

The History



OF our grandparents House

Marj and Wes Whitley

by: Angie Osborn and Lindsay Whitley

Lot 2- Block 16. Bowman's second addition to the town of Mt. Vernon.

This land was first mentioned on December 27th, 1844 as 80 acres. The United States sold it to H.W. Sanford in May of 1845.

Years later H.W. Sanford sold it to Revlen and Hanna Ash. They bought it for \$62.38.

On April 6, 1857 Revlen and Hanna Ash sold it to George B. Bowman. There is now only 36 acres and George Bowman bought it for \$6,500.

On July 23, 1857 the Bowmans added this land (lot 2- Block 16) to the city of Mt. Vernon and it is called "Bowmans second addition to Mt. Vernon". All the land in this addition will be private property except for the alleys and streets.

In November of 1866, the Bowmans sold lot 2- Block 16 to Albert foster. This was the first entry of the corner where our grandparents live. It was sold for \$75.00

On March 16, 1867, Albert and Sarah Jane Foster, sold 2 lots. They sold both of them to Daniel Oakly for \$150.00.

Later the Oakly's sold the same lots to Abram H. Law and his wife Sarah Abram for \$220.00

In January of 1869, James Thomas Alvesson and his wife Rhonda bought it from Abram H. Law for \$240.00.

On December 15, 1869, the lots 2 and 4 were sold to James J. Smith for \$250.00. James Smith was married to Anna Smith and research says that they had a bad marriage. At this time they had a young child and adult children.

According to Anna, her husband James, is a drunk and he squanders money. Anna says she was the suffering wife. She gets a divorce and is awarded custody of her younger child. Anna does not get the house. (lot 2- Block 16). James sells that to Clara E. Henderson.

In 1866 Clara sells lot #2 , not # 4 , to A.B. Link for \$100.00. Three years later the Links sell it to Mary A. Lush for \$200.00. Mary A. Lush and her husband Issac, sell it (lot # 2) to Charles W. Kepler in June of 1893 for \$225.00.

Charles Kepler was a lawyer and coincidentally he was also the lawyer for Anna J. Smith during their divorce case in 1869. Charles was also a great, well known man in Mt. Vernon. He had just built a large Victorian home at the corner of 205 2nd Ave. N. Mt. Vernon Iowa, which is also where Nate Freeman lives now. This house is still located there today and it is only one block away from our grandparents house.

Lot 2 - Block 16 used to sit where Nate Freeman lives now, but in 1892 it was moved by a team of horses and logs on a dirt road to 303 3rd Ave. N. M.V. and it still sits there today only now it has other additions added on to it.

The property taxes in 1903 were \$9.62 compared to what they are now, which is \$676.00.

In 1892 Perry B. Turkle and his wife Martha bought it, but they later sold it to Lois A. Richardson, a widow, in September of 1904. She also sold it to John E. Colon and his wife Jennie, in 1923 for \$1750.00. The Colons had three children; John E. Colon Jr., Hilda Yeisley, and Ramona Barrett.

John E. Colon Sr., later gets remarried to Susan D. Colon. They sell the house on December 18, 1939 to his son, John E. Colon Jr. and his wife Helen. John was a house painter and Helen was a school teacher in Mt. Vernon for several years. They raised 2 sons here together and they are both still alive, but they have nothing to do with each other even though their parents are both deceased.

In 1954, Shirley M. Giannini and her husband Joe bought the house for \$3400.00. They did some remodeling and added a large family house onto the back of the house. They used the French doors from the parlor , which was where a viewing for a funeral

took place. Our grandma doesn't know whose funeral it was. She also told us about a wedding that took place in the house. It took place in the bay windows in the dining room. The two people that got married were Ramona Barrett and John E. Colon Jr.

The Giannini's later moved across town and sold the house to Carl and Verla Whitemore, which are our great-grandparents and Verla is still living today. After the Giannini's moved they left a gravestone in the backyard and one day our grandma called Shirley and asked her about it and she said that one day Joe was dumping some trash down at the dump and he saw some old gravestones in a pile and he went to look through them and he saw one that he recognized and when he took it home he found out that it was Shirley's great-grandfather. Our grandma asked her if she was ever going to come pick it up and she said she would be over soon to get it. Well, it had tons of snakes living under and on top of it so our grandma didn't want to pick it up and then finally one day she figured that they weren't going to come get it so she stood it up in her backyard and it's been there ever since. Kids still come by every once in a while and ask if there is a real person buried under there. Well, anyway Verla and Carl bought it in 1966 and added a back part to the house. Then, in 1877 our grandparents, Marj and Wes Whitley, bought it for \$12,000.00. They are still living in it today and our dad says that one day he wants to turn it into a museum because some of the stuff in it is as old as the house itself.

Giannini's
added
back
part
in
50's

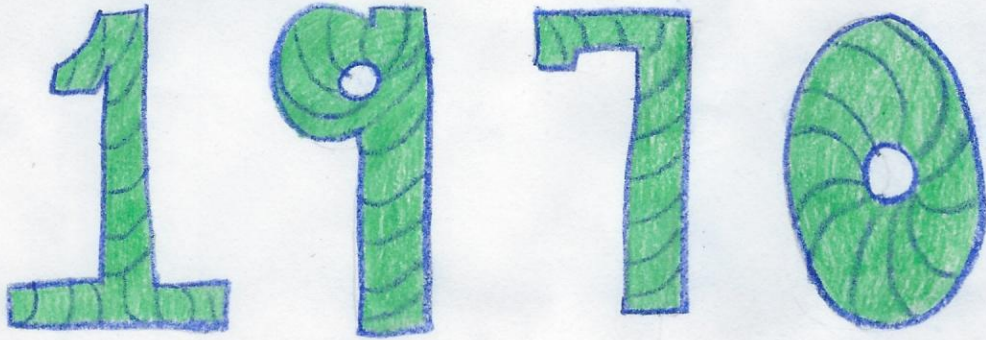


1957

This is a picture of our grandparents house in 1957 before they added on the other half of the house. Where the porch is shown in this picture that is what later became a bedroom.

↓
Gianninis

6



This is the house in 1970.
Beneath the big tree shown in this picture was once a cistern.



1996

This is the house in 1996.
In this picture it shows all the remodeling done through the years and which parts were added on to the original lot # 2.



Here are two other pictures showing the house from each side. This is what the house looks like now.

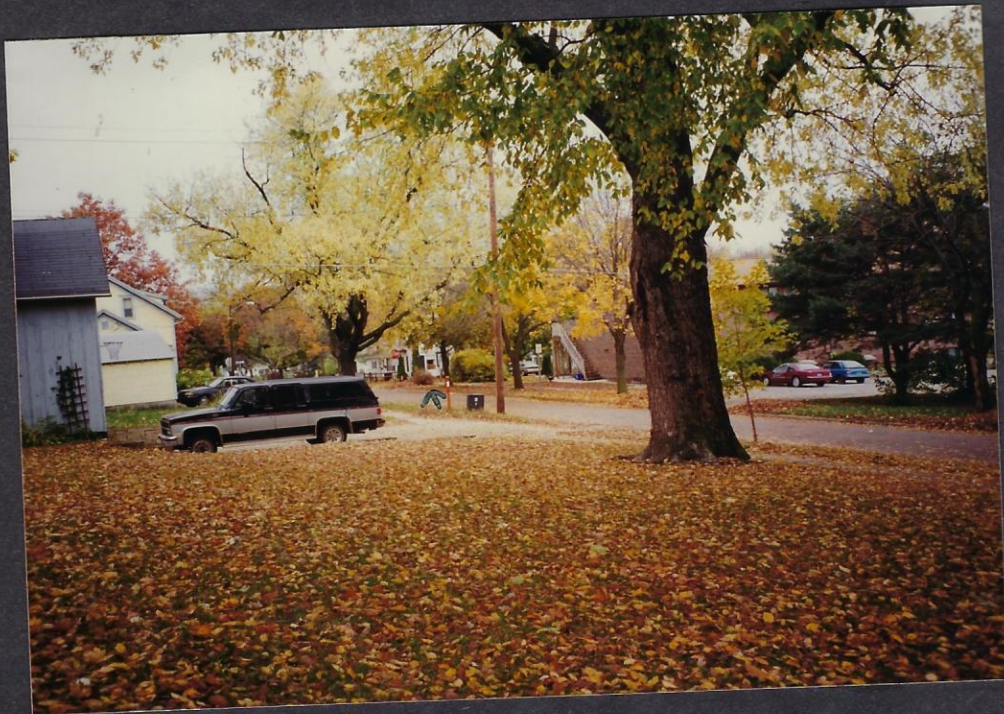
The top, left picture shows that the garage was added on and connected to the house.

The bottom, right picture shows the room that was added on to the house and made into a bedroom.



OLD LOCATION OF
OUR GRANDPARENTS
HOUSE

This is the house that is now at 205 2nd Ave. N., but originally, that was not the house that sat there. It was our grandparents house, which was later moved.



This picture shows how far the house was moved. It was moved by horse and logs down a dirt road. The house went from 205 2nd Ave. N. to 303 3rd Ave. N. It moved one block from its original location.

Our grandma says that after the flood in 1993, you could see a foundation in the ground. She isn't sure if it's the foundation of where the house used to sit or if it was where a cistern used to sit at one time.



FUNERAL

This is a picture inside the house, where the viewing for a funeral took place, but we're not sure whose funeral it was.



WEDDING!

This is another picture inside, but this shows the part of the house where a wedding took place. The people who got married were Ramona Barrett and John E. Colon Jr.



GRAVESTONE

This is a picture outside of the house in our granparents backyard.

This gravestone shown in the picture was Shirley Giannini's great grandfather.