

Brighton's Town Supervisors

- 1. Oliver Culver** came to the Genesee country in 1796 as a surveyor. He purchased a large tract of land in 1800 where he later established a farm and tavern. Oliver Culver was responsible for organizing the first school in the area in 1802, furnishing the boards for the building and hiring a teacher. Working at the Tryon store until 1804, he made trading trips to Ohio, returning from Cleveland with 4500 pounds of fur and fifteen yoke of oxen. He boarded with Orringh Stone until his marriage in 1805 to Alice Ray of Pittsford and, in 1814 at Orringh Stone's tavern, was elected the first town supervisor of Brighton. He was re-elected to the position in 1815 and 1816 and served additional terms in 1838-1841 and 1844.
- 2 Elisha D. Ely**, born in 1784 in West Springfield, Massachusetts, came to Brighton in 1813 and bought land on the Genesee River in the first village of Brighton. He was part of a partnership that built "the old red mill" on Aqueduct Street. During the War of 1812 he served as captain of the militia defending Rochester. He served two terms as Brighton town supervisor in 1817 and 1818. Three years later, when Monroe County was formed, he became the first Surrogate Court judge. Elisha Ely is notable for publishing the first Rochester directory in 1827. In 1834 he moved to Michigan where he died in 1862.
- 3. Ezekiel Morse** was the town supervisor of Brighton for several one-year terms from 1819 to 1824, and in 1828. During those terms he served on the first Monroe County Board of Supervisors in 1821. His farm was located near the present-day French Road Middle School. In the 1980s, the farmhouse was moved to Dixon Woods in Pittsford.
- 4. Elisha B. Strong** is said to have been the first permanent resident of Carthage, a village of the town of Brighton on the east bank of the Genesee River between the first village of Brighton and Hanford's Landing. After graduating from Yale College, Elisha Strong came to Brighton in 1816 from Windsor, Connecticut, where he had been born in 1787. With Elisha Beach he purchased 1000 acres at Carthage where they built a saw mill and a grist mill in an effort to establish a village and attract settlers. They built a bridge across the Genesee River near what is now the Veterans' Memorial Bridge. Elisha Strong was one of the petitioners to the New York State Legislature to form the new county of Monroe in 1821. He was elected supervisor of Brighton in 1825 and 1826.
- 5. Thomas Blossom** came with his father and mother, Ezra and Mehitabel Blossom from Lenox, Massachusetts, in 1818. Ezra opened a tavern in Brighton Centre on the southwest corner of what is now East Avenue and Winton Road. Thomas, born in 1784, married Hannah Yale, daughter of Justus Yale of Brighton. He was town supervisor of Brighton in 1827.
- 6. Samuel G. Andrews** came to Brighton when his father, Samuel J. Andrews, left New Haven, Connecticut, in 1812. The Andrews' property in Brighton was on the east side of the Genesee River near the main falls. It is said that Samuel J. built the first stone house in the village in connection with establishing a mill at the falls. Samuel G. Andrews was town supervisor of Brighton from 1829 to 1831. He was a member of the New York State Legislature in 1831 and 1832. After his service in the state legislature, he became active in Rochester city politics, serving as mayor of the city in 1840 and 1856, and postmaster from 1842 to 1845. Samuel Andrews was Monroe County Clerk from 1834 to 1837. After his second term as mayor, he was elected to the U.S. Congress in 1856. He died in 1863.

- 7. William B. Alexander** was born in 1788 in Galway, Saratoga County, New York, and settled in Brighton in 1817. He was supervisor of Brighton from 1832 to 1834 and was a member of the Whig party when he ran for justice of the peace in 1849 and 1850. Alexander Street in Rochester is named for him.
- 8. David Stanhope Bates** was born in 1777 in Morristown, New Jersey. He was a surveyor and engineer and was one of the principal engineers during the construction of the Erie Canal. After the completion of that project, he was the chief engineer for the Ohio Canal before returning to Brighton. He served two terms as town supervisor in 1835 and 1836.
- 9. Samuel Parsons Beckwith** was the son of John Beckwith who moved his family to Brighton in 1827, building a home and nursery on 168 acres of land at the corner of what is now Highland Avenue and Winton Road South. The family home still stands at the corner of Winton and Castlebar Roads. Samuel Beckwith worked in the family nursery business and served a term as Brighton supervisor in 1837.
- 10. Samuel P. Gould** was born in 1801 in Boxford, Massachusetts, and came to Brighton in 1819. He married Caroline Hatch in 1827 and worked in the shoe business with his brother, Jacob Gould, before buying a large farm in Brighton. In addition to serving as town supervisor from 1842 to 1843 and again, in 1865, he was also a judge in the Court of Sessions. He died at his house in Brighton Centre in 1837.
- 11. Stephen Otis**, born in Maine in 1804, immigrated from Canastota, New York, to Brighton with his brother, William. The two men went into business as contractors. In 1853, when the Rochester Brick & Tile Company formed, Stephen Otis was one of the principals. After his death in 1858, Stephen's son, Ira Otis, took over as manager of the brick works on Monroe Avenue in Brighton. Stephen Otis served as Brighton town supervisor from 1845 to 1847.
- 12. Lorenzo D. Ely** married Caroline Elizabeth Culver, the daughter of Oliver Culver, and fathered the only grandchildren of Oliver and his wife, Alice Ray Culver. The Elys lived on a farm on the west side of what is now Winton Road North. In 1844, Lorenzo D. Ely advertised his new fleet of canal boats. He was the supervisor of Brighton in 1848 and from 1862 to 1864.
- 13. Jason Baker** was closely involved with Brighton's brick industry as a salesman and as an investor. His large brick Italianate style house at 1600 Highland Avenue put him close to the brick operations on Monroe Avenue. Jason Baker was elected supervisor of Brighton in 1849 and served as a representative from the 1st Assembly District of Monroe County. In 1860 Jason Baker became the treasurer of the city of Rochester, a post he held until his death in 1864.
- 14. Elisha Miller** came to Brighton from Greene County about 1828. He set up his medical practice in a large brick Italianate style house on East Avenue in Brighton Centre. Purchased by Harrison A. Lyon in 1880, that house became the core of a larger residence and is now the location of the Rochester Academy of Medicine. In 1842 Elisha Miller was elected school commissioner of Brighton and in 1850 he served a term as town supervisor.
- 15. Benjamin Remington** came to Brighton in 1820 from Hancock, Berkshire County, Massachusetts, carrying apple trees on his back. He purchased eighty-eight acres on River Road in West Brighton, just north of what would become the New York Central & Hudson Railroad. Benjamin Remington served as town supervisor of Brighton in 1851. Both of his sons followed him into politics, Jeremiah serving in the Kansas State Legislature, and Edwin as Brighton town supervisor in 1890.

16. Abel Dryer came to Brighton with his family in 1817 from Rehoboth, Massachusetts. They settled in the Allens Creek area, purchasing the 100-acre Rattlesnake Spring Farm on Landing Road. Abel married Mary Serviss and had eleven children. Active locally in Whig politics, Abel Dryer was elected to a one-year term as supervisor of Brighton in 1852. The Dryer house is a designated Brighton landmark.

17. Justus Yale from Berkshire County, Massachusetts, came to Brighton in 1818. He had a small store in Brighton Centre on the northwest corner of East Avenue and Winton Road, the site of the later Caley & Nash enterprise. Justus Yale was one of the first nurserymen in Brighton, a business that his son, Thomas Blossom Yale, took over. Justus Yale was the town supervisor of Brighton in 1853

18. Seth Weed purchased property in Brighton in 1829 near the Erie Canal and Clover Street. With an additional purchase in 1850, he eventually owned 97 acres that included what is now Clover Hills Drive. In 1854 Seth Weed was an active member of the Anti-Nebraska party that formed in opposition to the extension of slavery in the western territories. In 1854 Seth Weed was elected Brighton Town supervisor. The Seth Weed house on Clover Street is a designated Brighton landmark.

19. Timothy Wallace came to Brighton from Massachusetts and bought land on Clinton Avenue South in 1833 where he built a fine brick house. Timothy Wallace was a farmer and also the superintendent of the Monroe County Alms house on South Avenue. He was also active in local politics, serving as a delegate to the Democrat Republican county convention in the 1840s and 1850s. He served as town supervisor for Brighton in 1855. Timothy Wallace died in 1893 at age 93. He is buried in Mount Hope Cemetery. His brick house on Clinton Avenue South is a designated town landmark.

20. Luther Eaton's family came to West Brighton in an ox cart in 1804. His father chose farmland on the west side of what is now West Henrietta Road across from the Colwell family, now the site of Monroe Community College. Luther married Priscilla Sibley of Rush. In addition to serving as Brighton town supervisor in 1856, he was justice of the peace for twenty years and captain of the 10th Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 2nd Division of Riflemen for the New York State Militia.

21. Benjamin Huntington and his wife, Eleanora, lived in Brighton Centre when he was elected supervisor of Brighton in 1857 and 1858. He was a farmer and owned not only the village lot but also several parcels of land in the Allens Creek area

22. Henry H. Holton was born in Brighton Centre in 1815 and, as an adult, continued to live there with his wife, Susan, while he was a nurseryman. He served two terms as supervisor of Brighton in 1859 and 1860 before moving to Irondequoit where he died in 1867 at age 52. He was buried in Brighton Cemetery. Susan Holton died in 1896 in Iowa.

23. Edwin T. Otis, born in Brighton in 1842, was the son of Stephen Otis, supervisor of Brighton in 1845-1847. Edwin was elected supervisor of the town of Brighton at the annual meeting of residents on 5 March 1861, receiving 208 votes. His opponent, Henry H. Holton, received 202. Edwin and his wife, Rosetta, owned a house on East Avenue near Goodman Street.

24. Ira Todd was born in Peekskill, New York, in 1825. His family settled in Pittsford in 1829. Ira Todd bought land in Brighton in 1845, building a large brick house on Clover Street that is now a designated town landmark. He married Zilpha Manchester of Niagara County in 1847. In addition to serving as town assessor for six years, Ira Todd was supervisor of Brighton in 1866, 1868-1870, and 1875-1876. Although a Democrat in a Republican town, he was elected six times to the supervisor's position.

25. Caleb Moore, son of Isaac and Amy Kennedy Bloss Moore, was born in Brighton on the Moore farm on Clover Street that had been purchased by the Moores from Oliver Culver in 1829. The large brick house, now a Brighton landmark, was constructed from bricks made on the site. Caleb Moore served in the Civil War after raising a company and serving as captain. A distinguished cavalry officer, he was promoted to the rank of major. After the war, he returned to Brighton and served as town supervisor in 1867. His death in 1869 was attributed to health issues incurred in the war. He is buried in Brighton cemetery.

26. Austin Crittenden came to Brighton with his family from Westchester County, New York, in 1814. His father, Chauncey Crittenden, purchased 600 acres in West Brighton and built a small brick house on what is now West Henrietta Road. The family later moved to 1600 Crittenden Road, a designated town landmark. Austin Crittenden married Sarah Warrant, uniting two prominent early West Brighton families. Austin Crittenden was a trustee of Brighton #4 School District. He was elected supervisor of Brighton in 1871 and 1872.

27. Harrison Armstrong Lyon was born in Burnt Hills, Saratoga County, in 1815. He settled in Rochester in 1830 where he was in the dry goods and carpet business until moving to Brighton in 1850 where he bought a large hops farm near Brighton Centre. In 1866 he partnered with A.J. Fisk to form the Eagle Nursery. When Fisk retired, L. W. Hall took over. The two continued the partnership until 1896. Harrison Lyon married Fannie Minerva Gale, the daughter of Justus Gale. He served in the New York Assembly in 1859. Harrison Lyon was supervisor of Brighton in 1874.

28. Thomas C. Wilson was born in Scotland in 1827. He came to Brighton in 1833 with his parents. In 1852 he became a nurseryman, specializing in fruit and shade trees that he grew on a 100-acre tract north of Brighton Centre. He married Emma Perrin, daughter of early settlers, and had three daughters. Thomas C. Wilson served three terms as Brighton town supervisor in 1877, 1878, and 1879.

29. David K. Bell was born in Ireland in 1845 and came to the United State as an infant. His father purchased a sixty-acre farm on East Henrietta Road, the site of the present-day Monroe Community Hospital. David Bell inherited the successful fruit farm, "Pear Valley Farm" and lived there for eighty years. Elected town supervisor in 1880, he served on the Monroe County Board of Supervisors from 1880 -1884 and later served another term as supervisor in 1888. After his retirement from public life, David Bell raised American merino sheep, taking major prizes at the Louisiana Purchase Exhibition in 1904 and at state fairs in New York, Michigan, Illinois, and Missouri.

30. Samuel Hatch Gould was named for his mother, Caroline Hatch, and went by the name S. Hatch Gould to distinguish himself from his father, Samuel Gould. He was born in Brighton in 1829 and with his father operated the Gould Nurseries on East Avenue in Brighton. S. Hatch Gould was supervisor of Brighton in 1885. He died in 1905 and is buried in Mount Hope Cemetery.

- 31. Henry E. Boardman** was born in Brighton in 1840, the son of nurseryman, Electus Boardman, and his wife, Lydia, who came from eastern New York to settle in Brighton Centre in 1842. Henry married the daughter of Marshfield Parsons and joined his father in the horticulture business, continuing it after his father's death in 1865. Two other careers followed in milling and cattle-raising. For the latter he imported a large herd of Holsteins from Holland in 1883. Henry Boardman served as town supervisor of Brighton in 1873 and 1874.
- 32. K. A. Hughson** came from Syracuse in 1884 to establish a carriage works in the old Glen and Hall thrashing machine factory on East Avenue in Brighton. In 1885 he helped to draw up the incorporation documents for the village of Brighton and in 1886 he was elected town supervisor. He was re-elected in 1887 and 1889. In 1890 Kinkaid A. Hughson and his wife relocated to California where he died in 1892.
- 33. Edwin Remington** was born in West Brighton in 1845 to Benjamin and Sarah Berger Remington. Edwin married Cora Phillips and, with his father, Benjamin, farmed a large tract of land north of the railroad tracks. Remington Parkway is named for the family. Edwin Remington was a member of the town board of Brighton before his election as supervisor for a term in 1890.
- 34. William H. Rowerdink** was born in Brighton to Dutch parents who settled in Brighton in 1850. William attended local school then went to Hope College in Michigan. He taught school for five years in addition to managing a dairy farm and milk delivery route. Later he went into the carriage business, working for Sullivan Brothers on East Avenue in Brighton before opening his own company in 1889 where he sold Hughson & Sullivan carriages in addition to vehicles of his own manufacture. William Rowerdink was supervisor of Brighton in 1891 and 1892.
- 35. A. Emerson Babcock** was Brighton town supervisor for seventeen years during the period 1893-1931. He combined his interest in fruit-growing on his Clover Street farm with his interest in history and civic affairs. During his time as supervisor Brighton began its evolution from farm community to residential suburb. Keenly aware of his town's place in the growth of the greater Rochester area and well-acquainted with the town's early settlers and their descendants, Emerson Babcock interviewed or profiled enough people to fill seven loose-leaf notebooks. He was appointed town historian for Brighton in 1945, a post he held until his death in 1949. The Babcock house is a designated town landmark.
- 36. William Manning** was born in Derr, Pennsylvania in 1846. He learned carpentry as a young man but, when he moved to Brighton in 1884, he went into partnership with John. F. LeClare, a nurseryman. The LeClare & Manning firm was located on the north side of East Avenue in Brighton village. The Manning's home was at 1211 Park Avenue. William Manning served as Brighton town supervisor from 1896 to 1898. He was also elected as president of the board of trustees of Brighton Village in 1895.
- 37. Cornelius F. Warrant** was the son of Benjamin Franklin Warrant and Lydia Trip. His grandfather was Thomas Warrant, a coppersmith, who settled in Brighton in 1818. Cornelius Franklin Warrant was born in 1855. As a child, Cornelius' father impressed upon him the evils of slavery by introducing him to escaped slaves who were sheltered at the Warrant house on their way to freedom in Canada. The Warrant house on West Henrietta Road is a designated town landmark. Cornelius Warrant served as Brighton town supervisor from 1902 to 1903. He was seventy-three when he died in 1928.

38. Stanley Todd was born in 1862 in Brighton, the son of Ira and Zilpha Manchester Todd. He married Laura A. McNall and had three children. He and his brother, Jerome Todd, remained on the family farm on Clover Street in separate houses. Active in the Pittsford Grange and at the Pittsford Presbyterian Church, he was often referred to as being from Pittsford but, although the Todd farm was close to the Pittsford town line, Stanley Todd was nevertheless a Brighton resident when he served as town supervisor in 1908 and 1909. He died in 1916 and is buried in Pittsford Cemetery.

39 Hiram C. Shaw and his wife, Sarah, lived on a twenty-six acre farm on Westfall Road in Brighton. In addition to farming, Hiram Shaw had a sand and gravel business. As a public servant, he was Brighton town constable in 1897, commissioner of highways in from 1903 to 1905, and town supervisor from 1912 to 1915. He died in office in January 1915 and is buried in Mount Hope Cemetery.

40. Bion H. Howard was born in Farmersville, Cattaraugus County and came to Brighton in 1878, working for Wallace Crittenden on his dairy farm. He was justice of the peace for nineteen years and served as town supervisor from 1915 -1927, beginning his service when he was elected to complete the term of Hiram Shaw. On the Monroe County Board of Supervisors he chaired the building commission that oversaw the construction of Iola Tuberculosis Sanitarium. In later years he operated a grocery store at Fort Hill Terrace near Mount Hope Avenue, serving as postmaster at this location for many years.

41. Samuel A. Cooper was born in the town of Teresa in Jefferson County, New York, and began a business career in Syracuse. In 1903 he moved to Rochester to establish the Cooper Wallpaper Store on Elm Street, the headquarters for thirty-five wallpaper stores throughout the Northeast. He became active in Brighton politics, serving as town supervisor from 1932-1941. During his tenure, the town's indebtedness was reduced from 6.5 million to 2 million, the town tax rate was lowered, and Brighton became a First Class town.

42. Charles O. Green was a native of Rochester who attended East High School and Mechanics Institute. After working with the city's engineering corps, he became one of the first members of the New York State Police in 1917 before enlisting in the U.S. Army for service in World War I. Returning to Brighton, he was appointed justice of the peace, a position he held for six years before his election to the town board. In 1941 he became Brighton town supervisor and was re-elected in 1943. He oversaw Brighton's participation in the 1942 Scrap drive that resulted in the collection of 253 tons of metal for the war effort.

43. Roy C. Draper was born in 1892. He and his wife, Marguerite, lived at 100 Walden Place when he began his service to the town of Brighton as an accountant. During his time as supervisor, Roy Draper served on the Monroe County Ways & Means Committee. It was also during his time as supervisor that the town began the process of leaving its rented space at 1795 Monroe Avenue for the new town hall on Elmwood Avenue. Included in the plans for the new building was a town library, requested for several years by local residents. Roy Draper was town supervisor from 1 January 1946 until his sudden death on 7 June 1951. One of his last official acts was the awarding of contracts for the building of the library and his obituary suggested donations to the new library in lieu of flowers.

44. Leonard Boniface was Brighton's longest serving supervisor, appointed to the post in 1951 at the death of Roy Draper. Born in Brighton, England, he came to the United State when he was three and was educated at city school #10 and East High School. After business school where he studied accounting, he worked for local financial and industrial companies before becoming Brighton's town welfare officer in 1945. During Leonard Boniface's tenure as supervisor, he rose through the Republican ranks in the County Board of Supervisors to become majority leader and chairman. In 1953 he presided at the dedication of Brighton's town hall. In 1971 he resigned due to illness and died in 1972.

45. Richard D. Wiles was Brighton town assessor for nine years before his appointment as Brighton town supervisor after the resignation of Leonard Boniface. Later in the year he won election in his own right. Described as honest, hard-working, and dedicated, it is said that his greatest accomplishment as supervisor was the implementation of the government modernization plan recommended in the mid-1970s by the Center for Governmental Research. Supervisor Wiles centralized the purchasing procedure and streamlined operations, including the computerization of records. His term in office encompassed the years 1971-1985.

46. Donald H. Connors had a six-year tour of duty with the Navy and a bachelor's degree in political science before he began his career in Brighton government as administrative assistant to the chief of police. After his appointment in 1984 as assistant to the supervisor, he earned a master's degree in public administration at SUNY Brockport. Running as an Independent in 1985, he received endorsements for supervisor from the Democratic, Republican, and Conservative parties. During his five-year tenure as head of government, 1986 – 1991, the public safety wing was added to the town hall and the town celebrated its 175th anniversary.

47. Sandra L. Frankel and her husband, Neil, moved to Brighton in 1977. A licensed speech language pathologist, Sandra Frankel was also a community volunteer, serving as vice-president of the Brighton School Board and a as a member of the BOCES board of trustees. In November of 1991 she was elected to be the town supervisor of Brighton, the first woman and the first person associated with the modern-day Democratic Party to do so. During her time as town supervisor, 1992-2012, Brighton's park system greatly expanded. It includes the Brickyard Trail located In the Sandra L. Frankel Nature Park that runs between Elmwood Avenue and Westfall Road.

48. William W. Moehle moved to Brighton in 1979 after graduation from Williams College and New York University Law School. He became the attorney for the town of Brighton in 1993. Bill Moehle was elected town supervisor of Brighton in 2011 and has served in that position since January 2012.