

**Newsletter**  
**February 2026**



**Pot Pouri – Miscellaneous Old Pictures**



**Morsestown Closed, But Mothers Still Meet**  
Metamora — Mrs. Bernice Schertz, teacher at Morsestown Grade School for 10 years, locks the door for the last time Wednesday following a Monday night annexation of the District (No. 42) to Metamora Grade School District by the Woodford County Board of School Trustees. Morsestown, on a non-recognition status for the past two years, was ordered closed by the state superintendent of public instruction. Eleven children attended the school, the last one-roomer in the county.



This is the home of J.C. ("Cass") Irving. When you read about Metamora's history, you'll find Cass was one of the most prominent citizens, involved in most civic projects, including a stint as Sheriff. You'll recall that his father built the Courthouse and stories about talking to Lincoln when was a boy.



This is the old Hoshor's Mill in Spring Bay. William Hoshor built this mill on the river for grinding corn in 1835. It was still in operation in 1878. Hoshor built a distillery in connection with the mill, which did a large business years, but ceased operation about 1866-7. The first regular tavern was built by William Hoshor, at Germantown, in 1850. He owned the land there, and put up this tavern, which is called the Germantown House, to enhance the value of it. The house is still used for hotel purposes. He also built the Union House, which is a tavern 1 mile east of GH, and on the same road. It was originally built in 1855.

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Thanks to Susan Schlupp for his picture of Susan, her brother Jim and teacher Bernice Schertz. This pic was taken about 1958. There were only about 12 students in the entire Morsestown school – only 3 were girls. Mrs. Schertz was "wonderful - patient and kind". Old teachers and supervisors included Almire Dutton, Julie Dutton, Joel Ranney, Orin Cheelde, Joel Morse, Eliza Morse, Lila Ranney, J.O. Morse, Jacob Ginrich, and Mark Ranney.

(Hoshor Continued) After being in use ten or twelve years, the Union House burned, and, in 1870, the present Union House was erected on the same site. At present, it is kept by Peter Alig, who, in addition to a tavern, keeps a grocery store and lager beer saloon. It is the center of the township, and the voting place, as well as the place for holding all town meetings. The Union House sat where the State Police HQ is today.



Francis and Helen (Jacquin) Bride were the first couple to be married in St. Mary's. Here they celebrate their 50th Anniversary. (Married August 29, 1865) Both were born in France. *Herald* 9/3/15 They farmed northeast of Metamora. The couple had 10 children (5 are deceased.)

**Bricks Around the Square**

The lowest bidder for paving around the Square was A.D. Thompson of Peoria with a bid of \$15,257. (Below the engineer's estimate by \$838.) Thompson expects to have the work completed by July 15, 1915. "Owner's of a majority of the frontage along the streets to be paved have a right within ten days from this date to take the contract for the work themselves, under the statue, upon entering into a contract to do so at ten percent less than the accepted bid." *Herald* 5/7/15 Editor's note: the segment of Partridge east of Davenport to the railroad tracks was separate.

**First 4-Year Graduating Class**

The commence address of the MTHS Class of 1915 is to be held at the Opera House on May 20, 1915. The school will graduate it's first time a four-year class. "The pupils to attain this honor are ay Lilian Grove, Clara Mable Malone, Alvena Claire Knoblauch, and Clarence Dominique Griggs." *Herald* 5/7/15

**Where Can I See the UGRR Railroad in Metamora Movie?** You can now download the movie! Grab the popcorn - find it at <http://tenthirtyone.org/ugrrwatch/>. Many viewers have said each time they watch, they learn something they missed the first time.

**FIRST ROAD.** "The first road through the township was the State Road from Chicago to Bloomington and Springfield. It ran through Ray's farm, by the old block house and by Peter Engle's, who kept a tavern and the stage stand. This was the first tavern in the township, and mentioned in the general history as the first in Woodford County. The stage changed horses at Engle's, it also carried the mail. *1878 Woodford History* Editor's note: there was an old block house across the road from what is now the State Police HQ. Ray had a farm on what is now the Washington Blacktop. Can anyone help clarify how this road might have been laid out?

**Contact Us Questions, Ideas – Love to hear from you** Laure Adams, President, 369-2353 or jrfarmer@mtco.com; Adam Bockler, Vice President, adam.bockler@gmail.com, Jenny Micheletti, Secretary, 657-3197, jennybee811@gmail.com; Jack Weddle, Treasurer, 645-0963, jackaweddle@gmail.com; Board members: Lee Summer, 367-4059, 635-0259, lsummer@mtco.com; Rick Lotz, 648-2010, lots@mtco.com; Ken Schmillen, 309-369-0538 schmika63@gmail.com