |
| Soddie Mae   | Zipporah            | Letitia    |
| Wilhelmina   | Fannie Alabama      | Zulabell   |
| Permelia     | Ammorilous          | Winderleen |
| Penelope     | Euanah              | Idonia     |
| Altamira     | Dorthula Orphelia   | Celestia   |
| Artamessa    | Tennessee           |            |
| Calista      | Talitha             |            |
| Euphamie     | Eugenia             |            |
| Verta Ressie | Deonna              |            |
| Isobelle     | Cinderella Isabella |            |
| Luvenia      | Parazada            |            |
| Burldean     | Columbia            |            |
| Mintie       | Nevada              |            |
| Jeweldene    | Cleffie             |            |
| Conella      | Saphronia           |            |
| Layunea      | Paralee             |            |
| Maridel      | Zepa                |            |
| Cleopatra    | Willella            |            |
| Valdine      | Talula              |            |
| Jeanetta     | Matilda Adlissa     |            |
| Necie        | Prudy Jane          |            |
| Blance       | Electa              |            |
| Margaretta   | Tirzah              |            |
| Luvisa       | Ozettie             |            |
| Arthurilla   | Robiteen            |            |
| Demmie       | Mozillia            |            |

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These unusual names remind me of this story I heard recently. It seems that a fellow had been given the name "Odd" by his parents. All through his life, Odd had been teased about his name. He hated the name and you can understand why. Finally, when he was 58 years old he told his wife he had been called Odd all his life and he wanted to put a stop to it. He told his wife that when he died, he wanted her to put on his tombstone just his birth date and death date, but not to put his name on the stone. Otherwise people would still remember him as Odd.

About 15 years later Odd died and his wife remembered their conversation. She did exactly as he requested. She purchased a very nice tombstone, but had only his birth and death dates engraved and did not engrave his name.

You can guess what happened. Now everyone that visits the cemetery notices the stone and calls to their companions, "Come look at this stone. There's no name on it—just the dates. Isn't that odd?"

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### FROM THE MAIL-BAG--

Thank you for publishing the *Sandyland Chronicle*. My mom (Bernadine Walker Mathis Gillespie) and step-dad (General Gillespie, both from Bluff City) sometimes share back issues with me after they finish reading.

I was particularly interested in "The Battle of Poison Spring" in your July 2007 issue. It's been years since I visited Poison Spring State Park. The Civil War historical markers of decades ago revealed nothing of man's inhumanity to man as revealed in your article.

I first heard of the mutilation of Black troops in the book, "[All Cut to Pieces and Gone to Hell](#)," edited by [Mark Christ](#). A friend suggested that some Indians once believed a man's spirit could not enter the next world if his body was dismembered. Perhaps this explains the behavior of the Confederate's Choctaw soldiers.

War then, as it is now, is sometimes not the brave and glorious exhibition of honor and courage. But it should be remembered nonetheless.

My mother's friends from Bluff City did research on the Walker genealogy in recent years and said that my great-grandfather, David Walker, was a Second Lieutenant for the Confederates at the battle of Poison Springs. After it was all over, she said, Lieutenant Walker went back to his Bluff City family. His son, my grandfather, Thomas Jefferson Walker was born July 4, 1879.

Mom wonders if the stories of the springs are true. She's heard that the water was poisoned and some of the Union soldiers died of thirst because they were afraid to drink it. I thirst for more answers as well.

Thank you again for your fine publication.  
Don Mathis

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**WITHOUT A PURPOSE**  
(from the 4-8-1918 issue of the Nevada County Picayune)

On a bleak deserted hillside  
With wild vines overgrown,  
Far from the traveled roadside,  
A cabin stands alone.  
Above the hut a sheltered nook,  
And a gnarled old apple tree;  
Below the hut a murmuring brook,  
That waters a sun-kissed lea.

Here nature's sounds are blended,  
And the travelers rarely come;  
And the human ties are ended,  
That made this place a home.  
Tis a scene of desolation,  
'Twould fill one's soul with hush,  
Be the poet's inspiration,  
And speed the Artist's brush.

Yet a sadder scene is near us,  
As we view the ways of life;  
'Tis the man without a purpose,  
On the broad highway of life.  
He who fails to see the beauty  
In the work of gath'ring sheaves;  
'Tis the man who knows no duty,  
But is idly gath'ring leaves.

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Editor's note: Did any of you recognize the cabin picture on the previous page? I took that photo in 1976. The old house is gone now, but it was located on Hwy. 299 about one mile out of Bluff City. I remember a black lady named Janie who lived there.

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### **A POTATO EXPLODED** **(from the 6-30-1911 issue of *The Nevada County Picayune*)**

A potato the size of a teacup caused extraordinary havoc in a home in Prescott the other day when it exploded in the oven of a range and shattered the cast iron grate, blew open the oven door, and caused such a loud report that the cook, thinking that someone had shot her, rushed from the house screaming for help. The explosion was due to the large amount of water in the potato and to the fact that it was a hot oven. The water was converted to steam and with the skin of the potato being baked hard, the pressure became tremendous until the potato exploded, causing a report similar to that of a shot-gun. No one was hurt.

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### **CITY OF CAMDEN DEALS WITH A DIFFICULT ISSUE** **(from the May 7, 1935 issue of *The Camden News*)**

Fish ponds came in for quite a discussion at the City Council meeting Monday night. The fish and frogs occupied the center of the oratorical stage when a letter of protest was read by Clerk Fred Benson regarding the Saxon fish pond in the ravine between Greening and Clifton streets. Property owners stated several reasons why the city should do something about the alleged "nuisance" and the property owners signed their names in bold type.

"Sweetest music I ever heard", Alderman Oscar Bird who resided in this neighborhood for years said. "I couldn't go to sleep at night without the croaking of the frogs." He urged these property owners to be patient and when they live on the street long enough and get used to the croaking, the frogs will not bother them. As for the time necessary, he didn't state.

Then City Attorney Robert Purifoy said he had talked with E. F. Saxon and that Mr. Saxon said he had killed 44 frogs already and was going to get rid of all of them. Alderman W. R. Smith brought up the best suggestion when he urged that a committee be named to write to the bureau in Washington that furnishes data on "The Life and Habits of Frogs" and find out how to operate on a frog to remove the croak. Dr. J. H. Jameson, a surgeon, then said it would be more painless to the frog to install mufflers, rather than operate.

The entire matter was left in status quo when Alderman D. J. Patrick, ardent spokesman, offered a motion to "preserve" the letter.

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**The Prescott Steam Laundry had this slogan in their advertisement in 1921:**

**"Put Your Duds In Our Suds"**

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## A BAD TWIST

from the Salem local news column of Nevada County Picayune (May, 1914)

Oscar Johnson came home one night from work slightly tired and went to bed with a somewhat hazy idea of things and dreaming his house was on fire, jumped up and in a hurry to get his clothes on, Johnson put his trousers on hind part before. He then started downstairs but slipped and rolled to the bottom. His wife rushed to him and exclaimed, "Are you hurt, Oscar?" Johnson got up and examined himself, seeing his trousers were hind part before, he said; "No, but I got a devil of a twist."

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### Moist Applesauce-Oat Muffins From Mrs. M. in Arizona

**In a large bowl combine:**

**2 cups Cheerios cereal rolled into crumbs [makes about One cup]  
1 ¼ cups all-purpose flour  
1/3 cup packed brown sugar  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
¼ teaspoon baking soda**

**Mix together:**

**1 cup applesauce  
1/3 cup skim milk  
½ cup raisins  
3 Tablespoons vegetable oil [I use olive oil]  
1 egg white, beaten**

**Stir this into the dry ingredients...just until moist**

**Divide batter evenly [about ¼ cup] into 12 medium muffin cups that have been sprayed with nonstick spray. Bake 400 degrees for 18-22 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from cups and serve warm or freeze for later. Pop individually into micro for 15-20 seconds and serve**

### SAUSAGE BALLS

From Janie Franklin in Arkansas

**1 lb. Hot sausage  
10-12 oz. Grated cheese  
2 cups of Bisquik  
1 T. Worcestershire sauce  
¼ t. garlic salt**

**Mix all ingredients; make into small balls and bake at 400 degrees about 15 or 20 minutes.**