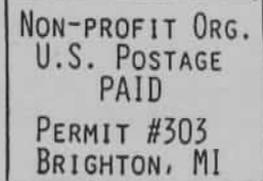


BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P O BOX 481
BRIGHTON MI 48116-0481



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

THE LYON FAMILY BRAVES THE MICHIGAN WILDERNESS (Part two)

Richard Lyon's small party, arriving in Brighton Township June 19, 1837, located the cabin William Valentine had built while here the previous year. (NW $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 22, Van Amburg Road south from Seitz, formerly Skeman Road.) This served as a shelter for all of them. Not long after, when Samuel W. Conely's family arrived, 22 nestled in the log structure. (Gentlemen up in the loft, the ladies on the first floor.) A few years later the families of William S. Conely and Issac L. Plat became neighbors in the cabins prepared for them. (Property was along Van Amburg, Buno and Newman Roads) Today one can see one's neighbor's house all too clearly. These pioneers had, at least, two miles of forest separating them in the 1830s.

With the organization of Brighton Township (which included the settlement called Ore Creek) in 1837, the settlers, who were anxious to be self governing, quickly tended to the business of seating a governing body. His obvious leadership skills convinced the other township voters that Lyon would best serve as supervisor. Martha helped him win the office again the next year by hosting 40 electors for dinner at the cabin.

By 1842 the several families within approximately one mile radius of Lyon's property built a log school on land set aside by Richard and Martha. The realization their childrens' education was vitally important was ever present even though the parents were struggling to exist. (A 'reality' most basic.) The log structure, Lyon School, District #8, served until 1885 when a frame structure was built. The log school also served as a house of worship and as a meeting place for community affairs.

Richard and Martha had six children. Caroline, Sarah and Martha (the latter two married brothers Benjamin and Cyrenius Morgan, respectively) remained in the township. As did Richard Jr., who remained single and taught school, living on the old farm. At the time of his father's death in 1876, Richard Jr. is a resident of the village. He helped draft the constitution and bylaws of the Brighton Hook and Ladder Co #1, was a charter member and served as secretary. Joining the newly formed Brighton Cornet Band he promoted acquisition of instruments and uniforms. For years their "services were much in demand" having many requests to perform. Sister Elizabeth married James Smith; moving to South Dakota, parenting six sons. William married Abigail Buck and was very instrumental in the "rapid growth and development" of Sioux City, Iowa. The familiar pattern of neighbors marrying is evident. Also some are as adventurous as their parents and head farther west. The rush for gold and land, new communities beginning with opportunity for getting in on the 'ground floor' drew many. Richard, Sr. died in 1876 and Martha in 1895. Both are buried at Calvary Cemetery. (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from "Early Landowners and Settlers" and obituaries compiled by Milton Charboneau. Also census records and Ellis' 1980 History of Livingston County. Corrections/additions welcome.)