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AREA FARMERS C. 1900

RESEARCH OF LOCAL FARMS AND FARMERS, LISTED IN THE BRIGHTON ARGUS, CONTINUES. LAKE VIEW, THE FARM OF WILLARD BEACH, IS THE SUBJECT OF THIS ISSUE.

IN 1839, WILLARD'S PARENTS, SMITH (B. 1800, N.Y.) AND HARRIOT (B. 1802, N.J.) MOVED WITH THEIR YOUNG FAMILY TO UNBROKEN LAND IN BRIGHTON TOWNSHIP. SMITH HAD BOUGHT 160 ACRES, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SECTION 22 (PLEASANT VALLEY ROAD $\frac{1}{2}$ MILE N. OF BUNO) SIGHT UNSEEN, AS WAS AS OFTEN THE CASE, IN 1833.

AS THE BEACHS' EARLIEST NEIGHBORS, WILLIAM O. AND MARY ANN VALENTINE HAVE ACQUIRED THE REPUTATION OF WELCOMING NEWCOMERS INTO THEIR CABIN UNTIL NEW LOG HOUSES COULD BE BUILT. THE 1850 CENSUS RECORDS WILLIAM, JR. IS LIVING WITH WILLARD AND HIS WIDOWED MOTHER, HARRIOT. WILLIAM'S BROTHER, JAMES, IS LIVING IN THE AARON BEACH HOUSEHOLD A HALF MILE SOUTH. THESE BOYS HAVE LOST BOTH PARENTS. THE FATHER DIED IN JANUARY AND MOTHER THE FOLLOWING SEPTEMBER, 1843. THEY ARE THE FIRST TWO BURIALS OF RECORD ON THE TWO ACRES SET ASIDE ON SMITH'S FARM FOR A GRAVE YARD, AS NOTED ON THE EARLIEST MAPS. SMITH'S IS THE NEXT GRAVE DUG IN THE PLOT, 1849.

UPON THE DEATH OF HIS FATHER, THE PROPERTY CAME TO WILLARD. HE MARRIED NEIGHBOR ALVIRA BIRD, C. 1850; ALSO BORN IN NEW YORK. (HER FAMILY CAME TO THE AREA ABOUT THE SAME TIME AS WILLARD'S. IT IS POSSIBLE THE FAMILIES WERE ALREADY ACQUAINTED.) WILLARD AND ALVIRA HAVE TWO CHILDREN. JANE IS BORN IN 1852 AND WILBUR S. IN 1858. BY 1852, WILLARD HAS BOUGHT THE W $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SECTION 23, ACROSS THE ROAD, WHICH INCLUDES BEACH LAKE. ABOUT 1874 SOME OF THIS LAND IS TRANSFERRED TO THE WESLYAN METHODIST CHURCH CONGREGATION FOR A BUILDING SITE. (NE CORNER PLEASANT VALLEY/JACOBY ROAD) BEFORE LONG THE BEACH CEMETERY BECOMES THE PLEASANT VALLEY CEMETERY. IN 1890 WILLARD'S TAX BILL WAS \$54.05.

WILLARD DIED IN 1907 AND SON, WILBUR, IN 1916. WILLARD'S OBITUARY READS "HE WAS A MAN OF STERLING INTEGRITY AND UNQUESTIONABLE MORALITY." FATHER AND SON ARE RESTING IN THE SAME CEMETERY AS THEIR ANCESTORS.

IT HAS BEEN SOME TIME SINCE WILLARD'S LAKE VIEW FARM HAS BEEN UNDER CULTIVATION. BY 1935 IT IS OWNED BY THE DUNK REALTY CO. BEFORE 1979 A DAM HAS BEEN CONSTRUCTED ON MANN CREEK AND LAKE MORaine SUB IS WELL UNDERWAY. BEACH LAKE IS NOW THE SITE OF MANY FINE HOMES OF THOSE WHO HAVE AN APPRECIATION FOR THE 'COUNTRY' ATMOSPHERE. (COMPILED BY MARIEANNA BAIR FROM: FIRST SETTLERS OF LIVINGSTON COUNTY, FIRST LANDOWNERS OF LIVINGSTON COUNTY AND COPIES OF OBITUARIES COMPILED BY MILTON CHARBONEAU. ALSO FROM CENSUS RECORDS, PLAT MAPS AND PLEASANT VALLEY CEMETERY LISTINGS. CORRECTIONS/ ADDITIONS WELCOME. 810/229-6402.)