

Chapter 15

Bevins Grove

The Bevins Grove area gets its name from Henry Bevins who settled in the area in 1849. He was probably the first to settle permanently in Liberty Township. He purchased land for \$1.25 per acre and built a log cabin in the grove. The cabin was probably located in the north-west quarter of the southeast quarter of Section 22-85-20.

At that time there were no towns in the county and no public roads. The Bevins cabin probably also served as the post office that was established in 1854.

BEVINS GROVE CHURCH

The Bethel Grove Church has often been referred to as the "bee-hive church" because of the way it helped found other churches in the area. The members "Swarmed" and then went out to establish other churches. The "second swarm" established the Bevins Grove Church in 1872 for members living west of the Iowa River at Bevins Grove.



Former Bevins Grove Christian Church
Liberty Church 1942-1976
Torn down 1980

The first church building was built in 1873. On January 20, 1877, Wm. H. Bevins deeded the following land to the Trustees Bevins Grove Disciples Church:

"Commencing 8 rods west of the northeast corner of the northeast quarter of the northeast quarter Section 27, Township 85 North, Range 20 west, thence west 10 rods, thence south 15 rods, thence east 10 rods, thence north 15 rods"- "for as long as used for church purposes".

On March 26, 1911, H. E. Bacon, Raymond Davis, and T. C. Andrews filed Articles of Incorporation for the Christian Church, Disciples of Christ of Bevins Grove, Liberty Township.

In 1913 the church building was remodeled by adding an addition on the east, digging basement, and putting a coat of stucco on the outside.

In some later references it became known as the First Christian Church. The church was closed in 1922 or 1923. In 1942 the church building was sold to the Liberty Friends. Their church had been destroyed by fire in 1941 and they used the church until 1976. In 1980 the church was sold and torn down.

At the time the church was founded, it was located in the timber and had a very pretty setting. By the early 1950's the timber surrounding the church had all been cleared.

BEVINS CHURCH

The Bevins Church was remodeled about 1913. It was covered with a layer of stucco. The church was raised to provide for the basement and the addition built to the east. The small room now a toilet room, was furnished with chairs and was for the use of nursing mothers and restless children. The arched windows were left the same, and in my childhood, to look out into the woodland from either direction was delightful. Several rods to the south were taken from Grandpa's (Cyrus Andrews) pasture and a long shed running from north to south provided protection for the horses. When the church was closed, probably 1922, then the barn was disposed of and the ground returned to Gandpa's pasture.

Submitted by
Cecile Andrews Hall

BEVINS GROVE CEMETERY

The Bevins Grove Cemetery is one of the very old cemeteries in the area that is still in use. Many of the old records of the cemetery have been lost and many old markers have deteriorated beyond reading. Many old lots have graves on them but whose graves they are is unknown. The cemetery probably dates back to the early days of the area.

A search of the records show a deed from William H. Bevins and others to Trustees of Liberty Township dated March 21, 1857 for land described as:

"Commencing at a stake 7 rods South and 5 rods East of the Northeast corner of Section 27-85-20, thence West 10 rods, thence South 16 rods, thence East 10 rods, thence North 16 rods, all lying in Section 26 and 27 - to be used as a burying ground."

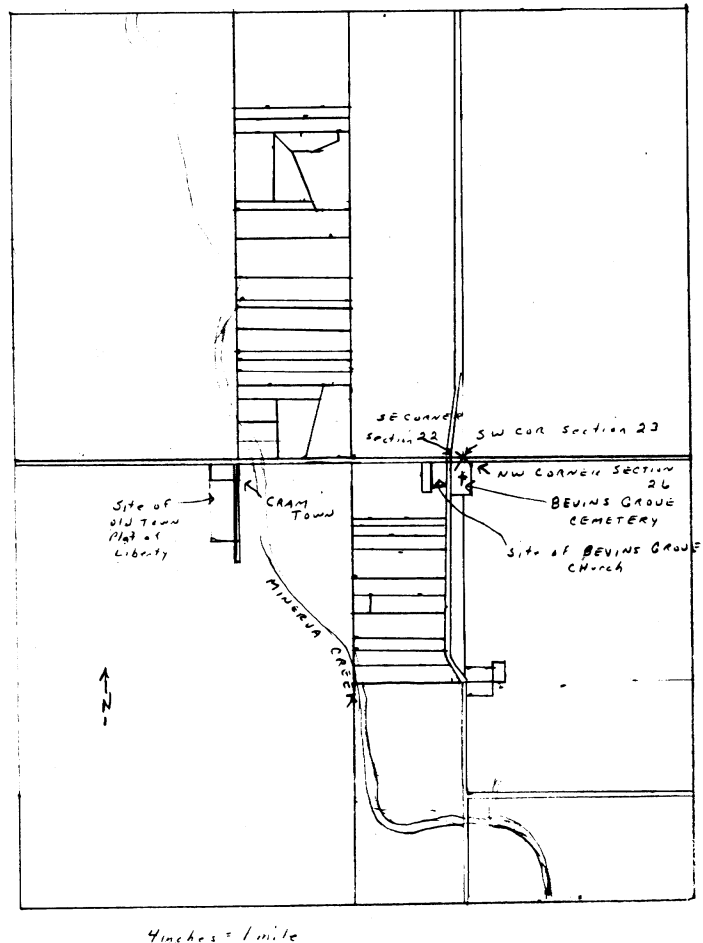
Also a deed is found from C. S. Andrews and wife M. B. Andrews to Liberty Township for land described as:

"Commencing at a point 88 feet East and 33 feet South of the Northwest corner of NW¼ 26-85-20, thence South 300 feet, thence West 184 feet, thence North 300 feet, thence East 184 feet - public burying grounds" dated August 13, 1914.

A tour of the cemetery reveals the names of many early settlers: Garber, Bevins, Ford, Perry, Brace, Andrews, Bartine, Sharp, Wooten, Hall, Nordyke, Hance, Smith, Bacon, Turner, McManus -- to name a few. Many of the real old stones are illegible, but those that can be read show dates of the 1870's and 1880's.

At this date the cemetery has five old pine trees in the center. In May of 1980, six trees were planted with memorial funds of Olive Brace Ross.

The area of Bevins Grove was never formally platted as a town, but through many years of settlement and the sale of timber lots the entire area is still divided into small plots and lots. These are usually by auditor's plats or surveys that the County Auditor has had filed to record the various parcels for taxation. As you can see by the drawing this area has numerous small tracts.



BEVINS GROVE PLATT