

## BRIGHTON'S CEMETERIES

One of the first civic issues to come before the newly incorporated village of Brighton was the choice of a suitable site for a new cemetery. There was at that time a small cemetery within the corporation, in fact it still remains, although many of Brighton's present day residents are probably unaware of its existence. It is located between Prince Edward and Cedar Streets, some distance back of Sam Covell's residence on Harbor Street. A number of the monuments are still standing and interments have been made there in recent years, but it apparently was used little after the opening of Mount Hope.

The cemetery question first came before council on March 30, 1861, when a committee was appointed to choose a location. Apparently this group was unsuccessful as another committee was named by council on April 17, 1863. The following year the citizens took a hand in the matter when a petition was presented to the village "fathers" who subsequently made an offer to A.C. Singleton of \$150. for five acres of his farm. Two years elapsed and on November 20, 1866 council passed a resolution to purchase a cemetery site from Mrs. M. Singleton, southwest of John McLaughby's property. Final action came on April 6, 1867 when authorization was passed for the purchase of a cemetery site from Abraham Singleton for \$800. A plan was prepared and lots were sold at a sale on July 6th. Single plots (12' x 12') sold for \$2.50 and double plots (12' x 24') cost \$5.00.

The cemetery was fenced on three sides in 1868 at a cost of \$103.74, and a house was erected there in 1887, according to the old minute book of Brighton Village Council. The vault presently in use for temporary interment was donated by Hugh Bibby.

It is not generally known that there is a pioneer cemetery on Presqu'ile Point, nevertheless the thousands of visitors who visit the park annually drive within a stone's throw of it when they travel the new road from the bay to the lake shore side. The last remaining stone has fallen and little visual evidence remains of its existence. One or more members of the Selleck family, who were pioneer settlers at Presqu'ile around 1800 are buried there. It is understood that the remains of some of the pioneers buried there were later removed to Mount Hope or the old Covell Cemetery in Brighton. The suggestion has been made that the Department of Lands and Forests should take steps for its preservation by erecting a fence and restoring any of the monuments which remain.

Before the establishment of cemeteries it was the custom to bury the dead in private plots on the property of the deceased's family. One such private burial ground is situated on the farm of Jacobs Boes, in the Lawson Settlement. This burial ground is situated on the "Vansicklin" farm and was only used by the pioneer Vansicklin family. In 1965, Mr. Arnold Boes erected a fence around the area; it was a fine gesture on his part; he needed the field for pasture, and also must have felt it right and good, to respect the resting places of a good pioneer family.

Another private burial ground is at Smithfield, on the former Smith property, settled by John Drummond Smith, around 1800. Through the years a few burials took place to help friends, not connected with the Smith family. It has for a number of years been completely neglected, due to the fact that there are no interested descendants willing to help restore it.

It is interesting to know, that in many rural areas, the Womens' Insititutes have taken over the restoration of their local cemetery.