

EVOLUTION IN THE BRIGHTON AREA - FROM WILDERNESS TO SUBDIVISION

"It looks like rain today," the young man said to his father as he and his brother are driving the team pulling two wagons. They are on their way, returning the help given by their neighbor earlier in the week, to get the new mown hay into the barn before it gets wet and loses its nutritional value for the live stock. Extra wagons are brought so as to get the hay off the ground and into shelter should it rain.

"Don't rush the horses. This is a long pull up Van Amberg Road. They shouldn't be worn out before we get to the hay field."

Reaching the top of the hill they pass the small Lyons burial ground on the east side. This 8X10 rod plot had been set aside by Richard and Martha Lyons from the 160 acres in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 22 in Brighton Township purchased in 1835 from the U.S. government. A glance at the small cemetery reminds them the site of the Lyons School on Buno Road was given by the Lyons in 1842. The log school has since been replaced with a Greek Revival style building. (Still standing.) Daniel O. Van Amberg bought the property from the Lyons and then sold to Art Carpenter. This was later purchased by Helen Parker in 1919.

At the top of the next rise the long driveway east to the Parker's house and barns comes into view. Before long all the menfolk are gathered in the hay field where the loose hay, cut two days before with a mower and then turned with a hay rake, is now cured sufficiently to be harvested. On the wagon bed is placed a rope and wood sling. The men vie with each other to pitch the largest fork full up on the wagon where one of them is hurrying to place the bunches so the wagon is evenly and fully stacked. It takes a strong arm to pitch a fork full of hay high over one's head when the wagon is nearly loaded.

At the barn the horses are driven through the large doors onto the wide plank floor of the haymow. High overhead, on a metal track running the complete length of the barn, is a car on rollers with pulleys attached. Ropes fastened to a large two pronged fork go through the pulleys. Another allows the men to move the car along the track. The hay fork is lowered to the hay on the wagon, pushed into the hay as deeply as possible and a lever is tripped which forces two hooks into the hay at the points of the fork. A horse, hitched to another rope, raises the heavy fork of hay, it is pulled into position over the haymow, another rope retracts the hooks and the hay drops to be evenly distributed by the sweating men in the hot mow. When the major portion of hay has been removed, the ends of the sling are brought together, attached to the hay car and similarly deposited in the mow.

In 1926, John Henry and Bertha Young purchased 120 acres from Parker. Ellen Jean Cooper and Lois Bird, children of the Youngs, began development of Pleasant View Hills Subdivision in 1964. The many comfortable homes built on the Lyons' original purchase are proof that Richard Lyons knew a good piece of land when he saw it. His contributions to the community are being equalled by today's residents. The people living there are still as industrious as the farmers of earlier days in Brighton Township. (Thanks for cooperation of Liv. County Register of Deeds office.)

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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