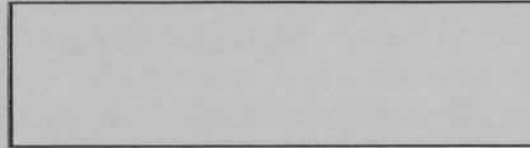


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A BIT ABOUT TWO MARSH FAMILIES

As was true of many early purchasers of land in Michigan, Elijah and Betsey Marsh, born 1802 and 1806 respectively in Massachusetts, bought acreage in Brighton and surrounding townships, even before coming to Michigan. Research shows much land speculation occurring at that time. Two hundred eighty acres were bought and sold in Brighton Township before Elijah and Betsey moved here. They continued this practice of buying land on tax sales, etc. Although not a resident of the county before 1836, he is noted as one of its earliest landowners. He was a peddler. They settled in what would become Brighton Village, but soon moved to the Pleasant Valley area (Brighton Township Sections 11, 12). He and Betsey had seven children. When Elijah died ca. 1859, son Richard J., born 1834, bought out his siblings. It is probable that Elijah was buried in the Marsh cemetery. It was located on Hyne Road at the NW corner of Elijah's farm. Betsey died pre-1870 and was buried there also. The 1860 census shows Richard, his mother and brother, Milo J., living with him in the farmhouse on the south side of Hyne Road. The size of the farm is such that four others are with them, three men and a domestic. (In 1924, when General Motors Corporation bought Richard's farm for its proving ground, those buried in the Marsh Cemetery were moved to the Milford Cemetery. That portion of Hyne Road was close in that period also.)

Several, besides Elijah, by the name of Marsh, also came at an early date. Daniel Marsh, born 1801 New York, was an attorney, among the first who decided to move to the up-and-coming village of Brighton in 1839. He is recorded buying/selling lots in Gales plat in Section 31. The young widow of Maynard Maltby, Sarah Jeffords Maltby, soon caught his eye, and they were married in 1843. Daniel willingly became a second father to Henry, born 1835, and Augusta, born 1837, Maltby. Daniel built a frame home on the SW corner of Ann Arbor Road (Rickett Road) and Grand River Road.

When interviewed by the editor of the 1880 History of Livingston County, "Did you fear the Indians?" Sarah remembered them more as an annoyance. Living on the Grand River Trail, the Indians often passed on their trip from their camp grounds farther west on their way to Detroit to receive their promised allowances.

His abilities as an attorney and knowledge of law caused Daniel to be aware of political developments in the county. Michigan became a state in 1837, the county organized in 1838, and Daniel soon put his talent to good use, serving as Prosecuting Attorney ca. 1843. He was also the township's J.P. in 1860. His name is noted on an 1863 list of professionals in Brighton. When the settlement became a village in March 1867, the first Village Council meeting was held in his home and he was elected to serve as the first Village President. When the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in 1843, their home was opened to host Sunday School and worship services; there was no church building at the time. It was a time of hard physical labor during which not everyone could take time out to build a school building. As the population outgrew the first school on Grand River, classes were held at various sites in town. The Marshes rented their home for a classroom. Daniel taught in 1847 and 1852. In 1848 he served as Director of the school board and was instrumental in urging construction of the Union School in 1868, just south of their home on Ann Arbor Road. His brother, William, taught a private school. Daniel and Sarah were prominent members of the community. Often when children's parents died or could not care for them, neighbors took them in. The Marshes did the same; the 1850 census records a Rebecca Renn, six, as part of the household. Sarah died January 10, 1882, and Daniel June 2, 1883. Both are buried in the Old Village Cemetery by the millpond. (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from *Early Landowners and Settlers of Livingston County* by Milton Charboneau; census records; *1880 History of Livingston County*; and *From Settlement to City - Brighton, Michigan* by Carol McMacken. Additions, corrections requested. 810/229/6402)