

## The "Schaeffer House", Milan, Ohio.

August 1, 2015 (revised July 1, 2019) - Jim McLane, Jr. and Clara Louise (Williams) Maurus

In 1843, Michael Schaeffer and Mary Elizabeth (Gambée) Schaeffer and nine children moved from Seneca County, New York to Milan, Ohio and there they settled on a farm Michael purchased from John Williams. The property is located on the northwest corner of Ohio SR 113 and River Road, 1709 SR 113, Milan, OH. There would be five more children born to the Schaeffer's after moving to Milan. At first they lived in a log house on the property until 1850 when Mr. Schaeffer built the substantial house that still stands today. In 1914, the house and farm were sold to Michael's grandson, Robert Dana McLane, son of James and Rebecca (Schaeffer) McLane. Robert and his wife Loviah (Brant) McLane, who with four children; Howard Brant McLane, Robert Starr McLane, James Arthur McLane and Mary Catherine McLane moved to Milan from Stuben, Greenfield Township, Ohio in 1914. One more child, Loviah Eloise McLane, would be born there after moving to Milan in July. The McLane's lived in the "Schaeffer House" and farmed the land until 1924 when they moved to a farm, north of Milan on the River Rd. Robert D. McLane would farm that property until his retirement in 1948. At age of 69 he then moved to 71 Huron Street, Milan, OH where he lived until his death in July 1965.

Clara L. (Williams) Maurus recalls that in her child hood (1930-1933), her grandfather, Delbert (Bert) Eugene Williams, who then owned a place on River Road, determined after his kids were all grown and away from home, he would buy the "Schaeffer House" to rescue it from neglect from the then owner. She recalls that some Schaeffer Reunions were held there. Her father, who was a carpenter, did a major amount of maintenance and remodeling work on the house. The interior woodwork was mahogany and a fireplace with a marble mantel. The master bedroom on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor ran the full width of the house with many windows. She recalls that, "as a kid, the whole house was a little more elegant than the regular run of farmhouses."

A search of Erie County, OH records shows that the house was built in 1890, but this is an error since Michael Schaeffer passed away in September of 1884 and would not be living when the house was built. In 2007, the 31 acres of land and house were purchased by Edwin M. and Lisa A. Coles for \$1,100,000. In addition they own 6 other parcels totaling 122 acres in the surrounding properties. I believe they have built their residence on one of the parcels at 10709 River Road, just north of the Schaeffer House. Edwin M. Coles is the President of Coles Energy that is the parent company of Mickey Mart Food stores and gas stations. Coles Energy office is located at 3619 East SR 113, Milan, OH, just east of the Schaeffer House.

Prior to the 2015 Schaeffer Reunion my wife, my daughter Laurel and her two children, Blake and Kendall visited the property and observed that the house was in the beginning stages of demolition. A portion of the east exterior wall had been removed, exposing some of the interior. We drove to the residence of Edwin Coles to ask for permission to enter the home to take some photos. There we spoke with his wife who indicated that the house was the responsibility of their son. A phone call was made, and she informed me that her son couldn't allow us to enter the house due to its condition and liabilities issues. We went back to the house and walked around outside and took a couple of photos. It was apparent that someone was inside as there was a car parked in the driveway and someone yelled at my grandson from inside. I was able to get a large piece of the transom panel and trim from above the front door. It also appeared that livestock was being kept in the barn as a large long horn bull was observed at the barn entrance.

The house has been neglected for more than two decades and it's in later stages of deterioration and demolition has now commenced. Even in its weakened and deteriorating condition, it still stands as a monument to the families and their pioneering spirit who built this beautiful home. Robert McLane is my grandfather and my father James lived in the house from age six to sixteen. There are many descendants of the Schaeffer, McLane and Williams families who in their

lifetimes have been in the house or heard many stories of its interior grandeur and architectural detail. We are sad that it has been demolished.

In the past few years there have been several videos made of the house and writings by interested people on the internet claiming the house to be haunted. You can view these and other photos on the internet by Googling, Schaeffer House Milan, Ohio and this will lead you You Tube and other links.







