

Jerry McKeiv's
SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

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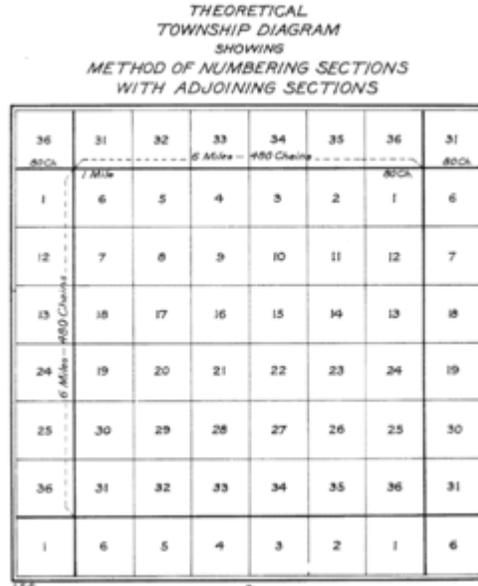
I'm not sure which school this is, but I thought it was an interesting picture. Notice that the boys and girls are segregated in this photo. Also notice the two boys on the left side with their tongues hanging out. I'm sure they had it all made up to do this when the picture was taken. I remember an episode of "Leave It to Beaver" in which Beaver and some other boys had planned to make a funny face when a class picture was taken, but it turned out that Beaver was the only one who actually did it and it ruined the group picture. I would imagine the teacher in this photo had a few words with these two boys later on and I suspect the student with the big grin behind them was probably in on this prank.

SURVEYING-PART TWO

In the last issue, we discussed how the townships were formed and numbered beginning at the Initial Point established by surveyors in 1815. Remember, a township was a block of land six miles square.

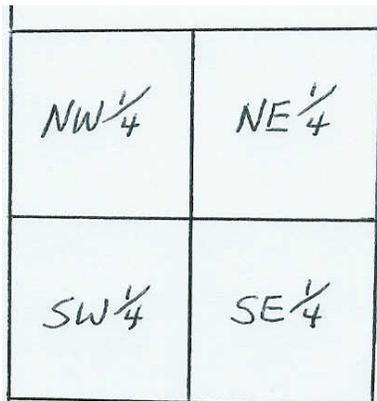
SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

Now we need to see how those blocks of land called townships were subdivided into smaller parcels. We will now learn a new term (sections). Each township was divided into 36 sections. Each of these sections was one mile square and contained 640 acres. These sections were then numbered as shown below. I don't know why they started in the upper right corner and numbered backwards, but that's the way it was done. You need to know this numbering scheme since many county maps only show section numbers in each corner of the township. If you know the numbering scheme, you can fill in the section numbers for the whole township.



Now imagine you own some land and your deed says it is located in Section 10, Township 12 South, Range 20 West. This puts the land in Nevada County, Arkansas. By looking at a good county map, you will be able to find your land on the map. The only problem is that you still are talking about Section 10 which is one mile square and contains 640 acres. Suppose you only own 80 acres in that section. You still can't exactly pin-point your land unless you have a more detailed description.

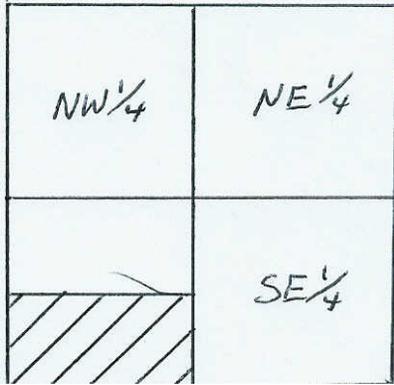
This is where many people get confused. It helps if you know your directions--north, south, east, and west. Most people know that north is normally at the top of a map and south is at the bottom. West would be on the left side and east on the right side. Just remember it spells the word "WE". That's the way it is on most maps. If the directions are different, it should be noted on the map.



Now, let's look at a close-up map of section 10 where your land is located. Remember, that in most cases, a section of land contains 640 acres. There are a few exceptions to this rule also. As you can see from the section map to the left, I have divided the section into quarters. All these interior lines would have to be surveyed to make sure they are in the correct place. We can then assign a legal description to each of the four quarters of the section (SW¹/₄, NW¹/₄, NE¹/₄, and SE¹/₄). Here is your first problem. How many acres would be in each of these quarters? *The answer is 160 acres (640 divided by 4).*

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

Now, remember that you own 80 acres in this section. You look at your deed and it has this for the legal description--South half of the Southwest Quarter of Section 10, Township 12 South, Range 20 West, containing 80 acres, more or less. Using that information, go to the section map and figure out the location of your land. It will be the area cross-hatched on the map. As you



can see, it is the south half of the southwest quarter of the section. Here is problem number two. What is the distance of the north side of your property and what is the distance of the west side of your property? *The answer is: Your north boundary is a half mile long and your west boundary is a quarter mile long. Remember, a section is one mile square.*

Now, let's say you had an opportunity to buy 40 acres in the extreme northwest corner of Section 10. You need to go look at the property. Of course, the seller or real estate agent would usually take you to the property, but for our lesson, we will assume that you are going to try to find it on your own.

First, you will need a good map that shows Section 10. There are some maps available that show the sections. You need one like that so you can pick out Section 10. You will have to use the numbering scheme I discussed earlier to find Section 10. You know the land for sale is 40 acres in the extreme northwest corner of the section. That will get you in the neighborhood of the land for sale. If the land is located on a road, you might be able to find it easily, but an aerial photo would really help you find it. Aerial photos are now available on the Internet and are used by foresters and others to help them be sure they are on the right property. They also check marked property corners to help them locate a particular piece of property.

Well, let's assume you made it to the land that was for sale in Section 10 and think it is suitable for your use. You would like to walk over it because who would buy land without first checking it out? Let's say there is a highway on the west side of the 40 acres which means the property has good access. That would increase the value of the land. Now your problem is how far do you walk off the road until you get off the land that is for sale? Usually, the boundaries would be fenced or painted, but let's assume there are no fences and no painted lines around the property. First you have to determine if the 40 acres is in the form of a square or is it a rectangle or some other shape. You get that from the land description. You look at the paper you have and it describes the property as the Northwest Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of Section 10, Township 12 South, Range 20 West. From this description, you know that it is in the form of a square. Problem number three--how far off the highway would you walk going east until you get off the property for sale? *The answer is a quarter of a mile. A square forty acres would be one-fourth mile on each side.*

Now, your next problem. You are not too familiar with walking in the woods, so how do you know how far you have walked? There are several ways. You would need a compass to keep you going in a straight line and to keep you from getting lost. I learned long ago to always carry a good compass and never argue with it. You can easily get turned around in the woods especially on cloudy days. Someone once asked Daniel Boone if he had ever been lost in the woods. He replied, "I can't say that I've ever been lost, but I was bewildered once for three

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

days".

You would also need some way to keep up with how far you have walked. Foresters use something called "pacing" to measure how far they walk. A taller person would probably need fewer paces than a short person to cover a certain distance simply because their legs are longer. An experienced pacer knows how many paces they would need to walk to reach the quarter mile point. They have to allow for heavy brush or other obstacles as they count. With experience a person can get pretty close by using pacing to keep up with how far they have walked. Most just count the paces silently as they walk along. Problem number four--how many feet is in a quarter mile? Hint: There are 5,280 feet in a mile. *The answer is 1,320 feet.*

Another way to measure the distance would be using some type of measuring device. Surveyors and foresters measure distances in "chains". A "chain" is a distance of 66 feet. They make a metal tape 100 feet long that can be dragged through the woods. You would need two people to use this. Surveyors use this method to measure distances in the woods. Another method is something called a "hip-chain". This fits on your belt and contains a spool of thread. The thread passes through a counter which will show how many feet you have walked. You just tie the thread to a bush, set the counter to zero, and take off walking. When you reach 1320 feet, you know you have walked a quarter mile, give or take a few feet. They also make a wheel that can be rolled to measure distances, but those are not practical for use in the woods. You could also look for timber changes when you get close to the boundary line. You might have hardwood timber on one side and a pine plantation or a field on the other.

This is probably enough for this issue. Next issue we will have a few more survey problems and discuss boundary lines, property corners, witness trees, and posting land.

Let me know if you think this is helpful information or if you are now hopelessly lost.

COST OF THE WHITE HOUSE **(from the 8-25-1886 issue of *The Nevada County Picayune*)**

Most people believe that the \$50,000 a year which the presidents gets as his salary is the sum total. This is a mistake. The estimate of the amount which Congress is to apportion this year lies before us open at the page relating to the president. We see that \$36,061 is asked for him, in addition to his salary of \$50,000, to pay the salaries of his subordinates and clerks. His private secretary is paid \$3,250; his assistant private secretary \$2,250; his stenographer \$1,800; five messengers each \$1,200; a steward \$1,800; two door keepers who each get \$1,200; four other clerks at good salaries; one telegraph operator; two ushers getting \$1,200 and \$1,400; a night usher getting \$1,200; a watchman who gets \$900; a man to take care of fires who receives \$864 a year. In addition to this, there is set down \$8,000 for incidental expenses such as stationery, carpets, and the care of the president's stables. And further on, under another heading, there is a demand for nearly \$40,000 more. Of this, \$12,000 is for repairs and furnishing the White House, \$2,500 for fuel, \$3,000 for the green house, and \$15,000

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

for gas, matches, and the stables. The White House, all told, costs the country, in connection with the president, considerably over \$125,000 a year.

OLD WIVES' TALES

We have all heard about old wives' tales on just about every subject imaginable. I wonder why the old wives got stuck with this and not the old husbands. Is it because old women tend to gossip more than old men? Maybe it could be that the old women are wiser than the old men and therefore able to come up with all those bits of advice or superstitions about certain things.

In the old days many of the older women got together in homes and spent hours making quilts. This was a good time for them to catch up on all the latest gossip. Maybe that's where some of these old wives' tales originated. But we all know that the old men tended to congregate at the local general store and "shoot the breeze" on just about any subject. Surely the old men came up with a few good bits of advice that needed to be passed on down to those that came after them, but we never hear of "old husband's tales" unless they involved hunting or fishing. Some say that the old husbands were the ones responsible for spreading the old wives' tales.

Many of the old wives' tales have proven to be myths. I think some were designed to discourage improper behavior by children such as telling them if they swallowed their gum, it would stick to their ribs and take seven years to digest or if they swallowed a watermelon seed, a melon vine would grow out of their ears. I have to admit that when I see a black cat cross the road in front of me, I am reminded of the superstition that this means bad luck. I also try to avoid walking under ladders and try to be extra careful on Friday the 13th.

I was told recently about an old cure for thrush in a baby's mouth. To be cured you had to find someone who had never seen their father and this person would blow into the mouth of the baby and this supposedly would cure the thrush. Mrs. Ibra Plyler was the person in our part of Nevada County that met the qualifications to perform this procedure. Everyone in the community who had a baby with the thrush would make a visit to Mrs. Plyler to have her blow into the baby's mouth and sometimes these visits were in the middle of the night.

I did a search for "old wives tales" and found one web site that listed the top ten old wives' tales that are true. Included in this list is the old saying "an apple a day keeps the doctor away". I'm sure we would all be better off if we ate more fruits and vegetables. I did a quick calculation on this. If an apple cost fifty cents and you ate one every day, you would spend \$182.50 per year on apples. That's a lot of money, but might still be cheaper than a visit to the doctor's office.

Another one on the list is "don't drink the water from the hot water tap". It has something to do with hot water dissolving contaminants from the water pipes. Wouldn't boiling a pot of cold water on the stove do the same thing?

One I had never heard about was "Drano drain cleaner can help determine the sex of an unborn baby". It seems that up until the company changed their formula, a woman could do an

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

experiment using Drano and a urine sample to determine whether she would have a boy or girl baby. Since the company changed their product, the experiment no longer works.

Also on the list of true old wives' tales was "eat the crust on bread because it is good for you". The experts say the crust has eight times more antioxidants than the other part of the bread, so it should be better for you. Some people may not know this because at one of our church pot luck dinners, I noticed a platter of little sandwiches with all the crust removed. I guess it depends on which old wives' tale you listen to because another one says the crust on bread will make your hair curly.

Another supposedly true old wives' tale is that a bar of soap placed in your bed near your legs will prevent leg cramps at night. I guess it wouldn't hurt to try this, but for some reason it just doesn't seem reasonable to me.

If you want to see the rest of the list of true old wives' tales, go to this web site—

<http://www.marksdailyapple.com/old-wives-tales/>

The following web site has a long list of old wives' tales, folklore, superstitions, etc. on just about every subject---

<http://www.corsinet.com/trivia/scary.html>

LACKLAND SPRINGS—FOX HUNTER'S PARADISE

The Arkansas State Fox Hunters Association met at Lackland Springs in November, 1940 for a four day hunt. There were about 300 men with 500 hounds from Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Missouri, Georgia, Kentucky, South Carolina, and other states. The Prescott Band provided music for the opening festivities. The featured speaker was governor-elect Homer Atkins. Prizes were awarded for the best dogs in several categories. The visitors were well pleased with the location and called Lackland Springs a Fox Hunter's Paradise.

Note: Lackland Springs in Nevada County was a well-known resort in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Many people from Prescott camped there for several days at a time, fished in Caney Creek, went squirrel hunting, or just relaxed and enjoyed themselves. The waters of the springs were said to cure certain diseases. The area was not maintained properly and many felt that Lackland Springs would become famous if someone would just take an interest in the area and keep it properly maintained. Today, the springs have filled in and the area has gone back to nature. It is mostly used by deer hunters who camp there during hunting season.



RAINFALL REPORT--

Sandy is glad summer is over. Rainfall record for 2012 (at my house)—Jan. (3.3 in.); Feb. (4.1 in.); Mar. (10.0 in.); Apr. (3.8 in.); May (none); June (2.0 in.); July (6.9 in.); Aug. (7.2 in.) Total – **(37.3 inches)**

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

HENS ATE DEADLY DYNAMITE

The Nevada County Picayune

10-15-1910

Now Their Owner Does Not Dare Go Near Them and is Afraid to Eat Their Eggs

Winsted, Conn.--A man who has a small farm a few miles from this town does not dare to trample on a small portion of it, and is afraid to eat his own hen eggs. Heavy fowls he had been fattening for Thanksgiving are immune from death for the present, so far as killing them is concerned.

Dynamite is the cause of his trouble. He opened two one-pound sticks of the explosive, into which a little frost had found its way, and after breaking the cylinders into pieces spread them on a flat stone in the sun to dry. He meant to use the dynamite in a lot he is clearing.

When he went to get the explosive after he had drilled holes in a big boulder, he saw a flock of his hens scratching in the dynamite and eating it as they would eat small gravel. That's why the farmer does not dare to eat his own hens' eggs, for he fears particles of the dynamite may lurk in the shells.

"Who knows where that dynamite they ate is now?" he said sadly. "Suppose it's got into the shell? Think I'd run the risk of cracking one of those egg shells? Yet how are you going to eat eggs without breaking the shells?"

And there's the story in an egg shell. The puzzled farmer cannot tell by the looks of his hens which ate the dynamite; therefore he doesn't dare to eat any of them at Thanksgiving. As for swinging heavily on their heads with an axe, he shudders at the thought.

This news story reminded me about the episode on The Andy Griffith Show in which a farmer's goat ate some dynamite and everyone was afraid he might explode. I remember Sheriff Andy's statement that "somewhere in Mayberry is a loaded goat". It pays to be careful when dealing with explosives. Here is another news story concerning dynamite involving a Bluff City man:

J. L. Purifoy Accident

Feb., 1920

J. L. Purifoy, a farmer of near Bluff City, suffered the painful misfortune of having the ball of his left eye practically blown out when a stick of dynamite exploded unexpectedly. He was brought to Prescott where an operation was performed to remove the remaining portions of his eye.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

Mr. Purifoy was clearing some land and was using dynamite to blow out the stumps. He placed a charge under a stump and waited for a reasonable amount of time. When the charge did not explode, he got down on his knees to blow on the fuse thinking it might have gone out. The fuse being in the ground did not burn as fast, and the charge exploded unexpectedly causing the injury. He has suffered continuously since the accident, but after the operation, was reported to be doing well.

GETTING OLD (from the 12-14-1914 issue of *The Nevada County Picayune*)

You are floating down the current, you are drifting with the tide,
You are getting nearer every day to that great ocean wide.

All your joints are getting rusty, age creeps on you unawares,
And no more you feel upon your brow youth's soft and balmy air.

But what's the use to worry when the storm is raging wild?
A little farther on, perhaps, the weather may get mild.

And there's still a hope to cheer you as your boatlet speeds along,
And there's still a daily reason for a bit of cheerful song.

You are drifting down the stream of time, the days are going by,
But it doesn't do a bit of good to weep and pine and sigh.

You are gliding down the river, and it's hard to keep afloat,
But you needn't wheeze and chug and snort like some old motor boat.

With your hand upon the rudder and your eye upon a star,
Keep the singing heart within you till you drift across the bar.

Local News From the Sandy Land **July and August**

Arkansas endured another unusually dry and hot summer in 2012. Most of the gardens burned up unless they were irrigated. Despite the dry and hot weather, we still had more produce than we could use, especially tomatoes and cucumbers. Those who purchased purple hull peas or other produce discovered that prices were much higher this year.

Lower White Oak Lake was completely drained so that some repairs could be made. It is strange to drive by the lake and see nothing but bare land and tree stumps. The water level in our farm ponds is still low, but not quite as bad as last year. It takes a lot of rain to fill up a pond after it goes dry.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

Finally in late August, we received a good soaking rain thanks to Hurricane Isaac. Ouachita County and areas further to the east got three inches or more. Bluff City only got about two inches but every drop counts in the Sandy Land. Although some people had damages from flooding and tornadoes in Louisiana and Mississippi, our rain was on the gentle side with very little wind damage. These type storms can be both destructive and beneficial, depending on where you live.

White Oak Lake State Park is still open for business despite the lake draw-down. That park has become quite popular with campers in recent years. The park has been an asset for both Nevada and Ouachita counties. A pavilion under the tall pine trees can be rented for reunions, company picnics, or other activities.

Gas prices have been high for some time now and as Labor Day approached, they got even higher--up to \$3.65 per gallon in some places. The hurricane may have had some effect on the gas prices. I think most people are now accustomed to the higher prices. Even if it dropped to \$3.00 per gallon, we would think that was cheap these days. Four years ago, the national average was \$1.83 per gallon. Most of us have had to make some adjustments in our lifestyle due to the high gas prices.

Deaths reported in July and August were:

Helen Kathleen Smith--July 2; burial at Bluff City Cem.

Hazel Plyler--July 6; burial at Ebenezer Cem.

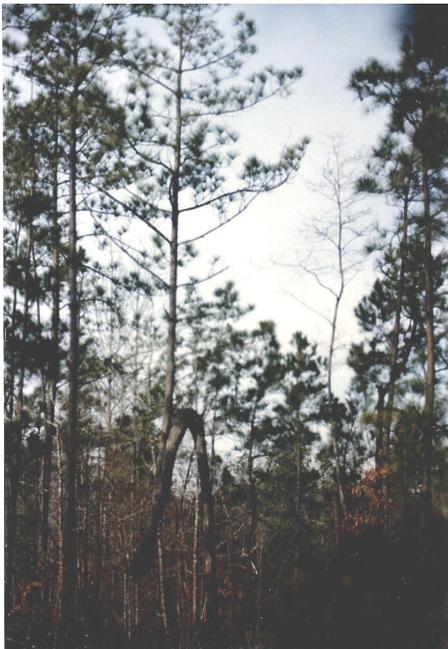
David Sims--July 7; burial at St. John Cem.

Raymond Hicks--July 17; burial at Caney Cem.

Clifford Lemons Jr.--July 19; burial at Bluff City Cem.

Ted Edison Starnes--August 21; burial at Bluff City Cem.

DEALING WITH ADVERSITY



Several years ago when I was working near Willisville, I came across this tree out in the woods. It was a pine tree about eight inches in diameter and as you can see, it did not look like a normal tree. About fifteen feet from the ground the trunk made a sharp turn toward the ground for about eight feet and then made another sharp turn and grew straight like a normal tree. Some sort of trauma happened to this tree, but even after this, the tree recovered and grew into a straight tree approximately fifty feet tall. It didn't give up.

This reminds me of a story I came across in an old newspaper about a young woman who faced a terrible situation in her life and overcame her handicap in a most remarkable way.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

Her name was Katherine M. Smith, known as Klittie. She was born in Chicago on October 29, 1882. She had two older brothers and a younger sister. At age nine, her mother passed away and she found herself living with an abusive and alcoholic father—not the ideal situation for a young girl.

One day her father told her to cook the Thanksgiving dinner, but she did not obey him. Her father then beat her and held her arms against the hot stove until they were so badly burned they could not be saved. Both arms were amputated three inches from her shoulders. I can only imagine what life would be like not having any arms.

Her father was prosecuted, but was not convicted due to lack of evidence. Kittie was placed in a children's home for destitute and crippled children. A doctor began to teach her how to use her feet in place of her hands. After much practice she was able to write, draw pictures, play the piano, type, and embroider silk using only her feet.

At age 21, she lost all support from the state and had to provide for herself. Her two brothers had low-paying jobs and were not able to help her and her younger sister had been adopted. Her father had died.

Kittie began to sell some of her drawings and wrote her autobiography (with her feet). She put this information in a pamphlet which had a slot for a quarter. She would mail these pamphlets out asking people to purchase her story for a quarter. By 1906, she had collected \$35,000 in quarters. In her pamphlet, she wrote that she forgave her father and falsely claimed she had fallen into the fire which caused her to lose her arms. She used the money to form a company called the Kittie Smith Co. which employed a bookkeeper, a stenographer, and a dozen envelope stuffers.

Kittie also got work with the Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey circus where she demonstrated her ability to work with her feet. She could saw wood, drive nails, mow the lawn, thread a needle, sweep, dust, mop, scrub, comb her hair, brush her teeth, eat at the table, and do many other things just by using her feet.

She had the distinction in 1913 of being the first woman in Chicago to cast a ballot—with her feet.

Kittie Smith was faced with a situation that would depress most of us, but she overcame the adversity and did what she could to provide for herself. I could not find anything about her later life or her death, but her story is one which should inspire others in similar situations. In fact, she spent much of her time working with other children who had serious handicaps.

You can see an example of her writing at this web site:

<http://www.todayifoundout.com/index.php/2011/the-first-woman-to-cast-a-vote-in-chicago-did-so-with-her-feet/>