

EVOLUTION IN THE BRIGHTON AREA - FROM WILDERNESS TO SUBDIVISION

The 1839 map of Michigan is crisscrossed by Indian trails; mainly for foot travel, often not wide enough for a horse and rider. Within 11 years the Detroit to Howell Plank Road on the Grand River Trail was completed and by 1852 it was planked from Howell to Lansing, the newly located State Capitol.

The plank roadbed was 18' wide, the planks 3" thick. A fine smooth surface was provided for wagons, stagecoaches and carts when the road was new. Toll gates were erected - toll charged.

And so we find ourselves in the last $\frac{1}{4}$ of the 19th century in a horsedrawn sleigh on our way to the Frank Hyne farm (on present day Hyne Road) in Section 18 of Brighton Township for a day of quilting. With a heated stone at our feet and a buffalo robe covering us, it's quite cozy for the five mile ride ahead of us. We're on the trail going north out of town, over Ore Creek, past the brick yard on the east side of the road, stopping at the toll gate (at present day Cross Street).

"They sure have a nerve, charging toll on this road to the local people," mutters our driver. "Now that the rail road goes through town we sure don't need a toll road to haul produce into Detroit. Yeah, gravel has replaced the planks but in wet weather it's still not worthy of a toll. They ought to be ashamed."

"Well, it won't be long and the tolls will end when the gravel franchise runs out", we answer.

"Then each farmer in the township will have to help when the 'Pathmaster' sends the call to work out the road taxes by grading and filling", is the reply.

At the corner of present day Hacker Road the sleigh turns north on the town line between Genoa and Brighton Township. In less than a mile we turn east on today's Hyne Road for about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to the house.

"It'll be fun to visit with the others as we quilt. It seems so long since I've seen the ladies. I'm anxious to see Louisa's baby."

Ownership of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 18 in Brighton Township has changed several times since being taken up by Wm. S. Conely from New York City in 1837, with Frank Hyne taking possession in 1881. The first owner of the W $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ was Abram Pietch, also from NYC in 1836. The E $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ was sold by the U.S. Government to George Post of Washtenaw that same year. By 1845, Charles Prosser owned the entire SE $\frac{1}{4}$. By 1895 John Hunter owned the E $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$. Their names, along with Hyne, were still on the records by 1915. The difficult times of recession and the Great Depression are reflected in the records at the County Register of Deeds office. (Please turn to page 3.)

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