

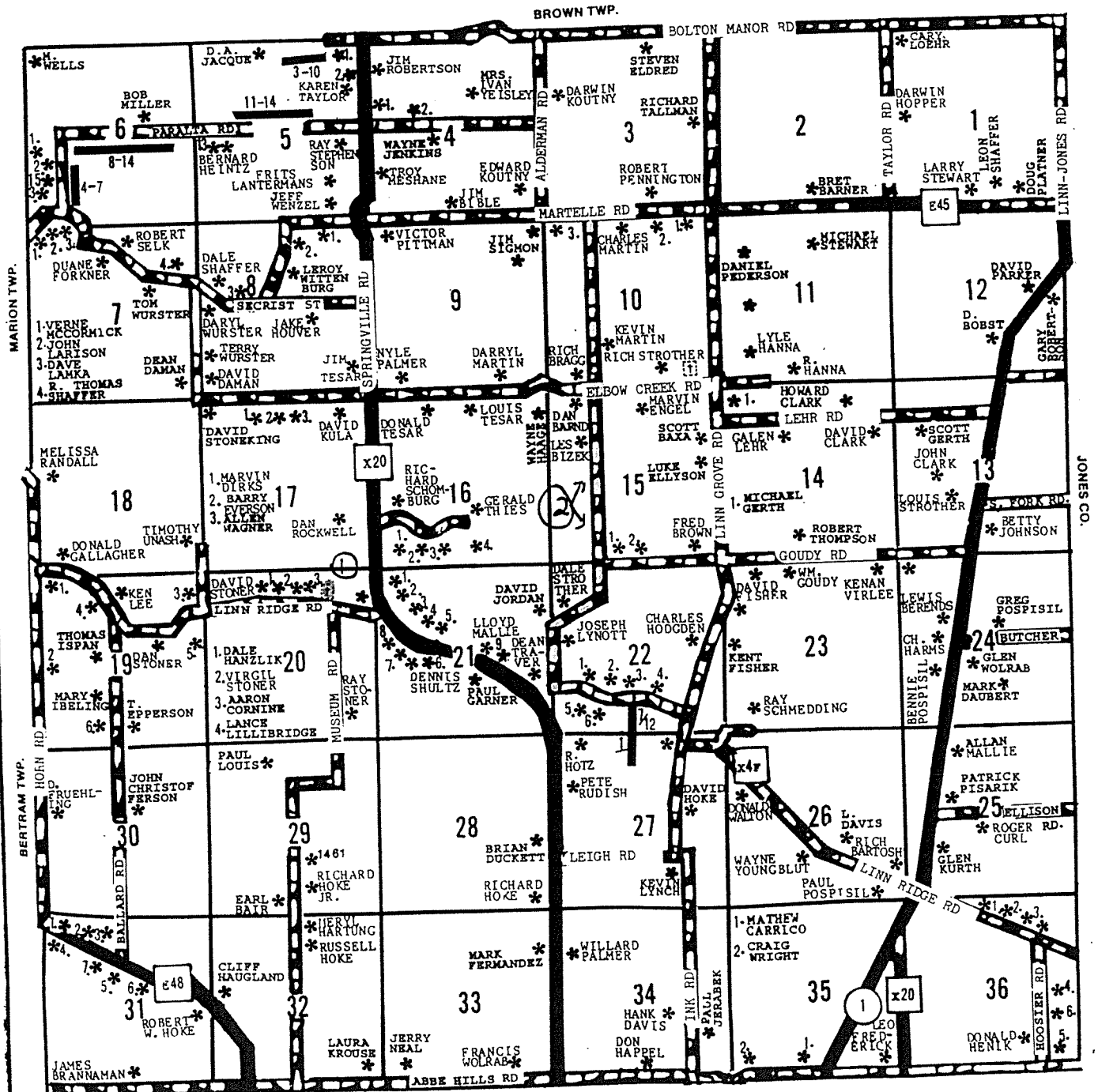
The
Weisleys
In
Mount Vernon

By Drew Virlee

T-83-N

LINN DIRECTORY

R-5-W



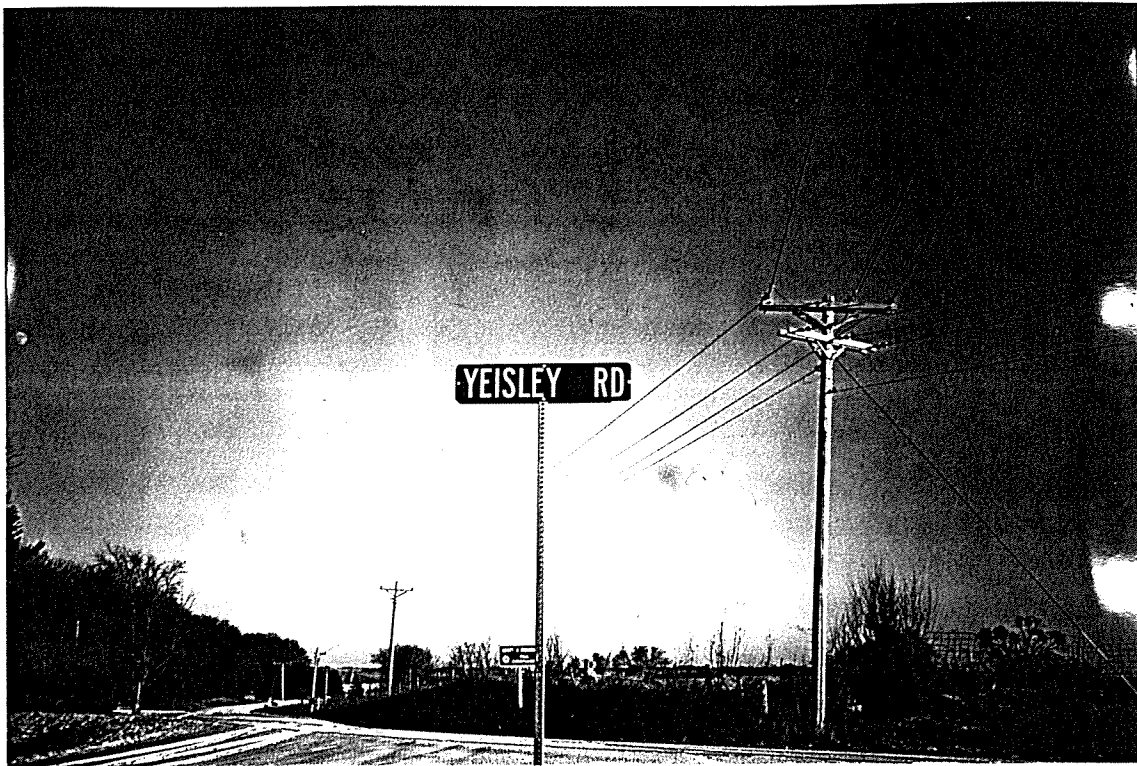
See Pages 24-27 For Additional Names.

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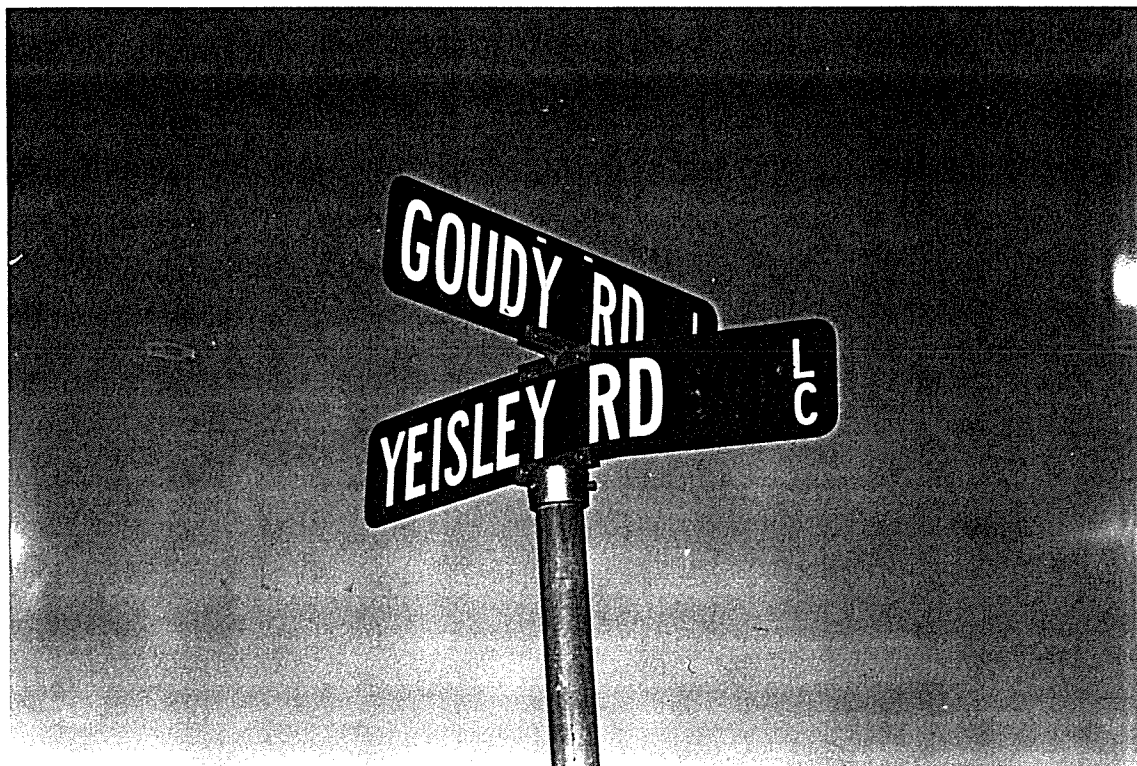
FRANKLIN TWP.

LINN CO., IA

1. Site of Mt. Zion Cemetery
2. Yeisley Road



Sign showing the beginning of Yeisley Road at Springville Road.
This is located just north and east of the site of the Yeisley farm.



Road sign located at about midpoint of Yeisley Road.
Yeisley Road extends from Springville Road to Martelle Road.
Our farm is located on Goudy Road.

Notable Family Reunion

On Thursday September 22, the home of George Yeisley of Linn Grove was the scene of one of the most pleasant gatherings it has ever been our good fortunes to attend, the occasion being the home gathering of the near relatives of the Yeisley families and as the happy groups of old and young continued to arrive from all parts of the state, each was in turn kindly welcomed by Uncle George and his kind wife, Nancy, and it seemed for the time being the kind old couple had forgotten their weight of years in their eagerness to make one and all feel at home at the grand old homestead and from the groups of smiling, happy faces by which they were soon surrounded, it was plain to see their efforts for the comfort of their numerous guests met with complete success. The kind old couple are now past 80 years of age, having lived together as husband and wife for nearly 60 years, coming into Linn County as a young couple from the state of Ohio, sometime in the year 1839, to make a home for their then young family.

How well they succeeded is part of the history of Linn County. The following is a partial list of those present:

David Yeisley, Aikoe, Mo.; Joseph Diehl, Mt. Vernon, Ia.; Eugene Albaugh, wife and family, Burdette, Franklin Co., Ia.; George Yeisley, wife and daughter, Springville; Philip Yeisley, Sen., and wife, Lisbon; Rebecca Diehl, Mt. Vernon; Gillette and family, Lisbon; Horace Yeisley and wife, Lisbon; Miss Hattie Yeisley, Mr. Willard Yeisley, Mr. Edgar Yeisley, Miss Dosha Beldon, Mr. Frank Beldon, Miss Eva Johnston, Mr. Harley Yeisley, Miss Ella Yeisley, Springville; Mr. Edwin Mitchell, city; Mr. J.B. Rhoades and family, Woodward, Iowa; Mr. G. Beldon, wife and family, Paralta; C. Loren Staker and wife, Woodward, Iowa; Mrs. J. Johnston, Kansas; Chas. A Mitchell and wife, city; Mr. Samuel Johnston and family, Lisbon; Dr. J. Diehl, Mt. Vernon, Iowa; William Yeisley, Springville.

After a time spent in pleasant converse by the older members of

the party and as the day was as pleasant as a day in June, the young people busied themselves with outdoor pastime and innocent sports relieved by occasional raids upon the orchard and vineyard. The entire party, fifty-two in number were invited to a tempting repast consisting of all the fruits and delicacies of the season and for which the old Yeisley homestead is famous. The tables were presided over by our hosts' son Elmer Yeisley and his two daughters (sic) (*actually sisters* --ed.) Kate and May Yeisley. As we wended our way reluctantly homeward it was with the heartfelt wish that we might all live to meet again.

Uncle George Yeisley's 78th Birthday

Quite a merry party was the one that met the residence of our old friend Mr. George Yeisley at Linn Grove in this county; the occasion being the celebration of the 78th birthday. For several days guests have been arriving from many distant points, all of whom met a kindly welcome at the old homestead. Uncle George, as we have all learned to call him was only too well pleased to grasp the hand of gray haired brothers and sisters, many of whom he had not seen for years. But the crowning event of all was on Saturday October 26 when came all the relatives of Uncle George to share with him the generous hospitality of his long time home at Linn Grove.

Leaving the then village of Ashland Ohio on October 14, 1839 he with his then young wife Nancy and three small children started to make for themselves a home in the territory of Iowa then little better than a wilderness. After a tedious journey of four weeks they stopped to rest within a few rods of where his spacious residence now stands; arriving here on the 15th of November; as the snow then covered the ground, they proceeded with the few crude tools at their disposal, to

erect a shelter for themselves and little ones for the winter. Here in their log house with oil cloth over the openings cut to admit the light as a pane of glass was a luxury unknown, they started to carve for themselves a home and name of which few in the annals of Linn County are held in higher honor than are the names of George Yeisley and his good wife Nancy.

Here was born to them seven more children, making a family of ten, two of whom died in infancy there still remains to them four girls and four boys now men and women. Here came his brother Joseph Yeisley father of Mrs. C. A. Mitchell of this city, in a few years came William, Philip and Susan, who became in time residents of this and adjoining states.

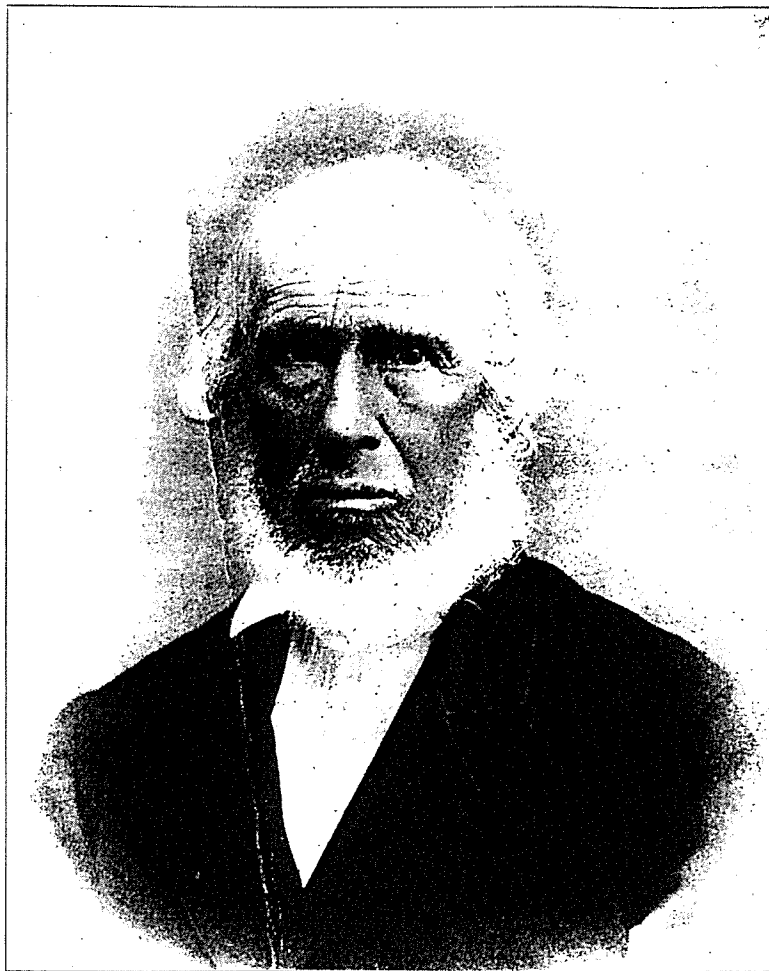
After a pleasant time spent in social intercourse, the company 45 in number, were invited to a sumptuous repast, presided over by Miss Kate, and Miss May Yeisley. Tables spread with all that wealth and good culinary skill could provide to which, rest assured the guests did ample justice.

After the repast Mr. and Mrs. Yeisley, were ushered into the parlor and each presented with a finely upholstered easy chair, these with other presents of the occasion were

presented in a neat presentation speech by Dr. J.H. Deal, of North Union, Iowa, and as happily responded to by Mr. Yeisley. The lateness of the hour compelled the company reluctantly to disperse from a scene where they would gladly linger. The following is the names of the relatives as nearly as they could be gleaned by your reporter. George Yeisley, Linn Grove, aged 78, Nancy Yeisley, age 70, George Yeisley, Springville, Sam Johnston and family Lisbon; Geo. Beldon and family Springville; Oliver and family; Peter Stocker and wife Woodward, Ia; Wm. Yeisley, Leavenworth, Kansas; Philip Yeisley and family Lisbon; Philip Yeisley Gallistan, Mo.; Horace Yeisley and wife Lisbon; Dr. J.H. Deal North Union; Miss R. Deal Mt. Vernon; C.A. Mitchell wife and son Marion; Chas. H. Gillette and family Lisbon; Miss May Yeisley Linn Grove; Miss Kate Yeisley Linn Grove; Mr. Elmer Yeisley Linn Grove; with a host of others whom your reporter in an effort to have a good time let escape his memory.



This is the site of the Yeisley farmstead. To the left of the grain bin is the barn (in ruin). The house was very large with stained glass windows and a door from the St. Louis World's Fair. It was burned by the fire dept to prevent vandalism. The large oak tree was in the front yard. Another big barn burned from a lightning strike in 1956. The property was divided and sold in the early 1990's.



G. A. YEISLEY.

IN LOVING
REMEMBRANCE OF

Our Dear Father,
GEORGE A. YEISLEY,
Born Oct. 27, 1811.
Died Feb. 5, 1904.
Age 92 yrs. 3 mos. 9 days.

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

A precious one from us has gone,
A voice we loved is stilled;
A place is vacant in our home,
Which never can be filled.
God in His wisdom has recalled
The boon his love had given,
And though the body slumbers here.
The soul is safe in heaven.

George Yeisley dies at age of 87 years.

George Yeisley, 87, died Wednesday at the farm home in which he had lived for 54 years. He was born in Ohio January 4, 1855, and his parents later moved to Iowa and settled on a farm north of Mt. Vernon. He was married to Maranda Paul of Marion, February 22, 1888. He had served as a director of the Paralta school for many years and was a charter member of the Linn Township Grange. He retired from farmwork 28 years ago.

Survivors are his wife; a daughter Mrs. Bertha Penn of Springville; a son, Ivan, on the home place; a brother, J.E. Yeisley of Mt. Vernon; and 8 grandchildren. Reverend C.B. Wilming conducted funeral services at the Hunte Funeral Home in Springville, Sunday afternoon and burial was in Mt. Zion cemetery.

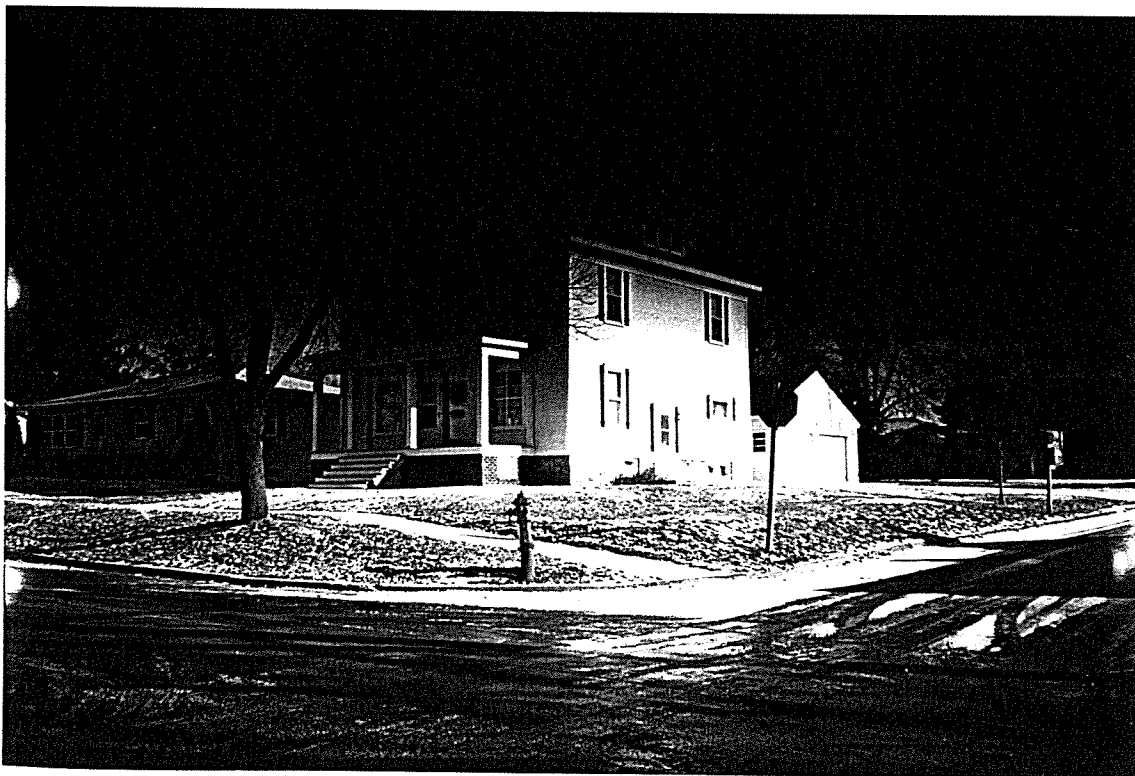


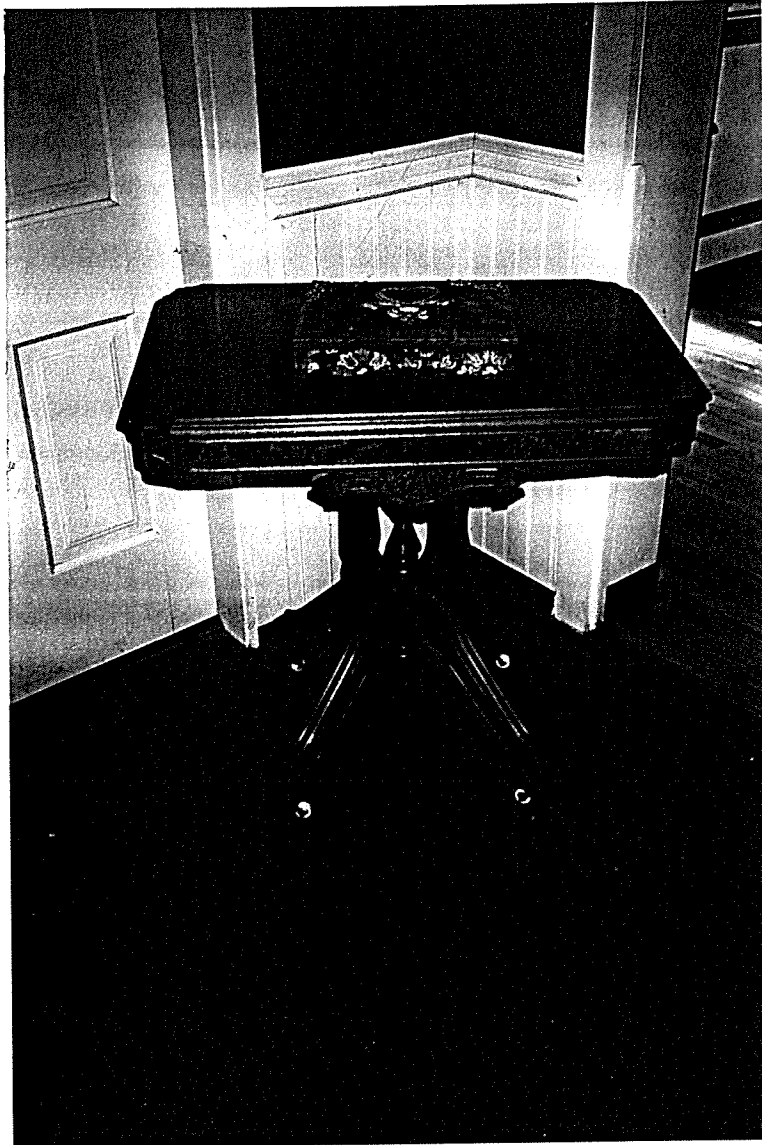
This is a picture of the chair that came on the covered wagon with George and Nancy Deal Yeisley from Ashland, Ohio to their homestead north of Mt. Vernon. It was in J.F.E. Yeisley's home until his death. Alberta Clare Yeisley, daughter of Harl and my mother's aunt gave it to my mother. We had the seat recaned and we keep it in our front room.

Memories of Uncle El: He was the glue of the family. He took my grandfather in to live with him and Emma, Uncle El's housekeeper. We gathered every Christmas at his house until his death in 1953. I remember him as a wonderful kind-natured old man that look a lot like the man on the Monopoly games. He smoked cigars and I used to climb on his lap in his big leather chair that sat by the big window that faced north and he would tell me that he could remember the Indians living in this area when he first came. He also told me they ate dog meat. I also remember the funeral room. The fern that is in our house was in there and I was always warned never to touch it because I was told if I did it would die. The funeral room was on the south west corner of the house. Aunt May and Aunt Kate lived with Uncle El until they died. After Uncle El's death, Christmas changed to the Yeisley farm.

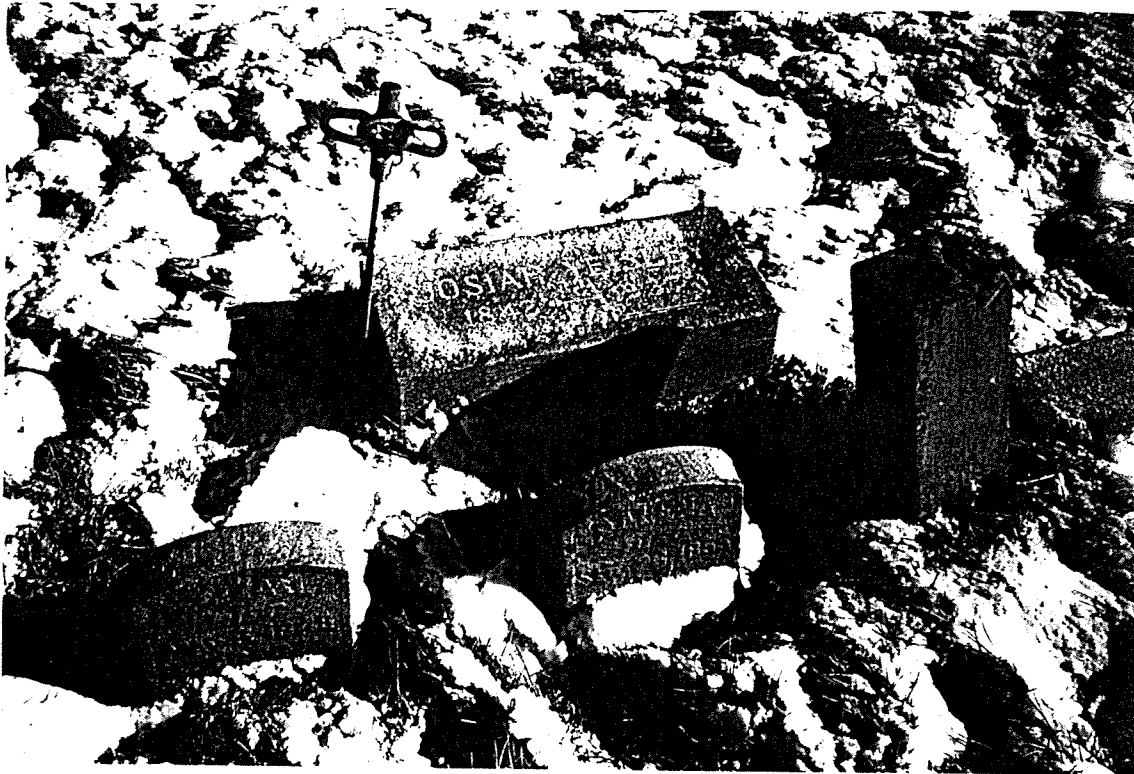
Grandfather Oliver left my grandmother for many years. There are a number of stories in the families as to why he did this, including the fact that they didn't get along and divorce wasn't acceptable at the time and also that the doctor told my grandmother that she shouldn't have any more children or she would die and since there was not birth control at the time, he left. For whatever reason he returned and my Grandmother took him back. He is buried in an unmarked grave in Mt. Zion-- at his request because he said he didn't deserve to be remembered. My great grandparents lived on the corner of Yeisley and Bent Elbow Road and I remember my mother telling about how Grandmother Rebecca would chase the children to Sunday School at Linn Grove Church with a willow switch. She was left to raise the children on her own, and it was said that Uncle El helped her out financially as did other members of the family.

These are memories that my mother wrote. This is a picture of the J.F.E. Yeisley residence in Mt. Vernon today. The closest room is the funeral room. We have the fern and the pedestal that it sat on in our front room.





This is a picture of a table that we have in our house that came from Uncle El's house. It was given to my aunt Alberta Clare Yeisley who gave it to my mother. On the table is a photograph album from the attic at Uncle El's. It belongs to my mother. At the auction, my grandmother bought Uncle El's dining room chairs which we now have. My mother bought his rock collection for ten cents. Besides interesting rocks it has an old campaign button and some Indian artifacts which may have come from Uncle Joe. She also has Uncle Joe's pistol and some dishes.



This is my great great great Uncle Joe's headstone at Mt. Zion Cemetery. In front of this headstone are the graves of two of George Yeisley's infant children. It was a practice until sometime this century to bury people without a burial vault. This is why Uncle Joe could be buried in the same place as the children. Uncle El is the only one in this plot who is buried in a cement vault. It was his wish to be buried without one, but the survivors felt that people would feel that they were trying to save money and so they overrode his wishes.

J.F.E. Yeisley, 95, dies; rites set for Friday.

Mt. Vernon funeral services for J.F.E. Yeisley, 95, prominent retired Linn County farmer and stock raiser who died Tuesday, will be held Friday at 2:30 p.m. in the Baxter funeral chapel. Burial will be in Mt. Zion Cemetery north of Mt. Vernon.

Mr. Yeisley was the last survivor of ten sons and daughters of Mr. and Mrs. George Yeisley, who came to Iowa from Ohio in 1839 and purchased of 160 acres of land north of Mt. Vernon from the government for \$1.25 an acre. The deed to the land was signed by President Polk.

J.F.E. Yeisley established the first herd of Angus cattle on the farm 65 years ago and the herd is still being maintained by the present operator of the farm, Arthur Yeisley, a grand nephew. The farm now consists of 292.5 acres. It has been in the Yeisley family since the day it was established.

J.F.E. Yeisley, a bachelor, retired from active farming in 1914 and moved to Mt. Vernon with two of his sisters. He was an ardent Democrat, an active member of Odd Fellows Lodge.

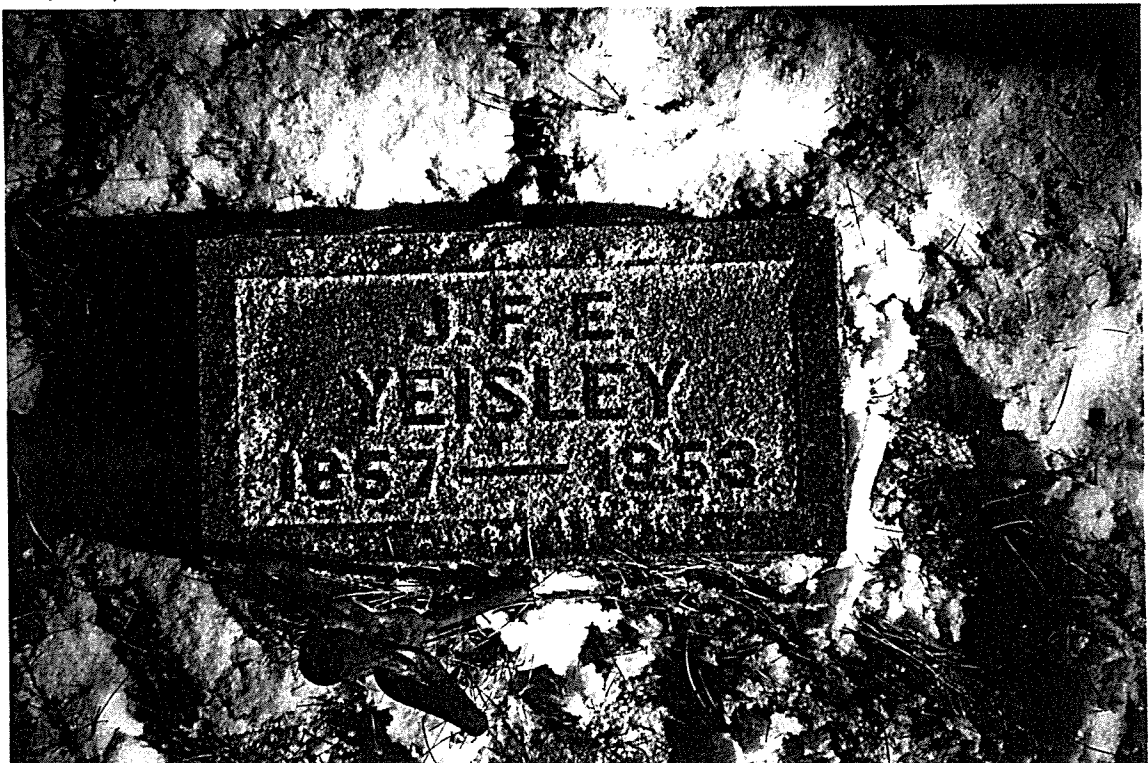
His survivors are three nephews, a niece, four grand nephews and four grand nieces. (1953)

Yeisley Will

The will of John F.E. Yeisley who died on May 5th was admitted to probate Tuesday. It leaves a 292.5 acre Linn Township farm to a grand nephew, Arthur J. Yeisley; a Mt. Vernon house to a nephew; Harley E. Yeisley, and Emma J. Cardey, and an automobile to Harley Yeisley.

The rest of the estate is left in equal shares to Arthur and Harley Yeisley and Emma Cardey. Arthur Yeisley was named was executor without bond.

The picture below is the grave site of John Frederick Elmer Yeisley (Uncle El) located in the Yeisley family plot in Mt. Zion Cemetary north of Mt. Vernon.



The Obituary Record

Oliver Yeisley

Oliver Yeisley, one of long time residents of the community, a member of its best know families, died last Saturday afternoon, at six o'clock, following a protracted illness, the home of his brother J.F.E. Yeisley. He had been a resident of this vicinity since the pioneer times of 39, and was accordingly well known. His last days were marked by much suffering, but no complaint, and his friends ministered to and inquired regarding his health in a manner which marked the genuine regard and esteem in which he was held.

Oliver Yeisley was born July 29, 1838, near Ashland, Ohio, the eldest of a family of then ten children. His parents were George A and Nancy Deal Yeisley. The parents with the boy moved to this vicinity in 1839, squatting on the land now held by the Yeisleys north of town. At that time the land had not been opened for entry. A few years later the quarter section they occupied was bought and has since remained in the family. Oliver Yeisley remained in this vicinity until about 1880 when he went to California. For more than 20 years he was engaged in mining near Camptonville, returning to this vicinity a few years ago.

On December 30, 1862 he was united in marriage to Rebecca Alice Keenan, who preceded him from this life June 19, 1905. Five children were born to this union. Ella, wife of T. A. Daniels, of near Springville, William, Harley, Hugh and one son who died in infancy. All were present at the death of their father except Hugh who was in Oregon.

Besides the immediate family he leaves to mourn his loss seven brothers and sisters and nineteen grandchildren. He was a member of Roseville Lodge No. 203, I.O.O.F.; California, also of Camptonville

Encampment no. 78, I.O.O. F.

The funeral services were held Monday afternoon, at two o'clock, at Mt. Zion Church in Linn Grove, Rev. Dr. W. L. Alexander, pastor of the Mt. Vernon Methodist Episcopal Church officiated. Appropriate musical selections were rendered by a mixed quartet from the choir of the same church. The floral offerings were beautiful, and the services largely attended. The decedent was an Odd Fellow, and although not a member of the Mt. Vernon lodge a large number represented the fraternity at the funeral service. Internment followed at the Mt. Zion Cemetery.

Services held for Harley Yeisley

Last rites for Harley Yeisley were held Monday at 3 p.m. in the Baxter chapel with the Rev Richard N Major officiating. Interment was in the Springville cemetery. Casket bearers were A.C. Newman, Leroy Wiese, Merrill Garrett, Willard Mitchell of Lisbon Frank Palmer of Springville and Russell L. Daniels of Cedar Rapids.

Mr. Yeisley, 86, died Thursday morning at the home of his daughter Mrs. Richard Riemath, in Strawberry Pint, where he had lived for the past five years. He had been ill for several months.

Harley Yeisley was born in Linn township Aug. 31, 1871 to Oliver and Rebecca Keenan Yeisley. He was married to Iva Idelle Sandefur on March 11, 1903. Mr. Yeisley spent his active life farming in Linn county with the exception of two years when the family lived in Texas. Mrs. Yeisley died at Brownsville, Texas May 14, 1920.

After he retired from farming Mr. Yeisley lived in Mt. Vernon with his uncle J.F.E. Yeisley until the latter's death in 1953. Mr Yeisley attended the Linn Grove Presbyterian church.

In addition to Mrs. (Alta) Riemath, survivors include three other

daughters, Mrs. Alfred (Opal) Olsen of the Linn Grove community, Mrs. Arthur (Grace) Davis of Ames and Clare Yeisley of Cedar Rapids; a son, Arthur Yeisley, nine grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and a brother Hugh O. Yeisley.

Opal Idelle Yeisley Olsen

Opal Idelle Yeisley Olsen, 86, was born of Harley Emery Yeisley and Iva Idelle Sandefur on Oct. 25, 1905 in rural Mt. Vernon. A descendant of one of Mount Vernon's pioneer families, her great grandparents, George A. and Nancy Deal Yeisley, homesteaded land just north of town, the original deed being signed in 1839 by President Polk.

Opal was the eldest of five children living in the Springville area with the exception of two years when her parents farmed in southern Texas. She attended Crabapple School and upon graduation from Springville High School in 1924, Opal worked as a reporter for an area newspaper and later as head cook at Altoona Hall at Cornell.

In 1934 she married Alfred W. Olsen, a native of Denmark, who formed south of Martelle. In 1953 they purchased and moved to the former Abner Lacock farm in the Linn Grove Community. Two children were born from her marriage--Nancy Sue (Swartz) who died in 1984 and Gladys Idelle (Olsen-Virlee). She had two grandsons--Jeffrey Swartz of Virginia Beach, Va. and Drew Olsen Virlee of Mount Vernon; and one grand daughter--Leah Idelle Virlee,

also of Mount Vernon.

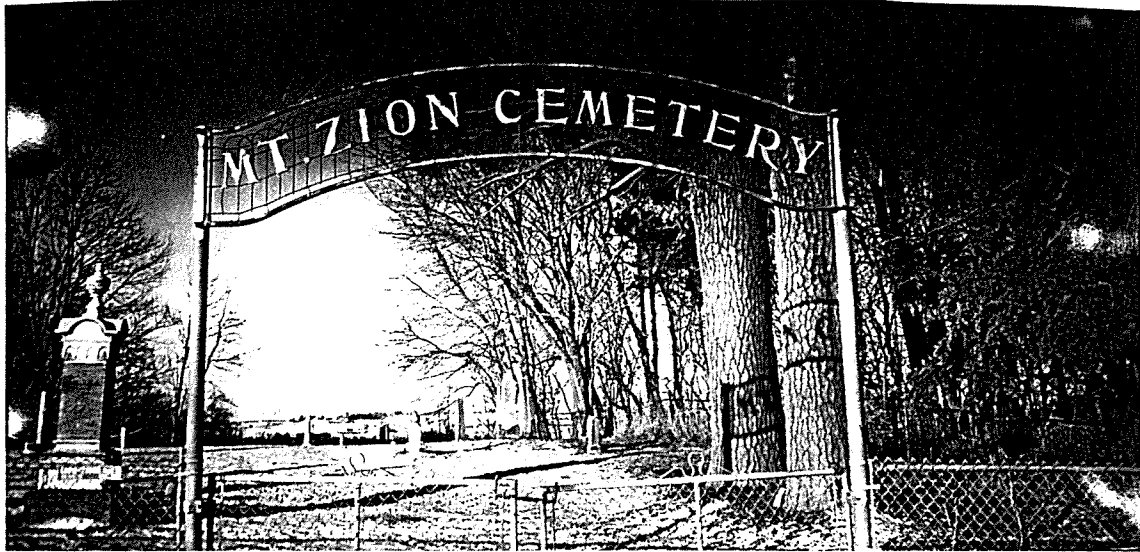
On the death of her husband, Opal moved to Mount Vernon where she resided until Dec. 1990, when she became a resident of Hallmark Care Center. She died there on Dec. 22, 1991.

Besides the previously mentioned relatives, she is survived by a sister, Grace Davis of Ames, and another sister, Clare Yeisley of Cedar Rapids.

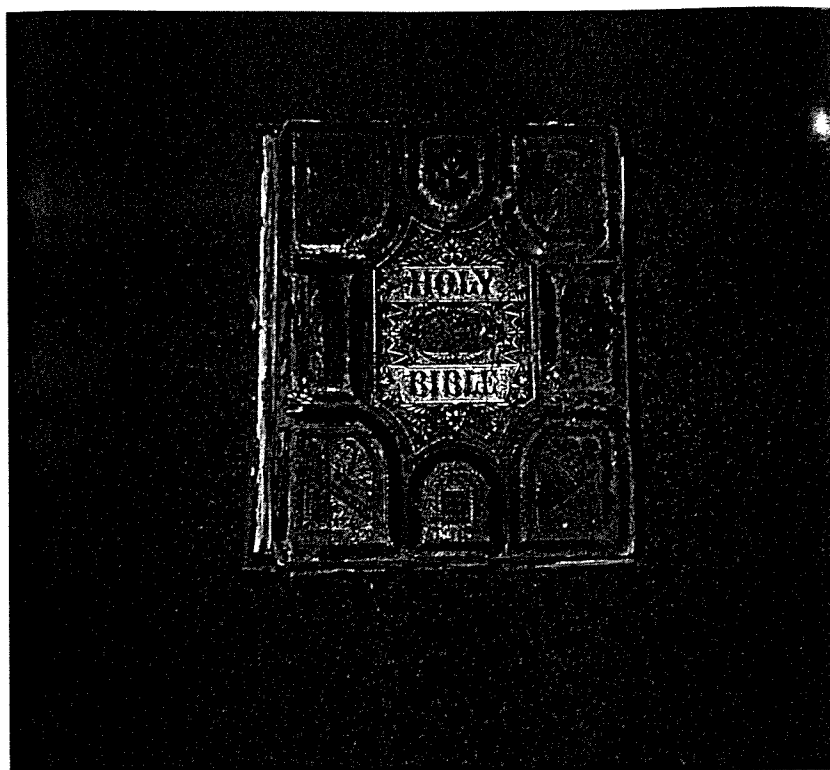
She was laid to rest on Christmas Eve day with Morgan Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.



This is a picture of the headstone in the Yeisley family plot. My grandfather Oliver is buried in the northeast corner of the cemetery in an unmarked grave. My grandmother, his wife is buried nearby. My great great great aunt Mary Beldon is also included with her husband in the Yeisley plot, since she was one of George's daughters. The "Beldon Place" is located on Yeisley Road. All that is left is a small grove of trees. It is part of the Hoke farm now. George Yeisley was supposed to have given each of his children 60 acres when they got married.



This is Mt. Zion cemetery which is located north of Mt. Vernon about a mile north and west of the site of the original Yeisley family homestead. To the right is a lot of trees and brush. This was the location of Mt. Zion Church and also a Grange Hall. My mother remembers when her parents used Grange Hall for their voting place.



This is the Yeisley family Bible. It belonged to George Yeisley, then to J.F.E. Yeisley who gave it to my grandfather Harl Yeisley. He gave it to my grandmother, Opal Yeisley Olsen who gave it to my mother. We keep it in the front room of our house. My aunt Grace Yeisley Davis has traced the Yeisley family history back to Pennsylvania and the Revolutionary War.

