

# METAMORA ASSOCIATION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

## NEWSLETTER

August 2020



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A great looking group, but we need help identifying anyone in these pictures!! Please let us know if you recognize an ancestor or friend.



Metamora High School Class 1898 (August is in Row One, far right)

Thanks to Larry Hagemann for contributing these four pictures of his great uncle, August Leo Blum who first graduated from Metamora high school in 1898 and then taught grade school in Germantown Hills just after that.

In this photo (right-front), he is holding 1898 writing on the slate. His father died in 1900 and August Blum gave up teaching in order to farm on his father's property (now known as Lake Santa Fe Estates, I believe) -- he probably found farming easier than keeping order with the kiddies!

**August Leo Blum** (born 1876) married in Peoria in 1901 (St. Boniface Catholic Church) and moved to Indiana about 1910 to farm. He and his wife Lizzie had 11 children. He lived to age 78 and is buried in Hamlet, Indiana. (Side note - this would make August about 22 when he graduated from high school.)



August Second Row, far Left



Germantown Hills Grade School 1899



1899 Germantown Hills Grade School. August is the teacher. That's him with the bow tie in the back.

THE HERALD, Thursday, May 4, 1978



The above picture of the old Lowell School once located east of Metamora was taken in the year 1914-1915. The photograph was loaned for publication by Mae Klein Wagner. Pictured, are front, L-R, Arthur Minger, Arthur Leman and John Klein

(deceased); Second row, L-R, Mae Klein Wagner, Mildred Minger Nash, Lois Leman, Ada Smith, Vera Klein Ioerger and Viola Minger Meyer; and third row, L-R, Clara Leman and Jessie Leman. Miss Emile Theena, left rear, was the teacher.

## Further Details Of Cpl. Harold Garber's Death Are Received

Mpd. Det. Hdqrs., Div. Arty., APO 25, San Francisco, October 12, 1943.—Dear Mr Garber: This will be a difficult letter for me to write, but I know I must in order to extend to you and your family, and to Miss Elaine Bryant, our deepest sympathy in your bereavement. The loss of Corporal Harold Garber, our soldier colleague, is felt keenly by all in the Division Artillery; in our medical detachment, his absence still seems unreal to us. We all feel for you and the remaining members of your family, and the fine young lady he left behind, and we, too, share your grief.

Perhaps I can give you a little more information as to the details of his death than what you have already learned from the War Department. We had just completed another campaign, rather a strenuous one, and conditions had once again become more or less static. Early in the afternoon of Sept. 4th, Harold decided to visit a newly acquired airport, in which he seemed keenly interested and delighted to watch planes coming and going. On that day, it so happened that he was standing near the runway as a damaged comber was coming in; as it landed, it caught fire and exploded, catching Harold and a group of other men in its blast. His injuries were extensive and severe, but he continued to live, although completely unconscious. After emergency treatment on the spot, he was rushed by special plane to a base Naval Hospital, where everything possible was done to save his life, including the administration of repeated transfusions of plasma and whole blood, glucose, saline, oxygen, and other forms of therapy. He failed to respond from his deep shock, and life gradually ebbed away; at 11:30 p. m. the same day, he quietly and peacefully rejoined his mother. He was buried at the Army, Navy, Marine cemetery, on the same island we carried out our initial campaign—an island bearing a name that will forever be famous in history.

At the time of the accident I happened to be away to another area and had left another man temporarily in charge; needless to say, I was deeply grieved when I returned and learned what had occurred. Thus, there is little more that I can tell you now. Should I be fortunate enough to survive this war, I shall attempt to meet you personally and tell you anything more that you may wish to know. It may give you some comfort to learn that instructions have been forwarded to have a headstone constructed and placed at the bottom of the white cross on his grave—this is to be from his "buddies" in our medical detachment.

In closing allow me to say that you can be extremely proud of your son. He was a fine soldier in every respect, and he gave his life for his country. Let us only hope that when this war is ended the blood that is spilled shall not be in vain. Our cause is a just one and we will fight on to victory, but you at home must bear with us now until our job is completed and to set this world of ours straight, again and forever.

Sincerely, Harry G. Marinos, Captain, Medical Corps.

METAMORA, ILLINOIS, FRIDAY, MAY 30, 1941

## Metamora Business District Hit by Most Disastrous Fire in Town's History Five Buildings are Totally L



Two double-room brick buildings on the east side of the square, with their entire contents wiped out and an adjoining brick building at the left was so badly damaged it must be torn down, as the result of Tuesday's fire in Metamora. From right to left is shown the corner of the village hall, which was protected by a heavy brick wall and concentrated work of the firemen. Next on the left was the hardware store and adjoining that the hatchery room, both owned by Chris Wiedman. Next was the Lincoln Ter-

ren with adjoining pool room, I. Wm. Norman. Next is the hall, which though standing had must be razed. Here the firemen were successful in staying the spread of Irene's Cafe, adjoining the Miller. The upper story and the lower parture through courtesy of the Pe



## Metamora Business District Hit by Most Disastrous Fire in Town's History as Five Buildings are Totally Destroyed



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with adjoining pool room, both owned by C. O. Villiger and Wm. Nauman. Next is the building owned by J. W. Miller of Peoria, which though standing had its roof almost burned away and must be razed. Here the firemen fought desperately and were successful in staying the spread of the fire to the north. However, Irena's Cafe, adjoining the Miller building was damaged by fire in the upper story and the lower part was flooded with water.—Picture through courtesy of the Peoria Evening Star.

### WOODFORD FIREMEN WIN BATTLE AFTER EFFORT OF 3 HOURS

Loss Heavy But Threat to Entire East Side Business District Was Averted

**APPROXIMATE LOSS**  
Villiger & Nauman, tavern and pool room: Fixtures, \$5,000; stock, \$1,000; building, \$2,000.  
Wiedman's hardware store and hatchery: Stock and equipment, \$8,500; building, \$7,000.  
Rohman Service Station: Garage and contents, \$5,000.  
J. W. Miller: Building, \$3,000.  
Irena's Cafe: Damage to building and loss of goods, \$2,000.

Above losses are partially covered by insurance. Building estimates are upon value when destroyed and not upon replacement cost, which will be much higher. Metamora suffered its most disastrous fire early Tuesday morning in the wiping out of five business buildings on the east side of the square, while firemen of Eureka, Washburn, Roanoke, Mionok and Metamora battled, eventually successfully, in preventing the spread of the flames beyond the area that appeared doomed from the outset.

Four buildings were in ashes and a fifth was so badly damaged it must be removed, while another was considerably damaged by fire and water, when weary firemen of the five towns were enabled to ease up on their efforts, just as daylight was breaking after laboring a good part of three hours.

**Alarm at 2:20 a. m.**  
William Nauman, one of the proprietors of the Lincoln Tavern and pool room, who had returned to his room in the upper floor of the Harison store building after having spent the evening in Peoria, had passed the tavern about 2 p. m. and saw nothing unusual. He had gone to bed when he noticed smoke coming into his room from an open window. Investigating, he discovered the smoke was coming from a fire raging in the tavern and poolroom building. He immediately gave the alarm. About the same time Mr. and Mrs. Walter Springer were awakened by smoke coming into their apartment above their cafe. They too began spreading the alarm. Fire Chief A. J. Mason reports that it was 2:20 when he was aroused by his phone.

Metamora firemen were quick to respond when the siren was sounded and had water playing on the flames within several minutes. When they arrived the entire front inside the

(Continued on page eight)



Across the alley just east of the burned brick buildings, the rear of which appear in the background, stood the 45x80 frame garage building of the Rohman Service Station, the ashes and smokesacks of which are all that remain. Most of the movable equipment was saved. Here the firemen were successful in saving Mr. Rohman's asbestos-shingled office building but 25 feet to the south, while men on the roof of the H. J. Waldschmidt furniture store building and the adjoining building of Emil Grob, kept the fire from jumping the 30-foot alley to those two brick-veneered buildings, which had they become ignited would surely have meant the destruction of all buildings in that block.—Picture through courtesy of the Peoria Evening Star.

### Mrs. W. H. Smith is Dead After a Long Illness, at Age of 79

Mrs. W. H. Smith, 79, died early Saturday morning at her home in Eureka after a long illness.

Funeral services were held at 2:30 p. m. Monday at the Christian church with the Rev. Donald Salmon officiating. Burial was in the Mt. Zion cemetery north and west of Eureka.

Amanda Jennings Smith was born Nov. 14, 1861, the daughter of Wm. J. and Lucy Park Jennings in the Mt. Zion community, where she lived until 1921, when she moved to Eureka. She attended Eureka college. On Dec. 25, 1927, she married Mr. Smith.

Mrs. Smith was one of the originators of the 4-H work in this county. She was a member of the Christian church, a teacher of the Loyal Daughters Sunday school class since its beginning and was interested in various clubs and philanthropic work in the community. For many years she served as secretary of the Woodford County Historical Society.

She is survived by her husband and 15 nieces and nephews. Four brothers and one sister preceded her in death.

Let The Herald do your printing.

### EMMA GREENNAGEL DIES WHILE BEING TAKEN TO HOSPITAL

Funeral Services to be Held Saturday Morning at 10:30 Daylight Saving Time

Miss Emma Green Nagel, 60, lifelong resident of this vicinity, died at about 3 p. m. Wednesday of a brief illness, while being taken to the Proctor hospital in Peoria. Her death evidently occurred at about the time the ambulance reached the hospital.

Decesed was a daughter of David and Catherine Ioeger Green Nagel and was born here Nov. 25, 1880. She had spent her entire life at the parental home, continuing to reside with her sisters, Carrie and Nettie at their home in Metamora after the death of her parents. Nettie died some years ago. Surviving is one sister, Carrie, and one brother Joseph, the latter residing on the farm homestead just south of the east side of Metamora. The body was brought to the Mason funeral home, where friends may

### Prof. L. J. Freeze, Retired Educator, Dies at Age of 86

Prof. Levi J. Freeze, 86, a former college president and an educator for many years, but retired for more than three decades and devoting himself mostly to the work of the Woodford County Historical society, which he organized and served as its president until his death, passed away Saturday night in the Eureka hospital after a short illness.

Funeral services were held at 2 p. m. Tuesday at the Presbyterian church with the Rev. Wendell Pontius officiating. Burial was in Mt. Zion cemetery at Deer Creek.

He was born Jan. 21, 1855 at Circleville, Ohio, the son of George W. and Lavina Freeze. When a small boy he moved with his parents to a farm seven miles southwest of Eureka. He was a graduate of Westfield college and for several years served as president of Hartsville college.

He was professor of science at Carroll college, Waukegan, Wis. He served as superintendent of the public schools at Eureka and Morton. On March 28, 1935, he married Mrs. Lula Harvey of Peoria. Four years ago he moved from the farm home to Eureka, spending the winters in Florida. He is survived by his widow and her daughter, Mrs. Richard Martin, Peoria, and one sister, Mrs. Jane Rupe, Chicago. Three brothers and four sisters preceded him in death. During his years as president of the Woodford Historical society Mr. Freeze accomplished much. He was instrumental in having all historical spots and trails in Woodford county marked, and arranged appropriate programs at each of the dedications. He gathered much historical material through the years, as well as many relics of a historical nature. The latter have formed the major part of the museum in the Lincoln Memorial Court house in Metamora.

### MRS. ANNE GRIESER DIES IN HOSPITAL OF SHORT ILLNESS

Taken to St. Francis Hospital Sunday and Died at 4:38 Tuesday Morning

Though in poor health for some time, unknown only to herself, Mrs. Anna Schleich Griesser, wife of Louis Griesser, died at 4:38 Tuesday morning in St. Francis hospital, Peoria, where she had been a patient less than two days.

She had been ill at home for several days when her condition took a serious turn Sunday. Shortly after noon she was removed to the hospital in the Volz ambulance. Though resting fairly well her condition rapidly became critical. Her son, DePaul, student at Illinois university, came home last week end and remained with his mother until her passing.

Her marriage was to Louis Griesser of Metamora and the couple settled on a farm near Washington, which was their home until a few years ago when they purchased a home in Metamora.

Surviving are the husband, two children, DePaul and Patricia, and the following sisters and brothers: Mrs. Louis Gries of Benson, Mrs. Sebastian Vogel of Fargo North Dakota, Miss Etta Schleich and John Schleich of Peoria, Fred Schleich and David Schleich of Minnesota.

The body was brought to the Volz funeral home and Wednesday afternoon was taken to the residence, where many friends gathered during the evening to pay their respects to one who was beloved by all in the community.

Thursday morning after prayers at the house at 8:30 the body was taken to St. Mary's church, where at 9:00 o'clock solemn requiem high mass was offered with Rev. Father Francis as celebrant, Rev. Father Emmett Schleich of Champaign, nephew of deceased, as deacon, and Rev. Father Paulinus as subdeacon. The church was well filled with relatives and friends and St. Mary's Altar society, of which deceased was a member, attended in a body.

The sermon was by Rev. Father Francis, who paid great tribute to the Christian life and great fortitude of the deceased, whose life he said had been devoted to duty regardless of sacrifice.

Interment was in St. Mary's cemetery.

DANCE PUPILS APPEAR IN RECITAL TUESDAY

Miss Brenda East of Peoria will present her dancing students of Washburn and Metamora in a public recital in the Metamora high school next Tuesday evening, June 3, at 8 p. m., daylight time.

Tap, aerobic, military, Russian and novelty dances will be featured in the program, which concludes the 1940-41 season. Mrs. Gail Crawford of Washburn has arranged the music for program.

He is survived by his widow and her daughter, Mrs. Richard Martin, Peoria, and one sister, Mrs. Jane Rupe, Chicago. Three brothers and four sisters preceded him in death.

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He gathered much historical material through the years, as well as many relics of a historical nature. The latter have formed the major part of the museum in the Lincoln Memorial Court house in Metamora.

Funeral services will be held at 10:30 Saturday morning in the Christian Union church and interment will be in Oakwood cemetery.

## ST. MARY'S OF LOURDES SCHOOL HISTORY

Before the year 1846, the children of the parish received their education in the log cabin of George J. Kerker. About 1846, the first school building at Black Partridge was built. (At that time the area was called Black Partridge.) It was constructed of logs, with a cut hole in the side for light. In one end was a fireplace. The seats were near the walls; they consisted of boards sawed from neighboring timber; holes were bored in the bottom of the boards and pegs were driven in to serve as legs. Desks consisted of boards fastened to the walls.

With growing enrollment, a second, larger school was built about 1859. This school was located a little west of today's present C.C.D. Center. It was also a one-room building.

In 1871, this second school building was moved to a location near the site of the former log church, south of the road and west of the cemetery. In 1881, this building was converted into a general store and post office and a third school was constructed of wood. This school was located next to where the second school had originally stood. The corner stone of this building was laid by Bishop Spalding of Peoria. In 1908, a room was added to this building.

A new chapter in the annals of the school began in 1882, during the pastorate of Father Eckert, with the arrival of two Franciscan Sisters from Lacrosse, Wisconsin. They taught until 1889 when Franciscan Sisters from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, took over.

From the year 1900 to 1955, the Sisters of St. Francis of the Immaculate Conception, Peoria, conducted the school.

In September, 1882, Lourdes' School became a public school district. For a number of years, 1892-1915 the scholastic term was only six months; parochial school (summer school) started immediately after the public term and lasted for three or four months. In later years, the school kept the character of a parochial school by holding religious instruction before regular class hours.

In the 1900's, the school was heated with a wood and coal burning stove. As late as the 1940's the students carried 10 to 12 buckets of coal each morning and lined them up next to the stove. As the fire died down, Sister would add another bucket of coal. Students in the front rows roasted and those seated in the back rows shivered.

A religious Vacation School was inaugurated by the Sisters in 1944 for those Catholic children who were unable to attend Lourdes School. Religion classes were held for these children for two weeks after the regular school term. The Pastor and Sisters also gave religious instruction to these children every Sunday after the first Mass.

During 1954, the school was overcrowded and the facilities were inadequate according to modern standards. The Sisters had indicated they were unable to teach under the conditions in the future, a parish meeting was called in November, 1954, at which time all present stated their unanimous approval to build a new school.

During the following months, plans for the new building were drawn up, but it was realized that it was impossible for the parish to raise money for the new school. Since the Sisters had expressed reluctance to teach in a one or two room schools in the future, the Reverend Mother informed the Lourdes Pastor, Father Severin, that the Sisters council had decided to discontinue staffing the staffing of the school.

Thus, on June 17, 1955, a page in Lourdes' history was written. After 109 years of instruction, the Lourdes' School would open its doors no longer to students, except those needing religious instructions to supplement their educations in the form of C.C.D. (Confraternity of Christian Doctrine).

(Contributed by Ed Kouri. Thanks, Ed!)

*Does anyone have a picture of the old school? We'd love to have a copy!!*



*Germantown Student Body In 1900*

### Contact Us

Questions, ideas - Love to hear from you!

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