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Timothy Warner Bicentennial

This year the Warner Homestead celebrates the 200th birthday of its founding pioneer, Timothy Warner. Timothy was born on September 14, 1819 in Livonia, Livingston Co., NY. He arrived with his parents in Brighton Township in July 1837 and began his agricultural career by farming land on shares.

Pioneer life was tough and according to his biography, Timothy was involved in trade with local Native Americans exchanging beads for venison to make ends meet. The biography also notes that “young as he was, and inexperienced in organization, Mr. Warner was called upon to assist in organizing the township, and in giving its name.” Brighton Township was officially set off on December 30, 1837, just a few months after he arrived.

On October 16, 1841 he purchased 80 acres on Pleasant Valley Road for \$384 that founded the Warner Homestead, a parcel of unbroken wilderness. A log cabin was built there and by 1850, half of his 80 acre parcel had been cleared. He married Lucretia Jones of Lyon Township in May 1847. They had six children. George, Henry, John, Lovisa, Alfred and Charlotte. In 1855, he built an upright and wing Greek Revival home.

Like many pioneers in the 19th century, Timothy speculated on land. In 1873 he was the 2nd largest landholder in the township and 11th in Livingston County. In all, he held 14 different parcels totaling 653 acres over time. The 1875 plat map lists him as a “Genl Farmer, Grain, Sheep, Cattle, Horse and Fruit raiser, Dist. No 8”.

Timothy was active in the community, serving as Township Treasurer in 1863 and 1865. His biography also notes that he served as road commissioner and Justice of the Peace. From

1867 to 1871, Timothy partnered with Thomas Woulds as co-owner of the Livingston Mill, formerly known as the Woodruff Gristmill. He also held several positions at the Lyon school from 1848 to 1884, including teller, moderator and director for five consecutive terms. In 1884 he served on the building committee to present proposals for the construction of the school.

Timothy died at his home on December 20, 1900 at the age of 81. The house he originally built in 1855 is listed in the national Register of Historic Places. It is now in its 6th generation of ownership, marked with six green stars above the parlor door. More information on Timothy Warner is available at www.warnerhomestead.com.

This story was submitted by Tim Bennett.

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