

# Time Tracs

## by Jim Ingram

(Fourth in a series of Orion history from 1800 through the 1920s)

Besides the three post offices previously mentioned (Decker, New Canandaigua and Orion), four other offices existed in Orion Township.

A post office opened in Mahopac in 1847 to service this lumber mill community located on Baldwin Road near Mille Lake. Also in 1847, the Jersey PO, named for New Jersey where most of the settlers were from, was established.

It was housed at the Lessiter farm on Baldwin Road and served as a general store as well. It operated through 1887 with William Kile as the first postmaster. At this time Baldwin Road was the Pontiac-to-Lapeer stage route.

The Cole PO, established in 1884, was a flag station on the Pontiac, Oxford and Port Austin Railroad. The station was on the south side of West Clarkston Road, east of Joslyn Road.

The station's name was changed to Randall Beach and the office closed in 1907.

Eames was also a flag station (1874) and post office on the PO and PA Railroad. Its postmaster, Charles Carpenter, was one of the largest landowners in Orion Township. The station was on Silverbell Road near the Joslyn intersection and also served as a general store. It burned to the ground in the summer of 1975.

Scattered throughout the Orion Township area were Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists. They got together and agreed to build a common church which they called the Union Church. It was used over the years by the Congregationalists, Methodists, Episcopalians, Baptists and Apostolic Church.

This church remains today on the northeast corner of North Broadway and Church Streets in Lake Orion.

The Methodists built their own church in 1873 near the railroad tracks on the southeast corner of what would now be West Flint Street and M-24. The church was moved to its current location on the corner of East Flint and Slater Streets in 1901.

The Howarth Methodist Church was built on the corner of Silverbell and Bald Mountain Roads on property donated by John Howarth in 1898. Prior to the church being built, services were held in the Howarth School built in 1859.

The original church was torn down in 1985 to make way for the new church. The Howarth School building still stands on the property.

Area Catholics started their services in the early 1920s at the lakeside yard of Pat Slavin's cottage on South Broadway in Lake Orion. Later they used the Unger's dance hall, which was at the foot of West Flint.

Their first church was built on Beebe Street in 1924 and still stands. The current St. Joseph Catholic Church on M-24 was built in 1940.

With the advent of the railroad in 1872, Orion Townships prospered. Some of the major farms and their locations were: Carpenter's -- Joslyn/Silverbell area; Lessiter's -- Clarkston/Baldwin area; Gingell's -- Baldwin Road in Gingellville area; Clark's -- east side of M-24 in Scripps Road area; Casemer's -- west of M-24 from Casemer Road to the shores of Lake Orion; Schick's -- Miller Road area.