

THE SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

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THE OLD WASH POT

We are fortunate to live at a time when washing clothes is so easy even though it is still not a favorite thing to do. All we have to do is sort some clothes, throw them in an automatic clothes washer, add some detergent, punch a few buttons, and wait. Then we transfer them into an automatic clothes dryer and soon we have clean clothes ready to wear or hang in the closet.

For our ancestors it was a different story. The women usually had the job of keeping the clothes clean for the entire family and families were much larger in those days. Disposable diapers had not been invented, so all those cloth diapers had to be washed by hand. Aren't you glad you live in these modern times?

When talking about washing clothes, I guess you could go all the way back to the days when women gathered at a stream to take advantage of the naturally running water to wash the clothes. As the land was settled, everyone could not live by a stream. Wells had to be dug for water and those wells or a nearby spring furnished water for washing clothes, or maybe rain water was collected in barrels for that purpose.

The cast iron wash pot soon came into existence and the job could be done right outside in the yard. The first task was to fill the wash pot with water which had to be carried from a well or spring before electricity was available. Some people set up the wash pot near a

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spring to avoid having to carry water so far. Firewood had to be gathered for the fire under the wash pot. It must be added carefully during the washing process to keep from stirring up the ashes. A good stick or paddle was needed to move the clothes around in the hot soapy water. The soap in those days was usually homemade lye soap--a story in itself. After the dirty clothes had been in the hot water for awhile, they would be removed with the stick or an old broom handle and placed in a wash tub filled with clean water. They were then scrubbed by hand on a scrub board to remove all the stains. This was hard work and not easy on the hands. They would then be rinsed in another wash tub of cold water, the excess water wrung out, and then placed on the clothes line to dry. Some of the least important things might be draped on a flower bush or a nearby fence.

Most families had a certain day of the week they called "wash day". It usually took all day to get the job done, so a day was set aside for that purpose. I think Mondays was the usual wash day, but some families washed on other days. Clothes might be worn more than one day which didn't matter too much because some people only took a bath once or twice each week anyway. Saturday was the big day for taking baths. Many of the older folks can remember taking baths in a No. 2 wash tub or one of the oblong shaped galvanized tubs used for that purpose.

I may have left out a few steps in washing clothes because I didn't get in on too much of that as I was growing up. I do remember washing clothes in a wash pot, but by the time I came along, most farms had electricity and the electric wringer washer was popular. Electricity changed everything, so I consider it one of the greatest inventions.

The electric wringer washer made it necessary for it to be located near an electric outlet. That might be on a back porch or a separate "wash house". Ours was in the wash house which was connected to the smoke house.

We had a wringer washer long before we ever got an electric clothes dryer. Drying clothes outside was practical since all that sunshine and wind was free. The main problem was what to do in a period of rainy weather. In that case, the clothes might have to be draped around inside the house until they got dry.

The good clothes had to be ironed since permanent press had not yet been invented. I can remember doing a little ironing, especially things like handkerchiefs. If I scorched one of those it wasn't be too bad. I remember the old RC Cola bottle with a sprinkler on top that was used to sprinkle the clothes with water while ironing and the light hanging from the ceiling by a long cord with a place to plug in the iron.

The old iron smoothing irons our ancestors used before electricity was a whole different story, but that was before my time. Maybe some of you can tell us about using those type irons or describe wash days as you remember them.

With the coming of electricity to the farms, the old wash pot soon became a thing of the past. They had many uses in the old days. They could also be used for making soap or cooking hominy. Many of them are now used as planters for flowers or sold to antique

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dealers. If you have one, you had better hold on to it. They don't make them anymore. *Note: How about some of you readers telling us about some of your wash day memories in the old days? The picture of the wash pot on page 1 is not from washing clothes. It is actually a picture of my mother making hominy in our wash pot.*

I came across this poem which may bring back some memories of washing clothes in the old days.

CLOTHES LINES

A clothesline was a news forecast
To neighbors passing by.
There were no secrets you could keep
When clothes were hung to dry.

It also was a friendly link
For neighbors always knew
If company had stopped on by
To spend a night or two.

For then you'd see the fancy sheets
And towels upon the line;
You'd see the company table clothes
With intricate design.

The line announced a baby's birth
To folks who lived inside
As brand new infant clothes were hung
So carefully with pride.

The ages of the children could
So readily be known
By watching how the sizes changed
You'd know how much they'd grown.

It also told when illness struck,
As extra sheets were hung;
Then nightclothes, and a bathrobe, too,
Haphazardly were strung.

It said, "Gone on vacation now"
When lines hung limp and bare,
It told, "We're back!" when full lines
sagged
With not an inch to spare.

New folks in town were scorned upon
If wash was dingy gray,
As neighbors raised their brows,
And looked disgustedly away.

But clotheslines now are of the past
For dryers make work less.
Now what goes on inside a home
Is anybody's guess.

I really miss that way of life.
It was a friendly sign
When neighbors knew each other best
By what hung on the line!

Author unknown

ISLAND WITHOUT WOMEN IS FOUND (from the November 14, 1931 issue of *The Camden News*)

Four miles from the heart of the Memphis downtown business district, this island domain is a womanless paradise for no white women live here.

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The island sticks its muddy prow into the swift currents of the Mississippi river. It is only accessible by boat or packet. Regular passenger service between the island and the mainland is maintained by principal owner, Joe Sailors, who operates a plantation here.

Sailors employs upwards of 100 Negroes on his land. Much of the time he is here directing the work, though his residence is in Memphis.

Management of the plantation is entrusted to Brick Woods, who with the exception of one week spent in a Memphis hospital has lived on the island for the past nine years. During one period, he was on the island ten months without leaving.

Sailors has 31 Negro families on the plantation. The total population of the island is about 300.

“Men come over sometimes and bring their wives and sweethearts for an outing,” Sailors said, “but it usually is a womanless paradise of white men.”

The quiet of the island never has been broken by the automobile engine. Life on the island, except for modern improvements at the “big house”, is just about like it was 100 years ago.

Sailors, more commonly known as “Mr. Joe”, runs his place much the same as if it were an old time plantation. Life of the Negroes is simple and carefree.

There is a Negro Baptist church on the island and the old Negroes said when the services were held, members came out of the bushes. High and dry on the middle of the island on the big stretch of sand running its entire length is the former baptizing place.

The river played havoc with it as it has with other spots on the island. Once the cemetery was washed away and another time, the storage spot for liquor was sent downstream in the whirling, muddy waters.

On the Sailors plantation, there are 100 head of hogs, all kinds of chickens and turkeys, and 60 mules. Wild game and birds make the island much sought by hunters.



I asked in the January issue if anyone had any information about this photo. The Meador family says the lady on the right in the photo is indeed Rilla Carter from Bluff City. They say that at one time she worked at or was part owner of a café in Cheyenne, Wyoming. The note on the back of the photo said, “This is our café.” So, maybe we solved this puzzle.

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A SAD INCIDENT

(from the 6-15-1887 issue of *The Nevada County Picayune*)

OK, ladies. Get out your handkerchiefs for this one.

During the tumult and excitement of the late war, one of the saddest incidents that occurred was the marriage and death of Annie, eldest daughter of Gov. Pickins of South Carolina. In the midst of the great events of the war, such tragedies were comparatively unnoticed, but now that time has calmed the troubled sea of strife and contention, a picture of that scene will be of general interest, and will awaken a cord of sympathy in the hearts of all who read it.

On April 22, 1863, in Charleston, SC, at the residence of Gov. Pickins, a party was assembled to witness the marriage ceremony of Annie Pickins to Lieut. LeRochelle. It was a time when terror and anguish was prevailing throughout the entire South, and the booming of the Union guns then roared in the harbors, but the little number who had collected together had determined to smile, even though their hearts were aching and they were trembling with terror.

Beneath the soft light of the chandelier, the clergyman stood with the habiliments of the church enshrouding his venerable form. Before him was the noble young Lieutenant in his official uniform, while before him leant the beautiful woman who was to become his wife. There she stood, regal and proud; possessing everything that prestige of birth, rank, and wealth could give.

“Are you ready?”, asked the minister, unclasping his book. “Yes,” said LeRochelle, taking the hand of his bride.

Hardly was the answer uttered than there was an awful crash. A shell from the enemy’s guns had penetrated the mansion, bursting in the midst of the marriage scene, and scattering its deadly missiles around; men trembled and women screamed, mirrors were slivered, and for a moment the walls seemed to rock to and fro. In a few moments quiet reigned, and it was ascertained that the only fatal wound received was in the left temple of the waiting bride, who lay like a beautiful crushed flower in the arms of her agonized lover. Laying her on a lounge, he bent over her and in a moan of despair, prayed that she would become his wife. Her quick-drawn breath melted in a sigh as the lips smiled assent. There she lay, pure and white as the cluster of camellias at her breast, while the crimson life-tide oozed in heavy drops from the death wound on her brow and coursed its stream over the lovely cheek, marring the snowy clouds of her bridal veil that enveloped her. The ceremony was of few words, and the “yes” was murmured in a dying whisper beneath the husband’s kiss. In a moment, it was all over, a little struggle and she was dead.

Beneath the cool deep shadows of the magnolia, Annie Pickens LeRochelle was laid to rest, where the sad wail of the waters sighed an eternal requiem, while the brave young soldier went his way in the fire and danger of battle to serve his country and his God. He little feared the sword or the bullets of war, for ever in his heart there was a wound more cruel than death and lasting as life.

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A FATHER'S GOOD ADVICE (from the 2-16-1887 issue of The Nevada County Picayune)

Note: The following was written by the father of the Tennessee's new governor, Bob Taylor and received by him on the day of his inauguration. It's too bad most of our modern-day politicians do not seem to follow these principles.

Jan. 17, 1887
Hon. R. L. Taylor,

My dear son: As you enter today on your official career as governor of Tennessee, I want to say a few things by way of encouragement and warning.

As a public officer your success or failure will be in proportion to your observance of certain simple rules.

1. Learn all your duties.
2. Then promptly and fearlessly discharge them.
3. In every transaction, be governed by the (1) requirements of the law, (2) by the demands of an enlightened conscience, (3) sanctioned by the exactions of the supreme divine code.
4. Let no temptation, however fascinating and attractive, however plausible, induce you to ignore the requirements of your self-respect, or to forget that the eye of God is always upon you and that the recording angel unerringly journalizes our lives, and the record will meet us on judgment and determine our eternal fate.
5. Let your promises be few and strictly performed.
6. Don't forget that the eyes of jealous rivals, false friends, and open enemies are open to all you say and do--therefore think much and often and let your words be few and well chosen.
7. In all questionable cases, choose to say and do those things that are clearly right and never doubtful.
8. Remember and forget not that all the material treasures of this world cannot restore a bankrupt character or replace a ruined reputation.
9. Do right under all circumstances, even at the sacrifice of place, power, and the prospect of wealth, even if it keeps you poor to the end of life.
10. Place your hand in the hand of Jesus and beg His guidance and protection in every condition and contingency of life, and may the love and peace of God be with you always.

Affectionately your father, N. G. Taylor

KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR BILLFOLD (this story appeared in the 1-13-1939 issue of The Camden News)

Rector, Ark.—W. F. Waddell, farmer living near here, has workmen wiring his home for electricity this week, because he butchered a calf that had just eaten a billfold containing \$60 that had been laid aside to finance the work.

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Waddell, when called upon to post the money for the wiring, discovered that the billfold containing three twenty dollar bills had dropped from his shirt pocket.

Search of the farm home's yard failed to disclose any trace of the missing billfold or its contents, when a neighbor noticed a calf standing in the barn lot chewing something.

Examination disclosed part of the billfold in the calf's mouth. At the suggestion and with the help of neighbors, Waddell butchered the calf finding his three twenty dollar bills intact in the animal's stomach.

Mrs. Waddell preserved the calf meat by canning it, and the family will soon have electricity.

NICKNAMES OF SOME ARKANSAS CITIES

Match the city with its nickname (answers on page 8)

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| ___ 1. Alma | A. The Spa City |
| ___ 2. Berryville | B. Spinach Capital of the World |
| ___ 3. Brinkley | C. City of Roses |
| ___ 4. Camden | D. Crepe Myrtle City |
| ___ 5. Conway | E. Turkey Capital |
| ___ 6. El Dorado | F. Brick Capital of the World |
| ___ 7. Eureka Springs | G. Where History Lives |
| ___ 8. Emerson | H. City of Colleges |
| ___ 9. Hope | I. Town With a Past, City With a Future |
| ___ 10. Hot Springs | J. Quarz Crystal Capital of the World |
| ___ 11. Jonesboro | K. City of Fountains, Parks, and Bridges |
| ___ 12. Little Rock | L. The Biggest Little Town in Arkansas |
| ___ 13. Lowell | M. Home of the Ivory Billed Woodpecker |
| ___ 14. Malvern | N. Watermelon Capital of the World |
| ___ 15. Mt. Ida | O. Rice and Duck Capital of the World |
| ___ 16. Mountain View | P. Peach Capital |
| ___ 17. Nashville | Q. Folk Music Capital of the World |
| ___ 18. Stuttgart | R. Arkansas' Original Boomtown |
| ___ 19. Siloam Springs | S. Little Switzerland |

THE JASPERS SOCIAL CLUB

In the early 1890s, there was a social club in Prescott called "The Jaspers". The membership consisted of the best young people of Prescott and the purpose was to provide wholesome amusement and pleasure for the members. Weekly parties were planned at the homes of the members and in the spring and summer, there were all-day picnics at Gray's Lake and Chamblis Springs.

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The young men saw that each lady got to go to all the parties and picnics. An iron-clad custom was that each Sunday at 2 p.m., the young men would meet somewhere and go in a group to each girl's home. The girls were always at home since there were no cars in those days. The girls would be dressed up and a fine time was had by all.

Much romance was involved and marriages began to result between members of the club. Almost all of the members ended up marrying another member of the club. After most were married, they began to have annual reunions on Christmas night each year. This tradition was carried on for several years.

JELL-O BANANA PUDDING CAKE

1 small Jello instant banana cream sugar free pudding and pie filling
1 box banana or yellow cake mix
4 eggs
1 cup water
1/4 cup oil
1/2 cup mashed bananas (one half cup)

Combine all ingredients in large bowl. Blend, then beat with electric mixer for 2 minutes. Pour into greased and floured 10" tube or bundt pan. Bake for 50-55 minutes or until cake springs back when lightly touched. Cool in pan for 15 minutes. Remove. When cool, drizzle with glaze made with 1 cup confectioner's sugar and one tablespoon milk.

MAPLE NUT PIE

(from Mrs. Ella Loe--Prescott, AR--published in *Nevada County Picayune*)

2 eggs
1 can sweetened condensed milk
3/4 cup maple flavored syrup
1 cup pecans
1 baked pie crust
Whipped cream
1/4 cup toasted coconut

Beat eggs slightly. Add to milk and syrup. Bring slowly to a boil and cook 5 minutes or until thick. Add pecans to filling. Cool. Pour into baked crust. Top with whipped cream and toasted coconut. Chill and serve.

Answers to quiz: 1-B; 2-E; 3-M; 4-G; 5-H; 6-R; 7-S; 8-L; 9-N; 10-A; 11-D; 12-C; 13-I; 14-F; 15-J; 16-Q; 17-P; 18-O; 19-K

“As seedlings of God, we barely blossom on Earth, we fully flower in Heaven.” *Russell M. Nelson*