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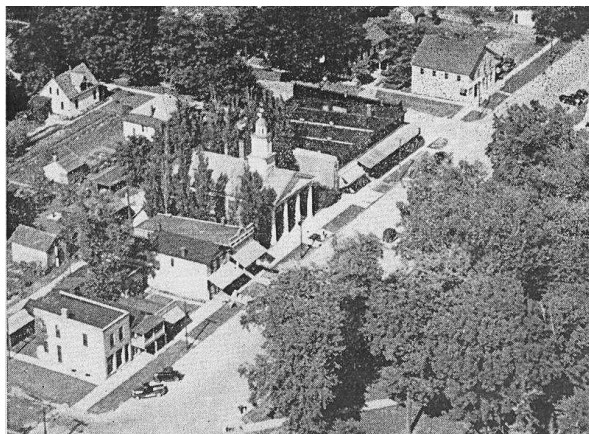
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1940's Birds Eye View

This picture of the north side of the Square was taken around 1940.

Points of interest – the old building that stood where the American Legion used to stand. It was torn down in 1941.

Also note the awnings along Partridge, and the porch over the sidewalk.



Here's a 1939 aerial view of St. Mary's Church and 305 W Chatham, which is located in the bottom right corner. Both properties were on the edge of town. Note that Tazewell Street ended at St. Mary's.

Pioneer Families – The Wiltz Family

The Peter Wilz family arrived in the area around Lourdes in 1837 from Michelbach, Germany, purchasing 40 acres for \$1.25 per acre. The family continued to live in the area for 150 years until Clara Wiltz Regele passed in 1986. The family name was later changed to Wiltz to reflect the English pronunciation of "z".

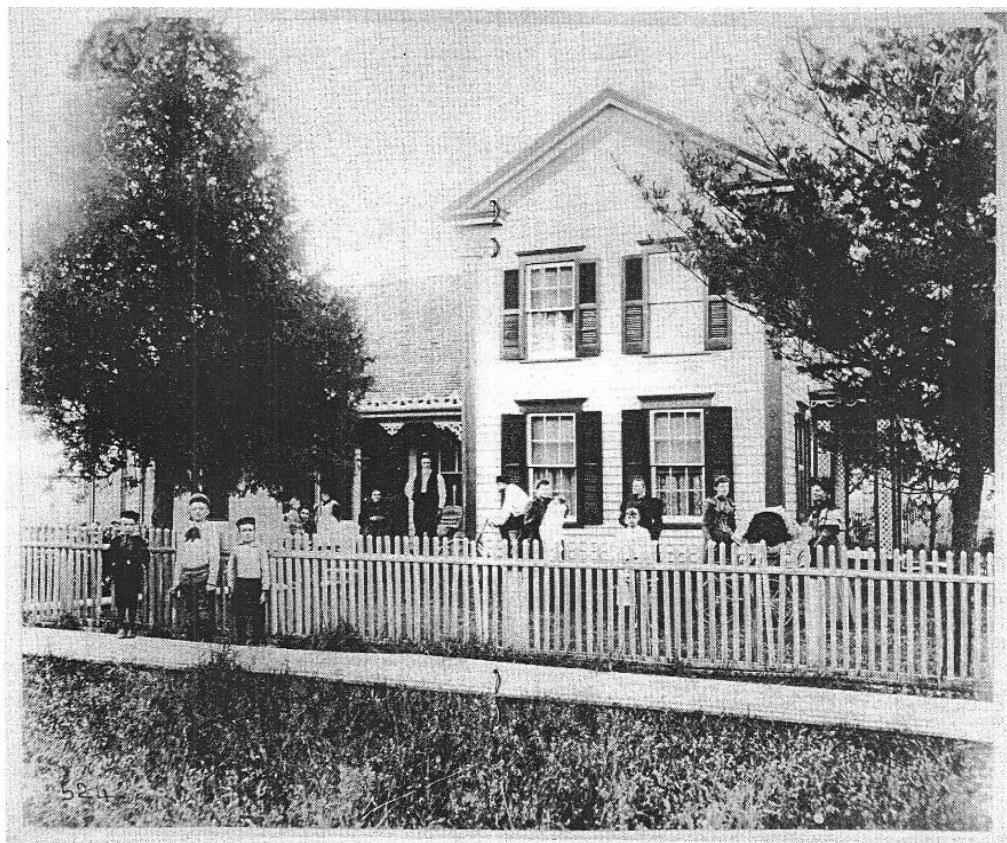
Peter's son, Peter, and wife Mary owned and raised 9 children in the home at the right at 305 W. Chatham. You may recall that this home was owned by the Waterworth family for several years until it was torn down and replaced. Six of the 9 Wiltz children reached adulthood.

Peter owned a brickyard at Hickory Point which supplied the bricks for both St. Mary's churches and the jail in Metamora. According to Ken Willman, he also owned a tile factory on what is now Progress Street.

Peter was a trustee for St. Mary's, Metamora, and purchased the land on which the church now stands. He also owned land behind his house and behind the church (see photo above.)

He died in 1880 at age 50 and is buried at St. Mary's Cemetery, Metamora.

A special thanks to the family of Kenneth Lambert Wiltz, who compiled the Wiltz family history and Larry Hagemann for sharing it with us. The complete history can be found at the Stevenson House.



The WILTZ Homestead, 305 W. Chatham St., Metamora, IL
Lambert O. WILTZ, Lambert DIESEL, Leroy G. WILTZ, Bertha A. WILTZ, Margaret (THEISS) WILTZ, Serena M. WILTZ, Mary J. (FULL) <WILTZ> NOIROT, Dennis NOIROT, Otto P. WILTZ, Margaret (WILTZ) DIESEL, Clara R. DIESEL, "Grandma" DIESEL, Emma WILTZ, Anna (WILTZ) CONRARD. Taken in 1894.

Old abstracts of property around St. Mary's and the area north of the family home are dotted with transactions with the Wiltz family. They are fascinating and show just how fluid property transactions were during that time.

Contact Us

Questions, ideas - Love to hear from you

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