

# MENOMINEE RANGE HISTORY – EARLY EXPLORATIONS – JOHN LANE BUELL’S TRIP UP THE MENOMINEE RIVER – 1876

*[Compiled and Transcribed by William John Cummings]*



## JOHN LANE BUELL

[October 12, 1835 – October 24, 1916]

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 9, Number 28 [Thursday, December 1, 1904], page 5, column 2

## QUINNESEC ITEMS.

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**Col. John L. Buell** received notice last Sunday that he had been allowed a pension of ten dollars per month on the age basis, account of service as first-

lieutenant in the United States regular army during the civil war. Col. Buell is seventy years old and next year his pension will be increased to twelve dollars per month.

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 21, Number 38 [Thursday, October 26, 1916], page 1, columns 1-2

## A PIONEER PASSES

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**VENERABLE JOHN LANE BUELL  
DIED AT QUINNESEC LAST  
TUESDAY.**

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**He Discovered the First Mine on the  
Menominee Range and Was the  
Founder of Quinnesec.**

**John Lane Buell**, a pioneer and highly respected resident of the Menominee range, died at his home in **Quinnesec**, [sic] last Tuesday morning, after a lingering illness, aged eighty-one years, three months and eighteen days.

John Lane Buell was a pioneer explorer of the Menominee range and **founder of Quinnesec**. He was a son of **George P. Buell**, and was born October 12<sup>th</sup>, 1835, in Lawrenceburg, Dearborn county, Indiana. His paternal grandfather, **Salmon A. Buell**, the son of a revolutionary soldier, was born and reared in Budington, Vermont. The

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father, George P. Buell, was born in 1801, in Scipio, N.Y.; married to **Ann Lane**, to whom were born **Salmon A., George P., John Lane**, (subject of this sketch), **Joana, Ann and Julius**.

Having completed his early studies in the public schools at Lawrenceburg, John Lane Buell took a scientific course at the **Norwich Military Institute in Norwich, Indiana**. Going to **Kansas** in 1857, he spent a year in **Leavenworth**, and on October 20<sup>th</sup>, 1858, was one of a small band of venturesome youths that started overland to **Colorado**, being the first to make the trip from that place.

On December 20<sup>th</sup>, 1858, the company arrived at **Cherry Creek, the site of the present city of Denver**. In 1859, Mr. Buell **surveyed and platted the present city of Boulder**, and in 1859 and 1860 worked in **Central City, Colorado**. He engaged in mining in **Leadville** for six months in 1860, and at the **Pine Altos mine in New Mexico** for a time in the same year. In the spring of 1861, Mr. Buell started for the **Gulf of Mexico**, going **via El Paso and San Antonio to Fort Davis**. By this time **Texas** had seceded and **General Triggs** had surrendered the federal troops. Traveling by night in order to escape capture, Mr. Buell finally reached the gulf and secured passage on a vessel used in transporting paroled soldiers and on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1861, landed in **New York**.

He entered the commissary department as clerk and in August, 1861, was **appointed second lieutenant in the**

**Fourth United States Infantry**, stationed at **Fort Columbus, New York**. Subsequently given charge of the North Carolina and Maryland prisoners, having the charge of Mason and Slidell. *[sic]* He took them to **Fort Warren, Boston**, from where they were released and put aboard a British man of war.

Mr. Buell then went to **Washington** where he was appointed regimental quartermaster and commissary. During McClellan’s advance he had charge of the baggage and supply train of the Third Brigade. After again joining his command he **took part in the battle of Bull Run, and at Antietam had charge of the second company of skirmishers**. His father being ill, Mr. Buell resigned from the army after the battle of Antietam and returned home to Lawrenceburg, Indiana. He subsequently served as **aid-de-camp to General John Lore**, who operated against the forces of **John Morgan**, the daring rebel leader. Entering **Harvard College** in 1863, Mr. Buell studied law for six months, afterwards returning to Lawrenceburg where he engaged in farming until August, 1866.

At that time, on account of ill health, Mr. Buell decided to try an entire change of climate. He came to **Menominee, Michigan**, and in 1867 put the machinery into the **Jones mill** on the bay shore, operating the mill for two years, in the meantime carrying on general farming, **publishing the Menominee**

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**Journal**, and as opportunity occurred, **practicing law**.

In 1871 Mr. Buell paid his first visit to the **Menominee range**, and on his second visit in May, 1873, commenced exploring and laid bare the first merchantable ore ever discovered on the range, finding it in the southeast quarter, township thirty-nine north, range thirty, and naming it the **Quinnesec mine**.

The same year Mr. Buell took up a homestead claim, and **in 1876 platted the village of Quinnesec**, which was the terminus of the Chicago & North-Western railway from 1877 to 1880. Since coming to the upper peninsula Mr. Buell has been deeply interested in everything pertaining to its development and advancement, and has been prominent and influential in public affairs. Elected to the **state legislature** in 1872, he became an active member of that body, and had the distinction of introducing the first ten-hour labor bill ever submitted to the legislature. He also *[sic]* introduced the first log lien bill. **In 1876 Mr. Buell built the first wagon road made between Twin Falls and the New York farm, and superintended the construction of the iron bridges at Twin Falls and at Iron Mountain.**

On December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1863, Mr. Buell married **Ruth B. Ludlow**, who was born of **Stephen Ludlow**. Her grandfather, **John Ludlow**, came to the Northwest Territory in 1810, locating in what was afterwards Hamilton county, and served

as first sheriff of that county. Her father, Stephen Ludlow, was born May 5<sup>th</sup>, 1790, in Morris county, New Jersey, and was subsequently a pioneer settler of **Lawrenceberg [sic – Lawrenceburg], Indiana**. In 1820 he was one of the commissioners appointed by the legislature to select four sections of land granted by the United States as a site for the capital, which in June, 1820, was located at **Indianapolis**. At seventy years of age Mr. Ludlow accepted the position of assistant United States surveyor, and was active in that work until his death at a venerable age at Lawrenceburg, Indiana.

The funeral services will be held at the Quinnesec Catholic church at 10 o'clock to-morrow *[sic – tomorrow]* (Friday) morning, **Rev. James Corcoran** officiating. The interment will be at cemetery park.

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume XX, Number XX [Thursday, May 27, 1920], page XX, column XX

## **Mrs. Buell Is Dead.**

**Mrs. Ruth Buell**, relict *[widow]* of the late **John L. Buell**, died last Friday noon at the family home in **Quinnesec** after a short illness. Mrs. Buell about six weeks ago returned from Lawrenceberg *[sic – Lawrenceburg]*, Indiana, where she had spent the winter months with relatives, and was taken ill a few days

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later. Mrs. Buel [*sic* – *Buell*] was about seventy-eight years of age and a native of Indiana. With Mr. Buell, she came to the upper peninsula about fifty years ago, first residing at **Menominee**, and forty-five years ago removing to **Quinnesec**, where she had resided ever since. She is survived by two brothers, **Homer and Stephen**, and two nephews, **Percy and Frank Ludlow**, and a niece, Miss **Laura Ludlow**, of Lawrenceburg. The funeral was held on Tuesday from St. Mary’s church at **Quinnesec**, with **Rev. John Mockler** in charge of the services, with interment at Cemetery Park. Mrs. Buell was a notable figure in the history of **Quinnesec**. Her acts of substantial charity were many and she was ever thoughtful of the welfare of her neighbors. During the past several years Mrs. Buell has lead a retired life.

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 25, Number 12 [Thursday, August 5, 1920], page 1, column 6

## Option Buell Home.

The county poor commissioners have instructed Prosecuting Attorney Knight to secure an option upon the residence property of the late **John L. Buell** at **Quinnesec**, and will recommend that the same be purchased for county hospital purposes. The board of supervisors will meet on Tuesday, the 24<sup>th</sup>, when some action will be taken. The state board of

corrections has decided that the building at present used for a county hospital is unsuited for the purposes and has ordered the supervisors to provide new quarters forthwith. An agent of the state board will attend the next meeting of the supervisors and he will be consulted relative to the Buell property.

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 25, Number 16 [Thursday, September 2, 1920], page 1, column 5

## Buell Place Sold.

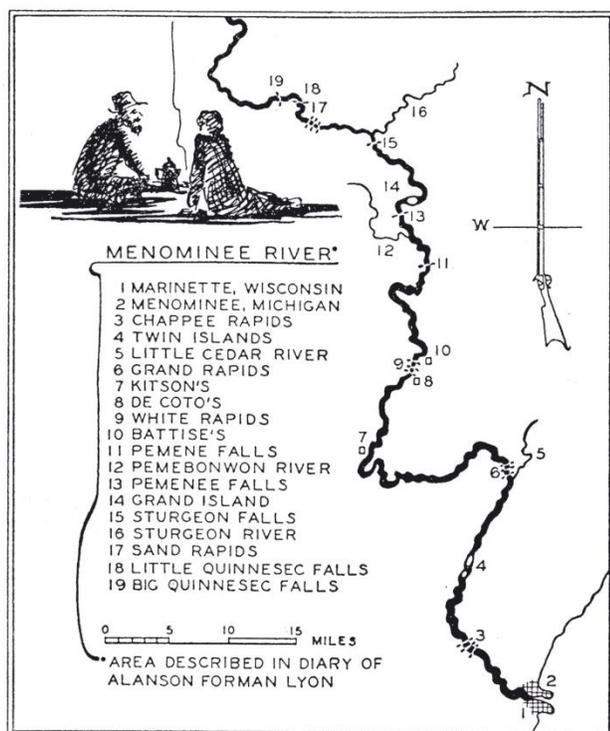
The **Buell place at Quinnesec**, which the county anticipated purchasing for a hospital, has been **sold to Joseph Mongrain**. The place contains seven acres, a large twelve-room residence and fine barn. Mr. Mongrain’s deal includes the furniture in the home and all the tools, etc., and the consideration was \$6,500.

## Diary of John Lane Buell’s Trip from the Mouth of the Menominee River North to the Pine River, Brule River and Paint River and Down the Menominee River to the Mouth

**Saturday, August 26 to Tuesday,  
September 5, 1876**

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THE MENOMINEE RIVER IN 1854

Map by James M. Campbell

Diary of a trip from the Mouth of the Menominee River (boundary line between Michigan and Wisconsin by way of Pine River to North fork to the Half breed Portage, thence by the Nine [?] lakes to the Brule River, and down the Paint to the Menominee home again.

The company consists of – myself, **J.L. Buell**, employee **John McLeoud** [*sic – McLeod*] and employee **John Gannon/Ganyon** [?].

Means of transit – wagon to mouth of Sturgeon, birch canoe from thence, legs on the portages.

Means of Defense and offense – Double barreled shotgun, Trolling line,

Trail line, 5 single blankets, 1 Tent, 1 Box matches.

Consolations – Breakfast Bacon, Flour, Tea (\_\_\_\_. H.), Loaf Sugar, Pepper, Salt, Baking Powder.

Guest – A water spaniel “**Jack**”

I have named only such articles as are essential to the well being [*sic – well-being*] of the physical man. Anxiety is only removed and an even peace of mind secured by having competent boatman on the water and industrious and willing men in camp. Was fortunate enough to secure both – **McLeoud** [*sic – McLeod*] is better than the average river men in the bow with either pole or paddle and **Gauyon** is a hero at such work. **Although McLeoud’s** [*sic – McLeod*] name is **John**, I call him “**Charley**” and **Gauyon** I call **John**. The woods is [*sic – are*] a poor place to come over a mouthful of names before you reach a man. Sometimes he is wanted in a hurry, and if the name is too long, a person don’t [*sic – doesn’t*] get a chance to swear any. I never knew an excursion of this nature that “cuss words” was [*sic – were*] not a component part (except this Charley don’t swear, and John although a thorough bred Chippewa belongs to church, and is a good Christian [*sic – Christian*]). Having no one to keep company[,] I have had to forego the habit for the time being, and I hope forever. Only one day[,] when coming down quite a pitch with an 80# pack on my back[,] the Gun in one hand and a

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paddle in the other[,] my foot caught, and in pitching forward I very seriously retarded the \_\_\_\_\_ development of a big cedar, with the top of my head. When I quit seeing stars, I was going to give that cedar a regular ordinary blessing, but when looking up at it, saw that the top was dead, took pity on it, put my head between my knees, squeezed it to its former symmetry [*sic – symmetry*], shouldered my pack, and travelled on. Probably the first time in my life that I ever philosophized.

John understands English quite well but don't [*sic - doesn't*] or won't speak it. Charley is our interpreter. He is Chippewa, speaks English, French, Menominee, Chippewa, and the Scandinavian tongues [*sic – tongues*].

We left Menominee on Saturday[,] Aug. 26<sup>th</sup>. I have kept a running sketch of each day's joys and sorrows, and on this Tuesday[,] Sept. 5<sup>th</sup>[,] finding myself encamped on a little Island containing a ¼ acre, near the center of the Middle Lake on the portage from the Pine to the Brule[,] I have set myself to codifying, and smoothing down my data. The little tent is pitched on the highest – part of the island facing the East. Charley has made a regular feather bed of boughs. The island is thickly timbered with pine and balsam fir so as to break off the chill. With [*the*] East wind that is blowing[,] the sun is shining brightly and as I look out from my shed but through the foliage [*sic – foliage*] I can see his rays dancing and glittering on the ripples

of the water. The site is picturesque in the extreme. This is a good spot at which to romance. Twenty years ago I could have taken it all in, but now the keen edge of rapture is turned, and I speak of it Only as a man whose face is turned toward, the down hill [*sic – downhill*] of life can. It is simply an island in the lake, and the lake is as the accident of subsidence left it. The old ax marks made years and years ago indicate that others have been here in times past[,] others that may now be sleeping the eternal sleep. The wild animals, as the indians [*sic - Indians*] who have frequented it in centuries past have left no record of occupation. The boys have taken the canoe and gone up the portage trail, leaving me alone with my dog – and my sketch.

I present a rough sketch of the lake and my camp. My topography of this history a dot [*? – writing light and very difficult to decipher*] and should my wife for whose entertainment I have sketched it [*? – writing light and very difficult to decipher*]. This is the middle and the widest of the lakes. Its shores are surrounded on all sides by pine woods except tamarac [*sic – tamarack*] at the extreme north and south ends.

*[drawing of map of lake]*

½ Mile E-W  
Island  
(looks like a system on the shell)  
1 ½ Miles N. & S.

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But to business, as I am to deer hunt to night [*sic – tonight,*] and want to close up my account of the trip to date. Tomorrow we portage to the Brule. And with a rapid current will soon be among the natives again. Have just had dinner and returned from a troll around the Island. Caught 5 large black bass[,] any two of which would make a mess for an ordinary family like mine.

On

Saturday, Aug. 26<sup>th</sup> 1876.

As before stated[,] left the farm four miles from Menominee at 7 P.M. and drove to **Charley Smith’s** at the rapids 17 miles[,] arriving there at 11 P.M. Slept on the floor the remainder of the night, took a bite of breakfast and drove to **Pemina farm** 18 miles further and 30 from Menominee. Had dinner, crossed the river and went down to Musconow [*sic – Miscauno*] Ford, four miles and [*to*] find [*a*] teamster to go with on the trip at the rate of 40 \$ per month. He agreed to be at **Murray’s** at 6 A.M. next morning. Hitched up and drove to **Murray’s** arriving there at 6 P.M. Saw a deer and partridge on the way, and also saw **Eddie Parmenter’s camp** at **Pemina Bridge**. None of the party were in. Supposed they were up the creek fishing, or up the river Hunting. As it was Sunday, probably not doing either. Slept on the floor again, in my own blankets. That was my own choice, as both **Mr. and Mrs. Murray** insisted upon my taking a room in their part of

the house which had been lately plastered. As this is in part a health excursion[,] didn’t think it advisable to accept the invitation. We had a good supper and breakfast[,] a good night’s rest and John coming to Land as per appointment and on

Monday 28 Inst [*of this month*] drove to **Mouth of Sturgeon [River,**] and while the boys were bringing the team over to the farm to feed, I went up to **Jo [*sic – Joe*] Lego [*sic – Legault – ?*]**’s and had [*?*] his canoe brought [*?*] down to this farm, and after dinner, spent the time until 3 o’clock pitching her up, arranging my packs & c.

Left 2 parts of flour, and

Flat of Bacon at the farm

borrowed of Rice \_\_\_\_\_ cups

A Shovel and four papers of Smoking tobacco.

Took the birch at 3 o’clock P.M. and poled up to **Sand Portage**, Killing two Partridges. Made the portage by dark and found **John Hubbard** with a crew engaged in blasting out the rocks at the head of the rapids. **Hubbard** invited me and the boys to supper and we not having fairly \_\_\_\_\_ accepted the invitation. No brush around[,] we slept in dry weeds. I was sore enough as this Morning.

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup>

Took the boat at 6 A.M. Made the portage of **little [*sic – Little*] and Big Quinnessecs [*sic – Quinnesec Falls*]** without incident beyond seeing a deer on its bank above the Lower fall and catching two black bass in the Eddy

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below the Upper fall on the Wisconsin side of the river. My body knows that Lower Q [*sic* – *Quinnesec*] is a short portage and the upper if you take it [?] The long portage is a long one. Reached the head of the Upper Portage at ½ past one, cooked one fish and made a hearty meal and further up River Stopping for camp at quite a little creek that comes in on the Michigan side at the Nine [*sic* – *Nine Lakes* – ?] five miles below the **Mouth of the Pine**. Found a very good camping place indeed, Just on this point. Deer sign being plentiful[,] we took the canoe after supper and went down river a ways in search of a deer. The moon was shining so brightly that we gave it up in disgust and returned to camp where on a good bed of boughs our troubles are soon forgotten and in the morning the fatigue of the former day with it.

Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup>

I concluded to stay over here a day to take a trout fish. Early in the morning **John** took the gun and went to kill a deer if possible while **Charley** and I took our trail lines and started for a fish. Went up the creek about 2 miles, with my poor success only having taken 3 small trout. On the way home and near the Log landing about a mile from the Mouth, I took [?] this bed of the stream and soon caught 12 very nice trout. Reached camp in time for an early supper, **John** coming soon after without any game. We cooked our trout, all of the crew eating them with relish. After supper **John** took the gun and poled up River two miles so as to

float down after dark in his hope of killing a deer. About 8 P.M. we heard the report of the gun and a quarter hour later **John** rounded this point with a deer in the boat. We dressed it nicely and fried some of the ham at once. How a guest of the Kirby [*Kirby House, a famous hotel in Menominee*] will relish a piece of venison properly cook [*sic* – *cooked*] after a long days tramp in the woods. And how a person can eat in the woods! The same indulgence in a city would nightmare a man of my weakness for a twelfth month. There is no great amount of pine visible along this creek, but such as there is, is large and sound. On the north bank for quite a distance up it is popple with black ash bottom. The South side rating better, being hemlock hardwood and pine. The surface is much broken. The Menominee from this point to the Head of Big Quinnesec is Generally smooth deep water.

Thursday Morning.

On breaking camp for **Pine River**, we struck a rapid about half mile from the mouth of creek, found swift shallow water nearly all the distance to **the Mouth of the Pine**. At the Mouth of that stream there is a bad rapid which continues for a distance of ½ half [*sic*] mile from the Mouth from whence I found a smooth beautiful river until about midway of the 2<sup>nd</sup> horse shoe. Then where the water becomes shallow and swift, Making it a hard place in a birch *canoe*[,] as it is only six hundred yards across the neck of the bend and

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about 3 miles around. I should another time make a portage at this point. There is a good trail cut out and seems to be much used. The part of the trail is just where the River makes a sharp turn to the East, a little above the trail a marshy bottom sets in.

We saw two deer to day [sic – today]. They seem to be plentiful from the signs, and no better place for night hunting could be found than in Space of smooth River referred to. Shot a duck, but it proving to be a saw bill threw it away. We have a ham of venison on hand from the deer killed on the main river, and[,] as I do not approve of the indiscriminate slaughter of game[,] we have not been anxious to day [sic – today] to capture any. Reached the 1<sup>st</sup> falls on the Pine at 4 P.M. Made the portage and camped at the head of the trail. The Length of the portage is 1/3 of mile if making the long portage, about 200 yards if the short one. The approach to the foot of the long one is as nasty [?] a place as I care to put a birch canoe. With the present low water, we should have damaged our boat by attempting to make this foot of the short one. The camping place at the head is a fair one. After the tent was pitched I tried trout fishing both above and below the falls with indifferent success only. Only caught two or three very small ones, which I threw back in the stream, and with a disgust for **Pine River trout fishing** of which had heard so much. Returned to camp – to supper. The Little river between the falls and the mouth is

seriously marred by the utter worthlessness of the country and ash and elm bottoms. The first hard wood [sic – hardwood] and pine of any account is reached at the lower falls. The outlook from our camping place indicates a more agreeable and valuable county ahead of us. These falls are very rough[,] being made up of a succession of pitches with huge boulders setting over the stream. Without a good deal of improvement they will seriously injure logs in transit over them. Portage on the south side of stream.

## Friday Morning

On taking the boat we saw big deer crossing the river at the first bend above camp. On reaching the south bank for some reason instead of passing out they turned back, and by the time they reached the north bank I had come within 120 yards of them. Without much hope of success I fired on them, Knocking over the larger of the two down. It fell in[,] then scrambled for a second and[,] reaching some brush on the shore[,] gained its feet and made off. The other charge in my gun was bird shot – or we would have had it sure. I had a bad eye for landscaping this morning or shooting either[,] it having swollen almost to a close through the night. About one mile from the head of the first fall we reached the foot of the second if falls they can be called. It's [?] rough to even and apparently too [sic – two] dams to portage. A little improvement may be necessary on the lower pitch to prevent

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the brooming [?] of the ends of logs. The take out – and put in on the portage of ¼ mile are both good and on the south side of the river. Taking the boat again and poling for one mile we reached the **upper and last falls and portage on the Main River**. For a distance of 200 yds. The water rushes at a wild rate through a narrow gorge which would be navigable at any time to bateaux but not to a birch *[birch bark canoe]*. Then there is a smooth stretch of river, where we came to a **very handsome falls made up of 3 pitches within 100 ft.** The 1<sup>st</sup> 3 ft. – the 2<sup>nd</sup> 8 – and the 3<sup>d</sup> *[sic – 3<sup>rd</sup>]* and lower one 20 feet – all perpendicular[,] making a descent of about 30 ft. The river at this lower pitch is about 80 ft. in width, spreading out into a kind of basin at the foot of the descent enclosed by ledges of rocks a hundred feet in height. The scenery below is attractive. It is wild, and to a degree dreary. One of steep places to make a person feel utterly alone – where man realizes his impotency as compared with the grandness of nature. There is a heavy growth of hard wood *[sic – hardwood]* about the falls, but little pine is visible. The portage is ¼ of a mile in length. The take out below very muddy and bad in all respects[;] the put in above a good one so to speak. Trout fishing again below these falls. Caught three chubs and gave it up. Cooked and ate our dinner at the head of this portage. Between each of these falls were *[sic – was]* a stretch of smooth[,] deep water, almost sluggish[,] forming

admirable points for night hunting. All along the banks deer signs are profuse. Also saw two Beavers and one otter sign, but have seen no partridges or pigeons since leaving Menominee. Saw three large porcupines on one drift pile as we passed along after dinner[,] and[,] when rounding a bend about a half mile below the forks[,] saw a deer on the bank. **Charley** dropped in front and **John**[,] putting the canoe to within four rods of her when she was feeding behind a clump of willow[,] I shot her dead [?] – one [?] buck [?] shot striking her right between the eyes. We took the carcass around after disemboweling it and reaching the forks poled up the north branch ½ mile and encamped on a high dry, hard wood *[sic – hardwood]* bank. With plenty of hard maple for wood[,] good water and enough hemlock for bedding added to a fresh supply of venison, we went into camp with light hearts and craving [?] stomachs.

**Charley Lasalle** *[sic – LaSalle]* lives between the two forks[;] has probably 40 acres cleared.

*[This book (diary) was given to Mrs. August Paveglio to keep notes by John L. Buell – 1914.]*

*Sketches of The Menominee River* by Lewis S. Patrick, Menominee, Michigan: Herlad Print, April 1, 1871

INDIANS.

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The Indians occupying this part of the state were quite a considerable tribe, numbering fully 2,000 persons, their principal habitations extending from the mouth of the River up to the Pimenas. They are reported to have been generally very peaceable and friendly toward the whites, and with few exceptions were never engaged in any depredations, nor took any important part in any wars with other tribes, although they were considered brave and powerful by their Indian neighbors. The only important tradition now relating to their affairs, a war ensued which terminated fatally to the attacking party. Their villages were located at various points along the River, the main village being at **Charles McLeod’s** place and extending up to the old dam. On the island near **McLeod’s** was another, one at **Kitson** [*sic* – *Kittson*]’s, one at **Grand Rapids**, and one at **White Rapids or Pimena**. For some reason or other, those living at the mouth of the River were called by those living up River “**Sturgeon Eaters.**” This was too much for their savage dignity. They reply to the taunt was that if they were, the others need not eat any, and in order to make this effectual, those living here went to work and built a dam across the river near the head of the [*sic*] **Streeter Island** to prevent the fish going up river. It seemed that it had the desired effect, as the chief representing those upriver, [*sic*] sent his son down to ask the chief here to open the river so that they could get

sturgeon for subsistence. This mission was most unfortunate one. The chief’s expression of his feelings was indicated by sticking an awl through the forehead of the young man, and cautioning him not to remove it until he reached home and had shown it to his father. Upon his return, when asked what was the reply, the young warrior removed a bandage from his head and showed the awl sticking through his forehead, the result of his mission. This was more than the Indian nature could bear, an outrageous insult to his authority, and an utter contempt of his wishes. A grand war council was held, the warriors assembled, preparations for war were made, and a war declared, with the object to avenge their wrongs and insults. Valiantly and hopefully they journeyed down the river to execute their fearful resolve. How well the offending chief was prepared to meet the opposing force, we have not the means of knowing, but the result of the battle was a complete victory to him, and a disastrous defeat to the other. The slaughter was frightful, **almost exterminating the band of the Pimenas**, in fact so nearly that they fled in terror and dismay and sought shelter with other tribes, their power and prestige broken and gone forever. The dead of this fierce struggle were buried in heaps. The mounds of one burial place are near **Chas. McLeod’s**, and it is said, they can yet be seen. One was in the vicinity of **Leon Cota’s**, and their [*sic* – *there*] is another near the Boarding

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House of **R. Stephenson & Co.**, which can yet be pointed out.

*Centennial History of Menominee County* by Hon. E.S. Ingalls, Menominee, Michigan: Herald Power Presses, 1876

## CHAPTER I.

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### HISTORIC SKETCH OF MENOMINEE COUNTY, MICH.

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The history of a new country can reach back but a few years. The unwritten history, if known, would possess a greater interest than the written, and could the distant past unfold its record we would read a page of history beside which the times within the knowledge of man would seem tame and commonplace. It is so with Menominee County.

Could we go back to the days of pre-historic man, we would probably find history so full of tragic interest that it would seem like romance, and even if we had the history of the early Indian races who made this their homes for many generations, it would undoubtedly furnish us much more of incident than we can obtain since the white man first paddled his canoe, or pushed his bateaux into the mouth of the Menominee.

Abundant evidence that such a race once inhabited Menominee County is

found in the mounds within its borders. But these mounds are the beginning and the end of all the history we have of the pre-historic race.

We have no knowledge of the pre-historic man except what is gained from the mounds scattered through the country, and some remnant of streets and cities that have been exhumed, and occasionally fortifications, the remains of which furnish satisfactory evidence that the builders were of a race much more numerous and farther advanced in civilization than the races that succeeded them and were found here by the white men.

**When the first white man visited Green Bay the Menominee river was the home of the “Menominee Indians”, then very numerous, and Menominee was their most populous locality.** The abundance of fish running out of Green Bay into the river; the check they received in climbing the rapids two miles from the mouth; and the abundance of game in the woods around, enabled them to obtain a living very easily. Their favorable location, too, on the shores of the bay rich with fish, and at the mouth of the river whose branches enabled them to penetrate the vast regions to the north with their birch bark canoes – these advantages drew large numbers about the mouth of the Menominee. The peaceful character of the Menominees was early noted by the white traders, and although they were brave as a people, yet wars rarely arose between them and other

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*[Compiled and Transcribed by William John Cummings]*

tribes, and violence was seldom committed on those who visited them. **Tradition tells of but one battle within the limits of Menominee County and that was between the Indians living near the mouth of the river and those living in the villages near White Rapids and Grand Rapids.** The first were Menominees, of course, but it is not certainly known whether their opponents belonged to the same tribe or were Chippewas, but the presumption is that they belonged to the latter tribe. The battle was fought near the house of **Charles McLeod**, and along the banks of the river near **Burying Ground Point**. The trouble occurred in this way:

The Indians in the village near the mouth of the river, *[sic]* were living on the fat of the land, that is Sturgeon, which they caught in great abundance on the rapids. But an abundance was not enough, for Sturgeon is the special delight of the red man. The Chief, therefore, ordered dams of stones to be built across the river at the rapids, in order to prevent the fish from ascending the river. This caused great suffering at the upper villages, for the Indians there were largely dependent upon Sturgeon for their subsistence, so the Chief at Grand Rapids sent his son down to ask the potentate at the mouth of the river to tear away the obstructions, and let the finny monsters wend their way up the stream as usual, stating, at the same time, that his people were suffering for the need thereof. But to this most reasonable

request the Chief turned a deaf ear, and sent the son back to the father with an insulting message. But Sturgeon his people must have or starve, and this fact, coupled with the insults heaped upon him by the Chief at the mouth of the river, aroused his fighting blood. Calling together the warriors and those from the tribes farther up the river, who were in a like condition, he prepared for war. With “Sturgeon” for the war cry, they set out down the river to punish the inhabitants of the village, that had wronged them by cutting off their supply of food. At early dawn the war whoop broke the stillness of the morning, and its death telling echoes and re-echoes were wafted upon the morning breeze, it fell with terrible meaning upon the ears of the Menominees at the mouth of the river, and every warrior was quickly in arms and ready for fight, in a warfare that showed no quarter and sought no mercy. The battle was short and sharp. The squaws and children fled to the swamps or crossed the river for safety. The fight raged up and down the river bank and upon the island for two or three hours, when the village fell into the hands of the assailants, and the shore Chieftain was a captive in the hands of his enemies. He was made a victim of the more terrible torture that savage ingenuity could devise, which was ended only by death. The loss was great on either side but much more severe on the side of the down river tribe. The conquerors, foregoing further bloodshed, tore away

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the obnoxious dams, and returned to their homes, followed up by the unsuspecting sturgeon, which were again caught in peace and plenty. The writer received this account from the late **John G. Kittson**, and he, in turn, obtained the traditions from the Indians living on the river when he came here. The tradition, as handed down, is much more full than his here given, but the object of this record is rather to preserve the fact of its existence than to make a story, and therefore much of the minutae is omitted.

**The Menominee Indians are fast fading away, and where there were thousands when the white men came, it is rare now to find one.** When the writer came here, it was very common to see a village of wigwams at the rapids, the occupants busy catching and smoking a season’s stock of the staff of life, i.e., Sturgeon, as a supply of provisions to last until the deer were fat enough to eat. It was also common to see fleets of bark canoes, loaded down with squaws and papposes [*sic – papooses*], coasting along the shores of Green Bay. Nearly all of these now live on their **Reservations at Keshena and Shawano**. Many of them have become civilized and have good common schools and churches. A few yet remain around Menominee, but their days are numbered. Like the pine of their native forests they cannot withstand the effects of civilization, and the time is not far distant when there will not be an Indian left on the Menominee to cherish the memory,

or even preserve the name of the peaceful tribe that once roamed over these hunting grounds, proud in the freedom of savage life.

## CHAPTER II.

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### THE FIRST WHITE SETTLERS ON THE MENOMINEE.

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**Tradition says that the first white man on the Menominee was a Negro; although old “Joe Bart,” as he was called, a half-breed, always claimed that honor.** In support of the first claim, however, traditionary [*sic – traditional*] lore informs us that in early times a **Negro Indian trader**, accompanied by a **Canadian voyageur** in his employment, visited this shore many years before **Chappee** came here, and that both were killed at a place on the Peshtigo river, several miles above where the village of that name now stands. It is said he had previously traded with the Indians and given them credit, and that at the time he was killed, a party of Indians living at Sturgeon Bay, [*sic*] came across to trade with him; that he insisted on their paying up for the goods which he had previously trusted them before he began to trade with them again, which they consented to do. This took about all the furs and deerskins they had with them, and after he got square with them he refused to trust the many more or to sell them

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anything for which they could not pay down. This arrangement did not suit the Indians. They thought the trader had taken unfair advantage of them and got their furs and peltries. They lost sight of the fact that they had many months before had their pay for them, and had had so many months' enjoyment of the trader's property, and thought they had been wronged because he had got his pay for the property they had previously bought of him. There are very many white men at the present day who reason just like them, but, unlike the white men, they had the remedy of their fancied wrongs in their own hands, which they immediately applied; that is, they lifted the hair of the Negro and his companion, and confiscated his goods, and thus paid their debts and obtained a large supply of plunder at the same time. This is a tradition common among the early settlers. The only proof we have to support it is the fact that there is a place up the Peshtigo river called "**Nigger's Hill**," where, the tradition says, the unfortunate trader lost his wool. The reader may call this history or tradition, which he chooses, but in early times there were many who believed it, and there are some even now who believe he buried quite a sum of money in silver, which still lies there.

**The first white man who came to Menominee to stay was Chappee, an Indian trader, who came here as an agent for the American Fur Company and established a post in 1796.** At that

time many thousand Indians visited the Menominee river every season, while at the north and about the headquarters of the river, and towards Lake Superior, the Chippewas had numerous villages which were accessible by birch canoes. There was an abundance of beaver, otter, mink, muskrat, martin and fishers, bear, deer, and less valuable game, throughout the country, and this post became an important trading point. **Chappee was a French-Canadian voyageur, with sufficient education to keep what books were necessary for an Indian trading post, and was apparently the right man for the place.** He was stirring and active, and had sufficient courage and nerve for any emergency that might arise. He had a large number of men, picked up from that class of Canadian voyageurs who preferred a life in the solitude of the forests to a home with civilization, and his post sometimes presented the appearance of a well garrisoned fort, and at other times he was left almost solitary and alone to defend it if hostile Indians approached. His post was solidly built of logs with palisades made of heavy timbers set in the ground around it. Some portions of the one near **Chappee's Rapids** were remaining when the writer of this came in the country in 1859.

A story is told illustrating his nerve in danger as well as the uncomfortable position an Indian trader is sometimes placed in when his post is far out on the frontier, away from civilized men. I state

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the story as it was related to me by the late **John G. Kittson**, several years before his death.

All of the white men belonging to the post had been sent away on various expeditions, leaving only **Chappee** and one white man. A band of Indians from a distance, who were none too friendly, came to the post, and before **Chappee** had discovered the character of his visitors they had come within the stockade and inside the building used for the store-room. At first they began peaceably to talk of trade, but soon got noisy and threatening, and it was not long before he became satisfied, from their actions, that the object of their visit was to rob him of his goods and probably to lift his scalp. To fight them was out of the question, for not only were they inside of the stockade, but were crowding around his small counter inside of the store building, and all of his reliable men were miles away and where he could not recall them. He tried by pleasant words to still the storm and avert the danger, without avail; they grew more and more threatening, and when, as he thought, the crisis had nearly approached, he rolled out a keg of gunpowder which was open at the end, and catching up a loaded pistol he cocked it and pointed it into the gunpowder, and with flashing eyes turned to their chief and told him that if every Indian was not out of the stockade in two minutes he would fire into the gunpowder, and send them and go with them into the happy hunting grounds.

They knew by his tone and the flash of his eye that he meant business, and being suddenly impressed with the idea that discretion was the better part of valor, in less than two minutes not an Indian was to be seen inside the stockade. The best of the matter was that they became so favorably impressed with his bravery, they immediately made friends with him, and he got a good trade with them, and they always remained his friends, and often afterwards visited him, to his and the **American Fur Company's** great profit.

**Chappee built his first trading post on the Wisconsin side of the Menominee river, near where Marinette's house now stands, and not far from where the railroad bridge reaches that bank of the river.** He carried on his trade with the Indians for many years, until dispossessed by **Farnsworth & Brush**, as will be hereafter stated. **After being dispossessed of his property by them, he crossed the Menominee river and built a new trading post near the foot of "Chappee's Rapids" – which were named after him – about five miles up the river from the village of Menominee, where he remained trading with the Indians until he died; [sic] in 1852.** He surrounded this post with palisades in the same manner as he did the first one, and some of these remained standing until after I came into the country. **Chappee** took to himself a squaw, with whom he lived, and raised

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children, as was the custom with the traders in those days, but to whom he was never married. Some of the descendants a few years ago were, and probably now are, living about the Peshtigo river, in Oconto County, Wisconsin.

The next permanent white settlers who came were **William Farnsworth** and **Charles Brush**, who came the same season, and operated together after their arrival. They arrived in 1822. They were stirring, wide-awake business men [*sic – businessmen*], but without so nice a sense of meum and teum as would stand particularly in the way of their carrying out any enterprise that they might undertake. About the first important enterprise they entered into was to root out **Chappee** from his trading post, before alluded to. Unfortunately, **Chappee**, through want of discretion, or perhaps forgetting that he was then the only white settler in the country having authority, opened the way for them, and made the opportunity, of which they were only too ready to avail themselves. Owing to some difficulty **Chappee**, soon after they came on the river, got into a quarrel with the chiefs – **Spaniard** and **Shenegesick**, and a brother of the latter. During the fracas he lost a thumb. Making more of the matter than prudence required, he caused these chiefs to be arrested and taken to Green Bay, (Fort Howard) and imprisoned in the fort there by the United States troops stationed at that place. These chiefs were told that

they were to be taken to Detroit and imprisoned there, and in some way they got the idea that as a punishment for the loss of **Chappee's** thumb they were to have their teeth knocked out. These stories were, undoubtedly, started by some of the white men, and told the Indians to get a sell on them, (to use a slang term.) The Indians being very credulous, believed the reports and told the chiefs, who, as well as their followers, were very much frightened and supposed the offense was a very serious one. This was an opportunity for **Farnsworth**. **For many years before he came to Menominee he had been employed by the American Fur Company, and was well acquainted with Indian customs, their language and habits of thought.** Possibly he had something to do in circulating the stories, though that such is the fact, tradition saith not. At any rate the chance was too good to be lost, and when their terror had approached its climax, he made his way to Green Bay and interceded for the chiefs with such good effect that he obtained their release. This made the tribe his fast friends for life, and a blow was thus struck at **Chappee's** popularity from which he never fully recovered. The good will of the chiefs did not end with words. They strove to show their appreciation of one who had proved a friend indeed, when they were in need, by making him a grant of all the land on that side of the river, from the mouth to the rapids, which grant included

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**Chappee's trading post.** How far back from the river the grant extended, tradition does not show, and as there is no written record of the grant, there is now no means of ascertaining, but as land at that time had no stated market value, it is presumable that it extended as far back as he might choose to consider it, so that it did not interfere with anybody's rights who might be living on the Peshtigo river. This presumption is strengthened by the fact that the Indians, who only wanted the land for hunting purposes, could continue to have just as much use of it as if they had not given it away.

The one thing that **Farnsworth** did want he got, and that was **Chappee's trading post**. One day when the latter was away, taking advantage of his absence, **Farnsworth** and his followers entered and took possession of the post. They piled the goods, wares, whiskey, furs, squaws, papposes [*sic – papooses*] &c., out, and as writs for “forcible entry and detainer” were not in fashion then on the Menominee, and the aggressors were the stronger party, **Chappee**, on his return, feeling completely disgusted with the turn things had taken, piled his traps into his canoes and paddled them up to the foot of the rapids which still bear his name, and there built another stockade, as I have before stated, and made a final stand for his rights.

While the course taken by **Farnsworth** in this matter, may not have been strictly according to the code now

supposed to regulate the acts of the people of the State of Wisconsin, it was one step forward in the course of civilization on the Menominee River; in fact it was the first step or led to it. Though **Farnsworth** was an Indian trader, he was also something more; he had good business capacity, and **Brush**, who was associated with him, had quite as good. They were not long in coming to the conclusion that there was something better than furs and peltries, and when they cast their eyes around as they journeyed up the Menominee, and saw the tall pines on its banks, they began to speculate on their probable value if sawed into boards, and got into a market, where white men lived; also seeing the schools of white fish coming up the river, out of Green Bay, the thought struck them that they could be caught and packed in barrels and shipped to some place where whitefish would be esteemed a luxury and return to them many a silver dollar for the silver scales of the whitefish.

It is true there was then no Chicago to furnish a market for its thousand million feet of lumber each year, nor to handle its ten thousand barrels of fish. There was no Milwaukee to rival Chicago, and no railroads to carry these articles of produce to thousands of cities and villages now spread out over the west; no steamboats, even, to take them down the lakes to cities and villages of white men.

Green Bay settlement was just where the city now stands, but there was very

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little of it then. There was the fort on the Fort Howard side of the Fox river, and a small rambling village on the Green Bay side, whose inhabitants were principally fur traders or men who were employed by the traders, and here and there, for a few miles up the river, were some of the old voyageurs, who, getting old and tired of wild life, had taken land and opened up small farms. But these men were not to be discouraged by the untoward prospects of a market. If there was no market in the West there was in the East, and they would find one somewhere; besides, they believed in the future of the western country, and they lived to see their belief verified, though not to the extent to realize to themselves all the advantages which they expected to derive from their labors. Their first enterprise was the building of a sawmill, which was commenced in 1832, and was the first mill built on the Menominee river. It was a water mill, and was built on the Wisconsin side, a short distance above where the Chicago and Northwestern Railway now leaves the bank in crossing. A dam was constructed across to one of the islands, which gave them a pond and head of water, and what we would now call an old fashioned sawmill was built, one that would cut six or eight thousand feet of lumber each day, and not such a one as we have at present, with their clock work [*sic – clockwork*] machinery and capacity of from one to two hundred thousand feet of lumber each day. The mill was run by them a few years. At

some time not now precisely known, one **Samuel H. Farnsworth** bought an interest either in the mill or in the water power formed by the rapids. It has been stated, however, that this mill had been sold at Sheriff's sale for debt, and the bid for it was purchased from the bidder, **D. M. Whitney** of Green Bay, for eighteen barrels of white fish, by **Samuel H. Farnsworth**.

I cannot learn, fully, at what time or how he was interested, but only learn the fact that about the year 1839, **Dr. J. C. Hall** came on the river and bought out **Samuel H. Farnsworth's** interest, and also bought into this mill with **Farnsworth & Brush**, and within two or three years after that time, the dam went out and the mill was abandoned, and in 1844 **Dr. Hall** built another dam and mill which will be hereafter referred to.

Besides furnishing the power for sawing lumber, the building of the dam opened the way for the fish business. After it was constructed, they built a wier along on the apron below the dam; and in the season when the fish were running, they caught great quantities, with no other trouble than going out in the morning with scoop nets and scooping them out of the wier. In some seasons they caught as many as five hundred and fifty barrels, with no expense, comparatively, except dressing, salting and packing.

**William Farnsworth** was lost on the steamer Lady Elgin, which was sunk in 1860 by a collision with a vessel between

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Waukegan, Illinois, and Chicago. It is not now known what became of **Brush**, or whether he still lives.

The next white man to follow those above mentioned and take up a permanent residence here, was **John G. Kittson**. He came in 1826 as a clerk for the American Fur Company under **Chappee**. He was the son of a British officer who was, or had been stationed in Canada. **Mr. Kittson** spent the remainder of his life in this vicinity, and died in 1872, his death being hastened, as it is believed, by the exposure and suffering he and his family were subjected to, on the night of the great woods fire, in October 1871. He was a very intelligent and stirring man and was all his life actively engaged in the fur trade or in farming, and he had the honor of clearing and working the first farms ever opened in this County, one at **Wausaukee Bend** above **Grand Rapids**, and another at **Chappee's Rapids**, near the old trading post, where he resided for many years before the great fire. He had great influence over the Indians, and was at all times a friend to their interests. The Indians always spoke of **Mr. Kittson** as "the writer," a name they gave him on account of his doing all the writing for them in their various transactions with the Government. He has left many descendants who still make the Menominee their home. One son, **John Kittson**, was killed in the war of the Rebellion, in Sherman's march to the sea.

In 1826 came also **Joseph Duncan** who was employed as a packer by the **American Fur Company**. He was a brave soldier and fought at the battle of Plattsburgh. He might be entitled to a pension, only, unfortunately, he was fighting on the wrong side. He was a British soldier, is still living, and makes his home with **Charles McLeod**, and believes himself to be between eighty and ninety years old, though he cannot tell exactly.

The next white men who came to stay permanently were **Baptiste Premeau** and **Charles McLeod**, who arrived in 1832. They are still living here at Menominee, **Charles McLeod** being now 64 years old. **Joseph DeCoto** came the same year and is still alive. He is living on a farm at White Rapids, and is now 70 years old. A good story is told of **DeCoto**, who is French, and does not talk the best of English. A few years ago he had a lawsuit with **John G. Kittson**, with whom he was not on the best of terms, about a horse which **Kittson** replevined. **DeCoto** could not speak the name **Kittson** but always called it "**Dixon**." Soon after the time of the suit with **Kittson**, a Catholic Priest, who made occasional visits to the Menominee river, and through the wild settlements, came here and visited **DeCoto** at White Rapids, so **DeCoto** made him a present of a pony to assist him in his travels on his missionary journeys. The matter of his suit with **Kittson** would occasionally come up, when he invariably worked

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himself into a passion, and after exhausting every expletive in the Canadian French vocabulary, he would cool off with, "Veil, I give vay two hoss; I give von to de Lord and I give von to de devil: I give von to de Priest and I give von to **John Dixon**."

In this connection it may be well to state that the **Jacobs** have since an early day, been a prominent family, and although their residence was on the Wisconsin side of the river, their history is blended with that of Menominee county, and it is proper that it should have its place in this brief sketch.

When **William Farnsworth** first came to the Menominee, **Marinette** was a blooming young woman, bright and intelligent. **She was the daughter of a Wabashish (the Marten), a chief of the Menominees, and Bartholomew Shevaliere [sic – Chevalier], a white man.**

When **Bartholomew Shevaliere [sic – Chevalier]** came to the Menominee, or whether or not he ever made his home here, tradition saith not, but from the best information obtainable, it is thought that he never did.

**Joseph Bartholomew Shevaliere [sic – Chevalier] (Joe Bart), a brother of Marinette, was his son, and it is owing to that fact that he made the claim, as before stated, that he was the first white man who lived at Menominee.**

It is not known whether or not **Marinette** was born on the Menominee. The first we know of her is, that **John B.**

**Jacobs**, a man from Canada, who was employed in the fur trade in early times, had her for his wife at Mackinaw. While they lived together they had several children, two of whom, **John B. Jacobs** and **Elizabeth McLeod**, are still living. **John B. Jacobs** is now fifty-eight years old, and resides in Green Bay, Wisconsin, **Elizabeth McLeod** is sixty years old, and lives here in Menominee, the wife of **Charles McLeod**. **For some reason not known John B. Jacobs Sr. parted from Marinette at Mackinaw. Afterwards William Farnsworth became enamored of her, and took her for his wife, and when he came to Menominee, in 1822, brought her and her children with him.** He had children by her, one of whom, **George Farnsworth**, of Green Bay Wisconsin, is still living. **John B. Jacobs (the son)** grew up on the Menominee and became closely identified with its interests, and was prominent in all enterprises which were started for its advancement. For many years he owned and run the steamboat "Queen City" between Menominee and Green Bay. **Marinette** died in 1863, highly honored by all the residents about the river. She was seventy-two years old when she died, and had been looked to as a mother by all the early settlers and Indians, for she had always been ready to assist the needy and comfort the distressed. The first orchard of apple trees was set out by her, which is still growing and bearing fruit. Her house is still standing in Marinette

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village, and is the first frame house built on the Menominee river.

The earliest settlers came from Canada in Batteaux, sailing and poling them up the St. Lawrence river and Lake Ontario, and, before the Welland Canal was constructed, up the Niagara river, by portage around the Falls into Lake Erie, up Lake Erie and Detroit river through Lake and River St. Clair; along Lake Huron and through the Straits of Mackinaw into Lake Michigan, and up Green Bay to the Menominee River; the voyage requiring several months, and being attended with great hardships and exposure. It was many years before a steamer was seen here, or before even sail vessels became frequent on the waters of Green Bay. The country was then all wilderness, from the Detroit river to the Pacific Ocean, excepting a few **trading posts**; those at **Mackinaw** and **Green Bay** being the only ones in this section. We who can now step on the cars and in forty-eight hours reach Montreal, can hardly realize that less than fifty years ago it took a whole season to come from there; nor can we understand the hardships the early traders had to endure when they made the first settlement in Menominee.

The next permanent settler was **Andrew Eveland**. He came in 1842, and in 1853 built the first frame building in what is now the village of Menominee. He is still living here. His business has usually been fishing. **Charles McLeod**

built a frame house in 1852 and still resides in it, on the river bank, just outside the village. This was the first frame house in the county.

Next among the old settlers is **John Quimby**, who came in 1845 and died in 1874, aged 65 years. At first he had charge of the fisheries and the boarding house of **Dr. Hall's** water-mill at the rapids. He afterwards built a tavern where the **Kirby House** now stands, which was destroyed by fire in 1859. **Quimby** immediately began to rebuild. He first put up a small building which he added to from time to time until, with the exception of one addition made since he sold it, it formed what is now the **Kirby House**. Here he kept the only hotel in Menominee until 1864, when he sold the property to **S. P. Saxton**, and its name was changed to "**Saxton House**." **Saxton** sold the house to a man named **Bopard**, who made the last addition to it and sold it to **Fred Waltz**, who sold it to **Abner Kirby**, of the firm of **Kirby-Carpenter Company**, and ex-Mayor of Milwaukee, who fitted it up again, and named it "**Kirby House**". **John Quimby** was a man of marked characteristics and either a warm friend or a good hater. There was never any trouble in learning which relation he bore to a person, for he never hesitated to make it known, yet he was so kind hearted that if he saw an enemy suffering and in want he would be the first to assist him. He was a great fighter, and so long as his opponent resisted would never give an inch, yet he

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*[Compiled and Transcribed by William John Cummings]*

never bore malice, and when the resistance was over, if his opponent came to grief, he was the first to extend a helping hand. He was also a great hunter, and found his greatest enjoyment in going with rifle, hounds, and a few friends, to some place along the shore of Green Bay, there to camp out for a few days and run deer into the bay and, with a boat, to catch them. When the writer first came to Menominee he frequently joined him in these expeditions, and many a deer have they taken together. **Quimby** owned very much of the land on which the village of Menominee now stands, and fully performed his part of the work in building it up, though he could never fully realize that Menominee was to become a large place. When the writer first came, and after he had resided here long enough to become acquainted with its resources for building up a large town, he frequently talked with him about building a railroad through the county, and his reply usually was that he never wanted to live any longer than to see a railroad through these woods. He did live to see one several years. His widow is still living here and she has always been considered a mother to the white settlers on the river, and many a foot sore and sick traveler or woodsman has been relieved by her care and sympathy, some there are who, without it, would have been long ago in their graves. She is now nearly seventy years of age, and is still active. I have given a short history of the coming of the first

settlers, none of whom are now living except **Charles McLeod, Almira Quimby, Andreas Eveland, and Baptiste Premeau**, who may be truly called old settlers. **Moses Hardwick came here in 1826, and lived here several years.** He is still living at Bay Settlement, on the east shore of Green Bay. Another class, who may also be called old settlers as compared with late comers, and who built the mills now on the river and gave the country its real start in prosperity, but who came later than those hereinbefore referred to, will necessarily be named in connection with the building of the several mills, and will thus appear in the order of their coming here.

**This was the home of the Menominee Indians. Nicolet, the French explorer, visited them in 1634 on his futile search for Cathay. Conflict over fishing rights brought on the Sturgeon War here between the Menominee and Chippewa tribes. During the 1700's this became a center of the fur trade. Until 1910 when the forests were cut Menominee was the Upper Peninsula's main lumber port. Its timber helped rebuild Chicago after the 1871 fire.**

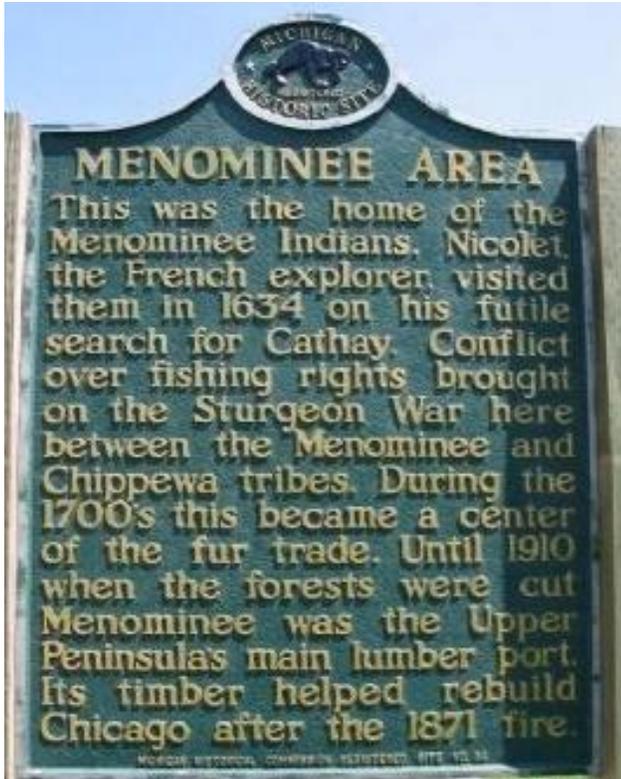
Erected by Michigan Historical Commission. (Marker Number 84.)

Location. 45° 6.456' N, 87° 37.17' W. Marker is in Menominee, Michigan, in

# MENOMINEE RANGE HISTORY – EARLY EXPLORATIONS – JOHN LANE BUELL’S TRIP UP THE MENOMINEE RIVER – 1876

*[Compiled and Transcribed by William John Cummings]*

Menominee County. Marker is on Bridge Street (U.S. 41) south of 10th Avenue, on the right when traveling north.



The Menominee Indians were one of the original tribes of Wisconsin and the Upper Michigan areas. All indications are that they had been living there for up to five thousand years. They set up forts on the Menominee River with their territory extending north east to Wisconsin. The Menominee were a relatively small tribe, with their pre-European peak being around 2,000. **The name Menominee came from their own language and means “good seed” or “wild rice people.”** The Menominee were

alternatively known as Malhominee, Nepaming, Kagi and Addle-Heads. They spoke a distinct dialect of the Algonquin language which was similar to that spoken by the Cree and Fox. The Menominee were divided into about twenty subtribes which included the Wininiwuk and the Kakanikone Tusniniwug. There were about six main villages.

The Menominee had an eastern woodland culture. They wore long buckskin pants, breechcloth and loosely hanging long hair. The land of the Menominee was not suitable for the growing of crops. Rather the people hunted for their food supply. As indicated by one of the names by which they were known, the gathering of wild rice was also a staple of their diet. Besides this, they were also expert fishermen. When they were forced south, however, the Menominee adapted to their new environment and practiced a limited amount of agriculture.

During the summer periods the Menominee lived in large villages which were situated along the banks of streams and rivers. Dwellings were rectangular long houses. With the coming of winter, the Menominee broke summer camp and headed into their hunting grounds to set up winter camp. **During this period they would live in buckskin covered wigwams.** The Menominee subgroups operated as individual bodies. There was no central organization. When tribal warfare came

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to the Menominee in the 1650's, however, this changed as the need was seen for security in numbers. Now a tribal council was set up to decide matters of major concern. An overall war chief was also appointed. The arrival of the fur trade in Menominee territory also placed a much greater emphasis on hunting as a means of trade among the Menominee.

**First European contact for the Menominee came in 1634 when French explorer Jean Nicollet encountered them en route to the Winnebago villages on Green Bay.** Over the next half century, thousands of Native Americans from eastern tribes found themselves flooding into the territory of the Menominees as refugees from the Iroquois in what were known as the Beaver Wars. The result was that the Menominees were squeezed into a corner and, inevitably, into war. This came when the Ojibwe took offence to the methods used by the Menominee to catch the sturgeon fish which entered the Menominee river from Lake Michigan. The Menominee created a series of weirs which caught all of the fish, leaving none for the Ojibwe downstream. With their major food supply gone, the Ojibwe reacted violently. They attacked and destroyed a Menominee village. The Menominee needed allies and they needed them quick. They called upon the Fox, Sauk and Potawatomi for assistance. Thus the conflict spread to include more than just the original two

tribes. Meanwhile, the Iroquois were looting into the area, attacking whoever they came across. The effect of these conflicts was to reduce the size of the Menominee population to just 400 people. Thus, their numbers had reduced by 80 % since the arrival of the white man.

By the mid-1660's peace had finally settled on the region. Now the French Jesuits moved into the area and started to make converts. They focused their attention, however, on the Huron and Ottawa Indians. The Menominee were able to keep their native religion. Meanwhile contact with the French grew by means of the fur trade. The Menominee were now able to look toward the French to mediate on their behalf with their enemies. The French were, in fact, able to bring together the Ojibwe and Menominee.

During the **first Fox War** the Menominee were neutral. They were, however, active participants in the **second Fox War**, starting in 1728. Siding with the French they helped to put down the Fox over the next five years. This won them the lasting hostility of the Fox. However, they enjoyed peaceful relations with most other tribes. Their numbers slowly grew from this point on, despite their involvement in several more conflicts. **By 1854 there were about 1,930 Menominees separated into seven villages.**

Today the Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin numbers about 7,200 people.

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About half of these live on the reservation west of Green Bay.

The Menominee Indians (or "Wild Rice People") fished (largely for sturgeon and for the smaller menominee), hunted, and harvested wild rice near the river mouth. Not so very long ago wild rice grew in what's now the parking lot of the M&M Plaza by the Interstate Bridge. The Menominee and the Ojibwa were original inhabitants of the Upper Peninsula and northern Wisconsin. They go back long before the 1600's, the time when disruptions and conflicts between native peoples occurred because of the fur trade and the French- British struggle to control North America.

French fur traders stopped as early as the mid-1600's to trade at the large Menominee fishing village at the river's mouth. Marinette was named after "Queen" Marinette, the Menominee woman married to two traders in succession. "She was not a queen, and her name is probably a contraction of Marie Antoinette," states the *Dictionary of Wisconsin History*. She lived here from the 1820's until her death in 1865, and managed her husbands' trading business and the real estate she acquired. Her trading skills and kinship network enabled her post to remain independent from **John Jacob Astor's** fur trading cartel.