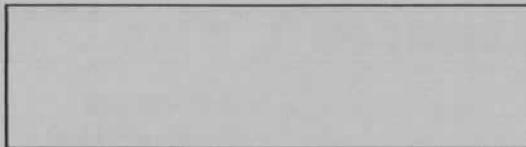


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BRIGHTON'S FIRST DEVELOPERS

"Brighton, although not the oldest, is by no means the least considerable of the townships of the County of Livingston. Like many other townships it had, at first, no separate organization, but composed an important part of the Township of Green Oak, and it was not until April, 1838, that it was accorded a distinct existence." Recorded in F.E. Ellis' 'History of Livingston County, Michigan'. Eventually, 1867, from the township would be formed the village of Brighton.

As settlers moved into Michigan, the majority came via the Erie Canal, over Lake Erie, arriving in Detroit. After finding a room to rent for the family, the male members headed west along the Sauk Trail to Ann Arbor and points west, or the Grand River Trail. The trip from Detroit into the interior usually took 2-3 days. Trail markers blazed on trees helped define the way through the wilderness thick with hardwood trees, interspersed with streams, rivers and marshes.

Among those choosing the Grand River Trail were William Noble and son, William, Jr. from Connecticut c. 1835. One also could find Anthony Gale, also from Connecticut, William Dutcher and William McCauley, both from New York on the trail to Brighton.

Altho' the Maltby brothers are credited with being the first arrivals in August, 1832, those that followed were cognizant of the money to be made in reselling land for development. That development was sure to follow the construction of the Maltby's saw mill on Ore Creek.

Horace H. Comstock was already in Kalamazoo County by 1835, living in a town with his name. By March 25, 1833, he owned property in Brighton Township, Section 30; the east ½ of the southwest ¼. Whether he ever even saw the land, this writer cannot determine.

February 20, 1837, Comstock sold his property in Section 30 to William Nobel, Jr., at a time when Brighton Township was still part of Green Oak. By July 3, the Noble plat is prepared – north of Main, east and south of Ore Creek, west of East Street. This was known as; 'lower town'. Brothers Almon and Maynard Maltby were the first to buy in Noble's Plat and built the first frame house in the settlement (southeast corner Grand River and Mill (St. Paul Street).

Anthony Gale had purchased land in 'upper town'. This was located in Section 31, the east half of the northwest ¼, the northeast ¼ of the northeast ¼ and the west ½ of the northeast ¼. This he sold by 1840, retaining Gale's Addition, the area around the intersection of Grand River and Rickett Road.

Dutcher's Plat was in the area of Grand River, Spencer and Church Streets. Gale also sold to Harvey T. Lee, which then became J.B. Lee's Addition east along Spencer and McCauley's Addition was east along Grand River. McCauley was a merchant with a store on the southwest corner of Grand River and North later a furniture store.

"Wm. Noble, Jr., came from New England and brought with him many Puritanical ideas. He was very scrupulous in his religious duties, and held the use of liquor an abomination, which, in those tipping days, was sufficient to confirm his reputation for eccentricity." "Anthony Gale is described as a man of irascible temper, quick to resent a real or fancied wrong, but withal, a kind-hearted, and keen and active man of business." (Quotes are from Ellis' 1880 History.)

An early purchaser in the Dutcher Plat was Robert D. Power, who put up a log public house-tavern in 1836, on the northeast corner of Grand River and Noble (Spencer). Ellis describes him as a man of "much force and intuitive shrewdness, and being somewhat inclined to politics, exerted a considerable influence in that direction among the early settlers of the neighborhood." Shortly after the formation of Brighton Township, an organizational meeting was held at the home of Daniel Lane in Section 17. Various officers were selected with William Noble, Jr. as Clerk. William Pless notes there was no treasurer selected, as there was no money anyway. Compiled by Maricanna Baird in the 1880 History of Livingston County; William Pless' writings; Early Landowners and Settlers in Livingston County by Milton Charboneau; From Settlement to City, Brighton, Michigan 1832-1945 by Carol McMacken. Additions, corrections requested. 810/229-6402.)