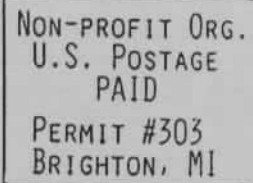


BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P O BOX 481
BRIGHTON MI 48116-0481



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

'IRA CASE & SONS' GENERAL STORE

Ira W. Case, b. March 21, 1819, New York, was the 12th child of Samuel (b. 1782, Rhode Island). In all, Samuel had 20 children. Ira was the 5th of Samuel's 2nd wife, Clarissa Crandall b. 1795, Rhode Island.

An elementary education was gained by Ira in a log house with only openings for "...doors or windows. It boasted, however, a great fireplace, and slab seats..." Lack of much formal education did not deter him from doing well. At 15 his practical experience came to the fore and for 4-5 years he drove horses on the tow path of the newly opened Erie Canal, pulling the flat bottom boats over the Allegheny Mountains, going to school in the winter. His commitment to his work did not go unnoticed and he was given the job of steersman. At about 21, with money saved, he bought himself a canal boat. However, due to an accident, the boat sank.

His father had come to Michigan in 1838; in 1840 Ira joined him. After a couple years he again ran a boat for two years. By then his half brother, Spaulding, had a general store in Hamburg and Ira went to work for him for four years. Electors of the community realized his abilities and he was made under sheriff and constable in that township. Ira continued clerking for his brother even after the move of the business to Brighton. (Here he was Justice of the Peace for 18 years, village president, and was a delegate to state and county conventions.)

Two years after the move he purchased a half interest in the business from Spaulding. They continued working together until Spaulding died, June, 1867. Ira had also purchased interest in a dry good stock owned by Patrick Donley. In 1884, Ira bought out Donley becoming the oldest merchant in Livingston County.

The store, built by Ira, was housed in a two story brick building (west side of Grand River, third building north of North Street) in which one found a "...line of goods that is suited entirely to the demands of his customer." Ira died July 2, 1898, however 'Ira Case and Sons' (Clio and Bartaw) was in business until April, 1931.

Fidelia S. Eddy, born July 26, 1831, New York, married Ira February 16, 1853. Besides Clio and Bartaw, Jasper W., Alta E., Nellie E., Myrtie W. and Mable E. were born to Ira and Fidelia. they also raised a neice, Amelia Campbell. The 1860 census has John McKinney "...a black farm laborer (26) who had escaped to the north via the underground railroad" also in the household. Along with Ira and Fidelia, records show 15 members of the Case family buried at the Old Village Cemetery. (Compiled by Marie-anna Bair from 1891 Photographic and Biographical Album, Census records and genealogical records gathered by Stephen S. Leith, descendant. Corrections/additions gratefully received. 810/229-6402.)