The Brenner Family

Information provided by Bev Brenner Christensen

The young Brenner couple moved to Millersburg in 1901 as newlyweds, establishing roots that ran so deep that all their children created homes and raised their own families here.

Louis David Brenner and Matilda Masse were from the small Lake Huron town of St. Joseph in Huron County, Ontario. Louis' family moved to Harrisville in 1883 when he was six years old. On April 30, 1901, Louis and Matilda were married in the St. Peters Roman Catholic Church in St. Joseph.

Louis brought his new bride to Millersburg, where lumber was king and he had good prospects of clearing land for a farm. They lived in the village for a time, before buying 40 acres a mile north of town, and began to clear the land. In 1909 the couple had a major setback when their home burned and they were forced to rebuild.

Their children were, Marie who married Adelore Crevier and had five children, Catherine (Kreft), Jennie (Ockensile), Mary Lou (Barber), Clifford, and Neil. Adelore was born December 22, 1900 in black River and married Marie on May 12, 1926 in Onaway. They moved to the farm near Millersburg in 1932.

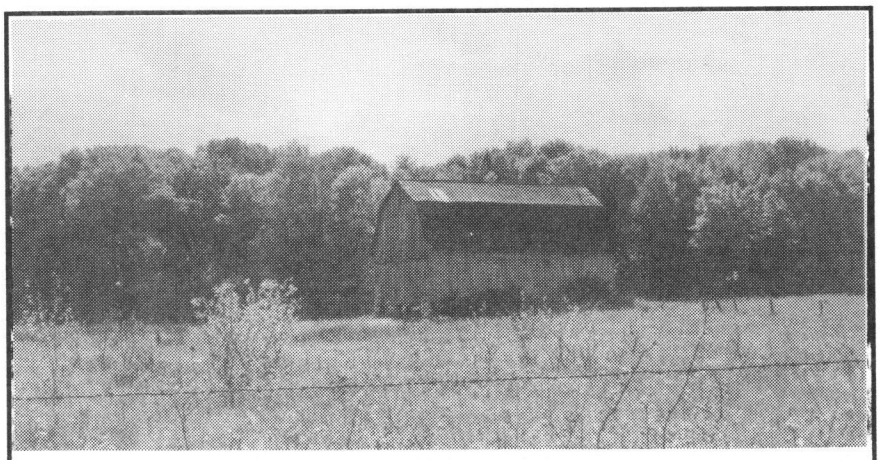
Charles was married to Mildred Robbins, with one child Beverly (Christensen); Leo was born February 26, 1909 and married Gladys Henke on December 3, 1935. He worked for Straits Aggregate. They had six children, Donald, David, Sally (Schaedig), Patricia (Houghmaster), and twins, Bonita (McDonald) and Bonnie (McDonald). Leo died January 7, 1975. Nelson, married to Ruth Schnepp who died August 15. 1981 and then he married Betty Hagstrom.

Maurice Freeman

Albena was married to Maurice Freeman, with five children, Ralph, Ray, Julie (Wills), Donna (LaFave), and Rita (Adas). Maurice was born May 8, 1910 in Walkerville and moved to Millersburg at age eight. On July 1, 1936 he married Albena in Onaway. Maurice was a county road truck driver for 21 years and before that worked in the hardware store in Millersburg. He died March 16, 1976. Ralph

Louis was born March 8, 1920 and married Beulah Robbins on his 23rd birthday March 8, 1943. He was a superintendent at Big Cut. They had four children Carol (Inglis), Robert, Roger, and Rollin. Louis died June 10, 2000.

Louis Sr. died June 2, 1926. Tillie, as she was know by her numerous friends, became the matriarch of the family and was a favorite of her grandchildren. She died September 1, 1955. Both are buried in Harrisville.



The Brenner Farm

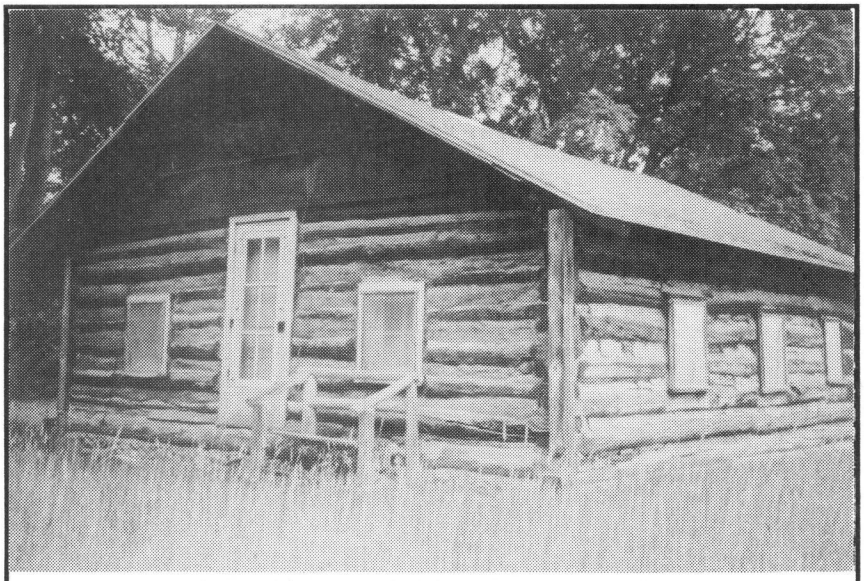
Charles E. Case

The first known settlers to the Millersburg area were Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Case in 1883. They were a young couple, newly arrived from downstate, he was from Flint and his wife, Dora (Nixon) Case was from Genesee. They decided to homestead in the south part of the township, cutting a road into their farm from the Ocqueoc River State Road, now called McIntosh Road.

They had a difficult time getting to the area that Charles had chosen. They got off the train at Indian River and traveled on the Parris stage to their destination, a distance of 50 miles or so Frequently, tired of riding, they would get off and walk. They finally came thru the dense wilderness to the 160 acres of virgin pine and hardwoods they homesteaded.

They had brought with them a few pieces of furniture including a rocking chair. The first night the Case family spent in their homestead, it rained very hard. Mr. Case often told the story of how he sat in the rocking chair with his wife on his lap and the umbrella held over his head.

The next morning with the storm over they set about with a saw, ax, hammer, and nails and soon had a small shelter. While Mrs. Case was no woodsman, she dragged the logs her husband had fallen and removed the limbs from them.



This cabin is possibly the first home in Case Township.

Mr. Case built a neat tiny log home to shelter them until a larger more sturdy home could be built. He cut slender poles and placed them as closely together as he could get them. Holes were cut for a few windows and a door. The floor was only earth.

He built the largest frame barn in the county. The barn was 40 by 60 feet with a basement 10 feet high and solid stonewall two and one-half feet thick. He had a big herd of cattle, many sheep, along with six head of horses and modern machinery to use on his farm as soon as the land was cleared.

The Presque Isle County News, February 20, 1904 edition reported the following: This would have been the second larger home of the Case family.

On Thursday morning about 5:30, fire was discovered in the roof of their house by Mrs. Case, and although she worked hard inside and Mr. Case on the outside, they could not check the flames and had to devote their attention to saving what they could of the contents and let the house go.

Mr. Case lives about three and a half miles south of town and it so happened that all of his near neighbors were way in camp so there were none to assist in any way.

Mrs. Case had on a very thin pair of shoes and her feet soon were wet and cold and the excitement and hard work exhausted her, and it will be fortunate indeed if she escapes a severe illness.

They only succeeded in removing a few articles of furniture and clothing, every thing else being burned. A cellar full of canned fruit, lard and such articles as a thrifty housewife prepares was totally destroyed.

It was a fortunate circumstance that the weather had moderated, for if the fire had occurred Monday or Tuesday Mr. and Mrs. Case would doubtless have perished.

The accumulations of about twenty years of toil in a new country, so far as household articles are concerned, were destroyed in a few minutes. The wind was in a favorable direction and none of the barn or other buildings were hurt. There was an insurance of about $300 on house and contents in the Farmer's Mutual Insurance Co. of Presque Isle Co.

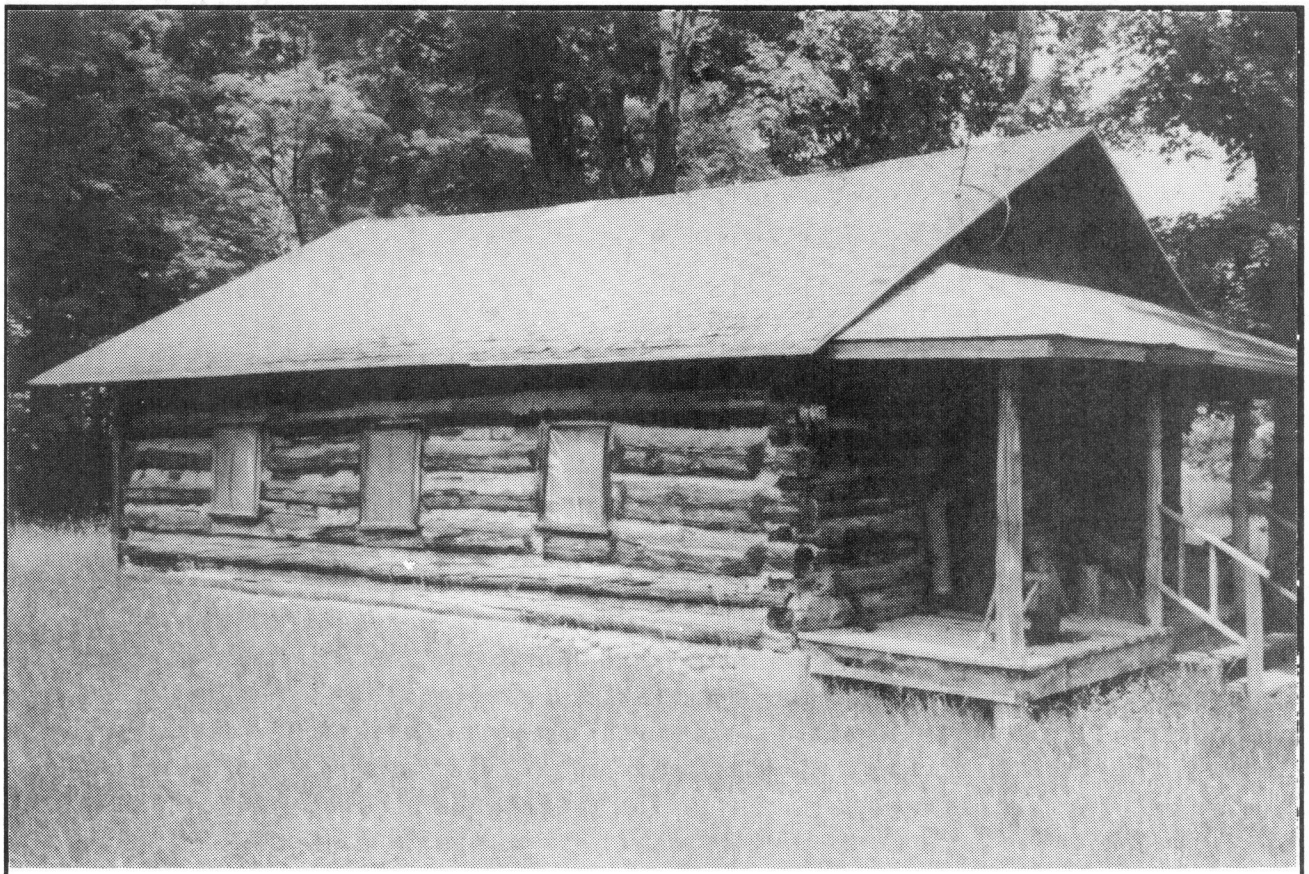
Mr. Case will not attempt to rebuild until spring but will likely get the VanGuilder house, which is about a half mile from his farm and is vacant at present.

Mrs. Case's immediate lady neighbors, who are all old residents, presented her a purse of $10 to assist in replacing some of the lost household articles.

Mr. and Mrs. Case moved to Flint sometime between 1910 and 1913. There according to records he died at age 80 on March 2, 1939. She died June 2, 1930 being 72 years old.

Out of this union were born three children, two girls, Bertha M. Case (1885), Matie Belle Case (1887); and a son, Elton C. Case (1885)

The township of Case, named after it first settlers, was formally established May 12, 1885 and conducted its first election June 1, 1885. It was formed from portions of Moltke and Bismarck Townships.



This is what some of the original cabins would have looked like