THE EFFINGHAM HISTORIAN

Quarterly Journal of the Effingham County Museum

In collaboration with the

Effingham County Genealogical and Historical Society

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Volume 2 Issue 4 October - December 2026 (pages 97– 132)



“Courthouse at Sunrise” by David Landers (Used with permission)

Effingham County Museum (ECM)

Parent organization: Effingham County Cultural Center and Museum Association, Inc. (ECCCMA)
<a 501 (c) (3) non-profit>
110 East Jefferson Avenue, Effingham, Illinois 62401

ECM's mission is to preserve our Historic Register structure, to collect artifacts from county history, and to use them both to educate our local and external communities, while immersed in the broader context of American history.

Mailing address: ECCCMA, Box 324, Effingham, Illinois 62401
Phone: 217- 663-0821
Email: ecccma@gmail.com
Web site: www.effinghamcountymuseum.org
Visit our Facebook page: Effingham County Courthouse Museum Effingham IL

The Board

Jane Ries, President **Phil Lewis,** Vice President
LoElla Baker, Secretary-Treasurer
Fred Johnson, Devin Walk, Delaine Donaldson

Membership dues: $25.00/yr individual; $50.00/yr family

The county museum is very accessible. ADA-compliant parking is just outside the east door. An elevator is located just inside the east door at ground level. Access to the first level and the second level is available by the elevator or stairs.

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EFFINGHAM COUNTY GENEALOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY (ECGHS)

MISSION

The **Effingham County Genealogical and Historical Society (ECGHS)** began in 1998, with the merging of the Effingham County Genealogical Society (ECGS founded 1980) and the Effingham Regional Historical Society (ERHS founded 1959). Our Mission is to bring together people interested in genealogy and researching their family history, and to discover, collect and preserve the history of Effingham County IL, and those who contributed to establishing it.

PHYSICAL ADDRESS:	Suzette Brumleve Memorial Effingham Public Library ECGHS is located in the *William and Jane Austin Genealogy Room.* 200 N. 3rd Street, Effingham, IL 62401
MAILING ADDRESS:	ECGHS, P.O. Box 1166, Effingham, IL 62401
EMAIL ADDRESS:	ecghs.1980@gmail.com
PHONE:	Eleanor Bounds – 816.262.5376; Nancy Reisner – 847.452.1981
WEB SITE:	www.effinghamlibrary.org (select **Library Services** to find us)
FACEBOOK PAGE:	Find us on Facebook at: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100086189185284
OFFICERS:	President: ***Eleanor Poe Bounds*** Vice President: ***Nancy Davis-Reisner*** Secretary: ***Herman Brummer*** Treasurer: ***Judy Wegman Pals*** Parliamentarian: ***Andrew Verdeyen***
DIRECTORS:	***Rex Borries, Eleanor Bounds, Nancy Reisner***
MEMBERSHIP DUES:	$25 Annually

ECGHS/Effingham Public Library is very accessible. ADA parking is right outside the EPL east door and the ECGHS room is very close to that entrance. The elevator to where the upstairs Children's area and the basement Meeting rooms and EPL Book Sales are held is just to the left of the door. The door has an exterior and interior remote access button.

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Editorial philosophy of THE EFFINGHAM HISTORIAN

The primary aim of this publication is to **create a venue for the completion, publication, and dissemination of genealogical research and historic writing** from and about Effingham County. It will be made available in paper and electronic formats. Electronic publishing has distinct advantages, but paper journals have a clearer potential for longevity via archival storage. Secondarily, THE EFFINGHAM HISTORIAN **will promote cooperation and collaboration with and among the various local organizations with an interest in genealogy and local history**. Finally, **independent scholarship will be welcomed.** The editor's decisions about inclusion of content and/or its timing will be final.

Journal construction

THE EFFINGHAM HISTORIAN will be published four times per year. Each issue will contain 32 pages. The content will be eclectic. Pagination will be continuous across the year. Footnotes will allow readers to consult sources; they will be continuous across each issue. A comprehensive surname index will be included on the final pages of Issue 4. Surnames will be in **bold** throughout the text, but if a name appears more than once on a page, only the first mention will be **bold.** Contact the editor with questions or comments at lruholl46@gmail.com.

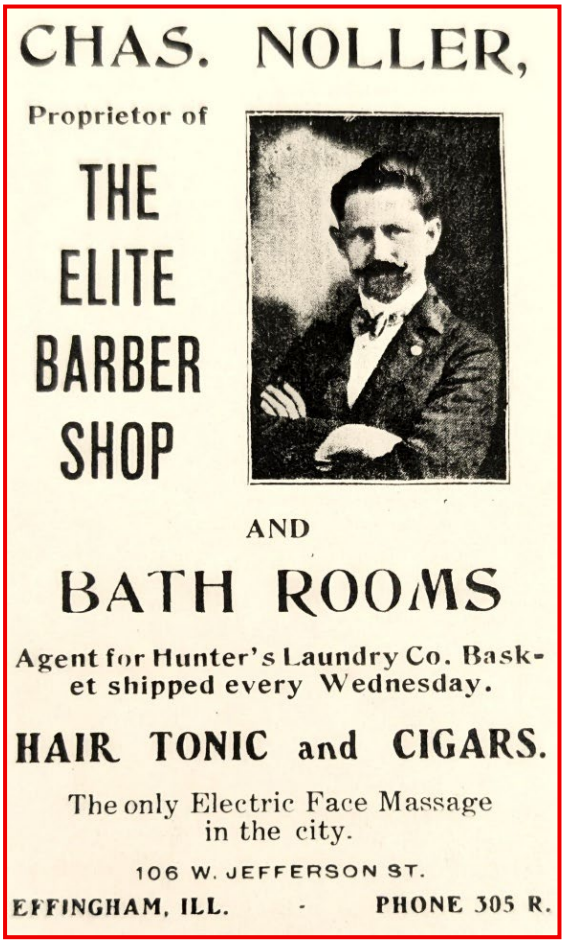
Linda Ruholl

DOWNTOWN EFFINGHAM – About 1910 – Part II (October 16, 1970)

Written by Ivar Knowles

EXCERPTED FROM: ***BITS OF EFFINGHAM COUNTY, ILLINOIS HISTORY***
By Peggy Wood Pulliam

"The old **Gravenhorst saloon building** stood at the corner of Fourth St. and Jefferson St. on the present site of the Benwood Hotel. Next to it was a row of buildings occupied by the **Mike Cramer jewelry store** in the center, and the **Charles Noller barber shop** on the east side and a **poultry house** on the west side. The next building was the **Merz Cigar Factory and Tobacco store**. The next place west was a saloon in the early 1900s. The **Reinhardt Brothers Meat Market** was located in the next building. We bought their thumbs (on the scales) many times. Then there was the **B.R. Wolters and Wallhermfechtel Shoe store** and on the corner was the **Anton Willenborg Shoe store** in what is now the Bauer Building."



"The **Washington Savings and Loan** now stands on the site of the old **Alf Stewart Grocery store**. Next was a saloon. The next building was the **J. H. Curry Grocery store.** The next one was the **Fisher Clothing Store**. Next to that was the old **Austin Opera House with the Post Office** on the first floor, and the **theatre** on the second floor. There also were a number of offices upstairs on the west side. The **First National Bank** on the corner has undergone many changes."

"North of the bank was the **printing office** and on the corner was the **John Feldhake Tinshop**."

"In my early boyhood days, there were no paved streets in **Effingham**. In 1910 the pavement on Jefferson St. was laid from what was known as the **Trade Palace** at the east corner of the Courthouse to the I. C. Railroad. The next pavement was on North Fourth Street and was laid in 1913. In those days, when the weather was bad like in the January thaw, it was all that four horses could do to pull a wagon on Jefferson St."

THE OLD SETTLERS' ANNUAL – PART II (MAY 10, 1980)

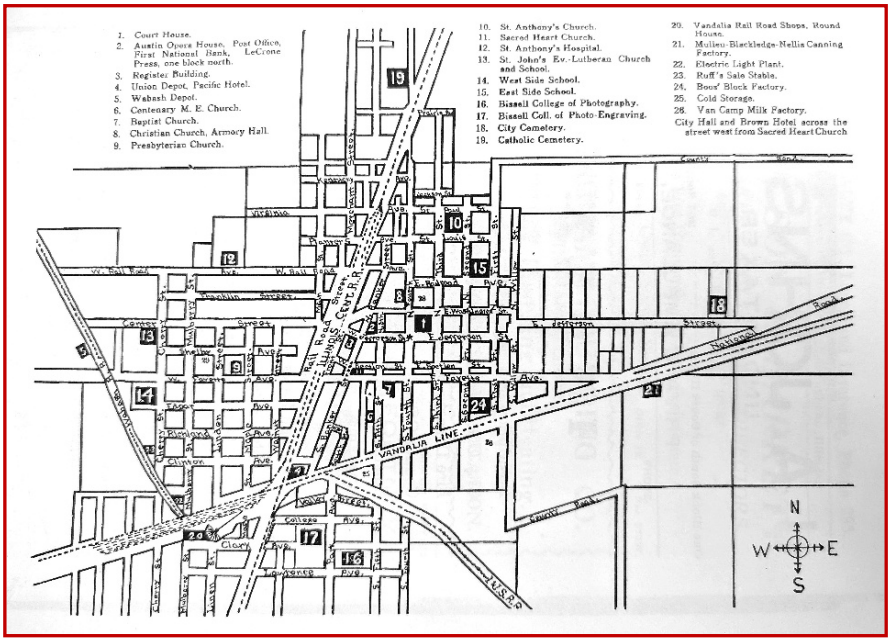
"Charles Noller's Elite Barber Shop provided bath rooms, which was unusual in the average house". *(Peggy Pulliam).*

GENEALOGISTS ARE TIME TRAVELERS.
A GREAT GENEALOGIST IS A TIME UNRAVELER.

MAPS CAN HELP WITH YOUR SEARCH

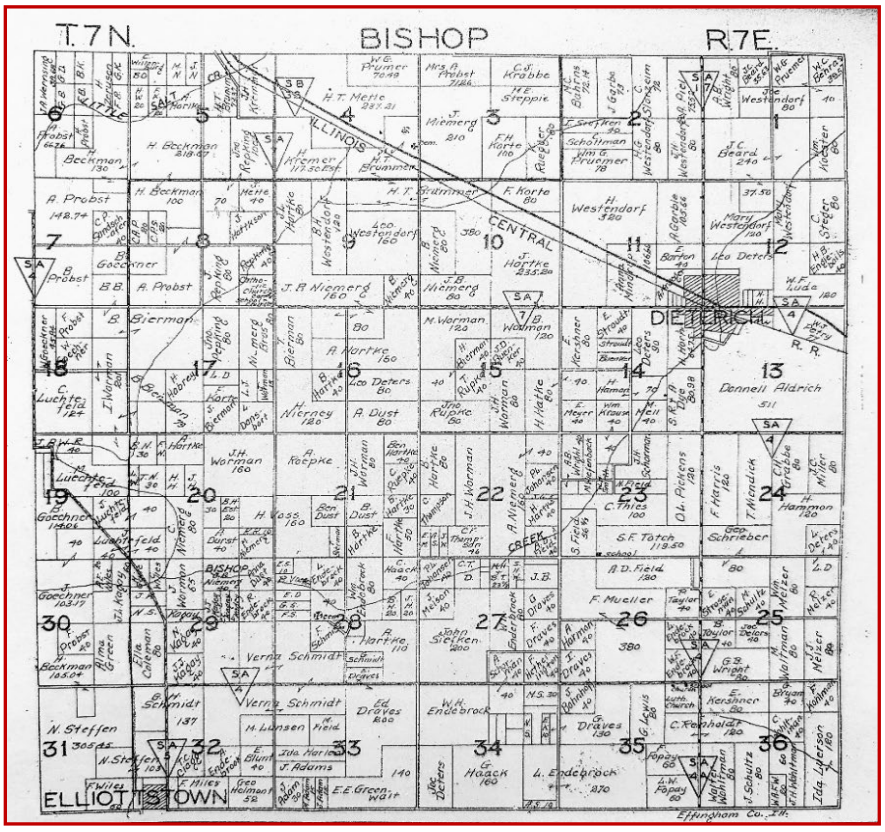
Enumeration District Maps, Plat Maps and Sanborn Fire Maps

ENUMERATION DISTRICT MAPS



Enumeration District (ED) maps were created to organize enumeration efforts for the census. An ED was an area an enumerator, aka census taker, could completely cover within two weeks in cities and within four weeks in rural areas.

Maps show names of political jurisdictions (counties, cities, townships, and so forth), roads, waterways, and large properties, such as parks, cemeteries, prisons, golf courses, etc. In cities, maps may indicate boundaries of Wards and other subdivisions. The Census Bureau annotated the maps with red, orange, yellow, and green pencil to show enumeration district and various political boundaries**. Maps are available at the National Archives website**: https://www.archives.gov/research/census/1950/ed-maps; as well as on **FamilySearch.com:**https://www.familysearch.org/en/search/image/index?owc=https%3A%2F%2Ffamilysearch.org%2Frecapi%2Fsord%2Fcollection%2F2329948%2Fwaypoints.



PLAT MAPS

Plat maps help you find a landowner's name for a parcel of land at the time the map was published. *These maps are a wonderful resource for the genealogist looking for where their ancestors lived.*

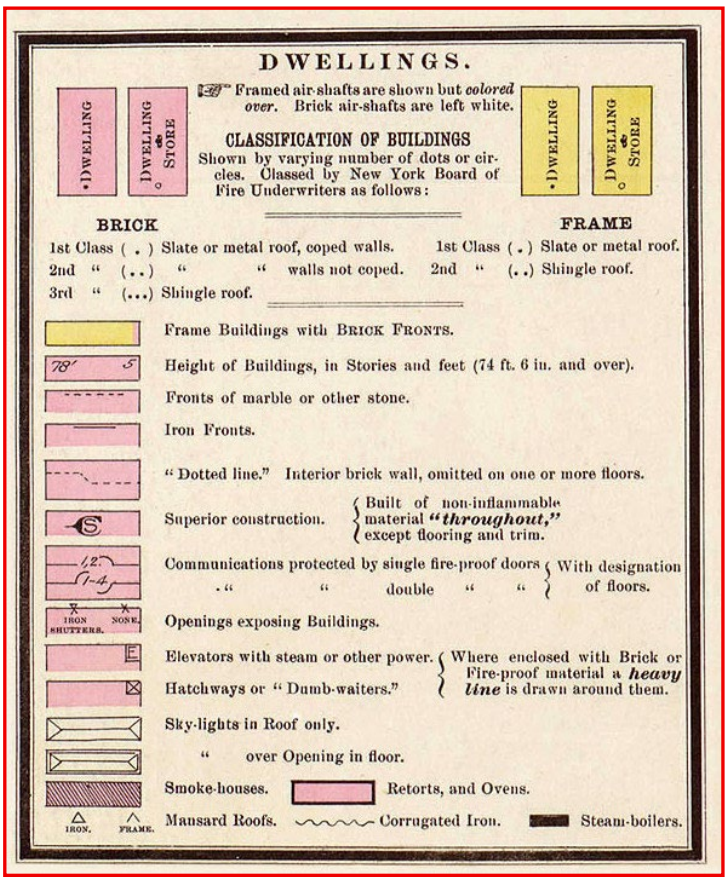
A standard township plat map, under the Public Land Survey System (PLSS), is divided into 36 sections, usually 1 mile by 1 mile, totaling 640 acres arranged in a 6x6 grid. Variations do occur in fractional townships often due to bodies of water, prior land claims, or irregular government lots. *Additionally, you'll find the location of churches, cemeteries, rivers and streams.*

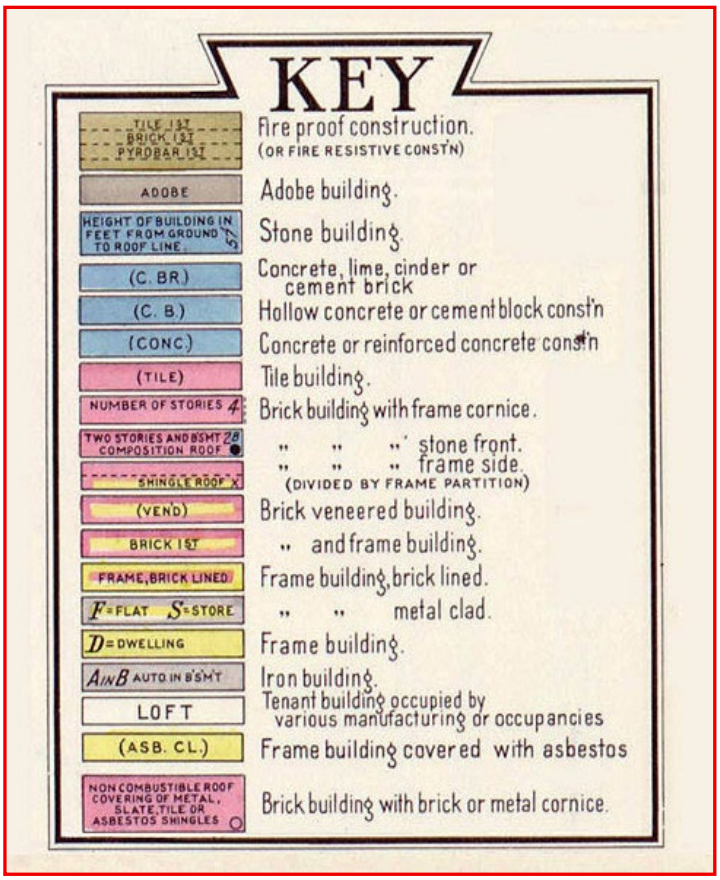
Sections are numbered starting from the northeast corner (Section 1), moving west, then east, creating an "S" pattern down to Section 36 in the southeast.

ECGHS has Plat Maps for Effingham County including an early 1899 map.

SANBORN MAPS (AKA SANBORN FIRE MAPS)

According to the **Library of Congress,** "the **Sanborn Map Collection** consists of a uniform series of large-scale maps, dating from 1867 to 1999, depicting commercial, industrial, and residential sections of some twelve thousand cities and towns in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. **D. A. Sanborn**, a young surveyor from Somerville, MA, was engaged in 1866 by the Aetna Insurance Company to prepare insurance maps for several cities in Tennessee. Following this, he established the **D. A. Sanborn National Insurance Diagram Bureau** in New York City in 1867. From this modest beginning grew the specialized company that has compiled and published maps for the fire insurance industry for over one hundred years. **D.A. Sanborn** died in 1883, but the company he founded continued to grow. After several acquisitions and name changes, the name was shortened to the **Sanborn Map Company**, which is used today. The maps were designed to assist fire insurance agents in determining the degree of hazard associated with a particular property and show the size, shape, and construction of dwellings, buildings and factories, as well as fire walls, locations of windows and doors, sprinkler systems, and types of roofs.





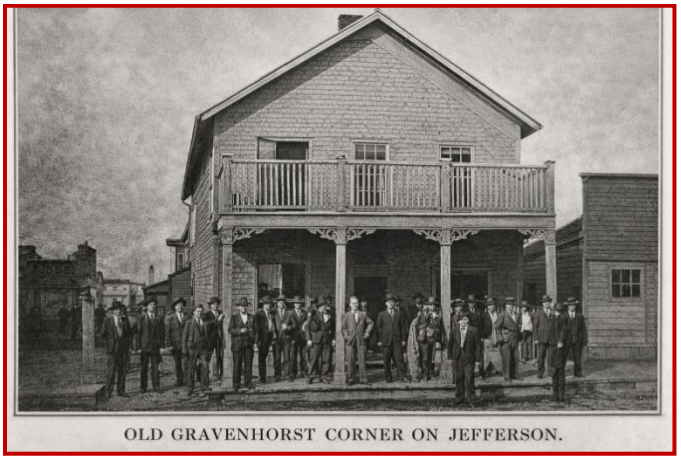
A **Key or Legend**, in various colors, is used to indicate building materials, such as frame, brick, stone, concrete, etc. Building heights are noted, fronts or veneers such as marble or iron noted, along with sky lights, openings, elevators, and windows. The maps also indicate widths and names of streets, property boundaries, building use, and house and block numbers. They show the locations of water mains giving their dimensions, and of fire alarm boxes, wells, cisterns, and hydrants. The Sanborn Maps are thus an unrivaled source of information for their time about the structure and use of buildings in American cities.

Framed Sanborn Maps for Teutopolis may be viewed at the Teutopolis Monastery Museum.

ECGHS has downloaded the Effingham County Sanborn maps and they may be viewed on the ECGHS computer.

1911 CITY OF EFFINGHAM SANBORN MAP

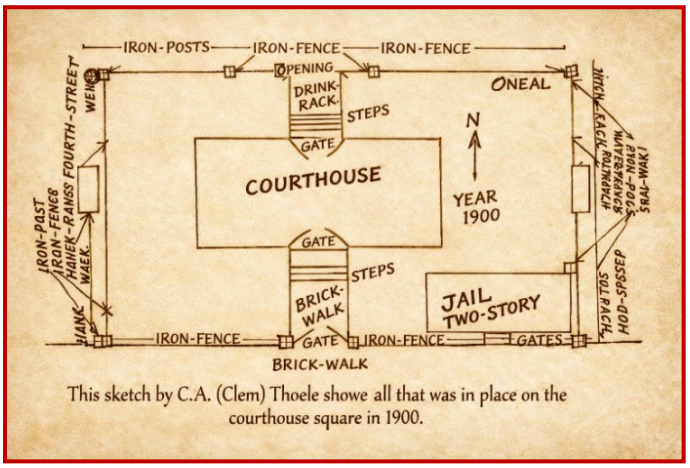
Jefferson Street – North Side from the Alley on the West, N 4th and N 3rd Streets



OLD GRAVENHORST CORNER ON JEFFERSON.

100 W. Jefferson Street (corner of 4th & Jefferson streets)

According to the *Effingham Illinois 50th Anniversary 1853 – 1903*: John Gravenhorst owned the saloon, and, "Joseph L. Bachman, the barber conducted a shop in the little frame building just north of Gravenhorst's saloon."



This sketch by C.A. (Clem) Thoele showe all that was in place on the courthouse square in 1900.

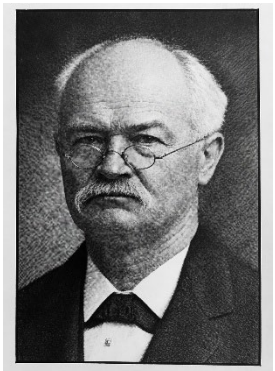
Courthouse Square, ca 1900



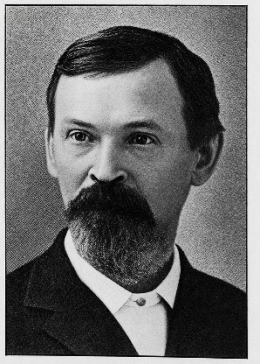
Oyster House – 114 W. Jefferson St. – ca 1912

Some of the men with businesses shown, or mentioned on these pages.

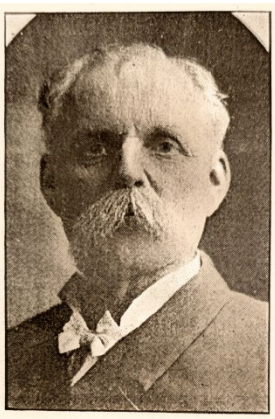
Effingham Illinois 50th Anniversary 1853 – 1903 photos below:



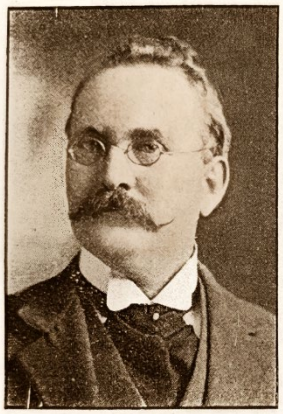
JOSEPH BACHMAN.
A substantial German citizen and the city's oldest barber, who located here in 1866.



HENRY CASSELLMAN.
The oldest business man in the city. Has been in business continuously since 1861.



GEO. W. GWIN.
Undertaker and traveling salesman, a sterling citizen who believes in municipal progress.



DR. J. H. WALKER.
Of the firm of Walker Bros, Physicians and Surgeons. At present City Health Officer.



ANTON WILLENBORG.
Boot and shoe dealer and member of one of the oldest German families in the county. Has been in business for many years.



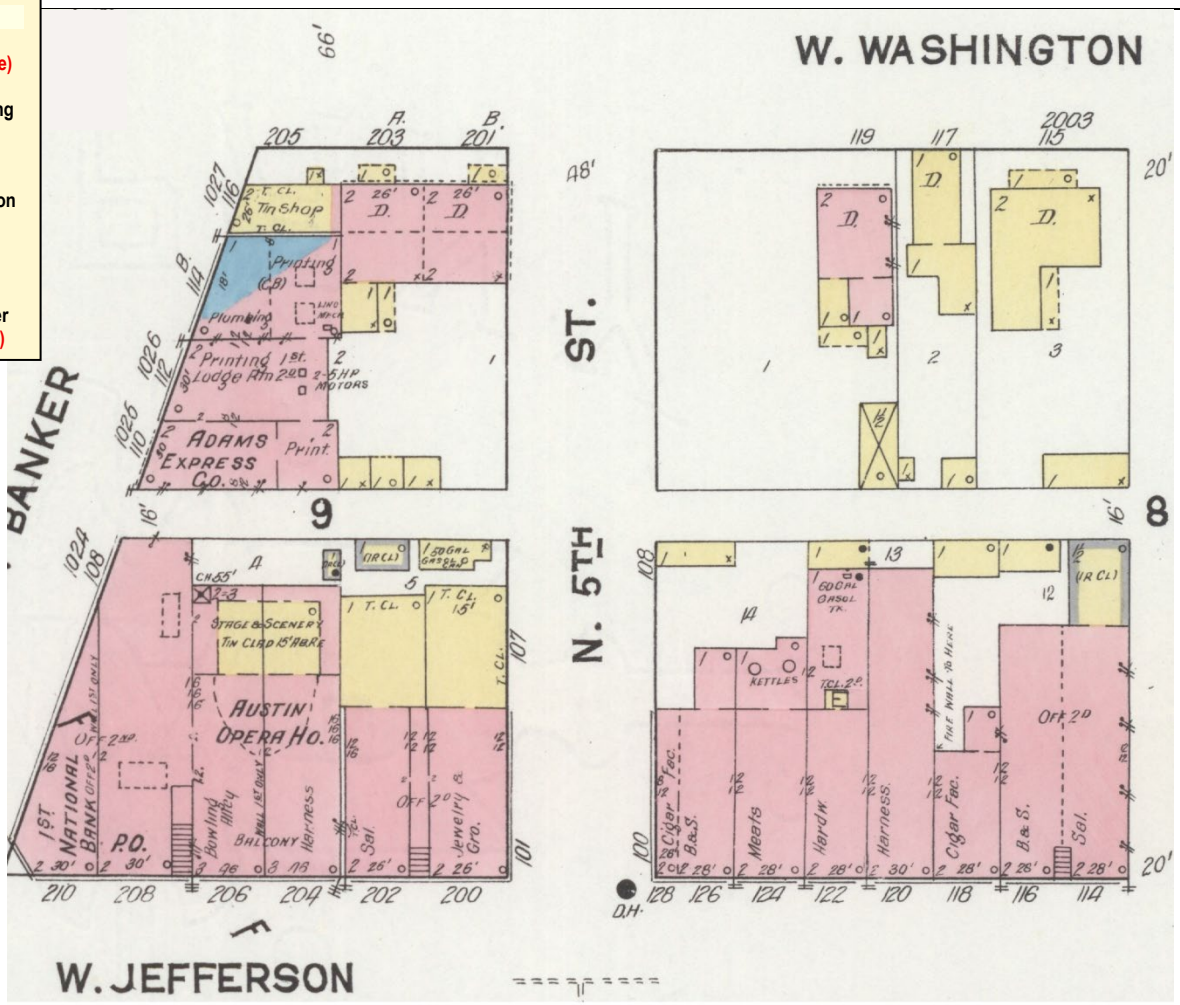
B. R. WOLTERS.
Member of the City Council and boot and shoe dealer. A progressive business man and citizen.

1911 CITY OF EFFINGHAM SANBORN MAP

Jefferson Street – North Side from the Alley on the West, N 4th and N 3rd Streets

ADDRESSES BELOW CORRESPOND TO THE 1912 EFFINGHAM CITY DIRECTORY

116
-Tin Shop
(JJ Feldhake)
114
-Eff Plumbing
-Printing
112
-Printing &
Lodge Saloon
(J Lowary
110
-Adams
Express Co
-Sign Painter
(Paul Brand)



115 W
-Mrs. Lillian
Jennings, wid,
(d) Dora

117
-Mrs. Josie,
Clarence (s)
Martin

210	208	206	204	202-202-1/2	200
-1st Nat'l Bk -Realty (Kagay)	Post Office	-Austin Opera House -Bowling Alley (RA Gay) -Physician (CC Holman) -Surgeon (Buckmaster)	-Harness shop & -Austin Advert. (WAustin) Eff Electric Light & Power Co.	-Dew Drop Sal. (Barlage) -Insurance (John Lake) --Lawyer, Loan & Real Estate (WS Holmes) -Music Dealer (B.E.Sharp) -Optician (Fortney,Long) -Physician (JH Walker, Long)	-Jewelry (Farthing) -Grocery & Dry Goods (Woldt)

128	126	124	122	120	118	116-16-1/2	114
-Cigar Factory (Bauer)	-Boots & Shoes (Wolters)	-Meats & Live-Stock Buyer (WH Rein-hardt)	-Hard-ware, Stoves, Ranges & Seeds (Surrells)	-Harness & Horse Goods (Cassel man)	-Cigar Factory (Merz Bros)	-Boots & Shoes &-Tailor (Metten) -Shoe Makers (Willen-borg)	-Oyster House Saloon & -Jacobs Buffet (Ed H.S Jacobs)

W. G. AUSTIN & COMPANY
HARD & SOFT COAL
BUGGIES & HARNESS
Telephone Main 6

W. WOIDT & CO.
Grocers.
Agents for Golden Sun Coffee.
Fruits and Vegetables a Specialty.
Highest Prices Paid for Country Produce
200 W. Jefferson St.
PHONE 3.

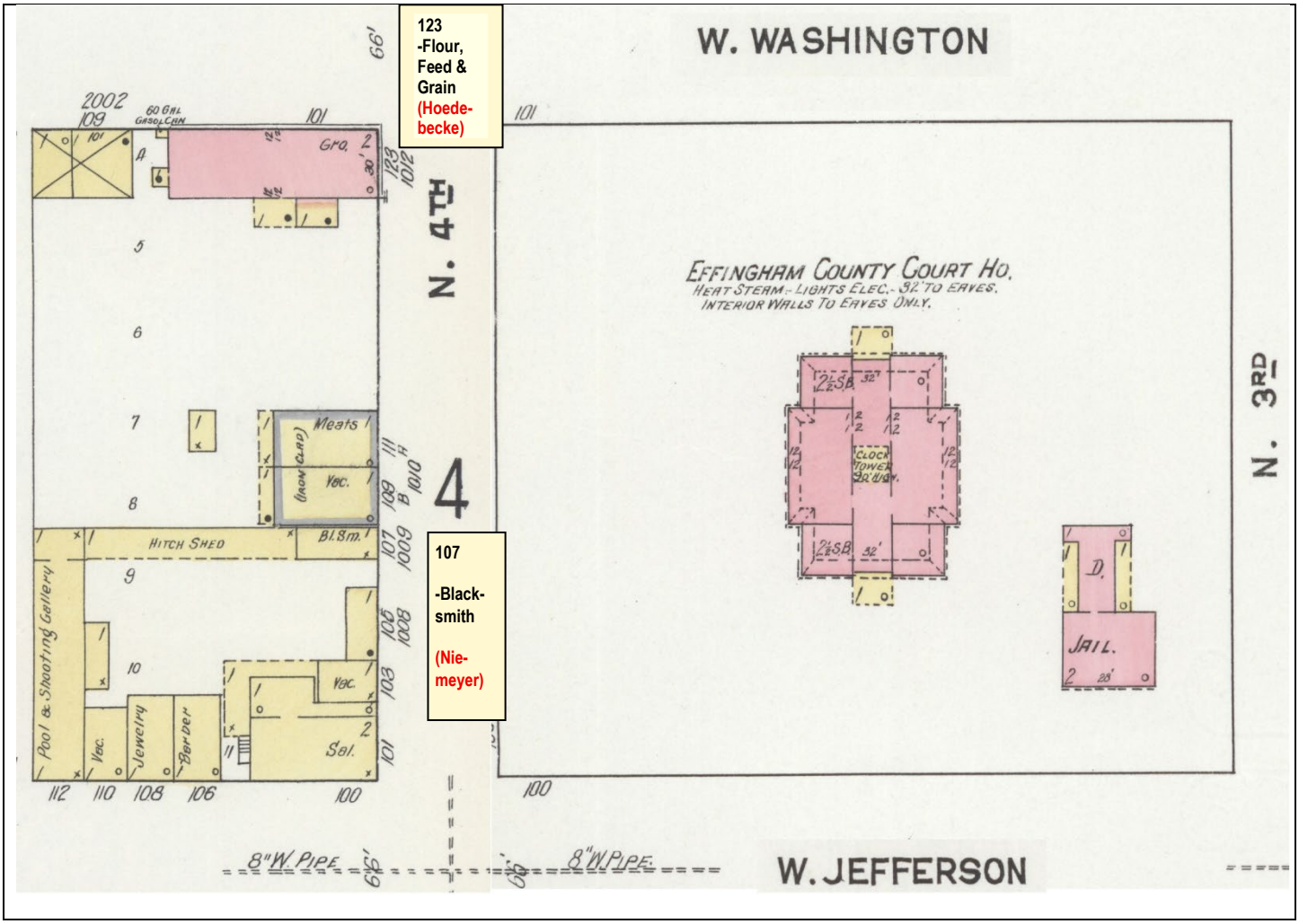
Cleaning, Pressing and Repairing of Men's and Women's Suits—
Prompt Work
JOS. METTEN
Over Willenborg's Shoe Store

JACOBS' BUFFET.
All of the Best Standard Brands of LIQUORS and CIGARS.
The Place for a Pleasant Smile and Something Good.
PHONE NO. 107.
114 W. Jefferson St. ED. H. JACOBS, Prop.

1911 City of Effingham Sanborn Map

Jefferson Street – North Side from the Alley on the West, N 4th and N 3rd Streets

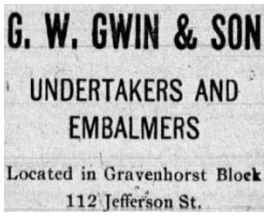
Addresses Below Correspond to the 1912 Effingham City Directory



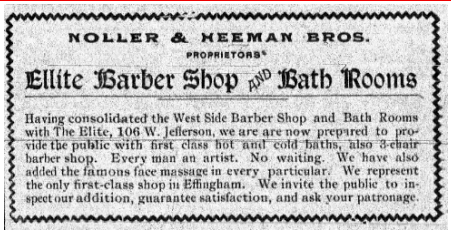
112	110	108	106	100
-Pool & Shooting Gallery -Undertaker, Ambulance, Embalmer & Insurance (Gwin, Son & Barrett)	Vac ant	-Jewelry, Music & News Dealer,& -Optician (M. Cramer)	-Elite Barber Shop (Noller)	-Saloon (Graven -horst)

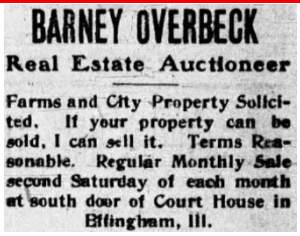
Courthouse, Jail and Public Square

- Auctioneer: Barney Overbeck
- Justice of the Peace: M. O'Donnell
- Police Magistrate: J.B. Jones (Lawyer)
- Lawyer: Mike O'Donnell









Effingham County Genealogical and Historical Society Meeting
Workman Room
Effingham Public Library
June 26, 2026

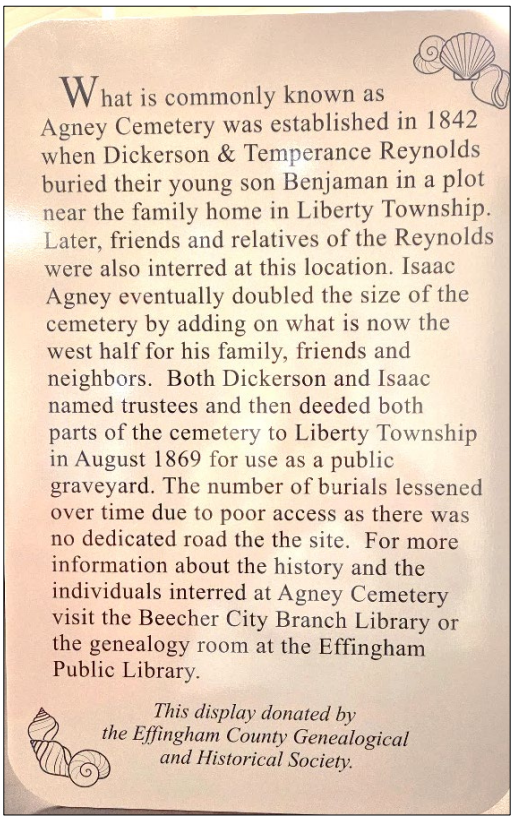
Members viewed a photograph of the results of a recent ECGHS cemetery service project in Liberty Township, which was funded by the Society.

"Before" Agney Cemetery



"AFTER" Agney Cemetery Addition





What is commonly known as Agney Cemetery was established in 1842 when Dickerson & Temperance Reynolds buried their young son Benjaman in a plot near the family home in Liberty Township. Later, friends and relatives of the Reynolds were also interred at this location. Isaac Agney eventually doubled the size of the cemetery by adding on what is now the west half for his family, friends and neighbors. Both Dickerson and Isaac named trustees and then deeded both parts of the cemetery to Liberty Township in August 1869 for use as a public graveyard. The number of burials lessened over time due to poor access as there was no dedicated road the the site. For more information about the history and the individuals interred at Agney Cemetery visit the Beecher City Branch Library or the genealogy room at the Effingham Public Library.

This display donated by the Effingham County Genealogical and Historical Society.

Surnames of those buried in Agney Cemetery

- Agney (5)
- Askins (2)
- Barr (2)
- Dunlap (1)
- Gettings (2)
- Grubb (5)
- Hedges (13)
- Johnson (1)
- Kelly (1)
- Kyle (3)
- Lahmon (3)
- Miller (5)
- Moore (1)
- Reynolds (9)
- Roberts (1)
- Stout (8)
- Vail (2)
- Wilkins (1)
- Wilson (1)
- Workman (1)[1]

[1] As listed at findagrave.com for Agney Cemetery

The Museum Celebrates Effingham County History and Our Country's 250th Anniversary July 9, 2026

The Museum Board and volunteers gathered with members of the community on this evening to remember and reflect on our shared history.

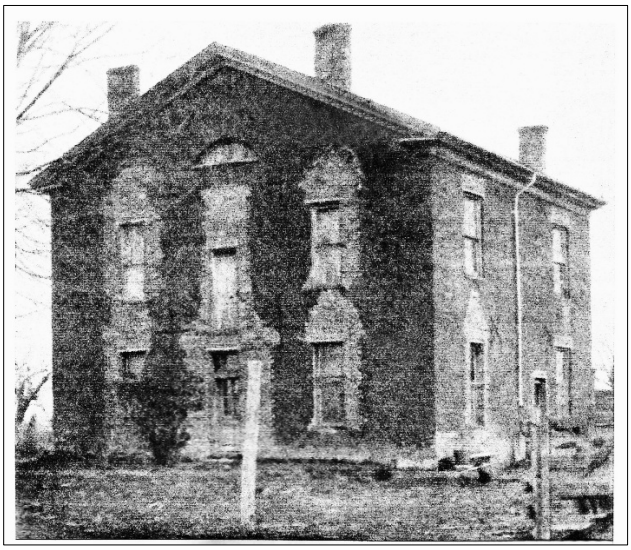


Museum President Jane Ries introduced the program. She spoke of early people and places that still have relevance today. Year 1776 marked a time when Illinois was under the control of the British.

When people eventually came here, they settled near water like the Little Wabash, Fulfer Creek, and Brockett's Creek. At first, they came mainly from the south: Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina and Alabama, among others.

The path to get here was rough – mountains to cross, creeks and rivers to ford, rain, snow with bitter cold, or extreme heat with high humidity. What they had in common was the pursuit of a better life.

Illinois became the 21st state in 1818, and Effingham County was formed in 1831 from parts of Fayette and Crawford Counties.



The first county seat was Ewington. This court house (above) later housed people sent to the Poor Farm. That happened after the Illinois Central Railroad forced the move of the county seat to Effingham. Eventually, materials from the building were used by a **Wernsing** family to build their home.

Judge John O. Broom was an important early settler. He built a home near Mason using money he earned from working on National Road construction. On July 4, 1832, he gave a BBQ for the locals at Ewington. Bear and deer meat were smoked on spits, and whiskey was the beverage of choice.

In commemoration of the date, Judge Broom read the Declaration of Independence aloud to the attendees, standing on a cottonwood log on the banks of the Wabash.

He is buried in Mason's Union Cemetery. His great-great grandson, **Jim Broom** stands next to the stone. To his left is **Herschel Broom**, whose ancestor was the Judge's brother.





Delaine Donaldson presented a spirited rendition of the **REVERAND ALFRED P. BLISS.**

Alfred Bliss was originally from Vermont, where he was born in 1811. He was introduced to the Methodist faith at any early age. He married **Direxia Knowles i**n 1834; she shared his Methodist faith.

They went on to have five children. Their first years together were on a farm, but in 1838, he decided to move west with his wife's family.

It took two months to get to Illinois. After reaching Montgomery County, Mr. Bliss purchased a large amount of government land. He also acquired property in Fayette County. Alfred Bliss was politically active at the time and served two terms as county commissioner.

Fifteen years after his arrival in Illinois, he answered the call to preach the Gospel in Clay County, encouraged by circuit rider **Peter Cartright**.

In 1881, Rev. Bliss moved to Effingham, where his daughter, **Nellie Bliss White**, and son-in-law **John C. White,** lived.

After she was widowed in 1888, his daughter donated the land upon which Austin College was built.

Rev. Bliss' wife, **Direxia Bliss**, died after a stroke in 1894, and he died five years later. His namesake Bliss Park remains in use today.



Fred Johnson spoke of the life of Effingham attorney **BENSON WOOD.** Mr. Wood was born in Bridgewater, Pennsylvania in 1839. He was a teacher at first, and later attended the local Methodist Wyoming Seminary. In August of 1861, he enlisted in Company C of the Rock River Rifles in northern Illinois. He was wounded at Shiloh and suffered long-term aftereffects of his military service.

He attended the University of Chicago School of Law and graduated in 1864. He got married that December. Soon thereafter, he moved to Effingham.

Mr. Wood was involved in Effingham banking, and other businesses, as well as in politics. At one point, he was counsel for the Illinois Central Railroad.

Benson Wood was elected to Congress on the Republican ticket, and he was a delegate to the Republican National Convention in 1876. He was a friend of **William McKinley**, starting around the time that future President McKinley was the Governor of Ohio.

His local legacy includes the Benwood Hotel, which was named after him. In addition, he is part of the roots of Midland States Bank. Finally, as a young man, **G. F. Taylor** started his career by reading law with Benson Wood. The current Taylor Law Office is named after G. F. Taylor.

Benson Wood died in 1915 and is buried at Oakridge Cemetery.



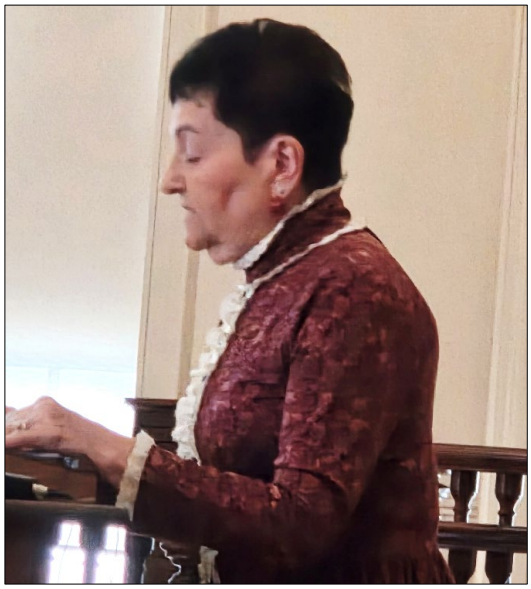
Phil Lewis shared information about **FRANK OTT GREEN.** Mr. Green was the Mayor of Effingham from 1901-1903.

Francis Green was born in New Jersey in 1842. He married **Florence Young** in 1872. The couple came to Effingham in 1890. Mr. Green was a railroad conductor on the Wabash Railroad between Effingham and Bement.

Mr. Green built his "dream house" at 608 Wast Fayette in Effingham. He got the layout from a house plan book. It was in the Victorian Carpenter Gothic style. He utilized black employees from the Wabash Railroad to build it, and he charged the Railroad for that labor. The house featured oak and cherry mantle pieces and oak pocket doors.

The Greens had three children; the boys were **Donald,** and **Frank Jr,** and their daughter was **Kathyrn**. They were wealthy enough to have a full-time maid with a room upstairs; she also served as the cook. Her name was **Rosa Helmink**.

Later on, the building became a boarding house, with three rooms that may have housed Illinois College of Photography students. A **Norris** family owned it for five years, followed by **Clarence** and **Verena Mowe**, who ran Mowe Moving out of it. **Phil** and **Jeri Lewis** lived there from 1979 to 2002. The home is still standing. Today it is a private residence that houses an art studio.



LoElla Baker's period dress called to mind early pioneer **MARTHA BROCKETT TUCKER**. LoElla entered the role of Martha's life, explaining that she was born in 1825, and that she was the first white female baby born in Effingham County. Her birthday was on November 14, and she shared that date with **Thomas Austin**, who was born the same day and in the same house. The **Stephen Austin** family had just come to the area and were staying with the Brocketts.

The Brocketts lived in Jackson Township. Daily life was challenging because the area was frequently underwater due to flooding of branches of the Wabash. The Brockett home was a center of activity, for example, it was the first polling place in the township – 13 people voted. The first school in the area started in 1831 in the Brockett's stable. **Elisha Parkhurst** was the teacher – he was 12 years old.

Martha Brockett married **Jonathon Henry Tucker** in 1849. They had 6 children. The children all worked – they hauled water, cut and carried wood, did other chores and helped with the farming. For food, family members gardened, hunted turkeys, rabbits, squirrels and deer, picked berries, and gathered nuts and honey.

After **Jonathon Tucker** died in 1888, Martha married a second time in 1893, to **W. H. McGeehon**. She died in 1896. Martha and her husband are buried in Little Prairie Cemetery in Jackson Township.

Martha's grandfather was a Revolutionary War soldier. There are many Brockett descendants today in Effingham County.



Devin Walk assumed the persona of early Altamont physician **DR. CHARLES WRIGHT.**

Charles Montague Wright was born near Boston in 1834. He wanted to make a good life for himself, so after he graduated from the Medical College of Philadelphia, he went west. His destination was decided by his finances; he went into a stagecoach office in Baltimore and bought transportation as far west as his money would cover. That turned out to be Freemanton, Illinois.

Practice there was not lucrative. He traveled by horseback through tall prairie grass to remote homes. The people there often did not have money to pay him, but he cared for them anyway. He became a skilled surgeon even though he was born with one hand.

Freemanton shriveled when the rail system came through, so Dr. Wright moved to Altamont. He bought multiple lots sold by the Wabash Railroad. In 1878, he established the C.M. Wright Bank. The second floor there was the home of the Wright Opera House.

His medical practice in Altamont did well. In 1888, he built his dream house, an Italianate style home with 18 rooms, ornate wooden floors and stone fireplaces. There were seven bedrooms, as well as a rain-gathering cistern, and gas-powered lights.

Dr. Charles Wright died in 1888, and he is buried in Union Cemetery. His home is now a museum, the Dr. Wright House. It is open for tours on Sunday afternoons.



Linda Ruholl entered the role of Effingham's Civil War nurse, **MARY ANN BROWN NEWCOMB.**

Mary Ann Brown was born in upper New York state in 1817. She married **Hiram Andrew Ward Newcomb** when she was about 17. They had seven children, but only three lived to adulthood. Hiram was a carpenter and helped construct the sides of the Eire Canal. By 1861, they were in Chicago. **Hiram Newcomb** was in Effingham that April to visit their son, **Sidney.**

When **President Abraham Lincoln** called for volunteers to save the Union, Hiram signed up. Mary Newcomb went down to Cairo where he was stationed. Many of the young soldiers there suffered and died from "black measles".

Hiram was wounded at the battle of Fort Donelson, and Mary took him home to die. She buried him at Oakridge and went back to "take care of the boys." For four years, she served as a volunteer nurse, parallel to **U. S. Grant's** Western Army, and worked in stationary hospitals and on transport boats bringing the wounded home from Corinth, Shiloh, Vicksburg and points south.

After the War, she was done with nursing, but she wrote a book about her experiences. It was issued after her death and might have been lost forever, except that her great-granddaughter inherited a copy and had it reprinted. From there, it came back to Effingham. **Claudine Rush** was instrumental in distributing it here. Mary Newcomb died in 1892 and is buried with her husband at Oakridge Cemetery.

Vietnam Era Lecture

July 16, 2026



Sgt. Goddard and a photo on his first night in Viet Nam

Ronald G. Goddard is a Marine who served in Vietnam. He was a rifleman, and he spoke of his experiences in that country from March 27, 1967 through October 6, 1967.

Sgt. Goddard's experience was much different than what he expected. He enlisted in the Marines right after high school, and he went in with the belief that it would be something like the movies he had watched about World War 2.

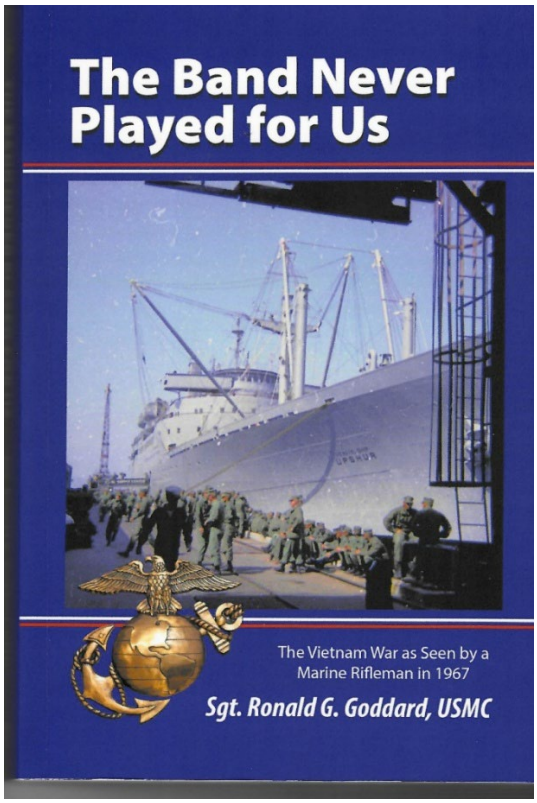
He was satisfied with the training he received from the Marine Corp and believed it qualified him to do the job the Marines were asked to do in Viet Nam in 1967. One issue all these men faced was the uncertainty of the kind of fighting they would encounter – would it be guerilla warfare or more traditional battles similar to World War 2? In Goddard's case, it turned out to be the former.

In 2017, Sgt. Goddard wrote a book about his memories of his lived experience during nine different major encounters with the Viet Cong. Some of these battles were named after a particular location, such as Hil 55, Hill 22 and Hill 51. Others were planned excursions, such as Operation Shawnee and Operation Kingfisher. His descriptions are quite detailed. He carried a camera in his pack and used color films. Most of the photos are of himself and people he was associated with at a particular time.

Many of the photographs in his PowerPoint were also in his book, but a few were unique. For example, he showed pictures of 1960s C-rations and noted that soldiers had to carry their own food on missions, and the materials to heat it with. That meant they had two meals per day on longer missions and subsequently they lost weight. They also had to carry all their equipment and weaponry along with a certain amount of ammunition.

He and the men he served with had problems with the M-16, in that in would jam repeatedly and unexpectedly. The spoken wisdom among the men was that the M-14 was a better weapon. He did not indicate the root cause of the weapon's problem, although he worked vigorously to overcome it, mostly by thoroughly cleaning and careful lubrication.

In his book, Sgt. Goddard states his opinion that the United States did not prevail in Vietnam because the American people, American politicians, and the news media stopped supporting the Republic of Vietnam (the south) (page 376). Saigon did not fall until April of 1975, about seven and one-half years after he was evacuated.



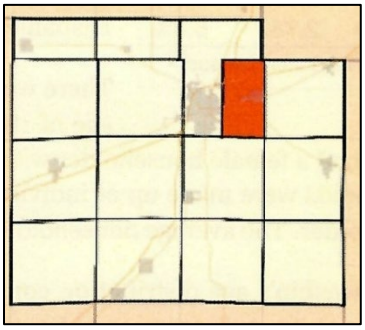
Other gentlemen were present at this talk who had served in Viet Nam. **Jane Ries** asked them to stand up in turn and say a little bit about themselves. Most of them were Army veterans. Each of them received a hearty round of thankful applause.

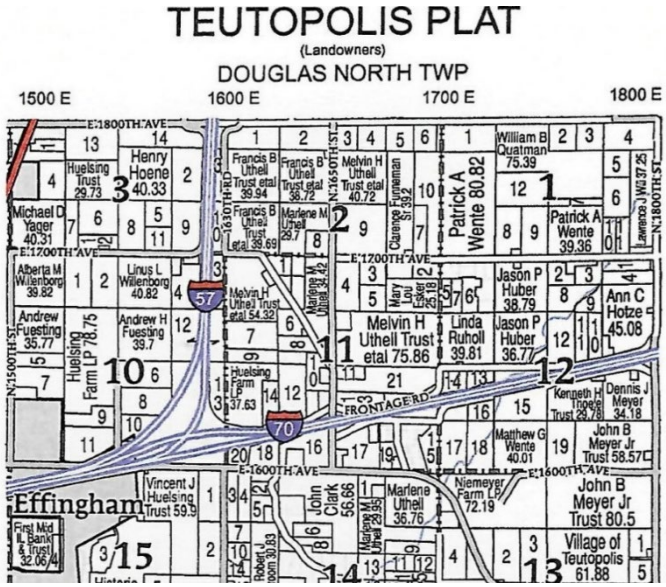
Teutopolis Township & the June 17, 2026 E3 Tornado

Linda Ruholl

Teutopolis Township has the fifth largest population of the 15 townships that make up Effingham County. According to the most recent census, there are 1,112 households. Many of these houses have deep roots in local history.

The E-3 tornado of June 2026 affected many of them and this article creates a broad verbal and photographic record of some of those effects. The diagram below shows the position of Teutopolis Township in the county, as well as its relationships to the 14 other townships.[2]





The material is presented by Section and by street address, with the township plat map as a reference and organizer. I used the 2021 Landowner version because it had the best details for visual placement.[3]

The Chair of the Effingham County Board issued a Disaster Proclamation on June 17:

This Disaster Proclamation allows the immediate and appropriate level of response to assist Effingham County residents, first responders, and other support agencies in the aftermath of the tornado and severe weather in the county.[4]

Effingham County Emergency Management issued a press release the following day:

*Emergency response crews are actively assessing the situation. **Sheriff Kuhns** asks the public to avoid impacted areas to allow emergency personnel to do their work. Use extreme caution when traveling, as debris, downed power lines, and other hazards may still be present. We will share updates as more information becomes available.*

***Pam Jacobs,** Effingham County Emergency Management Agency Coordinator, stated: At this time, we have received reports of injuries, but no fatalities. We have also received reports of damaged houses and buildings along the path of the tornado. We are incredibly grateful for the quick action of our first responders. Recovery efforts will continue in the coming days, and additional updates will be provided as information becomes available.*

For additional information, monitor the Effingham County Emergency Management Agency's Facebook page.[5]

Memories fail and scars superficially heal, but the aftermath of the tornado will linger. In the absence of other broad depictions of the event, this story creates a broad but coherent record. The tornado also had a profound effect on other parts of the county, including Douglas Township to the west and St. Francis township (just east of Teutopolis), but those are separate stories – this effort is confined to Teutopolis Township because your author lives there.

The tornado entered Teutopolis Township by crossing over Route 45, and then it touched down

[2] Township diagram from the township article in Wikipedia
[3] Plat map extracted from page 48 of Farm and Home Publisher's *2021 Effingham County, Illinois Plat and Directory.*
[4] Office of the Effingham County Board, Joshua P. Douthit, Chairman. For immediate release, June 17, 2026.
[5] Press release, Catherine Bailey, Effingham County EMA, June 18, 2026, for immediate release.

hard on **Michael Yager's** property in **SECTION 3.** Mr. Yager gave an interview to the *Effingham Daily News* that was published the weekend after the tornado. The central message was that MidAmerica Motorworks was gone, including the artifacts in the MyGarage Museum. The Volkswagen Fest was canceled.[6]

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Damage on North 1630th Street

The tornado headed southeast and crossed over both Route 57 north-south lanes and entered **SECTION 11**. The new recently constructed shouse owned by **Linda Jansen Harrington** was destroyed, as was the home of her son and wife**, Jake** and **Alyssa Vonderheide Harrington.** The remnants were leveled several weeks later. Signs of a rebuild were apparent across the prairie by the end of August.

Both these homes lie to the west side of the Effingham/Teutopolis "mail route divide" that starts from the east-west main frontage road that connects Effingham and Teutopolis (aka 1600th Avenue) and runs north on 1650th Street.



16559 and 1575 North 1630th Street, Effingham, IL 62401

Just across the road from the Harringtons, a very old barn near **Marlene Uthell's** home was flattened. It was also leveled in July.



16600 North 1630th St, Effingham, IL 62401

This barn was on ancestral lands occupied by a direct line Uthell descendants. Marlene's parents were **Frank** and **Florence Metten Uthell.** Frank was born 28 December 1885 and died on 17 November 1963. Florence was born 30 June 1903 and died 6 February 2004 (she lived to be 101 years old).[7]

Frank's father was **Bernard Uthell** (1842-1929) and his mother was **Mary Ostendorf Uthell** (1847-1916).[8] Bernard's father was **William Uthell** (1806-1870/1879?) and his mother was **Angela Puthoff Uthell** (1812-1892). They were early Teutopolis pioneers. From that time on, their descendants lived on this property.[9] The Uthells are buried in St. Francis Cemetery in Teutopolis.



Next the tornado took the top off a local landmark, the big tree marking the Y-split into 1625th

[6] Cathy Griffith, "Mid America Motorworks: The Museum, the Cars, All of the Memorabilia is Gone; Volkswagen Fest Canceled", *Effingham Daily News,* June 20-21, 2026, pages A1 & A7.

[7] Frank Uthell obituary, *Teutopolis Press & Dieterich Gazette,* Nov 21, 1963, page 1; Florence Uthell obituary, *Teutopolis Press & Dieterich Gazette,* Feb 11, 2005, page 5.

[8] Mary Uthell obituary, *County Review (Effingham),* Aug 30, 1916, page 8; Bernard Uthell, accessed @findagrave.com.

[9] Angela Puthoff Uthell and Willam Uthell, both accessed @ findagrave.com. William's date of death unknown. Record keeping is complicated by misspelling of Uthell as Otell in official records. It was probably between 1870 and 1880, because he is present in the 1870 federal census, but his wife is listed as head of household in 1880.

and 1630th Streets from 1650th Street. It stood near the stop sign on 1625th and warned those proceeding south that there was NO stop sign on 1630th south.

Damage on North 1650th Street

Extensive damage was evident on the ancestral Buhnerkempe properties just around the corner from Uthells and on 1650th Street. There were two homes, with a family business in between. The first structure was the home of **Bruce** and **Jill Will Buhnerkempe**. The destruction was so extensive they decided to demolish the wreckage. A rebuild was underway in September.



Bruce and Jill Buhnerkempe
16461 North 1650th St., Effingham, IL 62401

Their daughter's wedding was coming up on Saturday, and **Anna Buhnerkempe** and **Evan Addis** did get to the St. Francis of Assisi altar on June 20. According to her interview with **Steve Raymond**, Anna's wedding gown was in a bedroom closet at Lucille and Larry Buhnerkempe's old home, and came out smelling a little bit, but otherwise undamaged.[10]

The family business, Buhnerkempe Plumbing and Heating, Inc., was also severely struck. The firm was started by Bruce's father in 1963. Bruce's parents were **Lawrence (Larry)** and **Lucille Meyer Buhnerkempe.** Larry was born 20 December 1938 and died on 15 May 2025. Lucille was born 7 March 1939 and died on 28 November 2022.[11] Their house was the third structure on the property; it had roof damage.

Lawrence's father was **Edward Buhnerkempe** (1897 -15 July 1963.) Ed was a farmer. Lawrence's mother was **Agnes Thoele Buhnerkempe** (6 April 1906 – 8 May 1993). Ed Buhnerkempe's parents were **William Buhnerkempe** (22 August 1865 - 1 January_1953) and **Mary Wendt Buhnerkempe (**15 July 1876 - 22 April 1924). William's father was **Wilhelm Buhenerkempe** (29 August 1828 - ? 1886), and his mother was **Elizabeth Hoelscher Buhenerkempe** (3 March 1839 – 27 January 1916). Wilhem and Elizabeth were pioneers, born in Germany. All four generations lived on this property for all or part of their lives and all are buried in St. Francis Parish Cemetery, Teutopolis.[12]



Buhnerkempe Heating and Plumbing
16429 North 1650th Street, Effingham, IL 62401



Across the road from the Buhnerkempe's property, there was also a severe hit to the property of **Roger** and **Jackie Ludwig Niebrugge.** Again, this is ancestral land. Jackie's mother was **Adeline Hatke Ludwig**, and her father was **Jack Ludwig.** Adeline

[10] Steve Raymond, "Village Was There for Us," *Effingham and Teutopolis News Report,* Jul 23, 2026, page A1 and A5.
[11] Dates from their online obituaries.
[12] All members noted at findagrave.com; William Buhnerkempe obituary, *Teutopolis Press and Dieterich Gazette,* Jan 9, 1953, page 1; Ed Buhnerkempe obituary, *Teutopolis Press and Dietrich Gazette,* Jul 18, 1963, page 1; Agnes Buhnerkempe obituary, *Teutopolis Press and Dietrich Gazette,* May 12, 1993, page 6.

Hatke Ludwig was born on October 15, 1908, and died on November 8, 1999.[13] Their only child, **Jacqueline/Jackie Ludiwg** was born November 3, 1942.

Adeline parents were **Jospeh Henry Hatke, Jr.** (17 October 1866 – 25 June 1946) and **Philomena Stumborg Hatke** (21 October 1879 – 23 May 1962).[14]

Joseph Henry Hatke's parents were **Joseph Hatke Senior** (10 October 1817 – 18 May 1905), and **Margaret Terhaar Wessling Hatke** (unknown 1828 – 7 October 1908). Margaret was the second wife. She was widow with two children, **Anna Wessling** and **Mary (Mayme) Wessling.** The first wife was **Maria Anna Feldmann Hatke**. She died after the birth of twins in 1863.[15] Joseph Henry was Margaret and Joseph, Senior's only child together.[16]

The "plantation lane" style trees along the lane to the original Hatke homestead were shredded.



The little house that **Philomena** (**Minnie) Stumborg Hatke** and her youngest daughter, **Helen Hatke Heuerman** (23 September 1910 – 4 October 1998)[17], lived in after the interstate went through the township was reduced to a disorderly pile of rubble. (See top of next column).



For many years, there was no street address associated with this home. Helen did not want to change her mailing address from Teutopolis to Effingham after they moved, so she put the mailbox down the road on the corner of 1650th Street and 1635th Road, which kept it on the Teutopolis mail route. All the Hatke ancestors are buried at St. Francis Cemetery in Teutopolis.

Roger Niebrugge had several structures behind the little house that were used for horses and a donkey. They are all gone. There were no horses present and the donkey survived.

Down the Hatke lane, there was also damage to the remnants of the old Hatke place that dated back to the 1840s. This is what was left of Roger's horse barn.



Many years ago, it was constructed around the original 1840s log cabin built by Joseph Hatke, Senior.

[13] Adeline Hatke Ludwig accessed @ findagrave.com.
[14] John Henry Hatke, Jr and Philomena Stumborg Hatke, accessed @ findagrave.com.
[15] Linda Ruholl, *The Hatkes of Illinois* (work in progress).
[16] Joseph Hatke, Margaret Terhaar Hatke, and Maria Anna Feldmann Hatke accessed @ findagrave.com.
[17] Helen L. Heuerman death card, Bauer Funeral Home.

At any earlier time, the exterior of the cabin-to-barn looked like this:





These logs were hand cut and fitted together with hand cut notches at the ends. This barn was mistakenly listed as a pin barn in a 1976 county history, but they pre-date pin barn technology.[18]

The 1900s era **Joseph Hatke Junior** homeplace was also still standing, just barely. Roger's donkey, King Kong, happily posed out front.



Steve Raymond interviewed **Pam Jacobs**, the Effingham EMA Coordinator and **Cathy Bailey,** the EMA Public Information Coordinator, a couple of months after the tornado. They explained how the County's response played out. Once reports of damage to homes were received, the EMA's Emergency Operation Center's Emergency Liaison Group (ELG) was called in. The ELG consists of these Effingham County elected officials:

- Sherrif
- Clerk
- Treasurer
- Assessor
- Coroner

In addition to the above, the ELG also includes department heads from:

- GIS
- Sheriff's office
- Information technology
- Health department
- Highway department
- Animal Control, and
- County board chair

Here is what the ELG group does:

1. Monitors NWS reports,
2. Tracks damage on maps,
3. Monitors injury reports,
4. Tracks power outages,
5. Provides appropriate responses 1-4[19]

The response from Effingham County's elected Illinois Representatives was muted. On June 18, the 102nd District member posted this on his website

"I am thankful that were no fatalities from these tornados that hit my hometown of Teutopolis, Dieterich, and the Coles County area. Thank you to the officials, and first responders for their swift action to get help to those affected and to everyone who is pitching in to help their neighbors."[20]

On September 8, U.S. Representative **Mike Bost** reported he had held a roundtable to inform Effingham County people about USDA Rural Development grants. These were for low-income households who could not get any other form of credit.[21]

Effingham County officials created a dashboard and an online form to report damage.

[18] Peggy Pulliam, "Pin Barns of Effingham County", p.18.
[19] Steve Raymond, "Emergency Management Agency: All Hands on Deck during Disaster," *Effingham and Teutopolis News Report,* August 20, 2026, pages F1 & F2.
[20] Representative Adam Niemerg website, Jun 18, 2026.
[21] "USDA Rural Development Highlights Disaster Assistance", *Effingham Daily News* Sep 8, 2026, page A2.

The Illinois Emergency Agency form was very detailed and consisted of more than 12 pages, before completion. The major sections were:

- Contact and Location Information
- Occupant Information
- Insurance and Resource Availability,
- Damage Assessment
- Impacts and Needs
- Additional Information (2 parts)
  The first part of the last section called for a maximum of seven photographs of structural damage:
  1. Front of house
  2. Trees on house, bad roof
  3. Foundation/basement wall
  4. Flood lines/sewage
  5. Submerged utilities
  6. Inside damage-floors/walls/ceilings
  7. Other problems (fire, debris, etc.)

  Part 2 collected more interior information with a maximum of 5 photographs of:
  1. Electrical system damage
  2. Mold, water stains, rot
  3. Failed doors, windows, insulation
  4. Destroyed kitchen/ bathroom fixtures
  5. Structural support or beams damaged[22]

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Damage on East 1635th Road

Just off 1650th Street after you pass Buhnerkempe's, and around the corner to the east, there was a second family owned and operated business. Esker and Walker Concrete Construction is a 50-plus year-old business formed in 1983, but use of this location was relatively new. The current owners are **Shane Stone** and **Matt Ordner**.[23]



Morning after





Cleanup at Esker & Walker the morning after

This area was the target of intense disaster tourism during the first 48 hours. That was a problem because 1635th Road is narrow. There is a metal interstate fence to the south and a deep ditch to the north. Workers and volunteers had to park along the road; there was no place else to go. That left just enough room for one-way traffic. Gawkers laid enough rubber that there were no collisions.



[22] *Self-Assessment for Illinois Residents*. Completion time was estimated as 10-15 minutes.

[23] Company Facebook page; Bizapedia entry for foundation date.

When Ordner and Stone set up shop on this property, they creatively retrofitted some of the existing structures from the original Busse homestead. This barn, as it appeared in 2013, was used for equipment storage. Originally, it sat west of the house. It was destroyed completely by the tornado.



A small garage (side view below) was retrofitted, after extensive remodeling, into the Esker & Walker business office. Originally this structure was just a short walk from the Busse house. It disappeared with wind, too, leaving a trail of paperwork lodged in the trees along the interstate fence. The Esker & Walker rebuild began September 1, 2026.



The Busse family members were also early Teutopolis pioneers. The last Busse to live on the place was Leo Busse. His full name was **Leo Gerhard Busse** and he was born on 11 April 1887 and died on 26 March 1970. His wife was **Caroline (Kate) Doedtman Busse**. She was born on 2 August 1903 and died on 31 January 1968. Her parents were **John Henry Doedtman** and **Theresia Esker Doedtman.**[24]

Leo Busse's parents were **George (Gerhard**, in German) **Henry Busse** and **Mary (Mayme) Wessling Busse.** George was born on 16 December 1851. Mayme was born 27 November 1858 and died 28 June 1936. George was born the same year the original cornerstone was set for St. Francis of Assisi Church in Teutopolis. George lived to 99 years old; he died just short of his 100th year on 29 November 1951. His wife, Mayme Adelaid Wessling, was from across the back fence of the property and from the Hatke place; she was one of the two girls that Joseph Hatke Senior's second wife brought along from Cincinnati.[25]

George Busse's parents were **Johann Gerhard Busse** and **Margaret Elizabeth Uphus Busse.** They were immigrants from Germany who went to Cincinnati first. They got married there in 1840 and came here after that. Johann was born 7 August 1809 and died on 22 September 1889. Margaret was born 12 October 1820 and died 24 April 1880. All three generations of these Busses are buried in St. Francis Parish Cemetery.[26]

The National Weather Service issued a report on June 23, 2026. The tornado traveled 26.2 miles in Effingham County. The peak wind was 150 mph. The maximum width was 500 feet (of course that was not consistent across the 26.2 miles).[27]

Damage on East 1650th Avenue

What is known as 1635th Road magically becomes 1650th Avenue as you travel east. That happens after one 45-degree angle turn, followed by a 90-degree angle turn. Damage here was not as

[24] Leo Busse, and Caroline Busse, accessed @ findagrave.com; Caroline Busse obituary, *Teutopolis Press & Dieterich Gazette,* Feb 1, 1968, page 1; Leo Busse obituary, *Effingham Daily News,* Mar 27, 1970, page 12.
[25] George Busse obituary, *Dieterich Special Gazette,* Dec 6, 1951, page 4; Mary Adelaid Busse, accessed @ findagrave.com.
[26] Johnan Gerhard Busse and Margaret Uphus Busse, accessed @ findagrave.com.
[27] National Weather Service, "Effingham County Tornado Rated EF3; Traveled 26.2 miles with Peak Wind of 150 mph," *Effingham Daily News,* June 23, 2026.

severe. It was at this point that the tornado entered **SECTION 12.**

Greg and Ellen Hille Thies lost some trees and there was an assortment of debris in their yard. They are right the start of 1650th, just after the corner of the 90-degree angle turn. Their roof was damaged by debris which called for new shingles, which was done in August.



Greg and Ellen Thies, 17061 East 1650th Ave, Teutopolis, IL 62467

Just across the road, **Corey and Shannon Ruholl Dasenbrock** (17061 East 1650th Avenue) had a tree just miss their shouse and a second tree bent down the roof of their chicken house, greatly alarming the red rooster. A third tree totaled their daughter **Cailey Dasenrock's** car.

Art and Linda Hatke Ruholl (17120 East 1650th Avenue) had tree damage as well, again with a near miss from a twisted off elm. It is likely that the heavy stand of woods around these two homes helped insulate the structures somewhat from the wind. The Dasenbrock and Ruholl homes are also ancestral lands. This farm property was originally the home of **Frank Hatke** and **Mary Dasenbrock Hatke.**

Frank Hatke was born on 2 April 1876 and died on10 August 1941.[28] He was the son of **John Hatke** and **Bernadine (Dena) Dependener Hatke**. John Hatke was Joseph Hatke, Senior's brother. John Hatke was born in Germany on 8 April 1829 and died at home on 5 February 1910. Bernadine Dependener Hatke was born 13 March 1839 and died 12 May 1914.[29]

Frank Hatke acquired the farm in December of 1900, when he purchased it from his father, John Hatke.[30] Mary Elizabeth Dasenbrock's parents lived with the Frank Hatkes from 1930 until their respective deaths. Mary's parents were **John and Mary Elizabeth Lohman Dasenbrock.** John was born 22 October 1847 and died 20 July 1938.[31] Mary Elizabeth was born 24 January 1856 and died 19 August 1931.[32]
These Dasenbrocks are buried at St. Anthony Cemetery in Effingham.

Frank and Mary Dasenbrock had no children, and Frank left his farm to St, Francis of Assisi church in Teutopolis. **Clarence Theodore Bergfeld** and **Wilma Parks Bergfeld** lived there for a time in the early 1940s.[33]

George and Josephine Hatke purchased the 40 acres at public auction in 1944.[34] They moved onto the farm in November of 1946.[35] **George Henry Hatke** was born 22 January 1900 and died 2 May 1981. His parents were **Joseph Hatke Jr** and **Philomena (Minnie) Stumborg Hatke.**[36] **Josephine Schwerdt** was born 27 March 1905 and died 17 April 1995.Her parents were **George** and **Mary Kortte Schwerdt**.[37] These Hatkes are buried at St. Francis Cemetery in Teutopolis.

Linda Hatke Ruholl (b. 1946) is the only child of George and Josephine Schwerdt Hatke**. Shanonn Ruholl Dasenbrock (**b.1982) is the only child of **Art** and **Linda Hatke Ruholl.** Her husband is **Corey J. Dasenbrock** (b.1981). Corey's parents are **John and Kathleen Wall Dasenbrock.**

Across the road from the Ruholls and Dasenbrocks, **Nick Wente** and **Joyce Roepke Wente** also lost trees and there was a significant amount of debris near their house. The power was off on 1650th Avenue for about 15 hours.

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[28]Frank Hatke obituary, *Teutopolis Press and Dieterich Gazette,* Aug 14, 1941, page 1.
[29] Johann Hatke and Bernadina Dependener, accessed @ findagrave.com
[30] Effingham County Warranty deed No 1412, dated 6 Dec 1900.
[31] John Frederick Dasenbrock obituary, *Effingham Republican,* Jul 28, 1938.
[32] Mary Elizabeth Lohman Dasenbrock obituary, *Teutopolis Press,* Aug 20, 1931.
[33] "Suffers Broken Rib", *Teutopolis Press and Dieterich Gazette*, Aug 19, 1943, page 4; Clarence T. Bergfeld ad Wilma Parks Bergfeld, accessed @ findagrave.com.
[34] Tract l in Master in Chancery Sale bill, April 22, 1944.
[35] "Moved to Farm," *Teutopolis Press and Dieterich Gazette,* Nov 7, 1946, page 4.
[36] George Hatke Coroner Death Certificate No. 137 (1981).
[37] Josephine Hatke Medical Dearth Certificate 151 (1995).



Tin siding bent around Nick Wente's light pole

There was a known local non-human, non-domestic animal tornado victim. This turkey vulture was hit and left with a broken left wing that made it unable to fly. This variety is too common to merit a place at a bird sanctuary. Natural Resources advised" Let nature take its course."[38]



The northwesternmost portion of East 1650th Avenue affected by the tornado was the home of **Dennis** and **Ruth Krone Walk** at 17453 East 1650th Avenue. That was confined to blown-in metal debris and blown-down tree limbs.

Directly across Interstate-70 from the Walk home, **John** and **Kathleen Wall Dasenbrock's** property also had relatively less damage. One of John's grain augers was demolished.

This farm was at one time the home of **Frank Pundsock** *(*27 May 1849 - 20 May 1934) and **Mary Hatke Pundsack** (15 August 1870 –18 October 1951). Mary was **Frank Hatke's** sister.[39] Today the street address is 17491 East 1625th Avenue. Further west on 1625th Avenue, things were much worse – see below.

Damage to East 1625th Avenue

The frontage road that parallels I-70 on the south side was extensively damaged at ground level and in the Salt Creek bottom toward the east end. The home of **Robert** and **Jane Drees Ruholl** at 16890 East 1625th had structural damage and required roof replacement. Across the road from the Ruholls, the home of **Wayne** and **Jeanie Funneman** also incurred roof and side damage.

The tornado took this sign down as it crossed the interstate. Trees were down on both sides of East1625th Avenue.





Along north side of 1626th Avenue, heading east

[38] Illinois Department of Natural Resources, www.idnr.org

[39] Mary Pundsock obituary, *Teutopolis Press,* Oct 25, 1951 (clipping).



Bank along south side of 1625th Avenue heading east

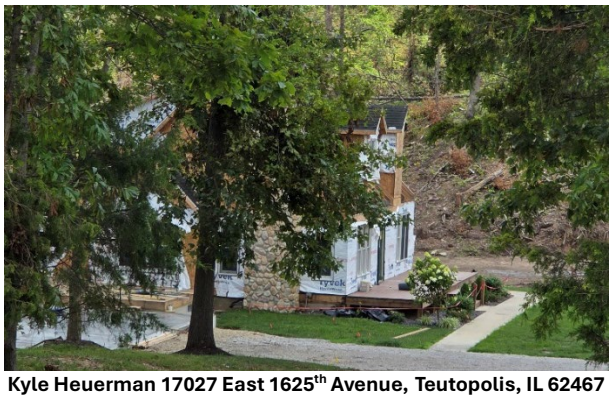
The **Jeff Burner** property sits deep in the Salt Creek bottom, with I-70 to the north and a Salt Creek tributary to the south. Multiple buildings were damaged. There were large trees on both side slopes, and the Burners were inundated with fallen timber.



Burner property 17011 East 1625th Ave



The other home in this Salt Creek bottom is that of **Kyle** and **Jill Flood Heuerman.** It was severely damaged and they had to start over from the ground up.



Kyle Heuerman 17027 East 1625th Avenue, Teutopolis, IL 62467

Damage on 1625th Avenue was so extensive that it required **Ryan Dust's** logging equipment. Ryan used a Skid Steer over a period of 14 hours to set them free. He worked 8 hours there on first day and 6 hours on the second day. The Skid Steer operates by differential steering; the left and right wheel pairs operate at different speeds. It turns by skidding across the ground, meaning it can turn completely around within its own length. That was essential in these dangerous and tight quarters. He left a row of logs stacked up along the field drive.[40]



Damage on St. Francis Road

At the far east end of Teutopolis Township, the Meyer Dairy Farm was severely damaged, including the loss of cows, the barns and milking parlor, the outbuildings, as as damage to the house.

This is another family owned and operated business passed down through the generations. The first Meyer in this progression was **Henry J. Meyer**. He was born in Oldenburg, Germany on 30 April 1837 and came to this country with his parents

[40] Conversation with Jancie Koesster Dust on Sept 18, 2026.

when he was three years old. He died on 26 November 1905. His wife was **Freida Vennemann Meyer** (1841-1895).[41]



Their oldest child was **Bernard (Barney) Meyer**,**Senior.** He was born 6 October 1859, and died 13 September 1944. His wife was **Christine Bueker Meyer** (1874-1934).[42]

One of their children was **John Adolph Meyer**. He was born 30 December 1903, and died 26 November 1972. His wife was **Sara Jerene Sheehan Meyer** (1912-1990).[43] Their son was **John B. Meyer.**

John A. Meyer and John B. Meyer worked together in this dairy business from the time John B. Meyer was a child. They formed a formal partnership, and over the years, their efforts to advance their family business made the news several times.

The Effingham paper ran a story during the County Fair week about the addition of a milking parlor and a milk house in 1958.[44] Four years later, there was another story in the Fair Paper, this time about the addition of a pole barn that year.[45] These and later efforts were reduced to a pile of rubble.

Currently the dairy business is run by John B. and his sons, **Jonathon** and **Dennis Meyer**. Dennis lives in the historic home, which was built circa 1900. Thirty cows were killed outright, and approximately 70 more were injured.

The Meyers are coming back. The roof of the house has been mended and the rest of the exterior will be repaired pending supply availability. The dairy farm will gradually become operational. [46]

The Meyer Dairy Farm is an Effingham County site that **Governor J. B. Pritzker** chose to tour when he visited downstate tornado damage two weeks after the event. He was accompanied by **Ted Berger**, the head of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency.[47]



Helpful Responses - Near and Far

In addition to the local proclamation at the county level, **Governor J. B. Pritzker** issued a disaster proclamation for Effingham County (among others) on June 30. It was intended to free up more

[41] Henry J. Meyer obituary, *Teutopolis Press and Dieterich Gazette*, Nov 30, 1905, page 1.
[42] Bernard Meyer obituary, *Teutopolis Press and Dieterich Gazette,* Sept 21, 1944, page 1.
[43] John A. Meyer obituary, *Teutopolis Press and Dieterich Gazette,* Nov 30, 1972, page 1.
[44] "Teutopolis Farmer-Son Building Milking Parlor and Milk House," *Effingham Daily News,* Aug 1, 1958, page 79.
[45] "Steady Growth of Dairy Products Come from John B. Meyer Farm." *Effingham Daily News,* Aug 3, 1962, page 58.
[46] Conversation with Rhonda Meyer at Teutopolis State Bank, Sept 10, 2026.
[47] "Governor Visits Meyer Dairy Farm North of Teutopolis" KJ Country Radio post, Jul 1, 2026.

state resources and to facilitate requests for federal relief.[48]

Federal response to tornado damage by FEMA has decreased. The gap was filled locally by various agencies. The Teutopolis Civic Club was one of the first non-profits to receive support from the Southeastern Illinois Community Foundation (SECF). The money was used to provide meals and essential supplies to affected areas, and to coordinate large-scale volunteer cleanup efforts.

Volunteers came from local businesses, youth groups, farmers, neighbors, and friends. Supplies included food and water, gloves, and containers. The Teutopolis Civic Club also distributed direct financial help for families affected by the storm. That amounted to $1,000 checks to 16 families within the Teutopolis Unit 50 geographic area. The SECF's **Ralph** and **Jane Kidwell** Endowment was an essential source for this funding.[49]

The Southeastern Illinois Disaster Refund also gave a grant to the Enduring Freedom Ministries. They used the funds to buy cleanup supplies, food, clothing, and other immediate necessities for people who lost their homes to the tornado.[50]

The American Legion Department of Illinois helped a Teutopolis family who lost their home to the tornado. The American Legion Illinois Disaster Relief Program issued the check.[51]

The Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC) offered access to the resources of thirteen different agencies at the Effingham High School's Hard Rock Café on June 25, 2016. This allowed affected people a "one-stop" chance to see what was available and who was providing it.

The Red Cross, Catholic Charities, CEFS, Enduring Freedom Ministries', FISH, Good Will, Heartland Human Services, and the United Way were among the agencies on site.[52]

On July 9, the Illinois Department of Revenue announced disaster tax relief for individuals and businesses. Taxpayers could request a waiver of penalties if unable to file or pay on time. The waiver included income tax, withholding, sales, specialty and excise taxes. There were specific instructions about how to apply electronically or by mail.[53]

Limited federal assistance was offered by the United States Small Business Administration. The deadline for applications was September 8, 2026. Low-cost loans were available in varying amounts to businesses, private non-profits, homeowners and renters.[54] A fact sheet and a link to a loan portal was posted on the county's EMA website, with detailed information about the types of loans, interest rates, terms, restrictions, and relocation.[55]

The Illinois Realtors' Relief Foundation also offered a program to assist with mortgage payments, rental costs for displaced people, and unreimbursed losses directly related to the tornado (such as an insurance deductible). Applications underwent a blind review. A link to this program was also posted on the County's EMA site.[56]

❦❦❦

More Tornadic Activity to Come?

The June 2026 tornado was part of the bigger weather picture in the state of Illinois, according to the University of Illinois-Champaign 2026 Climate Report. The number of tornados in Illinois has increased dramatically in the last four years, and again so in 2026.[57] **So, this isn't done....**

[48] Brenden Moore, "Pritzker Issues Disaster Proclamation for Storm-Ravaged Counties, including Effingham," *Effingham Daily News,* Jun 30, 2026, online post.
[49] "Southeastern Illinois Disaster Relief Coordinates Tornado Help," *Effingham Daily News,* Jun 25, 2026, page A-1 & A-2.
[50] "Southeastern Illinois Disaster Relief Fund Supports Enduring Freedom Ministries' Recovery Efforts," *Effingham Daily News,* June 27, 2026, page B-2.
[51] Effingham Teutopolis News Report, submitted item by the American Legion, *Effingham Teutopolis News Report,* August 20, 2026, issue.
[52] "Effingham County Disaster Resources," Effingham *Daily News,* Jun 25, 2026, page A-3.
[53] Illinois Department of Revenue, "State Waives Penalties and Interest for Taxpayers Affected by Severe Weather; Effingham Among 11 Counties Impacted," *Effingham Daily News,* Jul 9, 2026 (online).
[54] "SBA Relief Still Available for Those Affected by Severe Storms, Tornadoes," Effingham Daily News, Aug 13, 2026.
[55] *U. S. Small Business Administration Fact Sheet – Declaration 21863 & 21864*.
[56] *Application for Disaster Relief Assistance – Coles, Effingham and Jefferson County – Tornado*.
[57] Prairie Research Institute's *Illinois Climate Report 2026*, available at the Prairie Research Institute web site as of July 26, 2026.

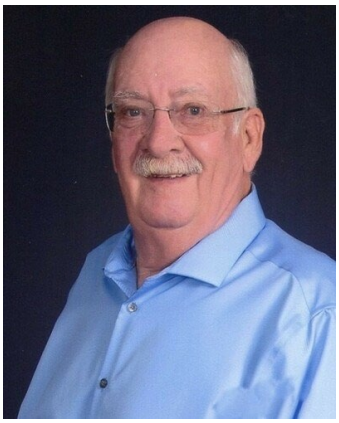
Veteran Deaths Effingham County
Late June – September 2026

MICHAEL WENTE



Micheal R. Wente was 76 when he passed away at home north of Teutopolis on June 29, 2026. He served with the United States Army during the Vietnam war. He is buried in St. Francis Parish Cemetery in Teutopolis.

RONALD WESTENDORF



Ronald Harold Westendorf, age 81, died in Texas on June 30, 2026. His family lived in Dieterich when he was a child. Mr. Westendorf served with the United States Army Reserves. He is buried in the Holy Spirit Memory Gardens associated with St. Stephens Catholic Church in Weatherford, Texas.

KENNETH GOUCHENOUER



Kenneth E. Gouchenouer died at HSHS St. Anthony's Memorial Hospital on July 2, 2026. He was 79 and from Altamont. Mr. Gouchenouer served with the United States Army. He is buried in St. Clare Cemetery in Altamont.

KENNETH BIERMAN



Kenneth L. Bierman was from Dieterich. He died at the age of 77 on July 2, 2026 at HSHS St. Anthony's Memorial Hospital. Mr. Bierman served with the United States Navy from 1966 to 1969. He is buried in St. Aloysius Cemetery at Bishop Creek.

EUGENE METTE



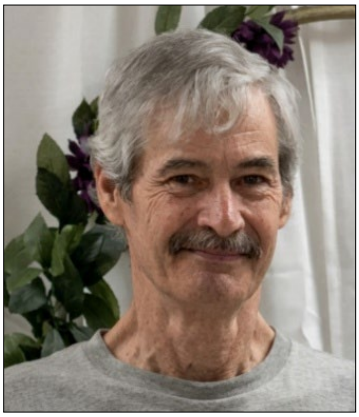
Eugene J. Mette died on July 5, 2026 at HSHS St. John's Hospital in Springfield. He was 81. Mr. Mette served with the Illinois National Guard, including active duty at Fort Jackson, South Carolina 1964 and 1965. He is buried in St. Aloysius Cemetery in Bishop Creek.

LOUIS BUENNEMEYER



Louis J. Buennemeyer was from Effingham. He was 86 when he died on July 6, 2026 at HSHS St. Anthony's Memorial Hospital. Mr. Buennnemeyer served with the United States Army in Germany. He is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery.

ROGER RANDALL



Roger A. Randall was 73 when he died on July 21, 2026 at Evergreen Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Effingham. He was from Beecher City. Mr. Randall served in the United States Army 1972-1974. No place of rest in noted in his obituary.

STEVE LAKE



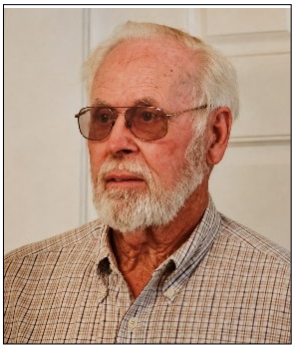
Steve Lake was from Dieterich. He died at the age of 77 at his home in Hilham, Tennessee on July 27, 2026. Mr. Lake served with the United States Army after high school and was stationed in Germany. No place of rest is noted in his obituary.

ROGER COMBS



Roger Combs, age 66, died at home on July 28, 2026. He was from Altamont. Mr. Combs served with the United States Army. His obituary stated there was a private family burial.

RAYMOND SCOLES



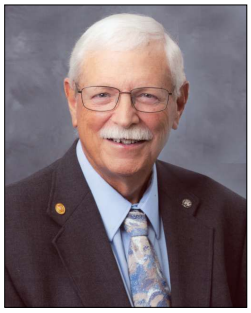
Raymond R. Scoles was 96 when he died at his home in Edgewood on August 9, 2026. Mr. Scoles served with the United States Army from 1946 to 1950. A place of rest is not noted in his obituary.

DONALD WENDLING



Donald Lee Wendling was from Altamont. He died at the age of 90 on August 16, 2026, at the Willow Breeze Hospice in Mattoon. Mr. Wendling was a veteran of the United States Army. He is buried in the St. Paul (Blue Point) Lutheran Cemetery.

STERLING WALDEN



Sterling G. Walden was 79 when he died on August 24, 2026 at Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Care Center in Mattoon. He was from Effingham. Mr. Walden was a veteran of the United States Navy, He is buried in the Watson Cemetery.

GEORGE METTE



George Mette died at home in Effingham on Septmeber 4, 2026. He was 102. Mr. Mette was a World War 2 Navy veteran who served in the Philippines. He is buried in St. Anthony Parish Cemetery.

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