

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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### AREA FARMS C. 1900

NUMBER FOUR IN THIS SERIES OF ATTEMPTING TO IDENTIFY SOME OF THE AREA'S EARLY SETTLERS AND WHERE THEY LOCATED. LISTED ON AN UNDATED NEWSPAPER CLIPPING, WIRT BRADLEY IS NOTED AS THE OWNER OF ELMDALE FARM. ONE CAN ONLY ASSUME THERE WERE A NUMBER OF ELM TREES IN THE AREA TO GIVE RISE TO THE NAME.

IT WAS LOCATED IN BRIGHTON TOWNSHIP ON THE EAST SIDE OF TAYLOR ROAD JUST NORTH OF THE SECTION LINE BETWEEN SECTIONS 4 AND 9. WIRT CONTINUED THE FARMING TRADITION OF HIS FATHER AND GRANDFATHER, LIVING IN THE 'OLD' PLACE PERHAPS BUILT BY HIS FATHER, IRA. IN 1895 IRA OWNED 81 ACRES IN SECTION 4 ON BOTH SIDES OF TAYLOR ROAD. A HOUSE IS NOTED ON THE EAST SIDE.

IRA WAS A CHARTER MEMBER OF BRIGHTON GRANGE #336. THIS WAS AN ORGANIZATION WHICH "...HAS DEVOTED ITSELF MORE ESPECIALLY TO THE DISCUSSION OF AGRICULTURAL TOPICS AND SUBJECTS WHICH SHOULD INTEREST FARMERS AND HAS AIMED, BY FREQUENT INTERCOURSE, TO DEVELOP THE SOCIAL QUALITIES OF ITS MEMBERS."

CHARTERED IN 1874, THE SOCIAL ASPECTS WERE PROBABLY EAGERLY ANTICIPATED IN THOSE HORSE AND BUGGY DAYS. HE AND WIFE, MARTHA THURBER, MOVED TO BRIGHTON VILLAGE IN 1908 WHERE HE DIED IN 1916. IT IS OF INTEREST TO NOTE THAT IRA AND BROTHER, GILBERT, MARRIED WITHIN TWO DAYS OF EACH OTHER IN FEBRUARY, 1866.

WIRT'S GRANDPARENTS, ORLANDO AND PRUDENCE, CAME TO THE AREA C. 1840, SETTLING IN HARTLAND TOWNSHIP. 1844 TAX RECORDS PLACE HIM IN SECTIONS 29 AND 30, TOTALING 240 ACRES, MOSTLY WOODED. SOME REFERENCE SOURCES NOTED THAT ORLANDO AND PRUDENCE HAD EIGHT AND SOME INDICATED THERE WERE 12 CHILDREN. HOWEVER MANY CHILDREN DIED AT AN EARLY AGE DURING THOSE DAYS. OF THE EIGHT IRA, BORN IN HARTLAND TOWNSHIP, WAS THE YOUNGEST AND WIRT WAS HIS ONLY CHILD. WIRT AND LILLIAN HICKS' ONLY CHILD DIED AT TEN YEARS FROM APPENDICITIS IN 1908.

BY 1915 IRA'S 81 ACRES ARE IN WIRT'S AND LILLIAN'S NAMES. IN 1961 THE ATLAS SHOWS THEIR NAME STILL ON THE PROPERTY. BOTH WIRT AND LILLIAN WERE NOTED TO BE 'GOOD' NEIGHBORS. HE SERVED MANY YEARS ON THE BITTEN SCHOOL BOARD.

RESEARCH OF WIRT BRADLEY'S BACKGROUND BRINGS MANY EARLY LOCAL NAMES TO LIGHT: THURBER, KELLOGG, NEWMAN, HICKS, TAYLOR AND WILSON. THE LAST FOUR ARE INCLUDED IN THE LISTING OF FARMS NOTED EARLIER. THEY WILL BE A PART OF THIS SERIES. (COMPILED FROM MILT CHARBONEAU'S COLLECTIONS OF OBITUARIES, 1880 HISTORY OF LIVINGSTON COUNTY, AND ATLASES. MARIEANNA BAIR, 810/229-6402. CORRECTIONS/ ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ALWAYS WELCOME.)