Civil War Veterans Resting At Old Village Cemetery (Part 5)

Joseph Placeway (b. 1804), of Vermont with wife, Ann Maria (b. 1814) of New Jersey, arrived in Livingston County in 1836. They had purchased 200 acres in Section 2 of Genoa Township, sight unseen as it was not unusual for the time. This was about one mile northeast of Lake Chemesn.

With them came their two daughters, Mary, 17 and Matilda, 15. Their sons Joseph Edward, George, and John, were all born in Genoa Township, between 1837 and 1843. In 1846, they purchased property in Brighton Village, in the Gales Addition B-9, lots 1 and 2, (currently the southeast corner of Grand River and Church Street). Joseph Placeway died in 1853.

At the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, their son Joseph Edward Placeway, with his wife Emily Jane (Smith) and son Charles (b. 1861) were living in Hamburg Township, not far from his uncle, William Placeway. They later had two children; Jennie born in 1863, and William born in 1865. Joseph Edward enlisted February 16, 1864, in the 3rd Michigan Cavalry, Co. G, joining them at their winter quarters in LaGrange, Tennessee. Before leaving there, his regiment did two months provost duty waiting for horses and equipment. Still dismantled, the regiment went to Arkansas under General Frederick Steele on May 18, 1864. Having been issued horse and gear, they began scouting and outpost duty on August 1, 1864 returning to winter quarters at Brownsville Station, Arkansas, later that year.

On March 14, 1865, they transferred from Arkansas to the Military Division of West Mississippi under General E. R. S. Canby, to move against Mobile, Alabama. After the fall of Mobile, the regiment was on outpost duty until the surrender of General Richard Taylor and the Army of Tennessee on May 8, 1865. Leaving Mobile, they arrived in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on May 23, 1865. Under General Phil Sheridan, they joined troops in Texas, leaving June 10, 1865, for San Antonio on garrison and scouting duty until February 15, 1866. James Edward was mustered out of service on September 20, 1866 before returning to his home in Brighton.

In 1870, the Placeway family was living in Brighton Village just before the coming of the railroad. Having been brought up as a farmer, he found plenty of opportunity working in town. The town was growing; carpenters, masons, blacksmiths, millers, and cooperers were all busy. And the railroad was coming! Joseph Edward did not neglect his civic responsibilities after his return from serving his country. In 1868-69 and 1872-73, Placeway served as Brighton Township Treasurer. Following the organization of the Village of Brighton in 1867, he took part in its governing as Village Marshall in 1868 and as Deputy Marshall in 1882. In 1879 he is noted as Village Assessor. Joseph Edward Placeway died in 1899. At a reunion of Civil War veterans in 1905, he is memorialized with a photo placed alongside other members of the Grand Army of the Republic veterans organization.

Of Placeway's children, his son Charles became owner and publisher of the Brighton Argus. Charles died February 8, 1919. His daughter Jennie was a teacher, and died in 1945. She and Charles are buried at Calvary Cemetery. His son William died young at 31 in 1919. Joseph Edward, along with his wife Emily (d. January 29, 1914), son William and his father Joseph, are interred at Old Village Cemetery. Eleven other Placeways can be found in the Placeway Cemetery in Putnam Township.

Compiled by Marianne Bair from census records; 1850 History of Livingston County; writings of Bill Pless; Early Landowners of Livingston County by Milt Charbonneau; "From Settlement to City" by Carl McKracken. Additions, corrections requested, 810-229-6402.

Help Preserve Your Family and Community Heritage

The digital electronics age has significantly altered the landscape of televisions, computers, cell phones and cameras. Who knew just 10 years ago the incredible transformations that would take place with our home electronics.

This digital age is quickly making paper documents an item of the past. Unfortunately, these vanishing paper documents have preserved the memories of the past 140 years. What will become of old family photographs stored on the hard, crumbling paper of the 1800s and early 1900s?

The younger generation of today has little if any desire to store paper products. Digital storage is fine, but those old family photographs and family papers and photographs are destined to be thrown out as the older generations pass away. Inseparably, the significance of the old photos or family history is not realized until after the older family members are gone and their memories are forever lost. The BAHS is concerned about preserving those family and community memories of today and the past. Those early photos are especially important as there is no one alive who can tell the first hand story behind those images. Such photos are destined for the trash.

To help preserve the pictorial family heritage of Brighton area families, we are working to scan old images of the community in order to save those significant historical pictures. Scanning does not affect the quality of your photo. You will get the same photo back with no changes to it. Think of this scanning process as today's digital equivalent of making a photo copy. This digital copy can be preserved, and copied to make an exact duplicate of your original picture.

Please contact us if you have old family photos from the Brighton area. This is the best investment you can make in preserving your family's heritage. There is no cost for scanning your photos and it takes a short time to perform this important task. Every family deserves a place in history and this is your chance to protect and preserve your heritage!

By Jim Vichich, BAHS President

The History of Labor Day

For most Americans, Labor Day represents the symbolic end of summer and return to the routine. Children go back to school, homes start making ready their property for winter, and farmers are preparing for the fall harvest. The day itself is usually marked with festivities. However, its origin is very different.

In 1894, the workers from the Pullman Palace Car Company in Chicago organized a strike which shut down the factories. In support, the American Railway Union (ARU), led by a boycott by their 125,000 members on twenty-nine railroads, who refused to handle trains which pulled Pullman train cars. The strike was in response to wage reductions and unfair treatment in relation to workers who lived in the Pullman company town and were indebted to the company store.

As with many early organized labor efforts, violence was not far off. Striking workers vandalized company... (cont. pag. 2)

PRESEVER, ADVANCE AND DISSEMINATE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HISTORY OF THE BRIGHTON AREA

Special points of interest: This history of the American Labor Day is explored in this month's Trail Tales. See Page 1.

The Story of Civil War Veterans buried in Old Village Cemetery continues in this issue's Historical Perspective. See Page 4.

"Yesterday the greatest question was decided which ever was debated in America, and a greater perhaps never was, nor will be, decided among men. A resolution was passed without one dissenting colonist, that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States..." John Adams (1735 - 1826) Letter to Abigail Adams dated 3 July 1776

Inside this issue:

Dover's Tale 2

Train's Recognition 2

BAHS Cup Day 3

BAHS Annual 3

Contact Us 4

Historical Perspective 4