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#### DOCTORS MC HENCH AND BROWN PRACTICE IN THE AREA

William McHench arrived in Green Oak Township in 1853 from New York, aged 22. He taught school in Green Oak Township for a year and then Brighton Township a year. In 1854 he began "reading medicine" with Dr. Ira P. Bingham. In the fall of 1855 he attended the medical department at the "State University in Ann Arbor", graduating in 1858. He practiced with Bingham 1857-1859. After a short stay in New Hudson, he arrived, September, 1859, in Philadelphia for further study, returning to Brighton in 1860. He never ceased studying medicine. More experience was gained in Baltimore where, July 1, 1864, he became acting assisting surgeon covering four wards in the hospital.

It was back to his practice in Brighton after the Civil War. A local girl, Margaret E. Sowle, became McHench's bride November 18, 1868. Shortly after, we find him in New York to study eye, ear, heart and lung diseases in 1870. Ten years later he left Brighton for New York again to study throat problems. When he came back to Brighton in 1881, he brought his 24 year old nephew, Dr. Willard C. Brown, back with him. When Dr. McHench died January 1, 1910, he was the oldest practitioner in the county - fifty years in one locality. All businesses closed during his funeral. He, his wife, daughter Gertrude, and son-in-law, Dr. A. T. Ward are all interred in Fairview Cemetery.

Dr. Willard C. Brown, son of Rev. Henry Brown and Nancy McHench, was born in New York state July 28, 1857. He began "reading medicine" under Dr. D.M. Leonard of Baroome Center, Schohaire County, New York. Following graduation after a year at University of New York City medical department in 1881, he accompanied his uncle, Dr. McHench, to Brighton to join him in his practice.

A local girl, Louisa Becker, daughter of John Becker of Pipp and Becker Hardware (SE corner W. Main/Hyne St.) became his bride in October, 1882. He and Louisa lived in South Lyon until 1888, where he was the Health Officer responsible for sanitary law and regulations. Conscious of the need for more study, especially in surgery, he spent a year in New York. 1890 saw him back in Brighton until 1903 when he moved to Detroit. Prior to this he had served as post master in Brighton for six years. He attended to his practice in Detroit until 3-4 days before his death, October 18, 1919. He is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery, Detroit. Before the end of the year his widow endured the accidental death by fire of their only grandson in November and then their only son died two days after Christmas from pneumonia.

In Brighton Dr. Brown's office was on the second floor over Pipp and Becker's Hardware. As late as 1940, the green window shades of his office still read "Office of W. C. Brown, M.D." (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from the 1880 History of Livingston County, the 1891 Portrait/Biographical Album and Brighton Argus obituaries collected by Milton Charboneau. Corrections/additions are most welcome. 810/229-6402.)