

BROTHERS HENRY W. AND WILLIAM H. PIPP

Henry W. b. 1831 and Elizabeth Buek b. 1833 Pipp were both born in Germany. Henry, an orphan at 16 came to America in 1847. Before his apprenticeship as a wagon maker Henry worked in a brick yard. Their shop was on the south side of Fitch (E. Main) between East Street and Grand River; where the Beckers lived.

(The construction of the railroad, 1871, resulted in the Smith/McPherson Addition for several blocks each side of the tracks. This event was followed by the building of a foot bridge over Ore Creek for pedestrians and a bridge for wagons, etc. The commercial area west of the creek developed quickly.) Pipp and Becker realized the smithy business would be 'down-sized' now that farmer's needs could more easily be filled. The Pipp and Becker Hardware Store, S.E. corner W. Main and Hyne was built c. 1871 by brother William H. Pipp, a carpenter/contractor. William built many homes and other buildings in the Brighton area.

Henry W. and Elizabeth's home was the N.W. corner of Grand River and Mill (St. Paul) Streets. A descendant notes Henry's business motto was 'Deal fairly and keep your expenses below your income.' Their home was filled with eight children- five boys and three girls. Brighton Village was organized in 1867. By 1869 Henry W. was village president. As a member of the school board he was responsible for construction of the new school for District 5 students which opens in 1868, grades 1-10. The curriculum was improved over the years and the first class to graduate from the 12th grade was in 1886. During the 'War of the Rebellion' the Union League (Loyal National League of America) to which many Brighton and Livingston County residents adhered- finds Henry W. among them.

William H., born 1836, married Elizabeth Smith, b. 1835, but didn't leave the 'old country' until about 20 years later, c. 1867, after the birth of two sons, William 1863 and Henry 1865. Their home was at the S.E. corner of Grand River and Beaver Streets where five more children were born- three girls and two boys.

Pipp and Becker were in business until 1896 when they sold to Henry Ratz. Years later son George, when remodeling the store, found a wide board from the counter under which he found in German, "Pipp is just a poor hardworking man who kept his nose out of other peoples' business, enjoyed his food and his liquor and slept well at night." The children of both Henry W. and William H. Pipp have taken their talents to other climes and appear to have continued those responsible ways. (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from: Census records; Bill Pless' (with Stephen Leight's addendum) Village Cemetery Supplement; obituaries recorded by Milton Charboneau and material compiled by Robert Watson.