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THOMAS WOULD'S - MILLER AND FARMER

Thomas Would's was an early land owner in Brighton Township; however not among the first. With his older brother, John, 240 acres in Section 15 (E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, W $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ and E $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$) were purchased in 1855 from John Jackson, son of Cyrus, a land speculator of New York. Before dying in 1858, age 33, John deeded Thomas his share.

Thomas, one of ten, was born in England November 15, 1826, and was on his own at age 10. One biographer writes: "At the beginning, when he started out in life for himself, he made it a rule to live within his income, and this resolve, closely followed, has given him an independence than which there is no more pleasant feeling in the world."

He married Hannah Abbott September 21, 1852, and, being married only three months, they sailed from England to the United States. Hannah was born May 27, 1824. After landing in New York they were in Pennsylvania for 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ years. 1854 finds them in Brighton Township.

In 1867, with neighbor Tim Warner, the Woodruff Mill and farm, (Section 34, on Pleasant Valley Road, south of I-96) 110 acres, were purchased. Restoration and repair of the mill was expensive. They operated the mill for five years. The partnership was dissolved in 1872 with Warner acquiring the farm and Would's the mill. Six years later the mill was sold to Mr. Henry Nye, a miller from England, and Thomas returned to full time farming on 160 acres in Section 15.

Thomas and Hannah had no children. Apparently Hannah was not well. Her sister, Martha Abbott, came to the United States in 1882 to help care for her. Martha died June 20, 1896, age 69. She is buried in the Pleasant Valley Cemetery. Hannah's obituary in January, 1900, age 76, says she "...suffered from mental aberrations."

Thomas moved into Brighton about the time of Hannah's death. He lived with Caleb Knight Collett, a carpenter and builder. Thomas died in 1907, joining Hannah and brother John, at the Pleasant Valley Cemetery. His obituary states "Bad speculations in recent years...reduced his wealth." In 1915 Thomas' 160 acres in Section 15 are owned by Collett. (North side Newman Road, one mile east of Van Amburg Road.

By 1961, 20-40 acre parcels are shown on the plat map. These were later divided into 5-10 acre parcels by 1979. (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from: 1891 Portrait and Biographic Album; census records; 1880 History of Livingston County; Early Land Owners and Settlers, First Landowners and obituaries compiled by Milton Charboneau. Corrections and additions welcome. 810/229-6402)