

Lackland Springs

This community was located in the south part of Redland Township and has an interesting history. It was so named for the springs located there and was popular as far back as 1860. **P. K. Kellam**, a prominent Camden businessman, kept a diary which was passed on to his relatives and has been preserved. This diary is one of the oldest records in existence which describe events in south Arkansas. He describes the events around Camden and also includes the news of the battles of the Civil War. The following entries were recorded in August of 1861, just as the Civil War was beginning:

Aug. 6, 1861

This a.m. at 31/2, we start to Lackland Springs. Awful hot and dry and heavy sandy road. Take us all day to get there safe. Several families there from our city.

Aug. 7, 1861

In company today with several of the Lackland visitors. We cut a bee tree.

Aug. 8, 1861

Visit about today. Go a-fishing in Little Caney. Fine fun catching jack fish.

Aug. 9, 1861

Go fishing again today. Good string of big jacks. Talk of a big battle to be fought in Mo. 20-30 thousand on each side.

Aug. 10, 1861

Having quite a pleasant visit at the Springs. Have an abundance of watermelons and peaches.

Aug. 11, 1861

Go home today. Leave family at the springs.

Aug. 18, 1861

Go to Lackland Springs after my family. News of big battle in Mo. Near Springfield, in which our loss was heavy, killing many Arkansas men.

Aug. 20, 1861

Go fishing. Catch none. Lackland Springs is owned by Mr. Martin. Too poor to put them in good fix. With proper management, this watering place will someday be of considerable note.

Most people I talked to remember seven springs, each with a different mineral water, although some records say there were five or six springs. These were all located in a relatively small area and were known for their healing properties. The following article was printed in *Scenes In Nevada County*, a turn of the century guide book and was reprinted in the Jan. 1993 issue of the *Old Time Chronicle*. It also shows an old picture of the grounds around the springs.

"Nevada County possesses many points of interest. As a health resort, Lackland Springs probably leads. Here in a beautiful hollow is situated five or six large springs, the waters of which have a far-famed reputation for curing many diseases. The springs are in Redland Township about twelve miles east of Prescott. They are a quite popular pleasure resort during the summer months, the waters of Caney Creek abounding in fish and game. Boating, bathing, hunting, and fishing form the principal amusements of the crowds that visit each summer. They are on the property of J. L. Eagle. W. H. Parker is the postmaster, the office being served twice a week from Sayre. Jno. G. Benton operates a store that is liberally patronized and also runs a sawmill which give employment to a number of hands and does a considerable business. Agricultural pursuits are followed by the people to a successful extent, and the lands around Lackland are considered very productive. The range is fine and -raising is a profitable pursuit."

Another article appeared in the July 7, 1906 issue of *The Nevada News*:

"Nevada County has some of the largest farms, the finest orchards, best stock, and the biggest mills in South Arkansas. Sawmills are numerous. Many summer schools opened last Monday and most are in flourishing financial condition. Many schools are paying teachers \$60 per month. People are for the most part in very good humor.

Lackland Springs is Nevada County's health and pleasure resort. A half dozen springs bubble out from a series of hills in Redland Township and form a cluster that is not only of rare natural beauty, but also contains properties proven beneficial in more than one disease.

For years, each summer has found scores of people camping on the hills above the springs and receiving wonderful benefit from the water and climate.

The springs have lost some of their attraction in the last few years. One scarcely mentions going there now. Yet the same water still flows from the same hillsides in the same way it did fifteen years ago. One even imagines the same spotted cow with the same bell, grazing in the same meadow, in the same lazy way as of yore. And there is the same barefoot boy, swinging the same tin bucket, whistling the same tune, but there is not the same jolly crowd every July and August that made matters merry in the late 1890's.

There is but one reason--accommodations lacking. Let someone build a few small cottages, rid the grounds of underbrush, burn up the ticks and redbugs, keep out the hogs, and clean up around the springs, and there will be a maddening rush for Nevada County's most beautiful resort.

There is an abundance of fish in Caney Creek and plenty of game in the bottoms. Boating, bathing, and other pleasures might be provided and Lackland made of more than local importance. Distance might be an objection of some, but for people who really want a change, who want to get away from cafes and the worry of business and enjoy a few weeks of quiet rest, twelve miles is all too short. Prescott and Nevada County need such a resort. Nature has amply done her part. Will our citizens do theirs?" (a picture of the grounds in 1906 was included in this article)

Still another article appeared in the July 16, 1908 issue of The Nevada News describing a Sunday spent at Lackland. It is reprinted below:

"Did you ever spend a Sunday at Lackland? Of course you have been there, but it has been on special occasions when you could hitch up "Old Baldy" and with the necessary tackle and bait, hie yourself off to the waters of Caney Creek, and while away the time pulling from the stream a good string of wary trout (?) or sneaking from the side of an old cypress tree a fine string of goggle-eyed perch. Or perhaps with a trusty rifle bring down from the heights of some fine old oak or hickory, a tempting mess of squirrels. Or perhaps you spent the time in an enchanting game of dominoes, or tripped the light fantastic on an improvised platform while an erratic orchestra attempted a mazy waltz.

But did you spend a day there? A day devoted to quiet rest? Yesterday was the ideal occasion for such an experience. A day when bright sunshine cast sufficient pools of light on seared leaves as to dispel the gloom, and southern breezes brought a happy relief from summer heat. There was a most congenial crowd of Prescott people there and they enjoyed the day.

The portly Dr. Guthrie, comfortably garbed, stretched himself on an easy cot, and for once forsook the temptation of any heated conversation, but he talked some and was always awake when the lemonade was passed.

Sam White busied himself with anything necessary for comfort or pleasure of the crowd, and never hesitated, when called upon by his good wife, to go to the spring for water.

Dan Pittman was moving around in a general way, always ready to listen to an interesting or raise his head at the slightest neigh from "Old Prince".

Sam Logan seemed to be the special guardian of the commissary department and held more than one battle with the insistent hogs. In the absence of other weapons, he did some telling work on the enemy with a good-sized hatchet.

Dr. Hesterly didn't make much of a record in anything particular until he reached the dinner table, and then for thirty minutes he was the busiest man there.

Meanwhile, Adam Guthrie, Jr. slowly moved about the grounds in a manner calculated to keep down perspiration.

The good ladies, Mesdames Logan Pittman, Guthrie, and White, with an ease and grace that was surely admired, moved about the culinary department in a way that resulted in a most excellent dinner.

Nor were the little folks idle. Little Lula White seated on a camp stool made love to her Teddy bear, while her younger sister threatened to baptize her doll baby in the sparkling waters of the center spring.

Fred Guthrie lay stretched out before a late magazine and occasionally queried the crowd with such questions as "What is the longest word in the English language?", while Master Green wanted to know if a man had twenty sick sheep and one should die, how many were left?

And that's how you spend a "Sunday at Lackland."