

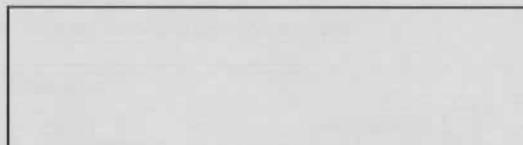
BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Civil War Veterans Resting At Old Village Cemetery (Part 20)

Nelson C. Thomas enlisted at age 19 as Private in Co. B. Michigan 6th Cavalry August 14, 1862. Of the 1200 members of the 6th Cavalry organized in Grand Rapids, over 50 were from Livingston County. Bill Pless records, "Farm boys were needed by cavalry units because they were accustomed to handling horses, and Nelson was soon made Sergeant."

Early in 1863, the 6th was assigned to the Army of the Potomac, fighting in Virginia, Maryland, and at Gettysburg, PA. July 14, 1863, Nelson was promoted to 1st Lieutenant. Other battles ensued before going into winter camp. May 6, 1864, found them at Chancellorsville. They were engaged in battle almost every day the rest of the year. January 1, 1865, Nelson was promoted to Captain taking part in the final battles of the war. Following the surrender of the Confederates, the 6th was ordered to the west for duty in Indian country. November 24, 1865 the men were mustered out to return home.

Nelson had been born in Michigan in 1843: however in the 1870 census he's recorded as living in Brighton Village with wife Emma Birge and his occupation is noted as sawyer. Two boys Roy (b.1876) and L.L. are born to them. Nelson C. Thomas participated in village government in 1869-70 as trustee and 1872 as street commissioner. He was also a member of the 1870 Brighton Band. When Emma died in 1885, they are living in Webberville. After Emma's death, Nelson remarried Emma Pierce. At some time he moved to Detroit. He died during the winter Of 1925-26. His widow Emma Pierce, and his son Dr. L.L. Thomas, were in Brighton in April 1926, to move Nelson's remains from the vault, where they had been placed for the winter, to be placed next to Emma (Birge) in the Village Cemetery. Emma Pierce died in 1938 and rests now also with three babies who didn't live past their first birthday, in the same plot.

Horace (b. 1811) and Harriet Filmore (b.1813) Rogers moved to Michigan from their birth state, New York, around 1850 with five children: Cynthia (b.1833), Henry (b.1836), Francis D. (b. 1839), Newell (b.1842), and George W. (b.1844).

Francis D. , at 14 years of age, enlisted as a Private in Co. I. 9th Michigan Infantry January 1864. A month later found the 9th 500 miles from home at the front, battling in Chattanooga, Tennessee. As part of the Army of the Cumberland, the 9th fought on to Atlanta, Georgia. March 26, 1865, they returned to Chattanooga and then moved to Nashville for duty at the Military prison until September 15, 1865. Four days later the men were "...Paid off and disbanded,... they returned to their homes and to the vocations of peace" arriving in Jackson, Michigan, September 19, 1865.

The 1870 census finds Francis married to Emma Prout (b. 1849 PA), living in Brighton Village. In 1880 his occupation is listed as carpenter and living in the area of Grand River and Beaver Streets. Francis died May 12, 1888. One finds his parents and brothers George and Henry resting with him in the Old Village Cemetery.

(Compiled by Marieanna Bair from: censuses: 1880 History of Livingston County: Old Village Cemetery transcription by John & Janice Field: Bill Pless' Supplement; Obituaries compiled by Milton Charbonau.)

Corrections/additions requested. 810-229-6402

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