

Samuel S. Yoder, a native of Mifflin County, Pa., now makes his home in Danvers Township, McLean County, Ill., being pleasantly and comfortably located on section 36. He has been a resident of the Prairie State since 1851, and is a fine representative of the intelligent and progressive farmers of the West. Mr Yoder was born in 1816, his parents being John and Susanna (Stutzman) Yoder, also natives of the Keystone State, (Pa.) the father born in 1785, and the mother in 1795. They were married in Mifflin County, Pa., in 1813 and remained upon a farm in that state until 1837. He then removed to Fairfield County, Ohio, and there cultivated rented land until 1852, when he moved further westward into Indiana. In this latter state he made his home with one of his sons and there spent the remainder of his days, dying in about 1874. The mother dies in Pennsylvania in 1836. Two of their twelve children died in infancy; Catherine became the wife of Adam Greenawalt; Samuel, of our sketch, the second child; Joel married Lydie Yoder; Elizabeth became the wife of Samuel Zook; Joseph married Lydie Kurtz; Gideon married Miss Elizabeth Hartze; Lydie became Mrs. Peter Stutzman; John married Miss Catherine Stahley; Adam married Susan Kurtz; Susan became Mrs. David Kurtz. The parents were members of the Mennonite Church. John, politically, was an adherent of the old Whig party, but afterward affiliated with the Republicans.

Samuel S. Yoder was reared by his parents to farming pursuits, and received a good common school education. After attaining his majority he was married to Miss Elizabeth Yoder, in 1838, in Ohio. He cultivated rented land until 1851, then removed to this state and county, purchasing forty acres in Danvers Township. In a short time he doubled his landed estate, but has now sold out and is living retired from the active business life.

The wife of our subject is the daughter of Jacob and Polly (Kinney) Yoder, both natives of Pennsylvania. They were married in about 1806, and removed from their native state the following year to Marion County, Ohio, where Mr. Yoder followed agricultural pursuits and where both parents died some years ago. Of their children, three died in infancy. Those living are Nancy, Jonathan, Lydia, John, Elizabeth, Margaret, and Priscilla.

Of the marriage of Samuel and Elizabeth Yoder there were born the following-named children: Jonathan married Miss Kittie Ballaman; Nancy became the wife of Ferdinand Holderly; Jacob married Miss Lydie King; John married Miss Rosa Zimmerman; Samuel P. first married Miss Ura Lantz, now deceased; his second wife was Miss Lucinda Wallace. Mr. Yoder is Republican in politics, and both he and his wife belong to the Mennonite Church.

SAMUEL S. YODER

When a young man, Samuel S. Yoder had moved westward in search of greater opportunities. When Elizabeth Yoder hinted at the possibility of accepting a marriage proposal she was living in Ohio and he in Illinois. Samuel walked from Illinois back to Ohio where they were married nearly two years later in 1839. They remained in Ohio until 1851. Several of their children were born there including Nancy F. Yoder (Mrs. Ferdinand Holderly).

I found reference to this in a part of an old letter and also in notes that my grandmother, Lib King, had kept. - - - OMS - Odessa  
- daughter of Ferdinand and Nancy - Springs  
According to "Portraits and Biographies of McLean County, Illinois Samuel S. and Elizabeth Yoder (no relation) were married in 1838. That is the only place that I found that date; all others say 1839. - - - OMS

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The following account was written by Jacob E. Yoder, grandson of Samuel S. and Elizabeth Yoder.

Grandfather and grandmother Yoder after being married and living in Ohio for about ten years, being of a progressive nature, decided to emigrate to the west to seek a home.

They loaded the old prairie schooner and started out early in the spring of 1851. There were four families in all. the Levi Lantz's, the Jonathon Yoder's, the Joel Yoder's, and the Samuel Yoder's. All four wives were sisters and they were accompanied by a spinster sister, Trucilla Yoder. Later after the death of Jonathons wife, Trucilla kept house for him.

They were three weeks making the trip staying overnite with families along the route. These families had only two room houses; the men would sleep in or under the wagons and the women would occupy the house. Grandfather often related that folks would say "if you ever come back this way, be sure to stop". He said they felt as welcome as if they were their own kinfolks. Just imagine four families staying in a two room house and they were probably more welcome than if they would come to our seven and eight room houses. That is the difference in hospitality in those days and now.

They brought the family cows along, leading them behind the wagons.

The Samuel Yoders settled near Oak Grove about two miles northwest of Carlock, Illinois, later moving to a home west of the North Danvers Mennonite Church.

My grandparents moved into Danvers in 1878. Grandmother didn't like city life causing them to move back to the country onto the farm which they had purchased earlier where they lived until Grandmothers death on Feb. 7, 1888.

Jonathon J. is a brother to Nancy F. Yoder Holderly and son of Samuel and Elizabeth Yoder.

Jonathon Yoder (J. J.) and Catherine Ballman were married Nov. 8, 1864. On that day Abraham Lincoln was elected to the presidency for a second term. Directly after the wedding ceremony, Mr. Yoder went to the polls and cast his vote.

Mr Yoder, born in Fairfield, Ohio, April 9, 1840, came to McLean County, Illinois in 1851 and settled in Danvers Township. Catherine Yoder was born in Butler County, Ohio, Nov. 20, 1844. She came to Illinois with her parents in 1847. They settled near Peoria, Illinois.

The trip from Ohio was made by steamboat down the Ohio River and up the Mississippi River and then on the Illinois River. From Peoria the family moved to Bowling Green in Woodford County. Bowling Green has ceased to exist.

When the Yoders came to McLean County it was mostly prairie. It was difficult at times securing enough switches to make their horses keep up their speed. Often they had to travel several miles to find a bundle of willow twigs. There were enormous numbers of prairie chickens and geese.

The farming in those days was very trying. Sod was broken with oxen. It was sometimes necessary to harrow the wheat 9 times and then much of the seed stayed on top. Had there been discs in that day the crops could have been put in much better and the yields would have been better also. After a few years the farmers started sowing spring wheat and barley but then came the chinch bugs which multiplied rapidly. They became so numerous that wheat growing was soon abandoned.

Jonathon and Catherine Ballaman Yoder were parents of ten children. - -

Samuel J. married Delia S. Wilhite, 1897

Milo F. married Lida McAyel, 1895

J. W. (John) married Ervina Kinzinger, Jan 23, 1895

Jake (Jacob E.) married Mary C. Greenwalt, 1898

Alice married Fred Spencer (Joseph Fredrick) Dec. 20, 1900

Eura married Herman Stahley, Nov. 29, 1898

Minnie married Bert Fry (Albert), Feb. 6, 1896

Ira J. married Grace Fry, 1903

Chester married Lula Miller, 1904

Gary C. married Maude M. Strubhar, 1906

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I think this information was receiver from a great granddaughter of Jonathon Yoder. - - - CMS

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In 1973 Willard Yoder, grandson of Jonathon and Catherine Yoder, gave us this bit of interesting information.

Catherine worked in her fathers tavern (inn) at Bowling Green in Woodford County. She did not like Abraham Lincoln because he never took off his boots when he rested on the bed on his stops at the inn. She was upset because the bedspreads would get so dirty.

A clock which was in that tavern has been donated to the Historical Society in Metamora.

My copy from the newspaper is very light and will not copy well enough to read. I retyped it below

Yesterday afternoon at 3:30 occurred the death of Samuel S. Yoder one of the old and prominent residents of the western part of the county. He expired at the home of his granddaughter Mrs. J. F. Spencer two miles east of Danvers. Old age was the cause of death. Mr. Yoder was born in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania on February 3, 1816 and lived in that vicinity until he was 22 years of age when he removed to Ohio. In 1851 he came west and located at Danvers where he had lived ever since. He was for many years one of the leading farmers and stockmen of that part of the county and in the course of a long life of industry he acquired considerable property. Mr. Yoder was married in Wayne County, Ohio in 1838 to Miss Elizabeth Yoder and five children survive as the result of this union. The children are J.J. Yoder, Mrs. N.F. Holderly, and J.E. Yoder all of Carlock. S.T. Yoder who lives in Nebraska and J.S. Yoder of Danvers. His wife died in 1887. There are living four brothers, Joseph of Livingston County, Gideon, John, and Abraham all of Topeka, Indianas. And one sister, Lydia who lives in Ohio.

The funeral will be held at 3 o'clock Tuesday at the North Danvers Mennonit Church of which the deceased was for many years a member.


The obituary says he was born on February 3. The other record says March 3.

The obituary says that his wife died in 1887. The other record says 1888.



Submitted by Larry Holderly Mar. 2026

Yoder Family picture

Back row	 Samuel 1855	Jacob 1847	Johnathon 1840	John 1852	
Front row	<sup>YR12732</sup> Samuel S. 1816	(Anna ?)	Nancy (Frances ?) 1845	Holderly	<sup>YR25125</sup> Elizabeth 1815

I don't have much confidence with the names of the people in the back row. The relative ages in the picture doesn't look right to me.