

JERRY MCKELVY'S  
**SANDYLAND CHRONICLE**

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**EARLY PRESCOTT PHOTOGRAPHERS**

Prescott has had several well known photographers in its history. Little is known about some of them other than their names being mentioned in advertisements in some of the early newspapers or in articles written about Prescott. There may have been others not mentioned in this article.

The city of Prescott dates back to 1873 when the railroad was being completed through that part of Nevada County. Newspaper articles were written in those early days to entice settlers to move to the Prescott area to live. These articles were distributed to other cities along the railroad line. Many of the early settlers of Prescott read these articles and decided to move to the area and be part of the growth of the new town.

**WILEY SHANKLE**

He is mentioned as being a photographer in an article about Prescott written in 1883.

**CLARENCE WASHINGTON MCGILL**

One of the earliest photographers in Prescott was Clarence McGill. He was born in 1849 and lived in Rosston about the time Rosston was county seat of Nevada County and was married there in 1874. He was listed as a resident of Prescott in the 1880 census.

An article about Prescott written in 1883 states "Clarence has made a study of photography for his entire life, and his ingenuity in posing, his original backgrounds, and rustic scenic effects have been copied by artists—north, east, south, and west."

An interesting tidbit of information about Clarence McGill is found in the May 18, 1934 issue of The Prescott Daily News in which the paper published items from the early history of Prescott. "Clarence McGill, who took pictures here for part of his life, built the first telephone Prescott ever had. It was a small and very taut wire with a box on each end. It ran from an upstairs room at Dr. Hinton Drug store to Mr. McGill's home,"

On November 7, 1883, Clarence died. He is buried in the old section of DeAnn Cemetery on the outskirts of Prescott. His obituary follows. From this we learn that he also served as city marshal of Prescott and a partial term as sheriff of Nevada County.

**Death of C.W. McGill**

Mr. Clarence W. McGill died at his home here in Prescott at an early hour last Wednesday Morning. His malady was brain fever and other complications, and death had been expected hourly for some days. Mr. McGill had long been a citizen of Nevada County and was widely and favorably known. His avocation was that of photographer in which business he was engaged in co-partnership with T.S. Bryan at the time of his death. He had served the people of Prescott

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three terms as Marshal, and he had filled that office more efficiently and faithfully than any of his predecessors and successors. In September 1882 he was appointed Sheriff of Nevada County by Governor Churchill, to fill the unexpired term of Sheriff Bright, departed, and in that capacity made a prompt efficient officer. Clarence possessed many noble traits of character. He was true and unwavering in his attachments to friends and as brave as Caesar. The high esteem in which he was held by his neighbors and acquaintances was abundantly attested by the unusually large number who attended his remains to their final resting place. He was thirty-four years of age, a native of South Carolina, being the eldest son of Major M.W. McGill of Camden and leaves a wife and three children. The Picayune feels the loss of a true and esteemed friend, and tenders its sympathy to the bereaved family.

## **THOMAS S. BRYAN**

According to Clarence McGill's obituary, he was a partner of Mr. McGill. He is also listed in the book "Arkansas Photographers" as a photographer and seller of sewing machines in Prescott in 1888-89. His wife had a millinery store.

## **E. LITTLEFIELD**

A newspaper reporter for the *St. Louis Republican* newspaper who was passing through Prescott by train in 1887 wrote an article entitled "A Wide Awake Progressive and Prosperous People—A Splendid Town in the Heart of a Fertile Region".

The article lists some of the important facts about the town, main crops grown, leading businesses in town, etc. It gives the population of Prescott at that time as being "2000 souls". The article lists E. Littlefield as being a photographer.

The last paragraph of his article states "Prescott is a lively little Southern town full of vim and enterprise. The stranger is made welcome, it has good facilities for pursuing any line of business, standards of morality are high, and everywhere in her borders prevails the spirit which says, "Come".

## **ETHELBERT HORD**

A book called "Arkansas Photographers" by D. L. Ewbank lists Ethelbert Hord as being a grocer and photographer in Prescott in 1888-89, 1892-93, and 1906-07. Being a grocer and a photographer seems to me an unusual combination, but maybe he needed some way to supplement his photography business or maybe photography was a sideline business.

## **CHARLES H. DOME**

He was a photographer in Prescott at various times between 1892 and 1900. I have several photos taken by Charles H. Dome. I am very impressed with the quality of these old photos which was still very sharp and clear over 115 years later.

From *The Nevada County Picayune* (Nov. 6, 1889)

Mr. Dome, the photographer, has for sale copies of a photo of the wreck of Neal's mill. It is a splendid photo, as all who see it say. Mr. Dome does as good work as any artist we ever knew. Go and examine the photo of the wreck. *Note: Neal's mill and gin was destroyed by a boiler explosion killing one person.*

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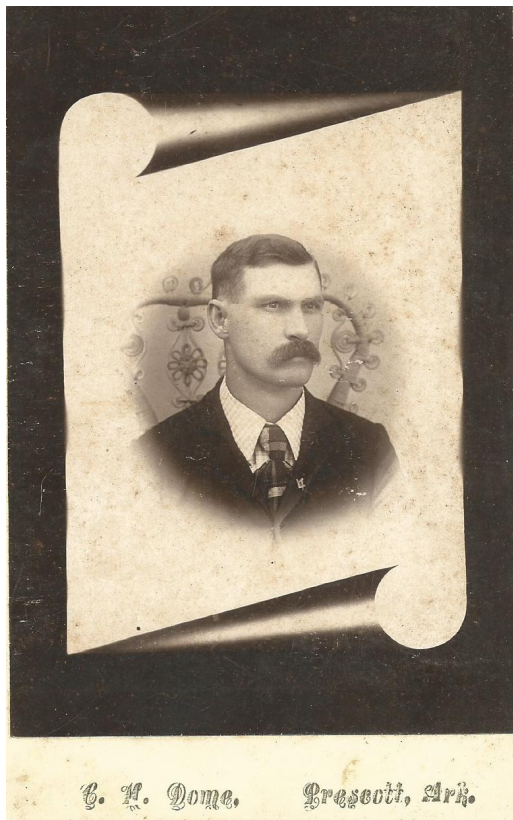
## SOME EXAMPLES OF C. H. DOME'S PHOTOGRAPHY WORK (OVER 100 YEARS OLD)



Pearl Carter  
(only child of Luke and Ella Carter of Bluff City)

She was born in 1894, so this photo was taken about 1900

The bottom two photos are unidentified. They were in a photo collection belonging to Annie Mae Barlow Greer.



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Mr. Dome had a little sideline business going in 1891.

From The Nevada County Picayune (1-29-1891)

Radam's Microbe Killer, Germ Bacteria or Fungus Destroyer cures all diseases. As a blood purifier, it never fails. As a spring and summer medicine, it has no equal.—C. H. Dome, Agent, Prescott, Ark.

Charles H. Dome was also an inventor. In May, 1901, he received a patent for his invention for an improved suspender-end attachment for attaching suspenders to trousers. The application for the patent was witnessed by Thomas S. Bryan and Pearl Bryan. Thomas Bryan is listed above as a photographer in partnership with Clarence McGill.

## **A. C. ALVERED**

A newspaper ad in the Nevada County Picayune about 1890 states that he makes first class portraits and that his work is guaranteed to be satisfactory and absolutely permanent.

## **MRS. MONTIE SHIP**

She is listed in the book "Arkansas Photographers" as a photographer in Prescott in 1906-07.

## **MR. MURREY**

All I have about him is a newspaper item from 1913 which says Mr. Murrey of Emmet was at Bluff City High School taking pictures. Perhaps he is the photographer who took many of the old Nevada County school photos prior to 1950.

## **ARTHUR W. NEWTH/NEWTH STUDIO**

The book "Arkansas Photographers" lists him in Prescott in 1912-13. I have pictures from Newth Studio in Prescott made around 1950. Arthur W. Newth died in 1954 at age 75. His obituary states he was in the photography business. He was buried at DeAnn Cemetery. As far as I know, this was the last photography studio in Prescott.

## **PRESERVING OUR DIGITAL PHOTOS FOR THE FUTURE**

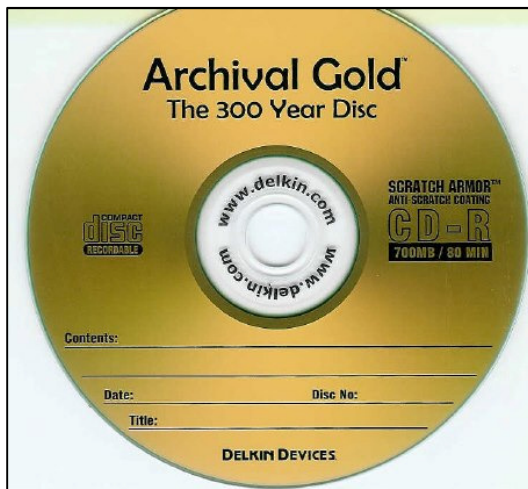
We live in an exciting time with all our modern technology. Digital photography makes it easy to take pictures and immediately look at them, store them on our computer, share them with family and friends by email, or print them out. The question is will these photos still be around 100 years from now? Computers crash, new formats come along that can't read older formats, pictures are accidentally deleted, photos are not labeled on the computer, etc. These are just some of the problems with digital photos. Some people never print out a photo but rely on their computer for storage. These computers we have now will be antiques in a few years. Think about all the VHS family movies you have and nothing to play them on. What about all the 35mm slides of your family you have stored away and no slide projector that still works?

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It takes a lot of time to convert the old formats to the modern format to keep our photos up-to-date. We do that and a few years later something new comes along. What about when we are gone? Will future generations be able to find out what great grandpa looked like?

Experts recommend printing out your photos, labeling them, and keeping them in a safe place as back-up storage. You could also make copies of your digital photos on external drives, but the question remains, will there be a way to look at them 100 years from now?

I'm excited now when I come across an old photo from 100 years ago, especially one that is labeled. Most people back then did not take the time to label their photos. I try to label all my pictures and encourage everyone to go through their old photos and do that. It's a good project for a cold, rainy day. Your descendants will thank you for it.



I can imagine someone 100 years from now finding a thumb drive and wondering what it is or finding a CD and having to do research to find out how they worked and how one might reclaim the data stored on them. I recently had some photos printed from some of my old 35mm slides. Only a few companies still do that. The company sent prints of my photos but also included them on the CD shown here which is supposed to be a special high quality CD that will last 300 years. The CD might last that long, but I doubt if there would be any way to look at those pictures 300 years from now.

The photography business has changed a lot in the last few years. If you can still find a professional photographer, I would suggest you have some pictures made of your family to pass down to future generations. That nice family picture you made last Christmas that you have stored on your computer or your smart phone will probably not be available a few years from now.

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## RAINFALL RECORD

**RAINFALL RECORD** (at my house)—January—5.4 inches; February—3.6 inches plus 5 inches snow and ice; March—10.7 inches plus 2 inches sleet; April—7.7 inches; May—6.0 inches; June—5.7 inches; July—6.2 inches; August—5.1 inches; September-- .7 inch

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## A TRAIN WRECK ON THE IRON MOUNTAIN LINE

Anyone who has ever seen the results of a train wreck knows the amount of damage that it can cause, especially if two trains were to hit head on. Fortunately, most of the train wrecks are caused by derailments involving only one train.

A horrible train accident happened in July, 1903 on the Iron Mountain railroad line (later known as the Missouri-Pacific line). The site of the accident was where the railroad crosses the Little Missouri River which is the boundary between Clark and Nevada counties in Arkansas.

Just as the train reached the river bridge, one of the box cars jumped the track. According to newspaper reports in many newspapers, this accident resulted in the deaths of two brakemen and a tramp who was riding on the train. The reports stated that 35 car loads of horses and mules were also killed as the cars plunged into the river below, a distance of forty feet.

It would be quite a clean-up job to remove all those boxcars from the river back in 1903. I wouldn't be surprised if there might still be evidence of this train wreck under the water of the river at that location. If you are a fisherman and you find some strange metal pieces in that area, more than likely they came from this train wreck which happened in 1903.

There are no Nevada County newspapers available for the year 1903, so the only information I have about this train wreck is from news stories passed along to various newspapers all across the country. The papers had the location as being between Bouden and Gurdon on the Little Missouri River. The spelling of Boughton is interesting. They spelled it like most local people pronounce it.

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*The Dynamo* was the school newspaper at Prescott High School. I have several copies from the 1930s and 1940s. I happened to notice in one issue this poem written by Jimmie Guthrie. I knew him as Dr. James Guthrie, our family physician and founder of the Ouachita Clinic in Camden. He possibly saved my life when I was in about the eighth grade. I was very sick for a time with severe stomach cramping and various other symptoms. The doctor at Prescott diagnosed it as appendicitis and was preparing to do surgery. My parents decided to seek another opinion and after a short stay in the hospital at Camden and some tests, Dr. Guthrie correctly diagnosed the problem as intestinal parasites called hookworms. This parasite lives in the soil and usually enters the body through a cut or sore and can also be transmitted from pets to humans. It was very common back in the days when most children went barefoot. A couple of treatments with some very large pills and some bad tasting medicine cured the problem. I'm sure my problems would have been much worse if the surgery had been performed in my weakened condition.

Senior Class Poem  
*The Dynamo*  
May 28, 1937

By Jimmy Guthrie  
Prescott High School  
Senior Class President

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Four short years abreast we've worked  
With tutoring of teachers we love,  
Molding a future of knowledge,  
As we are climbing one notch above.

We will miss you, our schoolmates dear,  
As we pass from you today,  
But knowledge never comes to us  
Unless we prepare the way.

The ladder to wisdom is high;  
It seems a tremendous endeavor  
To climb up each round, one by one,  
But our high goal we will seek forever.

We now pay tribute to our teachers  
For the molding of career and knowledge;  
We thank you for your help and patience,  
As we pass on our way toward college.

As we seek our shining goal of fame,  
Let's not falter along the way,  
But ever look higher and higher,  
Always above our goal each day.

Our hearts are heavy today,  
As we come to say good bye,  
But our ladder's not complete  
'Til we reach that goal on high.

*An excerpt from his obituary---*

James Guthrie, retired physician of Camden, Arkansas, died May 2, 2013, in his sleep at home. He lived the good life for 93 years. It was a life of activity balanced by contemplation while maintaining an unswerving dedication to his country, his community and his family.

Jim was born in Prescott in 1920 to Mildred Pittman Guthrie and James Martin Guthrie, a pharmacist. The grandson and great grandson of country doctors, he studied medicine at the University of Arkansas where he earned his B. S. M. and M.D. in 1944. Upon graduation, Jim was commissioned an officer. Lt.j.g., in the U.S. Navy. He served in Norfolk, Virginia, at the Naval Hospital in Aiea Heights, Hawaii, and then on board the minesweeper U.S.S. Southard in the western Pacific participating in the invasion of Okinawa, the largest naval engagement in history, surviving a kamikaze attack and abandoning ship in a typhoon. His ship was sweeping mines off of Honshu Island in preparation for the invasion of Japan when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. He treated wounded American and Japanese servicemen with a new drug called penicillin and shared quarters with the author Herman Wouk. He volunteered for active duty in 1953 during the Korean War and served as the base doctor at the Shumaker Naval Depot, now East Camden.

Jim married Virginia Roebuck in 1944, and they shared 69 years of happily married life. After separation from the Navy in 1946, he began private practice at the Southern Clinic in Texarkana and then in 1948 moved his family to Camden where he founded the Ouachita Clinic. Jim's dedication was reflected in a medical career that spanned 51 years until he retired, aged 75, in 1995.

Among his many interests was a passion for camellias. He grew and nurtured an impressive collection that has been toured by gardeners from around the region. He shared his intellectual curiosity by serving as a moderator of the Great Books discussion group. He also traveled, collected art and enthusiastically pursued many hobbies. *(an excerpt from his obituary)*



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## THE WELL By Jerry McKelvy

With shovels and picks in hand  
From every direction they came  
Family members eager to help  
They hoped their work was not in vain.

Digging was easy at first  
But soon they hit hard clay  
Progress was slow  
And it seemed to get harder each day

Dirt was drawn up by pulley and rope  
Ten feet down and much further to go  
As buckets and buckets of dirt  
Were brought up from down below.

Deeper and deeper they dug  
Until they were twenty feet down  
They were all very excited  
By the damp dirt they found.

Ten more feet they dug  
First a trickle, then a small stream  
Of pure, precious water  
Of which they had often dreamed.

They still had to case the well  
Both above and below ground  
Rocks were brought from far and near  
Wherever they could be found

Finally the well was complete  
The family was blessed  
Plenty of water so cool and clear  
Friends said the well was one of the best

These were hard working people  
Their earthly possessions were few  
But they thanked their God  
For each bucket of water they drew.

Many years have passed  
Those who dug the well are here no more  
But the old well remains  
A tribute to those who went before.



This old well is at my grandfather's old home place. It was used mainly for washing clothes and as a backup water source in case the main well went dry. This well was about 150 feet from the house.

A shed was built over it with a small room attached. The well was only a few feet from the county road. I was told the road grader operators would often stop at the well for a cool drink of water on the hot summer days. I can remember drinking from this well using a metal dipper which hung nearby.

Some people had to carry their water from springs. They usually took their laundry closer to the water source using a wash pot to heat the water and a rub board to scrub the clothes with homemade lye soap. Doing the laundry was a major chore usually done on a certain day of the week which was called "wash day". Just another glimpse of rural life in the good old days.