

Born in Cambridshire, England, Joseph, b. 1831 and James, b. 1833, Peach were the two older of the seven of the ten children of Charles, b. 1807, and Ann Ankar, b. 1812, who made the ocean voyage to America. (The others were Robert, Mary Ann, John, Sarah and Hannah.) Arriving in New York in 1854, the family immediately came to Ann Arbor. Edward was born in the United States. One can assume the family made the move from their ancestral home to take advantage of the opportunities for their children in this new country. Perhaps the encouragement of government agents from Michigan and their glowing descriptions (who were anxious to populate the state) was a factor. (These agents had been sent to many countries in Europe.)

After working in Ann Arbor, James came to Green Oak Township in 1861 and bought 80 acres in Sec. 8, on the east side of the Ann Arbor Road (old, old 23) north of the Huron River. Another 50 acres were acquired in Sec. 9 on Academy Drive. (More recently part of the Island Lake Recreation Area.) James was noted for the fine stock and sheep he raised. He became sufficiently wealthy to be able to make several visits to his hometown in England. James did not marry.

Brother Joseph also bought in Sec. 8, 90 acres, north of James, on Bishop Road. He married Ermina Dodge, January 7, 1853. They had eight children. By 1895, Joseph's son, Orange Phillip, also owns land in Green Oak; in Sec. 15, 80 acres and in Sec. 21, 32 acres (across from the township hall) and 40 acres in Sec. 22 on Davis Creek.

Orange took Hattie Potter as his wife September 21, 1887. They and their three children, Flora, Lemuel and Ermina were very comfortable in their home on Silver Lake Road. Flora and Ermina married local boys, Frank Field and Ken Masak respectively. Lemuel married Edna Durbin, a native of North Dakota. They spent their married life in a hill-top home on Silver Side Drive. Edna, in 1974, believed strongly in proper recognition and celebration of the nation's upcoming Bicentennial and set about organizing the Green Oak Township Historical Society. She inspired others in the area to support her in this project. Her own memories, interview of older residents and her research all provided the impetus in the compiling of a book of Green Oak history. The Society now has new and younger members who also carry on Edna's work. They too believe one can learn from the past.

Take a tour of the Plains (Holden) Cemetery on Maltby Road and you will see the remarkable number of Peach family markers. Along with Charles and Ann, their children Joseph, George, Mary Ann and Robert are also buried in Plains, including grand and great grandchildren. The adventuresome genes of Charles and Ann encouraged several of their children to settle in Washington and California and in other parts of Michigan. (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from Census Records; 1891 Portrait and Biographical Album; Yesteryears of Green Oak; John & Janice Field's transcription of the Plains Cemetery; Census Records.)