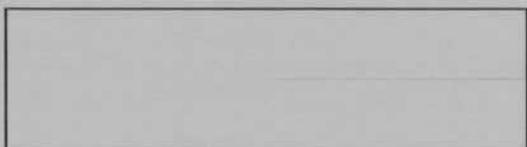


Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #303
Brighton, MI

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Civil War Veterans Resting At Old Village Cemetery (Part 4)

Austin Goucher, born 1806 in New York, and family arrived from the east in time for the birth of their youngest son, Homer, in 1848. The older children: Charles born 1829, Maria born 1836, and William born 1845, were born in New York as was Austin's wife, Lydia born 1809.

Records indicate Austin and Lydia bought 40 acres in Brighton Township, Section 5, February 19, 1853 and another 40 acres in Section 8, just across the road (McClements) two years later on December 3, 1855. The Gouchers farmed these acres with the usual cattle, horses, etc., to improve their lifestyle and secure an independence for themselves.

Of their children, Charles married Sylvia A. Smith on August 15, 1855, Maria married Laughlin N. Clark in November, 1853, and William married Mary E. Dennison in 1867.

No one in the Brighton area was untouched by the Civil War. However, the Gouchers could be considered as carrying an excessive burden. Charles' wife, Silvia, had died February 23, 1861. At 38 years old and a widower, he gave his child to be cared for by his sister Maria, and enlisted in Hartland in Co. B, 6th Michigan Cavalry Regiment December 31, 1863. During winter quarters in Stevensburg, Virginia, Charles died of disease on February 21, 1864.

Homer was not old enough to enlist, being barely 16 years old in 1864. However, like youngsters everywhere anxious to do their share, he apparently falsified his age and on January 23, 1864, enlisted in his brother's regiment. Homer was captured in Virginia on June 12, 1864, at the Battle of Trevilian Station, having survived nine earlier battles.

Following his capture he was sent to the infamous Andersonville Prison in Georgia. There, after four months of severe privation, he died on October 13, 1864. Sister Maria and her husband raised the orphaned Emma as their own after Charles'

death. Tragically, Emma died in 1872 at just 13 years old.

Nevertheless, in spite of these tragedies, the remaining family members picked up the pieces and continued making a significant contribution to the area. William and his son, Charles C. born January 1870, farmed Austin's property, adding more acres through the years. William's daughter, Clara born 1873, married local boy Charles Tunis. Austin's descendants married local people as late as the 1920s.

For many years, the Gouchers were noted for their musical penchant and abilities. Grace (McClements), the wife of Charles C., accompanied the Brighton Singers. The Goucher Orchestra provided music for the 1917 Brighton High School commencement exercises. Their daughter, Lila (married to Andrew Robertson) was in the Gouchers' Lady Orchestra in 1918, even before graduating from high school in 1925.

Markers, memorializing Austin (died 1874), Lydia (died 1867), Charles (died 1864), Sylvia (died 1861), Emma (died 1872), Homer (died 1864), Maria (died 1904) and Laughlin, her husband (died 1894), can be found in the Old Village Cemetery.

By Marieanna Bair, BAHS Vice President and Historian

Sources: '1880 History of Livingston County' by Ellis; Census records; Bill Pless' writings; 'Old Village Cemetery Transcription' by John and Janice Field; interview with George Allen; 'From Settlement to City, Brighton, Michigan' by Carol McMacken. Additions, corrections are requested. (810) 229-6402.



In Memoriam

The Brighton Area Historical Society would like to extend sympathies to the family of :

Shirley Jenks

Shirley was a Brighton area resident and member of the BAHS.