

THE SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

VOL. 8 – NO. 5

MAY, 2008

Editor: Jerry McKelvy

Mailing Address: 2680 Warren Ave., Camden, AR 71701

E-Mail Address: sandman43@att.net

Web Site: <http://sandyland.nevada.ar.us/>



This was the front-page headline in the February 25, 1921 issue of *The Daily Picayune*. The following news story accompanied the headline:

Messrs. Jno. L. and G. H. Henry of Bluff City, are in town today and bring the report the well at Bluff City is showing oil. John Moore, who is overseeing the drilling and testing of the well, declares, according to the Henry brothers, that the oil bailed out of the Bluff City well is apparently of the same grade found at El Dorado.

The Henry brothers declare they saw the oil as it came from the well, and that it is momentarily expected to strike a wonderful gusher.

The well is down to 2000 feet and will go deeper, the work being carried on rapidly and carefully.

From the showing at hand now, it is practically settled that Nevada county has oil, and the development of the well at Bluff City, at Sutton, and at Bodcaw, will be hurried by those in charge of the drilling.

It is believed by residents of Bluff City that the well there will prove the biggest surprise since the Bussey well first broke the stillness of El Dorado.

Again we say, "let her spout".

Well, we all know that an oil boom at Bluff City never happened. Several wells were drilled in the area with some promise of oil, but none were put into production. Everyone was interested in oil in 1921 after the big discovery at El Dorado. The Goose Ankle correspondent for *The Nevada News* reported in the paper that "Someone from our little burg went to Chidester. They found all of Chidester gone to El Dorado to see the oil boom except for the depot agent, two doctors, a few old ladies, and the city marshal".

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A PUZZLE FOR GENEALOGISTS

(from the 1-16-1969 issue of *The Nevada News*—reprint from 1-25-1945 issue)

This is a true story, set down here exactly as related to your snooper by Dr. A. S. Buchanan. Point is, peruse it carefully.

In the year of Our Lord 1821, two girls were born, Kathryn and Dosia Amytt, who married two brothers, Bolls J. and Kenneth W. Buchanan. Bolls J. Buchanan and wife moved to Clark County, Arkansas in 1836 and had one daughter, Helen Buchanan, who after growing up, married her first cousin, Presley Buchanan. They, Helen and Presley, had one son, Thaddeus, who married and had a son, Presley, who married and had a son named Donald Buchanan. Still Buchanan, please note.

All right, said Donald Buchanan married and had a son born on January 18, 1945 and delivered by our own esteemed physician and surgeon, Dr. Albert S. Buchanan (but he didn't tell me to say that).

All right, this Kenneth W. Buchanan, who married the other Amytt sister, born in 1821, had a son, Chesley Buchanan who married and had sons. Among them was Albert S. Buchanan, the same Albert who delivered Donald's son last Tuesday. This Albert Buchanan had two daughters, one of which married Carl Dalrymple, and had a son, Carl Dubose Dalrymple, Jr.

Now the story is virtually at an end. What Dr. Al (and your humble snooper) would like to know is—exactly what relation is Carl, Jr. to the infant boy as yet unnamed, born January 18, 1945? That's what I call a whopper of a question.

BOY KIDNAPS HIMSELF

This story appeared in the *Prescott Daily News* in 1940.

Detroit—Eleven-year old Raymond Diclare forgot when he planned his own “kidnapping” that boys of his age get hungry so now he won't get his pony after all.

Found staring hungrily into an ice cream store soon after daybreak, the boy who sent police on a frantic search for his captor Tuesday night admitted he had written his own ransom note in the hope of getting enough money to buy a pony.

The note, addressed to his foster parents, demanded \$500 by Saturday midnight and threatened that “your son will be killed” if the money was not forthcoming.

“I guess it wasn't such a good idea after all,” he grinned sheepishly as detectives fed him after his all-night vigil in an abandoned bunkhouse. “I hadn't counted on getting hungry.”

The “ransom” note was written on a sheet of paper and tossed into a flower box at the rear of his home.

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This interesting old picture was given to me recently. I was told it was found in an old house at Reader. Nobody has been able to tell me if this picture has some connection to the town of Reader. What is the huge building in the background? The men pictured are evidently the construction crew since several are holding hammers and other carpenter's tools. The carpenter's aprons worn by several of the men have these advertisements printed on them: Bracy Bros. Hardware Co. and Foster Lumber Co. The man standing next to the desk appears to be the man in charge of the project.

There was a large saw mill at Reader and a hotel and stage coach stop at Sayre. Could this be the hotel? If anyone has any information about this picture, please contact me.

It seems that during the 1930s, several Nevada County residents tried their hand at writing poems. Many of them were about recent events that had been reported in the newspapers. There were many poems about the Great Depression and some of the New Deal programs. One poem was about the kidnapping of Charles Lindbergh's baby and the following poem about the execution of Mark Shank in Arkansas.

I tried to find more information about this case. All I could find was that Mark Shank was an attorney from Ohio who was executed in March, 1935 for the murder of a family of four from Ohio by serving them poisoned grape juice at a picnic. The crime happened in Saline County, Arkansas which explains why the execution happened in Arkansas. This poem was written by Mrs. Alta Honea and was published in the March 21, 1935 issue of *The Nevada News*.

MARK SHANK'S EXECUTION

The prisoner was old and broken,
And trouble had bent his form.
His face was pale and haggard,
And his drooping head was shorn.

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Mark Shank was once a lawyer
Well dressed, respected, and straight,
But he bartered his soul with the devil
For this sad and gruesome fate.

The murmuring priest could not help him,
Or his absent, heart-broken wife.
Through the bars the sunlight had entered,
'Twas the signal to pay with his life.

Did he think of the four he had murdered,
And the lone little orphan lad
Who has lost his two little brothers,
And loving mother and dad?

He prepared the poison and gave it
To the five he knew so well.
He had broken the law, and he reasoned
That dead ones no tales can tell.

'Twas in '33 in the summer
That the poison grape juice they drank
And March the eighth two years later
Has witnessed the end of Mark Shank.

HISTORY OF NEVADA COUNTY JOURNALISM (PRIOR TO 1922) (from the 6-15-1922 issue of *The Nevada News* and the souvenir edition of *The Prescott Daily Mail* in 1947)

The Banner appears to have been Prescott's first newspaper. It was started in 1875 by E. E. "Bunk" White and W. B. White. In 1876, they sold to W. D. Johnson, who changed the name of the paper to *The Prescott News*. In 1877, Mr. Bascom became the owner and the name was changed to *The Clipper*.

T. H. Bascom was also the publisher of a little paper called *The Fruit Grower* in the 1870s.

The Prescott Dispatch was started in 1876 by John P. Fagin with E. A. Warren as editor. In the 1870s and 1880s, Prescott was a stronghold of the Greenback Party and the Dispatch espoused that cause. Mr. Warren moved to Hope and then to Texarkana and publication of the Dispatch was suspended for awhile, but was revived by J. A. Ansley and continued to be published until the demise of the Greenback Party.

The Nevada County Picayune, a Democratic newspaper, is the longest lived of Prescott's newspapers. It was founded Feb. 14, 1878 by Eugene White. He retired in 1883 and moved to Hot Springs and his brother, W. B. White took charge of the Picayune. In 1884, it was

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bought by Dudley B. Madden, a lawyer just out of college, but in the same year, it reverted back to Mr. White. J. W. Gardner acquired a half interest in the paper in 1884 and in 1885, the remaining interest of Mr. White. He then sold it to J. J. Thompson. Other owners include W. F. Evans, F. J. Johnson, Charles Shankle, and C. B. Andrews in 1904. An evening edition of the *Picayune* was started in 1921. Mr. Andrews sold it to Geo. B. Munn and Harry F. Helton, the present publishers (in 1922). Others on the staff of the *Picayune* include Fred W. Allsopp, Andrew Ross, Walter Ross, Claude McCorkle, and Orto Finley.

The Prescott Democrat was started by J. J. Thomasson and was published until about 1902.

J. O. A. Bush started a paper in 1891 called *The People's Tribune* which was published until 1896.

The Weekly Times was started in 1897 by Dan Delahoyde. In 1899 it was sold to W. H. Mack and A. J. Hunter and afterwards was consolidated with the *Picayune*.

A paper called *The Prescott Paragraph* was started by Charles Shankle and was published in 1896 and 1897.

The Prescott Graphic, by Lon McCorkle and Lee Giles, made its appearance in 1900. In 1903 it was consolidated with the *Picayune-Times* under the management of C. B. Andrews.

The Nevada County News owned by H. B. McKenzie, was established in 1905 as a weekly and in 1906 began to publish a daily edition. F. Jack Johnson purchased it in 1910.

The Arkansas White Ribboner (monthly) was started at Prescott in 1907 by the W. C. T. U. with Mrs. Minnie U. Rutherford as editor.

Candid Opinion, "a monthly journal of comment for thinking people", was established in Prescott by H. B. McKenzie in 1920.

The Daily Dinner Horn was published for a short time by C. B. Andrews.

The Prescott Daily Mail was started in 1947.

The Arkansas Dispatch

The Commercial

The Nevada News (a weekly paper)

There were three school papers—*The Dynamo, Jr. Hi Charter*, and *The Nevada County School News*. Bluff City High School had a paper called *The Bluff City Flash*. There were also three feature publications—*The Methodist Messenger, Arkansas White Ribboner*, and *The National Guardsman*.

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These publications, many with romantic names, were born, flourished, and passed into oblivion. Yet each one left its effect on mankind and its impression in the lives of those who perused their columns.

Nevada County now has only one weekly paper, *The Nevada County Picayune*. If you happen to have a copy of any of these old newspapers that no longer exist, please consider donating it to the Nevada County Depot Museum so that it can be preserved or microfilmed. You can also contact me and I will take care of it for you.

THE COST OF LIVING AS OTHERS DO **(from the 6-6-1913 issue of *The Nevada County Picayune*)**

Every one agrees that it costs more to live than it did twenty years ago, but opinions differ as to the cause. There are many causes, but one of the most important is that our expenses have grown with our needs. Invention has supplied all sorts of new facilities for living that have become necessities to most of us, and they all cost money.

Moreover, in a democratic society, where all are supposed to be equal, we do not like to be outdone by our neighbors, and urged by this feeling, we all push up our expenditures so as to be sure that we have what others have.

The trouble begins at the bottom. The young man entering business, with his living to earn and his way to make, should save every penny, live narrowly and avoid display if he wishes to succeed. Yet the fashions of expenditure about him—in dress, in amusement, in social relations are such that it takes exceptional strength of character to refuse to comply with them.

The difficulty is even greater when a man marries and has a family. It is not always easy to deny yourself; but to deny those dear to you is almost impossible. A man does not like to see his wife dress less handsomely than the wives of his associates. He even tells himself that her good appearance help his business reputation. Still harder is it to refuse things that seem to be necessary for the welfare of your children. “Really”, says mother, “living the way we live, I cannot see why Jane should not have all the opportunities the Smith children have.” Thereupon, Jane gets them, and father wonders how he is to pay.

The pity of it is that usually not one of them—father or mother or child—really cares. They simply must do as others do. And so the dance goes on.

There is no general remedy. You must apply reason and common sense to each individual case. At least keep a little behind the rush instead of a little in front of it. Then when a bad day comes, others will wish they had done as you did. If your neighbor gets an automobile, and your children clamor for the like, get a runabout instead of a touring car. If your daughters have fewer frocks and cheaper music lessons than their friends round the corner, that is better than ending up with no frocks and no music lessons at all.

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Let us keep our heads in this matter. The man who does not is infallibly driven sooner or later to the terrible question that men are asking all over the country today: "With my income, how can I live as I am living?" To this question there can be only two final and fatal answers—live differently or steal.

Which shall it be?

INTERESTING NEW ITEMS FROM DAYS GONE BY

The school at Gum Grove is progressing nicely and is being taught by Miss Alma Johnson, Principal and Mrs. Ruth Barlow, Assistant, having an average attendance of about 70 students. (from the Goose Ankle local news column of the *Prescott Daily News* 1-11-1922)

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Thad Buchanan was the first child born in Prescott. He was the son of W. P. "Press" Buchanan who came here in 1873 to work on the railroad. The Buchanan house was the oldest residence in Prescott located on West Third Street between Hazel and Walnut Streets. (*Prescott Daily News*--2-11-1938)

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The Just Can and Hardly Able Oil Companies will hold their annual meeting at the Broadway Hotel. (*Prescott Daily News*--2-16-1938)

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March 9, 1938—Amarillo, Texas was the site of a Mother-in-law parade. The parade was 12 miles long and was attended by Mrs. Franklin Roosevelt, who was presented with the world's largest bouquet consisting of 5,000 roses. A crowd of 125,000 attended the parade which featured a float shaped like a ship on which 600 mothers-in-law rode. (*Prescott Daily News*--3-10-1938)

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A new bus service announced. Arkansas Stages, Inc. will provide bus service of two round trips daily between Prescott to DeQueen via Dierks and Nashville. Another route will run from Prescott to Bluff City, Chidester, and on to Camden. (*Prescott Daily News*--3-14-1938)

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Bluff City is the first school in Nevada County to offer a hot lunch program. Hot lunches will be served to 225 students each day. The commodities are donated by the patrons of the school and labor is furnished by the WPA. (*Prescott Daily News*-- 1-10-1940)

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A course in Bible will be offered in the regular curriculum at Prescott High School. The classes will be conducted by various ministers in the city and will be open to juniors and seniors only. (*Prescott Daily News*--1-11-1940)

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The senior class of Bluff City High School has joined the national conservation movement by planting 2500 pine seedlings on two and one half acres of the school grounds as a demonstration pine forest. The class is led by Mrs. Denman. R. L. Cummings, Jr. is president of the class and Hazel Griffin is secretary. Other class members are: Mary Hildebrand, Georgia Hillery, Marie Andrews, Lewis Pruitt, Fred White, Elloene Moore, Mavis Nichols, Pauline Cummings, and Lorene Bevill. (*Prescott Daily News*--1-31-1940)

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Mr. C. C. Harvey has donated ten acres of land to be used in the gardening and canning project at Bluff City School. Bean, beets, mustard, spinach, cabbage, carrots, corn, lettuce, tomatoes, radishes, turnips, peas, onions, and potatoes will be grown. These will be used in the school's hot lunch program in late spring and the rest will be canned for use in the next school term. (*Prescott Daily News--2-14-1940*)

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The Bluff City Junior-Senior banquet was held at the Loda Hotel in Prescott. Covers for 38 were laid at the banquet table decorated with candles, ivy, and jonquils. At the speakers table were Mr. Basil Munn, Mr. Charles Henry, Mrs. C. C. Harvey, Miss Berthel Thompson, Mrs. Dale Denman, R. L. Cummings, Jr., president of the senior class, and Eva Dell Starnes, president of the junior class who also served as toastmaster for the evening.

During the evening, students of Mrs. Annie Lee Acker presented a floor show and Miss Jennie Lewis rendered several numbers on the accordion. After the banquet, the juniors and seniors enjoyed a theater party at the Nevada Theater where they saw "The Hunchback of Notre Dame". (*Prescott Daily News--3-6-1940*)

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Mrs. Zettie Griffith Jobe is the new recreational director at Bluff City. Softball teams have been organized for boys and girls in school and for the young married ladies. A croquet court has been built and table tennis and badminton courts have been laid off. Classes in Dramatics, Singing, Sewing, and Story Telling have been organized. Competitive games with the neighboring towns are being arranged. (*Prescott Daily News-- 3-7-1940*)

READER PARTICIPATION

Now is your chance. It's time for reader participation again. You may choose to answer any or all of the questions below. Send me your comments and I will publish them in the next couple of issues. Don't worry. I will only identify you with your initials and your state. Surely you have an opinion or an answer to some of these questions. You may send your answers by regular mail or e-mail. The addresses are at the top of page 1 of this issue.

1. If you could choose a time period in which to live, when would it be and why? If you could live anywhere in the world, where would it be and why?,
2. Describe a job you once had that was unusual.
3. What do you think was the greatest invention up to the present time? Why?
4. If you could live your life over, what changes would you make?
5. Do you think the United States has already reached its peak, or do you think our best days lie ahead? Explain why you feel the way you do.
6. If you could spend 30 minutes with a famous person, living or dead, who would it be? What would you ask them?