

Standard Form For Members of the Legislature

Name of Representative Nelson, Nelson Alva Senator _____

Represented Jasper County, Iowa

1. Birthday and place 2 June 1852 Orwich, Vermont

2. Marriage (s) date place
① Ernest J. Benefield 25 Dec 1875 Scott County, Iowa

② Grace L. Atwood 22 Nov 1899 Beaconsfield, Iowa

3. Significant events for example:

A. Business _____

B. Civic responsibilities _____

C. Profession Farmer; livestockman; mail carrier;
wood hauler

4. Church membership Methodist Episcopal

5. Sessions served 26th General Assembly 1896

6. Public Offices

A. Local _____

B. State _____

C. National _____

7. Death 13 Dec 1923 Verndale, Minnesota Barrie Green Lewis Cemetery, Verndale, Minnesota

8. Children William B.; Leonard; Shelby; Edith (Mrs. Austin
Sobler); Mattie (Mrs. R. E. Lewis); by 2nd wife Merritt N. Spaulding; Ivan

9. Names of parents _____

1900 Palo Alto Twp, Jasper Co., Iowa

Wells, Nelson P.

10. Education He attended school at Ansonia, Iowa

11. Degrees _____

12. Other applicable information Republican

- His first wife, Emma, died 10 Mar 1858 at age 41 years, 8 months, 8 days; buried in Newton Union Cemetery, Ansonia, Iowa
- In 1856 he moved with his family from Vermont to Ansonia, Iowa
- It is unknown when the family moved to Jasper County, Iowa, but he did serve at the General Assembly in 1876.
- He apparently failed in business in Jasper County. Left his home at Nelson Station in Polk County, Iowa and at age 19 ^{in 1862} went north to Adams County, Minnesota. They lived 5 miles north of Verdale on a farm.
- They later moved 7 miles north and 3 miles east of Verdale, Minnesota spring 1863. Jones were hard and he headed west to Dakota. Later he became a mail carrier 1908-1919

Wells, Nelson A.

Sources Log For Legislation Entries

Applicability

Source	Non Applicable	Applicable	Information obtained
- Jaeger County Iowa Cemetery p 509			
- sac.ark.com (Accessed 15 Apr 2009)			
- Obituary - A. Madira, Fremont paper, published Dec 20, 1923			

BREAR

WELLS, N. H.



W.P.

Pearson's Art Gallery
DES MOINES, IA.

["26th G.A. Newton, Jasper Co."]

1923 12 20: Obituary

WELLS: Nelson Alva Wells was born at Norwich, Vt., on June 2, 1853., and died at his farm home in Wadena county, Minnesota, at the break of day on Dec. 13, 1923, at the age of seventy years, six months and eleven days, the immediate cause of death being gastric ulcers.

In 1856 Mr. Wells' family moved from Vermont to Davenport, Iowa, where he attended school, grew to manhood and married Emma Benefiel on Dec. 25, 1875. To this union were born William, now captain of the U. S. S. Cleveland, Leonard, of Trout Creek, Mont., Shelly, of Buffalo, Wyoming. Edith, now Mrs. Austin Kohler, of Monroe, Iowa, and Mattie, now Mrs. R. E. Lewis, of Fergus Falls, Minn. Edith and Mattie were present during their father's last illness, but the older sons were unable to come.

After the death of his first wife, Mr. Wells married Grace Atwood on February 22, 1899, and to this union were born three children, Ivan, Merrit N. and Grace E., who are still in the home, a comfort and support to the bereaved wife.

Mr. Wells spent the greater part of his life in Iowa, where he held various offices of trust and responsibility. He was a member of the 26th General Assembly of the Iowa legislature in 1896. In 1902 he came with his family to Wadena county and settled on the farm in Wing River township, where he made his home until translated to his heavenly home.

Funeral services were held at the Verndale M. E. Church by Rev. H. A. Sawyer, of Wadena, assisted by Rev. Standerling, and interment was made in Green Lawn cemetery. Hon. C. F. Bailey, an old friend and associate in the Iowa legislature, was present and spoke briefly in appreciation of the life and character of the diseased.

Nelson Wells was converted, and joined the Methodist Church when a young man; he lived a consistent life of high ideals, ever using in influence and example for the right. While conscious that the end was near he repeated the following lines:

"Oh come angel band, come and around me stand,
Bear me away on your snowy wings, To my immortal home.

WELLMAN, WILBUR F.

Reference: Verndale Sun, 12-17-1953.

see County Gardens ("Organizations"), "Congregational Church History", Volume I.

AUGUSTA/Augustin AMELIA LARSON, daughter of Charles and Caroline Larson, was born near Stockholm, Sweden, on June 6, 1869. At the age of 11 years she came to the United States with her parents locating in Gowrie, Webster County, IA. When 17 years of age she moved with her family to O'Brien County, IA. There on December 20, 1888, she was married to Wilbur Fisk Wellman and for 25 years they made their home on a farm in this same county.

When a child she was confirmed in the Lutheran faith then after her marriage became a member of the Methodist Church with her husband. They later joined the Oak Grove Congregational Church when they came to reside in the Oak Grove Community.

To this union five children were born - four daughters and one son. Mrs. Willis Nichols (MABLE WELLMAN) and Mrs. Alfred Kuehl (INA WELLMAN) of Storden, Mrs. Wallace Fetzer (MYRTIS WELLMAN) of Duluth and DAVID C. WELLMAN of Verndale. One daughter GRACE WELLMAN, preceded her in death.

In the spring of 1913, they moved to Minneosta living in different localities till moving to the Oak Grove Community in 1942 where she resided until death on December 7, 1953, at the age of 84 years and six months in Wadena. This venerable couple would have celebrated their 65th wedding the following Sunday on Grandpa Wellman's 90th birthday had she lived.

She left to mourn her passing her loving husband, four children, 15 grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren, one brother, Carl Larson, and one sister, Tilda Soderquist and a host of friends. Three sisters and one brother preceded her in death.

Grandma Wellman, as she was called by her host of friends, was a devoted Christian mother and friend. She remained ever active in church work until her health began to fail.

Wilbur died on March 10, 1957, at the age of 93 in Wadena. They are buried in the Verndale Green Lawn Cemetery, Lot 31, Block 9.

WELLS, HERBERT E. - died at the age of 70 and was buried in the Montrose Cemetery near Central on September 12, 1980.

WELLS, MATTIE - married SIDNEY SANFORD (see Sanford).

WELLS - A PROUD HERITAGE - A COMMUNITY LEADER

Information provided by Donald L. Wells, RR, Verndale, MN 56481; Grace Wells Paulson, Box 474, Pelican Rapids, MN 56572; Merritt Wells, 4232 - 24th Ave. So., Minneapolis, MN 55406.

References: Verndale Sun, 12-13-1923; 12-21-1944; 7-25-1974; other newspaper clippings kept in a scrapbook by the Wells family.

Also see "Hope Chapel History", "Wing River Township History", "Postal History" (page 169), "District #9 School History", Blue Grass Ramblers 4-H Club History ("Organizations"), Volume I; Atwood, Lukens, John Bradford, Frank S. Anderson and Williams family histories.

The Wells family history in Verndale, Wadena County, MN, begins in 1902 when NELSON ALVA WELLS, having failed in business in Jasper County, IA, came looking for reasonably priced land and a new start. He then left his home in Wilson Station in Palo Alto Township, also known as "Wildcat Grove" at the age of 49 with his second wife, and two year old son, Ivan. He had been married before with five children from his first wife who died in 1898. The two youngest were girls, EDITH WELLS and MATTIE WELLS, who came with them to Minnesota. The three boys, being grown, stayed behind.



NELSON WELLS
photo contributed by Don Wells

They lived their first winter in Wadena County at Cooks Corner five miles north of Verndale. Then they moved to their farm seven miles north and three miles east of Verndale in the spring of 1903. That farm is now owned by Fred Heller. In 1906, the plat book shows N. A. Wells as a land owner in the SW 1/4 of Section 14, Wing River Township. It was rugged country, far from town, and life was hard. Mrs. N. A. Wells always missed Iowa, but took the change in stride for the sake of her family.

To earn money the first few years, Nelson would haul cord wood to Wadena some 13 miles away. He would cut the wood one day and haul it to town the next, leaving home before light and arriving home after dark that night. When it was very cold, he would walk most of the way.

Things got a little better when he got the mail route in 1908-09, with his wife for many years serving as substitute carrier. He would meet the other mail man at the Wing River Town Hall, then drive the three miles home to sort the mail for those on the route 2 "extension", also known as route 4. With his fresh horse he would go the 24 miles to Oylen, getting home at about four or five o'clock. The next day he would go to the hall with the horse he used the day before. Thus he just used two horses. Grace recalled that as a young child she rode in this mail wagon many times with her father or mother. In those days, there was no rule against a small passenger in the mail wagon.

AN INTERESTING EXPERIENCE OF A WINTER DAY AS SUBSTITUTE RURAL MAIL CARRIER (about 1912 or before)

Once upon a time, several years ago, I had this experience while substitute mail carrier in rural Minnesota. The snowmobile had not yet made its appearance and that time, the roads were often merely trails through the woods.

One snowy winter morning, my husband being sick in bed and unable to go with the mail, I realized that I would have to make the 30 mile drive and deliver the mail, so I sent the hired man to get a neighbor girl to come and stay with my children and look after my sick husband.

I started out with the faithful old horse hitched to the mail cab, to do my regular duty as substitute mail carrier.

Much of the 30 mile route was through the pine woods, with houses far apart, and some of them a long distance from their mail box. The snow was deep already and much of the track

unbroken. How quiet everything seemed - no one seemed to be out - and how white and cold the snow looked!

After a while the snow began coming down in earnest. The weather was not extremely cold (for which I was grateful) and the wind was stilled - but the snow flakes came so thick and fast, it began to seem almost like a great blanket pressing down trying to cover one. Seems like I never saw snow come down so fast. The horse found it hard going and became leg weary breaking the track but still plodded on.

Thirty miles for that old horse to go before the short winter day was over! My thoughts ran on and on - how were the folks at home? Would old Dan really get me home safely again? I was worrying with plenty of time to worry.

Late in the afternoon, when I stopped at one of the mail boxes, my horse went down in the snow. I tried to get him up, got out and waded around in the deep snow and worked to get him up - finally when I succeeded, I found that one shaft was broken. No one to call - no house near, and no telephone. What could I do? I knew of a log cabin farther on and so started for that.

The family heard my problem, but would not consent to take me farther than the next neighbor, which was about three miles away, but said they would care for my horse until we could come for him.

Now it was dark and we finally reached the next neighbor and Mr. A. said he would take his team and sled and take myself and the mail the rest of the distance on the mail route. Mrs. A. insisted on getting me something to eat; as Mr. A. must finish up his chores, and make plans to be away until the following day. Imagine my worry about my home folks, and I thought they would be worried about me - not knowing where or how I was detained so late.

Well, the road seemed long, but finally reached my home about 11 p.m., but in the meantime, the hired man had started out on horseback to find me. In the darkness he missed the road and wandered around in the woods, lost for a while - so that I got home before he did.

So ended a long winter day with the mail - one short winter day.

Nelson ran this mail route until about 1919 or so, being forced to retire because he reached the age of 65. His work as mail carrier was beyond reproach and at all times the

He ran for the legislature in 1912 on the prohibition ticket, winning in Wadena County, but Todd County being the bigger vote, lost the election. The following story appeared in the newspaper at that time.

PAGE FROM HISTORY

A PROHIBITION CANDIDATE

In this issue of the paper appears the announcement of N. A. Wells of Wing River as a candidate for the legislature from this district on the Prohibition ticket. Mr. Wells was in Sebeka Tuesday and while here meeting the voters was a pleasant caller at the Review office. He is well versed in legislative matters, having served two terms in the legislature in Iowa before he moved to this state. Immediately after the primary election Mr. Wells will commence an active campaign and with the Prohibition and Antisaloon Leagues supporting him he will likely cut some figure in politics this fall.

Hon. Wm. Dower of Wadena and either E. R. Hinds or P. D. Winship of Hubbard County will be the Republican nominees and a three cornered fight will soon be in progress.

N. A. Wells had been a member of the 26th General Assembly of the Iowa Legislature in 1896. He and his family were charter members of the Wing River Farmers Club which was active for many years.

Funeral services for N. A. Wells were held in the Verndale M.E. Church, conducted by Rev. H. A. Sawyer of Wadena, assisted by Rev. Standing of Verndale. Hon. C. F. Bailey, an old friend and associate in the Iowa Legislature was present and spoke briefly in appreciation of the life and character of the deceased.

Many times when a minister was not available, Mr. Wells would be asked to talk at funerals or other meetings and would also act as a lay preacher.

Nelson's son, WILLIAM "Willie" B. WELLS was born on December 20, 1875, in Davenport to Nelson's first wife Emma. Willie graduated from the Naval Academy in Annapolis and later was a navy captain of the U.S.S. Cleveland of the Special Service Squadron in Panama and several other ships. He died on March 11, 1930, and was buried in the Arlington National Cemetery, at the age of 54.



N. A. WELLS beside his mail wagon in about 1908. He carried mail on Route 4, a loop route from Route 3, which served the area between Wing River Town Hall and Oylen. This route is mentioned on page 169 of Pages From History. Mr. Wells served as a mail carrier until approximately 1921, in later years using a Model T.

predominating part of his service was his outstanding honesty. He also farmed, usually having a hired man until his boys got old enough to help with the work. He was a good provider and left all behind well cared for with land well-stocked on the Wing River Township farm where he resided for over 20 years.

N. A. Wells, prosperous and popular farmer, passed away on December 13, 1923, at the age of 70 years, 6/7 months, and 11 days in Wing River Township of a lingering illness of gastric ulcers. Conscious that the end was near, he repeated the following lines: "Oh, come angel band, Come and around me stand, Bear me away on your snowy wings, To my immortal home."

The Wells came from England to Vermont. Nelson was born in Norwich/Newberry, VT, on June 2, 1853, and left with his mother and sister in 1856. First they went to Ohio and later on to Davenport, IA, leaving his father in Vermont. At Davenport Nelson attended school, grew to manhood, and married EMMA BENEFIEL on December 25, 1875. Three sons and two daughters were born to this union. He spent a few years in Crawford County, IL, and later moved to Jasper County. He spent the greater part of his life in Iowa, where he held various offices of trust and responsibility. He was quite a prominent character in this neighborhood being the leader of the church as well as in politics and was known for his honest and fair dealings. He was a man of good character and strong convictions.

Another one of Nelson's sons was a lawyer. LEONARD A. WELLS lived in Seattle and Trout Creek, MT, in 1923. SHELLY WELLS lived in Nevada and in Buffalo, WY. EDITH/Edyth WELLS (Mrs. Austin Kohler) lived in Monroe, IA. MATTIE WELLS married Rolla E. Lewis and they lived in Fergus Falls, MN. In 1933, Mattie and her daughter, Constance, were from Pelican Rapids, MN.

N. A. Wells' mother remarried a man named Hall and they had a number of children, one of which became a doctor. When Nelson came here he borrowed money from his half brother, the doctor, to buy his farm. He refused to submit to bankruptcy and later paid all his bills.

GRACE ATWOOD WELLS, beloved resident of Wing River Township for over 42 years, wife of Nelson, was born on December 25, 1870, near Newton, IA. Here she grew to young womanhood and received her early education. Later she attended Highland Park College in Des Moines, IA, for one year and taught successfully in the public schools of Iowa for five years before her marriage. She also taught Women's Sunday School class in Newton.

Grace passed away in Wing River Township in the home of her son, Merritt Wells, on December 19/24, 1944, at the age of 73 years, 11 months, and 25 days, after a year's illness. She was survived by two step-daughters, Mrs. Austin Kohler of Inglewood, CA; and Mrs. R. E. Lewis of Duluth, MN, and a brother, Frank Atwood, of Los Angeles, CA; and nine grandchildren. Mr. and Mrs. Wells are buried in the Verndale Green Lawn Cemetery, Lot 65, Block 3.

Funeral services for Grace Wells was held in the Hope Chapel Church, Rev. J. C. Youngblood of Bertha, pastor at Hope Chapel officiated.

Grace loved to write and kept a daily log of the happenings of the family, church and other information.

She was converted at the age of 10 years in Grace Chapel, the church built on her father's farm and named in her honor and was a life-long member of the Methodist Episcopal Church. She was a good Christian woman and very active in Sunday School and church activities all of her life.

On February 22, 1899, she married Nelson A. Wells of Reasoner, IA, where they lived for three years.

Nelson was converted and joined the Methodist Church when a young man. Immediately after their arrival in Wing River a Sunday School was organized in the Wing River Town Hall and preaching services were held

there by pastors from churches in nearby towns. Later a weekly prayer meeting service was established and continued through the years. Finally in 1925, she had a very important part in the furtherance of the Hope Chapel Church project, and was very ably assisted by many others. It was Grace who named the church which was dedicated on September 27, 1925. Grace played the piano and organ, was Sunday School teacher, and was a leader in the church in many other ways. She was the leader in organizing the Ladies Aid in December of 1921 and was its first president which office she held for 13 years. She was also a charter member and one of the first officials and organizers of the Loyal Neighbor Society which was organized in February of 1915 and very active in its programs. For several years she held office in the Wadena County Sunday School Association. For the last two years of her life she was a member of the W.R.C. and W.C.T.U.

Mrs. Wells was the first adult leader of the 4-H club, then known as the Girls Bread Club.

MRS. NELSON (Grace)
ATWOOD WELLS

photo contributed
by
Don Wells



The father of Grace Atwood Wells and her brothers, was Merritt W. Atwood, born in 1831 and died in 1894. He never lived in Minnesota. His grandson, Merritt Wells, has donated the Civil War sash from Captain Wells' dress uniform to the Verndale Historical Society. Grandpa Wells' wife, ELIZA DUNN ATWOOD, was born in 1840/41, lived briefly in Minnesota, where she died in October of 1902 at the home of her daughter in Wing River Township.

It is believed that Charles, Grant, and Frank Atwood and their wives arrived in Wing River Township at about the same time as the Wells family. Grant is believed to have been the first to arrive - coming in February of 1903. However, none of them stayed very long.

CHARLES "Charlies" S. ATWOOD, the oldest, born in 1859, and his wife, ELLA ATWOOD, lived where Ken Kraft and Ole Amundson lived. He planted those large spruce trees there. Charlie left for San Francisco where he was a carpenter. Having experienced the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, they returned to Iowa to make their permanent home.

ELMER ATWOOD, Charlie's eldest son, was the only Atwood to make a lasting residence in Minnesota. He homesteaded in Cass County near Longville and Walker, MN, (Leech Lake), in 1912. He married LONA CARPER in 1906. She lived with her folks on a farm a little over two miles north of Hope Chapel where Bob Biddle now lives. Lona was 99 in November of 1983, and at that time was still spending her summers with a companion near Longville. Carpers traded farms with Gail Johnson's grandfather in southern Minnesota, sometime between 1906 and 1910. Both Elmer and Lona Atwood were born in 1884.

Charlie's son, Harold Atwood, built up a summer resort on Lake Wabedo in Cass County.

Grace's second brother, HARRY E. ATWOOD, born in 1867, never joined the others in Minnesota.

GRANT W. ATWOOD, Grace's brother born in 1872, and his wife, NELLE ATWOOD, lived where Harlan Thomson lives now. Her youngest brother, FRANK ATWOOD, and his wife, HILDA ATWOOD, lived just west of Fred Heller's where RUEBEN MORTON lived. The buildings are now all gone.

Nels and Grace Wells had three children. IVAN WELLS; the eldest, lived all but two years of his life in Wing River Township, passing away on February 12, 1982.

Ivan's birth was announced in the local Iowa paper of that date as follows, "A stalwart Republican baby boy came as an Easter blessing to Hon. N. A. Wells and wife at Reasnor last Sunday." Grace's journal contained the following entry for that memorable date in her life, "East Sunday, April 15, 1900. Sprinkled rain a little in the morning and then burned off pleasant and warm (clear part time) rained hard in evening. Dr. Carpenter (old gentleman) came little before 8 o'clock and staid until between 5 and 6 in the evening. Baby born just before 4 p.m. Mrs. J. R. Livingston dressed him. So thankful it is all over and we (baby and I) are all right - spoiled Grant's visit. Baby weighed 8 lbs. dressed. Mrs. Sipe just called - sent him an Easter egg too.

Baby slept well all night, did not cry - nursed once - and I got a good sleep, (only awake about two hours). Nel says he is the

prettiest baby she ever saw - looks just like the Wells, Etc.

I had a long tedious time but feel quite well considering all the agony I went through."



IVAN ATTWOOD WELLS

Age 4 months - born 4-15-1900, 15-1/2#

Dress was made from Grandma Attwood's wedding dress.

The yoke was of imported lace

photo contributed by Don Wells

Thus was the beginning of the life for Ivan Wells; the February 18, 1982, Verndale Sun told of the close of that life:

LONG TIME WING RIVER TOWNSHIP RESIDENT DIES

Ivan Wells, a well-known farmer in Wing River Township for many years died at his home, Route 3, Verndale, at the age of 81, following a short illness.

Ivan graduated from Wadena High School in 1917. He and GLADYS MC DOWELL, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Roy Mc Dowell, were married in her parental home at Wadena on June 14, 1933. Gladys had been a teacher in the public schools of the county for several years prior to her marriage. She taught for two years in School District #2, where she resided at the home of C. C. KRAFT. They farmed in Wing River Township all of their married lives.

Active in community affairs, he participated in the play "Prisoner at the Bar" a widely known drama of that time which was presented at the Wing River Tabernacle in September of 1934. Ivan portrayed the part of the Judge. The others in the cast were as follows: Prosecuting Attorney - REV. A. L. OLNEY; Defense Attorney - MERRITT WELLS; Clerk of Court - J. M. HAGERMAN; Bailiff - JESSE HESS; Prisoner at the Bar - HON. H. H. HONSON; Prisoner's Daughter - DORA MAE HESS; Star Witness - Mrs. JESS HESS; Finger Print Expert - CLARENCE JORDAHL; and Sheriff - PAUL BILLINGTON. Summoned for Jury Service - Mrs. C. C. KRAFT, P. H. MASON, ED PETERSON, R. M. SHELTON, PERRY DAHLVANG, A. E. JOHNSON, KENNETH CROCKER, Mrs. E. O. MICKELSON, Mrs. WM. SHEARER, Miss ADA RICE, Mrs. G. A. WELLS and OLIVER SMITH.

Ivan was an active member of the Hope Chapel Alliance Church and served as a Sunday School teacher, a member of the church board, District #37 board and the board of Hay Creek Telephone Company. He is listed in the Verndale Telephone Directory as having a "farm" telephone in 1938. Ivan served for over 50 years on the Wing River Township Board, beginning at the age of 26, most of that time serving as clerk.

He was survived by his wife Gladys, three sons, Lawrence of Roseville, Donald of Route 3, Verndale, and Allen of Russellville, AR; one brother, Merritt; one sister, Grace.

The Rev. Eugene Breid, pastor of Hope Chapel officiated at the funeral with interment in the Wadena Cemetery.

Ivan was a nice, quiet man who worked hard and loved his family, and served the Lord. He loved to read about the Civil War and was kind of an authority on the subject. He knew the Bible as he read the scriptures every day. He was also a history buff, having written the history of the building of the Wing River Town Hall and for the dedication of the new addition to Hope Chapel Church (4-29-1973), he also wrote the history of the church.

LAWRENCE WELLS, 1983 a resident of St. Paul, married Audrey Jean Erke, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ervin Erke, in St. Paul in 1957. They have two sons, Gregory and Ken. Lawrence works for Deluxe Check Printers. He was born in 1935.

DONALD LEROY WELLS, Ivan's next son, was born in 1938. He farms on the home place in Section 22, Wing River Township. He was

married to CONNIE JEAN CARPENTER, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Carpenter of Staples, MN, in 1979. They have three daughters: Holly, Sandra, and Lynnette.

ALLEN WELLS, Ivan's youngest, was born in 1940. He is a mechanical engineer and lives and works in Russellville. He married Jeanne Bandstra in Minneapolis in 1973. They have one daughter named Andrea, born in 1976.

2 - MERRITT N. WELLS, Nelson and Grace's second child, was born late in 1903 in Wing River Township in their log home there. He was named after his grandfather, Capt. Merritt W. Atwood, who settled in Jasper Co., IA, and served in Company K 28th of the Iowa Infantry during the Civil War.

Merritt recalls how cold the nights used to get in Wing River Township. When going outside you could hear the wolves or coyotes howling on the cold, still air. It was an eerie sound as their packs moved about.

Merritt's name is listed in the 1938 Verndale Telephone Directory as having a telephone on his farm. Merritt lived here until about 1955 when he moved to Minneapolis. There he worked for the state weighing grain. He married Edith Potter from Leaf River Township in about 1934. They had five children: David, Bill, Grace, Mabel and Cheryl.

WILLIAM "Bill" WELLS was born on May 12, 1935, in Wing River Township. He was named for his father's half-brother, the Annapolis graduate, and career Navy man. His untimely death occurred on July 17, 1974, in Minneapolis just four days after moving into a newly purchased home. He was survived by his wife, Grace, and one ten month old daughter, Kimberly. Funeral services were held on July 20th in Emmanuel United Methodist Church, where he was a member, with burial in the Crystal Lake Cemetery of Minneapolis.

After graduating from Verndale High School in 1954, Bill was employed in Minneapolis the last 15 years at Pillsbury Company - in recent years as foreman.

GRACE WELLS was born in 1936 or 37, is divorced, and has no children. She lives in Minneapolis.

MABEL WELLS, born in late 1940, is divorced and lives on the West Coast.

CHERYL WELLS was born in 1945. She is single and works in Minneapolis as well.

Edith and Merritt divorced and he is married to Marge.

3 - GRACE E. WELLS, Nelson's third child, was born in 1906. She was named for her mother. In Grace's contribution to this family history she reminisced about when her parents used to buy groceries at the Heineman & Goebel

store in Verndale, banked on the corner, and her father would like to stop and visit with Mr. Calvert at his feed store. Mary Bradford was the post mistress then.

Grace attended rural school in District #37 and returned there to teach during the 1924-25 school year. She had attended high school in Wadena. During the 1920's when still quite young, Grace took a teaching position in Pelican Rapids where she has lived ever since. There she met Palmer Paulson, who was the school janitor and they were later married. Palmer after that had a filling station which he built and sold when he retired. They have two daughters: Mary Lou, who was born in 1937, married Robert Koth and lives in California. They have two children. Kathy Paulson, Grace's second child, was born in about 1942. She teaches in Long Prairie and is unmarried.

The Wells were Methodist in the early days, but today are kind of a mix of Protestant faiths - on the most part. Much more could be written about the Wells family, but that would take another book! There are only two males to carry the Wells name on to the next generation and neither are living in this area, so the Wells name will probably die out in the Verndale area.

WELTER, AUGUST

References: Verndale Sun, 5-12-1921; 4-22-1926; 12-28-1939; 7-4-1955.

Also see Legion Auxiliary History ("Organizations"), Volume I, where Anna E. Welter is mentioned.

August Welter died on May 8, 1921, after an illness of three weeks due to heart trouble. He was a retired farmer in this city. Funeral services were held from St. Frederick's Church with Fr. Yzerman officiating. Burial was in the Catholic Cemetery at the edge of town.

August Welter was born on September 18, 1855, in Treves, Germany, the son of Aug. Welter, which made him 65 years, eight months, and nine days. He came to this country in 1872 at the age of 16 years and settled in Cuming County, NE, near West Point. He was married to MARIA/Mary SEUZ in West Point/Fremont, NE, on October 18, 1892, and moved to Knox County where he lived 16 years on a farm before moving to Minnesota, where in 1911 he took up his residence on a farm in Thomastown Township five miles east of this city and lived there until 1920. He farmed in the area of School District #4.

He left to mourn a wife and three children: Anna, Wilfred and Eleanor and two adopted children, Mable/Mabel and Albert.

Mary Welter passed away on June 30, 1955. She was born on June 9, 1874, in Kempton, Bavaria, Germany. Three children survived, Mable, Eleanor, and Ann. Two sons preceded her in death. Three still reside in Germany.

Albert Welter was brought here for burial having died on April 16, 1926, at the Veteran's Hospital in St. Cloud following an illness lasting since the war days. The deceased served this country during the World War and was stationed at Camp Wadsworth, SC, when in the service. After being discharged from the army he returned home where he lived for one year when he left for the government hospital in St. Paul from which place he was transferred to East Norfolk, MA, and then to Sheridan, WY, where he remained until taken to the new hospital in St. Cloud, MN, where he quietly passed away after two years at that location.

Albert was born in Creighton, NE, on October 18, 1893, making him 32 years old at the time of his death. He was the adopted son of Mr. and Mrs. August Welter having been taken into their family when but six years old.

Albert left one brother and three sisters besides a devoted mother to mourn his loss. They being, WILFRED WELTER and ELEANOR WELTER of St. Cloud, Mrs. A. E. Moore (MABLE WELTER - see Moore) of Creighton, NE; Mrs. E. E. "A1" JACOBS (ANNA WELTER) of Minneapolis (1939 of Verndale); and Mrs. Mary Welter of St. Cloud.

Funeral services were held in the St. Fredericks Church of Verndale with interment in the church cemetery. The local American Legion had charge of the burial ceremonies acting as pallbearers and carrying out a military funeral in respect for their departed comrade. A number of the friends of the departed and family attended to pay their last tribute to the dead patriot.

Eleanor Welter apparently moved around a lot. In 1939 she is listed as a resident of Wheaton, IL; 1955 as Mrs. Coffin, a resident of Hinsdale, IL; and is later remembered as residing in Florida.

Dr. Wilfred A. Welter was killed in a car accident in Indiana on his way to Verndale to spend Christmas in 1939. His fiance was also killed. Dr. Welter was born in Creighton, NE, on March 29, 1906. He was survived by his mother and three sisters. Funeral services were conducted from the St. Frederick's Catholic Church with Rev. Fr. Van Zutphen officiating. Interment took place in the Verndale Catholic Cemetery.



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[Find others searching for Nelson A Wells](#)

Iowa State Census Collection, 1836-1925

Name: **Nelson A Wells**

Birth Year: **abt 1854**

Birth Place: **Vermont**

Gender: **Male**

Marital Status: **Married**

Census Date: **1885**

Residence State: **Iowa**

Residence County: **Crawford**

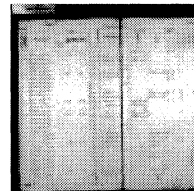
Locality: **Willow**

Roll: **IA1885_170**

Line: **16**

Family Number: **32**

Neighbors: [View others on page](#)



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Household Members:	Name	Age
	Nelson A Wells	31
	Emma Wells	28
	Willie Wells	8
	Leonard Wells	5
	Shelly Wells	2
	Thomas Dalby	27
	Minnie Harkins	18

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[Find others searching for Nelson A. Wells](#)

Iowa State Census, 1895

Name: **Nelson A. Wells**

Age: 42

Race: White

Birthplace: Vermont

RESIDENCE: ~~Pala Alta, Jasper~~*Pala Alto Township*

Save This Record

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Source Information:

Ancestry.com. *Iowa State Census, 1895* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: The Generatio Network, Inc., 2003. Original data: Iowa. *1895 Iowa State Census*. Des Moines, Iowa: State Historical Society of Iowa.

Description:

This database contains information for 91 counties from the 1895 Iowa State Census in the united States. Information listed includes the name of every member of the household, thei age, birthplace, and location (town and county). [Learn more...](#)

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Iowa Marriages, 1851-1900

Name: **Nelson A. Wells**Spouse: **Emma J. Benefiel**Marriage Date: **25 Dec 1875**County: **Scott County**State: **IA**

Save This Record

Attach this record to a person in your tree as a source record, or save for later evaluation.

Source Information:

Dodd, Jordan, Liahona Research, comp.. *Iowa Marriages, 1851-1900* [database on-line]. P UT, USA: The Generations Network, Inc., 2000. Original data: See extended description for original data sources listed by county.

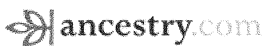
Description:

This database contains marriage information from various counties in the U.S. state of Iowa from 1851-1900. Information that may be found in this database for each individual include their name, spouse's name, marriage date, and marriage county. [Learn more...](#)

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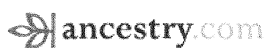
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You searched for **Wells**

1900 United States Federal Census

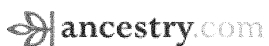
Name:	Nelson Wells	
Home in 1900:	Palo Alto, Jasper, Iowa	
Age:	47	
Birth Date:	Jun 1852	
Birthplace:	Vermont	
Race:	White	
Ethnicity:	American	
Gender:	Male	
Relationship to Head of House:	Head	
Father's Birthplace:	Indiana	
Mother's Birthplace:	Vermont	
Spouse's name:	Grace	
Marital Status:	Married	
Residence :	Palo Alto Township, Jasper, Iowa	
Occupation:	View on Image	
Neighbors:	View others on page	
Household Members:	Name	Age
	Nelson Wells	47
	Grace Wells	29
	Ivan Wells	1/12
	Edith Wells	13
	Mattie Wells	11
	Leonard Wells	20
	William Wells	23
Source Citation: Year: 1900; Census Place: Palo Alto, Jasper, Iowa; Roll T623_439; Page: 8A; Enumeration District: 32.		
Source Information: Ancestry.com. 1900 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004. Original data: United States of America, Bureau of the Census. <i>Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900</i> . Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1900. T623, 1854 rolls.		
Description: This database is an index to individuals enumerated in the 1900 United States Federal Census, the Twelfth Census of the United States. Census takers recorded many details including each person's name, address, relationship to the head of household, color or race, sex, month and year of birth, age at last birthday, marital status, number of years married, the total number of children born of the mother, the number of those children living, birthplace, birthplace of father and mother, if the individual was foreign born, the year of immigration and the number of years in the United States, the citizenship status of foreign-born individuals over age twenty-one, occupation, and more. Additionally, the names of those listed on the population schedule are linked to actual images of the 1900 Federal Census. Learn more...		



You searched for **Wells**

1910 United States Federal Census

Name:	Nels A Mells [Nels A Wells]	
Age in 1910:	56	
Estimated birth year:	abt 1854	
Birthplace:	Vermont	
Relation to Head of House:	Head	
Father's Birth Place:	Vermont	
Mother's Birth Place:	Vermont	
Spouse's name:	Grace	
Home in 1910:	Wing River, Wadena, Minnesota	
Marital Status:	Married	
Race:	White	
Gender:	Male	
Neighbors:	View others on page	
Household Members:	Name	Age
	Nels A Mells	56
	Grace Mells	39
	Iven Mells	10
	Maret Mells	6
	Grace Mells	3
Source Citation: Year: 1910; Census Place: Wing River, Wadena, Minnesota; Roll T624_729; Page: 3A; Enumeration District: 194; Image: 685.		
Source Information: Ancestry.com. 1910 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2006. For details on the contents of the film numbers, visit the following NARA web page: NARA Original data: United States of America, Bureau of the Census. Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1910. T624, 1,178 rolls.		
Description: This database is an index to the head of households enumerated in the 1910 United States Federal Census, the Thirteenth Census of the United States. In addition, each indexed name is linked to actual images of the 1910 Federal Census. The information recorded in the census includes: name, relationship to head of family, age at last birthday, sex, color or race, whether single, married, widowed, or divorced, birthplace, birthplace of father and mother, and more. Learn more...		



You searched for **Wells**

1920 United States Federal Census

Name:	Nelson Walle [Nelson-Walls] [Nelson Wells]	
Home in 1920:	Wing River, Wadena, Minnesota	
Age:	66 years	
Estimated birth year:	abt 1854	
Birthplace:	Vermont	
Relation to Head of House:	Head	
Spouse's name:	Grace	
Father's Birth Place:	Vermont	
Mother's Birth Place:	Vermont	
Marital Status:	Married	
Race:	White	
Sex:	Male	
Home owned:	Own	
Able to read:	Yes	
Able to Write:	Yes	
Image:	429	
Neighbors:	View others on page	
Household Members:	Name	Age
	Nelson Walle Wells	66
	Grace Walle Weas	44
	Iran Walle Wells	19
	Marritt Walle Wells	16
	Grace Walle Wells	13
Source Citation: Year: 1920; Census Place: Wing River, Wadena, Minnesota; Roll T625_864; Page: 4B; Enumeration District: 248; Image: 429.		
Source Information: Ancestry.com. 1920 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2009. Images reproduced by FamilySearch.		
For details on the contents of the film numbers, visit the following NARA web page: NARA .		
Note: Enumeration Districts 819-839 on roll 323 (Chicago City)		
Original data: Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920; (National Archives Microfilm Publication T625, 2076 rolls); Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29; National Archives, Washington, D.C.		
Description: This database is an index to individuals enumerated in the 1920 United States Federal Census, the Fourteenth Census of the United States. It includes all states and territories, as well as Military and Naval Forces, the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, and the Panama Canal Zone. The census provides many details about individuals and families including: name, gender, age, birthplace, year of immigration, mother tongue, and parents' birthplaces. In addition, the names of those listed on the population schedule are linked to actual images of the 1920 Federal Census. Learn more...		