

Written 1977
for Meridian School Dist.
in re: Linder School
by Helen Bryce

In 1900 Charles Cairns, a young schoolteacher seeking adventure, arrived in Boise by train from Mt. Hope, a small town in southwestern Wisconsin.

Arriving in Boise with very little money, an immediate job was a necessity. Mr. Cairns was offered employment in a sheep camp near Weiser. He walked to this small town by way of Emmett, staying with friendly homesteaders along the way.

The following year, Charles' brother, Floyd joined him. Together the brothers bought 240 acres one mile northwest of Meridian for \$10.00 an acre. Little of this land was cleared of sagebrush. Potatoes were planted on the tillable land while more land was being cleared. After harvesting the potatoes the brothers peddled them in Boise City as it was then called. To supplement their income, Charles worked at the Overland National Bank in Boise, commuting by train.

While farming more acres each year and irrigating with water from the Settler's Irrigation project the brothers lived in a two-story house at the corner of Linder and Cherry Lane.

In 1906 Floyd married Mable Tolleth who had been teaching in local schools. The following year they built a house which still stands on Linder, one half mile north of Cherry Lane.

About 1908 a large part of the original farm was planted to prune trees since the climate in the Boise Valley was well adapted to fruit raising. For many years, prunes both fresh and processed were shipped to many markets throughout the country.

In 1909 the farm was divided. Charles took the southeastern 120 acres and this was the family home after he married Susie Monlux in 1912.

With the Arrowrock Dam completed in 1914 more water was available. In addition to the fast growing orchards, wheat, corn, and alfalfa were grown. Mr. Cairns had a continued interest in sheep raising. During the fall and winter several hundred sheep were kept on the farm and trailed to summer range during the warm months.

For several years a herd of dairy cows produced milk for an early day cheese factory in Meridian and later for the Ada County Dairymen's Association.

deceased 1979

deceased 1996

Mabel Cairns and her son, Vernon, continue to own and operate their part of the original farm but the farm of Charles Cairns, the site of a proposed new elementary school, was in the family name until 1956 when it was sold to Mr. Nyborg.