

## THE BRIGHTON AREA AND THE SESQUICENTENNIAL OF MICHIGAN (Conc.)

Social and religious organizations have been a part of the fabric of the area for many years. The Livingston County Bible Society was organized in Howell, 1843, for the distribution of "Bibles to the destitute throughout this county...." Before the establishment of congregations, worship was conducted in settlers' homes. Not all embraced the missionaries sent out by the Catholic and Protestant groups. Brighton, like many other villages in a new country, had an unenviable reputation both religiously and morally.

"...to collect and keep in remembrance the many interesting incidents connected with the early settlement of Livingston County and...handing the same down to future generations..." was the reason for the formation, in 1850, of the Livingston County Pioneer Association. Research indicates this organization continued at least to 1880.

Lodges, gun clubs, musical groups, social organizations and the fire department were all in existence by 1880. Wars did not leave the area untouched; the cemeteries give ample evidence of that.

The Livingston Courier originated in Brighton 1-10-1843, where it existed for nine months before moving to Howell in October. The Brighton Bulletin began publication 1-18-1872, in Brighton and the Brighton Weekly Argus and Gazette, Vol 1, No. 1 first appeared Tuesday, April 6, 1880. (The parent of today's Brighton Argus.)

In 1835, Dr. F. Curtis was located in Kensington. If patients couldn't come to the office, doctors traveled through openings in the woods guided by marked trees and Indian trails. It was 1836, when Dr. Wilber Fisher came to Brighton followed in 1841 by Dr. Ira P. Bingham. In 1876, the Livingston County Medical Association was organized with 31 doctors listed. The two from Brighton were Wm. J. McHench and Cutting B. Wiley.

Attorney Daniel C. Marsh settled in Brighton in 1839, becoming the Prosecuting Attorney of the county in 1841. He was followed by Fred C. Whipple in May, 1841. (First editor of the Livingston Courier.) After moving to Howell, in 1846, he served in several County positions. George Peck, his partner, was a member of the Michigan legislature in 1846 and of Congress in 1855-57. The County Prosecuting Attorney in 1850, Wm. A. Clark came to Brighton in 1848.

As Michigan's Sesquicentennial celebration nears its end we are reminded that settlers were in this area by 1832. marriages were consumated, babies born, hell raised and heaven praised by people not any different than we of 1987. The press, professions, businesses, farms and the ordinary laborer (on whom all the others depend) were then, and are still, keeping their "shoulder to the wheel, etc..." The discovery of oil, the development of electricity, the railroad, the gas engine, etc., etc., all continue to reduce the labor but certainly add to the complexities of life today. (Condensed and edited from "Livingston County History 1880".)

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