

Arabella Lucy Hunter Maxwell

b.1847 d.1914

Likely owner of Martin guitar.

Maxwell was born in the original “Long House,” located in the Wisconsin Phalanx settlement in Ceresco, near what now is Ceresco Park on Union Street. She was the first white female born in Ceresco/Ripon. After attending Ripon College, Maxwell studied at Music Vale Seminary from October of 1865 until September of 1866. Operating from 1835 until 1876, Music Vale was a music conservatory for women and the first accredited music school in the United States.

In February of 1866, Maxwell writes about her guitar lessons at the music school, “I Think I will like it very much. It hurts my fingers terribly now though.” By April she notes “...got so out of patience with that old Seminary guitar that I did not practice on it more than an hour today. I think it is a nuisance.” The school was known to be strict, and lessons were rigorous.

