



Mile 146

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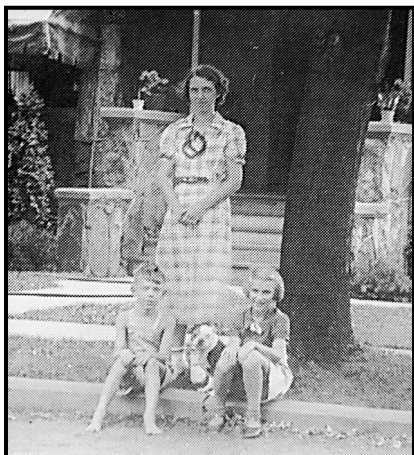
“Seagly Brothers, If You Needed It ...They Had It”

For decades the name of Seagly was synonymous with banking and business in Topeka. When the Seagly brothers came to town around 1910, they purchased the building at 118 North Main Street. Today that building is home to Ace Hardware. In addition to selling hardware goods, farm equipment, coal, and fencing, Seagly's add the ever popular Studebaker buggies and wagons that were being manufactured in nearby South Bend, Indiana. After a number of years, they moved into the Parks Building where they added a grocery store and meat market to the hardware and farm implement line.

Dail E. Seagly (1886-1956) and his older brother John F. (1884-1955), along with other members of the Seagly family, were involved in many areas of community life from banking, to civic groups, to education, and retail business. Dail was the president of the State Bank of Topeka.

Dail married Edna Belle Miller in 1910. One year later their son Waldo was born. Unfortunately Edna died in 1920. Waldo (THS Class of 1929) joined the Army and was stationed in London, England, during World War II, retiring as a colonel in the Army Reserves. For many year he owned and operated Seagly Hardware & Farm Equipment before it was sold to Orvin Kropf. Waldo died on June 23, 2003.

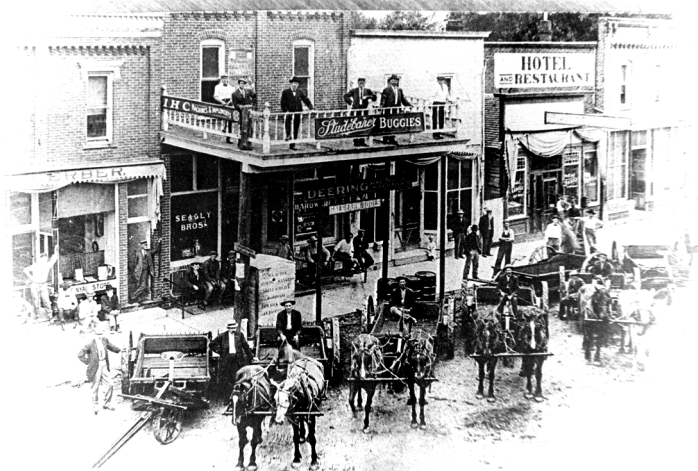
In September of 1922, Dail married Mary Jane Scott (THS Class of 1914). Mary Jane was a teacher and Dail's son Waldo was one of her students. Dail and Mary Jane had three children; Jack Douglas who died as an infant in 1924, Jean (Crouse), and Richard. Mary Jane taught school for eight years and helped to form the Topeka Book Club which met from 1939 until 1988. Her daughter Jean also taught school for 25 years, and son Richard retired after a long career with the Ft. Wayne Public Library.



Mary Jane, Richard, and Jean Seagly
in front of their home on East Lake St.,
built in 1914 by Floyd Peck.

Jean (Seagly) Crouse told Lyn Stutzman after he purchased the building on the east side of North Main that she remembers when her uncles had the business. “The store was outfitted with rolling ladders because of the tall shelves. Crouse says that in those days you walked in with your list, but you didn’t walk through the isles to find what you wanted. You gave your list to the workers behind the counter and they got what you needed.”

Jean remembers how hard it was for her father Dail when he knew the State Bank of Topeka was failing and he couldn’t tell anyone. “Dad would come home from the bank mentally exhausted and just lay on the couch or the floor; he couldn’t even tell family members who had money in the bank what was happening ... it was terribly hard on him.”



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Dail and John Seagly were the sons of Alfred "A.J." (1856-1938) and Melissa (Stone) Seagly (1858-1922). The Seagly brothers had grown up in the Woodruff area northeast of Wolcottville. When they came to Topeka, A.J. built a home with a stone front porch at 314 South Main Street.

Seagly's neighbors to the south, on the corner of S. Main and Indiana, were John W. and Gertrude Priest. John W. owned the lumber yard. Their son Leroy Priest (pictured on page 3 with the THS Class of 1917), built a house on the north side of the Seagly home. All three houses are standing today and well maintained. Following the death of A.J. Seagly, Jean and her husband Don Crouse moved into the house.

When the Seagly Brothers moved their business into the Parks Building on the southwest corner of the square, half of the store was hardware and the other half, a grocery store and meat market. Jean says that her father Dail owned a farm 3 or 4 miles north of Topeka where he also had a slaughter house. "Dad and Maurice Moseman would buy good cattle from Texas, bring them to Topeka, butcher them, and then sell the meat in the store."

It was the meat market that initially brought a young

butcher from Delphos, Ohio, by the name of Bill Turner to Topeka. Most people associate Bill Turner with the corner drug store which the Turner family owned and operated for many years, but according to Jean, it was the meat market that got him here.

Jean takes delight in telling the story that one day, shortly after Turner started working for the Seaglys, her father Dail walked in the store and saw Bill rinsing the freshly ground beef in water (which added weight) like he had been taught to do in Delphos. "Dad just said, we don't do that

here," Jean chuckled, "...and he never did it again."

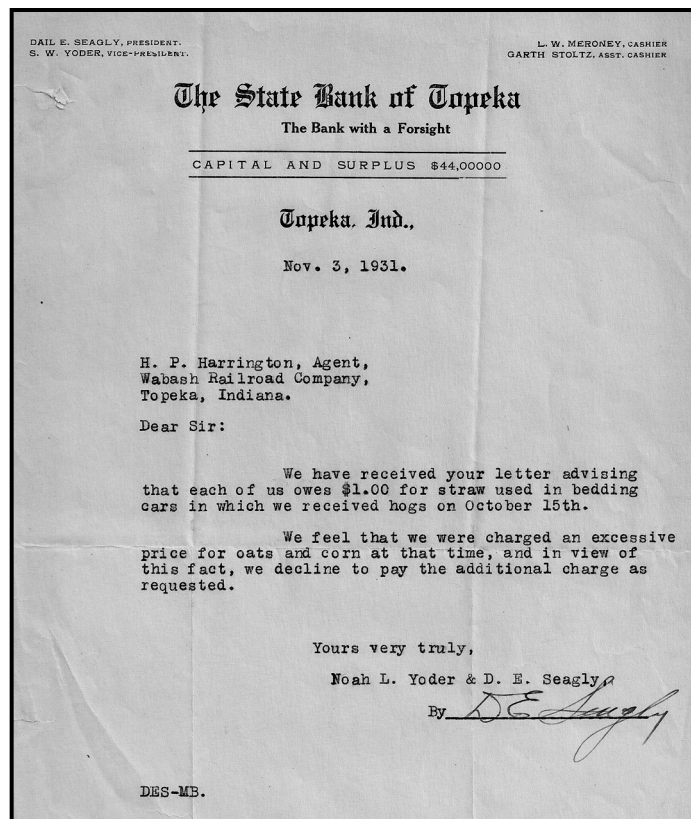
John F. Seagly, Dail's brother, opened a hardware store in Ligonier around 1933. Tragically he was killed apparently trying to recover his hat in August of 1955. The details are outlined in his obituary.

Seagly John F, 71, Ligonier hardware dealer, was killed last Saturday when he was struck by a car 4 miles from the junction of U. S. Roads 6 and 33, by a car while crossing the road. It is thought he stopped his car to recover his hat, believed to have blown off, and stepped in front of a car driven by Floyd Halterman. He operated a hardware store in Ligonier for 22 years, moving there from Topeka. Surviving are the widow, Georgianna; 2 daughters, Mrs. Eldon Smith of Ligonier, and Mrs. John Gates of Wis.; 4 grandchildren; and a brother. Funeral was Tuesday. Burial, Oak Park Cemetery.

Dail Seagly died one year later in 1956. He is buried in the Eden Cemetery west of Topeka. An avid Indiana University basketball fan and member of the Ligonier Presbyterian Church, Mary Jane maintained the family home at 317 East Lake Street until her death on April 3, 1998, at the age of 101.

Mary Jane's mind remained sharp. Even at 101 years of age she clearly remembered when the Hoosier Poet James Whitcomb Riley came to Topeka on November 24, 1905, for the dedication of Sycamore Hall. But I remember her answer when asked about the greatest thing that happened in Topeka in her life time. Without hesitation her response was, "Getting paved streets!"

HG



A Woman Hung in Topeka

*around her husband's
neck begging him to
buy some of Seagly's
Coal. Her neighbors had
used it and told her
about it. Don't be the
cause of your wife be-
ing hung, but get some
at once.*

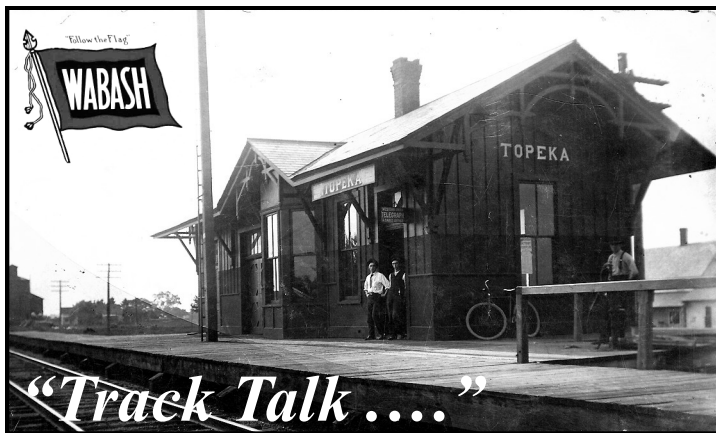
Seagly Bros

*Scales, Office and Shed west of
depot north side of tracks*

Topeka Journal - December 31, 1914

The original Seagly Bros ad is on microfilm at the Topeka Depot museum. I have tried to duplicate the original font and type setting as closely as possible.

Answers:
(1) Studebaker
(2) Melissa Stone
(3) \$1.00 each
(4) Delphos, Ohio
(5) 1941



THS Alumni Closes Accounts and Presents Check to Historical Society

Pattie Knowles, THS Alumni Association treasurer, presented a check in the amount of \$855.59 to the Topeka Area Historical Society at our September meeting.



The Alumni Association voted at their final reunion in June to give whatever funds remained, after all alumni bills had been paid, to the historical society.

New website:

Be sure you visit the historical society's new website at: www.topekahistoricalociety.com.

Our thanks to the folks at LaGwana Media, especially Justin Geigley, for a marvelous job on a much needed update.

Coming Events:

Jan. 16, 2018 "The Legacy of Ruth Johns—Teacher"

March 20, 2018 TBA



Topeka Area Historical Society Meetings are held at the Topeka Branch Library - 6:30 PM
Everyone is welcome

Visit us online at: www.topekahistoricalociety.com

The Mile 146 Quiz:

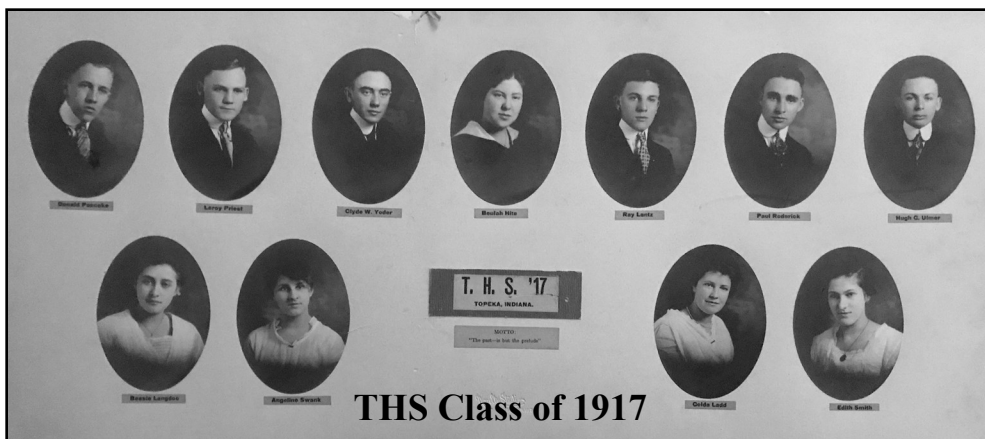
1. What kind of wagons did Seagly Brothers sell?
2. What was John and Dail Seagly's mother's name?
3. How much was the Wabash Railroad bill that Dail Seagly and Noah L. Yoder refused to pay?
4. Bill Turner moved to Topeka from where?
5. What year did Olive Grace Yoder graduate?



Sycamore Hall Painting

We want to thank Norm Duesler from LaGrange for donating this wonderful oil painting of what the original Sycamore Hall may have looked like.

When the Maple Grove Mennonite Church built a new brick building on County Line south of Topeka, the old wood frame church was moved one mile north of town to Sycamore Corners to become the first Sycamore Hall.



Top Row (L to R) Donald Pancake, Leroy Priest, Clyde W. Yoder, Beulah Hite, Ray Lantz, Paul Roderick, Hugh G. Ulmer

Bottom Row (L to R): Bessie Langdoc, Angeline Swank, Golda Ladd, Edith Smith

Mark & Sharla Thompson graciously donated this wonderful (24 x 11 inch) photo of the THS Class of 1917 to the historical society. The class motto was: "The past - - is but a prelude".

Topeka Area Historical Society
P.O. Box 33
Topeka, Indiana 46571

www.topekahistoricalociety.com

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The Hawpatch History Detective

“Where do you find all this stuff?”

People ask this question all the time. I generally just smile and say, “I have my sources....you know, it amazing what you can find on the internet.” So let me give away a couple of my research secrets that are FREE.

The internet is truly an amazing resource, but you do need to be careful. Websites like Wikipedia may be very helpful, but the information isn’t always accurate. The reason is that almost anyone can “post” something to that website. So if you find something on the internet, try to verify the information from several different sources.

I frequently start my research by doing a simple Google search. For example, if I’m trying to find information on someone, I just type their name into Google’s search box and hit ENTER. It will surprise you how much pops up. I also like exploring Google’s “images” options.

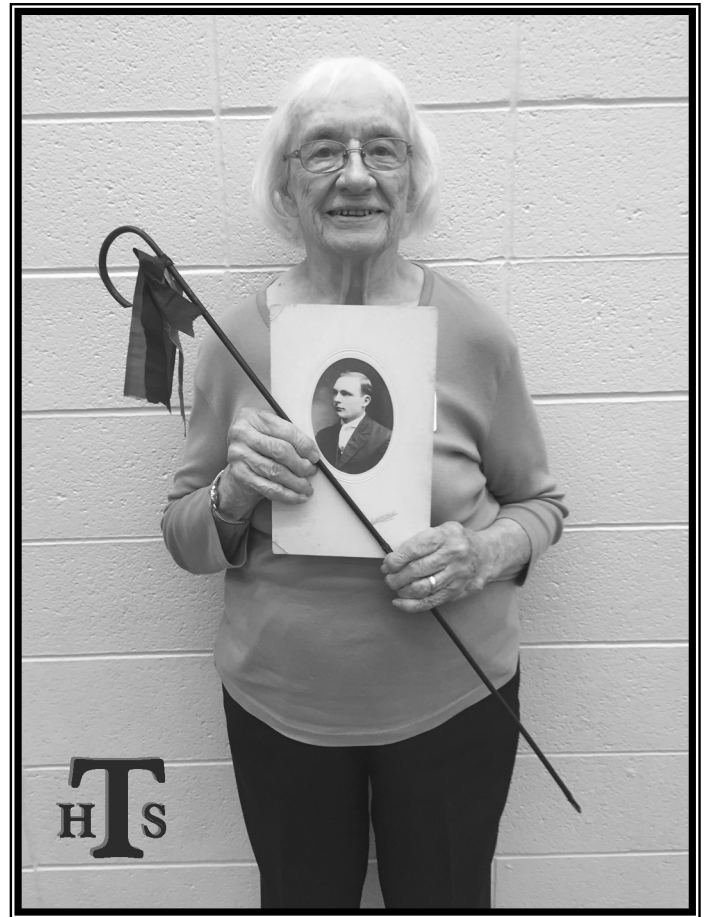
One of my favorite websites is: findagrave.com. There is also a free app for your smart phone. I do like the full website the best and it is very easy to navigate. Simply follow the instructions, fill in as much information as you can in the question boxes, and hit the search button.

FIND A GRAVE



Once you have found the gravesite you’re looking for, move the computer’s mouse around to see what else you can open to learn more interesting facts.

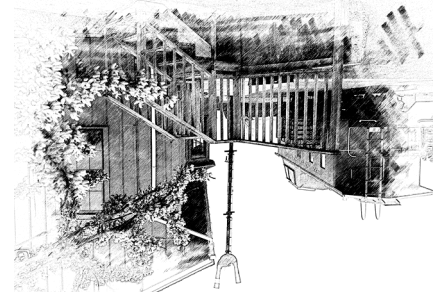
Happy hunting *HG*



Olive Grace Yoder Miller (THS Class of 1941) was one of the oldest THS graduates to attend the final THS Alumni Reunion held on June 17, 2017.

She is holding her father’s (Edwin J. Yoder, THS Class of 1908) senior class photo and the staff with the original purple and gold ribbons, that he carried at graduation.

www.topekahistoricalociety.com



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