

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Early Roads in Genoa Township — Richardson, Beattie, Westphal and Pardee Roads

Richardson Road begins at Coon Lake Road, then south through the middle of Sections 29 and 32 of the township, a distance of 1.5 miles. The 1915 Plat map indicates Myron H. Richardson is the owner of the 120 acres at Brighton Road. This acreage had been originally purchased by Nathan C. Hight in 1844. He is noted as owner on the 1895 map also. When Richardson died in 1947, he and wife, May Beattie, had moved to Howell 15 years earlier from their farm in Genoa. Richardson Road continues onto Hamburg Township, Section 5, ending at Schafer Road, a total of three miles.

May Beattie’s family was a nearby neighbor. One mile west of Richardson Road, Beattie Road, one mile long, runs north to Crooked Lake Road from Coon Lake Road. By 1845, the Beattie name is on parcels in Sections 18 and 19 in Genoa Township. In 1875, the Beattie name is on 160 acres on each side of the road. In 1958, the Beattie name is still noted on nearby land; as is the Richardson name.

The Westphal family was prolific; the 1880 census indicates eight children were born to August and Barbary Westphal. Siblings had large families also. Many, with the Westphal name, owned productive farms in the county. In 1915, the August Westphal farm is located at the corner of Westphal and Pardee Roads, Sections 19 and 20 in Genoa. August and Barbary had first acquired land in the county in 1853. March 18, 1915, at 82, August fell from a wagon injuring “...his head and back, so that he did not recover and death was the result” March 30, 1915. Barbary had passed away April 27, 1901.

Gilbert Pardee and wife Emeline, were neighbors of the Westphals. The Pardees were in Genoa by 1865. Census records note members of the Pardee family were born in the United

States in 1812, which could indicate the family could have arrived before the US was the United States. By 1880, Gilbert and Emeline had three children. During the years, the Pardees and Westphals owned several hundred acres in Genoa Township; thus Westphal Road (3/4 miles north/south) and Pardee Road (3/4 miles east/west) reach from Crooked Lake Road to Coon Lake Road. Emeline died March 19, 1891 and Gilbert March 2, 1927, at the home of his son in St. Johns, as a much respected farmer in Livingston County.

It is presumed roads were given names during the early 1930s by Detroit Edison as electric power came to rural residents. It is probably deemed logical to use these long-time residents’ names. Prior to that everyone knew where the Richardsons, Beatties, Westphals and Pardees lived.

(Compiled by Marieanna Bair from: Census Records; “Early Landowners and Settlers” by Milton Charboneau; obituaries collected by Milton Charboneau. Additions/corrections requested 810-229-6402.)

Reminder from the BAHS

Our membership drive continues this month. Please see the insert in this issue and consider becoming a member .