

The Mondy Morning
CHRONICLE

Family Poop Sheet since 1990
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It is time to begin another Chronicle. I'll start with the weather. I hear from all over the nation (almost) how hot and dry it is and I believe it. I watch the weather reports and it seems every-body needs rain. We are still in a *la nina* condition and if the south Pacific doesn't warm up, it will continue.

I can't complain about our temperature which has been as high as 88 degrees, one day, but cools off as soon as the sun goes down, – the temp was 51 degrees when I got up this morning – blanket weather. We don't have air conditioning and don't need it.

This is Tuesday, July 25 and already I have a couple of letters. I hope I get some more.

Bill Mondy writes from Desha, Arkansas:

I really enjoyed Issue 11 of the Chronicle. Pat Mondy's research is outstanding – any info on this group I would like to have. In my records, the name Brooks appears on my maternal grandmother's side and also on my paternal great grandfather's side.

I know how Pat felt hunting those old cemeteries for old stones and records. It took me several years to even discover what year my great grandfather died, –and even longer to find where he was buried.

I found my GGGrandfather, one of his sons, a daughter, and GGGrandmother, all buried on a high hill near White River in a place called Possum Grape (believe it).

There were no stones, just a mound. The last burial there was many years ago. There was only one monument with a name on it on the whole hill. We had to be taken there in a 4-wheel drive truck because of the rough road, and if their resting place had not been memorized and handed down, I wouldn't have been able to find them.

Hope you had a wonderful time in Australia. I was there in 1944, June to August. I remember the warm beer and the steak and egg breakfast, also the strange money and the climate (winter). The Navy sent us to a rest camp in Coolangata – had a wonderful week with no musters! Then back on the ship to get ready for the invasion of Leyte. I have always wanted to go back but have never been able, – made a few friends I wish I had kept up with. I still remember some of their sayings: “cobber” for friend, “all knocked up” for tired, and the classic, “give er a go, Yank, she's over aut-eeen”. I liked those people. [*Also, Bill, all girls were Sheilas and gasolene was petrol.*]

Harrison, any new material you get on the Mondays/Mondys/ Mundys/Mundas, pass it on. Any thing you want from me, just tell me. Bill

Wednesday, 7/26/2000

The lightning flashed, the thunder rolled, and the rain came down in dribbles. Almost enough to wet a man, if out in it.

From **BESSIE AND BERTHA** 7/25/00

It is a nice sunny morning here in the Ozarks, after a rainy (slow) Saturday, most of the day. Our temperature this morning was 56 degrees. Our rainfall for July has been good and we are about normal for rainfall this year.

We had a very nice trip to New Mexico visiting with Jennifer and family. We had a big birthday party for Great Grandson, John Richard III, who was two years old on July 15. He sang every word of Happy Birthday along with all of us, and clapped his hands and laughed with us. He is sure some little guy. (Could I be partial?) *[Of course not, Bessie, Grandmas and Great Grandmas should never be accused of partiality.]* I am looking forward to another Great Grand in November. We think it will be a girl.

Norma and Bert (of Charles' family) arrived home from St. Louis, and Bert is improving after being quite ill after his surgery.

Harrison and Marg, Glad you had a nice trip to Australia.

Bertha talked to Judy Mondy this past week and Jim had been in the hospital but was home and feeling better. He is still waiting for his liver transplant. They will be working at a booth for organ donations at the Ozark fair next week. The rest of the Mondy clan is doing well.

Most of my family is on vacation. Ann and John left on the 14th to go roaming all over the northwest. They expect to meet up with George's son and wife somewhere and then travel together. Last I heard, they were in Glacier Park. They expect to be gone until the 14th of August. Son Harold and Karen left on the 21st for Yellowstone Nat. Park, then on to Glacier Park. They may find the rest of the gang up there. Don't know when they will be back. When Harold called me yesterday, they were at Jackson

Hole, WY.

I am enjoying the report of the Randolph County Historical Society Report
Love to All, Bessie and Bertha

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In a note, **Margaret Ann Segrest** says:

Thanks again for the Chronicle – but it didn't seem quite right without a letter from Miss Bessie and Miss Bertha.

Our weather is super; 60 degrees high, enough rain for our gardens and the farms around here. July people wearing jackets! It's unbelievable. After 45 years in New Orleans and south LA – hard to believe. I talked to one of my grandsons in New Orleans and told him the people here were wearing jackets to keep warm and he yelled – JACKETS?? He said the temperature there was over 90 degrees.

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Phone Message ----

Ercil says that Martha and Vicki are both still improving after their bout with breast cancer.

Jim says the temperature is still HOT in Houston where he is getting their house spruced up for sale. He is coming back by Taos on his way home.

Ann (Armstrong) says she is getting along okay.

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It is now Sunday afternoon, we have had nearly a quarter of an inch of rain, and the temperature has dropped to the low 60's. Feels real good

We have just been to the postoffice and picked up the mail and in it there was a letter from our dear cousins, the Duffers.

July 22, 2000

Hello Harrison and Margaret,

I thought I had better check in and let you know how things are in this part of Arkansas. Hot, Hot and dry. We sure could use some rain. We did get a little the past two days, but it was not nearly enough. We do have a few degrees cooler weather. I have had to water part of my lawn to save my good grass. The rest is drying up in places. Typical July weather.

I had a real nice visit with my brother and sister and their spouses in June. (James (Jim) and Jean Thomas; Lois and Phil VanGuilder) They were out here for James's 50th year class reunion. They had invited the classes of 2 years before and 2 years after their graduation so Lois decided to come also. I did not graduate from Morrilton and not in the years that were included. I finished my last two years in Benton. While they were here, I had symptoms of a heart attack and went to the hospital for 2 days and 1 night. After all the testing they found nothing wrong with my heart. It was spasms of the esophagus. I had the same thing in 1994 but with some different symptoms. I am back on Prilosec each day. At first the doctor put me on 800 mg Tagamet twice a day, but after 2 more spells of spasms he put me on Prilosec. I am doing fine now. No more problems with it. I am doing real well otherwise too.

My son-in-law had upper back surgery on June 12. They had to fuse 5 vertebrae and put 2 steel rods in his upper back. He came home on the 19th. The surgery went well even though it was worse than the doctor expected. He is in for a long recovery. I will be keeping their 6 year old, Erica, a lot when Marilyn goes back to work as he will not be able to take care of her for a while. She is real good and not a lot of trouble.

The rest of the family are doing fine. Working every day and staying busy. Only one of Eddie's girls played softball this year and that has already ended. School will be starting again in about a month. Seems like it starts earlier each year.

I enjoyed Pat's letter about looking for old cemeteries. Several years ago James and Jean Thomas were in Arkansas and we went looking for some of our relative's graves. Lots of driving, walking, weeds and discomfort, and it wasn't even the right cemetery. Never did find it that day. It is interesting to find them, and at least this generation will know where they are even if the next ones don't keep up with them.

I will stop rambling for this time and say "Hello to all and try to keep cool".

Always,

Lucille

(3)

RA says:

Dear Harrison and all you guys who read the Chronicle.

My, Oh My, I'm glad I don't have a desire to find my ancestors like some people like **Pat** and others, – going out in the rain, wading the mud, fighting the briars and brush, and ending up covered with scratches, ticks, and chiggers.

No, I'd rather sit in my chair and read about what other adventurers have done, what they have found out and how far back they have traced my ancestors, maybe all the way back to the Mayflower, and why they came over here, – back even to Noah!!! Really, though, I do appreciate it.

I have been trying to talk myself into writing this letter for weeks, but my body, mind, and arm just wouldn't respond. My mind says, "Do something," but my body says, "Just sit still and don't move". I'm afraid I'm slipping down the hill rather rapidly. Every letter I write, I think it will be my last.

Old arthritis has got the best of both of us and we just creep around. The other night we both got up at the same time because we couldn't sleep, and almost bumped into each other in the dark. We laughed when we agreed that it would have been quite a crash – considering the speed with which we were moving.

We have been having some awfully hot, dry weather. We just stay inside and try to remain comfortable. We had a shower yesterday that brought the temperature down to 95 today, – good!

Noal, we are happy for you and your new wife. But don't think you are going to get out of the family after fifty years because you can't. So **Jovalene**, welcome to the family, we are happy to have you.

Nell, congratulations to you. We are so proud of you. You're great. And Harrison we are glad you succeeded in

getting **Judy** and **Brecken** to write. We enjoyed all your letters. We enjoy all letters, cousins or friends.

And let me tell you about some great friends. Our postman brings our mail and puts it in our hands if we are on the porch; if we are not, he pulls a chair over to the door and puts it there. Our neighbor on our left mows our lawn when he mows his and if he is out of town and has someone mow his lawn, he has him mow ours also. The neighbors across the street do our shopping and take us if we need to go, cook and bring us all kinds of good food. The neighbor on our right raises a beautiful garden which he shares with us. And, of course, there are the kids and friends who live farther away.

So we just thank the Lord and enjoy what He has others do for us, now that we are not very good at helping ourselves.

Well, my arm is hurting and I'm getting to the point where I can hardly write so I'll say good night and tell you that we love every one of you.

Russell and R.A.

PS: Noal: Since you know where we live, bring your wife to see us. We'd love to see you.

I'm behind my schedule of getting out one issue of the Chronicle every two weeks this year. I'll add a filler to make up for this short issue (it's short because you didn't write). It is from *The Search for Tji* and I think you will enjoy it.

I'm already tired of Politics – and it has just begun.

Lucile Rundel's letter is somewhere in this issue. Her mother (Alma Thomas) was among the very first "subscribers" to the Chronicle and I used to read over each issue and wonder if there was anything in it that would appeal to Alma.

Love to all, Harrison

(4)

JACKSON'S TALE

This story is from my novel, "The Search for Tji". The place where the scene takes place is in the deep outback of Australia at an army camp. Jackson is a civilian. Harrison c. Mondy

It was an hour before sundown when a man stepped through the door and said, "Bean did you want me?"

He was inside before he realized that more than corporal Bean were inside. He stopped and stared at the others. Steve arose and extended his hand, "I'm Colonel Steven J. Benson, Special Commissioner from the Crown. This is Doctor Benjamin Lockyer from America. And you are?"

"Amos Jeremiah Jackson, Sir, and I am glad to make your acquaintance."

"Is that your real name, or one you have adopted?"

"I resent that," he said rather heatedly. This is the name given me by my parents thirty-five years ago. I have never had a reason for changing it." He turned to Lockyer. "I am an American also, Dr. Lockyer."

"Now don't get your bowels in an uproar, Jackson. Many of the prospectors are men who have run away from debts or women or escaped from prison and changed their names. I don't give a bloody hoot whether your name was given you by your parents or one you adopted after you went bush. I just want a handle so I can get in touch with you when I want.

* * *

"You interest me, Jackson. How come you are out here in the bush? You talk like a man with some education, you could get along in a more civilized area."

"I probably could but I don't want to. I was born in California and went to school there but education did not suit me. About twenty years or so ago when I was about fifteen, I stowed away on a ship from San Francisco, and ended up in Melbourne. I had stolen a bit of money from a couple of drunks who had hit it rich in the gold field, and they were after me when I slipped aboard the ship. If I ever strike it rich, I'm going to pay it all back if I can find them. So far I have not been successful.

"I did not know where I was going when I got on the ship. When we got to Melbourne I wandered around town for a couple of weeks, then met a man who claimed he was a prospector and was going prospecting for gold and he wanted a mate. Of course, like hundreds of others, what he really wanted was a stake. He would be glad to take me along if I would stake him to about twenty pounds.

I told him I did not have that much money but that maybe my uncle would let me have it. He said he would need that much for he had to buy a donkey to carry our provisions. I would have to bring my own stuff, my food, my bedroll, everything I would need. If I could get another pound or two, he would buy what ever utensils we would need for cooking.

I agreed to think about it over night and meet him the next day. I made up a good yarn about how I was living with my uncle and that he was getting married the next week-end and would probably be willing for me to go prospecting so he could enjoy his new wife. The old man bought the story.

The next morning I went around to several places where I had converted silver American dollars to pounds and shillings and it took all morning to get the twenty pounds he needed. I did not dare go to a bank, they would be sure to ask where a boy like me had obtained that much American money. But American dollars were welcome; there was a lot of them there. Many Americans visited Australia and found that they could buy more for the hard silver coin than they could with its equivalent at the present rate of exchange.

By mid-afternoon I had been able to collect the required amount and I met the old man. Now I was not as dumb as he might have expected. Back home I had spent all my allowance and every nickel I could earn for pulp magazines about the old west. I loved stories about prospectors and boom towns and how that if one was lucky, he could get rich and how he could lose it all in one crap game. So I knew a lot more than most fifteen year old boys about prospecting.

The old man told me his name was Charlie and that no one needed to know his last, so I never asked. When I met him that afternoon, I told him I had brought the twenty pounds necessary to buy the donkey and some of the stuff we would need and he agreed to go then and get the donkey. In all the time I knew him, he never called me anything but "Boy".

"'Boy', he said next morning when we met, 'we are in business. I have a good pack mule, bought it at a bargain, and a lot of tools and necessities. Found a prospector who was giving up for the present, and going to settle down and enjoy his prosperity. He was glad to get rid of the mule and so I kept bargaining with him til I got it at a good price.'

That afternoon we went shopping and bought a lot of flour, salt, raisins, dry beans, and everything he thought we would need. I had no clothes fit for such a trip so I bought some boots and a hat, and some trousers. He only wore shorts, but I preferred pants that covered my legs. What I wanted were the heavy corduroy or calvary tweed like some of the prospectors in America used but didn't find them. One thing I insisted on was a pistol, a six shot revolver. Charlie thought that a waste of money but all the cowboys of the old west carried a gun to kill snakes and I was sure there were snakes in Australia so I bought a little 22 caliber pistol, still have it. I persuaded him to get one also, pointing out that if we were lost from each other we could use them for signalling."

He stopped and looked at us and said, "Hey fellows, I didn't intend to tell you the story of my life -- I guess I just got carried way. I apologize."

"It's a good story and I don't know of anything better to do than listen to a yarn. Let me guess what happened; Next day you found that Charlie had skipped town leaving you 20 pounds poorer."

"No sir, you are wrong. Charlie was an honest man. We loaded that old mule and began a long walk north and west. He knew the country well and how to ration our water so that we had no real trouble going from water hole to water hole. After about two weeks we came to a nice place with plenty of water and even some grazing for the mule. We set up camp and made it more or less a permanent site. It was from here that Charlie wanted to explore a lot of canyons. We hobbled our mule and let him forage for his food and from the way he ate, it appeared he would be happy. It was the ideal place for our campsite.

"The next day Charlie made his first trip up one of the canyons, taking with him a canteen and some food, and a few tools. I, reluctantly, stayed behind with the mule and our camp. It was reasonable. We knew

that there were plenty of Abos in the area and that they would be certain to come to the waterhole. We agreed that if he got into trouble, broke a leg or something, and needed my help, he would shoot three times and I would come to him. Likewise, if the Abos came around and looked menacing, I was to do likewise.

"At the end of the first day, Charlie returned more tired than I had yet seen him. I had prepared a good meal for him and he ate most of it but was not his old self. I tried to get him to talk, to tell me if he was sick, but he just said, "I'll be alright later. I have had these spells before. I just need to rest. I may stay in camp tomorrow and let you go. If I rest up, I'll be able to get a good start the next day.

"The next day Charlie was dead. I don't know when he died. I thought he was still asleep so I made as little noise as possible as I made coffee and when I went to him, he was cold and stiff.

"I just sat down and cried. I didn't give a damn whether any one saw me or not. I cried for a while out of sheer pity and loneliness. I was alone, on an endless desert, with no one to talk to, no one to tell me what to do. Abandoned. After an hour or two, I came to my senses. The flies were there in the millions. I found a place where the sand was rather loose so I dug a shallow grave and buried my friend. I had a bottle we had emptied so I took a piece of paper and wrote, 'HERE LIES MY FRIEND CHARLIE. I DON'T KNOW WHY HE DIED. HE WAS A GOOD AND HONEST MAN. I HOPE GOD TAKES GOOD CARE OF HIM.'

I put the note in the bottle and put the bottle on his grave and then I piled rocks on it to make a kind of cairn. I figured somebody would come along some day and find my note.

"I'll tell you the rest of the story later. If we are going to interview that old Aborigine, we'd better go. It's nearly sundown."

After the evening meal and several tasks had been completed, Steve said, "And now I think it's story time. I have been wondering how Jackson's story ends and I suggest we all sit around and listen to the rest of it. I think a story is much better if it is accompanied by a good beer and stogie. Corporal, break out a beer for each of us except Private Barnes. He has had more than his share today. But he hasn't had a good cigar, so light up, Barnes." He passed around the cigars and everyone settled back and got comfortable in preparation for the rest of Jackson's story.

"Where did I get to? Oh yes I think I had just buried Charlie. What was a fifteen year old "new chum" to do? I've no knowledge of what others would have done, I just know what I actually did. I had to have someone to talk to so I went to mule and there I poured out my heart. I had had a guilty feeling ever since I stole the money in San Francisco. I knew God would punish me.

The Amos Jeremiah part of my name was not drawn out of a waste basket -- my mother was a devout Baptist. I'm sure she thought that by giving me the name of two prophets something would rub off on me and I would become a preacher.

Once when I was on the ship there was a storm and I was sure I was going to end up like Jonah, though I didn't actually believe that story. I thought it was an allegory or something. But I survived the storm, though I had prayed for hours, and promised God that I would pay the money back as soon as I could get a job. One of the reasons I teamed up with Charlie was that I thought this was the way God had chosen for me to pay back the two men. I had figured out that God was going to lead me to a fortune, I would become wealthy, go back to San Francisco, strut my new duds, and hunt the two old miners and pay them double what I stole from them.

"But that wasn't the story I told that mule. I knew that God had saved me from the storm at sea so that he could pour out a lot more suffering on me in this desert. There was no need for me to ask why, -- I knew why. At first I thought I should just sit down and wait for death to come to me.

"By the end of the day I was hungry and since it didn't look like the grim reaper was in a big hurry I made damper and opened some jam and ate a good meal.

"As night came on I had other fears. Suppose the natives came and killed my mule, or carried off all my food, or tortured me. I did what Jessie James did one time, I made up Charlie's bed to look like some one was asleep in it, then I made my own bed in the darkest place I could find. I brought out my pistol and Charlie's pistol so that I had maximum protection. I had no intention of sleeping, just sitting in the dark all night.

"I dozed off and then I was awakened by a gunshot and I realized I had been shot. I lay perfectly still and listened for foot-steps or some kind of movement. I heard something. Then it dawned on me I had shot the toe of my shoe off, and what I heard was that damn mule running away. I had gone to sleep with that pistol in my hand, the safety off, and my finger on the trigger.

Everybody roared with laughter.

"Break in narration," Jackson said. "I've gotta go to the latrine".

So did every body else.

After they were back in their places, Jackson continued. "I didn't sleep the rest of the night. I sat there thinking about how God was punishing me just a little at a time. I was sure that it would all end with my death, and no one to bury me.

"As soon as it was light enough to see, I climbed as high as I could on a big rock and looked in all directions to see if my mule was around. I hadn't hobbled him, just tied him on a long leash so he could graze. He was no where in sight. My doom was confirmed.

"I looked over my food supply and decided I had enough to last a month. I had my rations plus all of Charlie's. I had Charlie's map and because he had drawn a circle at one place on it, I assumed that was where we were. There were trails on the map and some crosses which I assumed were waterholes, since there was such a cross in the circle. At the end of one of the trails, someone had written "Stuart". I did not know whether this was another waterhole or the name of a town. Another trail had a cross marked AR. My mind was made up. I would stay here where I had plenty of water until I was nearly out of food, then I would strap as much food and water as I could carry and strike out on one of the trails.

"I nurtured the idea that sooner or later the mule would get thirsty and come back to the water. Every day I climbed to the top of the rock and looked in all directions but there was no sign of the mule.

"One night after about a week or two, I woke with a bad case of the trots. 'This is it,' I thought. 'This is how I'll die, squatting here in the sand.' But I didn't die; whatever I had passed in a couple of days and I was back to normal.

"Then there was a complete change in my situation. I awoke one morning to stare up into the eyes of the biggest Abo I ever saw.

"Before I could reach for my guns he had pinned my arms behind me and tied them with some kind of rope. There were three or four others around and they were busy gathering up every thing I had and piling it in piles; separating it as to its worth to them, I assumed. They ignored the guns. One of them picked up one of the guns, looked into the barrel and finally threw it down.

"Then it happened. One of them found Charlie's pants which were draped over his personal stuff, and tried to put them on. As I look back on it now, it was about the funniest thing I've ever seen, but then I just registered it. In his dancing around, some of the shells Charlie always carried loose in his pockets bounced out and a couple of them fell in the edge of the fire. Then I really began to pray. I thought they were close enough to explode, if the fire was only a little brighter. In the efforts of that big Abo to get Charlie's pants on which were far too small for him, he kicked some of the fire over on the cartridges. I was still lying on the ground, completely ignored. I let out a loud scream and a few seconds later one of the cartridges exploded. The Abos were stunned into frozen positions for two or three seconds, then a second and third exploded and as the hulls came whistling out over their heads, they came to life and the last I could see of them, they were virtually running over each other putting as much distance between me and them as they could. The one that had succeeded in getting one leg through Charlie's pants was truly handicapped. He would jump as high as he could and yank at that leg. I don't know when he finally got it off, I never found it.

"I managed to crawl to a jagged rock and in a little while I had cut through the cords on my wrists and set myself free.

"A couple of weeks later, about the time I was considering packing my stuff to move on, I climbed my observation rock and saw something coming in the distance. At first about all I could make out was a column of dust.

"So you got thirsty, you damn fool mule, and decided to come back", I yelled. Some how it made me feel good just to yell. But as I looked, I decided that it might not be the mule, it might be those damn Abos coming back. This time they would not get a chance to grab me. There was an overhanging rock under which I could stand, far enough back that no one could drop a stone from above and hit me. I had both guns and a lot of cartridges and I was prepared to wage war.

As they approached I saw that it was not the Abos, it was a couple of men riding horses and leading a well loaded camel. They were heading for the waterhole, which advertised itself by having several gums growing around it. I don't know whether I was glad to see them, or frightened. I could imagine them killing me and taking everything. But even if this was the way God wanted me to die, I was not about to give up.

"When they were about a hundred yards away I fired one shot from each gun into the air and yelled, 'HALT'. Believe me they stopped. It was a complete surprise to them. They retreated a few yards and stopped and began a conference. I was screened from their view by some shrubbery. Then I looked them over. There were just the two men on horses, leading the camel and behind it, my mule. One of them dismounted and holding his hands above his head, came forward. Then he stopped and yelled, 'Do you speak English?'

"Who are you?" I yelled.

"A missionary and a prospector. We need water. That's all we want, just water. Who are you?"

"I did not answer for a bit. Then I said, 'Come on. Let me look at you. Don't make any strange moves. Do you have a gun?'"

"I carry no such weapon, or any other,' the man replied and I was willing to take him at his word. I came out from behind my screen and pretending to give some directions to a companion still hidden by the screen, I went to meet the man.

"My God, you are just a boy. Who's your companion? Is he just a boy too? I'm a minister of the Gospel. My companion is a prospector and explorer who hopes to look around at some of the unexplored regions and maybe find gold or silver. We have plenty of food, and you can depend on us. We do need water and we have depended upon this waterhole for it."

"I decided that they were who they claimed to be so I shook hands with the minister and he motioned the other to come on.

"Where did you get the mule? It's my mule.' I asked.

"The mule was about three or four miles from here, eating parrakelia. How long has he been missing?"

"I told him that the mule had been gone for a couple of weeks, but I did not tell him that I scared him when I shot myself in the foot. He told me that the mule had probably lived on the water in the parrakelia."

"By this time the other fellow had come up and introduced himself to me. They offloaded their camel and watered the horses, the mule and the camel. They stayed four or five days and when they left, I went with them. They showed me how to get to Alice Springs which was marked "Stuart" on the map. They described the McDonald ranges and when they turned west, I turned east toward Alice, then struck out northwest until I arrived here and here I have been ever since."

He stopped. The story was over.

Steve said, "Jackson, that was a damned good story whether it is true or not. You are a good story teller."

"Hear, hear" some one else said.