

### **The Late 19th Century**

When the war was over, the Township grew in population. By 1870, there were 820 people. Times were good and there were several changes. The Baptists replaced their church with a new brick church and the Methodists replaced theirs with local sandstone. As of 2001, these churches still stand. A township hall was built in the park. A grain cradle factory, a gristmill and a cider mill were also built. In 1873, another boundary change was made; south sections 4, 5 and 6 were added giving Napoleon a straight line along our south boundary.

By 1880, our population had grown to 1,177, but the 1880's were slow years. A major forest fire in eastern Michigan devastated the lumber industry. Nearly 3,400 buildings were burned. 300 were killed and over 15,000 were homeless. President Garfield was shot. He lingered on until the autumn of 1881. By 1900, our population had decreased to 948. A promotional pamphlet of the time, stated that religious interests were well cared for by three churches and that the public schools were excellent, well conducted and largely attended. At this point in time, Napoleon had a public hall, a large hand picked bean "manufactory", a coal dealer, two hotels, a livery, feed and saw mills, a blacksmith, a woodworker, two barbershops, a drug store, a meat market, a grocery, three general-stores, a pool-hall, a shoe shop, a millinery emporium, United States Express, Western Union Telegraph, and a telephone connection.