

**THE SANDYLAND CHRONICLE**  
**Vol. 9 – No. 1 (January, 2009)**  
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**GURDON MAN INVENTS FLYING MACHINE**  
**(from the 11-18-1910 issue of The Prescott Daily News)**

W. F. Morehead has spent several months working on a flying machine. It is now completed and has a 30 HP engine and a powerful propeller. This flying machine is of the monoplane type and is the first of its kind built in Arkansas. It is designed something like the French type of aircraft and has many features not found on other machines. The rear wheel of this machine is arranged so the aeroplane can be guided on the ground, and is controlled by the same lever that operates the rudder. This is the only aeroplane in the world, as far as we know, that has this feature. The machine measures 20 feet from tip to tip; the rudder runs 20 feet back; has an area of about 120 square feet of canvass and weighs 300 pounds.

The machine was built by Mr. Morehead himself and will be tried out in a few days. No attempt at flight will be made at first, but it will be run over the ground until he is thoroughly familiar with the controls. Then short jumps will be made, further each time. "I am confident the machine will fly", says Mr. Morehead.

**THE TEST**  
**(from the 11-21-1910 issue)**

In speeding overland with his aeroplane, Frank Morehead broke the propeller of his machine which will cost him about \$40 and will delay the "try-out" until it is replaced. Frank is highly elated over the experience in spite of the accident.

*Editor's Note:*

*No further reports were found regarding the testing of this flying machine. I found it interesting that someone in this area attempted to build an airplane. This was only seven years after the first airplane flight by the Wright brothers in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.*

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**ARMY FORBIDS SALE OF COCA-COLA**  
**from the 7-1-1907 issue of The Prescott Daily News**

The U. S. Army has issued orders forbidding the sale of "coca-cola" in post exchanges after reports concerning the effects of the drink and an analysis of the ingredients. In the majority of samples, Prof. Wiley, chief chemist, found traces of cocaine and caffeine. Officers reported to the War Dept. that enlisted men have discovered the effects the drink produces and, to get this effect, they drink six or seven glasses of the stuff and the result is injurious to health as well as destructive to morals.

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## BOOKLET FOR SALE

I have just completed a booklet on the history of Bluff City, Arkansas. It is about 56 pages in length and has many pictures of stores, churches, schools, and some of the former residents along with much historical information about the town. I am offering the booklet for sale to anyone interested. You may receive the booklet on a CD for only \$5 plus \$1.50 postage. A printed copy with plastic spiral binding is \$20 plus \$2.50 postage.

Contact me by email for more information or to place an order.  
sandman43@att.net

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## IN THE MAIL BAG

Dear Mr. McKelvy,

My sister, Mesilla Jean Miller (in Texarkana, Texas), and I, Warren Upton Ober (in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada), have long been faithful readers of the on-line edition of your delightful *Sandyland Chronicle*. As grandchildren of Percy C. Upton, we found especially poignant the story in your November 2008 issue, quoted from the February 26, 1890, issue of the *Nevada County Picayune*, about his being shot from behind while clearing new ground.

To the *Picayune* story I can provide an addendum handed down in our family. Certainly I have no reason to doubt its authenticity. My grandmother, it is said, after realizing what had happened, threw herself over my grandfather, who was lying helpless on the ground, and remained there to protect him. The would-be assassin, on horseback, rode closer and seemed to be debating what to do next. Since my grandmother refused to move, he finally turned away and rode off.

*The Picayune* ran a follow-up story on the shooting in its April 9, 1890, issue: "Mr. Presley [i.e., Percy] C. Upton, the young man who was so basely shot from behind on Feb. 22, near White's Ferry, is now about well. He was in town Saturday, shaking hands with friends. Eight buckshot hit him in the back, and his recovery is miraculous, but it is hard to kill a good solid Democrat like Mr. Upton. Drs. W. E. Arnold and N. Adams were the physicians who brought him through safely."

Percy C. Upton later opened a general store in Bluff City, prospered, and became one of the most respected and influential citizens in the area around "the Bluff." He and his first wife, Martha, had four children: Pearl, Jewelle, Percy, and Delilah. He and his second wife, Essie, had a daughter: Gwendolyn. Delilah was married to Andrew Clifton Ober, and the couple had three children: Warren Upton, Mesilla Jean, and Kenneth Harlan, who died in 2003. We three siblings attended the Bluff City Consolidated School until the school year 1939-40, when our family moved to Prescott, and it may be that some of your readers will remember us as schoolmates. Our grandfather suffered severe and constant pain from the buckshot that remained in his body throughout the rest of his life. At last his suffering became so intense that he insisted on an operation to remove the shot, even

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though the surgeon warned him beforehand that his chances of recovery from the operation were not good. He died shortly after the operation in 1927.

Best wishes for the continued success of the *Sandyland Chronicle*.

Warren U. Ober

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### CAN YOU HELP IDENTIFY THESE PEOPLE?

I have received several requests to include some of the old photos our ancestors had stored away in hopes that someone might recognize the people in the photo or possibly have the same photo with the people identified. The chances are slim that we will solve a puzzle, but it won't hurt to try. So, here is one of these old photos to consider. Shannon Edmonson says this photo belonged to James Neal and Mary Lee Walker Byrd, her grandparents, and could possibly be Byrds, Starnes, or Walkers in the picture. Let her know if you can help. Her e-mail is: [shedmonson@peoplepc.com](mailto:shedmonson@peoplepc.com)



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### WRESTLING IN PRESCOTT IN 1939 (from the 9-29-1939 issue of *The Prescott Daily News*)

Weekly wrestling matches are advertised in Prescott. The next match will be between “Silent” Rotan, the deaf and dumb Russian vs. Jim Nelson. Five local colored boxers will also compete. Each will be blindfolded and have one hand tied behind their back. This should prove to be an interesting feature. Admission—25 cents.

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## THE FORGOTTEN ANIMAL

(Author Unknown)

(from the 3-31-1938 issue of The Nevada County Picayune)

Oh, horse, you are a wonderful brute,  
No button to push, no horn to toot.  
You start yourself; no clutch to slip,  
No sparks to miss, no gears to strip.  
No license to buy for you every year,  
No plates to screw on front and rear.  
No gas bills climbing on you each day  
To steal the joys of life away.  
Your inner tubes are all o.k.  
And thank the Lord, they stay that way.  
Your spark plugs never miss or fuss,  
Your motor never makes a cuss.  
Your frame is good for many a mile,  
Your body never changes style.  
You carry the husband, children, and wife,  
A very safe way to go through life.  
All you need is corn and hay  
To carry you from day to day.  
A very slow way, each day of the year,  
But safe and sound, don't ever fear.  
Your wants are few and easy met,  
You've something on the auto yet.

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## FORD CAR AD FROM 1927

---Car has unusual speed—able to reach 55 to 60 miles per hour with ease  
---Car has three forward speeds and one reverse  
---Has steel spoke wheels with only 30 spokes per wheel  
---Comes in four colors—Niagara Blue, Arabian Sand, Dawn Gray, and Gun Metal Blue  
---Standard equipment includes starter, five steel spoke wheels, windshield wiper, speedometer, gas gauge, door lock, mirror, rear stop light, oil gauge, ignition lock, and complete tool set  
---Prices: Tudor Sedan-\$495; Fordor Sedan- \$570; Roadster-\$385; Coupe-\$495; Sport Coupe-\$550; Phaeton-\$395

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## THE GEM CAFE



Here's another mystery. Does anyone know where the Gem Café was located? This picture had on the back—"This is our café.—Rilla". This could be Rilla Carter from Bluff City. The sign on the tall building next door appears to read "Roe Motor Co.—Chrysler-Plymouth". The car in the bottom right appears to be from the 1940s. Let me know if you have any information about this picture.

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### A message from Jerry McKelvy:

Some articles from the January issue were not included in this Internet edition. If you would like to receive the full issue including filler material such as recipes, quotations, poems, and a few articles I have written, just notify me by email and I will add you to the email list. My email address is at the top of page 1.

THE SANDYLAND CHRONICLE  
PRESERVING THE HISTORY OF NEVADA COUNTY AND THE  
SURROUNDING AREAS OF SOUTHWEST ARKANSAS