

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 481
Brighton, MI 48116-0481

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Early Roads in Genoa Township — Conrad Road

The family Conrad arrived in New York harbor from Germany shortly before Christmas, 1832. Charles Sr., wife Maria Catherine, sons Jacob (10), Charles, Jr. (4), Phillip (1) and daughter Mary Magdalena (8) lived in New York state for three years, during which time daughter Elizabeth was born. Other than the \$400 lent by a sister, Charles had no other funds.

The Erie Canal was most likely the first leg of their journey to Michigan in 1835, crossing Lake Erie and landing in Detroit. After walking to Genoa Township, his 80 acres were recorded in Section 23, June 6, 1836. Son John was born in 1842. During those trying years, their German ancestry and its characteristic attributes of frugality and economy stood them in good stead as the entire family was involved in clearing land for crops and stock. The boys often worked for neighboring farmers also. The sons of Charles, Sr., bought Genoa Township land, Sections 22, 23, 27 as did some of their sons in later years, often from their parents.

Son Jacob of Charles, Sr. worked in California for three years, returning to Michigan with sufficient cash to get started in Section 23, in 1852, and married Elizabeth Dorr in 1856. Their five children selected German neighbors' children for spouses. One tended to marry those one met at school or church. Jacob's son, Henry, a Brighton City Health Officer closed schools, theaters and churches for two weeks February 1, 1934, due to a Scarlet Fever epidemic.

Daughters Mary and Elizabeth of Charles, Sr. both married Genoa Township farmers and prospered on the land.

Charles, Jr. (son of Charles Sr.), wife Sarah and the family were determined to make their way in Kansas, while raising a family of three.

Son Phillip of Charles, Sr. married Elizabeth Becker. Of their four children, Louise (b. 1870) married Langdon Scripture and lived in

town. Son Carl C. (b. 1871) founded an electric lighting plant in 1902. The plant was built behind the Burgess Store located at 334 W. Main. After installing lights on Main Street he sold electricity to Brighton Village and residents. In October 1904, he announced he would "...run his electric light plant from 5PM until dawn for a week." "...if it could be made to pay" he would continue all winter. In 1914, Carl's plant became part of the Eastern Michigan Edison System. Son George bought the general store from George W. Cushing, 120 E. Grand River, in April, 1910. George carried mail to Chilson, was on the School Board in 1921, and helped the first PTA get organized. Sister, Amelia, took over George's store in May 1931. During the depression years of the 1930s, she often hosted Mrs. Santa who distributed goodies and toys, promising to get all letters to Santa. Amelia is also known for driving her own Ford in 1914. Her civic responsibilities included her as one of six women marshals sworn to enforce the November, 1916 curfew after the Village bell rang at 8PM.

The Conrads were among those forming the Evangelical Lutheran St. George's Congregation in Genoa Township, April 23, 1845. Phillip owned property at Main and Fourth. In 1922, the property was purchased by the congregation as the site to which to move the church building. When Detroit Edison assigned names to roads, the selection of Conrad Road was a logical given. On earlier maps Conrad Road runs north from Brighton Road for one mile.

(Compiled by Marieanna Bair from: census records; From Settlement to City—Brighton by Carol McMacken; Early Landowners—Livingston County by Milton Charboneau; 1880 History of Living-