

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

THE GRANT S. BURGESS STORE ON MAIN STREET

Anyone not interested in hard work did not last long in the Michigan Territory. With his mother and stepfather Samuel Burgess's family came to stay. In 1826, with settlements few and far between, they came to Ann Arbor from New York. In 1833 Samuel moved to Putnam Township, Section 8, and purchased 80 acres December 12, 1835, none of which had been cleared of trees. (Only after clearing can farming commence.) When he sold it in 1854 "...every tree had been removed." A sign of great industry. In Handy Township, Sec. 24, NE $\frac{1}{4}$, he then purchased 160 acres and went to work to clear that land. (Dec. 6, 1854) Samuel owned several yoke of oxen and hired out to 'break' land. His death at age 53, 1861, was cited to have been caused by overwork.

Wife, Lucy Perry, also from New York, had the first of their five children in 1829. Grant S. was the third, born in 1844. For six years, after Samuel died, Grant worked for nearby farmers to help out with family finances. In 1866, at 22, he began clerking for William McPherson in his general store in Howell for 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ years.

McPherson, brother Edward, and Hiram Smith (president of the Detroit, Lansing and Northern Railroad) purchased land in Brighton Village west of Ore Creek out to the Genoa Township border from F.T. Hyne in 1870. (Insider information is not new.) Platting of the Smith-McPherson Addition was instantly underway. By the time the railroad arrived business sites were being sold. A general store, two stores wide (SW corner W. Main and Hyne St.) was commenced. Grant Burgess accepted the opportunity to purchase a share of the store and became its manager. In 1888 G.S. Burgess and Co. was on the store's marquee. Ads of the time tell of the "...dry goods, groceries, boots, shoes, hats, caps and clothing..." available.

Grant and Sarah Jenks were married January 16, 1873, and moved to their new home in Brighton in 1874. Grant served on the school board for 20 years. In 1890 his tax bill was \$75.77. Sarah was one of 13 who organized the Brighton Baptist Church in 1874. One source reads "He (Grant) is liberal in his religious views, but his wife is a member of the Baptist Church." Following an accident while returning from an errand of mercy to a family in Hamburg, Sarah died February 15, 1900. Brighton businesses closed and the church was overflowing with mourners. Of their five children, their only daughter died at the age of two in 1881. The four sons matured and moved to: Ohio, Minnesota, California and South Dakota. Three years after Sarah died Grant sold the store to an S.B. Rice. Mr & Mrs John Strick became owners in 1910. (For over 40 years the legacy of the general store continued.) The building, over 130 years old is still a viable reminder of Brighton's past. Grant was with Lantie in S. D. at the time of his death April 18, 1919. Grant, Sarah and Amelia are interred at the Brighton Village Cemetery. (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from 1880 Hist. of Liv. Co.: census records; 1891 Bio/Photo Album; 1946 Homecoming booklet; Early Landowners and Settlers of Livingston County and obituaries compiled by Milton Charboneau. Additions/corrections welcome. 810/229-6402.)