

A HISTORY
OF THE HASLETT-LAKE LANSING AREA
MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP,
INGHAM COUNTY,
MICHIGAN

BY
EVELYN HUBER RAPHAEL

1977-78
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This history principally encompasses the Haslett-Lake Lansing area in the northeastern corner of Meridian Township 4 North, Range 1 West, Sections 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and a part of Section 9, of Ingham County, Michigan.

Material outside this area was introduced only when it was directly associated with or affected the lives of those living within the Haslett-Lake Lansing area.

The author.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Bicentennial Edition

This edition was begun at the suggestion of the Haslett Woman's Club who, along with the staff of the Haslett library and the Friends of the Haslett Library, formed a committee to bring about its publication and distribution. The committee has provided materials and checked accuracy of information for the author who no longer lives in the area. Special gratitude is due to Eileen Maddex and Bernice Tanner, co-chairmen of the committee; Eva Wilson; Vera Ralya; Josephine Wolk and Edith Jamsen, Ingham County Library System; Winifred Motherwell, Friends of the Haslett Library and Meridian Township Bicentennial Committee; Gale C. Jamsen for the Update photographs, and all others providing data for the Update.

*Many of these early contributors are deceased.

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To Haslett
with love

Chapter I

THE FIRST SETTLERS

Long before the white man pioneered to the shores of Pine Lake, now Lake Lansing, the red man found the surrounding countryside a fertile farm land, the woods an excellent source of wild game, and the lake an abundant fishing ground. How far back in time the occupation of the red man extends is not precisely known, but sepulchral mounds give evidence of an early civilization unknown to the era of Chief Okemos of the Chippewa Indian Tribe, and his followers. Several of these mounds have been explored, giving up valuable information and specimens, some of which are in the Michigan State University Museum.

At the north end of Pine Lake, near the corner of Reynolds Road and Lee Street, was the stub of such a mound. It was said to be a rounded area two or three feet in height and legend connects it with an Indian battle. It was never excavated; instead, a cottage was built on the site. When the foundation was being dug, children found and played with a skull that was uncovered. Whether there was basis for the skull story or not, the section was called "Indian Mound" by the local residents, and official evidence of the red man's presence in the area makes one certain that the cooling and abundant waters of the lake lured many from the Indian trails which passed on all sides of the lake.

One of the main Indian trails leading to the north followed a line from Okemos, past Pine Lake into Clinton County and northward to the Maple River and the Saginaw Valley. Connecting with this trail at the northwest corner of Pine Lake was a trail from Owens Lake, now called Three Lakes (in Williamston Township). When the first United States Surveyors came to map the area, Owens Lake was quite an Indian settlement.

Along the famous Grand River Trail (now U. S. 16) was the village of Chief Okemos and a burying ground. A few miles east, where the Red Cedar River crosses the highway at the Meridian Township line, was another village and burying ground, and around this area was the planting grounds of the Indians. Several trails ran north from here, and Dr. F. N. Turner of North Lansing was quoted in the Pioneer History of

Ingham County, Michigan: "In 1866, there was an Indian trail in Mullett's woods east of the school house, that went north to Pine Lake connecting the planting ground (near the crossing of the Red Cedar near Meridian Road) with aforesaid Lake. This trail had been used so long that no bushes grew in the tract, but it was overgrown with grass." The Mullett woods lay between VanAtta and Meridian Roads; the school house, called the Mullett or Plank School, was at the corner of U. S. 16 and VanAtta Road. This trail must have joined the others at Pine Lake and connected the planting grounds of the Saginaw Valley with those on the Red Cedar.

When the white man pioneered to this northeastern section of Ingham County, he must have followed these early "moccasin highways" and come upon Pine Lake. Early historians describe the lake as "the most considerable body of water in the County". Mud Lake, a small body of shallow, muddy water in section 14, is the only other body of water in the township. Pine Lake is about three miles in circumference, one and one-half miles from north to south, one mile east to west, and nearly triangular in form, with the narrowest portion towards the south. It is generally shallow, though there is considerable deep water in places. It has a large margin of marshy land to the south, with somewhat bolder shores to the west, north, and east. At the north end, the shore forms a sandy beach. The outlet is at the extreme western angle, near the northern end and the water flows southwest. Early writers said the lake's clear waters were well stocked with various kinds of fish, and the shores timbered on the north and east by yellow pine, the only sizable tract in Ingham County. Hickory and majestic oaks distinguished the north and west shores.

On November 1, 1836, Obed Marshall and an unnamed brother were probably the first settlers in Meridian Township. On that date, A. Hutchinson, Receiver of the United States Land Office, Grand River Section, accepted from Obed Marshall the sum of \$318.08 in full payment for the purchase of the S. W. 1/4 of Section 11 (160 acres) and the S. E. fractional 1/4 of Section 3 (88.06 acres) T4N R1W, containing 248.06 acres at \$1.25 per acre. This transaction was entered in the tract book at this time, but the patent was not recorded until November 2, 1837.

This purchase gave to Obed Marshall 160 acres south of the lake (most of which is now the town of Haslett) and the land along the lake shore between the amusement park and the outlet. This sale preceded the first land entry in Lansing Town-

ship (Jacob F. Cooley, 1837) by one year, and the log cabin built by the Marshall brothers preceded the first house built in the City of Lansing by six years (John W. Burchard, 1843). In December, 1839, J. H. Kilbourne built the first house in what is now the village of Okemos. The first house in Ingham County was built in Stockbridge Township in 1834 by David Rogers. The same year Hiram and Joseph Putnam cut a road, known as the Putnam Trail, some twenty miles beyond to the Cedar River and built a cabin in what is now Williamston. This was the second white man's roof in Ingham County.

The Marshall brothers were physicians with money. They cut pine timber on the east shore of Pine Lake, rafted it across the lake, and erected a log house just north of the amusement park property. They brought with them from the East ten yoke of oxen and employed a number of men in clearing the land and building their log house. This log house was still standing when the land was purchased by George Culver in 1855.

In August, 1874, J. H. Kilbourne wrote for the Ingham County Pioneer Society an article (published in the Ingham County News) in which he said, "In 1837, the lands originally settled by the Marshalls were sold to Parley Davis, who harvested the first wheat and in 1838 built the first frame barn." Obed Marshall sold to Parley Davis the land in Section 11 in December, 1837. In 1839, Mr. Davis sold one-half of his Section 11 holdings to William Davis, who might possibly have been his son. Durant, in his History of Ingham and Eaton Counties, Michigan, says that in 1839-1840, the Marshalls sold the property to Parley Davis, who was from the town of Greene, Chenango County, New York, who cleared up a farm, and remained upon it until about 1852 or 1853, when he sold to Benjamin Guile, who in turn sold it to the afore-mentioned George Culver in 1855. Neither writer had mentioned before the purchase of the land in Section 11 by the Marshalls, so the question might arise: on which land did Parley Davis build the barn and grow the wheat?

Original land entries gave others who came to this area in 1836. Those listed were:

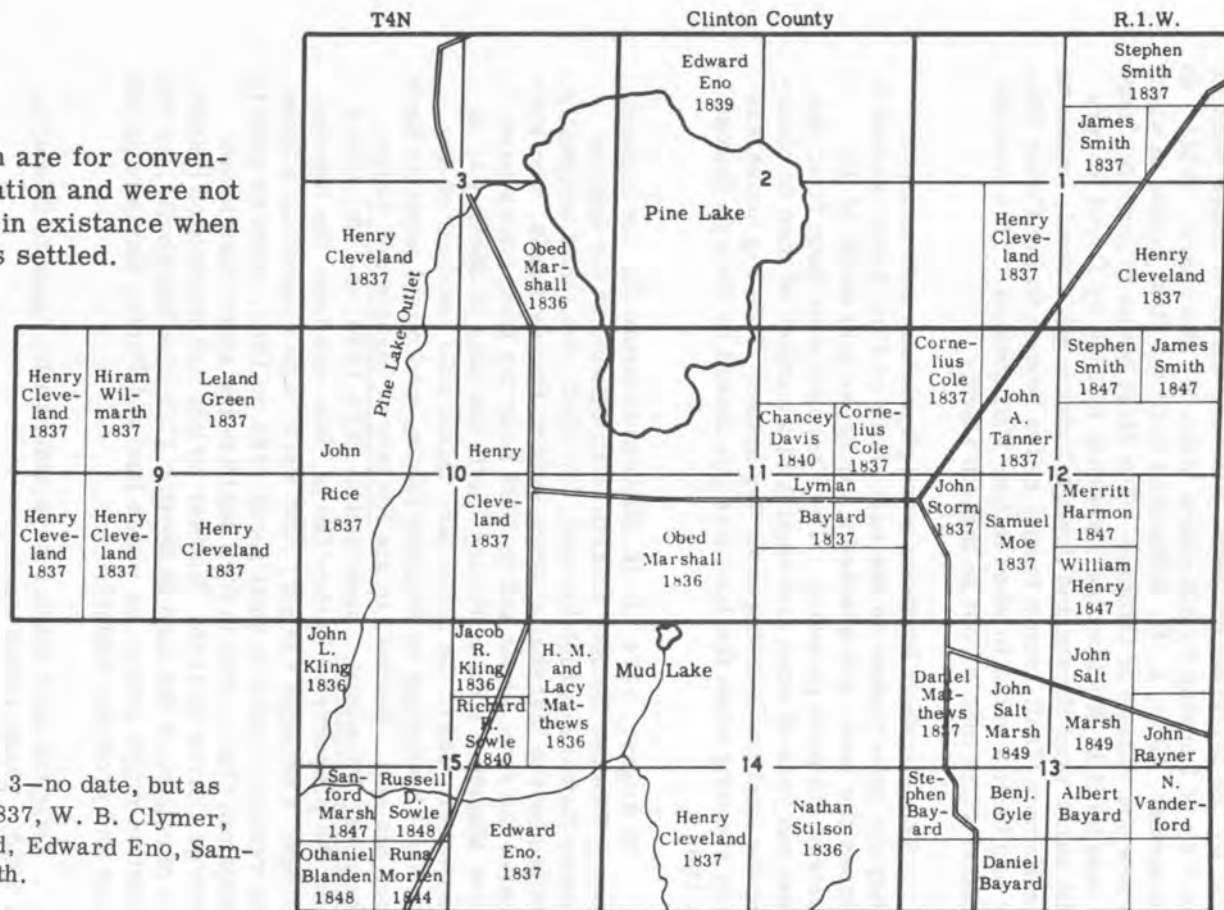
November 1-H. M. and Lacy Matthews-E. 1/2 of N. E. 1/4,
Sec. 15.

November 7-Jacob R. Kling-N. W. 1/4 of N. E. 1/4, Sec. 15.

November 7-John L. Kling-W. 1/2 of N. W. 1/4, Sec. 15.

December 13-Nathan Stilson-S. E. 1/4, Sec. 14.

Roads shown are for convenience in location and were not necessarily in existence when the area was settled.



Note: Section 3—no date, but as early as 1837, W. B. Clymer, Ansel Ford, Edward Eno, Samuel B. Smith.

The year 1837 found many men coming to the area--most of them seeking homes in the wilderness; others came to acquire land offered so cheaply by the government. Foremost of those who bought up vast acreage was Henry Cleveland. Besides the many parcels of land he bought in the sections this history encompasses, he also took large tracts in Section 6, 8, 17, 23, and 24.

Land entries on record for the year 1837 were:

January 17-Edward Eno-S. E. 1/4, Sec. 15.

January 18-John Rice-W. 1/2, Sec. 10.

April 3 -Henry Cleveland-S. E. 1/4 and E. 1/2 of S. W. 1/4,

Sec. 1.

S. W. 1/4, Sec. 3.

S. W. 1/4, N. E. 1/4, S. E. 1/4,

Sec. 4.

S. E. 1/4 and E. 1/2 of S. W. 1/4,

Sec. 9.

E. 1/2, Sec. 10

S. W. 1/4, Sec. 14.

April 3 -Leland Green-N. E. 1/4, Sec. 9.

April 4 -Hiram Wilmarth-E. 1/2 of N. W. 1/4, Sec. 9.

April 12 -John Storm-W. 1/2 of S. W. 1/4, Sec. 12.

April 12 -Samuel Moe-E. 1/2 of S. W. 1/4, Sec. 12.

April 15 -Henry Cleveland-W. 1/2 of S. W. 1/4, Sec. 9.

April 21 -James Smith-S. W. 1/4 of N. E. 1/4, Sec. 1.

April 21 -Stephen Smith-N. 1/2 of N. E. 1/4, Sec. 1.

April 22 -Henry Cleveland-W. 1/4 of N. W. 1/4, Sec. 9.

June 27 -Lyman Bayard-N. E. 1/4 of S. E. 1/4 and N. W. 1/4

of S. E. 1/4, Sec. 11.

August 12 -Cornelius Cole-W. 1/2 of N. W. 1/4, Sec. 12.

August 12 -John A. Tanner-E. 1/2 of N. W. 1/4, Sec. 12.

September 4-Daniel Matthews-W. 1/2 of N. W. 1/4, Sec. 13.

October 10-Cornelius Cole-S. E. 1/4 of N. E. 1/4, Sec. 11.

Although no dates were given for W. B. Clymer, Ansel Ford, Edward Eno, and Samuel B. Smith, these men settled in Section 3 as early as 1837. Also listed without dates were men who settled in Section 13. These men and the land they settled were as follows: John Rayner - S. E. 1/4 of N. E. 1/4; Stephen Bayard - N. W. 1/4 of S. W. 1/4; Napoleon Vanderford N. E. 1/4 of S. E. 1/4; Benjamin Gyle - N. E. 1/4 of S. W. 1/4; Albert Bayard - N. W. 1/4 of S. E. 1/4; Daniel Bayard - S. E. 1/4 of S. W. 1/4.

The remaining entries in the original tract book for the

sections covered in this history are:

June 17, 1839-Edward Eno-N. W. fraction of Sec. 2 (108.85 acres).

July 25, 1840-Chancey Davis -S. W. 1/4 of N. E. 1/4, Sec. 11.

March 20, 1840-Richard R. Sowle-S. W. 1/4 of N. E. 1/4, Sec. 15.

August 10, 1844-Runa Morton-S. E. 1/4 of S. W. 1/4, Sec. 15.

1847 - James Smith-N. E. 1/4 of N. E. 1/4, Sec. 12.

Stephen Smith-N. W. 1/4 of N. E. 1/4, Sec. 12.

Merritt Harmon-N. W. 1/4 of S. E. 1/4, Sec. 12.

William Henry-S. W. 1/4 of N. E. 1/4, Sec. 12.

Sanford Marsh-N. W. 1/4 of S. W. 1/4, Sec. 15.

October 12, 1848-Russell D. Sowle-N. E. 1/4 of S. W. 1/4, Sec. 15.

Othaniel Blanden-S. W. 1/4 of S. W. 1/4, Sec. 15.

March 5, 1849-John Saltmarsh-W. 1/2 of N. E. 1/4, and E. 1/2 of N. W. 1/4, Sec. 13.

The county was almost a dense wilderness in these early days. It abounded in wild game, particularly deer, bears, and wolves. Mr. Barnes, who lived south of Okemos on Dobie Road said, "the bears carried off, first and last, more than fifty hogs in the neighborhood". There were no roads and traveling was among the lost arts. In many of the biographies of early settlers was the statement that they bought acreage of "wild land" in the area around Pine Lake.

Chapter II

YOUNG MERIDIAN

As far back as 1796, all of the lower peninsula of Michigan, parts of Ohio, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Indiana were known as Wayne County, Northwest Territory. In 1803, Michigan was Wayne County, Indiana Territory, with the capitol at Vincennes. By an act signed by President Thomas Jefferson on January 11, 1805, the Michigan Territory was established with Detroit as the capitol. Wayne County was organized in 1815, under Governor Lewis Cass, and other counties followed close behind. The United States Land office was opened in Detroit in 1818.

By 1826, the present Ingham County was a part of Washtenaw County. By an act of the Legislative Council of Michigan, Ingham was laid out and became a county on October 29, 1829. It was one of the "cabinet counties", named for President Andrew Jackson's Cabinet. Others in this group were: Branch, Calhoun, Eaton, and Van Buren. Ingham was named for Samuel D. Ingham, Secretary of the United States Treasury.

The Territory of Michigan was admitted into the Union as a state January 26, 1837. Ingham County was organized by an act of the Legislature of Michigan, approved April 5, 1838, and effective June, 1838. The number of townships was less than today; sometimes there was only one to a county. Meridian was a part of the old township of Alaiedon from March 15, 1838, until the Legislature approved the organization of Meridian on February 16, 1842. The township's name came from the fact that the principal meridian of the state forms the eastern border of the township. This eastern boundry was laid out by Joseph Wamples in 1824. The north, south, and west lines were run by Louis Lyon in 1825. Also in 1825, Musigrove Evans laid the lines dividing the township into sections.

The first township meeting was held at the home of George Matthews in Section 15, probably in the spring of 1842. There were at that time fifty inhabitants in the township. The old records covering the years 1842-44 were destroyed by fire, but, according to Durant's History of Ingham and Eaton Counties, Michigan, of 1880, the recollection of early settlers furnished the names of the first township officials as: Supervisor, George

Matthews; Town Clerk, Lyman Bayard (footnote here reads that Mr. Bayard started overland for California about 1850, but got no farther than Salt Lake, where he died.); Treasurer, William Davis; Justices, A. D. Wilmarth, Lyman Bayard. Items from the records show the first accounts, audited in 1845, totaled \$13.87. One hundred and fifty dollars were raised for contingent expenses in 1845. The total number of votes cast at the gubernatorial election in 1845, was thirty-five, of which eighteen were cast for Alpheus Felch and seventeen for Stephen Vickery, for governor. The whole number of votes cast in 1850 was 66; in 1860, at the annual meeting, 221; at the fall election, 227, of which the Republican electors received 127, and the Democratic, 100.

The resident taxpayers in the township of Meridian in 1844 were the following: S.D. Alverson, Parley Davis, Lorenzo D. Johnson, Isaac Earle, Benjamin Earle, Caleb Johnson, Asa D. Wilmarth, William B. Hamilton, George Haskins, John Moore, Martin F. Thomas, Ira Haskins, Henry Cleveland, F. Davis, Chauncey Davis, Stephen M. Bayard, John G. Jeffries, George Matthews, Lyman Bayard, Daniel Matthews, R. D. Sowle, Runa Morton, O. Davis, O. E. Sowle, Melzor Turner, William H. Turner, Sanford Marsh, James Egbert, Jr., Stowell Maech, William Bascom, Joseph Gilpin, Freeman Bray, S. Hall, J. H. Kilbourne, M. W. Barnes and Jehiel Church. Meridian real estate was valued at \$32,822 in 1850--personal property, \$1,426.

The earliest road recorded was known as the State Road (now Okemos-Haslett Road as far as Okemos--the Okemos Road southward), leading from the north line of the county to the village of Mason, and it was laid out on the 15th and 17th days of June, 1839. This road followed substantially the present north and south road, starting on the north quarter-post of Section 3, and thence running south through Sections 3, 10, 15, 22, 21 (via Okemos), 28, and 33 to the township line between Meridian and Alaiedon. The last 81 rods on Section 33 were laid in May, 1855. Benjamin C. Ferris and Horace Havens were the commissioners.

On the fifth of October, 1839, the Shiawassee Road (now Green Road) was laid out in Sections 1 and 12, consisting of one mile, two hundred and sixty-four rods, ten links in length. It was surveyed by Anson Jackson, County Surveyor. J. E. North, Jr. and N. Blain were the commissioners. At the same time these men laid the Meridian-Line Road from the Grand River Trail to Sherwood Road. It was 53 rods in length.

From the Grand River Trail to the southeast corner of the township, the Meridian-Line Road was laid on January 3, 1855.

Three other roads in the township are on this early list: The Town-Line Road, between Meridian and Alaiedon--December 28, 1840; The Wilmarth Road, now Burcham Drive, between Sections 7 and 18--June 14, 1843; Barney Road (Dobie Road), running north and south through Sections 22, 27, and 34--December 29, 1841.

The Topographical Wall Map of Livingston and Ingham Counties published in 1859, shows the aforesaid roads and the present Haslett Road from the Okemos-Haslett Road to Green Road, the present VanAtta Road to the Plank Road (U. S. 16) and the present Piper Road connecting VanAtta and Meridian Roads.

The Lansing and Howell Plank Road, following the Grand River Indian Trail, was chartered March 20, 1850, by James Seymour, H. H. Smith, E. B. Dansforth, George W. Lee, and F. C. Whipple. Ground was broken on the road about the first of July, 1850, and a portion of it between Lansing and Okemos was opened for business in June, 1851. The entire line between Lansing and Howell was completed and opened in December, 1852, or early 1853. There were toll gates at Lansing and Howell and approximately ten miles apart. Two gate houses were in Meridian--one located just west of Park Lake Road and kept by Alonzo Proctor, and the other just west of Red Bridge, the bridge that crossed the Red Cedar at the easternmost part of the township. Here also a post office was located, known as the Red Bridge Post Office.

The firm of Hibbard and Burrell (Daniel Hibbard and A. Burrell of Detroit) was the first to establish a through line of mail and passenger coaches after the plank road was finished. The stage coaches were strong and roomy and carried twenty passengers each. Four horses pulled the stages and tin horns announced their approach. It was always cause for celebration when the stage arrived with mail, news, or a passenger.

The road was excellent at first after the muddy and rutted path or roadway the early settlers were accustomed to. The eighty-five mile trip to Detroit was made in ten hours. But after a few years the planks warped, and the ends became drawn up by the heat of the sun until the plank road became worse to travel than the early dirt road. The Detroit and Mil-

waukee Railroad, completed in 1858, attracted some of the business from the plank road, but it was still comparatively profitable and was maintained as a plank road until about 1866. At that time the company procured an act of the Legislature, authorizing it to change the road to a graveled turnpike. The graveling was completed about 1870.

The Seventh Agriculture Census, dated August 29, 1850, and signed by John H. Child, Assistant Marshall, gave fifty-seven owners, agents, or managers of farm land in the township. There were 1,395 acres of improved land; 4,820 acres, unimproved. The cash value of farms was \$44,535; cash value of implements and machinery, \$2,064. The total value of live-stock was \$7,414 including 22 horses, 123 milk cows, 106 oxen, 106 other cattle, 220 sheep, and 199 swine.

Agricultural products included: 2,096 bushels of wheat, 120 bushels of rye, 3,280 bushels of Indian corn, 2,065 bushels of oats, 691 pounds of wool, 56 bushels of peas and beans, 2,525 bushels of Irish potatoes, 264 bushels of buckwheat, 7,383 pounds of butter, 790 pounds of cheese, 569 tons of hay, 3,931 pounds of maple sugar, and 836 pounds of beeswax and honey.

In 1857, the State Legislature set aside vast areas of swamp land for the Michigan Agriculture College, then headed by President Joseph R. Williams. The Topographical Wall Map of 1859 shows all of the marshy land to the south, almost all of the land east of Pine Lake (except 62 acres belonging to S. Alverson), and the swamp land around Mud Lake as belonging to the Agricultural College.

This same map of 1859 located the residence of George Culver (land once owned by the Marshall brothers) west of the lake; a house just north of the intersection of the Haslett and Okemos-Haslett Roads on the west side of the road; three houses on Haslett Road between Green Road and the Okemos-Haslett Road. One of these was owned by J. Bohanan, whose wife was the widow of William Davis, and the house location corresponds to the site of 1427 Haslett Road. The other two houses were located approximately at 1298 and 1180 Haslett Road. These were the only houses in the area that is now so populated in and about Haslett and Lake Lansing. Other houses dotted the outlying area.

When the Civil War was being fought in our country, the

township set up war bounties for volunteers. In January, 1864, the electors of the township voted to pay \$100 to each volunteer credited to the township, and authorized the town authorities to issue bonds to that effect. They also voted to reimburse those citizens who had contributed individually to the raising of funds for volunteers and their families. On the 8th of March, 1864, bonds were issued in favor of the following persons, or their representatives, who had enlisted: Watts S. Humphrey, Abel Buckingham, Stephen R. Tyler, D.N.P. Kelley, Jacob C. Haner, James W. Parks, Emery Hardy, William E. Johnson, William Cook, Fayette Meech, and Cyrus H. Potter.

In August, 1864, each person enrolled for military duty was assessed twenty dollars to pay volunteers. On October 7 of that year the electors of Meridian Township agreed to pledge the faith of the township to pay by tax the sum of \$1,200, when legalized by the Legislature of the State of Michigan, for the purpose of clearing the town of Meridian of draft. On February 4, 1865, the sum of \$200 to enlistees and \$100 to drafted men was authorized.

In 1874, the County Atlas of Ingham, Michigan was published by F. W. Beers and Co. It included the figures for the 1870 United States Agriculture census and attested to the fact that Meridian Township was growing into a valuable agricultural center. The total population was 1,374 (763 males--611 females). There were 266 families who occupied 264 dwellings. The number of acres improved was 8,440; unimproved, 2,109; woodland, 9,347 (by this time the land owned by the Agricultural College had reverted to private owners). The cash value of farms had risen to \$688,750 and farm implements to \$20,169. The value of all farm products, including betterments and additions to stock, was \$148,410, and the livestock alone was listed as \$102,981. This figure included 414 horses, 11 mules and asses, 471 milch cows, 104 working oxen, 474 other cattle, 4,860 sheep, and 852 swine.

Agricultural products included: 728 bushels of spring wheat, 34,055 bushels of winter wheat, 39,098 bushels of Indian corn, 14,965 bushels of oats, 2,563 bushels of barley, 1,080 bushels of buckwheat, 16,662 pounds of wool, 25,414 bushels of potatoes, \$6,185 in orchard products, 43,303 pounds of butter, 5,120 pounds of cheese, 2,455 tons of hay, 164 bushels of clover seed, 350 pounds of hops, and \$3,760 in forest products.

The only listings in the 1874 Ingham County Business Notices for District #1 of Meridian Township were: George Culver--Farmer and Stock and Wool Grower; J. Saltmarsh--Farmer and Breeder of full blooded Durham and Ayershire Stock; John F. Saltmarsh--Farmer and Dealer in Stock.

The census for Meridian Township through its early years gives evidence of its growth: 1850--367; 1854--582; 1860--825; 1864--915; 1870--1,374; 1874--1,407; 1880--1,532; 1884--1,682 1890--1,720; 1894--1,730; 1900--1,625; 1904--2,207.

The estimated census for Meridian Township in the fall of 1957 was 15,000. Soon after, the Marble area was annexed to the City of East Lansing. The township lost approximately 2,204 voters by this annexation, and a census figure is difficult to estimate at this time.

Record books at the township hall go back to June 1, 1926. Until that time the book work was done at the home of board members. There was no center of township government to house records. Members of the board served on a part-time basis, and met when township business warranted. The first full time clerk's office was set up in 1945, in the old town hall in Okemos. C. B. Robinson was elected clerk in 1941 and still holds that position today. James McClure is the present supervisor.

Voters used the old town hall in Okemos (now torn down), and the township hall in Haslett (the present library building) to cast their votes. There were only these two precincts for many years; now there are nine.

The present fire station and township office building was built in 1948, and during that year the building code and the zoning ordinance were adopted. The first Township Deputy Sheriff was appointed April 13, 1950, and police protection stems from the Ingham County Sheriff Department. The first water system was established May 9, 1950, in the Marble area and was known as Water District #1. The Haslett Water System in Lakeview Heights became township operated in 1955, the Forest Hills System (Okemos) in 1956, and the Hillbrook Water System in 1957.

Chapter III

THE SCHOOL

Samuel W. Durant in his 1880 History of Ingham and Eaton Counties, Michigan, gave an account of the first school district in Meridian Township. He wrote:

"The school records in possession of the town clerk go back no further than 1849. The earliest formed district in the township was the Pine Lake District, which may very possibly have been formed while the township comprised a part of Alaiedon, previous to 1842. The first school in the township was taught in the house of Robert R. Sowle, on section 15, in 1841-42, by Mrs. George Huckins, then a widow, now Mrs. R. Morton. There were no districts then organized and the school was taught a part of the time summer and winter. The second school was taught in a log shanty adjoining the dwelling of George Matthews, on Section 15, by Amy Nutt, in 1842.

The first regular school building in the township was erected about 1844 by George Matthews, on the east half of the southwest quarter of section 11. [The Topographical Wall Map of 1859 places School House #1 at the northeast corner of Carlton Street and Haslett Road.] The frame, about 18 by 22 feet, was made of oak and tamarack and sided up with whitewood. This was in District No. 1. Among the early teachers was Levi Avery. *****

There seems to have been the nucleus of a township school library in 1849, for on the 14th of April in that year the inspectors 'labeled the unlabeled library books' and agreed to have a table and book-case made for the township library, 'not to exceed five dollars in cost'."

School records in the State of Michigan Archives go back to the year 1859. By that time the library had been divided among the schools in the township. District #1 had 36 volumes. In a school report of 1862, M. D. Chatterton wrote, "This township divided its library among the several school districts. Some of them have kept their number good but as a general rule there is a lack of interest felt--as to the library--some of the

districts pay no attention to keep fine money from any other but is mixed up with *****other funds." In 1864, \$1.42 was spent for the library, and \$2.75 paid for books.

In 1859, township schools included three log school houses, valued at \$60, and four frame school houses, valued at \$500, on seven school sites. A township inspector visited the schools at least once a year and filed a report. Each school district had its own director.

Nineteen children attended School #1, and school was taught for four months. From 1859 to 1879, the number of pupils varied, but never exceeded thirty-eight, and the school year average six months. Some time between 1859 and 1874, the site of Schoolhouse #1 was moved from Section 11 to Section 12, east of the juncture of Green and Haslett Roads. The school was on about an acre of ground and was named the Pine Lake School. In the early school records, under the column entitled "Build or Repair Schoolhouse", was the item, \$100, in 1860; the following year (1861) \$88.46. The value of the schoolhouse was then \$310, and except for a slight depreciation reduction, the amount stayed fairly stationary through 1879. This would allow the assumption that the school site was moved and a new school was built in the years of 1860-61.

Certainly all did not run smoothly for the early township school system. M. D. Chatterton, in his report of 1862, wrote: "School houses are most wholly destitute of any kind of apparatus. In some of the districts may be found a Webster's dictionary or a moderately sized blackboard, but no maps, globes, or mathematical blocks", and in 1866, Thomas Humphrey, town clerk, noted that it was "impossible to give text books--nearly as many different books as scholars. The parents object to buy new books--the Directors often guess at the books used, than any other way." A notation for 1864 reads: "Visiting Inspector gone to War".

Residents now living, who attended or recall the Pine Lake Schoolhouse in the 1890's and as far back as 1888, say it was white or light brick. It is the opinion of the author that the original frame school building was bricked-in sometime in the 1880's. When the school house was replaced by the Haslett School, this building was torn down. Some of the bricks and timbers were used in the elevator in Haslett; some of the lumber was used as flooring in a barn on the Walter Buxton farm on Kaiser Road.

The school was the typical one room schoolhouse; a large heating stove kept the pupils warm in winter. A board fence with a six-inch railing enclosed the school yard, and many a youngster walked that fence. Older residents tell of the many miles they walked in all weather to attend the little school. The school house was the community gathering place, and many people recall the night when the room was crowded for the presentation of the Christmas program and the floor collapsed.

Myra Belle Proctor, daughter of Alonzo Proctor who kept the toll house on the Plank Road, began teaching at the Pine Lake School in 1881; she was fifteen years old at the time. It is said she walked from her home, following the railroad tracks, to reach the school. Miss Proctor later married H. H. "Hi" Hammond and lived in the community for many years. She was one of the organizers of the Woman's Literary Club.

Lillian Megiveron (McGiveron), who married E. M. Babbitt, and Mrs. Augusta Botsford Donley were also early school teachers. Mr. Dingman was principal of the school in 1894-95. Caroline Bray of Okemos taught in 1899-90, the last year classes were held at the Pine Lake School. Crowded conditions necessitated the opening of an annex in a house at the southeast corner of Potter Street and Lake Lansing Drive (then called Rich Street) during that last year. This branch school was taught by Miss Alice Swan.

In 1898, Mrs. Sarah Haslett, widow of James Haslett, gave lot 16 of the platted village of Namoka in Section 10 (where the present school now stands) for a school site, and Samuel Soultz, who owned the farm at 1427 Haslett Road, gave land for the right-of-way (now School Street) to the property. A two room brick building was constructed and in September, 1900, Haslett School opened its doors to pupils. The school offered ten grades, and six students made up the first graduation class of 1906, under Superintendent Mixter. The six were: Mary Elliott, Pearl Smith, Walter Moore, Milo Clark, Russell Ferguson, and Lyla Smith. Three students--Jim Greene, Ruth Russell, and Jennie Ratslof--graduated in 1907. Clare Murphy was the principal in 1902, and Dora and Jim Kaiser, Banker Cade, and Agnes Dunnigan were among the teachers.

In 1910, a second story was added to the school, making four classrooms. An auditorium and extra class rooms were added in 1921, and the Haslett Agriculture School was consoli-



Original Haslett School

courtesy Eva Kuhn



Second Story Addition

courtesy Vera Cavanagh

dated and became accredited. Motor bus transportation was provided for the 165 pupils who attended, and 100 students were served hot lunches at five cents a dish. T. L. Ingersoll was the Superintendent and Gertrude Prindle was the Principal.

In 1930, the frame building known as "the Bungelow" was built. The gymnasium was begun in 1935 and completed in 1936. Around 1948, a one story cinder block building north of the school was acquired for a wood working shop and band room.

The school was adequate until 1950, when the growth of the school district demanded additional classrooms. The first unit of the grade school was completed that year. It was built to the south of the original school building, and contained, besides eight class rooms, an office and a combined all-purpose room and cafeteria with kitchen facilities. Eight more rooms were added to this building in 1954.

By 1956, even more classroom space was needed. It was felt that more units at the present site would be unsatisfactory. A Citizen's Advisory Committee recommended a decentralization plan for elementary schools. Ten acres of land was purchased in Section 11 to the north of Haslett Road (part of the C. O. Wilkins farm). Named the Wilkshire School, it was completed and pupils started classes on October 28, 1957. The building consists of four classrooms, an office, health room, kitchen, and boiler room; it is designed to accommodate further addition to it.

In 1957, the voters approved a \$750,000. bond issue to build a new high school to relieve the crowded junior high and high school conditions. A twenty-six acre tract had been purchased in Section 10, south of Franklin Street. On August 29, 1957, contracts were awarded to Hanel and Vance, General Contractors, and the official ground breaking ceremony took place September 22 of that year. The school will be adequate to care for 400 pupils from the ninth through twelfth grades.

The plans call for eight standard classrooms and Home-making, Science, Shop, Music, Library and Study Hall rooms. The Gymnasium will be used as a multi-purpose room, doubling as auditorium and cafeteria. Besides these, there are a kitchen, heating plant, locker rooms, and administrative offices. This building will be ready for occupancy by the start of the 1958 school year.

The total enrollment figures for the Elementary, Junior High, and Senior High Schools in 1957 was 1,211. Of these, 772 were in the elementary grades; 439 in the Junior and Senior High. These figures compare with 1,006 in 1955, and 657 in 1951.

Mr. H. M. Murphy has been Superintendent since 1948; Mr. Fred Jappinga is the High School Principal; and Mrs. Vera Ralya is the Grade School Supervisor.

What is now the Haslett P. T. A. began as an adult community club called My Neighbor and I, in 1921. It met every two weeks and started with ten members. Mrs. Lillian Babbitt was the first president, and Banker W. Cade was the second.

Chapter IV

THE POST OFFICE

The post office at Haslett was established in 1879, but it was not the first post office in the immediate locale. The Alverson Post Office, situated on land owned by S. Alverson in Section 1, was established September 23, 1852. The post office was on the east side of the road on the land at 6137 Green Road, and Mr. Alverson was the postmaster. The post office was discontinued at this location on October 31, 1867, and on June 19, 1868, it was re-established at Barry and Shoeman Roads (known as Smith's crossing) in Williamston Township. It was in existence at this location until January 3, 1896, and Phillip DeBarry was postmaster here for many years.

Local residents were also served by the Okemos Post Office, once known as Sanford. Others may have received their mail in the pioneer years at the Red Bridge Post Office, located on the Red Cedar River at the easternmost toll gate of the Plank Road, but this post office had been abolished by 1874.

In 1871, the Chicago and Northeastern Railroad Company was organized to construct a line between Lansing and Flint. This line was later consolidated with other railroads to form the Chicago and Grand Trunk Railroad. The company erected the Pine Lake Station House across the tracks from the present station in 1878, and built a water tank to the east which was called the Pine Lake Watering Station. The laying of the single track was completed in 1879.

The coming of the railroad made possible the establishment of the Pine Lake Post Office, although it was not accomplished without much effort. An historic letter tells of the early struggles to obtain and retain the post office. There was, at that time, thirty-five farm homes, the Pine Lake Schoolhouse, and the Lake Hotel on the north shore of the lake, in the northeastern section of the township.

Edward Elliott was the first postmaster of the Pine Lake Post Office, and the first mail was thrown off the train on June 1, 1879. Mr. Elliott's home and later his barn, located just west of the old cinder block post office, served as the

first post office until a two-story store building was erected. A huge desk and bookcase were used for the mail; the pigeon holes were the boxes. Mr. Elliott also sold patent medicines, nuts, candies, etc. and was listed in the 1881 Business Directory as a grocer. The salary for the postmaster in these early days was \$40 a year--\$3.50 a month, or less than 12¢ a day. Mr. Elliott wanted to give up the job but there was no one else to take it. The Michigan Business Directory notes that the Pine Lake Post Office was abolished in 1885 and residents got their mail from Okemos until 1887 when it was re-established with A. E. Andrews as postmaster.

Mr. Andrews had come from Williamston and had built a general store where the Chevrolet Agency now stands. He was postmaster until 1889, when R. L. Williams, an employee, took over and held the post until 1891.

From 1891 to July 31, 1895, John P. Lockwood, an associate of Mr. Andrews, was postmaster. Post office receipts for 1892 were between \$10 and \$30 per month. This strikes a note of comparison to 1957 when money order receipts alone totaled \$11,282. In 1892, the name was changed from the Pine Lake Post Office to the Haslett Park Post Office by legislative action.

On August 1, 1895, E. M. Babbitt, having purchased the general store, became postmaster. On August 17 of that year he wrote a money order receipt and listed the post office as Haslett, Michigan, dropping the word "Park" from the name, and he continued to do so for his term of office (1897). The name, Haslett Park, was never restored.

From August 1, 1897, to February 18, 1902, the post office was housed in the little store of Aaron J. Smith, and he served as postmaster. This store stood on the north side of Haslett Road between the houses at 1530 and 1536 Haslett Road. This building was later moved around the corner--the first house south of the library. On January 5, 1898, the last receipt written for money received from the Haslett Post Office came from the Detroit Post Office; on February 18 of that year, receipt #80 came from the Lansing Post Office, signed by Seymour Foster.

On February 19, 1902, E. K. Elliott, son of Edward, became postmaster, and thus began over half a century of continuous service by the Elliott family. On March 26, Cynthia,



Post Office Fire (building below)-1908

courtesy Eva Kuhn



Original Post Office and Elliott Store Building

courtesy Mary Elliott

his wife, took over the position.

Sparks from a passing train set the post office building ablaze and it burned to the ground in May, 1908. Business was transferred to the Elliott home just west of the store until a cinder block building was constructed on the same land in 1910.

Mrs. Elliott sold "choice brands of cigars and clean, fresh candy" and was an agent for tickets on the electric trolley (Michigan United Railways). She was postmaster until February 23, 1915, when her daughter, Mary, took over. During Cynthia Elliott's term of office there was a rural mail carrier, Chester F. Davis, to serve the outlying rural population. Rural delivery from the Haslett Post Office was discontinued in 1915 until recent years.

Miss Elliott served until December 31, 1954, and through the years watched the growth of the community, especially after 1950 when new subdivisions opened in this area. Mrs. Harold (Mary Margaret) Schlichting became the postmaster January 1, 1955, and continues in that position at the present time.

In January of 1958, a new brick post office building, situated on the north side of Haslett Road to the west of the railroad crossing, was completed and the formal dedication took place on May 10. This modern building with its convenient equipment will better serve the growing community. The postmaster has two assistants--Mrs. Mildred Sargeant and Mrs. D. Carlton--and a rural mail carrier--Charles King.

The old post office building is now occupied by Hi's Radio and TV Service. Keith Hidecker, the owner, held a grand opening on May 16 and 17, 1958, and his business is the first commercial enterprise, independent of the post office, since the building was erected in 1910.

Chapter V

TRANSPORTATION

Horses, buggies, sleighs, cutters, and wagons fitted with sled runners for the winter--these were the early means of travel around Haslett before the coming of the steam engine, the lake steamer, the trolley, and the automobile.

The Locomotive

One of the greatest boons to the Haslett area in the early days was the coming of the railroad. In 1871, the Chicago and Northeastern Railroad Company was organized to construct a road between Lansing and Flint. This road formed a link between the Peninsular Railroad from Battle Creek to Lansing, and the Port Huron and Lake Michigan Railroad. The building of this link, which passes through Haslett, was finished in 1879. These roads were consolidated and the entire line between Port Huron and Chicago became the property of the Canada Grand Trunk. In 1880, the various divisions were united under the name, Chicago and Grand Trunk Railway.

The coming of the trains made possible the establishment of the Pine Lake Post Office and the first mail was thrown off in June, 1879. A water tower for refilling the locomotives was constructed half way between the present station and the Carlton Street crossing on the south side of the single track. The water was pumped from the lake through a six inch cast iron pipe by a windmill and later by gasoline engine. Pete Sharboneau was an early "tank man" and Henry Ferris, Harvey Scott, and Bert Cochrane were others who took care of the Pine Lake Watering Station. The depot was on the east side of the tracks and attached to the grain elevator. The Michigan State Gazateer and Business Directory listed R. Chamberlin as section boss in 1881, and reported oak lumber, ties, and some farm products being shipped from Pine Lake. In 1887, T. L. Hutton was Railway and Express agent. There was a section house (a dormitory for workers) on the west side of the tracks near the present station; Jim O'Connor was a section man. There was also a railroad camp near the Okemos-Haslett Road bridge over the tracks, and Wes Pease was in charge of the workers.



Haslett Park Station

courtesy Eva Kuhn



Pine Lake Watering Station

courtesy Mary Elliott

In the 1880's the Spiritualists laid out a park area west of the lake to be used as a summer encampment for Spiritualists from all over the State. They named the campground Haslett Park in honor of James Haslett, who was the motivating force behind the establishment of the camp. In 1892, by legislative action, their group succeeded in having the name of the Pine Lake Post Office changed to Haslett Park. During the month of August, and especially on weekends, great crowds, sometimes 2,000 to 4,000, came to the park. Excursion trains with special rates were added to accommodate this influx of people.

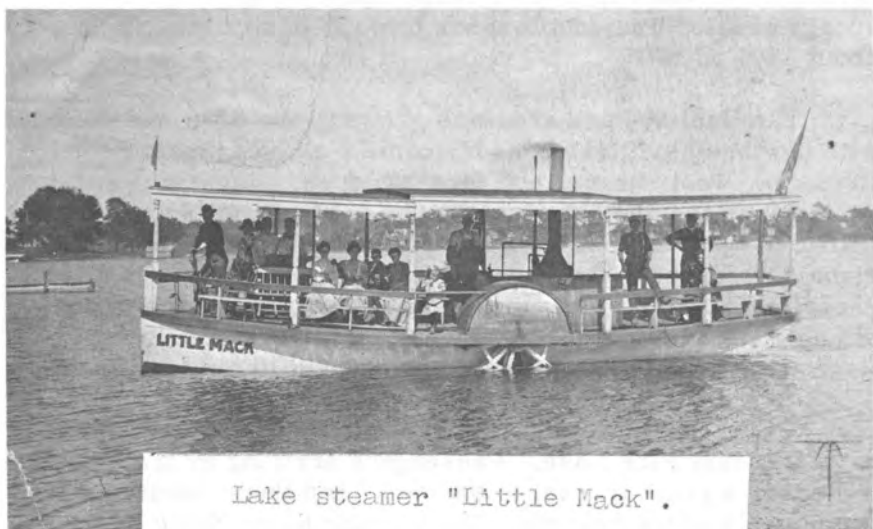
About 1900, the new Haslett Park Railroad Station was built on the west side of the tracks, and work was started on a double track system. Much difficulty from sink holes was encountered in laying the new roadbed. One of these was north and east of the Carlton Street crossing--a hole six feet wide. Men worked steadily with horse and wagon for three weeks hauling dirt and heavy timbers which disappeared from sight. Twenty-two yards of dirt and four carloads of timber were said to have been digested by this apparently bottomless hole. Another bad spot encountered was west of the bridge, where forty acres of timber disappeared. For a long time after the construction was completed, trains had to crawl over the spongy areas. The double track through Haslett was finished about 1903 or 1904.

The Haslett Park area was growing; the town was dotted with new homes. Haslett had become a shipping center for livestock, wool, beans, and farm produce. Regular passenger service and the special excursion trains brought increased traffic to the center of town. Before the electric warning signals were used, the job of guarding the busy Haslett Road crossing was given to flagman Billy Hart. When his duties did not keep him busy, Mr. Hart grew flowers around his flaghouse, bringing color and improvement to his town.

To the north of the railroad station was the Town Dock, extending into Pine Lake. Passengers arriving by train could walk over a plank tressel to the dock, and there catch a boat to the north shore resorts. Those going to the Spiritualist Camp Ground could ride in Mr. Bill Burgess' horse-drawn taxi. This was a surrey with a top and sideflaps to let down in case of rain.



Crystal Sea (formerly the Merry Mae)
courtesy Mrs. Robert Pulver



courtesy Eva Kuhn

Lake Steamers

Thomas Bateman is said to have been the first person to furnish boating facilities on Pine Lake. Mr. Bateman owned the land north of the lake. He sold his boating interest to R. W. Surby, who began the resort business on the lake. Mr. Surby's successors brought a small steamer from Lansing and launched it in 1876. This boat was subsequently taken apart and the steamboat "Belle Haslett" was built for Origin and Anson Hardy, then the owners of the Pine Lake House on the north shore. The "Belle Haslett" was launched in 1881, and carried 150 passengers. Many times during her career on the lake the Belle's capacity was not large enough for the week-end crowds, and passengers were left on shore to await a return trip. In the 1880's and 1890's the Spiritualists used the "Belle Haslett" as part of their summer camp program, and pleasure rides around the lake were fifteen cents per person or twenty-five cents per couple.

Another boat plying the lake in the early days was the "Merry Mae". This boat had a side wheel turned by power from a steam boiler. She was owned by Tom Cudney, who also had a small resort hotel on the north shore. About 1908, Mr. Cudney sold the "Merry Mae" to Elby J. Beebe, who renamed her the "Crystal Sea".

In 1902, William Megiveron built the "Little Mack". This boat was also of wooden construction with the steam boiler furnishing the power to turn the side wheel. A ride from the Town Dock to the north shore was five cents. The Little Mack was the last of the colorful lake steamers, for in 1911, they were replaced by gasoline launches. The "Dorothy S", owned by Al Sprague, and the "Hetty Marie", owned by Al Hull, were two that are still remembered by residents.

The Trolley Car

The Interurban or Electric Trolley was another form of transportation that opened the way for future growth of the area. The Michigan United Railways (also called the Jackson-Lansing Line, and in the 1920's, the Michigan Electric Railroad) completed a suburban line to Michigan Agriculture College in 1894, and in 1905, extended the line to Pine Lake. In 1911, tracks were laid north-eastward beyond Haslett to Owosso. From the western edge of the college, the trolley continued eastward to MAC Avenue, then north to Burcham



1334 Casino, South Side, Pine Lake, Lansing, Mich.

courtesy Mary Elliott



Dock on West Side of Pine Lake, showing Iser Club House, near Lansing, Mich.

courtesy Mrs. J. Marsh

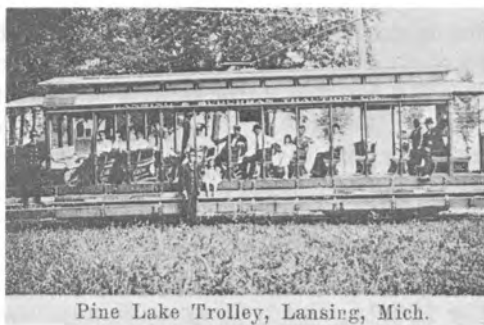
Drive across the countryside. Near the present East Lansing City Dump on Park Lake Road, the trolley stopped at "Raby's Crossing", so named for the Raby family who owned this land they had homesteaded in 1850. Continuing, the line ran adjacent to the Grand Trunk Railroad tracks until it reached the south foot of Potter Street, where it turned north down Potter Street to the park. Most of this route can still be traced despite the changing face of the countryside.

In the early 1900's, the trolley company leased the eastern one-half of the Spiritualist Campground for a loop or turn-around for the trolleys. Here on the lakefront, the Railways built a large pavillion, "The Casino". A large open porch extended over the water, and encircled the pavillion; here one could enjoy ice cream and the cooling lake breezes after dancing or skating in the big hall. This building, although altered in appearance, is still in use at the amusement park. Crowds of young people came from Lansing and the College, especially on Saturday nights. The last trolley left at 11 p.m.; missing it meant a long walk home. That last trolley was filled to capacity and more, with the bravest hanging over the sides.

The trolleys were open cars and gave their passengers a breezy ride. They were powered by an electrified third rail which ran between the two outer tracks. This third rail was fatal to both man and animal should they come in contact with it. Crossings were marked with warning signs to all.

The Woman's Literary Club of Haslett raised funds through benefit parties for civic improvements. Through the club's efforts two shelters were built for those waiting for trolley cars--one at the Potter Street-Haslett Road crossing and another near the railroad crossing. From the proceeds of their endeavors the club also engaged Albert Smith and Henry Foster to lay gravel on the muddy path between the Potter Street shelter and the post office; this gravel path was Haslett's first sidewalk. Several members of the club and their husbands chartered one of the first trolleys and went to Lansing to the Opera. Among the party were the H. H. Hammonds and the Bemsley Smiths.

The trolley brought Lansing closer to Pine Lake, providing more frequent transportation. It was possible for the Haslett young people to commute to Michigan Agriculture College and the business schools in Lansing, and for the older people to enjoy some of the cultural advantages of Lansing.



Pine Lake Trolley, Lansing, Mich.

courtesy Mary Elliott



Balloon Ascension courtesy Eva Kuhn

For the people of Lansing it brought a recreation area within easy reach. Many of the prominent Lansing families bought property and built summer homes on the lake. Among them was the R. E. Olds family. Thus began an era when Pine Lake was THE fashionable summer colony.

The Automobile

The coming of the automobile brought changes to the Haslett-Lake Lansing area as well as to every section of our country. Lansing grew along with the automobile and soon the city had park and recreation facilities within easy reach of the town people. By 1929, interurban transportation to outlying areas was no longer profitable and the Michigan Electric Railroad discontinued service on all its lines on May 28 of that year.

With the advent of the automobile, Lansing residents could travel further for their summer recreation. Most of the summer dwellers left their cottages at Pine Lake and established colonies on larger lakes.

As the summer people left they were replaced by year-round residents who saw the advantages of winter, as well as summer sports at their doorsteps, and a chance for suburban living within easy commuting distance of their work.

Mail could be brought speedily and more often from Lansing by truck, and the changing agricultural picture no longer provided a need for a shipping center. Only an occasional freight or coal car, switched to the side track, provided business for the railroad.

As steam engines became larger with increased capacity, and as diesel engines replaced the steam engines, the watering station at Pine Lake was no longer a necessity. It has been missing from the Haslett scene for many years.

Passenger service from the Haslett station was also discontinued a number of years ago. In 1954, the Railway Express Company abandoned its local office, and on December 31, 1957, the railroad station was closed. In 1957, the last of the "iron horses" on the Grand Trunk system was retired from service, and now the mighty diesels whistle through the little town that, despite its growth, has little business to offer the railroad.

Chapter VI

THE SPIRITUALISTS AND THE WEST SHORE

The eastern one-half of Section 10, containing 302 acres, was known for many years as the Pine Lake Farm. This land was settled by Henry Cleveland in 1837, and his son, Augustus, held the land until 1865. There were several owners in the following ten years; then, in 1875, the farm became the property of Mary Heimerdinger. On January 2, 1883, Spencer Shaw and his wife, Lucretia, purchased from Mary Heimerdinger all of the land lying between the north and south section lines, from the Okemos-Haslett Road eastward to the Section 11 line, except the land occupied by the post office and the Grand Trunk right-of-way. On January 3, 1883, the Shaws platted the Village of Namoka, consisting of 16 blocks; 14 blocks were divided into 4 by 8 rod lots; blocks 1 and 16 were not divided. Block 1 is the property the amusement park occupies, and block 16 is the site of the Haslett School.

The Camp Grounds

The area covered by the Lake Lansing Amusement Park today was once known as "Haslett Park" and was the summer meeting place for Michigan Spiritualists. The possibility that the Spiritualists held meetings there as early as 1882 is found in a camp meeting bulletin of 1888, which stated that the 1888 meeting was the "sixth annual meeting of the Michigan Spiritualists". On September 1, 1884, the Shaws sold block 1 on land contract to the Directors of the Namoka Joint Stock Company, and made the provisions for the Shaws to "keep all buildings but the gate house and the speakers stand". This notation substantiates the idea that the Spiritualists had the nucleus of a permanent encampment at that time. It is possible that the Namoka Joint Stock Company was connected with the Spiritualists, as N. A. Dryer was one of several signers of the contract with the Shaws. In 1885, block 1 passed to the Namoka Spiritual Camp Meeting Association, and N. A. Dryer, M. D. was Chairman of the Board of Trustees of this group. P. F. Olds was President, and Julia M. Walton was Secretary.

By April, 1887, the property was again in the hands of Lucretia Shaw, and in that month she sold block 1 and a great

portion of the lots in the Village of Namoka to James H. Haslett, a haberdasher from Port Huron, Michigan. No lake front lots were included in this sale. In 1888, George G. Mead of Mason was praised for his "timely and unselfish aid in the early purchase of Haslett Park****liberal assistance at a critical time****otherwise the property would be in other hands". About this time Mr. Haslett acquired the Pine Lake House and its property on the north shore to add to the Spiritualists holdings.

Mrs. Jay Miller, a niece of James and Sarah Haslett, has in her possession a Haslett Park Camp Meeting Bulletin which gives much information of the aims, purposes, and facilities of the Spiritualists camp. The Bulletin is Volume 2, Number 2, dated July 26, 1888. It states that "the Sixth Annual Camp Meeting of the Michigan Spiritualists will be held at "Haslett Park" commencing Thursday, July 26, and closing Monday, August 27, including five Sundays". The month of August was the time the camp was held each year. "Haslett Park" was named for James Haslett, given for the cause of Spiritualism, was to be self sustaining, and was to pass on Haslett's death to the corporation. The park was described as a "Beautiful grove at the west shore of Pine Lake one-half mile from the depot, consisting of about 20 acres timbered with oak, hickory and elm".

Aims and Ideals

The objects sought by Mr. Haslett in establishing and endowing Haslett Park were:

- "1. To offer an attractive resort for all disciples, professors, or inquirers in regard to Spiritualism philosophically and religiously considered or as to its material manifestations.
2. Teach Spiritualism--discuss truth and freedom against error and superstition.
3. Beautiful spot for outdoor meetings--also those seeking pleasure only.
4. Home for aged people and orphans.
5. Sanitarium.
6. Art gallery--work done by spirit hands.

7. Medium's home for all the world to investigate all phases of mediumship.

8. Liberal school for children, free of sectarian bias.

9. Liberal library, all works pertaining to spiritual philosophy."

Classes in mental philosophy, psychometry, and mediumship were offered. There was a reading circle, a volunteer band with uniforms, which also provided good orchestra music for the Friday dances (both men and women danced with coats on). There was vocal music and a glee club for special occasions. The Lyceum, a gymnastic class, was presided over by Professor G. H. Brooks and met each day at 10 a. m.

The Facilities

Mr. John M. Potter was the manager of the Spiritualists' properties, including the buildings, the boats, and the sale of lots in the Namoka Plat. The largest building on the camp grounds was the Auditorium, 60 by 96 feet, having a large rostrum on which the speakers, chairman, and officers sat during the meetings. The building was constructed of heavy timbers, 20 feet between joints, with a truss roof; the sides were open and heavy curtains were let down in bad weather and during the winter. This building would seat 2,000 people and was dedicated July 29, 1888. It is still in use at the amusement park as the "Dodgem".

Another building which stood at the southwest corner of the park was the Park House. It was used as a dormitory or hotel and Mr. Mel Turner was the custodian. His daughter, Daphne Turner Streeter, was reportedly the first child born on the Spiritualists Camp Ground. Mrs. Streeter died in 1950, at the age of 61. After the camp ceased to operate, the Park House was moved and now stands on the southwest corner of Potter and Colby Streets.

There was a Dining Hall, 30 by 70 feet, which could accommodate 250 people. Meals were 25 cents each or 75 cents per day. Both board and room could be had for \$1.00 per day. Rooms and meals at the Pine Lake House on the north shore were available for \$1.50 per day; a single meal was 40 cents or meals alone, \$1.00 a day.

Communication with the spirits took place in the Seance Hall, a small building which was also later moved across the street from the park. It was Rusty's Tavern for some time, then was unoccupied and is now being torn down. A story published in the Lansing State Journal on Sunday, October 16, 1938, entitled "When Spirits Walked at Lake Lansing" may have taken place in this building. The article told of a man who wanted to contact his dead father. The medium asked him to bring two slates screwed together at each corner. When he had done this the medium stood up, called his name and instructed him to place his father's watch on the surface of the slates. The medium then went into a trance. Minutes later he told the man to remove the watch, unbolt the slate, and there would be a message. The man did this and found a message (the contents were not revealed) written on one of the slates in gold lettering in the father's own handwriting.

Outside the camp ground on the northwest corner of Potter and Colby Streets stood the Medium House, a large frame building containing 16 rooms; only mediums were allowed in this building. It has also been torn down.

There was a barn for the horses and sometimes as many as 150 horses were stabled here. The charge was ten cents per team.

Tents occupied a large portion of the camp ground during the summer meetings. Those who desired could bring their own tents and camp for the season for \$1.50. New and well-made tents, 10 by 12 feet accommodating four to six people, were available for \$8.00 for the season, \$6.00 for 3 weeks, \$5.00 for 2 weeks, and \$4.00 for one week. Those living in tents could cook their own meals or be served at the Dining Hall or the Pine Lake House. Usually there were from 100 to 125 tents pitched on the grounds.

Arrangements had been made with fifteen railroads for special excursion rates during the time the camp was in session. The Chicago and Grand Trunk Railroad and the Detroit-Milwaukee lines offered one-half fare on week-end tickets. Sometimes on Saturdays and Sundays 2,000 to 4,000 persons attended the meetings and then none of the Camp's accommodations were adequate.

The steamboat "Belle Haslett" met regular and special trains of the Chicago and Grand Trunk Railroad at the Pine



Entrance Gate to "Haslett Park", the
Spiritualist Camp Ground (looking to the
west on Lake Lansing Road)
courtesy Mrs. Jay Miller



Nemoka Hotel, originally the Titus House courtesy Eva Kuhn

Lake Station, landed passengers at the Haslett Park dock, thence to the Pine Lake House. Besides the "Belle Haslett", which was also used for pleasure rides, the boat facilities included two sail boats and twenty-eight small boats, which were rented for 50 or 75 cents a day.

The lots in the plat of Namoka Village which Mr. Haslett had purchased were (according to the Camp Meeting Bulletin) "associated with and a part of Haslett Park", 264 lots have been platted--about 60 already sold. Many neat cottages have been constructed."

Mr. Haslett died in 1891. In 1898, his widow, Sarah gave the park area to the Haslett Park Association, setting up certain terms to be met. In the event these provisions were not carried out, the property was to revert to her. Mrs. Haslett died in 1907. From the time of Mr. Haslett's death onward the numbers coming to the camp meetings dwindled until eventually the camp was abandoned. It would seem that the vision of a national headquarters for all Spiritualists could not materialize without the man who was its motivating force. Today nothing remains to recall the Spiritualists, but James Haslett's early presence will be remembered as long as there is a Haslett, Michigan.

Outside the Camp Grounds

Two privately owned hotels near the campgrounds also provided accommodations for the Spiritualists. The first of these was built by William Megiveron in 1889, and was named the Namoka House. Mr. Megiveron (the spelling McGiveron was used later) was born in Okemos in 1846, and claimed to be the first white boy born there. His father operated a tavern in Okemos in the early days of that village. The Namoka House was across the street from the camp grounds between Potter Street and the lake. John Okemos, son of the chief, often visited Mr. Megiveron at the hotel. The building burned in 1896, but was rebuilt and operated for a time by Bill Burgess.

The other hotel, the Titus House, was a large two story rooming house containing 80 rooms. It stood on the east side of Potter Street just south of the intersection of Lake Lansing Road and Potter Street. The Hasletts gave the property to Hannah S. Titus on March 11, 1890, with the provision that Titus "erect and maintain a building suitable for a lodging house to be used in the interest of the Haslett Park Associ-

ation". On July 28, 1897, Hannah Titus turned the property back to the Haslett Park Association. After the Spiritualists disbanded, this building was moved to Lake Lansing Road in the block between Potter Street and Edson Street, and was operated for a time by Al Hull as the Namoka Hotel. In this block there was also a grocery store, which was operated by Joe Brusselbach in 1908, later by both Jay Miller and Dick Farley. The hotel, grocery, and a barber shop were destroyed when the entire block burned to the ground in 1928. This block is almost completely rebuilt and contains Lack's Grocery, the Mayfair Bar, the Outpost Restaurant, and the Lake Tavern.

Early in the 1900's the Michigan United Railways leased the eastern one-half of Block 1 for a loop for street cars. The company built the Casino for skating and dancing, and this became a popular entertainment place. Fred Sherman played first violin for the dances, Ed Hardy played second violin, and Carlton "Cardy" Sherman played the dulcimer. These local musicians, who loved music and played as a sideline to their business, were always on call for a party or dance in the area. Fred Sherman's first violins were cigar boxes.

The Michigan Catering Company was the first to start the amusement park, and the first ride was a figure 8 roller coaster. John Reed and his brother, Gordon, ran the park for a number of years. In 1916, Al Sprague came to the lake and was superintendent of the Pine Lake Amusement Center for three years. In 1934, he purchased the park from the Lakeside Development Corporation and operated it until 1947, when he sold the property to Roger and Conrad Haney. In 1958, the Haney's sold to Rolland and Lawrence Johnson.

Although Oak Park Subdivision had been platted on June 3, 1906, by Walter Piper, there was only one house, the Martines home, west of the amusement park in 1916. Beside the numerous homes in that area today there is a filling station, Blinky's Tavern, and Smith's Grocery (formerly Thad and Bob's). In 1950, Frank Peet, a pharmacist, opened Peet's Drug Store at 1621 Lake Lansing Road. Stephen Musselman operates a Variety Store at 1615 Lake Lansing Road. Leo Barnes runs his barber business in a store next to his home on Potter Street.

North of the amusement park is the Lakeview Plat, laid out by Charles Foster and Jim Kaiser on May 29, 1903. At one time there was an elevated boardwalk over the swampy

land connecting the amusement park property to the foot of Columbia Drive. There were also two summer cottages which sat on stilts along this boardwalk.

Lakebrook #1 was subdivided by Ard and Martin Burr Foster on May 20, 1930, and lies between the Lakeview Plat and the lake outlet.

Chapter VII

PINE LAKE AS A RESORT CENTER

Lake Lansing, formerly Pine Lake, is the largest body of water in this region. In the early days when transportation was limited to horse and buggy, it was natural that pleasure seekers would discover and take advantage of a pleasant lake within easy reach. The lake area was practically uninhabited except for surrounding farms, and its unspoiled beauty must have been attractive indeed. The north shore was a natural sand beach, and majestic oak, hickory, and pine trees formed groves along the shore; there was virgin pine on the east side of the lake.

The Pine Lake House

When Samuel W. Durant wrote his History of Ingham and Eaton Counties, Michigan, in 1880, he stated that the resort area on the north shore (where the Dells now stands) had been a favorite resort for pleasure seekers for many years, and he gave a complete history to that time as follows:

"Thomas Bateman appears to have been the first person to furnish boating facilities. R. W. Surby bought the land of Bateman and also his interest in the boating business, and erected the first building for the accommodation of the public in 1870. In 1871 he built a hall which was subsequently torn down to give room for the present commodious one. In 1873, George W. Northrup became a partner with Mr. Surby in the enterprise and the firm put up the frame of the "Lake House" and erected a barn. In the fall of 1874, Surby sold his interest to Northrup and Origin Hardy became the partner of the latter. Under their administration the hotel was completed and the remainder of the buildings on the grounds were erected.

Subsequently Northrup sold to the brothers Origin and Anson Hardy, who have continued to improve the grounds and add attractions to the place. ****They have some 25 or 30 row and sail boats, and intend to put on a pleasure steamer in the spring of 1881. A small steamer was brought from Lansing and launched on the lake in 1876. This was afterwards taken to pieces and the engine transferred to a new boat built for the Messrs.

Hardy. This last was sold to parties in Portland, Ionia Co., Michigan, in June 1880. The buildings consist of an extensive hotel, a dancing hall, two barns, an ice house, bathhouse, boat houses, etc. with swings and other attractive features, all situated in a fine grove of oak and hickory timber. The place is well patronized through the warm season, as many as six thousand people having been on the grounds at one time. Boating and fishing facilities are excellent."

The Hardy brothers launched the "Belle Haslett", a steamer capable of carrying 150 passengers, in 1881. This boat provided pleasure rides on the lake and met the trains at the town dock on the south shore. Its capacity, however, was never adequate on Sundays and holidays.

About this time the resort was acquired by James Haslett, and was used in conjunction with the Spiritualists' summer program. After Mr. Haslett's death, and with the waning of the Spiritualists' Camp meetings, the hotel became the property of James Haslett's son, Frank, who rented the property to various operators. It was in 1895, that H. H. Hammond and Cliff Foster took over the management of the Pine Lake House, and developed the new business to large proportions for those times. On the forty acres of ground surrounding the hotel they promoted horse races, ball games, and participation sports, such as tug-of-war, pole vaulting, quoit pitching, croquet games, and foot races. There were row boat and steamer rides around the lake, bathing on the beach near the hotel, and a water toboggan for thrills. The toboggan was moved in 1896 from the Spiritualists camp grounds where it had been a recreation feature. There was usually a balloon ascension at sundown and fireworks in the evening. The balloonist was the hero of the day when he was lifted through the air grasping the trapeze as the balloon was released from the pit where it was filled.

In those early times, the large crowds who came for a Sunday outing considered a day at Pine Lake a special occasion. Early in the morning the family would climb into their horse-drawn vehicle, and it would be late in the evening before they returned. Baskets would be packed with picnic lunches, and often a freezer of homemade ice cream would ride along too. For those gay days, the dress fitted the occasion. No casual or sport clothes, but grand attire was worn. Young women were garbed in starched lawn and dimity dresses which barely missed the sand. By mid-afternoon the dresses usually lost



Pine Lake House as seen from the lake

Both photos courtesy Eva Kuhn

their crispness, with the inevitable summer shower. Leghorn and Tuscon braid hats with net maline, bright flowers, and ribbon streamers, which made such a beautiful picture in the cool shade of morning, were pitiful sights as they drooped and shed their colors on the wearers and passersby. Seersucker suits, linen dusters, sailor hats, white shirts, and stiff collars worn by the young men suffered when the high spirited horses had to be managed.

Mrs. Hammond and Mrs. Foster served their guests homemade bread and pastries and huge freezers of homemade ice cream for all special occasions.

The Hammond-Foster firm operated the Pine Lake House until 1900, when it was taken over by William Megiveron. "Bill" Megiveron was well experienced in managing hotels--his father had operated an inn in the pioneer days of the village of Okemos, and Bill himself had owned and operated the Namoka House on the west shore of the lake, and for a short time, had a hotel above the old post office building in Haslett. In 1902, Mr. Megiveron built the "Little Mack" to replace the "Belle Haslett" on the lake. It was of wood construction and a steam boiler furnished power to operate this side wheel boat. This was the last steamer on the lake and it was replaced by gasoline launches.

Mr. Megiveron ran the Pine Lake House until 1910, and soon afterward the hotel and ten acres around it was bought by Joe Palmer and his wife, Mame. Mr. Palmer remodeled the hotel and renamed it the "Palmer House". A fire destroyed the buildings in 1929. This fire was one of the first runs for the truck of the newly organized Haslett Fire Department. After the fire, Mr. Palmer built the "Dells Ballroom", which has been a popular dance spot for many years. Al Sprague succeeded Mr. Palmer as owner and in 1957, Don Wilson and the Grabowski Brothers, George and Theodore, became the proprietors.

The Pulver House

Another small resort hotel just east of the Pine Lake House was the Pulver House, owned by Henry Pulver, whose mother was a sister of the Hardy brothers. The large house contained six bedrooms and a large porch; there was a bath house and pavillion on the lake. The house and other buildings have since been torn down. George Northrup later

bought the Pulver House, and in turn Tom Cudney bought from him. Mr. Cudney operated a lake steamer, the "Merry Mae", in conjunction with the resort. This boat was subsequently sold to Elby J. Beebe and renamed the "Crystal Sea".

The Summer Resort

Preceding the turn of the century and for some time after, Pine Lake was a fashionable summer resort. During these years many prominent Lansing families built summer cottages--most of them on the north shore. The most impressive of these was the large summer home of the R. E. Olds family built on the "bluff". Next to it on the west was the Dick Scott cottage. Both of these properties now belong to the Y. W. C. A. and are known as Camp Mettamega. The Olds' gave their property to the "Y" in 1908, and for some time it was used as a summer place for business girls. The Scotts gave their cottage at a later date. Other families who built summer cottages about this time were the Clyde Christophers, the Emerys, the Howes, and the Ilandburgs.

Ray Whitehead was responsible for developing "Hickory Island", and a group of cottages were built there. All of the cottages on the north side of the island were destroyed by fire about 1920. Mr. Whitehead, Mr. Utter, and Mr. Gafill had the island platted in 1908, and Carlton Street, leading to the island, was put through in 1907. Before that time there was a path (called Devil's Lane), bordered by a split rail fence, leading to the island with a plank tressel to cross over the marshy area. The island was a fine picnic grove for local families, as was Whipp's Point and Indian Island, both of which could only be reached by boat.

The lake hummed with activity during this era and the culmination of the summer season was celebrated with "Venetian Night". Then the whole summer colony turned out, decorating their individual boats for a grand prize, and there were general festivities for all.

The Izzer Club

In the late 1890's, a group of Lansing business men built a men's social club in the center of Pine Lake. Although the clubhouse has been gone for a number of years, many still remember it sitting on piers, and the remains of those piers are still evident in the lake. The clubhouse was a two story



courtesy Mary Elliott



courtesy Mrs. J. Marsh

square building with a porch about all sides. It had various names, being called the Merry Sisters Club, the Downey Club House, and the Izzer Club. George S. Alderton, writing for the State Journal an article entitled "Wasser and Izzer", gave a story told by Burr McCurdy: "Charley Downey went to Kentucky to look over some horses to buy. Each horse had a long record. Mr. Downey listened patiently, then said, 'I am not interested the least bit in has-beens. I am not concerned with what any horse was. What I'm looking for is an "izzer".'. So the Izzer Club."

Charley and Oscar Downey were both members of the club along with J. Piersall, Guy Rennex, Ford North, J. P. Lee, Bob Shank, Clyde Christopher, Ray Whitehead, and others. The story goes that there was a trap door in the club house, and while an innocent guest was sitting enjoying himself, he would suddenly find himself taking an unwelcome dip in the lake by courtesy of his hosts. Another dunking story concerns Mr. Mel Turner, who was hired as the caretaker. During the winter it was his job to keep the ice cut from around the clubhouse. Several times this good man would unwittingly cut himself into the lake. Gay and colorful times were had at this club in the center of the lake.

Making Way for Permanent Lake Residents

While Frank Haslett owned the Pine Lake House he had the land from the lake outlet northward to the hotel platted as Hickory Grove Addition. This was in 1908, and what is now Lake Drive from the lake outlet to the Dells property was named Electric Street. This plat was erased, but was replatted by John R. Ferguson and Horace T. Thomas in 1925. Between 1919 and 1927, Supervisors Plats #1, #3, and #4 along the north shore were recorded. Reynolds Road was named for the R. Reynolds family who owned the land north and east of the Pine Lake House. The house at 6403 Reynolds Road was the family home.

Frank Johnson, known as Pine Lake Johnson, was the greatest promoter of the improvement of the lake. Mr. Johnson, a printer by trade, came to Lansing in 1917, and eventually rented a cottage on Hickory Island. He liked the lake and began buying land that was then largely worthless along the east shore.

The east side of the lake was, at one time, covered with

white pine--the largest stand in the county. Long before Mr. Johnson came to the lake, the pine crop had been harvested; only a few old sentinals still stand today. George Northrup cut pine from the northeast section of the lake, but the biggest logging operation was carried on by John Saltmarsh around Sunset Cove. Mr. Saltmarsh cut in the winter and sent the logs over the ice on sled runners. The logs were stockpiled behind the depot to await shipment by rail. Mr. Saltmarsh also operated a picket mill, making 1" by 4" pickets and stave bolts. Some of the piles of sawdust from the logging operation can still be found east of the lake.

Mr. Johnson said, "I sat down under a tree all one afternoon and made up my mind to just go buying". And buy he did. He started a big project on the east side of the lake, promoting lake homesites instead of mere summer cottages. With this in view he and William Dudley platted Sunset Cove in 1923. Mr. Johnson worked hard and it was through his efforts that Lake Lansing Drive now encircles the lake. Before the Drive was put in, the only access to the east side of the lake was a lane running west from Green Road just north of the railroad crossing. Johnson dredged shoreline and swamp. In 1925, he got the State Conservation Commission interested in a 1,200 acre wildlife sanctuary. It was Pine Lake Johnson himself who effected the name Pine Lake changed to Lake Lansing in 1927, - "because there are dozens of Pine Lakes". Other lands Mr. Johnson bought and platted were his North End Plat, Perry Road Addition, and Indian Island--all in 1947. Frank Johnson died in 1956, at the age of seventy-nine, at his Indian Island home.

Chapter VIII

MAIN STREET

When the railroad was laid and the Pine Lake Post Office established in 1879, there were four farm houses on Haslett Road between the Okemos-Haslett Road and Green Road. The schoolhouse stood in the "Y" formed by Green and Haslett Roads. In all, there were approximately thirty-five homes and the lake hotel in the nine sections which this history principally encompasses.

West of the Okemos-Haslett Road was the Pine Lake Farm house, mentioned before in an earlier chapter. On the east was a house corresponding to 1180 Haslett Road. Lyman Bayard settled on this property in 1837, and from 1853 to 1875 the farm was the property of the W. F. Kelly family. It passed to a Mr. Fuller in 1875. From 1877, and for many years after, this farm was known as the Everett Farm. Now it is the property of C. O. Wilkins, who in 1956, platted Wilkshire Sub-division.

East of the railroad crossing were two other farms--the D. V. Smith farm at 1298 Haslett Road and the Fidelo Stevens farm at 1427 Haslett Road. Mr. Smith's farm passed to Fred Brundige and from 1908 to 1949 was known as the Bert Dunn farm. The original house on this property was moved and now stands at 5682 School Street. Orlo Elliott bought the property from Mr. Dunn, and it was from Mr. Elliott that Couchois and Miller, builders, bought land and platted the eastern portion of Lakeview Heights in 1954.

The Fidelo Stevens (also spelled Stephens in some records) farm was first settled in 1836 by Obed Marshall, and was sold soon after to Parley Davis. It remained in the Davis family until purchased by Mr. Stevens in 1865. In 1892, the farm was bought by Samuel Soultz and through his daughter, Emma Soultz Smith, the house and several lots remained in the Soultz family until recent years. A portion of the farm was sold as lots and a great part of the older residential section of Haslett was once part of this farm. Many of the fruit trees from the orchard, south and east of the house, still bear fruit for modern day residents. The part of the farm which became residential was

platted in 1922 as Supervisor's Plat of Haslett, and was replatted in 1928 as Supervisor's Plat #1. Haslett Road in the town was named Bundy Street.

By 1887, there was the nucleus of a business section clustered about the railroad crossing. The Michigan Business Directory for that year listed at Pine Lake the following: "A. E. Andrews, postmaster and general store; Ed Elliott, general store; Fuller and Smith, Picket mill; F. Hall, blacksmith; T. L. Hutton, railway and express agent." The railroad station was on the east side of the tracks; it is possible that the picket mill was next to it, although no evidence of this has been found; Mr. Elliott's store was the old store building which burned, but which stood near the site of the former post office; Mr. Hall's blacksmith shop was on the south side of Haslett Road near the foot of Potter Street; and Mr. Andrew's general store stood where the Chevrolet Agency now stands.

This same year Fred Sherman built the house at 1558 Haslett Road, and to the west of the house he built and operated a grist and a cider mill. Mr. Sherman and his uncle, Carlton "Cardy" Sherman also threshed grain for farmers about the countryside, using a yoke of oxen in the fields. Later Mr. Sherman operated a feed mill at the same site. His daughter, Mrs. Charles (Madeline) Spencer still occupies the family home.

It was during these early years, too, that the town pump stood on the post office grounds. A stone crock caught water for the townsfolk; a large black ash log had been burned out to form a trough for watering the horses.

In the 1890's and the early 1900's the little town, now called Haslett Park (population 100), became a thriving community and a shipping center for agricultural products and livestock. Aaron J. Smith opened a small grocery in a building across from the post office and became postmaster for five years. Aaron was the son of Hiram Smith whose family settled in Section 1 in 1837. Hiram built the house at 1530 Haslett Road on whose property the grocery store stood.

Mr. Andrews' general store was purchased in 1891 by John P. Lockwood and Emroy "Roy" M. Babbitt, a nephew of Andrews who had come to clerk in the store a few years before. In 1894, Mr. Babbitt bought Mr. Lockwood's interest and from this beginning, became the leading business man of Haslett for



The "old" Babbitt general store with the original bank building on the right



The "new" Babbitt store

Both photos courtesy Eva Kuhn

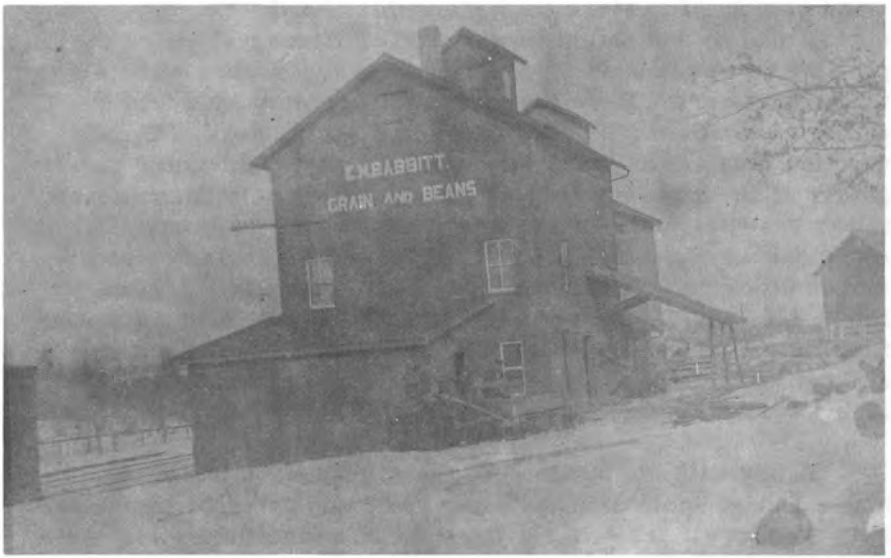
many years. The store sold groceries, hardware, drygoods, boots, shoes, and patent medicines. For several years the post office was housed in this store and the owners were also the postmasters. Here the men of the community would gather to swap stories, and perhaps close a "deal". In fair weather they sat on the porch and front steps; in winter they gathered about the big heating stove, sitting on tobacco boxes, eating peanuts, and hashing over the problems of the day. Around 1910, Mr. Babbitt built his "new" store, a two story cinder block building known today as the American Legion Hall. Mr. Ray Towner worked for Mr. Babbitt in the store for thirty-three years. In 1936, Mr. Babbitt sold his store and retired; he died in Owosso at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Howard Sweet, in 1945.

Along with his grocery business Roy Babbitt had an ice house and an apple drier. These were housed in buildings behind the store. Ice was cut from the lake and the apples were peeled by hand, spread on trays and set in the sun or by stoves to dry.

A beanery was another facet of Mr. Babbitt's business. After the new store was built, the old building was used for the storage of beans. But most of the bean business was handled in the elevator across the street. Navy beans were brought from twenty miles around and Mr. Babbitt employed six to twelve women to process the beans for shipment.

The elevator was first begun by Mr. Lockwood. The railroad station was at the west end of the lot and the elevator to the east. Mr. Lockwood was the railroad agent and he bought grain, lumber, and other local products for shipment. There was an elevated ramp from the street level to the upper story of the elevator building and a little car carried the grain from the farmer's wagon to the building where there was a scale for weighing and a turntable to unload the car.

Around the turn of the century Roy Babbitt bought the elevator from Mr. Lockwood. By this time the new railroad station had been built on the west side of the tracks, and the double tracks and the siding had been laid. Mr. Babbitt began a new and larger addition to the existing elevator buildings. Some of the bricks and timbers from the Pine Lake School (no longer in use at Green and Haslett Roads) went into this new building. Here the beans were processed and grain was stored.



Elevator

courtesy Eva Kuhn



courtesy Walter Buxton

Mr. Babbitt later sold his interest to the Cooperative Elevator Corporation, among whose members were Jim Kaiser and Bert Dunn. Another cooperative group ran the elevator under the name of the Haslett Elevator Company. Franklin Moldenhauer was manager of the elevator for a period of twenty-five years.

On a triangle of grass between the elevator buildings and the street, the Woman's Literary Club started a town park. They planted shrubs and trees and grew flowers about a flag pole they had erected. The flag pole, flowers, and shrubs are gone but some of the trees remain; the semblance of a park is no longer apparent.

In a spectacular fire on April 30, 1954, the "new" building and much of the old portion of the elevator were destroyed. The loss of grain and feed stored there made it a costly fire indeed. Mr. Nelson Sheldon, the owner, soon began the rebuilding process. He converted the business to a lumber and coal company. Several new buildings house lumber, paint, and other building materials.

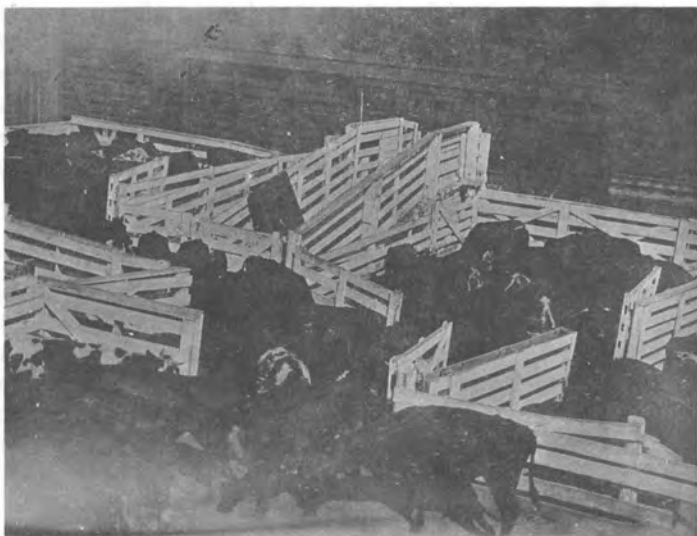
Under the hill to the east of the elevator were the stock yards--a series of pens leading to the railroad siding. Cliff Foster and Hi Hammond shipped cattle, hogs, sheep, and calves from this point. When the livestock was driven down the unpaved main street on stock day, great clouds of dust enveloped the town. Many of the local farmers specialized in raising registered stock and the shipping center at Haslett did a brisk business. Bert Dunn, Jim Kaiser, and John Green were others who operated the stock yards.

The store building, now Robinson's Grocery, was built about 1894 by Albert Smith, and for the most part has always been used as a grocery store. Mart Smith, Orrie Henderson, Walter Buxton, Robert Watkins, James Greenman, William Dudley, Al Switzer, Tom West, and Al Sprague were men who owned or operated the grocery store before Robert Robinson, Senior, became the proprietor in 1929. Upon Mr. Robinson's retirement a few years ago, his son Russell took over the business.

Walter Buxton, one of the early owners, bought the grocery store in 1909, and operated a grocery wagon in conjunction with the store. He drove his well-stocked wagon, drawn by two mules, about the country-side, bringing his wares to



Stock Day



Stock Yards

Both photos courtesy Eva Kuhn

farms in a wide area, reaching even south of Okemos. Mr. Buxton was not the only one to bring door-to-door service to the housewife, however. Mrs. Fannie Hunt had a bakery wagon, featuring homemade pastries and ice cream; Walter Moore, who ran a meat market at the back of Elliott's store, took his meats about the country in a wagon; and Orlo Elliott and Frank Heimerdinger also had a grocery wagon that made the circuit.

Above the grocery store was a hall where medicine shows and socials were held. Here the American Legion post held its meetings in later years.

On a now vacant parking lot to the east of the grocery store was the implement business of S. S. Smith. From an open-faced shed running the length of the lot, buggies, seeds, implements, hardware, twine, and fencing were sold. Mr. Smith was the father of Albert, Bertram, and Mrs. Anson (Flora) Hardy. He owned 260 acres in the vicinity of the township hall, and built his large farm house on the North Okemos Road between Raby and Haslett Roads.

To the west of 1442 Haslett Road (on a now vacant lot) stood a blacksmith shop. The building was 40 feet long and 24 feet wide and was built and operated by Charles Harrington at its beginning. About 1902, Ed Cochrane bought the property and business from Mr. Harrington, built his home to the east of the shop, and continued his business there. In conjunction with the blacksmith shop he ran a wood shop, sold building lots, and a complete line of "International" agricultural implements. Around 1910, Mr. Cochrane moved the blacksmith shop to the corner of School Street and Haslett Road. To the back he added a two story building, which still stands today, to be used as a grist mill. Mr. Cochrane took over the implement business of S. S. Smith, sold the implements, hardware, coal and feed, shod horses, and did repairs. When tractors made their appearance, the store had the local agency. Upon Mr. Cochrane's death, his son Vern, continued the business. He remodeled the building, put on a store front, and ran the shop until he sold the business to Hal Church. Mr. Church's brother, Jay, managed the store for him. Mr. Stanley Piniewski succeeded Mr. Church as owner until ill health forced him to sell. M. E. Pierce bought the business in 1954. He has expanded the business to include a complete line of boats and motors. In 1958, a large addition to the east of the store was completed to display and house the boats.



courtesy Walter Buxton



courtesy Orlo Elliott

Next to the hardware were two small buildings--one the house of Lafe Geer; the other a combination barber and harness shop belonging to George "Peg Leg" Avis. Mr. Avis kept a pan of hot water on his stove and in this water he warmed his leather to make it pliable. When a customer came for a shave, Mr. Avis used the hot water already on the stove and so the customer came away with a "leathery" shave. Oney Clark and Lester Wagner ran barber shops above Babbitt's "new" store. Leon Witchell, who is at present and has been the Haslett barber for many years, started his shop in a small lean-to building east of Robinson's Grocery. The building he now occupies once sat farther back from the street and was a small dwelling.

To the west of the "old" general store and attached to it was a one story building. Here the Exchange Bank of Haslett had its beginning in 1906. It was organized by the Sayre Brothers of Schwartz Creek, and there were ten members on the first board of directors. This number was cut to five and included: Hi Hammond, Martin Lehman, E. M. Babbitt, Freeman House, and Jay Marsh. Mr. Marsh was cashier for the Haslett bank for twenty-five years. Banking was neighborly, small-scale, and fairly efficient; the bank carried a responsibility of \$200,000. In 1908, the bank was paying 4% interest on saving deposits. By 1913, it had been moved into the new bank building, an annex to the new Babbitt store; it was impressive and modern for those days. The bank did not survive the crash of depression days, and it was necessary to close its doors in 1932. Its depositors were more fortunate than those in many parts of the country. The bank paid back between 75% and 85% of its claims over a period of years--a credit to the directors.

After the bank was dissolved, the building was used as a real estate and insurance office run by John Lanier with Don Aldrich at one time, and a Mr. Godfrey at another, as partners. Claude M. Lewsader had an insurance agency in the building in the 1940's. In August of 1949, Harold Schlichting opened the Haslett Drug Store--the first prescription center in the area.

When the old one story building was vacated by the banking concern, Billy Allshouse opened a meat market there. Later his son, Bert, and Don Herbison were the butchers. In the 1920's the old general store and its attached building was moved to the back of the lot. In its place a garage was constructed, and a Ford Sales Agency was opened by Roy Babbitt



Interior of the first bank building

Jay Marsh, cashier

E. M. Babbitt, customer

courtesy Orlo Elliott



Interior of the "new" bank building

courtesy Eva Kuhn

and Hi Hammond. Cars were sold and serviced just as they are today. Al Sprague followed as owner and around 1935, Jack Flood acquired the business. He had the agency (Chevrolet) until 1953, except for the years 1937 through 1939, when Chris Strong was the owner. Mr. Flood sold to Anderson and Andrews, and in 1957, Lee MacGillivray, the present owner, took over.

Also in the 1920's, Lee Kuhn built a cement block factory building between School Street and the railroad tracks. Mr. Kuhn made the blocks for many of the buildings in Haslett. This building is now used by the Haslett School for its shop and music program. Mr. Kuhn built the large cement block home on Shaw Street and the one at the corner of Potter and Lake Lansing Drive.

Around the turn of the century the Knights of the Macabees built a hall on the property at 1438 Haslett Road. The hall was used for many social functions of the community, and it was here that plays were given under the auspices of the Woman's Literary Club. Some of the plays were presented by troops of traveling actors, much like the summer stock companies of today. When the companies, or other overnight visitors, were in town they were accommodated by Mrs. Ed. Cochrane in her home to the west of the hall. Because of this, the house was sometimes referred to as "the town hotel".

The Baptist Church was another early landmark on the Haslett scene and will be discussed in a later chapter.

The Fire Department

The first fire department in Meridian Township was a volunteer group of Haslett citizens. The first fire equipment was a hand operated machine, and fire calls were answered as best the volunteers could. A disastrous fire in 1928 destroyed a complete block of stores and buildings on the corner of Potter Street and Lake Lansing Road. This fire sparked a movement for a fire department with adequate facilities to fight fires.

The Haslett Fire Department was organized and on October 24, 1929, the township board was presented a petition to purchase fire fighting equipment for District #1. The 1929 fire truck, still in the department's service, was procured and was housed in a lean-to shed attached to the east of the Robinson's Grocery building. There were perhaps six or eight fires

a year; between these infrequent fires the battery on the truck would go dead. The fire engine sat on blocks and when an alarm came in, the truck was pushed off the blocks and down the hill to start the engine.

Reservoirs were built in different parts of the town and fire lanes were cut to the lake. The Palmer House (the former Pine Lake House) was one of the first fire calls answered with the new truck.

Not long after the department's beginning, a two story building behind the drug store was obtained as a headquarters for the fire department, and in 1932, a siren was installed there to sound the alarms.

In the early days of the department, the owner of the garage was also the fire chief, and the fire truck was kept and serviced there. Al Sprague owned the garage at the fire department's beginning, and he was the first part-time fire chief. He was followed, in 1935, by Jack Flood, who was then owner of the garage. Mr. Flood was the first full-time fire chief--the first pay was \$40. Chris Strong took over the garage and the fire chief's post from 1937 to 1939, then Jack Flood again became proprietor of the garage.

In 1940, the job of fire chief became independent of the garage and Raymond Raby became the department's head. In 1941, the township purchased the fire station building and another truck.

Around 1930, Haslett Road from the Okemos-Haslett Road to highway M-78 was cut through and opened for travel. In the preceding years residents reached North Lansing by means of Lake Lansing Road, and Lansing proper by way of U.S. 16. In 1948, when the township sought a more centralized location for its fire department (also serving Okemos, Towar Gardens, and Marble areas) and for township offices, it chose the corner of Haslett and North Okemos Roads in the Pleasant Acres Subdivision. The fire station was opened for use in 1950, and the department was, by that time, known as the Meridian Township Fire Department.

Fire fighting equipment for the township now includes the two trucks previously mentioned, a tank truck, a high pressure Bean truck, a high pressure and pumper truck, and an inhalator car. In 1957, an additional fire station was constructed in

Okemos to serve that rapidly growing community, and one of the trucks is housed there. Succeeding Mr. Raby, Val Naert became fire chief in November, 1955, and continues in that position today. Ermin "Goody" Good has the longest volunteer service record in the department. He joined in 1937, and was at one time assistant to the Chief.

The Meridian Township Fireman's Auxiliary, made up of wives of regular and volunteer firemen, was organized in September, 1951, with Mrs. Raymond (Helen) Raby as its first president. This group supplies clothing and other necessities for burned-out or needy families. In conjunction with the Fireman's Association they stage the annual Christmas party for underprivileged children of the township. Along with the firemen, they restore toys and dolls, and assemble baskets of groceries to be distributed at this party.

Thus Haslett grew from a farming community to a village. The lake area, although a bustling place in the summer months, was abandoned in the winter; Haslett developed more permanently. Here the local businessmen and the farmers, who retired from the rigorous farm life of those times, built their homes. Along Haslett Road, down Babbitt, Cade, and Carlton Streets the town grew. The Nichols, Hiram Smiths, Buxtons, Babbitts, Allshouses, Ray Towners, S. S. Smiths, Harringtons, Cochranes, Annis', Harlan Towners, Marshs, Lockwoods, Frenchs, Guy Petersons, Edward Smiths, the Foster families, Frank Soult's---these were some of the families who built homes in the early 1900's. Albert Smith built the town's largest home on Haslett Road opposite Carlton Street. This house burned early Easter morning in 1941. Guy Peterson was the carpenter who built a number of these homes.

Then for many years the town settled into complacency. Some families moved away; others replaced them; but for the most part the early residents remained, raising their families and enjoying life in the little town. Many of these families were descendants of the first settlers in this area; some of them are still living; many of their children are.

There were not too many events, except those effecting families personally, that marked the passage of time from the early growth of the town, just described, until the 1950's. One event, which frightened citizens and brought sadness in its wake,

happened in the Spring of 1924. This was an outbreak of hemorrhagic "black" smallpox. Fear that this dread disease would sweep the community compelled everyone to stay indoors and avoid contact with others. No outsiders were permitted in the town. After the town was declared safe again, six victims had been laid to rest, among them Billy Hart who, by means of his flower beds in the business section, had attempted to beautify his town. Banker Cade, a teacher in the Haslett School, unselfishly lent his services during this crucial time and many appreciatively remember his kindness and courage.

During the years several doctors resided in Haslett, among them Dr. Diamond, Dr. Codrington, and Dr. Jim Ferguson. But in the early days, when doctor's services were not used as much as today, the mother of the family dispensed her home remedies, and had her babies at home. Here the practical nurse and midwife played an important role. Marietta Herbison Law, who died in 1957, gave many years to the community as such a person. She would walk for miles to go to someone in need and in the worst possible weather conditions would leave her home to answer a call. She gave much of herself to aid her community. In 1956, Coburn C. Bland, D.O. came to Haslett and set up practice. In 1958, he moved into his new office building on Shaw Street.

Eventually utility services--sidewalks, paved streets, electric lights, natural gas, and telephones--made life easier and more comfortable for residents of the area. The first electric light plant in the town was a Delco System enterprised by the Foster, Marsh, and Green families to serve their homes. This was about 1914, and the generator was set up in the Foster's barn.

In 1908, the Okemos Independent Telephone Company had wires to seven townships in the county, including Mason, and boasted of direct connections over copper wires with Detroit. There were 127 telephones on the Okemos exchange and several businessmen in Haslett availed themselves of this service. Several had telephones on both the Okemos and Williamston lines.

World War II

World War II affected this community just as it touched every part of the country. Everyone in the surrounding area lent his efforts in one way or another.

Meridian Township had a defense set-up complete to the last detail, bringing into co-ordination the needs and efforts of Haslett and Okemos. The defense council followed the model organization approved for township set-ups under the State Defense Council. The control center was in rooms over the Haslett Fire Hall. Fred J. Weissinger was the commander of the council, and Floyd Linn, then Supervisor, was the deputy commander. Under these men were: Richard Huizenga, communications officer; Roswell Bogue, chief air warden; Frank Moldenhauer, deputy air warden; John Whitmyer, chief gas officer; Theodore Wagner, public utilities chief; Dr. J. K. Heckert, medical chief; Mrs. Margaret Schuon, Red Cross chairman, assisted by Mrs. Alvin Baetz; Jack Flood, chief fire warden, John Peterson, deputy chief fire warden; Owen Abbey, chief of police. These men were assisted by trained personnel including 50 air raid wardens, 35 auxiliary fire wardens, and 30 auxiliary police. There were first aid stations in Haslett, Okemos, and Towar Gardens. Classes were held in air raid protection, fire fighting, first aid, gas technique, and nutrition (the Haslett classes met weekly in homes). An air raid post was established at the Ingham County Hospital, and the council procured an inhalator which was kept at the Haslett Fire Department headquarters. The personnel of the council handled the rationing for the Haslett, Okemos, Marble, and Carl School districts.

The school played a large part in the war activities also. Under Foster Van Vliet, the school principal, several successful scrap drives were conducted. In the spring of 1942, twenty-six tons of scrap metal were collected and in the fall, forty tons of scrap metal and rubber were obtained. The boys shop classes sent twenty-nine completed model air planes to the Navy Department for educational purposes in 1942, and in 1943, they doubled that number. Christmas boxes were sent to service men who had attended Haslett School, and regularly the student newspaper "High Sparkle" and letters were sent as a class project. The Junior Red Cross was active and classes in subjects related to the war effort were held. Students were excused from classes for the fall harvest or other war efforts.

The Blue Star Mothers displayed the service men's pictures (about 100) at the Claude M. Lewsader Insurance Agency in the former bank building.



Albert Smith House destroyed by fire in 1941

courtesy Eva Kuhn



Haslett's Baseball Team

courtesy Mary Elliott

Left to right--Front row: Burr Foster, Eddie Douglas, Guy Peterson, Bert Smith. Back row: Roy Douglas, Gust Kaiser, Bert Allshouse, Fred Karber, Hugh McGiveron

Thus the years passed to the present time and the post-war housing boom. All over the nation new homes were being built in the suburbs and the fingers of growth extended farther and farther into the countryside. Haslett began to feel this suburban trend in the 1950's. Lanier Heights, encompassing an extension of Babbitt Street, School Street, and Franklin Street (connecting the two), was platted in 1947, and not long after, Couchois and Miller, builders, erected houses on these lots. Between 1952 and 1954, these men acquired the farms of Edward Piper and Orlo Elliott and subdivided Lakeview Heights #1, #2, #3, and #4 extending to Cornell Road on the east and the swampy land of Mud Lake on the south. The woods on the hill overlooking Mud Lake were once used as a picnic spot by the young people of the town. A lane from Haslett Road, between the properties at 1427 and 1443 Haslett Road, wound its way to the woods. Along this lane was a baseball field where the local team held forth.

In 1955, Jay C. Shaw platted his land south of Franklin Street as Shaw Acres. Many homes and the new high school are being built there. West of Haslett, between Haslett and Lake Lansing Road, the Couchois and Miller firm purchased land once known as the John Greenman and Gil Cushman farms. Here they began the Hillbrook Park Subdivision in 1957, and it is developing rapidly. Both this subdivision and the eastern section of Lakeview Heights have water systems which were developed by Couchois and Miller and presented to Meridian Township for operation.

Chapter IX

FARMS AND FAMILIES

The only known Centennial Farm (a farm which has been in the same family for at least 100 years) in the area is at 2150 Lake Lansing Road. This is the home of Mrs. Willis Culver and her daughter and son-in-law, Adele and Jay Foster. This land was purchased by Willis Culver's father, Zenith, around 1855. Zenith's father was George, who bought the land settled by the Marshall brothers (see Chapter I).

Charles and Christiana Nicholas Foster were married in England and came to America on their wedding trip. They stopped with relatives in Pontiac, Michigan, and in 1850, Charles set out on foot, coming to Meridian Township where he bought eighty acres of wild land in Section 26 (at the corner of Cornell and Hatch Roads). There he built a log house and brought his bride. The Fosters had ten children. To each of his sons, Charles gave a forty-acre farm, and three of his sons--Charles S., Henry, and Clifford--settled in the Haslett-Lake Lansing area. The Charles Foster farm was on the west shore of the lake at the outlet (part of the Culver farm), and here he and his wife, Mary, raised a large family. Their sons were known in local circles as the Foster baseball team. The Charles Foster home is now gone.

Henry had a farm at 5100 Van Atta Road, and his granddaughter Mrs. Roland (Eleanor) Davis, and her husband now live on the farm. In later years, Henry built the house at 1399 Haslett Road and there he spent his retirement years.

Clifford "Cliff" built a house adjoining Henry's property at 1411 Haslett Road. He was a local business man and occupied this home until his death in 1953. His daughter, Mrs. Dwight (Vera) Cavanagh and her husband still live in the family home. Olive Shiffer Foster, wife of Cliff, was the granddaughter of Thomas Bateman, who at one time owned all of the land north of Lake Lansing, and her paternal grandfather, Henry Morgan Shiffer, owned the Pine Lake Farm west of Haslett in the late 1860's, and it was here that she was born.

James Smith and his wife, Betsey, came to this area in 1837. They settled in Clinton County on 320 acres of wild land adjoining the northeast corner of Section 1, Meridian. James Smith was the first settler of Clinton County, and because he came to Michigan from Bath Township, New York, the township was called Bath. Mr. Smith's son, Stephen, took up the original land grant on the northeast corner of Section 1, and J. Smith, an adjoining 40 acres. In 1847, the family claimed land in Section 12.

James Smith built a log house and stable on the Clinton County farm at the terminus of Green Road and cleared the land. It is said that the Smith's log house was open to all weary travelers in the pioneer years. James and Betsey had fourteen children, among whom were Stephen, James, Hiram, Elizabeth, Martha, Mary, Nancy, and Emaline. The sons bought more land in Sections 1 and 2, and, collectively, the Smith family owned many acres in Bath and Meridian Townships. Stephen built his home on his land at 6461 Green Road, and Hiram first built his house on Coleman Road; later he built the large buff brick house on Green Road north of the railroad crossing. Hiram married Margarette Van Atta, and Elizabeth married Margarette's brother, George B. Van Atta. Most of the Smith children married sons and daughters of other pioneer families of Bath and Meridian Townships.

The farm at 5805 Green Road belonged to the Jeffres family for many years. S. E. Jeffres and his father, John G., settled here in 1844. Edith, daughter of S. E. Jeffres, married Edward Smith, son of Stephen, and they built the house at 1361 Haslett Road. The Green family has owned the Jeffres farm for some time.

The large brick house on Van Atta Road was the show-place of the countryside at one time. This home was built in 1879 by George B. Van Atta, who had come to Meridian in 1858 and had purchased 80 acres of partially cleared land. He increased his holdings until at one time he owned 840 adjoining acres in Sections 11, 13, 14, and 23. He was the son of Washtenaw County pioneers and married Elizabeth Smith,

daughter of James and Betsey Smith. Van Atta's daughter, Cynthia, married Edward K. Elliott, son of the first postmaster.

John Saltmarsh, who came to Meridian in 1849 from London, England, settled all of the land along Piper Road in Section 13. His son, John F., had an adjoining 80 acre farm in Section 12, with his home at 488 Haslett Road. At one time John F. owned a large portion of Section 12, and land in Sections 2 and 11. The Saltmarshs were breeders of Durham and Ayershire stock.

Peter Tihart borrowed fare for passage to America and came to Meridian Township from Germany when he was a lad of 18-19 years. Two years later, in 1875, he purchased land in Section 15. From this simple beginning, he increased his land holdings until at one time he owned 930 acres in adjoining sections south of Haslett. His son, Jacob "Jake", took over the farm until recently, when it was sold to a real estate firm for a subdivision. A fire gutted the family home in May, 1958, and the house and extensive barns are now being torn down.

James Northrup, another pioneer, came to Meridian in 1853. According to history he bought 160 acres of wild land and built a log shanty in Section 9; eventually he owned 500 acres west of Haslett. Much of this land was later owned by S. S. Smith (see page 61). James Northrup's son, George, had his early schooling in a log schoolhouse in Meridian; later he was a carpenter and builder, and in 1877, became the proprietor of the Pine Lake House on Pine Lake. George married Jenny Hardy, daughter of Reuben K. Hardy, another pioneer who came to the area in 1856. Jenny was a sister of Origin and Anson Hardy, who were also identified with the early history of the Pine Lake House.

Still in the family is the Martin Weissinger farm at 1931 Raby Road. Martin Weissinger came from Germany around 1880, and in 1884, married Amelia, a Swiss girl who had come

to America two years before. Together they cleared their 40 acre farm, using oxen to pull the stumps. In a log cabin on this farm, five of their six children were born. Mrs. Weis-singer died in 1956 at the age of 98.

Harlan Towner came to Meridian after his discharge from the Civil War. In 1866, he bought 160 acres of wild land on the present Towner Road. He sold 80 acres of the land and improved the rest. Harlan was born in Shiawassee County, the son of Isaac B. and Julia Towner. His grandfather, Daniel, served in the Revolutionary War, and a brother of Daniel once owned Long Island, New York, which he purchased from the government. Harlan lived on his farm until 1902, when he re-tired to the house built for him at 1416 Haslett Road. Newman Annis, his farm neighbor, built the house next door at 1422 Haslett Road about the same time, for his retirement years. Mr. Towner's daughter, Daisy, married John G. "Jim" Kaiser. Both were early school teachers in Haslett.

Chapter X

THE CHURCHES

The oldest church in this area is the Chapel Hill (formerly the South Bath) Methodist Church. It is in Clinton County, and is actually outside the boundaries of this history. However, it is adjacent to the Section 3 line, and the church has served the people of the Haslett-Lake Lansing area since its beginning; it was first known as the Pine Lake Methodist Episcopal Church. The information for the background of this church comes from a history compiled for the "Dedication of the New Basement of the South Bath Methodist Church" in May, 1950. The notes of Oscar L. Fletcher, who gave the fiftieth anniversary speech in 1929, the records of the church, and recollections of members of the church were used to compile the history.

The first public worship in the east part of Bath Township, Clinton County was held at the old log Rose School House (long since gone). In the summertime some of the services were held in the grove or woods just north of where the Rose Church now stands. The first Memorial service (or Decoration as it was then called) ever held in Bath Township was in this grove. In 1871, the Rose Church was built, and was used by the Baptists and Methodists on alternate Sundays. This arrangement did not prove satisfactory for long, and the Methodists began holding their services in School House #1 of the township.

From the church records, those who helped with the organization of the church are as follows: Andrew J. Murry, Wm. F. Pultz, S. Marion Smith, G. Wesley Smith, Stephen S. Smith, Therin A. Stevens, Isaac Fletcher, J. N. Smith, and Levi Carter. There may have been others, but there were probably less than thirty persons who actually organized the building of the Pine Lake Church or the Chapel Hill Methodist Church as it is known today, although many in the community contributed their time and money.

While holding services in the schoolhouse in late 1878 or early 1879, the wish was stated that they might build a church. Mr. Pultz, father of William Pultz a church member, gave an initial offering of \$100 toward the building of a Methodist Church in the community. On February 6, 1879, Isaac

Fletcher and Mrs. Thomas Bateman each gave 1/4 acre of land, constituting the present church site, to the 2nd Methodist Church of Bath. Building was soon underway; materials found in this community--stones for foundation, timbers for the frame, etc.--were used and most of them were donated. The seats were clear white pine and are irreplaceable today. The solid timber frame was raised in May, 1879, and the dedication took place on October 20, of that year with J. Hills as pastor and T. H. Jacobs as presiding elder. Carts and wagons drawn by oxen, as well as horse and buggy conveyances, brought members to church.

The small stone slate over the door of the church was marked and presented by Mr. George Carter, who was a marble worker in Lansing and lived south of the church. The organ was given to the church by J. N. Smith in 1879. The bible on the pulpit was presented by G. Wesley Smith in 1888; the pulpit was constructed by James L. Fletcher about 1907, and is still in use today. The bell was placed in the church in 1895. The Sons of Temperance had a hall and when they ceased to function, the hall was placed in custody of the church for supervision, and was moved to the west of the church to be used for church and community purposes.

The Ladies Aid or the Women's Society of Christian Service, as it is known today, was organized October 9, 1894. The first meeting was held at the home of Mrs. Hattie Hunt. The first officers were: President, Miss Ann Nichols; Vice-President, Mrs. Monroe; Secretary, Mrs. Ed. Cochrane; Treasurer, Mrs. Charles Miller. The charter members of this group were: Mrs. Monroe, Mrs. Tolman, Mrs. Culver, Mrs. Stout, Mrs. Hattie Hunt, Mrs. Olive Roby, Mrs. Fannie Hunt, Mrs. James Costigan, Mrs. Ella Cochrane, Mrs. Minnie Costigan, Mrs. Della Miller, Miss Alice Fletcher, Miss Nellie Worth, Miss Addie Smith, and Mrs. Ann Nichols.

In 1949, in order to provide more Sunday School space, the congregation voted to put a basement under the church. Construction was started in October of that year and during this period the church was moved from its foundation and services were held in the hall. The Sunday before Christmas the church was on the new foundation and services were again held in the church. The new basement, containing the Sunday School rooms, was dedicated on May 21, 1950. The Reverend Gerald Salisbury of Bath is the present pastor.

The Haslett Baptist Church

The Free Will Baptist Church of Pine Lake, as this church was originally named, was organized by Reverends H. M. Ford, C. D. Berry, and M. G. Pett on the 11th day of March, 1892, at the Carl School House, District #7 in Meridian Township. The first officers were: Reverend M. G. Pett, pastor; H. P. Towner, deacon; F. A. Gibson, clerk; and G. B. Van Atta, Treasurer. The list of the original members is as follows: H. P. Towner, Hiram Smith, Sarah J. Gibson, Addie Gibson, Jessie Thacher, Gracie Hardy, Frank Gibson, Martha Hunt, G. B. Van Atta, Emaline Towner, Margarette Smith, Martha Culver, Emund Costigan, Mary Costigan, and Daisy Towner.

The meetings were held at the Carl Schoolhouse until the fall of 1892. From the time of the first meeting in March the founders were working toward the erection of a church in the village of Haslett. Fidelo Stevens, who owned the house at 1427 Haslett Road and the surrounding lands, gave the property now occupied by the church, and the white frame building was constructed a little to the west of where it now stands. Jim Fletcher, John Youry, and Ed. Cochrane were the carpenters. The first meeting (Covenant) was held in the new church on September 4, 1892, and the formal dedication was held the next day, Sunday, September 5, by the Reverend H. M. Ford of Hillsdale College.

Mr. Orlo Elliott, then a child of seven years, helped his father draw stones for the foundation. The cost of the church was around \$1,300. Mr. Beebe collected money for the bell. The church was heated by two large stoves--one in each corner at the front. The pipes extended to the chimney in the rear of the church. Six large oil lamps hung from the ceiling. Sheds for horses were built in 1902; a woodshed in 1907. In 1914, a steel ceiling was put in the church.

In 1923, plans were made to rebuild the church. A basement was dug to the east of the church, a foundation was laid, and the church building moved to this foundation. In the basement is a kitchen with its equipment and a large serving room. The exterior of the church underwent changes too; a belfry was added to the east side of the church with a class room in the tower. The church was re-dedicated on February 10, 1924. That year too the by-laws of the church were revised and the

name of the church was changed to the Haslett Emmanuel Baptist Church.

In 1925, the church became independent of the Shiawassee Association of the North Baptist Covenant, which it had joined in 1915. This gave the members full financial responsibility of the pastorate. That year they purchased the parsonage across the street at 1385 Haslett Road. This house was built about 1900 for Timothy L. Baldwin, who had come to Michigan in 1861 and had served with Company E of the 8th Volunteer Infantry during the Civil War. He had fought under General Sherman and upon his discharge in 1865, returned to Michigan, and from 1874 to 1882 operated a mill and general store on the Red Cedar at Red Bridge in Meridian. His daughter, Ethel, was the wife of Jay G. Marsh until her death ended the union.

The ladies of the church make up the Home and Missionary Society. In group meetings they sew needed articles for overseas boxes for missions or for local families who have met misfortune. Through the years this group has performed many worthwhile community projects, besides aiding the missions. The church has four active missionaries in the field, and supports other missions in foreign lands.

An interim pastor is at present conducting services at the church, filling the vacancy of the Reverend Lyle Hoag, who in April, 1958, left with a group of dissenting members to establish the Lake Lansing Baptist Church. Their services are conducted at the Meridian Township Hall.

The Haslett Community Church (Congregational)

On March 23, 1954, ten people met to discuss the need for a church in the Haslett-Lake Lansing area to serve the people of many different religious backgrounds--for Christian training for the children and an inclusive Christian fellowship to bring these people together. An open meeting was scheduled in the Meridian Township Hall for March 31, 1954, and forty-nine people gathered on Sunday, April 25, 1954, for worship and the organization of a Sunday School. Services continued every Sunday under the guidance of dedicated local leaders and weekly guest ministers.

By October, 1954, it was evident that this new venture needed rootage in the main stem of Protestantism and needed the help of a denomination in securing a resident minister. On

November 22, a democratic vote was taken and it was decided to seek affiliation with the Congregational Christian Churches, to approve a constitution, to have the church incorporated, and to elect officers.

On January 16, 1955, the Superintendent of the Michigan Congregational Conference and his assistant led the worship service, baptised many persons, received the first group of charter members, and declared the church officially organized. The Haslett Community Church (Congregational) was chartered with ninety-seven charter members by the Central Association of Michigan Congregational Christian Churches on April 24, 1955.

In January, 1955, the members purchased the land for the present church site, and in September acquired the house at 1415 Haslett Road, whose lot adjoins the building site, for a parsonage. That month the Reverend Charles O. Erickson became the first pastor of the church.

On March 4, 1956--two years after the first group met--the groundbreaking ceremony of a multi-purpose first unit of the church took place. The cornerstone was laid on April 15, 1956. With the aid of gifts, pledges, and many hours of volunteer labor, the church was completed and dedicated on October 21, 1956. In May, 1958, the church purchased the historic house at 1427 Haslett Road; its land adjoins their other two properties.

The Women's Fellowship began as the Women's Guild and was organized June 10, 1954. The first officers were: President, Mrs. Robert Butler; Vice-President, Mrs. Conrad Haney; Secretary, Mrs. Jay Jennings; and Treasurer, Mrs. William Youatt. The Guild raised money for the support of the church and carried on a program of education and service. As their number grew, the group divided into Circles under the Women's Fellowship. The Men's Fellowship was organized in January, 1956. The Junior Choir was begun in October, 1954, and is now made up of a Children's Choir and a Youth Choir. In November, 1955, a Pilgrim Fellowship was organized for the young people.

St. Katherine's Episcopal Chapel

Familiar to most people is the charming chapel on Meridian Road near Sherwood Road--a historic place of worship.

Although it is furthest from the center of the Haslett-Lake Lansing area and outside the boundries of this history, it was close enough for easy travel in the early days and the church has served parishioners here for many years. This chapel was built in 1887 by John Harris Forster for his family because of the difficulty of travel to and from distant churches. It is adjacent to Spring Brook Farm, the name Mr. Forster gave to his stately home and surrounding farmland. John Forster was an adventurer who came to Michigan in the early days. He was first a surveyor, and in 1885 married Martha Mullett, daughter of his good friend and fellow surveyor, John Mullett. From the time of his arrival until John Forster retired to Spring Brook Farm in 1874, he followed a trail of adventure wherever mining, exploring, or engineering feats could be accomplished. He was successful at all of them. In the little graveyard to the south of the chapel, Mr. and Mrs. Forster and their daughter, Katherine, are buried.

To the north of the chapel has been added a Parish Hall for educational purposes and parish events. The Women's auxiliary is an active group. The Reverend Derwent A. Suthers is vicar.

Many other denominations are represented in the Haslett-Lake Lansing area. Most of these people attend churches in Lansing or East Lansing. By far the largest group of worshipers who do not have a church in the area are the Roman Catholics. The first Catholic came to this town in 1902, and the number has swelled to include approximately 200 families at this time.

Two miles northeast of Haslett, on Woodbury Road in Woodhull Township, Shiawassee County, is a cemetery with graves dating back to 1837. Here once stood St. Patrick's Catholic Church--a mission. This church and its burying ground served a group of Irish settlers who pioneered to this country from Cork County, Ireland, and the area of settlement was unofficially called "Cork Town". One of these early settlers was Phillip DeBarry, who was for many years the postmaster of the pioneer log post office at Smith's Crossing (at Shoeman and Barry Roads). Phillip married Bridget Corcoran, his fiancée from Cork County who followed him to this country soon after his arrival. Bridget's brother, John C. Corcoran, a lad of 13, also came with her in 1852, and a few years later

married Anna Bray. From this marriage came one of Haslett's most beloved citizens, Anna Corcoran (Mrs. Guy) Peterson. She was the first Catholic to come to the Haslett area and her sister, Mrs. Nellie Green, was the second.

St. Patrick's Mission was eventually closed (the church building is now gone), and those wishing to hear Sunday Mass had to travel to Williamston or to the Cathedral in Lansing for worship. In 1922, the Church of the Resurrection was established on the east side of Lansing, but it was still a long journey when travel was by trolley or early automobile. In 1940, a new parish, St. Thomas Aquinas, was started in East Lansing and when the first Mass was celebrated in the State Theater on the first Sunday of October, 1940, many people of Haslett and Lake Lansing gave thanks that their church was moving closer to them. Although there was no formal organization, by 1942 the parishioners living in the Haslett area had formed the Haslett Club, which was a social group that also worked for the benefit of the parish.

During the summer of 1944, religious instruction classes were held in the American Legion Hall in Haslett; seventy-two children and twelve adults attended. On July 5, the first Mass offered in Haslett was celebrated at the home of John Green with twenty-two receiving their First Communion. The religion classes were also held the following two summers.

The Rosary Altar Society of St. Thomas Aquinas, the women's organization of the parish, was begun in 1941. Two Haslett women were among the first officers of this group-- Mrs. Merle Green was President, and Mrs. John Peterson, the Treasurer. The society works for spiritual improvement and takes care of the altar. In 1943, the society was subdivided into guilds and at that time St. Catherine's Guild, encompassing Haslett and Lake Lansing, was organized. The first officers were: President, Mrs. James Flood; Secretary, Mrs. Ralph Spalding; Treasurer, Mrs. Alvin Baetz. By November, 1954, the guild had become so large that it was necessary to divide; Haslett Road formed a natural division and those north of the road were designated as St. Catherine Guild, and those south, St. Jerome Guild. The first officers of the newly formed St. Jerome Guild were: President, Mrs. Robert Maddex; Vice-President, Mrs. Victor DeRose, Secretary-Treasurer, Mrs. Harold Raphael. The Haslett Holy Name Society, an organization of the men of the area, was begun in 1957.

In 1956, the Bishop of the Lansing Diocese purchased twelve acres of land east of Haslett in the Wilkshire Subdivision for a site of a future church. The Rt. Rev. Msgr. Jerome V. MacEachin is pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas.



courtesy Orlo Elliott



Woman's Literary Club-1911

courtesy Vera Cavanagh

Left to right--Children: unidentified, Clinton Mumby, unidentified, Irene Kaiser, First row: Cora Brusselbach, Olive Foster, Cynthia Elliott, Ella Cochrane, Kate Smith, Mae Mercer, Belle Hammond, Beatrice Dunn, Lottie Wellman, Myrtie Smith, Second row: Emma Smith, Ada Douglas, Sarah Cade, Mary Douglas, Alice Hardy, Mamie (Mary) Foster, Agusta Donley, Lucy Baldwin, Anna Foster with Dorothy Foster, Standing: Dora Kaiser, Kate Carr, Lou Mumby, Nettie Ferguson

Chapter XI

THE LIBRARY, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS

Woman's Literary Club

The Woman's Literary Club of Haslett is the oldest social group still in existence in the community. It was organized in 1906, and its two remaining charter members, Mrs. Anna Peterson and Mrs. Minnie Towner, are still active in the club. The club is a member of the Ingham County Federation of Women's Clubs; its motto is "Truth Conquers All Things"; its purpose is for self and community betterment. Many worthwhile civic projects have been carried out by the club through the years. These were financed by various fund raising programs--plays, socials, work days, etc.--by the members. The club has sponsored girl and boy scout troops. Mrs. Myra Belle Hammond was the first president of the organization, and Mrs. Augusta Donley, a member, was the founder of the Ingham County Federation of Women's Clubs.

One of the prime projects of the club was a library, which was started at the club's beginning with books donated by the members. The library was maintained for a number of years, but because the club did not have a central meeting place, it was difficult to maintain and keep the books. Most of them were donated to the service men of World War I. The club has maintained an interest in the Haslett Library for many years and, especially during recent years, has made contributions to it.

The Ingham County Library

When the County Federation of Women's Clubs, under the presidency of Mrs. Andrus Eichele, took the establishment of a county library as a goal for an all-county project in 1936, a committee of three women--Mrs. Orin Snow, Mrs. William Baumgras, and Mrs. E. T. Crossman--were appointed to contact the existing thirty clubs for the project.

Many Child Study Clubs sponsored libraries, and those and the existing Women's Clubs' libraries had been brought together during the depression years under a W.P.A. supervisor, with the aid of W.P.A. funds; headquarters was in the basement of the Lansing Public Library. There were at the

most nine stations (one of which was in Haslett) with a circulation of about 40,000 books in its best year. However, most clubs knew the W.P.A. funds would not always be available, and those who had maintained libraries knew the difficulties and expense connected with operating them. With the possibility of State Aid being available for the establishment of a County Library, the library committee of the Federation, along with a representative from each member club, worked swiftly and thoroughly to have all possible data, including a petition circulated among the federated clubs, ready to be presented to the Board of Supervisors at their meeting in June, 1937. The matter was presented and well received by the Board at the June meeting. At their annual meeting in October, 1937, the Board of Supervisors voted to establish a County Library, to begin service--when--and if--State Aid was available. A Library Board was appointed. The State Aid Bill was passed and payments began with the fiscal year, 1938-39. Three thousand dollars was received from the Organization fund and a little more regular State Aid, along with the appropriation from the Board of Supervisors, which met the State requirements for the State Aid funds.

It took time to get a collection of books bought and cataloged. The County Federation of Women's Clubs put on a book drive and many books were given. The library began service in December, 1938, with Mrs. Gladys Miller, a graduate of Adrian College and the School of Library Science of the University of Michigan, as librarian. In the meantime Mr. Albert J. Hall built and gave to the County the Hall Memorial Library in Mason, in memory of his wife, Ada, with the provision there be a room for boys and girls, and a room for community meetings. At the annual meeting of the County Federation of Women's Clubs in May, 1958, members voted to initiate a movement to have the community room of the Hall Memorial Library named the "Elgie Crossman Room", in honor of Mrs. E. T. Crossman, who served on the Board of Trustees from the library's beginning until the fall of 1957.

The library operates with funds from friends, the County, the City of Mason, State Aid, and penal fines. Norman Bunker is the County Librarian at this time.

The Haslett Branch

When the W.P.A. funds became available, Constance Bement, State Librarian, along with the help of Leonara Hauss,

County Librarian, under the W.P.A., established libraries in various communities, among which were Okemos and Haslett. Miss Roberta Bentley was appointed traveling librarian for these units.

The first library in Haslett was housed in the Bank Building (now the Haslett Drug Store) about 1934. The bank had closed its doors and was in the hands of the receivers, so that it was necessary to find another location for the library soon after. The next move was to the back of Babbitt's General Store (now the American Legion Hall) in a dark little corner. Then the general store was closed, and the library moved to the Township Hall (the present library building). This was in 1937, and the Woman's Literary Club and the Child Study Club worked together to provide some shelves for books and linoleum for the floor. The Literary Club paid a janitor seventy-five cents every three months for his services.

Some time between February, 1938, and October, 1939, the W.P.A. funds for libraries were discontinued, and the Haslett Library was closed. Mrs. Earl Schuon, an interested member of the community, along with Miss Bentley, began a crusade to have the library re-opened. Mrs. Schuon circulated petitions which she brought before the Township Board, and through her efforts, Miss Bentley was reimbursed salary due her under the W.P.A., and the township turned the library financing over to the Ingham County Library plan. In November, 1939, the Haslett library was re-opened under the Ingham County Library, with Mrs. Pansy Anderson as librarian of the Haslett Branch.

In April of 1950, Miss Parks, County Librarian, spoke to the Woman's Literary Club of the need for a sponsor of the Haslett Library, and suggested that the club take over that sponsorship; the club so moved in January, 1951. That year material was purchased and window curtains were made by members. Since that time the club has purchased new linoleum, children's chairs, a book chute, and a sign for the building.

The first permanent improvement to the building in many years was accomplished in the spring of 1958 when the Township Board appropriated \$200 for the repair of the building. New lighting was installed, and part of the interior was replastered, and the exterior repainted; paint was purchased for the interior.

Mrs. Robert Scott is the present County Librarian for the Haslett Branch.

Friends of the Library

On April 7, 1958, a group, under the leadership of Mrs. Frank Blatt, held a meeting for the purpose of organizing a Friends of the Library in Haslett. In May, a constitution was approved and officers were elected, with Mr. Frank Blatt as president. The purpose of the Friends is to improve the library's facilities and to increase book circulation. At present the group is redecorating the interior of the building, and is presenting a summer story-session for children.

The Haslett Child Study Club

The Child Study Club in this area was organized in 1928. Its first president was Mrs. Pansy Anderson. This club was a unit of its parent organization, the Child Study Clubs, whose purpose was "to make Michigan a place where every child has a chance". To accomplish this, the club studied home and family relationship, child guidance, and all phases of child activity. This club, after being in operation for twenty-eight years, disbanded in 1956 due to lack of interest and leadership. Through the years the club had, at various times, contributed to worthwhile community projects--girl and boy scout sponsorship being one of them.

The American Legion

The American Legion, Chief Okemos Post #269, was chartered in 1937. Its first Commander was Edgar Morgan. The organization first met in homes, then held meetings at the Lakeside Tavern at Lake Lansing, and after that in a hall over Robinson's Grocery until they purchased the Babbitt store building in Haslett in the 1940's. This building is now well-known as the American Legion Hall.

Some of the chief objects of the group are to work for child welfare, to aid veterans and their families, and to assist veterans in the hospitals. The American Legion Women's Auxiliary was organized in 1938 and the first president was Lucille Steffy.

Extension Clubs

Home Demonstration Clubs are a part of the Cooperative Extension Service of Michigan State University, and are administered through the Ingham County Home Demonstration Agent. Demonstrations first started in this community in 1916, with a two day workshop held at the Chapel Hill Methodist Church. The first project was learning how to make fireless cookers. These workshops continued as an annual event until 1940 when the Haslett Home Demonstration Group was organized on a club-year basis.

In September, 1950, this group divided into the Learn-a-Bit Group under the chairmanship of Mrs. William Quick, and the Dozen Mrs. Group with Mrs. Esther Pulver as chairman. By 1956, the number of women interested in this activity had grown so large that it was necessary to form a third club--the Haslett Lakesiders. They were organized in April, and Mrs. Betty Goode was named the first chairman. A fourth group--The Scorettes--was begun in 1957, under the leadership of Mrs. Ward Swarthout.

All the extension groups follow a program sent out through the Home Demonstration Agent, designed to develop the knowledge and skills of home-makers in a wide field.

Haslett Area Community Council

Today's Haslett Area Community Council was first begun early in 1956, when a group of interested citizens met to form a community-wide organization that would act upon some of the problems facing the rapidly growing area. This, however, was not the first such group, for in 1945 a Community Council, under the presidency of Noel Miller, met to study township zoning and to discuss a youth center. Although there was considerable interest in the beginning, this council was short-lived, lasting probably no longer than a year.

The Haslett Area Community Council met through the early part of 1956 with Glenn Hilley as temporary chairman. A constitution and by-laws were adopted and election of officers took place in the spring. William "Tex" Malone was elected the first President; Rev. Charles O. Erickson, Vice-President; Mrs. Gerald Durst, Secretary; Mrs. Harold Schlichting, Treasurer.

An annual clean-up campaign has been one of the activities the council has sponsored; others are: an annual Christmas home-decorating contest, spraying for mosquito control, a newsletter (the "Haslett Park Post") published during the 1957-58 year, presentation of candidates and issues in local elections, discussions on community problems, and a campaign for better health and sanitary conditions in the community.

Haslett-Okemos Kiwanis Club

The Haslett-Okemos Kiwanis Club was chartered under Kiwanis International in September, 1953. It is composed of business and professional men of the community. Two men from each community were elected the first officers. They were: President, Jack Flood; Vice-President, George Richards; Secretary, Rev. David Evans; Treasurer, Don Tatroe. One of the prime objectives of this club is to aid underprivileged children, although many other worthwhile community projects are carried out by the Kiwanis.

Haslett-Okemos Rotary Club

Another business and professional men's group, the Haslett-Okemos Rotary Club, was chartered in August, 1956. The club is part of Rotary International and the Rotarians refer to their club as "An Adventure in Friendship". They assist in civic and community projects. The first officers of the club were: President, Gordon Storm; Vice-President, Gerald Case; Secretary, Ken Oliver, Treasurer, Bob Smith.

Boy Scouts

Boy Scouts were first started in Haslett in 1913; Jay Marsh was the first leader. They were chartered as troop #65 of the Chief Okemos Council, Boy Scouts of America. The charter has been dropped three times in the intervening years, but the present charter has been in effect for almost twenty years. A part of this time the troop number was changed to #66--it is now #65 again.

Ralph Goff has been scoutmaster of the Haslett Troop for the past 17 years, and during these years many boys of the area have enjoyed trips to Isle Royale; Mackinac Island; Cimarron, New Mexico; the troop was represented at the Boy Scout Jamborees at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, in 1950, 1953, and 1957.

Through the years scouting has been sponsored by several organizations including the Haslett Child Study Club, the Woman's Literary Club, and is now under the sponsorship of the Haslett Board of Education. Two Cub Scout Packs--troops #165 and #265 are active in the area.

Girl Scouts

Through the efforts of the Child Study Club and the Haslett P.T.A., Girl Scouts of America were chartered in 1944. The program had a slow beginning but has gathered momentum in recent years, and Girl Scouts and Brownies are active groups. Those who especially aided the Girl Scouts movement in Haslett at its beginning were: Mr. and Mrs. Harold Traver, Mrs. Lucille Lawrence, Mrs. Charles Sweeney, Mrs. Homer McCoy, Mrs. Earl Pettit, Mrs. Ed. Martines, and Mrs. Theodore Wilson.

Girl Scouts have assisted in hospitals and performed other community services. Many girls have enjoyed camping facilities offered, and with capable volunteer leadership have learned many crafts and skills.

Chapter XII

UPDATE

Seventeen years have passed since this history was written. Much development and many changes have taken place in the intervening years. This chapter attempts to provide a record of these changes.

The toll of old-time residents who have died during these years is too lengthy to present, but these individuals helped form the town and make its history. Many of their contributions are on record.

Articles from The Meridian News, the Towne Courier, and the Ingham County News were a great help in reconstructing the growth that has taken place since 1958.

Research by the Meridian Township Historic Study Committee in a December, 1974, report, Historic Structures in the Haslett-Lake Lansing Area, pointed out that the land in Section 10 platted by Spencer and Lucretia Shaw on January 3, 1883 (pp. 21,38,39,40, 43,44), is spelled the Village of Nemoka, not Namoka.

This same report provides official evidence that the name Pine Lake Post Office was changed to Haslett Park in 1890 (p.26), not 1892.

In 1964, sections of the Okemos and East Lansing branches of the United States Post Office were transferred into the Haslett branch area. This shift in territory extended the Haslett Post Office boundaries east to Shoeman Road, north to highway M-78, west to Okemos Road and south to Raby Road. After 10 years as postmaster, Mary M. Schlichting retired in 1965, and Harold E. Joy, a lifelong Haslett resident, was appointed postmaster. The old cinder block post office building (p.28) on the north side of Haslett Road is now vacant.

A record of Haslett's early settlement has been permanently and officially recorded by the State of Michigan. On Community Church property near Haslett Road stands Haslett's historical marker. The marker



Haslett Post Office



was fittingly placed on land that was a part of Obed Marshall's original purchase in Section 11 from the United States in 1836.

During the winter of 1969, Donna Lee Pettit and Barbara Louckes of the Haslett Businessmen's Association and this author discussed the possibility of a historical marker for the Haslett-Lake Lansing area. Research was done and forwarded to the Michigan Historical Commission for acceptance and authentication. Before the project was approved, however, the author moved from Haslett. A committee from the Businessmen's Association and the Haslett Woman's Club continued to work with the Historical Commission. Through the joint efforts of both organizations, the proposed marker became a reality. It is registered local site #154 of the State of Michigan. The marker was unveiled and dedicated on June 11, 1972 when the official seal and document were presented to Vera Ralya of the Haslett Woman's Club by Jerry Rowe of the Michigan Historical Commission.

A major change in point of reference in the 1958 edition is the renaming of Okemos-Haslett Road (p.14) to Marsh Road. This took place in July, 1969, when 13 year old David Jones, son of Mr. and Mrs. Gomer Jones of Okemos, rode his bicycle to Mason to a hearing set by the Ingham County Road Commission to change the name of the road (a Haslett Road and an Okemos Road in the township caused confusion). David's suggestion of Marsh Road to honor Sanford Marsh, who came to Okemos in 1839, was approved by the Commission and the name became official August 1, 1969. On the south, the road dead-ends at Hamilton Road in Okemos, and the name designation ceases at the County line near M-78 on the north.

The old two-lane railroad bridge on Marsh Road west of Haslett was replaced with a four-lane, graded overpass in 1964, and the road itself was regraded and straightened. It is now four lanes from Lake Drive to East Grand River Avenue.

On the northwest corner of Marsh Road and East Grand River Avenue is the Meridian Mall on land that was once part of the Unruh farm. Meridian Township

approved the plans for this mall, one of greater Lansing's largest shopping centers, in November, 1966.

In 1966, Meridian Township purchased 104 acres of the Unruh farm north of the mall site for a new administration-recreation complex. The Meridian Municipal Center at 5100 Marsh Road was completed and dedicated on June 4, 1972, relieving the crowded conditions at the outgrown Township Hall on Haslett and North Okemos Roads (pp.18,66).

A 72% township growth between 1960 and 1970 made urban services increasingly necessary and with piecemeal annexations a threat to township lands, a strong governing unit at the township level became a necessity. Far-sighted township officials took steps to preserve orderly development. They established a Planning Commission in 1957; adopted a Master Plan of streets and roads in 1959; passed new zoning ordinances as guidelines for multiple housing in 1960 and 1963, adding amendments as need arose; formed a Master Plan for parks and recreation in 1966; hired a full-time Planning Director in 1965; and in 1968, secured a "701" grant from the Federal government for additional comprehensive planning.

Water systems first begun by subdivision builders (p.18) were further developed by bond issues; bond issues also made possible sewer service in all areas of significant urbanization by 1968. The administration of these utilities was consolidated with the City of East Lansing into the East Lansing-Meridian Water and Sewer Authority. The plant is located on Raby Road.

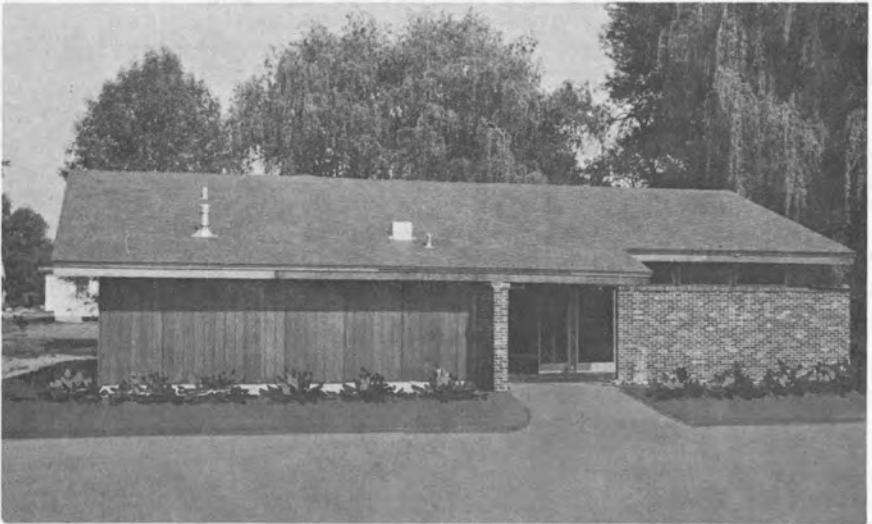
Robert Robinson, Jr., served as township supervisor during ten years of this rapid growth. He resigned in July of 1969.

A vote to become a city was approved by the citizens in November, 1969, and a commission was elected to draft a city charter. However, at the present time, a township charter still governs Meridian Township, since the two charters presented by the commission were defeated by the electorate.

Meridian Township has provided quarters for the Haslett Branch of the Ingham County Library System



Municipal Building, Meridian Charter Township,
dedicated June 4, 1972



Florence and Noel Miller Building, home of the
Haslett Branch of the Ingham County Library

since 1937 (see page 87). As the Haslett area grew, the one-room former town hall building on Shaw Street, which had no sanitary facilities, became completely inadequate even though the Learn-A-Bit extension group had refurbished it in 1962. Mrs. Lawrence Sommers (now of Okemos) began a campaign for new library quarters. She worked with the Haslett Woman's Club and Noel Miller of the township's Library Committee, and in 1964 the Township rented the newly-completed lower level of the Medical Building at 5681 Shaw Street for the library. The old building across the street, which had housed the library for 27 years, was sold and moved from the site in 1965.

The hope of permanent quarters for the Haslett library never died. In 1973, the Township purchased two lots on the east side of School Street from the Haslett Board of Education as a site for a new building, and the Board of Trustees approved a budget for a new facility in October of 1973. A grant from the Michigan Department of Education in April, 1974, provided the final impetus. Ground-breaking took place in March, 1975, for the 2500 square foot library building at 5670 School Street. It was dedicated in October of 1975. The building was named the Florence and Noel Miller Building by the Meridian Township Board of Trustees. Mrs. Miller was a former librarian with the Haslett and Ingham County libraries, and Mr. Miller has been Township Treasurer for 17 years.

The Friends of the Library, as described on page 88, dissolved after a few years. With the prospect of a permanent library building, another Friends of the Haslett Library was formed on December 5, 1974, at which time a constitution and by-laws were adopted. Mrs. Lary Hill was elected the first president.

The Meridian News, the first weekly newspaper established to serve Meridian Township exclusively, was started October 10, 1957, by Ben and Shige Kuroki of Williamston, Michigan. There was a great need for a local organ to present issues to the community at that time. The Haslett Area Community Council had attempted to fill this role with its publication of the Haslett Park Post (p.90). The Meridian News answered the need by reporting local news and issues, and it helped unify a township that was in a stage of rapid growth and development.

In April of 1965, the paper was sold to the Towne Courier Publishing Company of East Lansing. In addition to the East Lansing Towne Courier, the company published the Okemos and Haslett Towne Courier. This title was changed to the Meridian Towne Courier and the paper serves as the official organ of the township. The Towne Courier, Inc., a division of Suburban Communications Corporation, now publishes the paper. The Ingham County News, published in Mason, also serves the area.

The face of Main Street, the original business section of Haslett (Chapter VIII), has changed since 1958.

The railroad station (pp.30,31) has been gone for a number of years. The post office and Lee MacGillivray's auto agency (p.65), built in 1962, are near its former location.

The Haslett Lumber Company, the site of the feed and grain elevator (pp.57-59), has been remodeled, and Nelson Sheldon's son, Richard, succeeded his father when he retired in 1973.

The historic grocery building, known for years as Robinson's (p.59), burned on June 10, 1968. It was a tragic loss for Russell Robinson whose family had owned the store since 1927. A small store was reconstructed on the site and is now a Min-A-Mart food store.

On the south side of this block are two new buildings. One at 1473 Haslett Road is occupied by Dr. Michael Lutsch, Jr., an optometrist who came to Haslett in 1964, and Ray Creps' barber shop. There is a warehouse on the southwest corner facing School Street. The American Legion still uses its building. Other businesses in the block are Advisory Management Associates, Kay Herro Studio of Dance, American Business Machines, Haver Lockhart Laboratory, and the Union Colloids Co.

Harry Mallchok purchased the Haslett Pharmacy (p.63) in 1964 when Harold Schlichting retired. In December of 1966 he moved his business to a newly-completed store in Shop Town.

Haslett gained a resident dentist in 1960 when Dr. Frederic Lydens began practice at 5695 Babbitt Street. Since that time his offices at that address have been remodeled.

Near Wilkshire School on Haslett Road are the offices of the Michigan State Florists' Association and the Commercial Rose Growers' Association.

A major shift of Haslett's business district to the west of the railroad tracks began in 1964 when Eugene Towner and other members of the Towner family started construction of a complex of stores southeast of the intersection of Marsh and Haslett roads. The Shop-Rite Food Market was the first store to open in the center in March of 1966. Today there are a number of neighborhood service stores occupying Shop Town. They are the House of Subs & Pizza, the Village Hardware (formerly DeNike's), Haslett Pharmacy, Haslett Wash & Dry, Ute's Beauty Salon, Allemande Shop, The Budget Gap, Larry's Village Barber Shop, Lee's Sewing Shoppe, Domino's Pizza, and Savant Cleaners & Shirt Launderers, Incorporated.

The Telstar Drive-in (opened in 1962) on Marsh Road, a Marathon service station, Honda-Haslett Motor Sports, Incorporated, and the Haslett Car Wash make this corner of the Marsh-Haslett Road intersection a hub of activity.

Across Haslett Road is the Haslett Branch of the East Lansing State Bank which opened in 1962 at 1602 Haslett Road. Darrell Brown built his real estate and insurance agency at 5678 Edson Street in 1966. The J & B Arco service station is at the northeast corner, and farther north on Marsh Road is the Haslett Animal Hospital.

Dr. John Siddall, D.O., became an associate of Dr. Coburn Bland (p.68) in the medical building at 5681 Shaw Street in 1963. Dr. Bland left the area in 1970.

The business section across the street from the former amusement park at Lake Lansing (p.44) has also undergone changes of ownership since 1958. The Quality Dairy, Andries wholesale bakery, Jerry's Party Store, the Mayfair Bar, and the Chalet Lounge occupy the buildings now. Club DooBee is at the northwest corner of Marsh and Lake Lansing roads.

The Dells at the north end of the lake (p.49) is



East Lansing State Bank



SHOP TOWN, 1975

still owned by the Sprague family, who has leased it to Frank DeLaCruz for a supper club.

The Haslett-Lake Lansing Businessmen's Association was formed in 1959 and became incorporated as the Haslett Businessmen's Association in 1969. Dr. John Siddall was elected Chairman of the Board at that time.

The Lake Lansing Amusement Park (p.44), former site of the Spiritualist camp ground, is gone. The popularity of the park had been declining for many years and the permanent structures deteriorating. On June 30, 1971, a fire destroyed two concession buildings on the grounds.

In September of that year the historic Dentzel carousel was sold and moved to the Cedar Point Amusement Park in Sandusky, Ohio. William Dentzel, its designer and carver, built carousels in Philadelphia from the turn of the century until his death in 1928. When Al Sprague owned the park, he purchased the carousel in 1942 from the defunct Exposition Amusement Park in Aurora, Illinois. It was 60 feet in diameter and carried 66 animals.

Fire gutted the old pavilion, the "Casino" (pp.34, 35), in February, 1974. The death of the amusement park was near.

In June of 1974, the Ingham County Board of Commissioners bought the 30 acre site from Rolland and Lawrence Johnson. Included was 1300 feet of lake frontage. Plans for developing Ingham County's largest park here are underway.

For many years committees and individuals have been deeply concerned about the deterioration of Lake Lansing. At one time Dr. John Snell recommended dredging the lake bottom which is so overgrown with weeds and filled with silt that its depth has been reduced to as little as five and ten feet. Completion of the sewer system around the lake has stopped that source of pollution, but only a massive clean-up will restore its former beauty and usefulness.

In 1969, the Lake Lansing Lake Board was formed to obtain Federal funds to deepen the lake bottom. Richard Sode, Ingham County Drain Commissioner, serves as chairman of this Board and has persistently applied each year for Federal aid to save the lake.

This update would not be complete without mention of a sudden snowstorm on January 26, 1967. For almost five days the town was snow-bound. High winds whipped the 28 inch snowfall into drifts that kept roads closed. Many acts of kindness and heroism were performed by businessmen and residents during this time.

A major flood hit Meridian Township in April, 1975. Although the greatest damage was in the Okemos area in the Red Cedar flood plain, schools and roads in Haslett were closed while the township was under the jurisdiction of the National Guard.

A five-unit, 2½ story structure was Haslett's first apartment building. Haslett Manor Apartments at 5706 Potter Street was built by Donald DeNike in August, 1965.

June of 1965 marked the ground-breaking of the Lake o' the Hills Subdivision west of Haslett on a 135 acre site off Lake Lansing Road. This undertaking was the project of the Rose-Hill Development Firm of Detroit. It included a 32 acre lake. Chalet Park, the first unit of the apartment complexes of the subdivision, was completed in March, 1966. The project has grown according to plans and today is the most concentrated population unit in the Haslett area. There is an entrance from Haslett Road as well as from Lake Lansing Road. The development is bounded on the east by Hillbrook Park (p.71) and a newer subdivision, Nottingham.

There are several apartment units on Ridgeway Drive off Haslett Road east of the town center; new houses and the Meridian Hills apartments in Sunrise Estates (former Tihart farm, page 74) on Marsh Road; and more apartments along this road north of the Haslett intersection. There is growth in Wilkshire Subdivision (p.54) and many new homes along Green Road. Greenwood Subdivision, north and west of the Green-Shoesmith intersection, has been developed since 1958, as well as many individual homesites throughout the Haslett-Lake Lansing area.

A farm at 5100 VanAtta Road is the second Centennial Farm in the area. The home of Roland and Eleanor Davis was officially designated as such in 1974. Eleanor is the daughter of Sidney Foster and granddaughter of Henry Foster whose parents came to Meridian Township in 1850 (see page 72).

Set back from Marsh Road north of Lake Lansing Road is Grange Acres, a senior citizen apartment complex. Its development was sponsored by Capitol Grange 540, headed by Daniel Balog. It was begun in February, 1969, and was first occupied in December of that year. It was formally dedicated in April of 1970. The entrance road is named for former U. S. Representative Charles Chamberlain. In the Robert West Park on the grounds is an outdoor shelter whose roof boards and beams came from a barn built in 1865 by Charles Parkhurst of Burns Township outside Perry, Michigan.

Apartment complexes and new homes brought a need for expanded school facilities. With far-sightedness the Haslett School Board was able to acquire lands for site development and, as needs arose, Haslett taxpayers provided the means to expand facilities. Today Haslett has three elementary schools, a middle school and a high school. The "bungalow" (p.23) has been gone for several years and the original school building (pp.21-23) was razed in August, 1971. It had served the town for 61 years -- last as the junior high school.

The 1950 grade school (p.23) was named the Vera Ralya Elementary School in 1965 to honor Vera Ralya, who retired after 21 years with the Haslett School System. She was principal of the school and Elementary School Supervisor for 12 years (p.23).

Wilkshire School (p.23) has had two additions -- in 1961 and 1967 -- since it was built and now has 15 classrooms.

The first unit of the H.M.Murphy Elementary School on Lake Lansing Road was completed in 1962.

The school is named for former Superintendent of Schools, H.M."Pat" Murphy (p.24), who retired in 1961 and died soon after. During his tenure he guided the school through the post-war suburban expansion years. A large addition, designed by architect D.S.Budzynski, Jr., of Haslett, was completed in 1967. The school now contains 22 teaching rooms.

Martha Haun retired from Murphy School in December of 1971 after teaching 35 years in Haslett schools. Countless youngsters received their introduction to school from Mrs. Haun as their kindergarten teacher.

The High School on Franklin Street (p.23) became the Middle School in 1971. While in use as the high school, the building was remodeled and added to in 1968; it was adapted for junior high use in 1972.

An Administration Building was completed in 1972 on the north side of Franklin Street near the Middle School. Tennis courts are nearby, and a garage for school buses was built in 1973 east of these.

In November of 1966, the Haslett Board of Education purchased 130 acres of the Hal B. Church property on Marsh Road as a future high school site and for school-park development. This land lies in Sections 14 and 15 south of the present Middle School and includes the 10 acre lake known as Mud Lake (pp.8,71). The first school classes held in the township were probably held on this land (p.19).

Classes were held in the new high school in the Fall of 1971. Official dedication ceremonies and an open house were held on April 23, 1972. Haslett's modern building is a source of pride to the community and a tribute to school personnel and Haslett citizens who planned it. Dr. Milton Baron, a Haslett resident for many years, was landscape architect for the grounds.

In 1973, the School Board voted to purchase 15 acres on the southeast corner of Green and Shoesmith roads as the possible site of another elementary school.

In the woods behind the Middle School is a log cabin authentically reassembled from its original site on Haslett Road near the Williamston Road. It was given to the Haslett schools by Dr. Ervin VanDer-Jagt, professor emeritus of Michigan State University's Department of Natural Sciences. This cabin is used



Haslett Schools Administration Building



Log cabin used by Haslett Middle School
pioneer living course

for courses in pioneer living and is part of a unique program developed by Robert Copland, Outdoor Education Director for the schools. Mr. Copland was dedicated to ecology long before preservation of our natural resources became an issue. His nature course materials have been assembled into an outdoor education manual written with Jane Taylor, an associate in the department. This manual is now used by hundreds of school systems throughout the United States.

The Haslett Baptist Church (pp.78,79) marked its 70th anniversary in 1962. By 1967, a gift of land by Orlo Elliott and the purchase of another parcel provided nearly three acres between Carlton Street and Ridgeway Drive for the site of a new church. Five years later the congregation moved into its new brick church at 5727 Ridgeway Drive, and on June 4, 1972, the 80th anniversary year, it was dedicated. The former church building was sold to Karber Realty for their offices. The lower level is rented for receptions and parties.

The Haslett Community Church (pp.79,80) became affiliated with the United Church of Christ by accepting its constitution in February, 1961. Five years later a large addition, built to the north of the church, was dedicated. The historic Fellowship House at 1427 Haslett Road (formerly the Stevens-Soults-Smith house) was torn down in 1965 to make space for the addition.

Saint Katherine's historic chapel (p.80) still stands, but parishioners now worship in a spacious modern church that was completed and dedicated in 1962. A new parish hall was completed in 1969.

The Lake Lansing Baptist Church was organized in 1958 (p.79). With a great deal of volunteer labor from its members, the church building at 5960 North Okemos Road was completed by September, 1960, and dedication ceremonies were held on June 25, 1961. The church stands on two acres of ground that was part of the Fred and Dora Kaiser farm and was given to the church by them. On January 16, 1972, an addition was dedicated.



Haslett Baptist Church,
dedicated June 4, 1972



Haslett Community Church

The Woman's Literary Club of Haslett (p.85) changed its name to the Haslett Woman's Club in 1966. The Club's last charter member, Minnie Towner, died on June 12, 1974.

There are no longer Extension Clubs in Haslett, nor a Haslett Community Council (p.89). The Fireman's Auxiliary (p.67) is inactive. The Haslett-Okemos Kiwanis Club is now an Okemos unit only (p.90). The American Legion, the Haslett-Okemos Rotary Club, the PTA (and Parent-Teacher Advisory Council), and Boy and Girl Scout units continue to be active.

Other organizations have formed since 1958. One is the Haslett Lions Club. Robert Gurnham was its president when the club was chartered with 48 members in September, 1966.

The Haslett-Okemos Jaycees, the local arm of the national service organization of young, civic-minded men, was chartered in October of 1963.

Another new organization is the Meridian Garden Club which was formed in 1971. The club is a member of the Federated Garden Clubs of Michigan, Incorporated. Helen Tanner served as its first president.

The 60-Plus Club, organized in 1973, is an active senior citizen group. Much of the initial leadership came from Esther Middlewood. The club meets on the third Monday of each month. It is sponsored by the Haslett Community Church which provides facilities and program assistance. The club itself is non-denominational, self-governing, and open to all 60-plus residents.

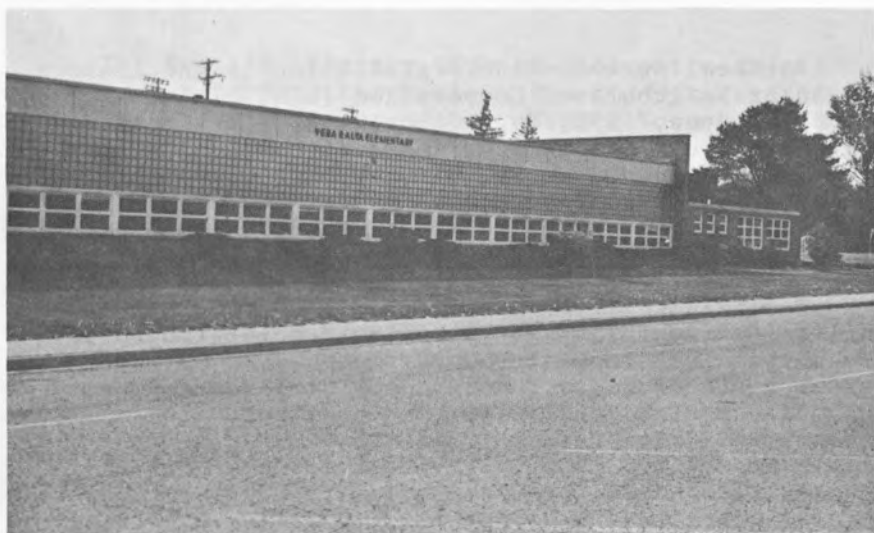
The Meridian Township Historical District Study Commission held its first meeting in November of 1971 with William A. Brehm, Jr., presiding. Its purpose was to identify historical sites and encourage the preservation of buildings and records. The Committee compiled and published comprehensive reports on the township's two primary population areas -- Okemos and Haslett-Lake Lansing -- one of which was Historic Structures in the Haslett-Lake Lansing Area. In September 1975, Historic Structures in Rural Meridian was published. After the committee finished its work, it dissolved and has been replaced with an independent group, The Friends of Historic Meridian.

Another township-wide organization is the Liaison for Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation (LINC). It was formed in June, 1972, as a lobby group representing more than a dozen homeowner associations including over 1600 homeowners. Dr. Ulreh V. Mostosky served as its first president.

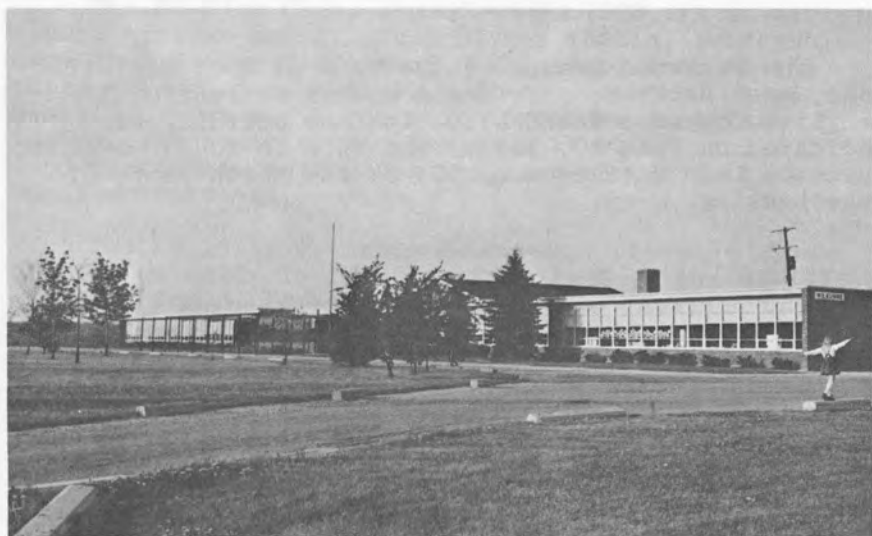
The Wilkins family began a golf course in 1962 on its land north of the Wilkshire Subdivision (p.54). The Eastern Development Company bought the 90 acre parcel north of Haslett Road, completed the course, and built a club house near the intersection of Haslett and Green roads. Official opening of the Pine Lake Country Club, with its nine-hole golf course, club house, pro shop and swimming pool, was Memorial Day, 1964. On April 1, 1967, the club was sold to a private corporation of 20 stockholders incorporated as the Pine Lake Country Club of Ingham County, Incorporated. Part of the Green farm (p.73) was acquired for future expansion of the golf course. Ronald Applegate (Haslett High School golf coach) and Richard Datema purchased the golf course in January, 1975, from the stockholders and are operating it as a semi-private club.

The Parkwood Branch of the YMCA at 2306 Haslett Road, East Lansing, provides a modern recreational facility for area residents. Its new building was dedicated on June 10, 1973. The YWCA no longer operates Camp Mettamega (p.50) on the north shore of Lake Lansing.

The post-war period brought many changes to the small rural community of Haslett, and the seventies have brought even more. The village has become more urbanized and this is reflected by the changing population. Continuing change is inevitable but the distinctive character of Haslett is still evident.



Vera Ralya Elementary School



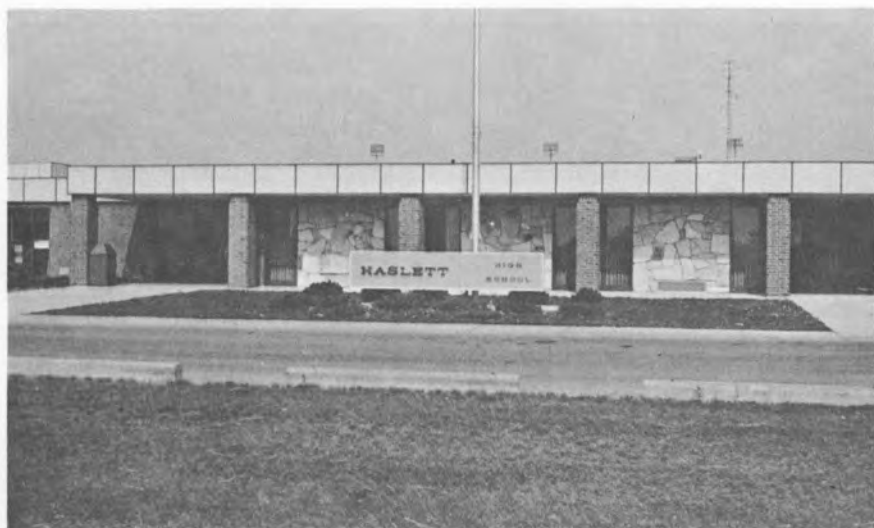
Wilkshire Elementary School



Haslett Middle School



Murphy Elementary School



Haslett High School, dedicated April 23, 1972



Parkwood Branch of the YMCA,
dedicated June 10, 1973

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