

AMERICA WELCOMES THE BRADY BROTHERS

In the 1820s, three brothers named Brady came to the United States from Longford, Ireland: Matthew – born 1797, Patrick – born 1810, and Thomas – born 1814.

The oldest, Matthew, brought wife Mary along with daughter Bridget – born 1825, and son Phillip – born 1827. Family tradition says Matthew came to work on the Erie Canal. The family lived in New York. By the time of son Joseph's birth in 1838, they were living in Section 9, Green Oak Township, on Placeway Road. Bridget married Daniel Miles c. 1850 and moved to Merritt, Michigan. Joseph married Ann Elizabeth Lavey, is a farmer in Green Oak in 1870, and a saloonkeeper in Brighton in the 1880 census. Neighbor to brother Joseph, Phillip – who married Mary Ann Barron October 4, 1863, fathers nine children: seven girls, two boys: Joseph Aloysius, the youngest. By 1911, Joseph A, in partnership with Paul Brogan, operated the grocery at Chilson. A store had been there since shortly after the Ann Arbor Railroad was built through there to Howell. The many fishermen and campers at Crooked Lake in Genoa Township made Chilson a thriving railroad station.

In 1897, the store was operated by Laughlin and Henderson. Historian William Pless described the store as a “large double structure”. Later, owner Albert Smith established a several-times-weekly delivery route with a wagon stocked with groceries, drawn by two horses. The small bell notified the farmers the ‘Chilson’ wagon was on the way. In 1911, owners Brogan and Brady continued the delivery service, taking turns on the road and tending the store. The wagon was well stocked with groceries and empty egg crates. When they returned, the wagon had butter, vegetables, etc., and crates full of eggs in exchange for the groceries. The wagon also carried soap, needles, pins, thread, tobacco, matches, salves, liniment, work gloves and, in season, a variety of wide-brimmed straw hats worn by everyone working in the fields. The scent of coffee and spices always sparked memories of the wagon for Pless.

In 1914, Joe and Julia A. Bergin were married. The following March 6, Julia died. By 1916, Brady sold his interest to Brogan, moved to Brighton and opened Brady's Market at 431 W. Main. During the next 35 years, before retiring, Joe had married Haidee Judson in 1920 and raised a family of five. Joe, Heidee, two sisters, his brother and parents are resting in Calvary Cemetery on Brighton Lake Road, as is Julia.

The middle brother, Patrick, and wife Betsy, appear to have been the first to arrive in the U.S., purchasing property in Green Oak Township October 11, 1834, c. 160 acres. This couple appears to not have had children but took in youngsters that needed support.

Third brother, Thomas, married Ellen c. 1840. She was born in New Jersey as was daughter Edith; but the other children were born in Michigan. By 1845, he owned 360 acres in Green Oak Township. He was a hard working farmer for the next 40 years. Many of Thomas' family are at rest with him in the Holden (Plains) Cemetery on Maltby Road.

(Compiled by Marieanna Bair from census records; Yesteryears of Green Oak; From Settlement to City – Brighton; Early Landowners and Settlers, obituaries, and cemetery records compiled by Milton Charboneau; cemetery records compiled by John and Janice Field; conversations with Pat Brady Convery and Phyllis Brady Wenzel. Additions/corrections requested - 810/229-6402.)