



HISTORIC BRIGHTON NEWS

Volume 12

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Number 1

Celebrating our town's history and educating our community about Brighton's past.

Historic Brighton Annual Meeting January 30th, 2011 2:30PM Brighton Town Hall Auditorium

BRIGHTON MEMORIES II

Bring your personal recollections and vintage photographs of your life in Brighton to the Auditorium at the Brighton Town Hall on Sunday, January 30th at 2:30 PM. WHAM TV News Anchor, Don Alhart, will once again host this popular event. Don will share his own childhood memories of growing up in Brighton. Brighton Cable will record this meeting to bring the community. Call your neighbors and invite them to attend with you. This nostalgic, sentimental and sometimes hilarious event promises to be “memorable.”

Historic Brighton's Annual Meeting and Election of Trustees will precede the program.

Free and open to the public.

The Blaker-Hartley Water Well

By Leo Dodd

The phrase archaeological dig conjures up images of Egyptian earth being removed from a remote desert site to reveal treasures not seen for thousands of years, cities and thousands of artifacts of great riches. Well, we have been conducting an archaeological dig on the Blaker-Hartley farm property off Westfall Road this summer on a smaller scale and fewer riches but with great interest.



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So, let me describe our efforts. The diggers three were Janet Hopkin, Kathy Lynn and Leo Dodd. We started with the desire to uncover the water well located within twenty feet of the main house. The view of the well area is shown below as of May 10, 2010. Several boards were evident covering a stone-lined hole; our site was identified and we started to dig.



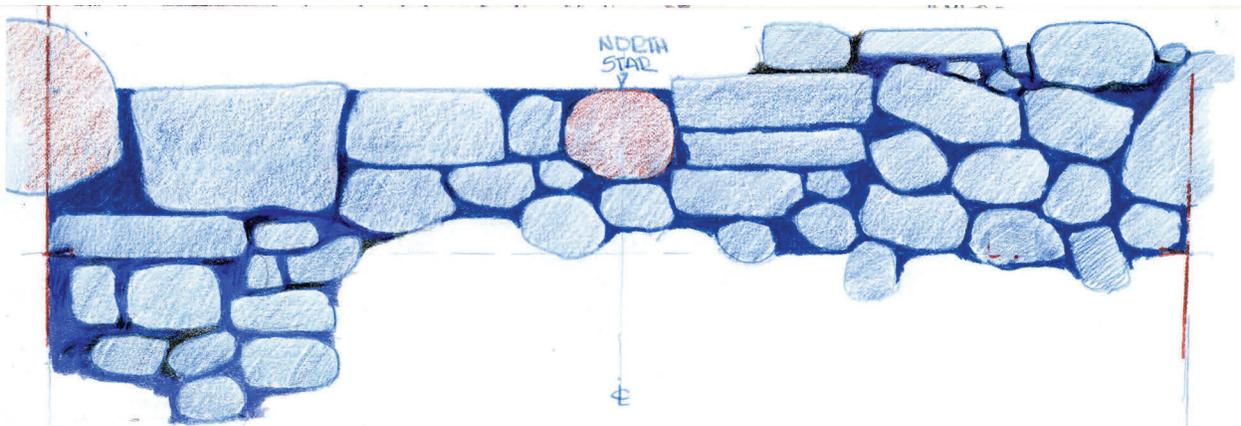
After a summer of digging, the well area now appears as follows. The first effort was to remove the top material, which consisted of long wooden planks, large metal plates and concrete slabs. All of these materials are thought to have been used to cover the well opening for protection from dirt and debris and to allow safe and secure access to remove water from well. The wooden planks were seven feet long and two feet wide with an access hole in the

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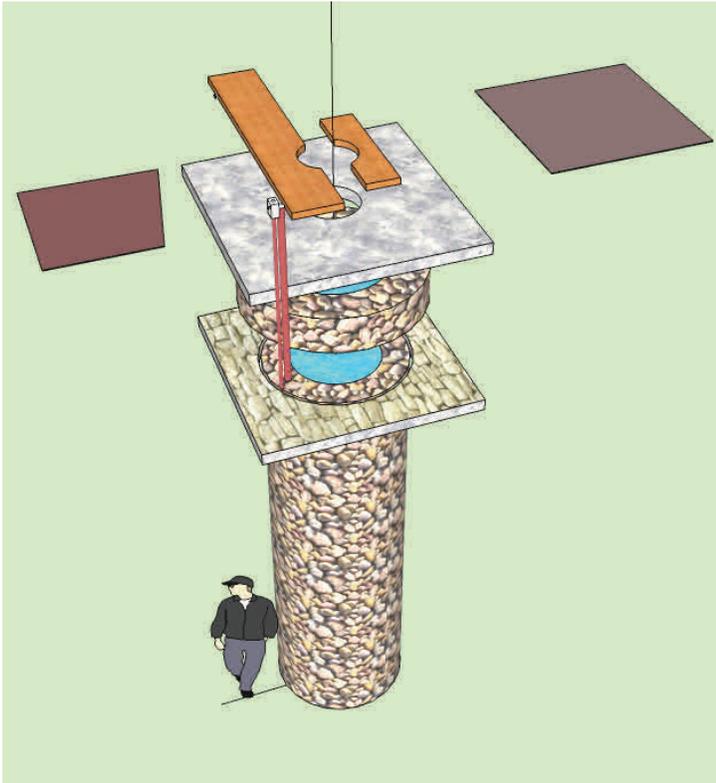


center. The metal plates were approximately four feet square and the concrete was broken in various size sections, giving the impression of an original concrete slab possibly six foot square that covered the top of the well. The removal of the wood, metal, and concrete gave view to a large collection of small glacial rock surrounding a two and half foot well-hole more than ten feet deep. Today, the well remains blocked by several concrete slabs that we have yet to remove. The upper two feet were examined and measured, revealing the details of the non-mortared field stone lining typical of our nineteen century farm wells in Brighton.

Illustrated below is a rolled-out inner view of the first two foot depth of the well inner circumference. The rock placement was one selected by the well contractor of available stone. The Edmunds diaries documented the varied use of glacial stone on the farm. The diaries speak of uses such as: paving the farm road and barnyard to establish a work area; supporting fence posts; providing material for house and barn foundations, and lining the water wells.



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The arrangement of the elements found about the well area can be illustrated as shown. Two metal plates, two boards and concrete slab all above the constructed well to a depth unknown at this date. All these items rested above the stone elements needed to establish a base atop the well area and the stone lining of the well proper.

Several metal artifacts found at the well site give evidence of tools and means to allow water access and removal. Chain links, cast iron pulley parts, and large metal bolts and pivots were found, but as yet no evidence of a hand pump. An electric switch box and protective cable piping had been established at the site, but no electrical pump was uncovered.

A review of the Edmunds diaries reveals several stone related references. One item was the task of removing and collecting field stone from the fields as plowed and storing them for later use. The Diaries of year 1891 contained several references to collecting stone from the fields. This activity I am sure happened every year but was noted only in one year's diary, as so often happened in his note writings,

Mon. May 25..... *"Jimmy picked up stone on beet ground."*
 Tue. May 26 *"Him and Jimmy drew limbs and stone out of the young orchard."*
 Fri. May 29 *"Jimmy and Will picked stones out west of house."*
 Thur Aug. 13 *"William picked stone on the meadow."*
 Fri. Aug. 14 *"William drew stone from the meadow."*
 Sat. Aug. 15 *"William picked stone."*
 Sat. Aug. 22 *"William picked stone in the meadow."*
 Mon. Aug. 24 *"William scraped in the barnyard and drew stone."*
 Tue. Aug. 25 *"William scraped in the barnyard and drew stone."*

(This is really neat history. . . to be able to dig on property in 2010, uncovering artifacts and structures, and relating it to the first hand account of farming tasks with the diary details written in 1891.)

But how about this diary entry of Tuesday, March 18 1884,
"Went down to J. Hartleys and got our stone boat."

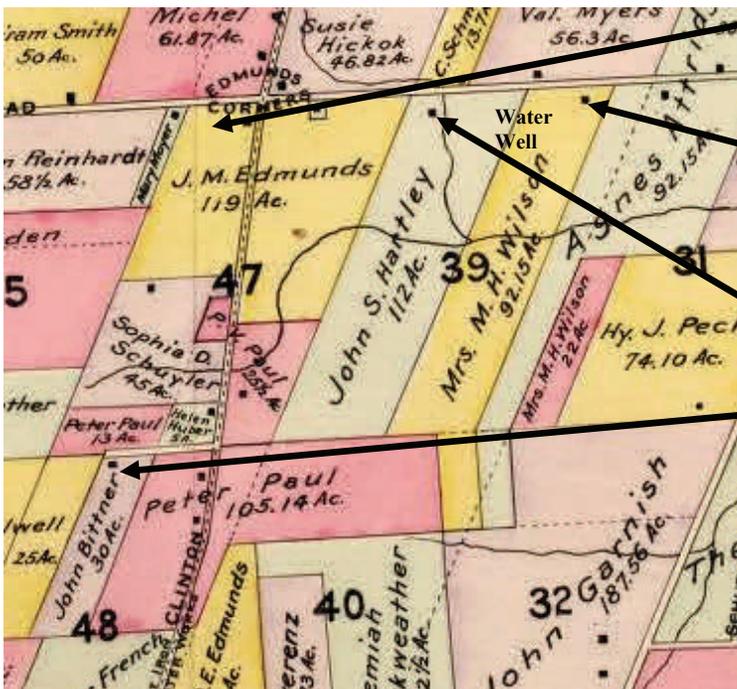
Had John Hartley, next door neighbor to James Edmunds and probably best friend at that time, borrowed James stone boat to collect stones for his water well and that is the date of our uncovered well. . . 1884. . . could be..right! Yes, "you betch-ya". . . could be!

Another James Edmunds diary entry that is pertinent to our understanding of well construction is the following entry of January 4, 1889

“Fished the Bucket out of the Well. Made a new Well Spout.”

Things happen at the well, operations go wrong, and a new well spout is required. We know from his diary entries that James Edmunds was an accomplished carpenter with access to a wood shop and wood lathe. But could it be that I was looking for artifacts to a metal well pump and they did not exist? That the pump and spout were of wooden construction which did not survive the rigors of one hundred plus years of climate exposure. True, this is not the same property; I am not digging on Edmunds property, but James was a constant assistant to the works on the Hartley farm. He noted spending weeks on the Hartley farm working on structures or land.

5 The Bittner connection.....let’s take a minute to review the proximity of four farm lands and their relationship, using a 1902 Brighton map. These three farms should find some way to come together at the Buckland House of History. The existence of twenty seven years of farm diaries, the diggings of present day amateur historians and the scholarship of a Brighton college, combining to document nineteenth century Brighton farm history. Now wouldn’t that be great! . . . ***How do we accomplish that goal?***



Edmunds Farm

. . . . Origin of the 38 Farm Diaries.

Buckland House of History

. . . . Farm house restored by Town of Brighton

Hartley Farm

. . . . Land where we are digging today.

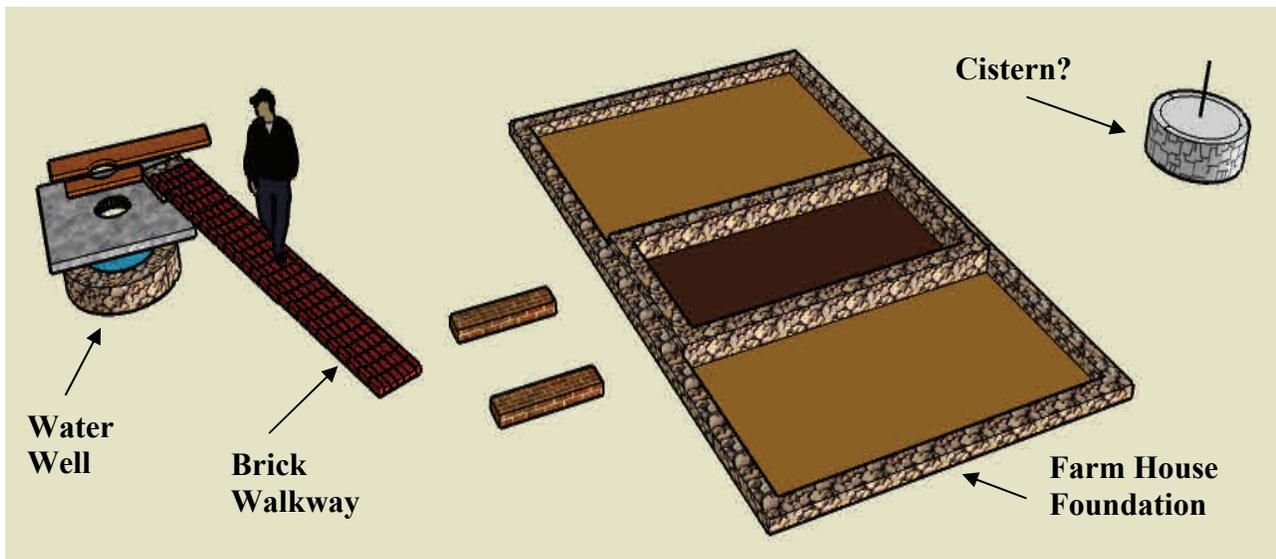
Bittner Farm

. . . . The farm which Professor David Day, author of “The Life and Death of a Family Farm” book, describing several years of archaeological digs at the Bittner farm house, an area which continues to be explored by Monroe Community College students.



The next phase of our digging at the Blaker-Hartley Farm is to uncover the foundation to the house and detail, if possible, the method and means of construction and develop more completely the Brighton farm history of Westfall Road. I have not told you about the brick walkway that was uncovered leading from the house entrance to the well site. This twenty foot long three foot wide path was quite a surprise when finally totally uncovered.

6 So as we wind up our digging efforts for the year 2010 and look at the future we find the site development looks like the following sketch. With a goal of collecting additional Brighton farm history details, a great community opportunity exists before development obliterates access and understanding.



Oh! Did we find anything really interesting? Well, yes, Kathy and Janet did. In digging near the house at the east wall foundation, they unearthed two coins, one a half penny token of 1812, and the other a 1829 coin. They received a “Heroes Badge” for their efforts. We will talk more in 2011, hopefully at the Buckland House of History.



Lovina Wells Riley, Third Wife of Orringh Stone

**By Mary Jo Lanphear
Brighton Town Historian**

Lovina Wells, was born on 21 April 1765, the second child of Ephraim and Sarah Gates Wells, of Colchester, Connecticut, a town located between Norwich and Hartford.

Her siblings included older sister, Sarah, and Hannah, Thomas, Ephraim, and Ruby. When Lovina was twenty-five years old, she married Ashbel Riley in Scotland, Connecticut, a town northeast of Colchester. Their first son, Ashbel Wells Riley, was born on 19 March 1795 in Glastonbury, Connecticut, and their second son, Justin P. Riley, was born in Scotland, Connecticut on 1 August 1797. By 1799, Ashbel Riley was dead and Lovina was left to raise their two young sons.

7 In his memoirs, Ashbel W. Riley said that his childhood was spent in Rocky Hill, Connecticut, a town south of Hartford near Glastonbury. In 1813 he moved to Preston, Chenango County, New York, where he taught school for a year then he lived in Scipio and Auburn in Cayuga County from 1814-1815. 1815 found him in Buffalo but later that year he made a tour of eastern states with his mother. By 1816 he had settled in Brighton. He said that he learned the carpenter's trade at the insistence of his mother, rather than go to college or into the Navy, but education was a continuous interest in his life. He taught Sunday school at the Brighton Presbyterian Church in 1819 and served as school commissioner in Brighton from 1824 to 1829.

Sometime after the 1810 census of Wethersfield, CT, in which Lovina was enumerated alone, Lovina moved to Brighton perhaps to live with Ashbel or Justin. In May of 1817 she bought three acres in Brighton in Lot #58 with a house and shed. Lovina's land in lot #58 was located near the northeast side of the first Brighton village on the east side of the Genesee River. The following year Lovina owned fifty-four acres on the west side of lot #37, valued at \$800. The present-day Brighton neighborhood of Home Acres is located on lot 37.

In 1820 there were two weddings in the Riley family: Lovina married widower Orringh Stone on 16 May, and her son, Justin, married Abigail Hagaman, the daughter of John Hagaman of Highland Avenue on 5 September. A few years later, Orringh Stone's youngest daughter, Harriet, married Abigail's brother, Charles.

When Lovina Riley married Orringh Stone in 1820, he had been a widower for fifteen months. His seven surviving children were Sally, 25, Olive, 21, Malana, 20, Elizabeth (Eliza), 16, Harriet, 14, Orringh Jr., 12, and Enos, 10. Lovina was fifty-five

years old. Early nineteenth century family life would have Orringh responsible for training his sons in the business of farming and tavern-keeping. Lovina would have taken on the education of the young women in the housekeeping skills they would need when they married. Women were responsible for the growing, preparation, and storage of food for their families in addition to maintaining the household. If their spinning, weaving, and / or fulling of cloth could provide an income, that enhanced their value as wives.

In 1839, Orringh Stone died. Lovina remained in Brighton, living with her son, Justin, through the 1840 census. She died in Preston, Chenango County on 12 July 1846 at the age of 81. Presumably she was visiting or staying with her brother, Ephraim Wells, who was seventy-six when Lovina died. She was buried in Mount Hope Cemetery in the Riley plot.

References:

U.S. Census, newspapers, Ontario County assessment rolls, Ontario County deeds, Monroe County Surrogate Court records, Barbour collection of Connecticut Vital Records

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New Members Always Welcome

As a member you will receive our newsletter **Historic Brighton News** with interesting articles about Brighton's history and information about upcoming lectures and events. Recent lectures have focused on Brighton's important architects and architecture, and its agricultural roots.

Historic Brighton is a private not-for-profit membership organization bringing the town's history to the community through lectures, research and its many publications. To learn more visit our website www.historicbrighton.org.

Please fill out the form (or copy) and return it at your earliest convenience. Your membership in Historic Brighton is tax deductible. Please forward your check, payable to Historic Brighton, P.O. Box 18525 Rochester, NY 14618 .

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