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AREA FARMS C. 1900

THE CRIPPEN SAGA CONTINUES. (SPRINGDALE FARM WAS NOTED IN THE JULY ISSUE OF TRAIL TALES.) WHEN ANSEL AND MARILLA (PADDOCK) CRIPPEN CAME TO BRIGHTON TOWNSHIP FROM PENFIELD, NEW YORK IN 1835, THEY BROUGHT WITH THEM TWO SONS: MILLARD FILLMORE (1832) AND HENRY L. (1835). ISAAC (1837), HARRISON (1839), ERNEST (1842) AND EMMA (1844) LATER JOINED THE GROWING FAMILY IN THE CRIPPEN HOME ON HACKER ROAD. (TAKE A LOOK WHEN YOU DRIVE BY.)

HIRAM PADDOCK (PERHAPS A BROTHER OF MARILLA) WITH HIS FAMILY, HAD JOINED THE CRIPPENS ON THEIR MOVE TO THIS WILD LAND IN THE WEST. OFTEN, WHEN COMING TO THE UNSETTLED, UNPEOPLED LANDS OF WOODS AND SWAMPS, WITH WOLVES AND BEARS AS NEIGHBORS, SEVERAL FAMILIES WOULD UNITE TO MAKE THE TRIP. CAN ONE IMAGINE THE COURAGE NEEDED TO MAKE THIS VENTURE? WITH THE NEAREST MERCHANT MANY MILES AWAY EVERYTHING A FAMILY NEEDED HAD TO BE BROUGHT ALONG IN THE WAGONS.

IN THE 1859 ATLAS HIRAM PADDOCK'S NAME IS ON PROPERTY JUST SOUTH OF HACKER ROAD ON BOTH SIDES OF THE GRAND RIVER TRAIL (A TRAIL IN EVERY SENSE OF THE WORD AT THAT TIME.) THIS OLD INDIAN TRAIL, FROM DETROIT TO THE WILDERNESS, LAY ALONG THE PROPERTY SELECTED BY MEMBERS OF THESE TWO FAMILIES WHEN THEY ARRIVED. (BY 1859, JOHN PADDOCK HAD 120 ACRES IN SEC. 11, MARION TOWNSHIP, SOUTH OF HOWELL; RICHARD HAD 40 ACRES IN SEC. 15, BRIGHTON TOWNSHIP [IN PLEASANT VALLEY]).

BY 1875 HENRY L. CRIPPEN HAD PURCHASED 40 ACRES ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE TRAIL, IN GENOA TOWNSHIP, FROM HIRAM PADDOCK. IT WAS THIS PIECE, LATER OWNED BY HENRY'S SON, BEN AND HIS WIFE GEORGIA, WHERE A HOUSE WAS BUILT AND THEY FARMED OAK RIDGE FARM. ANY OAKS THERE NOW?

WHEN HENRY L. BOUGHT THIS PIECE THE TRAIL WAS A TOLL ROAD, AND HAD BEEN PLANKED FOR A MORE DEPENDABLE THOROUGHFARE FOR TRAVELERS AND FREIGHT. HOWEVER THE COMPLETION OF THE RAIL ROAD BETWEEN DETROIT AND LANSING GREATLY REDUCED THESE NEEDS. IT MUST BE REMEMBERED THIS WAS NOW THE MAIN ROAD BETWEEN DETROIT AND THE STATE CAPITOL.

AT THE TIME WHEN BEN FARMED, C. 1900, THE TOLL HAD BEEN REMOVED AND MOST OF THE PLANKS REPLACED WITH GRAVEL. IT WOULD BE 1924 BEFORE M16 BECAME A HARD SURFACED ROAD. THE 1915 ATLAS INDICATES BEN OWNED LAND SOUTH FROM OAK RIDGE FARM TO CHALLIS ROAD. (COMPILED FROM MILT CHARBONEAU'S COLLECTIONS OF OBITUARIES, 1880 HISTORY OF LIVINGSTON COUNTY, ATLASES AND NORMAN CATRELL'S GENEALOGICAL RECORDS. MARIEANNA BAIR, 810/229-6402. CORRECTIONS/ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ALWAYS WELCOME.)