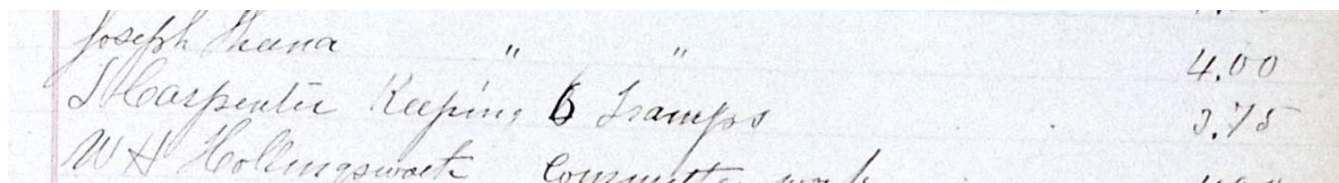


METAMORA ASSOCIATION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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www.historicmetamora.org



MORE CALABOOSE INFORMATION. The project to digitize and save old village records is moving along rapidly on the scanning side and is [on our website](#), but slower on the conversion to more searchable, readable text. One of the things that has surfaced is more information about the calaboose ([first published earlier this year](#)) that was located across the alley directly behind the Courthouse. Examining old village minutes (example above) from 1878, the following was found -

- **January, 1878** - Gish and Theena - "fix up the calaboose to a reasonable shape"; night watchman Thomas Causey is discharged and replaced by Al Wilson.
- **February, 1878** - Linus Carpenter and Theena are paid \$1.55 each to fix up the calaboose; it was decided not to employ a regular night watchman, but only as needed.
- **March, 1878** - Carpenter was paid 50 cents and \$1.00 for keeping tramps in the calaboose. In April he was paid \$3.75 for 6 tramps (see above).
- **May, 1878** - L. Carpenter was the constable. (Sidenote - he was the father of Mary Hall, wife of James Hall. James and Mary ran the Carpenter House Hotel on Menard Street. It was the last hotel to close - in the 1940's.
- **May, 1878** - Mrs. Spears (sic) was paid \$1.00 for keeping tramps. She owned the [Metamora House](#).

More to come later...!

The Ranney and Schertz Families

We recently discovered a book written by Dr. Brooks Alden Ranney. Dr. Ranney grew up in Metamora in the 1920's and 30's. He had written a wonderful, interesting, very detailed book about life in Metamora during his childhood. It's a fascinating read!!

Dr. Ranney lived with his parents, Milo and Ruth Ranney, in the home across from the Kirby Foods (pictured below). He talks about his school experiences, his chores around the house, bumps and bruises absorbed by an active, creative child, and names friends who you might recognize today. His stories are both interesting and often funny.

His mother, Ruth Schertz Ranney, was an intelligent, talented, hard working wife who did an amazing job raising her children. Ruth's father was Peter Schertz, who was a dynamic, successful businessman and civic leader.

The *Newsletter* will share more on these two families in coming issues.

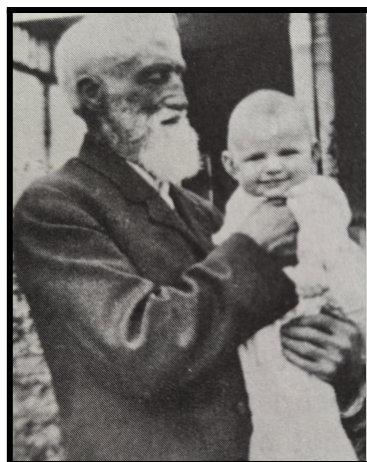
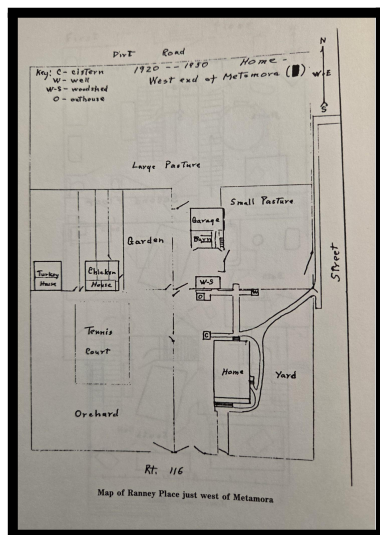
MARRIAGE AND HOUSE. Here's the story of how Milo and Ruth were married and a snapshot of their home.

Milo pursued Ruth Schertz, who was in music school in Boston. They finally got married and it was decided to buy a house but it was hard to find a house in Metamora. But fate entered the picture. A well-to-do gentleman named Baker had just built a three story Queen Anne style house with associated barn and woodshed on a 3 ½ acre lot just west of Metamora's city limits. Then he died of the flu. Milo bought his property for about \$6,000 but a similar amount was needed for plumbing, central heating, and decorating. For the next eighty years this house has been known as the Ranney House. It was sold to Phil Fisher when our mother died at the age of 90 February 17th February 14th 1976. (See pictures below.)

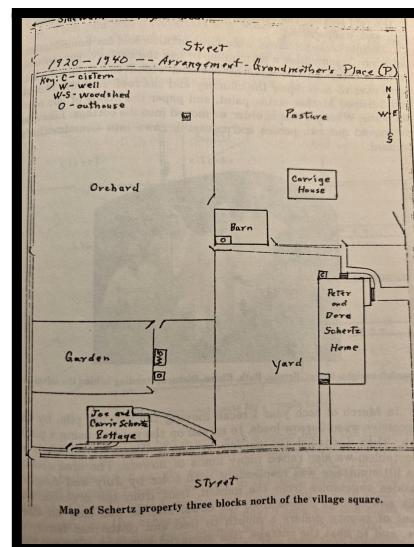
GRADE SCHOOL. The playground in the front of the school building was covered with gravel probably to limit the mud which students would drag into the school after each recess. The bathroom was just a long metal gutter slanted towards one end of the wall. The higher end was for the taller boys and the lower end for the shorter boys. At the bottom end of the gutter drain into a pipe which fed into the septic tank. The room also contained a toilet. During classes if a student held up one finger he admitted he or she had a psychologic urge to empty the urinary bladder; two fingers indicated that the bowels must be emptied. No teacher had the nerve to question the accuracy of those requests unless they were repeated too frequently.



Grandmother Schertz's home



Joel A. and grandson
Brooks Ranney



This is the Ranney House located at 605 W. Mount Vernon in Metamora. It was built in 1889 to 1890 by the bachelor Nicholas Baker. This impressive 3-acre Victoria home was to be a wedding gift for his new bride. But before the house was finished Mr. Baker died suddenly at the age of 46. His brother then occupied the house until 1910 when it was sold to Milo (son of Joel A. Ranney) and Ruth Schertz (daughter of Peter Schertz) Ranney. (Note the tennis court.)

You'll recall that Milo's father, Joel A. Ranney, was an important civic leader, [Underground Railroad](#) conductor, and former member of the Illinois House of Representatives.

This is the layout of the original home of Peter and Mrs. Dora Schertz at 405 N Davenport St in Metamora. Ruth Schertz Ranney was their daughter. Dora and her daughters served chicken dinners to visitors from Peoria.

The little cottage on the bottom left was occupied by daughter Ruth and her four children after moving out of her Mt. Vernon home during marital issues.

Peter was a highly successful businessman, owning the elevator, lumberyard, and the bank, which today is Commerce Bank. He served as the village president.

THE NORTHWOODS (MEISMER WOODS). Many events were held in the Meismer Woods. The Meismer Woods was at the end of Washington Street north of Metamora and also included the Partridge creek. The young boys used to go out there and swim in the creek. It was sometimes called the Northwoods or the Meismer Woods. The Centennial celebration (and other plays) was held out there. It was a natural amphitheater site where every youngster in town played a part.

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