



HISTORIC BRIGHTON NEWS

VOLUME 9

FALL 2008

NUMBER 4



Celebrate Halloween by attending
HISTORIC BRIGHTON'S
fall program



October 30, 6:30 to 9 PM
at the historic
Oliver Culver house
70 East Boulevard

featuring tours and a talk by
Town of Brighton Historian
Mary Jo Lanphear
Talk begins at 7:30 PM

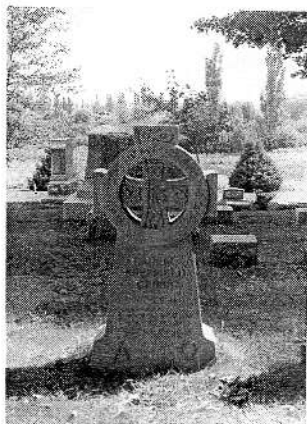
Shuffling off this Mortal Coil:

A LOOK AT THE FOLKLORE OF MOURNING

By Mary Jo Lanphear

When death occurred, our ancestors put aside the tasks of everyday life and took up the rituals of mourning. Seemingly more elaborate than today's observations, these practices included special foods, clothing, and ceremonies. Handed down from generation to generation, the familiar customs brought comfort to the bereaved and reinforced the cohesion of the community.

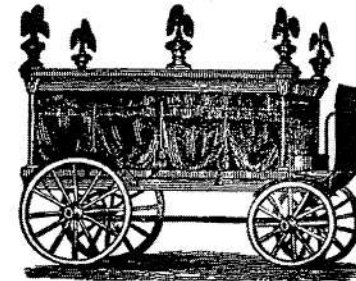
"Telling the bees" of a death in the family was a common practice. The supposition was that the bees would die if not told of the death. Bees pollinated the crops and thus were important to the economic success of the farm family. In 1858 John Greenleaf Whittier described the ritual of draping the hives in black in his poem "Telling the Bees." Today, the phenomenon of colony collapse reinforces the concern about lost colo-



Carrol Sheffield Cross's headstone in Lakeview Cemetery in Pulteneyville was designed by prominent architect Claude Bragdon, indicating the Cross position in the community.

DAVID W. ALLEN,

Undertaker,



119 Buffalo St.,

IS NOW PREPARED TO FURNISH

Coffins, Shrouds, Hearses & Carriages,

and attend Funerals in both city and country. From his long experience in the business, he trusts he will be able to give entire satisfaction to those who may favor him with their patronage.

RESIDENCE, NO. 9 NORTH FORD STREET.

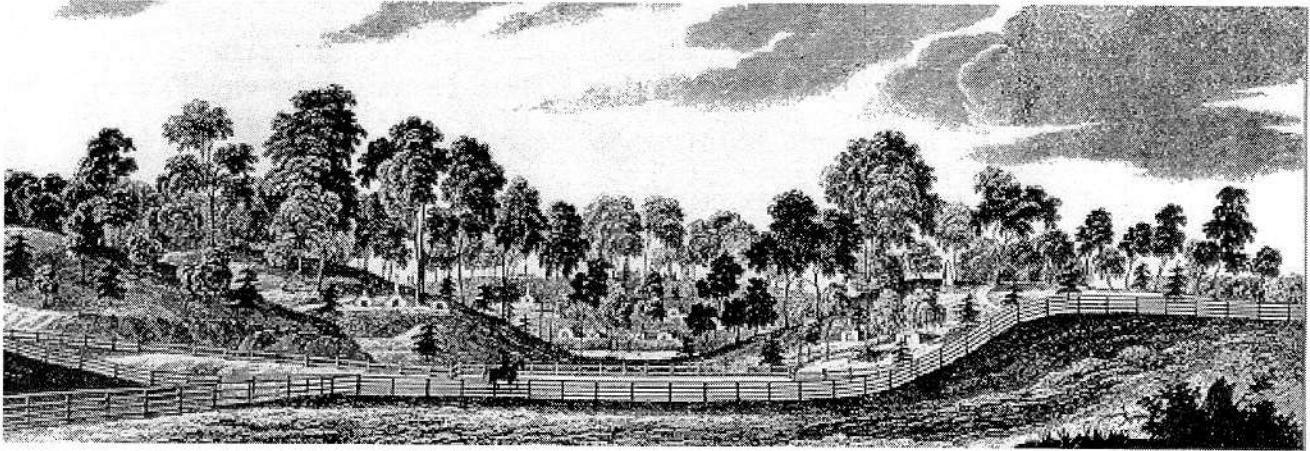
nies of bees.

In more urban areas, the custom of transporting the deceased in a horse-drawn hearse became a common practice in the second half of the nineteenth century. Black plumes adorning the top of the hearse denoted the wealth of the deceased, six or eight being the maximum.

In both rural and urban areas, headstones carried expressions of mourning. Carved epitaphs and inscriptions told about the dead but sometimes the choice of the designer of the headstone conveyed additional information.

For more information on this interesting topic, come to the Oliver Culver house on October 30, 6:30 to 9 PM. Talk begins at 7:30 PM.

MOUNT HOPE CEMETERY WAS ORIGINALLY IN BRIGHTON



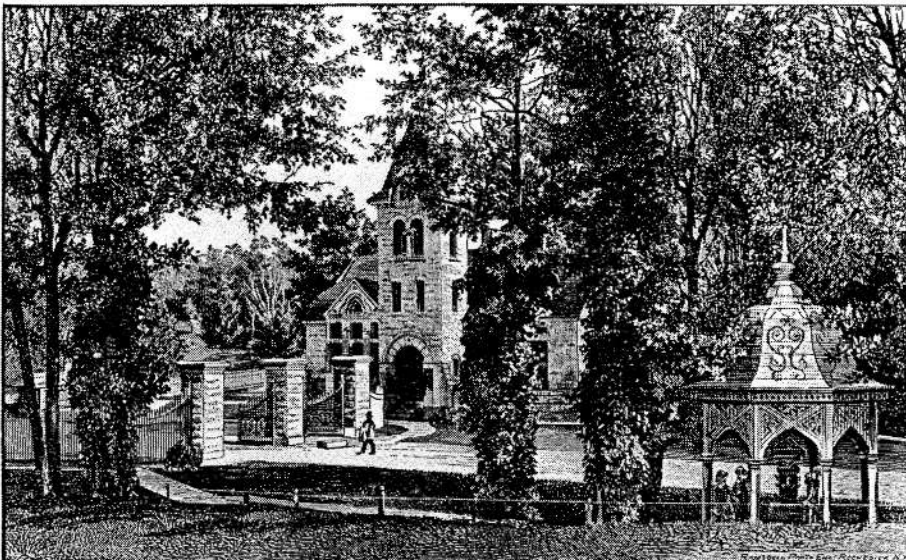
When the village of Rochesterville was chartered in 1817, it was located entirely in the Town of Gates, west of the Genesee. East of the river was Brighton, chartered in 1814. As the tiny cemetery on Buffalo (West Main) Street filled, land for burials was sought. The highlands were not suitable for farming, so Brighton offered the western portion of its Pinnacle Hills. Indeed, there were five cemeteries along the Pinnacle range of high ground left as a moraine when the glacier receded.

In 1837, Rochester purchased 54 acres and the next year Mount Hope opened with the latest architectural novelty—an elaborate neo-Egyptian Revival gate designed by local architect John McConnell. But a strange and incongruous lotus column topped the heavy, massive construction. In 1840 the wild and beautiful land set aside for Mount Hope was annexed by the city. Goodbye Brighton.

2

In the 1870s, the Egyptian fantasy was demolished and replaced by wrought iron gates and a gatehouse with bell tower and Romanesque arches designed by Andrew Jackson Warner. A Moorish Revival pergola and elaborate fountain stood nearby. A neo-Gothic chapel had been built in 1863, and in 1912 J. Foster Warner (son of A.J.) added a crematorium to the chapel with the requisite smokestack resembling a Gothic spire as best it could.

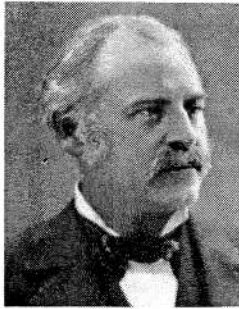
At the turn of the 20th century, the city purchased additional acreage from Brighton until it owned an expansive 200 acres.



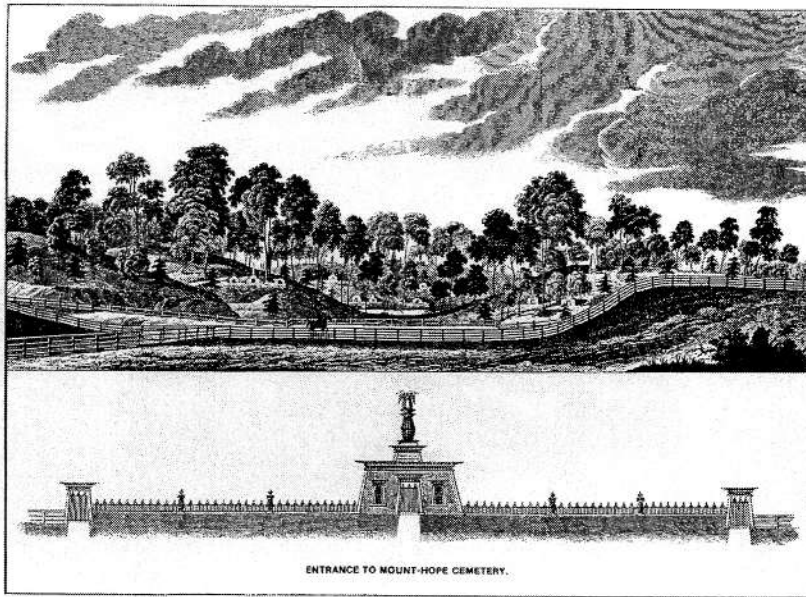
Wrought iron gates, a romaneseque gatehouse and a Moorish gazebo were added in the 1880s



Monument marking the plot of the Home for the Friendless which moved to Brighton and became the Friendly Home in 1918.



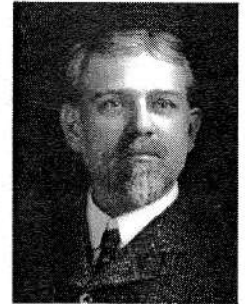
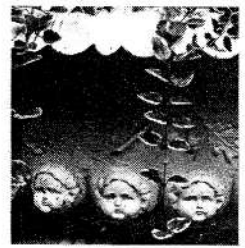
A. J. Warner



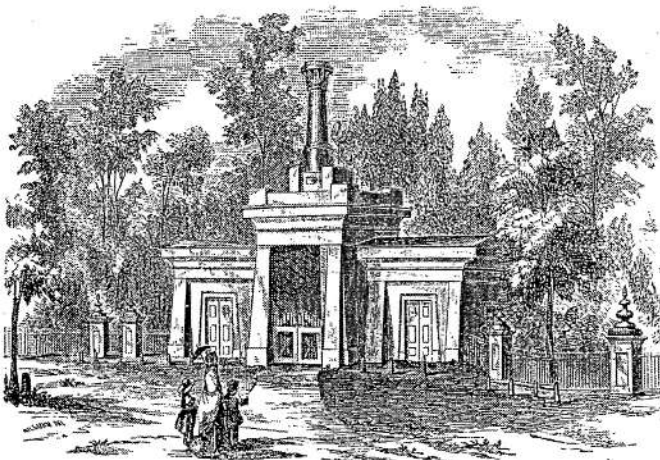
ENTRANCE TO MOUNT-HOPE CEMETERY.

FRONTIS PIECE OF PHARCELLUS CHURCH. AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE DEDICATION OF MT. HOPE CEMETERY, ROCHESTER, OCTOBER 3, 1838. ROCHESTER 1839.

ORIGINAL IN UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER LIBRARY.

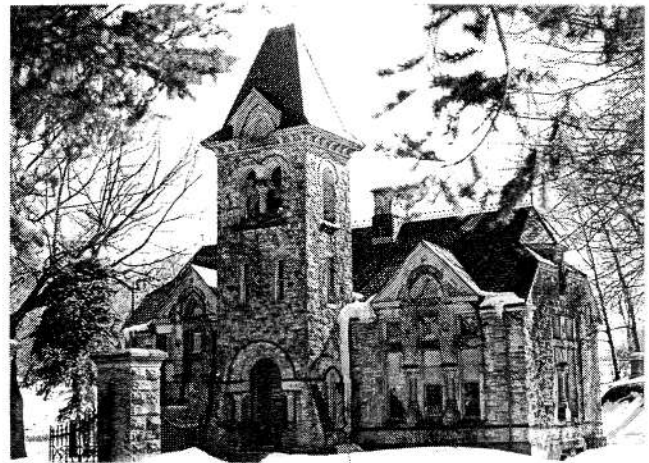


J. Foster Warner

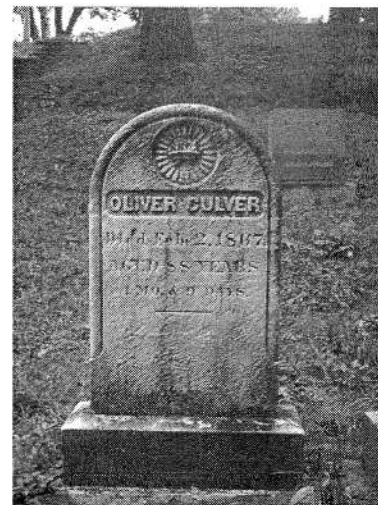


ENTRANCE TO MOUNT HOPE CEMETERY, ROCHESTER, N. Y.

In 1838, an elaborate neo-Egyptian Revival gate was designed by local architect John McConnell. It was later demolished.



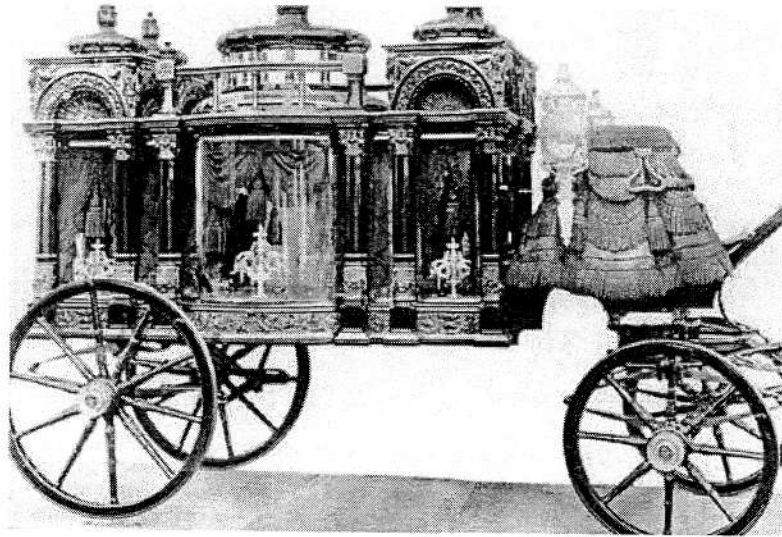
Gatehouse designed in 1870s by Andrew Jackson Warner



Left, mausoleum of Louis Henry Morgan, considered by many as the father of American anthropology and right, tombstone of Oliver Culver, Brighton's first supervisor

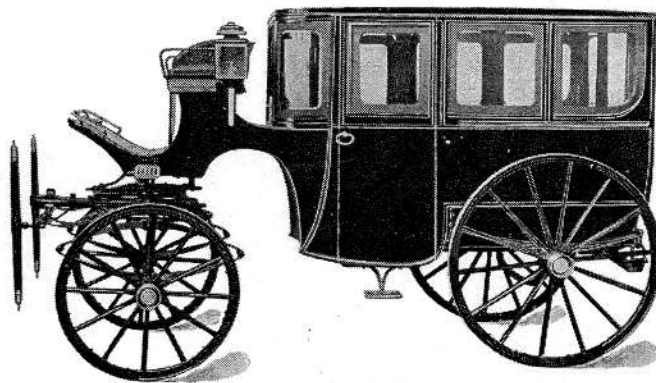
Special Halloween Issue

FANCY HEARSE WERE A SPECIALTY OF LOCAL AUTO MANUFACTURER JAMES CUNNINGHAM, SON & Co.



James Cunningham
1815-1886

Lie
Eight Passenger Pall Bearers' Coach.



No. 423.

Built by The James Cunningham, Son & Co.
Factory, Rochester, N. Y., U. S. A.

CHICAGO.
BRANCHES: ST. LOUIS,
BOSTON.

The following is an excerpt from The Cunningham Car Made in Rochester by William H. Morris, published in May 1986 by the Institute of Fellows at the Rochester Institute of Technology.

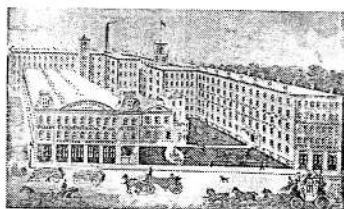
James Cunningham's early fondness and skill in woodcarving became apparent in the design and construction of his hearses, as well as a Cunningham tradition. They were elaborately hand carved, and it has been reported that at one time 200 wood-carvers were employed at the plant. Sometimes these hearse bodies were decorated with ornate carved wooden garlands, cherubs, doves, tassels, draperies, trumpets, and torches. The earlier practice of designing hearses with large oval side windows and plumed ornamentation on the roof ultimately gave way to the hand carved four-column square body style which was succeeded in turn by six-column and eight-column hearses, all elaborately hand carved and beautifully finished.

HEARSES WERE A CUNNINGHAM SPECIALTY



A \$12,000 hearse without its heavy hangings was exhibited at the 1893 World's Columbian Exhibition according to a talk by Arlene A. Vanderlinde.

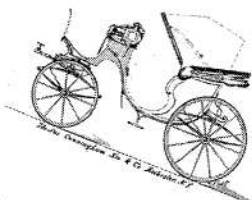
In 1884, James Cunningham & Son was Rochester's leading employer in terms of capital and area. The carriage and hearse company employed 550. By comparison, the Kimball Tobacco Factory employed 1,000 workers in 1884. Bausch and Lomb employed 200, while the Eastman Dry Plate and Film Company was still in its infancy with 30 employees.



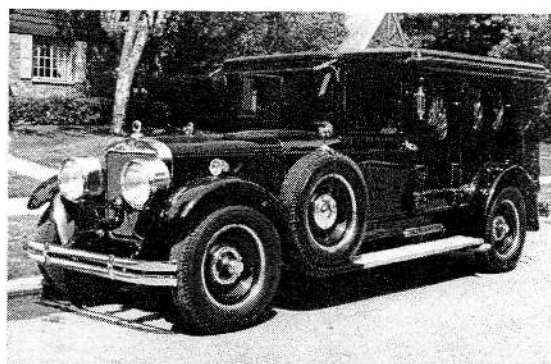
GEORGE EASTMAN AND CUNNINGHAM



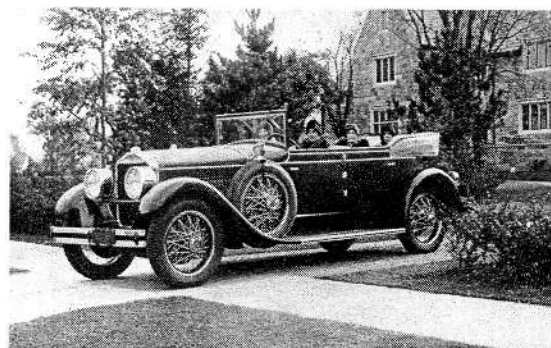
This was George Eastman's stable when he lived at 400 (now 1050) East Avenue, (1895-1905) next door to Rufus Dryer of the Cunningham Company. Dryer took care of Eastman's carriages, sleighs, and cars even after the Kodak King had moved in Eastman House, one-quarter mile west on East Avenue.



Cunningham carriage for George Eastman



A restored 1930 V-9 hearse, one of the last models, still used the radiator, hood, and front fender design of the V-6 models



Cunningham car driven by Marietta Dryer of 2 Greenfield Lane in Brighton, a Cunningham relative



THE JAMES CUNNINGHAM SON & COMPANY
CARRIAGE & HEARSE BUILDERS

Rochester, N.Y. Mch. 31, 1892.

Geo. Eastman, Esq.,
Rochester, N. Y.

Dear Sir:-

I regret very much that I was absent from the factory when you called a day or two since.

We are now finishing up some new styles of victorias, something that is a very great improvement over the one you saw on the floor. We are making them both on full platform springs, and on platform and C-springs behind. I will be pleased to furnish one of these new styles to you, trimmed in green cloth, with C-springs behind, with rubber cushioned tire and all finished in the best possible manner, at \$1000. Or, if you dispense with the rubber cushioned tire and C-springs, would make the price \$950. We could have one of these finished about the middle of May, which we presume would be as soon as you would require it.

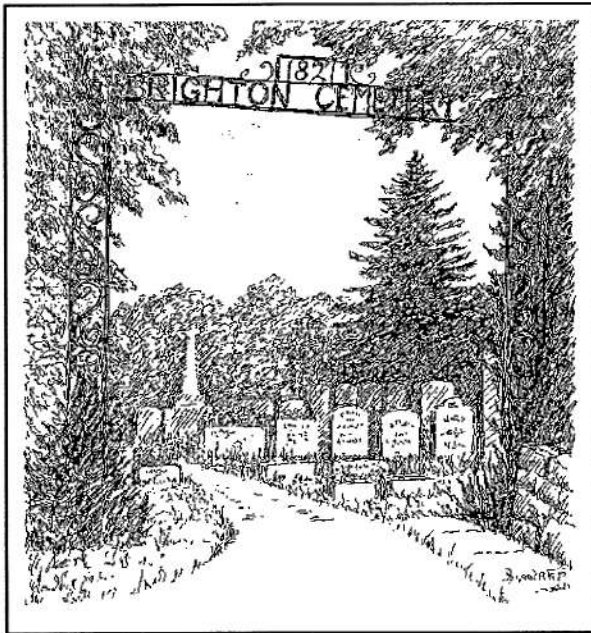
We are also building a very handsome phaeton which we are confident you will be pleased with and, as soon as we get it hung up in our blacksmith shop, we would be pleased to have you come in and see it and, if satisfactory, we could finish it up in a very short time. This is something on the Godard style, although a little different from the drawing which we sent to you sometime since. I will let you know as soon as it is in shape to be looked at. The price of this would be \$400, and I believe I made an allowance of \$55 for the old phaeton which you now have, which you informed me you desired to turn in.

I shall be pleased to furnish the victoria for you and I can assure you I will take extra pains in getting out something that will please you in every respect, and if you will let me have the order in time so I can have the rubber cushioned tire put on (which we do not intend putting on any of the others unless ordered) I will see that it is finished so it shall be acceptable in every respect.

Awaiting your commands, I am
Yours truly,

Rufus Dryer

BRIGHTON CEMETERY IS NO LONGER IN BRIGHTON EITHER



A pen-and-ink drawing of the Brighton Cemetery by Ruth Blossom Kingston Porter, author of the Brighton Cemetery Report, a compilation of all 2080 known burials, gleaned from records and inscriptions on stones. Since the records were destroyed by fire in 1867, the names of those buried in unmarked graves earlier than 1867 are probably lost forever. Mrs. Porter estimates that there are about 600 such names.

6

By Ruth Blossom Kingston Porter

"Where is the Brighton Cemetery?" The answer is: in the City of Rochester—at the end of Hoyt Place. When the Erie Canal was completed in 1825 it flowed quietly past the cemetery on the eastern and northern sides. Today that quiet flow of water has been replaced by a never-ending flow of thousands of noisy vehicles as they speed through the interchange of Expressways I-490 and I-590 which were built on the bed of the old canal.

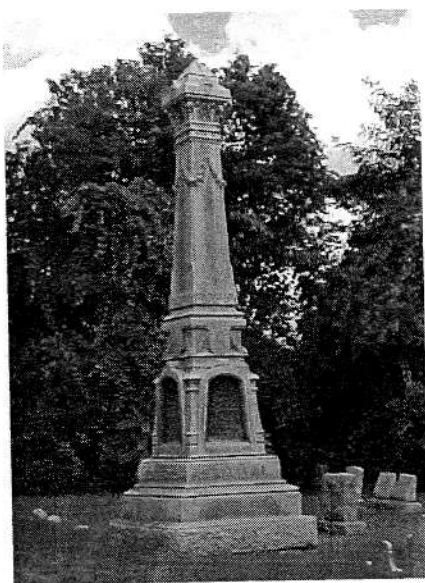
Most of the early pioneers to Brighton were pious Congregationalists from New England who soon organized a church which met in members' homes for several years. In the early 1820s they built a small brick church on the high ground adjacent to the cemetery. In pleasant weather the members would stroll through the cemetery reading the inscriptions and looking for a shady place to enjoy their picnic lunch. When the canal was completed they often spent the intermission watching the boats being pulled through the nearby lock. Then back to church they would go for another two-hour session.

A wrought iron gateway at the end of Hoyt Place marks the entrance to the cemetery. Just inside the gateway to the right is a large granite monument to the Bloss Family with a bronze plaque telling of the life of William Clough Bloss.

Down the driveway a bit farther is the burial lot of Enos Blossom, a school commissioner in who helped found Allen's Creek School. Mill owners Marshfield Parsons and Isaac Barnes are buried here.

Graveyards no longer contain rows of little stones, each with the name of a child dead from diphtheria, cholera, scarlet fever or measles, but in an old cemetery like this such stones are evident

The old fashioned first names for women include Temperance, Obedience, Thankful, Charity, Patience, and Wealthy. However, the most common women's names were much simpler: Jennie, Millie, Minnie, Fannie, Sarah and Anna. The most interesting men's names were



The Watson memorial (above) is the largest monument in the Brighton Cemetery. Right, the grave of Arch Merrill, local historian.

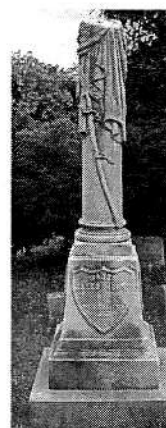
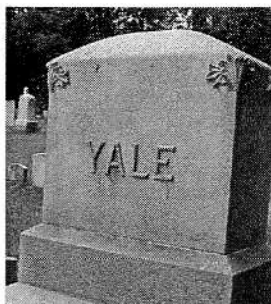
Orringh, Intus, Valentine, and Columbus, but Biblical names, Abram, Abraham, Isaac, Peter, Benjamin, Jacob and John, were most often bestowed on Brighton boys in the 19th Century.

Amasa Drake, who had a distinctive name, rests here in the Drake family lot, high on the western edge of the cemetery. Amasa, an expert in masonry, superintended the building of the Erie Canal aqueduct over the Genesee River. Today we drive over the Broad Street bridge which was built atop Amasa's aqueduct and never think of Amasa and his engineering project of the early 1820's.

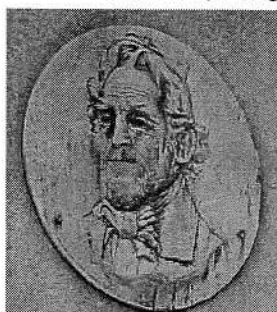
Near the Drake lot many members of the Blossom family are buried. Ezra Blossom who was born in 1761 must have created quite a stir in this wilderness area when he arrived with his family. In an unpublished Blossom genealogy it states, "He brought with him the first family carriage seen in that new country which was substantially a dense forest, the women of the party in the carriage." This emigration was in the early 1800's when the Indian trails were anything but smooth! Another Blossom near Ezra's grave is Benjamin Bangs Blossom, along time deacon in the Brighton Church and postmaster for thirty years. As postmaster he had to ride his horse to Canandaigua carrying Brighton's out-going mail and return with eagerly-awaited letters from families left behind.

This excerpt from Mrs. Porter's Brighton Cemetery Report of 2000, is taken from a longer excerpt first published in the Historic Brighton News, v. 1, No. 2 Fall 2000

Mrs. Porter writes, "Justus Yale was a notable figure in his Spanish cloak, low shoes, and very white stockings". That description of him fits my mental picture of him perfectly, but I did wonder how Justus, who was born in 1808 and died in 1882, kept his stockings so white in those pre-Clorox days.



Left: The notable pre-Civil War reformer, William Clough Bloss, is buried in the Brighton Cemetery. Right, a calvary monument



Detail of William Clough Bloss bronze memorial plaque in the Brighton Cemetery

Historic Brighton officers and board

Founded 1999

Rome Celli, President

Beth Keigher, Vice president

Janet Hopkin, Treasurer

Hannelore Heyer, Secretary

Sheldon Brayer, Nominating chair

Elizabeth Brayer

Richard Dollinger

Suzanne Donahue

Sally Harper

Peter Parker

Ron Richardson

Arlene A. Vanderlinde

Andrew Wheatcraft

Mary Jo Lanphear, Town of Brighton Historian

Call Betsy Brayer at 244-0402 to contribute articles or letters

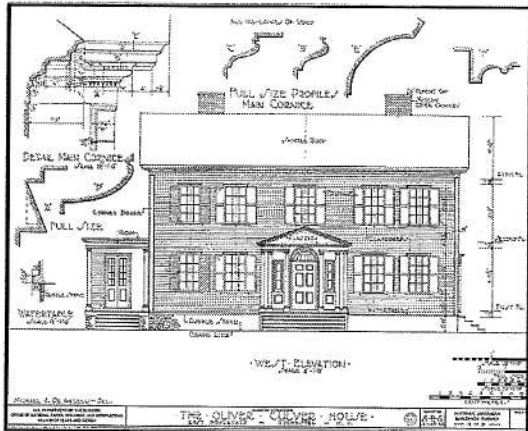


Historic Brighton address

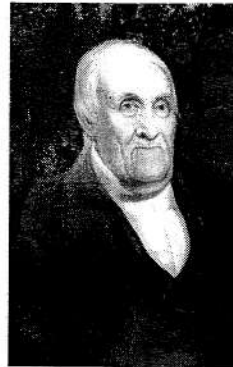
P.O. Box 18525

Website: www.historicbrighton.org

VACANT OLIVER CULVER HOUSE, 70 EAST BOULEVARD IS SITE OF HISTORIC BRIGHTON PROGRAM. OCTOBER 30



*Historic American Buildings Survey
drawing, 1934*



Oliver Culver

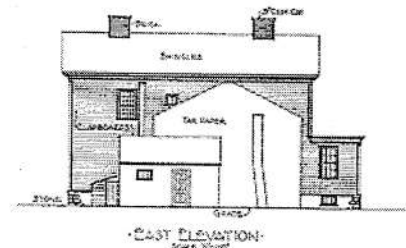
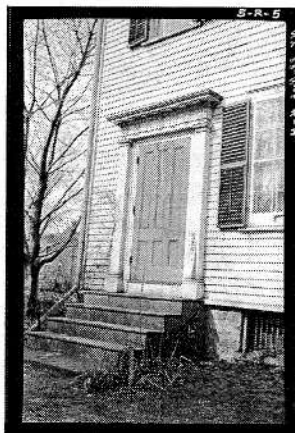


*Photo by Hans Padelt for the Landmark
Society of Western New York*

Oliver Culver (1779-1867) was born in Connecticut. At age 18, he started walking westward to take a surveying job in Cleveland. When delayed in Schenectady waiting for a lake vessel, Culver wandered on to Irondequoit Bay. For a month in 1796, he hunted and fished near the Indian Landing. About 1800, he returned, worked in at various jobs, and boarded at Orringh Stone's Tavern. He bought 180 acres at \$3 an acre bounded by today's Barrington and Hawthorne Streets and Route 490. He cleared some of the land and planted wheat near Culver Road, but did not settle there until his marriage to Alice Ray of Pittsford in 1805. He then built a cabin in the woods which by 1818 had been added to by building in front of the cabin. When the house was moved to its present address in 1905, the old portion was demolished although, according to architect Carl Schmidt, the lines of the old house can be easily traced.

Both Culver Road and Oliver Street were named for Oliver Culver.

The wide side door, popularly known as a funeral door because a coffin could be carried though it, was a common entrance in homes that had public areas such as taverns



HABS drawing shows tar paper on the back of the house where the demolished original house had been joined.

Elizabeth Holihan

Pioneer preservationist, interior designer, and restorationist Elizabeth Holihan acquired the Oliver Culver house for a reputed \$3,000 in 1941. Prior to that time, the early 19th century inn/residence had remained in the Culver family down to Oliver's great grandson. For the



next sixty years, Miss Holihan lovingly restored the exquisite Federal structure while adding her own touches such as a superb library of rare art and architecture books. She probably became interested in preservation under the tutelage of Helen Ellwanger who formed the Landmark Society of Western New York to save the Campbell-Whittlesey house in the late 1930s. Miss Holihan served as president of the Landmark Society (1952-1961) and president of the Rochester Historical Society (1977-2000). Her restorations included the Schuyler mansion, Stone Tolan house grounds, Patrick Barry house, and George Eastman's boyhood home.