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MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

From Metamora Association for Historic Preservation
(Christmas Tradition - This 1910 Santa Picture is one of our favorites!)



The Old Stage Coach Route

Over the years, we've heard bits and pieces about an old stage coach route that ran by Metamora. As a young girl, Lois Snyder Keys recalled seeing wagon ruts next to their home which was located about a mile and half or so north of Metamora on the curve on the east side of Wiedman Road. It's across from the cool looking barn.

The following two articles add depth to her recollection.

In the the article below - to help get you oriented - the Boys house is northeast of the Snyder home. The Theena farm/Parke Mill is located just southwest of the Snyder home. (The Parke Sawmill was located in what was later called the Theena pasture around the convergence of the two branches of Partridge Creek.)

From "In Lincoln's Path" 1964

The Stagecoach Road came to the Snyder residence from the Boys place and then went south towards Metamora where it passed the post office at Parks Mill known for a while as Partridge Point.

In the next article from an old obituary, that was transcribed by Marvin Keys, husband of Lois Keys, Mr. Engel discusses the old trail. The Schierer house is (still) located about a mile and a half south of town on the east side of the Washington Blacktop. Before it was straightened out, the old road went straight south, roughly following what is today a waterway. You can still see the waterway. It took a dogleg west and joined the blacktop just north of the Schierer house. (Digressing a bit, Ken Willman said the hill next to Bill and Sandi Christ's home was the best snow sledding hill around. The height of the hill was lowered when the Washington Blacktop eliminated the dogleg/waterway path.)

In the map below, in 1919 local civic leader John McGuire and Professor Raford traced the old road. Look for the red highlighted area on the map below.

From an Obituary

A letter from Lloyd Engel relates that the parents of Samuel Engel (deceased October 30th, 1953) were among the very early settlers in what is now Woodford County, their home being on the site of the present Arthur Engel Farm just west of Metamora, which was a stagecoach stopping place in pioneer days. Part of the old stage trail is the angling part of the present road between Washington and the westside of Metamora, the old road now ending at the Edward Schierer Farm, whereas in the pioneer days it extended from there northeastward to the present Theena Farm, where there was an early day post office, known as Partridge Point, predecessor of present-day Metamora.



Engel Home 1903 1

The Road to Eureka

Mr. Keys and Prof. Radford also highlighted the road to Eureka in red. The map is on the next page.

More from Professor Radford About Court in Metamora...

Lincoln as Professor Radford from Eureka knew him from the June 4, 1920 Herald

"My father-in-law to be, Captain Magarity, was in attendance as the first sheriff of the county. One warm afternoon during the session a case was called in which Lincoln was interested. He was not in the room. Judge Breese said, "Mister Sheriff, call Mr. Lincoln into Court." The sheriff found Mr. Lincoln out in the grassy yard, in his shirt sleeves, pitching horseshoes with some farmers who were in attendance. When told that he was wanted in the Court, Lincoln dropped his horseshoes and went in, without stopping to put on his coat. It was found that that not all the parties were ready for the trial, and an order for continuance was granted; whereupon Mr. Lincoln went out and resumed his quoit-pitching with unabated zeal."

Side note: Judge Breese was later Chief Justice of Illinois.

Duplicate marking of the Lincoln road from Metamora through Versailles to Bloomington; and from Washington to Metamora as traced by John L McGuire and Prof. B. J. Radford. Copy from Prof. L.J. Freese 14 Dec 1919

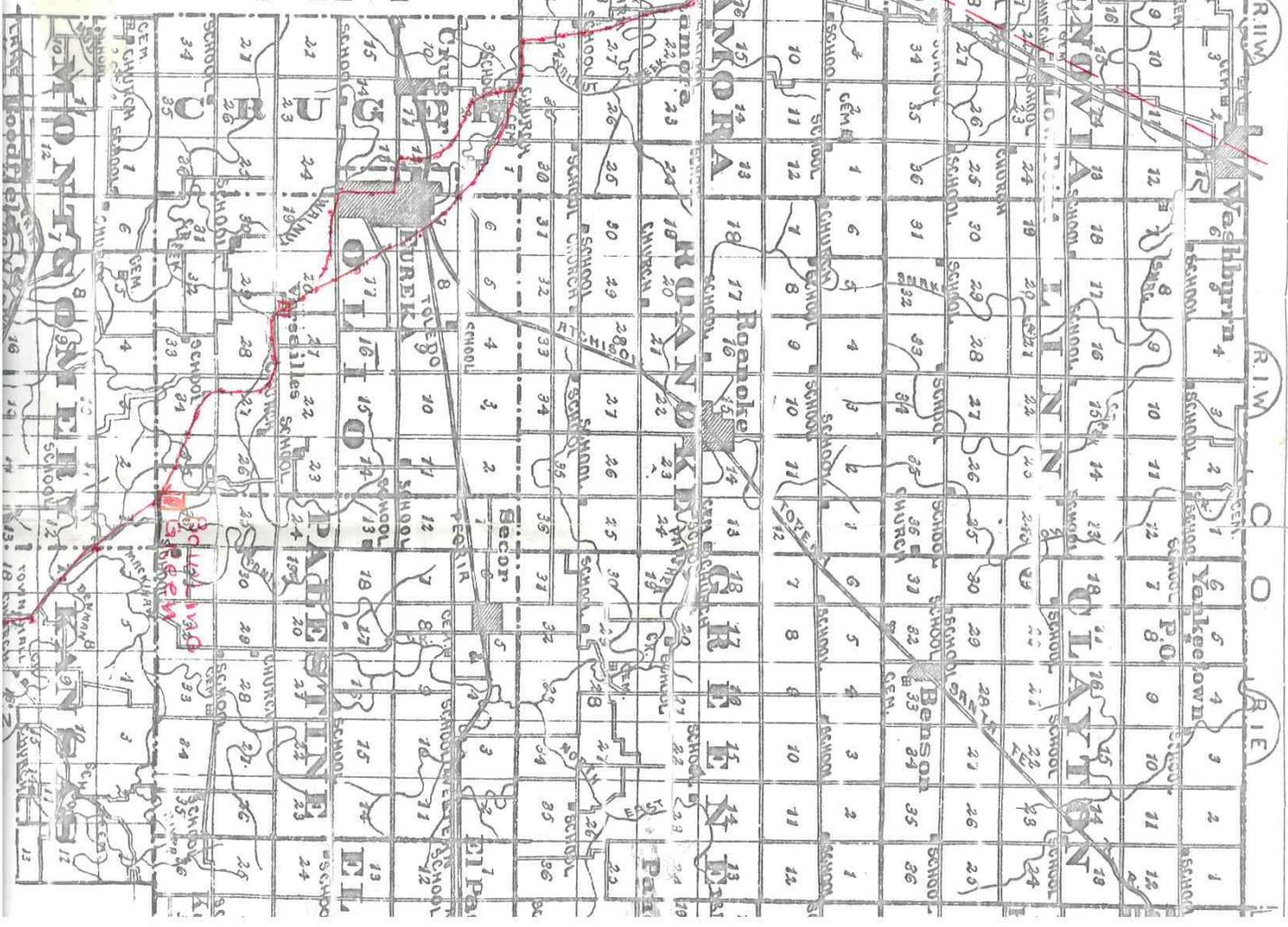
Woodford County, ILLINOIS.

MAP OF

STAGE TRAILS IN RED

T AZEWELL CO.

T AZEWELL



STAGE COACH TRAVEL. According to Mr. Keys' old notebook, "when the roads were in good shape, a stage coach could make 70 to 80 miles between daybreak and sunset in 1838."



John and Veronica Fandel and children – 1907. Top l to r – Leo, Anna; middle Cyrilla; front Rose and Peter; Veronica is on the left and John on the right



The John Fandel farmhouse in 1912. L to R – Anna, Peter, Veronica (Blum) (mom), John (dad), Rosa, Leo, Cyrilla



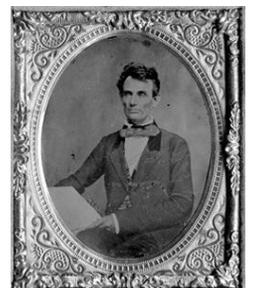
Back row, left to right – Rose Fandel Hagemann (Henry, IL), Pete Fandel (Lourdes Road), Anna Fandel Grebner Grebner Road – Carol Malcome’s grandmother); Front row, l to r – Cyrilla Fandel Kiesewetter (mother of Mary Ann Montgomery, Bertha Mischler, Rosy Neff), Leo Fandel (Marcella, Agnes Parr, Melberta Krumholz)



Can anyone help ID these folks? Hint – Magdalen Hagemann is on the far right. HELP!

Remembrances of Lincoln’s Time in Metamora – February 10, 1905 Herald From Cass Irving

“Although but a very small boy at the time I can remember Lincoln,” said Mr Irving. “One instance in particular concerning him I well remember. It happened at the old Metamora House. Lincoln and my father were seated on the porch conversing and I was sitting on the sidewalk busily engaged trying to bore a hole in a large old-fashioned brass door key. ‘What are you making son?’ ask Mr. Lincoln. ‘I’m making a cannon,’ I piped up. Lincoln seemed amused and made some remark to my father concerning warfare which I interpreted to mean that he hoped for the time when such things as cannons would not be needed.”



From John McGuire

"I was only a boy during Lincoln's time in Metamora, said John L. McGuire, but I remember the last time Lincoln was in Metamora. It was 1858 the same year that I came here. Lincoln made a campaign speech in the in the grove on the Page place just to the south of the village. That was his last visit to Metamora. Douglas, whom Lincoln had been meeting in joint debates at several places in Illinois, spoke here about a week before Lincoln came. Many persons have the erroneous impression that Lincoln and Douglas held a joint debate here but that was not the case. Mr. Maguire was one of the boys who several years later responded to Lincoln's call for defenders of the Union."

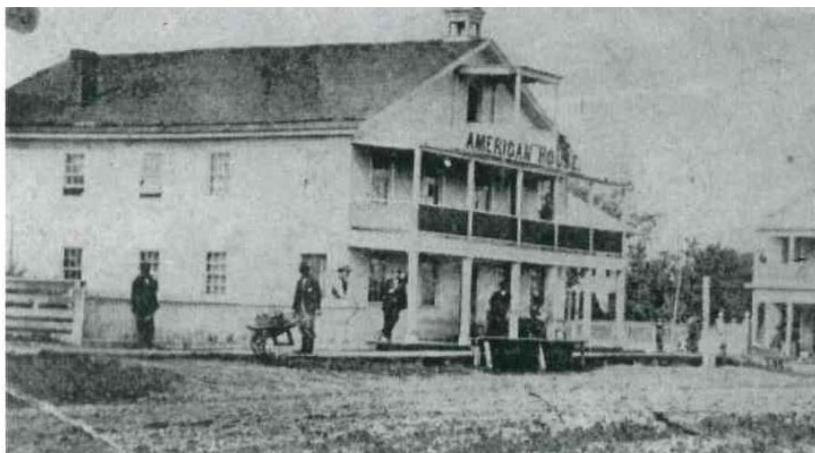
Looking at Train History in Metamora

Train service through Metamora began around March, 1870. The Dwight to Washington route made stops at Dwight, Nevada, Blackstonre, Smithdale, Streator, Munster, Garfield, Wenona, Evans, Varna, Lacon, LaRose, Washburn, Lowpoint, Cazenovia, Metamora, and Washington.

At the time, laying track cost around \$12,983 per mile. Early frieght was corn and grain. In the 1920's, passenger service was trimmed to two daily trains. Freight was reduced to three-imes-a-week during World War II.

In the 40's, freight traffic declined as farmers and merchants found truck transportation far more efficient.

Permission to end train service through Metamora was given in August 1979. This line ran from Washington to Dwight, a distance of 79.6 miles. *Thanks, to reader Karl Burmeister for this contribution.*



Little is known about the American House. It was thought to have been located at the corner of S. Menard and E. Mt. Vernon Streets. William Christ Insurance is at the location today. Hanson Ross Hanna (1814-1892) and his wife, Levina Ellsbury Hanna (1815-1904) were the owners and operators of this hotel. Thirteen children were born to them: Drusilla 1838, Harvey 1840, Jane 1841, Charlott 1843, Maudy 1844, Mary 1846, Jerome 1848, Alexander 1850, Editha 1852, Alabama 1854, Doni 1855, Juliet 1857 and Albert 1860. The hotel was believed to have burned to the ground. A lady in Missouri sent the photos and information. Editha Hanna was her great grandmother.

Soldiers of the War of 1812. One of the artifacts the Courthouse passed on the us is a booklet of Woodford County soldier from the War of 1812 who received Bounty Land Grants. If you are looking for an ancestor from this war, take a look at this booklet from 1913.

Contact Us

Questions, ideas - Love to hear from you

Laure Adams, President, 369-2353 or jrfarmer@mtco.com; Dave Pohlman, Vice President 369-3290; pohlman46@yahoo.com 367-4426; Jim Efaw, Secretary, 367-6099 or jimefaw-mahp@eggroll.com; Jack Weddle, Treasurer, 645-0963, jweddle@mtco.com; Board members: Lee Summer, 367-4059, 635-0259, summer@mtco.com Mary Curry, 367-2185, curry@mtco.com; Rick Lotz, 648-2010, lots@mtco.com