

METAMORA ASSOCIATION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

NEWSLETTER

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A Civil War Letter From Home From Linda Kern Moore's and Bob Kern's great great-grandmother

Nancy Dutton, wife of Underground Railroad conductor Norman Dutton, writes to her Union soldier son Harvey, whose brother Horace had just died as a 19 year old Union soldier in a Tennessee hospital. The spelling and grammar are unedited. (*Rosecrans was at Murfreesboro*) A copy of the original letter is displayed in the Veteran's room at the Stephenson House. Norman, Nancy, and Horace are buried in Oakwood Cemetery. Thanks so much to Linda Kern Moore for sharing this insightful slice of Metamora history.

A LETTER FROM NANCY SMITH DUTTON TO "SON HARVEY" (HARVEYJAMESDUTTON) 1837-1928

Metamora Jan 18 1863

Dear Son James Harvy

We received your kind letter in answer to A_ but as we had answered your other, we concluded to wait a few days, but I cannot wait any longer, and if our letters do pass on the road, it is not much matter for we do want to hear from you so often. There are so many changes lately and for some reason there is but little to be heard that can be relied upon. That if we get any news it is not certain but that it will be contradicted In a few days, you have heard no doubt of Rosenerance big fight at Murfersboro the papers give him a decided victory and some of the folks about here have had letters from the 51 and Milton Kingston has lost a leg by a shell. Jim Stivers and Henry and Will Taylor are in that regiment, but we have not heard anything from the 17th for three weeks and the report was here that the 108th had been all killed but 17. But that is not credited but they have not been heard from since they left them-this which was in about a week after your Father was there.

Norman Richards is in the 77th company H capt Keedy and Isaac Groves is in the same Will Kerrick and Phil Gallop also, were taken prisoners and paroled and sent to Columbus Ohio, for Emma Trembels husband was in that regmt and he wrote to Em that if he had money he would come and see her, and she wrote to Jim Brady and he got the money and sent it on, and I have not heard whether he had come yet, his name is Bangs. Em is teaching school out east almost to Indiana, one of Mr Stivers sons was brought home a corpse, his father went about the same time that your Pa went for Horace, but could not get to the regmt for some cause and came home, but in a few days, his corpse came on the cars he was in the 51th, three brothers went together, others are experiencing the same heartrending trials that we have, four weeks from the day that Horace, was buried Sam Kingston was brought here and buried he lived near Panola was at El Paso and was taken sick died in two hours, he was so bad that he could not get home only three miles, so sudden a death has not been known for a long time I do not know as they know what was the cause for he has been a healthy man. We think of you every day and hope you may be kept from all harm put your trust in the Lord and do your duty in the fear of the Lord and you will have peace of mind and an inheritance hereafter farewell

Jan 25

Another week has passed since I have laid aside my pen and there are several incidents transpired in one week, from the army and the return of Lieutenant Briggs he has resigned and come home sick, but he is getting along slowly and Geo. Everett has been home on a visit he had got a wound in his leg that disabled him and he was sent to Keokuk and he came on home. I guess never stopped, he stayed two weeks, and went back. I have not heard from him since. Newton is in the fourth caberly and stationed at Columbus Ky I want you to write who your genl is now and col too, for we look for something in the paper to hear of your whereabouts, the papers state that genl Steel and Gorman and Hovey have engaged largely in cotton speculation and the war will not end as long as officers can make money as they do now. How much _____ to expect this war to last and.

_____ And there must be an end of the war when our men are called home and quit fighting there The generals are awful mad about the proclamation they had an information meeting in town but I believe that there was not much done, and we have not heard much about It since for the next day it was ascertained that John Clark had the smallpox and several had been to see him and they were badly scared [scarred?] and Stevenson was one.

I do not wonder I should think that they would fear that the judgments of heaven would be sent against such treasonable sentiments as are uttered daily Ed Nelson was here a few days agoe he had just received a letter from Will and read part of his letter to us He says that they call the 108th "a secesh regiment" For most of them are opposed to the proclamation and said that he would not have enlisted if he thought it was going to free the negros _____ aint he and Ed read a part of your letter, quite a contrast I think. Julia received a letter from cousin Arthur sent his picture to Almira and he is a fine looking young man he belongs to the 19th Ohio battery and likely at Vicksburg by this time we have heard from the 77th [p 477] lately all well but a great many of the new boys are sick he belongs to the 19th Ohio battery and likely at Vicksburg by this time we have heard from the 17th lately all well but a great many of the new boys are sick John Kindig is dead he died at Youngs Point of Eyrasipelas buried on the bank of the river. This letter looks so [bad?] that it was a great mind not to send it but I could not write it over again. Almira will write you soon and Julia will next time so you can burn this as soon as you read it if you can

N Dutton

1939 Aerial Photos

The pictures below were taken by the state in 1939 –
My, how we've grown!

The pictures below are the full (2), northwest, northeast, southwest, southeast quadrants of Metamora in 1939. Lots and lots of changes!! You can orient yourself with the Square right in the middle of town.

Can you find –

- 1) Tazewell Street did not go north of St. Mary's. Monroe did not go past Lafayette behind St. Mary's.
- 2) There was an oval track behind the old high school. The baseball diamond was approximately where the cafeteria is today.
- 3) The Washington Blacktop had a dog leg that approximately follows where the waterway is today.
- 4) Before Route 116 was developed, the "main drag" was Partridge Street, which is on the north side of the Square. Follow it through town to see where the early residents shopped.
- 5) Can you find where the swimming pool, grade school, banks, and Christian Union Church are today?
- 6) The old grade school was at the corner of Hanover and Partridge and took up half the block. Can you find it?



Wide Angle.



Closer – Find St. Mary’s at the upper left corner of town. Check how the streets have changed and how much vacant land was adjacent to the church.



Northwest section. The Square is the treed area in the lower right corner.



Northeast section – note that this picture was taken before the east side of the square burned in 1941



Southwest section – no IGA, no banks, and Phil Fischer’s “Ranney” house is on the west edge of town!



Southeast section – find where the railroad tracks were located

Contact Us

Questions, ideas - Love to hear from you

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