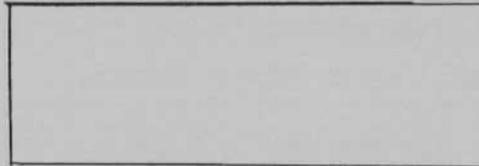


BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P O BOX 481  
BRIGHTON MI 48116-0481

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT #303  
BRIGHTON, MI

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



#### FITCH STREET/MAIN STREET/ORDNANCE OF 1785

As early as 1785 the Brighton area was under the influence of the Federal Ordinance of that year. This ordinance called for a survey, prior to settlement, of lands north and west of the Ohio River to the Mississippi. These lands were ceded to the U.S. at the end of the Revolutionary War in 1783. It was August, 1794, before the English were finally ousted. The Ordinance provided for townships six miles square which would then be further divided. Surveyors began their work. However it was 1818 before the first public land office opened in Michigan. By 1836 over four million acres had been purchased by settlers (and speculators).

It was into this headlong dash for land (\$1.25 acre), and a future for their families, that Elijah Fitch brought his family. Lack of roads to the land north of Washtenaw County forced many to travel there first. Elijah and his family appear to have landed in Salem Township of Washtenaw County. When they arrived surveys had been done but few government divisions set aside and named. At the time the south two tiers of townships of what became Livingston County were part of Washtenaw. The Ordinance of 1787 detailed the requirements necessary for a county to be formed. In 1835, Wayne, Macomb and Washtenaw Counties were among the several titled counties. Washtenaw's northern border extended to Commerce, Golf Club and Mason Roads, as later known. These two tiers of townships became part of Livingston County when it was formed March 24, 1836.

The 1915 map of Brighton Village notes Fitch Street east of the tracks to the Grand River Trail and Main Street west of the tracks to Seventh. Who was Fitch to be honored in this manner? Elijah Fitch was among the very first to buy land in what became Brighton City. He is recorded as purchasing section 31 of Brighton Township, the NW NW (the NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ ) 40 acres, and section 36 of Genoa Township the N $\frac{1}{2}$  NE  $\frac{1}{4}$ , July 29, 1835, while living in Salem Township, Washtenaw County. Other parcels in the area are also purchased within the next several years.

He is recorded in the census of 1840 with wife Hannah, and six children, four boys, two girls; however no names other than heads of households were included; nor where any were born. However, while in Brighton, he is noted as an early merchant. The 1880 History of Livingston County lists him as a taxpayer in 1844; also his service as school moderator in 1838 and as a Justice of the Peace in 1840. It appears all his land has been sold and the Fitches "...removed from this place" by 1845. (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from census records; 'A Short History of Michigan' by John Kern; Early Landowners and Settlers and First Land owners by Milton Charboneau. Additions, corrections eagerly received. 810/229-6402.)