

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P O BOX 481
BRIGHTON MI 48116-0481

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #303
BRIGHTON, MI

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

AREA FARMS C. 1900

RESEARCH OF LOCAL FARMS AND FARMERS, LISTED IN THE BRIGHTON ARGUS, CONTINUES. LAKE SHORE FARM, OWNED BY W. J. SAWYER, IS THE SUBJECT OF THIS ISSUE.

THE 170 ACRE FARM OF WALTER J. SAWYER, SECTIONS 16 AND 17, IN BRIGHTON TOWNSHIP, HAS FIRST BEEN PURCHASED BY DAVID AND ABIGAIL LAND AND SON, PETER, RESIDENTS OF WAYNE, MICHIGAN IN 1834. IT SEEMS LIKELY THEY WERE LAND SPECULATORS; NO EVIDENCE IS FOUND THEY EVER WERE IN THE AREA. BY 1850, IRA WARNER'S NAME IS ON THE MAP. BY 1895 IT'S HENRY WARNER AND BY 1915 W. J. SAWYER IS OWNER.

THE SITE IS FIVE MILES NORTH OF GRAND RIVER, ON OLD US 23. THE ROAD, KNOWN AT THAT TIME AS FLINT ROAD, PASSED THROUGH A PORTION OF THE FARM. THE EAST SIDE OF THE FARM INCLUDED A LARGE PART OF THE SHORE OF SCHOOL LAKE (FORMERLY HICK'S LAKE AND BEFORE THAT WARNER'S LAKE).

AS WITH MOST OF THE FARMS AND FAMILIES RESEARCHED WE FIND THAT WALTER'S GRAND-FATHER CAME TO THE AREA IN THE EARLY 1830s. CALEB SAWYER, BORN IN 1808 IN MASSACHUSETTS, WAS A FARMER. AFTER PURCHASING LAND IN GREEN OAK TOWNSHIP IN 1834, HE BROUGHT HIS FAMILY, WIFE CAROLINE WHEELER AND SON, HENRY, THE NEXT YEAR. CALEB AND CAROLINE HAD NINE CHILDREN, SEVEN OF THEM BOYS. THEY WOULD ALL BE NEEDED IN ORDER TO SURVIVE THE WILDERNESS.

SECOND SON, JOHN, MARRIED FLORILLA SPRING. THEY HAD TWO DAUGHTERS AND A SON, PAUL. (HE WAS A LOCAL POSTAL CARRIER FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS.) ONE DAUGHTER MARRIED AND MOVED TO SOUTH DAKOTA C. 1900, PART OF THE VAST NUMBERS OF PIONEERS STILL MOVING WEST. FOLLOWING FLORILLA'S DEATH, JOHN MARRIED ELLA WHO CARED FOR FLORILLA'S CHILDREN AS IF THEY WERE HER OWN, WITH THE SEVEN SHE AND JOHN HAD.

HER OLDEST, WALTER J., WAS BORN IN 1879. HE MUST HAVE BEEN AN ASTUTE AND ENTERPRISING BUSINESS PERSON. BESIDES OWNING LAKE SHORE FARM, HE WAS INVOLVED WITH THE UP AND COMING AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY. FROM HIS BROTHER FLOYD'S OBITUARY, SEPTEMBER, 1921, AROUND 1919 HE AND WALTER "...OPENED A FINE NEW OVERLAND GARAGE IN HOWELL." "...FLOYD WAS THE OLDEST AUTOMOBILE MAN IN BRIGHTON AND ONE OF THE OLDEST IN THE COUNTY." FROM THAT TIME ON WE FIND NO MORE REFERENCES TO WALTER IN THE MATERIAL AVAILABLE TO US. WE DON'T KNOW WHEN HE DIED OR WHERE BURIED.

LOCAL DESCENDANTS OF BROTHER FLOYD, WOULD INCLUDE WILLIAM F. WHO MARRIED MARY M. HOLDEN AND LIVED IN GREEN OAK TOWNSHIP. BOTH ARE BURIED IN FAIRVIEW HAVING PASSED AWAY IN 1999 AND 2000. (COMPILED BY MARIEANNA BAIR FROM CENSUS RECORDS AND ATLASSES; OBITUARIES COMPILED BY MILTON CHARBONEAU AND CEMETERY RECORDS TRANSCRIBED BY JOHN AND JANICE FIELD. ADDITIONS/CORRECTIONS GRATEFULLY RECEIVED.)