

NEWSLETTER

February 2023



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Pest Eradication Program – An Unusual Blast from the Past! - During your high school years did you take part in FFA (Future Farmers of America) pest eradication program???

One day a week you would come to your ag class with bags filled with rat and mice tails, sparrow feet or heads, pigeon heads, coyote ears, and groundhog tails, etc.

The program started in the early 1930's with the last known contest in 2001-2002. The awards varied by school and FFA chapter.

In today's world many groups would take a dim view of these activities but during this period, FFA (Future Farmers of America) pest eradication program was a big deal.

Note: Mothers were NOT happy with the contested because they disliked the plastic bag of animal parts in their freezer.

By Carol Wood A Big THANK YOU to Carol for this contribution!



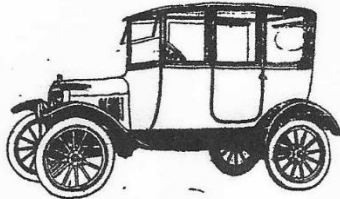
THREE RURAL Lowpoint youths display the fox cubs which they caught over the weekend. Ronnie Bachman, Sandy Imhoff and Tom Imhoff, old four cubs which they dug from a den on the Sanford Imhoff farm, Rura Route 1, Lowpoint.

Pictured above are three of the "eradicators" – Ron Bachman, Sandy Imhoff, and Tom Imhoff on Grandpa Sandford Imhoff's farm. This picture was taken around 1960. Thanks to Ron and Sue Bachman for providing the picture.

Ford

THE UNIVERSAL CAR

We Handle All Styles, from the Sedan to the Runabout



The Ford is Everyman's car—the great American conveyance—the car suited to every walk of life. Whether you want luxury or just every day American go-ahead-and-get-there means of locomotion, the Ford answers your every purpose.

Ask Any of Our Big Family of Users What They Think of the Fordson

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Was Granpa A Ford Man?

Check the list to see if Granpa – or Dad – drove a Ford.

Wonder what was considered "luxuary"?

By the way, Wagner also sold Fordson Tractors for \$750.

Wagner Ford Ad From the February 27, 1920 Metamora Herald





Thanks to Carol Wood for the pics and names!



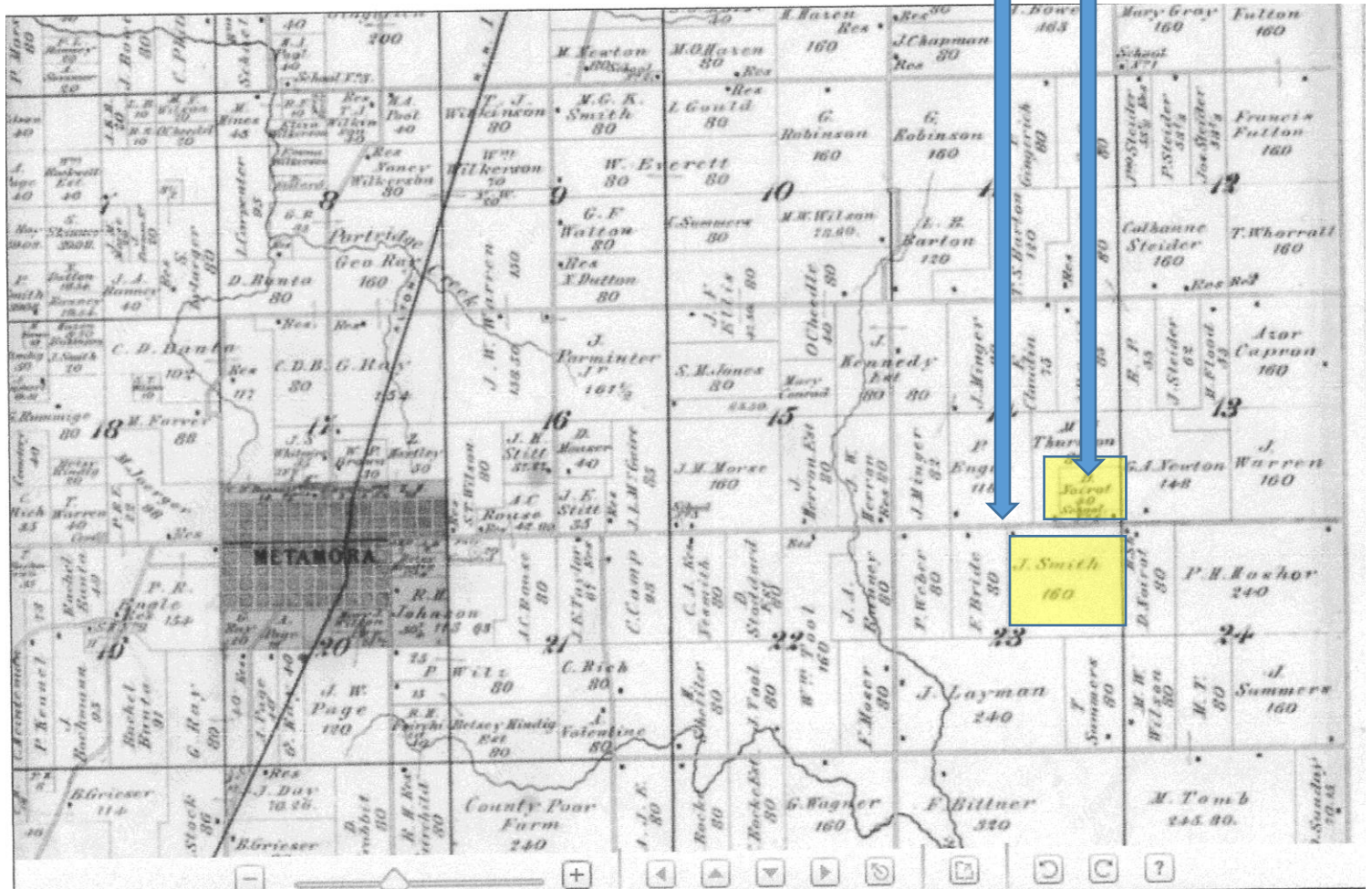
Maple Grove School – Help us with the names and dates!
 Teacher? Girl1? Boy2? Willard Stock Frank Schieber Girl5?
 Merle Belsley Boy2? Boy3? Ruth Schieber

Maple Grove School. B1? Merle Belsley Teacher Ethel Morris G4? B5? B6?
 Russell Armstrong Ruth Schieber G4? B5?
 Gen Alig 1936

What Our Country School Was Like... More from the *Mennonite County Boy* book by C. Henry Smith.

Our schoolhouse, a small, white, squatty, one-room affair, not much larger than a box car, was located at the crossroads in the very center of the district of four square miles. The nearest family lived just across the road; and the farthest, two miles away. The school yard was a small lot hardly big enough for a ballground. The building was set well back; along the road in front extended a row of hard maples under whose welcome shade we played mumblety-peg or exchanged boyhood secrets. Country modesty was not so sensitive as that of the city. 'The oblong outhouse in one corner of the schoolyard was divided into two parts, one for the boys and the other for the girls, by a thin wooden partition. Through this some of the evil-minded big boys of an older generation had cut holes with their pocket knives. Obscene signs and suggestive drawings cut by these same boys were to be found on the board fence facing the road, for they were meant to be seen and thus placed in conspicuous places, in full view of boys, girls, teachers, and parents, but never removed. The building faced south. I have since learned that all school houses should face north. In our geographies we learned that the top of the map was north, and the right east; then Germany is to the right of France, and Holland to the north of Belgium, as it should be. But if the desk faces south, north is south, and east is west in the geography that lies before you.

Smith Home Country School



Inside, the building was as plain and drab as the outside. Both walls and ceiling were lined with plain, wide boards painted a dull grey except between the windows where a coat of black converted these spaces into blackboards. Three rows of double seats placed lengthwise across the room were graded to suit all sizes of pupils, from the biggest in the rear to the smallest in front. The big round coal stove in the middle gave out too much heat for the small children nearby and too little for the big ones far away. The teacher's desk in front was flanked on both sides by the long recitation benches. An annex across the front end, added to the original building later, served as an anteroom for our wraps, the water bucket, and on rainy days as a play room for blind man's bluff, or clap in, clap out. The movable material equipment consisted of an A B C chart, a globe, an abacus, water bucket, and stove poker. The curriculum still consisted of the three R's with

The curriculum still consisted of the three R's with a little geography and history added in the wintertime for the big boys and girls. There was no graded course of study and no thought of finishing anything. The nearest thing to graduation was a classification according to readers. A boy who had finished the fifth reader was in the graduating class, his education being tested by his ability to read. Boys and girls kept coming to school, however, for a month or two each winter until they were twenty-one years old, unless they were married before that time, which was very often the case. If they had finished the fifth reader at fifteen, they read it over again each winter, reviewing also all the other advanced books. We had heard of a sixth reader, but it had never been used in our school.

The most enjoyable part of the school day, it is needless to say, was the period devoted to outdoor games during the noon hour and recess—all too brief. Our games were the usual ones familiar to school boys of the middle west a generation ago—blackman, prisoner's base, and three-cornered cat, among others. 52 The Last Day Several, I believe, were local adaptations of more general games. Andy-over was played by two opposing teams on opposite sides of the schoolhouse; fir, fire, fits, was a form of tag starting from a cinder pile near one corner of the building. The big game, of course, was the ball game. We had a brand all our own. Dutchball, we called it, and it differed from ordinary baseball, which we termed townball, in several important respects. Any number could play. Instead of a pitcher whose chief art was to throw a curve that could not be hit, we had a "dropper" who stood in line with the batter and tossed the ball so that it might be hit to the best advantage. There was no limit to the number of times a batter might strike at the ball; so there was no such thing as striking out, and no inducement to drop a poor ball. If the ball was caught by a fielder of the opposing side, the side at bat was out. If the ball was not caught, the batter would run for the field base. If he was hit by the ball before he reached base the side was out also; but if not, he was safe until such time as he cared to risk a run back to home base. There was no need for fine decisions, and so there was no umpire. The successful runs were chalked up on the board fence back of the home base.

The bat was a substantial hickory stick, and the ball was made of highly elastic rubber. When a husky batter with a strong arm got a good chance at it the ball sailed high into the air and far out into the field. The fielders wore no gloves, and it took a courageous heart as well as a big calloused hand to capture one of these swift balls on the fly. The boy who could unflinchingly perform this feat was the hero of the school and always the first to be taken in choosing up sides. It was for the benefit of the more timid, no doubt, that the rules permitted catching the ball on the first bounce, but not the second. In order to discourage the strong boy from making too much of a display of his prowess, and out of respect for the neighbor's bull grazing in the meadow just across the school yard fence, "over the fence" was out, too.

Choosing up sides was an important part of the game. In order to distribute the good players equally, two boys were agreed on as leaders to choose up alternately from the players standing by. The leaders had no other function. We did not know the word captain. Pride rose and fell among the Mennonite Country Boy and players as they were early or late in being chosen. The last one to be taken was in disgrace. When there was an outstanding player such as several of the Lehman boys, who always caught on the fly, never on the bounce, it was an advantage to get first choice. There were several ways of deciding which leader should have this advantage. A favorite method among us was for one of the boys to toss a bat to the other boy who caught it in one hand, holding it in an upright position. Each boy then alternately put his hand around the bat above the other until each had measured his way to the top by handbreadths. The boy who got the last hold at the top had his first choice of players. Some boys acquired marvelous skill and judgment in catching the bat just at the place that would give them the last handhold. Other methods of counting out were usually resorted to when

Morsetown Cemetery was one of the earliest in Woodford County, one of the tombstones showing interment in 1835. It is said that a Revolutionary soldier is buried there. *From the February, 1920 obit of pioneer J.A. Ranney.*

From the 1887 Metamora

Sentinel Pres Laure found this ad from the 1887 Metamora Sentinel. Don't think it was either the Metamora House or the Carpenter House, which both show up on 1910 Sanborn village fire maps. In the 1873 village map, the Carpenter is labeled on Menard St across from the Square. Two doors door is another "hotel." Could this be the Clifton House...? Help us solve this mystery!



The **Emancipation Proclamation** was issued by United States President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863 – 160 years ago. The Proclamation changed the legal status of more than 3.5 million enslaved African Americans in the secessionist Confederate states from enslaved to free. As soon as slaves escaped the control of their enslavers, either by fleeing to Union lines or through the advance of federal troops, they were permanently free. In addition, the Proclamation allowed for former slaves to "be received into the armed service of the United States."

To learn more about this impacted Metamora, pick up a copy of "**The Underground Railroad in Metamora**"

Group Presentations Available. If your group would like to learn more about the UGRR in Metamora, a slide presentation is available at your meeting from the Metamora Association for Historic Preservation. Contact a board member for more information.

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD BOOK IN METAMORA AVAILABLE – It's a fascinating account – and little known - that details the significant participation of Metamora area abolitionists in the Underground Railroad – in their own words!! You can pick up a copy (\$10) at Commerce Bank, the Metamora Library, Timeless Treasures (east side of the Square) – or we'll send you one if you send your name and mailing address to Metamora Association for Historic Preservation, PO Box 264, Metamora 61548. Be sure to include your name, mailing address, and a check payable to Metamora Association for Historic Preservation for \$15. Thanks!

Contact Us

Questions, Ideas - Love to hear from you

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