Benjamin Blaine and his brother made the move to Michigan.

One of the many who crossed the mountains on the Erie Canal and sailed across Lake Erie, Benjamin, age 26, arrived in 1833. From Detroit he found his way to the cabin of his older brother, Ammon, October 21. Ammon (27) and wife Lucy had arrived a year earlier, and had taken up land in what would later be Green Oak Township, Section 15, August 23, 1832. (The following year, 50 acres on the north side of Silver Lake.) Benjamin was one of eleven children of Joseph and Sarah of Orleans County, New York.

Several years before Livingston County was organized, March 24, 1836, the lower two tiers of townships (of four tiers) were part of Washtenaw County. Benjamin bought 60 acres each in Sections 5 and 6 of what was to be Bright Township, a total of 120 acres, November 11, 1833. (North side of McCallum Road.) Three years later, January 16, 1836, one mile north, he bought 40 more acres in Section 5.

That first winter Benjamin lived with his brother in his log cabin. In 1834, with his friend Seth Bigwall, a small log cabin with a dirt floor, in which they lived for a year or two in Bright Township was built. Ben, who enjoyed hunting and fishing (a trigger and hunter all his life), kept the food supply in good shape. That first year he reported to have bagged 60 deer. (These could be sold/branded to other settlers.) During that period he also worked for Kinley Bingham and Robert Warden of Green Oak for 15 years.

In 1838 he returned east, married Emily Washou, and brought her to the cabin in Michigan. Seven children were born to them in the wilderness. (A daughter, Mary, married a son of Friend Seth Bigwall, George Alfred.) A c.1920 photo shows Ben and Emily's son, James, driving a mule drawn by oxen on the Grand River Trail. When Bright Township was organized he served the board as assessor in 1836. November 15, 1854, 60 acres of Hartland Township Section 32 were purchased from the U.S. government. The sou the two acres contained a lake now known as Blaine Lake. A cabin was built on the west side of the lake. To arrive at the cabin a two-track lane over the neighbor's property was followed. The story goes that Emily always washed dishes in the lake, the many fish cleaning up the debris. Residing a silver fork Emily was bitten by a pine, washing her hand badly.

Ben is reputed to have been a peculiar fellow known for always going without shoes. When helping put hay in a farmer's barn the snakes, which often were caught up in the hay, would be kicked out by Ben with his bare foot. Late local historian, Bill Pless, suggests that because of Benjamin's extensive travels while trapping, he ascended the route of the creek with its origins in the very northern end of Bright Township, and noticed its High Iron content. Pless therefore credits him with naming One Creek which flows through Brighton City, exits into Hamburg township, into Ore Lake and finally the Huron River.

A photo c. 1890, includes Thomas, William, Ammon, Benjamin and Joseph Blaine, all of Orleans County, New York. One concludes that at some time these five of seven brothers reunited at least for a photo. Ben 64, Emily 47 and son Truman 29, are buried at Hartland Village Cemetery. (Compiled by Marlenia Bair from 1980 History of Livingston County; Bill Pless writings; censuses; Early Land Owners and Settlers and obituaries compiled by Milton Charbonneau. Additions/corrections welcomed. 810/229-6403.)