

DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY -- FORD MOTOR COMPANY – IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

[Compiled and Transcribed by William John Cummings]

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 25, Number 11 [Thursday, July 29, 1920], page 1, column 2

Word of Warning.

There is a disposition on the part of some owners to advance city real property beyond reasonable values. This, we are sure, is a mistake, and can only result in retarding the growth and improvement of the business district as now located. It may result in the business district shifting to another part of the city – to Carpenter and River avenues – in the general direction of the Ford plants. As the Mining Journal has told us, we should “keep our feet on the ground.” The advice is good. There is considerable demand for business and residence property, but due to the high prices demanded, there have been only a few transfers. Rumors of all kinds are flying relative to the incoming of new industries, but an investigation establishes that they have no foundation in fact. It is certain, however, that other industries will follow the lead of the Ford company and locate here, provided real property owners show a disposition to sell the sites wanted at a fair values [sic – value]. Inflated values are a bad thing for a city on the verge of industrial progress.

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

CONCRETE POURED

Construction Work on Ford Saw-Mill and Power-House Under Way.

Tuesday, August 3rd, 1920 – First building construction work on the Iron Mountain plant of the Ford Motor company.

The foundations are now being constructed for the mammoth saw-mill [sic – sawmill] and equally mammoth power house. Work on these buildings will be rushed forward as rapidly as men can do the work. The walls above ground will be constructed of stucco on steel frames. The supporting columns will be of concrete steel re-enforced. The saw-mill [sic – sawmill] will be unique in saw-mill [sic – sawmill] construction as now view [sic – viewed] and it will include every labor-saving device now known to the industry and many new ones. The sawing equipment includes two band saws, a gang saw and re-saw. The size of the mill on the foundations is 200 feet in length and 125 feet in width. The cost of the mill has been estimated at \$250,000. Work has also been started on the power-house [sic – powerhouse]. This building is 250 feet long and 40 feet wide and it will house one of the geatest [sic – greatest] batteries of boilers in the west. The plants will furnish all the power for the mill and the several factories.

John Marsch, who has the contract for building the spur track from the St. Paul road to the factory, is employing about one hundred men in the work. Grading is in progress on both sides of Carpenter avenue. A cut of about seven or eight feet is encountered in crossing the Robbins fam [sic – farm], but west of Carpenter the grading is comparatively easy. The St. Paul road will build the bridge across the Crystal Lake outlet and the timbers are enroute [sic – en route]. The ties and rails are also in the St. Paul yards.

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The Press can state that the Ford Motor company has no intention of building a new town on the lands recently purchased. It is the desire of the Ford Motor company, we are informed, to have their factories and holdings incorporated within the limits of the City of Iron Mountain. The company will not engage in the mercantile or any other business other than that appertaining to the manufacture of Ford car parts.

It is the intention of the Ford company to beautify the district immediately surrounding Crystal Lake, making it a playground for their employes *[sic – employees]* and citizens in general. The scheme includes a well constructed boulevard around the lake and the planting of much shrubbery and trees. Homes for employes *[sic – employees]* will also be erected in the vicinity of the lake.

Plans are also being made for extensive *[sic – extensive]* logging operations and a number of camps will be operated, but their location has not yet been decided upon. Logs sufficient to keep the big mill in active operation with day and night crews will be cut and shipped to Iron Mountain during the winter and this means employment for five hundred or more men. Like the von Platen company, the camps will be operated winter and summer.

The Michigan Iron, Land and Lumber company has been incorporated to handle this branch of the industry. The officers elected are:

President – Henry Ford.

Vice-President and Assistant Treasurer – Edward G. Kingsford.

Treasurer – Edsell *[sic – Edsel]* Ford.

Secretary – C.B. Longley.

The Ford Motor company has closed the deal for the purchase of the Trenary residence property on the south side of East Brown street and will erect thereon an

office building to cost more than \$25,000. The location of the office building in that district should have a tendency to keep the town from slumping to the south and hold real estate prices level.

The desire of the Ford Motor company to have their several industries – constructed at a cost of more than a *[sic]* \$1,000,000 – incorporated in the limits of the City of Iron Mountain, *[sic]* should meet with an enthusiastic affirmative response from our citizens. And the incorporation of the plants within the city limits means many problems for our city government and public utility companies to solve, and there should be no delay in solving them. The building of new streets and the extension of the sewer system means a large money expenditure. This expense can be met only by a bond issue and this bond issue should be sufficiently large to prove *[sic – provide]* for the needs of a city of not less than 50,000 people. The issue should be for not less than \$250,000. Then the Water and Light and Power companies should plan to greatly enlarge their plants at once for a greater Iron Mountain. New school buildings will also be necessary, but an increase in volume of taxable property may provide for this demand. Now is the time to plan for greater things. The county road commission is already moving and last Monday decided to improve the highway leading west from Carpenter avenue to the factory sites on the Mongrain farm and will do this work at once.

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 25, Number 13 [Thursday, August 12, 1920], page 7, columns 1-2

VIEWS OF NEWETT

DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY -- FORD MOTOR COMPANY – IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

[Compiled and Transcribed by William John Cummings]

Ishpeming Editor Spends a Day in Coming Peninsula Metropolis.

George A. Newett prints the following in his Ishpeming Iron Ore as a result of a recent visit to Iron Mountain:

“The editor of Iron Ore took a look at the Ford purchase in Iron Mountain, recently. It comprises a tract of land four miles square, extending to the Menominee river from the town of Iron Mountain. For the most part this land lies high and dry, ideal for the purposes to which it is to be put, and is mostly farming land, farms having been tilled here for many years. The Ford interests are now beginning the construction of a spur railway over which supplies can be brought. Connection can be made with both [of] the Chicago & Northwestern and Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul roads without crossing a single railway track. All this land was optioned some weeks ago and the Ford company bought it outright, asking no bonuses. Ford doesn't need any help for such enterprises.

“In the preliminary work there will probably not be needed more than 200 men up [sic – at] the beginning of the coming year, but the story of the deal has gone abroad, has swelled as it traveled, and we met men going to Iron Mountain on all the roads we traveled in that section, many of them on foot, carrying their “turkeys” [sic – term for knapsack], and the most of them looking as if they had just left some lumber woods job. All trains are bringing men to the city, and there is already a great surplus. It will be some time before these can find employment here, and the advice for men to wait until the word is sent out that they are needed is good, as otherwise

they will find themselves out of jobs for some time and if they are also out of money, as many of them will be, they will not have a pleasant time. It is going to take a year or more before this plant will be ready for business. There will be a housing problem that will have to be met and it takes time to construct such immense buildings as are to be put up there.

“The Iron Mountain plant, as has already been told, will be one for the wood work portion of Ford bodies, and it will be of enormous dimensions, practically a mile long by a quarter of a mile wide, the main building, with many smaller structures. The wood for this plant will be cut from the lands recently bought in the upper peninsula, and there will be a practical treatment of the lands as the wood is [sic – wood is] removed. All values will be taken that ought to be removed. Chemical plants will be operated, and there will of necessity, and for economy, be several timber-cutting mills located at points of greatest advantage. It will be the aim to eliminate the waste at the production point, so that as little as possible will be freighted. The plan has in view the proper treatment of all lands denuded of timber, and its carrying out will be a fine thing for that portion of the upper peninsula where these operations will be under way. While Iron Mountain will naturally derive the greatest benefit from the work, many other places will be helped by the employment of labor and the accompanying distribution of pay roll money.

[“]After many years in which Iron Mountain was about as flat as a pancake it has suddenly sprung into life, its veins filled with the elixir of gasoline, and dirt has risen in value to great heights over night. We were told by one man who conducts a tire and automobile accessory shop that he was

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offered \$27,000 for his business location and building that he recently purchased for \$3,750. A business block near by that was bought for \$4,000 last winter could now be sold for \$30,000, this having been offered for it, and so it goes all along the line. The town could have been optioned last winter for – well, we wouldn't like to say how much, but to-day *[sic – today]* it's a Goldfield *[sic]* when the bonanza metal was first encountered. It isn't for sale.

*[“]We found Art Minnear rushing to get his real estate and brokerage office open by Monday. We saw Frank Russell buying the town newspapers and preparing to issue a live daily as a subsidiary of the Marquette Mining Journal. We had numerous invitations to pull up stakes and come down and grow up with the country. Every one *[sic – Everyone]* was feeling 100 per cent fine and expecting profits running into the 1,000th. It was good to listen to them.*

[“]One merchant gave us samples of a copper mine, and it may be he has one. You never can tell until you try. There are all manner of plans being arranged for the meeting of the increased business that is sure to attend the operations of this great body-making plant, and as one big concern generally draws others, there is some big speculating as to just what lengths Iron Mountain may go in industrial progress and general prosperity.

*[“]It was good to hear Tom Hanna, editor of the Iron Mountain Press, and it was even better to see him. He has lived in Iron Mountain very many years, has stuck to it through thick and thin, ever a booster for it and all Cloverland, and in all this time has prined *[sic – printed]* a fine newspaper, clean, on the right side of things, and if he has joined in a daily paper venture, or been absorbed, we hope he wins the reward he is entitled to, as he deserves much.*

[“]Over at the Milliman Hotel they were talking of an eighteen-hole golf course, as what use will be a nine-holer after the town takes on its new population? Six to eight thousand additional people will come quickly when the plant is ready. The banks were figuring on enlarging their present quarters, the picture showmen on additional space, and everyone was full of expansion.

[“]There was all manner of rumors going around. One was to the effect that agents of the Steel corporation were quietly picking up lands on which to erect a steel plant, and all kinds of predictions, all of them of big size, were being offered.

[“]It certainly was good to listen to it all.

[“]The Ford plant will be of very great benefit to the town, will add materially to its population and prosperity and from it many other things may spring into activity bringing to this Cloverland country a diversity of industry which, added to its mining and agriculture, will make it a wonderfully prosperous district.[“]**

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 25, Number 16 [Thursday, September 2, 1920], page 1, column 4

Looking Over Norway.

We are still hearing report about engineers of the General Motors company looking over lands at Norway, on the Menominee range, with the idea of locating a plant there. If this should materialize Dickinson county will have still further reason to give industrial thanks. It would be a great bull card for that county if it secured both a Ford plant and a General Motors plant within its borders. We hope it gets them. – Iron Ore.

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Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 25, Number 18 [Thursday, September 16, 1920], page 1, column 5

HOMES IN DEMAND

Needs of the Hour Are Several Hundred Modern Homes.

As has been anticipated, there has been a large movement in residence property during the past few days and the demand is a growing one. Lots in the village of Breitung, sold by Minnear & Co., are finding a ready sale and several have already changed hands at an increase in price. A new sub-division, handled by Cruse & co., has been named "Ferndale." A portion of the Corollo *[sic – Carollo]* farm has been platted by the firm. These lots are well located for homes for industrial workers, being within walking distance of the Ford plants, close to the von Platen-Fox mill and convenient to all the railroads. Lots in the Victoria Park addition, handled by M.E. Richards for the Iron Mountain Land & Mineral company, are being sold rapidly. There are no finer residence lots in the district. A newly incorporated concern – the Iron Mountain Real Estate company – will plat several hundred acres in the immediate future. The lands are to the north, south and west of the Ford industries – some has *[sic – have]* a river frontage. One desirable tract is located in the vicinity of Crystal Lake, where the Ford folks are going to locate their recreation park and play grounds *[sic – playgrounds]*. This land is well-wooded *[sic – well-wooded]* and a special effort will be made to preserve all the natural beauty.

Business property is moving slowly. The only considerable deal reported recently was the purchase by E.J. DeGayner of the property at the corner of West B street and Carpenter avenue, occupied as a garage. The consideration, we understand, was \$10,000. Many deals are pending, but the seller and buyer appear to be unable to get to-gether *[sic – together]*. And, too, buyers are hesitating for the reason that they are unable to reach a decision as to the future business center of the city.

The need of the hour is a company to erect homes. To-day *[sic – Today]* there is a sale for several hundred modern residences. The company that will plat a tract of land, erect homes on the lots and make street improvements will reap a substantial profit in a few months. The plans of the Ford company is not to build houses, but unless private capital embraces the opportunity, the company will be forced to erect several hundred in order to house its men.

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 25, Number 18 [Thursday, September 16, 1920], page 8, column 2

IRON MOUNTAIN REAL ESTATE CO.

The Iron Mountain Real Estate company, recently incorporated by a number of leading business men *[sic – businessmen]* of Iron Mountain and vicinity, as noted in another column, has acquired holdings of realty north, south and west of the Ford plant.

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These lands will be platted into desirable building lots. The holdings include the plat of the village of Breitung, lots in which are now being sold by J.A. Minnear & Co. Other lands will be platted in a parklike [*sic – park-like*] manner for a real residential section, and will also adjoin the Ford company property. These lots will be on sale in a short time and will no doubt find a ready market on account of their beautiful location in the vicinity of Crystal Lake and their closeness to the business section of the city. This tract will give splendid opportunity for the landscape gardener. Much of the property is well-wooded [*sic – well-wooded*] with native trees of goodly size and the fertility of the ground affords lot owners ample opportunity to aid nature in adding to the general attractiveness of the surroundings. As has been announced, it is the purpose of the Ford interests to construct a recreation park and play-grounds [*sic – playgrounds*] at Crystal Lake, and this will add much to the attractiveness of the holdings of the Iron Mountain company as a residential section. We are assured that the prices for these lots will be moderate and that they will be of a desirable size.

The plans of the company have not been fully matured as yet – the work of platting is now in hand – and it might be well for those contemplating the purchase of a lot upon which to erect a home to await further announcements.

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 25, Number 23 [Thursday, October 21, 1920], page 1, column 1

A Wisconsin Plat.

A bridge is being built across the Menominee river at the west end of A street. A section of land on the Wisconsin side of the river is soon to be platted by the Cady Land company. The land is directly opposite the plants of the Michigan Iron, Land & Lumber company. The plat will contain a number of residence lots and also some five-acre tracts suitable for truck gardening. No doubt a permanent bridge will be built at an early day. Such a bridge would bring to Iron Mountain the trade of a considerable number of Wisconsin farmers.

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 25, Number 23 [Thursday, October 21, 1920], page 1, column 4

Newest Addition.

Engineer Cummings, of Marquette, is engaged in platting the forty acres adjoining the Breitung townsite on the west for the Iron Mountain Real Estate company. The lots will be in [*sic – on*] the market soon and will be handled by J.A. Minnear & Co. This property is located directly south of the immense body plant of the Michigan Iron, Land & Lumber company upon which work will commence at an early date.

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 25, Number 23 [Thursday, October 21, 1920], page 1, column 5

A New Industry.

The Press has information to the effect that a copper country industry employing several hundred men is seeking a home in Iron Mountain. The Commercial club has the matter in hand and the outlook for the

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removal is decidedly encouraging. Iron Mountain is an ideal location for the enterprise.

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 25, Number 23 [Thursday, October 21, 1920], page 1, column 5

Ferndale.

Cruse & Co. have sold many lots in their Ferndale addition to people who intend building homes and become residents of Iron Mountain. A couple of business houses – meat market and provision store – is also assured.

The Iron Mountain Daily News, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 1, Number 65 [Saturday, June 25, 1921], page 1, column 6

SINGLE MEN ARE TO BE RELEASED

Will Be Supplanted at Ford Mill by Men With Families

Single men who have been employed at the Ford plant will be released today, and their places will be filled by married men with dependents who were thrown out of employment by the shut-down [*sic – shutdown*] of the Chapin mine here. Between twenty-fiv [*sic – twenty-five*] and thirty will be affected, according to E.G. Kingsford.

Since the shutdown, the Ford officials have been besieged with applications for employment, and to relieve the stringency of local conditions it was thought advisable to release the single men and give their places to men with families.

The change might have been carried further, according to Mr. Kingsford, except for the fact that some of the men who would otherwise have been let go constitute skilled labor, and could not easily be replaced.

Slight delays have been experienced in the receipt of material, so the opening of the sawmill will not take place until a few days after July 1. Some motors, starting boxes, and other electrical equipment is still awaited, although most of the machinery is in, and some of it is already being operated. Shortly after Independence Day is tentatively set for the opening. Nothing further has been heard as to whether Henry Ford will be here for the occasion.

The Iron Mountain Daily News, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 1, Number 78 [Tuesday, July 12, 1921], page 6, columns 1-2

Will Improve Ford Addition

Boulevard Along Shore of Crystal Lake Main Feature

Real estate operations of the Ford company in and about Iron Mountain are commanding great interest here, particularly since the acceptance by the city

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of “Ford’s First Addition.” This is the tract lying south of F street along Kimberly avenue, where the present Ford houses are located, and takes in the shore of Crystal Lake.

An extensive program of improvement and beautification has been planned by the owners. Before the lots are thrown open, water, sewer, gas, and electric connections will be made, streets graded and paved, and sidewalks, curbs and gutters built, making the new addition improved property in every sense of the word.

Perhaps the feature of the greatest general interest is the boulevard around Crystal Lake. This, according to present plans, will consist of an asphalt pavement paralleling that portion of the lake shore included in the addition. Shade trees will be planted along the drive and boulevard or “white way” lamp standards installed. This will give the city a residential section feature unequalled, it is believed, in any city in the upper peninsula.

This is only a portion of the improvements planned for the addition. Small parked spaces will be provided, with shrubbery and flowers. A landscape gardener will have charge of the work.

Ford employes [*sic – employees*] will be given preference in purchasing the improved lots.

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OPENING OF MILL MARKS CLOVERLAND EPOCH

Foreshadows New Industrial Era in U.P., General Belief

The start of operations at the new sawmill of the Michigan Iron, Land and Lumber company, the upper peninsula subsidiary of the Ford Motor company, will be looked upon as an epochal event not only in Iron Mountain and Dickinson county, but throughout the upper peninsula, as the advent of the Ford interests north of the straits has everywhere been regarded as a great moment.

Irrespective of the lengths to which the new Ford industry is carried, it is regarded as of unusual significance, as the first instance in which a great national industry has put a unit of its plants in Cloverland. The wish may be father to the thought but many persons believe it opens an era in which the upper peninsula counties will make marked industrial strides.

Officials Reserved.

Reserve has marked, and continues to mark the attitude of officials of the Michigan Iron, Land and Lumber company and the Ford Motor company in regard to the operations here. The project as originally outlined is to be carried out. Of that definite assurance has been given. But beyond that the officials have so far declined to go. This attitude reflects the policy of the Ford organization to let its accomplishments speak for themselves, and to waste little time expatiating on what they are going to do.

Measurably, also it probably reflects the conditions in industry and commerce of the year 1921. It is a year of depression and

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transition, in which the forces at work are unprecedented and thus peculiar *[sic – peculiarly]* puzzling. The industrial leaders are studying the developments from day to day, and their plans for expansion, as far as they are definitely outlined, are subject to quick change.

Since the announcement, just short of a year ago, that Iron Mountain had been chosen for the location of the Ford sawmill and body plant and the organization of the Michigan Land, Iron and Lumber company to take over the former holdings of the former Michigan Iron and Land company and to undertake the erection and operation of the Iron Mountain plant, the city has been prominently in the upper peninsula's view. Developments have been followed with keen interest.

Feared Change of Plans.

The unusual progress with the construction of the mill and power plant buildings last summer and fall was followed closely by many visitors to the city, and was widely commented on. Then, when the wave of industrial depression which caused the closing of the Highland park plant led to practical suspension of the operations in Iron Mountain, there was wondering comment as to whether the Ford company's plans for this city would be seriously affected. The rumor mongers had a fine inning when, about the first of the year, the stories were declared by Mr. Ford to have been entirely unwarranted – that the Ford interests were in urgent need of formal financing were inculcated *[sic – inculcated]*. It was felt by many Iron Mountain men that if these reports were true the plans for the new subsidiary might be adversely changed.

Accordingly, Iron Mountain rejoiced whole-heartedly with the officials of the Ford organization at the surprising

comeback of the Ford company. When production was resumed at the Highland Park plant the company built up its production to 100 percent with a rapidity not equally *[sic – equaled]* by any other factor in the motor industry.

Work Resumed.

Resumption of work at the mill a few months ago was hailed here with the greatest pleasure, and the progress in the intervening weeks has been attentively followed. The start with its operation this week will be regarded as the rounding of the first mile stone toward the achievement for Iron Mountain of the greatest industrial plant north of the straits.

The Iron Mountain public has been greatly impressed by the attitude of the Ford organization as shown by the officials *[sic – officials]* of the Michigan Iron, Land and Lumber company resident here and by the officials of the parent company who have from time to time visited the city. They have asked little of the community, for which they are destined to do so much, and have shown a keen interest in its well being and progress.

For its part, it is to be said that Iron Mountain has been gradually awakening to the nature of the problems which the logic of events is requiring it to meet. The community has been handicapped, , as compared with many other upper peninsula cities, by reason of the fact that for its population it has had much the smallest taxable values. This has made the carrying on of public improvement difficult.

Citizens Co-operative.

But the public spirited residents of the town have shown a willingness to extend themselves to the limit to meet the prospective new needs of the community. An evidence of this attitude is the enthusiasm with which the voters a few

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weeks ago ratified the \$200,000 bond issues for streets and sewer improvements. It has been evidenced also by the increased interest in municipal problems and the evident growing determination that Iron Mountain shall take every measure within its power to keep step with the future in store for it. This, it is realized, calls for subordinating differences, that have been a handicap on its development, and the cultivation of a spirit in which all interests in the city, conceding one another's good intentions and public spirited purpose, will turn in to work for the public good.

That the past year has witnessed a remarkable quickening of the sense of civic responsibility is unquestioned. Iron Mountain is beginning to think along broader lines. Its citizenship has been, and is at the present time, displaying an admirable spirit, one that will make for rapid progress when industrial conditions become normal and when the growth of the city, consequent on new development, begins in earnest.

Broadmindedness Essential.

Of particular significance, there is a growing realization of the value of a broad and fair minded policy in all relations between the new Ford subsidiary and the community. Cordiality of relations between the company and the city, in both its official and unofficial aspects, will give the atmosphere in which the plans of the Ford interests for the development of their new plants will make the most rapid progress.

The city should be responsive to every legitimate demand of the company for co-operation in providing for new population. It can be very sure that anything the Ford interests ask will be reasonable. It is a self-reliant organization, accustomed to providing for its own necessities. In the aggregate, it will, from time to time, ask for

rather less than it would seem it might ask for. But it is a very human organization, as most corporations are, and will appreciate to the full extent a spirit of helpful and friendly co-operation and of appreciation.

Whether Iron Mountain realizes it or not, it is regarded as the City of Opportunity in the upper peninsula. The measure in which it will realize its opportunity, *[sic]* is dependent to no small extent on itself. It is stressing the obvious to say that it has so many problems of moment before it that its continuing need will be united and whole-hearted association of all *[sic – all]* its people and all its interests to cope with them successfully. Iron Mountain has an assured future. It needs a large vision that it may make the most of it.

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Farming Tract Near Factory

Putting up the sawmill and boiler house of the body plant in record time wasn't enough to keep the Ford organization here busy. Farming was taken up as a side line.

Before construction of the body plant was started, the Ford interests purchased approximately 2,000 acres of land in the immediate neighborhood. As only about 80 acres were to be used for the plant proper, at least for the present, it was decided to plant the balance to hay and oats. It was farm land of the best kind, and in accordance with their policy of conservation, the Ford chiefs didn't propose to let it lie idle.

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Accordingly, several hundred pounds of seed were purchased and sowed, and the hay crop is now being harvested. Both it and the oat crop are expected to reach many tons.

All the farm work was done by Fordson tractors in connection with the proper implements: plowing, harrowing, seeding, cultivating, and reaping.

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Prophecy?

Iron Mountain's Boom Foretold Years Ago By Seeress.

In view of the events of the past twelve months, the prophesy of the city's future made here some years ago by "Mabelle, the Girl of Mystery" is almost unearthly. At least, the coincidence with which events is most striking, rivaling the famed "Mother Slipton's Prophecy." **[Double check these paragraphs against the original]**

"Mabelle, the Girl of Mystery" appeared five years ago as a vaudeville attraction at the Marion theatre, when that playhouse was running. As a feature of the entertainment, in addition to the usual question asked by members of the audience, Mabelle foretold a great future for Iron Mountain.

"There is much prosperity in store for Iron Mountain," she said. "Within five years hence, the city will experience the biggest

wave of prosperity that it has even [sic – ever] known.

"Some concern will locate in Iron Mountain within the next five years, and will employ 2,000 men.

"Real estate and land will greatly advance in price. I advise all owners of property and land here to hold on to every inch of it.

"The main street of Iron Mountain will be changed to some other part of the city."

Whether the last prediction will come true remains to be seen, but the correctness of the others cannot be disputed. Only on one point did Mabelle slip. She prophesied that within the same period, "There will be a street car line which will connect with Iron River, other towns in this county, and neighboring towns."

Even so, it is pointed out, the two bus lines now operating give some credence to the report, even though they are not trolley cars.

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Congratulations!

City officials, and heads of the rotary and commercial clubs united today in extending their congratulations to the Michigan Iron, Land & Lumber company for the successful opening of the new Ford sawmill.

"The city of Iron Mountain rejoices with the Ford interests in the first operation of the new mill," declared Mayor Eslick. "Throughout our dealings with them, they have always manifested the keenest

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interest in the welfare of the city they have chosen as their site, and shown the finest spirit of co-operation with the city administration.”

Officials of the rotary and commercial clubs commented upon the value of the plant to the city from a business standpoint, and its significance as indicating future industrial expansion for the upper peninsula in general and this district in particular. They spoke most highly of the attitude manifested by the Ford officials and employes [*sic* – employees] since their establishment here.

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FULL SPEED AHEAD

There will be no slackening in the activities of the Ford interests here now that the sawmill is operating, according to C.W. Avery, general manager of the Ford Motor Co., who attended the opening of the mill as representative of Henry Ford.

“Our organization here is complete, and we have not intention of disrupting it,” Mr. Avery said. “We will go ahead completing the sawmill and constructing the body plant in the same way we have constructed the sawmill.

“There will be a gradual, steady expansion, as there has been since operations were resumed. There will be no ‘boom,’ no spectacular increase in forces. Our progress will be substantial and steady; [*sic*] which is the only real healthy growth.”

The Iron Mountain News, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 2,

Number 177 [Saturday, November 11, 1922], page 1, column 2

250 NEW HOMES IN CITY, IS ESTIMATE

But Not Enough to Supply the Demand, Say Observers

At least 250 homes were constructed in Iron Mountain during the past summer and fall, according to a conservative estimate today by a man who is engaged in the building trade. But even this number, it is said, will not aid materially in reducing the housing shortage and the clamor for homes and living quarters instead of decreasing, is growing in volume.

While the housing situation in the city is admitted to have reached an acute stage, it is asserted that unless some relief is provided it will have become most critical in the spring.

Students of the situation have offered the observation that the No. 1 and No. 2 body plants of the Ford company will employ 500 men each on a shift, of 2,000 men with day and night running. While it is expected to have both units operating at capacity in the spring, it is said, conservatively estimating that it will take nine months before full production is reached, a number of new men will be brought into the city during that time.

In addition, for every five men on production there is one non-productive man, this classification, including butchers, bakers, bankers, etc.

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[Compiled and Transcribed by William John Cummings]

With this average in mind it is predicted that within one year Iron Mountain will have need of at least 1,000 new homes. At the present time good flats and rooming places are at a premium and the majority of the occupants are seeking their own homes.

The Iron Mountain News, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 2, Number 300 [Saturday, April 7, 1923], page 2, column 4

BUILDING & LOAN TO MOVE HOUSES

Thirty Will Be Brought To L'Anse and Iron Mountain

The building activities of the Detroit & Northern Michigan Building & Loan association for the coming season include the moving of approximately 30 of its dwellings from the Copper Country to L'Anse and Iron Mountain.

At the meeting of the association's directorate this week sanction was given the project, which had been tentatively accepted more than a month ago. The house shortage in L'Anse and Iron Mountain has become acute and the success met by the association in moving some of its dwellings to Iron Mountain a year ago encourages expansion of the program to include L'Anse.

There is not an empty dwelling in L'Anse and with the entry of the Ford interests in the Baraga county metropolis there has been an increased demand for houses. It is probable that L'Anse will obtain a dozen of

the houses to be moved. Plans call for an early start in order that the work may be completed by late summer.

Alex Keturi, Hancock contractor, will raze and rebuild the dwellings under the direction of the association's building committee. Unlike the plan followed last summer the houses in this instance will not be moved in sections but will be dismantled and the lumber used in building residences of the bungalow type.

The Iron Mountain News, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 3, Number 5 [Monday, April 16, 1923], page 1, columns 7-8; page 2, column 1

HOUSING SHORTAGE HOLDS BACK DEVELOPMENT

Must Have Homes For Ford Plant Employees, Kingford Declares

Expansion Program Includes Body Plant Additions; Construction Starts Soon on Chemical Plant and Sawmill.

(This is the first of a series of five stories concerning the housing situation in Iron Mountain and methods of relieving it so as to leave the path clear for unhampered industrial development. – Editor's Note.)

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[Compiled and Transcribed by William John Cummings]

BY THE INVESTIGATOR

The housing situation in Iron Mountain, about which so much has been said and so little done during the last two years, is now at the stage where it is seriously retarding industrial expansion. The authority for this statement is E.G. Kingsford, chief of the Ford Motor company's operations in the upper peninsula.

Mr. Kingsford returned Saturday from a lengthy visit with Mr. Ford. The two industrial leaders discussed in detail the mammoth plans they have in mind for the Iron Mountain branch of the great motor company, but the conclusion was reached that the large portions of them must be held up until such time as this city is prepared to house the thousands of laborers required.

At the present time the company has on its payroll here approximately 1,500 persons and, in the words of Mr. Kingsford, "this is more than we can really handle simply because of the housing shortage."

Big Building Program.

And even in the face of this the following building program was announced today by Mr. Kingsford:

The contract for the chemical plant sawmill, which will have a capacity of 100 cords per eight hour shift, is awarded.

Plans for large additions to the present two body plant units and the construction of a third are also being considered.

An important announcement concerning the Menominee river dam project will be made in the near future.

Even this gigantic construction program does not complete the Ford development plans here.

No Limit, He Says.

"There is no limit to our expansion," Mr. Kingsford declared, "but it all depends upon the number of homes we have for our employes [*sic – employees*]."

"There are still 4,000 men employed in Detroit doing the same wood work that is being done in the Iron Mountain plant. If we had a city large enough to draw on for labor supply or if we had enough homes for the men we bring in from the outside we could have all those wood working operations being performed in Iron Mountain by next fall.

"But we can't bring in men from the outside because we haven't any place to put them. Our expansion here is practically stopped until such a time as the city has caught up with us in the matter of building homes.

"We bring laborers here and they are forced to pay exorbitant rents for one or two little rooms. They can't find a house and they can't bring their families. The result is that they take one look at us and then go.

"We have no trouble securing men from the outside but as long as housing accommodations are not provided for them we cannot keep them here.

Can't Have Idle Plants.

"Those plains out at the Ford plant would be covered with buildings if we could go forward as we'd like to. But there's no sense in putting up idle factory floor space that must remain idle as long as we can't get steady employes [*sic – employees*]."

"The situation is in the hands of the people here. Every person who can afford to put on up one or two or more homes should do so. It is a good financial investment for them and the community benefits.

"Certainly if our payroll at the Ford plant is doubled, the people benefit by it. And once we can bring laborers here without worrying about where we're going to house them, our payroll will double and double and then some"

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[Compiled and Transcribed by William John Cummings]

Asked concerning the possibility of the Ford Motor company financing the construction of homes, Mr. Kingsford said:

“The Ford Motor company could come in here and build a lot of homes but by so doing it would wreck building and loan associations and similar organizations inside of a month. We don’t want to do that. We realize that we could probably sell homes at less money than someone else is obliged to ask, but we don’t care to injure existing organizations and business.

Up to People.

“You can say this, the point has been reached where the pace of the Ford development is dependent upon the people to large extent. It would seem to me that there should be an eagerness to develop the city so as to allow this industrial expansion to proceed. It means money to those who sponsor it and it means a bigger and better community.

“Boiled down the fact is that there must be more homes if the Ford plant is to develop as it should.”

Mr. Kingsford added that no contracts would be awarded for the additions to the body plant units and the construction of the third until such a time as it was believed that housing accommodations were sufficient for the number of men who would be brought in and employed in the plant.

Construction Starts Soon.

Construction of the chemical plant will begin as soon as the weather permits. It will be located north of the present sawmill, and the buildings will extend westward. No figures on the size of the plant were available but from the contract awarded indicates that it will be the largest in the world.

The chemical plant sawmill will have a capacity of 100 cords of wood every eight-hour shift. The mill, while not as large as

the present one, will be modern in every respect.

Mr. Kingsford explained that if there were any excess of dry kiln production the dried lumber would be shipped to Detroit unless, he added, “we can go ahead with body plant construction in which case we can use that lumber here. But remember, we can’t build body plants unless we have labor to man them and in order to have labor we must have homes.”

Mr. Kingsford’s statements today are practically the first public announcement giving definite information on the great magnitude of the Ford program here, a program that is almost limitless. But they also emphasized the cold blooded fact that Iron Mountain and vicinity cannot hope to share in the prosperity and growth accompanying such an expansion unless it provides more homes, thereby paving the way for an influx of labor.

The paramount question today is that of homes—homes—homes. The city has the prospect of being the beneficiary of an industry that will employ thousands of men provided it finds a place to house them.

(The succeeding [*sic* – *succeeding*] articles in this series will concern building prospects here this spring, the real estate situation and suggestions as to how the city may help to lessen the shortage of homes.)

The Iron Mountain News, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 3, Number 6 [Tuesday, April 17, 1923], page 1, columns 2-3; page 2, columns 1-2

***Golden Harvest Time
Is Here For Landlord;
And The End Is Far Off***

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[Compiled and Transcribed by William John Cummings]

Some Cheerful Rooms at Reasonable Rents Can Be Found – But in Most Cases, Well Read On –

(This is the second of a series of articles dealing with the housing situation in Iron Mountain, the real estate angle and suggested remedies that will allow unhampered industrial development. – Editor’s Note.)

BY THE INVESTIGATOR

During Mr. Kingsford’s conversation yesterday in which he declared that future expansion of the Ford industry here was dependent largely upon the housing situation, the chief of the Ford Motor company’s operations in the upper peninsula characterized the present home shortage as being “shameful.”

To get the full portent of the term as used in this application, it will be necessary to delve quite deeply into the question of rents.

On every hand the cry of high rents is heard. One need only mention the subject in order to learn a lot about the meaning of the word extortion and kindred expressions. It is granted, of course, that in a so-called boom town, into which classification Iron Mountain falls, there are bound to be numerous instances of rent gouging, and it appears that in general, rentals in Iron Mountain are all out of proportion to the value received.

Landlords Reaping Harvest.

Landlords are reaping a golden harvest that bids fair to continue without interruption for at least five years. This figure is based upon a careful calculation made by students of the situation. The foundation of

their logic is the simple fact that the Ford development will keep pace with any increase in homes. Additional labor coming into the city will occupy the flats, rooms and dwellings vacated by their more fortunate brethren who have found out that “mid pleasures and palaces there is no place like home.”

What is to be done? I find that any sort of living quarters are at a premium. Not only that but we are facing the none too encouraging fact that there is practically open bidding for rooms, flats or houses. Renter is pitted against renter and the landlord is in the same position as if he auctioned his rooms to the highest bidder. Only the landlord gains financially through no effort on his part. He can afford to be complacent and unruffled about the matter as he knows the persons who are clamoring for living quarters must use those he has available.

A Few Samples.

It is surprising to learn, however, that many persons do not fully realize the crisis that we have reached in housing conditions. Here are three or four samples, picked at random, from a large number known to exist:

Mr. A came to Iron Mountain a short time ago and is now working in a store. It was impossible for him to find a house for his little family and he was finally forced to take two unfurnished office rooms. For these he is paying a rent of \$40 a month.

Mr. B., after a frantic search, was compelled to accept three upstairs rooms in a ramshackle house on a side street. The dwelling is not equipped with modern conveniences. The rent is \$45 a month.

Mr. C has been paying about \$40 a month this winter for a very small house on a side street. The house has a furnace and electric lights but he also pays the water,

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light and fuel bills. He has just received notice that beginning next month his rent will be increased to \$55.

The following case of Mr. D is unusually striking. He couldn't find a place to live and eventually managed to locate one room in a house on Carpenter avenue. The room is on the second floor and was unfurnished. He moved a stove and his own furniture into it and is now occupying it with his family, a wife and child. For these spacious, fashionable and luxurious living quarters he is paying \$25 a month.

These few examples are possibly enough to give an insight into existing conditions. True, occasional cases can be found of where cheerful rooms are rented at a reasonable price, but they are greatly in the minority.

And three years ago, before Mr. Ford decided to locate a branch of his gigantic industry here, it was possible to rent a house in Iron Mountain for \$10 to \$15 a month!

In The Big Cities.

A perusal of Detroit, Chicago and other metropolitan dailies will show numerous want ads of apartments to let for \$50 to \$100 a month rental. With this in mind, some persons will assert that rents here are entirely within reason. Let us pause to analyze this.

Generally speaking, the apartments in the \$50 to \$100 class are modern, heat is furnished and very often they are located in new and practically fireproof buildings. In addition, they are occupied by the business man [*sic – businessman*], the "white collar" fellow who must be within hailing distance of the business center of the city. Therefore, these apartments are located on property that commands a high price and in itself represent a large portion of the investment.

The laboring man, in this instance the individual who works in the manual end of the big industries, resides in the outlying districts. He seeks the cheaper rents and the residential sections of a substantial percentage of his coworkers are buying their own homes.

In Iron Mountain, however, the situation is drastically different. Our new modern flats, including the second stories of original one-family dwellings, are few and far between. We have scores of homes that are without modern conveniences and they bring high rentals.

Rents are high in the cities and the laboring man is often forced to dig deep, but the same conditions existing in a metropolis do not govern the small city of Iron Mountain. The laboring man in this city does not occupy the \$100 a month apartment. If it is necessary for him to reside in the same radius as his "white collar" brothers, he hunts an abode that may not possess much class but has a lower rent. You have also probably heard of tenements – not an elegant term, but it tells a lot.

Some Live In Norway.

The Ford plant is employing approximately 1,500 men. Of this number about 20 reside in Norway and the majority are eager to move to Iron Mountain. The principal reason, naturally, is transportation, which costs them about \$3 to \$4 a week. In bad weather they may not be able to report for work and forfeit a day's pay and the time lost in traveling back and forth they would much rather spend in another manner.

Approximately 25 to 30 per cent of the Ford plant workers own their homes. They are the lucky minority. They are not beset by worry or care and their main problem is to pay their taxes and look after the garden in the summer. There is upkeep expense

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to a house but compared to the renter's outlay it is almost negligible *[sic – negligible]*.

The “Homeless” Crew.

Mr. Kingsford told me that the force of men employed was really too large because it was difficult to handle them on account of the housing situation. If this is hard to believe, it may be interesting to know that about 500 of these employes *[sic – employees]* are “homeless.” Some of them are one and two-room cliff dwellers. Their “apartments” are very compact. The music room, the library, the drawing room, the parlor and the living room may all be found in the kitchen. This saves steps and doesn't cause disorder as so many different rooms when entertaining visitors and their children. In the second room may be found the beds, milady's boudoir and possibly an installment of the parlor or living room.

Eliminating the cliff dwellers from the 500 and the balance are “single roomers,” some of them single men. The rest are married but they can't secure suitable living quarters and their families are living in other cities.

Single Room Rent.

A word about the rent for single rooms. It ranges from \$15 a month to \$25 and even \$30. One man occupied a large front room in a house that had no furnace. For this he paid \$5 a week. He took in a partner and the rent went up to \$8. More than \$32 a month. We're not mentioning the upkeep of that room – it can be figured out easily. Of course the two men used water to wash and utilized the tub when they had hot water on Saturday nights.

In another case a man was “pleased” to find himself in a small, dimly lighted room for which he only paid \$25 a month.

This article today deals with just a few facts concerning the rent situation in Iron

Mountain. A recent “house for sale” want ad in The News brought 73 replies – when there is a “furnished room” want ad – well, the result can be imagined. One of them was run Saturday. The paper went out on the street at 4:15. Then some time elapsed until the carrier boys had them delivered. Before 7 o'clock in the evening the advertiser had answered the front door bell seven times.

It's a rent problem, alright *[sic – all right]*, and the end is not in sight.

The Iron Mountain News, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 3, Number 7 [Wednesday, April 18, 1923], page 1, columns 2-3; page 2, columns 1-2

Real Estate Prices Here Are Becoming Firmly Established

**Maybe They Seem High But
There's No Reduction In Sight;
Inflation Caused Trouble**

(This is the third of a series of articles on the housing situation in Iron Mountain, real estate and similar topics – Editor's Note.)

BY THE INVESTIGATOR

Real estate is the most cussed and discussed commodity in Iron Mountain and vicinity.

Since the announcement almost three years ago that the Ford Motor company would locate here, the real estate situation has been in almost a constant state of

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[Compiled and Transcribed by William John Cummings]

turmoil and only now is being restored to a firm basis.

Like the landlord, the property owner and the real estate dealer come in for a large amount of verbal abuse. Such terms as robber are not infrequently employed in referring to the one who is selling property.

Speculative Fever High.

For the first 30 days after the Ford announcement Iron Mountain assumed a real estate complex that bid fair to wind up everything in a big crash. The speculative fever reached a higher pitch than the fictitious temperature maintained by the Escanaba girl. The man with a few dollars hunted high and low for the opportunity to invest it in something that he could turn over within a short time and realize a handsome profit.

But it is a fact that during these hectic 30 days real estate was inflated to unprecedented heights and no actual property, to a marked degree, was changing hands. As far as real estate was concerned, it became a "hot air" boom.

Homes valued at \$2,500 suddenly shot up to \$8,500. Lots that the owner would have been glad to dispose of for \$150 and \$200 became \$600.

Property owners were unable to place a definite real value on their holdings because, as far as values were concerned, they were all at sea.

Came to Get Rich Quick.

Incoming trains brought scores of persons attracted here by the prospect of sudden and overwhelming prosperity in a boom town. They brought with them little money and big ideas. They turned to real estate. They didn't buy, they merely offered John Brown \$8,500 for a house that John had previously valued at \$2,500 and thought because of the boom it might be worth \$7,000. And when John heard

\$8,500 mentioned his sense of real estate value was shattered and he began to think that his house ought to bring at least \$10,000. So he would tell his neighbor, Smith, that he had been offered \$8,500 and Smith would say to himself that his house was worth more than Brown's and should command a better price.

The story is told of one individual who owned a house located on an important corner lot. Before Ford came its value was about \$3,000. Several days after the boom broke a stranger approached this man and offered him \$25,000 for the property. Did the property owner snatch up the offer? He did not. He consulted with his neighbors and friends. He felt that possibly he could and should get more than \$25,000. He killed time going around and getting advice that wasn't any better than what he could have given himself. The stranger stayed in town three days. Then he realized that his offer had been too magnanimous so he disappeared. When the property owner sought him out it was too late – the bird had flown.

Some of Them Made Hay.

In the meantime, some men with real money jingling in their pockets began to hunt around for options on large blocks of property, both in and out of the city. They discovered that practically all of the valuable land had already been sewed up. Not one organization or one person accomplished this. The common report that a few on the inside bought everything in sight is erroneous. One individual[,] whose closest connection with the Ford Motor company organization was the fact that he drove a Ford machine, executed a very neat real estate maneuver six weeks before the boom broke. His investment was \$1,000 and he didn't lay down his money

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[Compiled and Transcribed by William John Cummings]

until the boom materialized. Today that property is valued at \$40,000.

For six months after the Ford announcement there was a brisk exchange in real estate. When the 30-day period ended money and property started to change hands. Persons who were formerly property poor found themselves possessed of holdings that made them independent. Business was fine – for six months.

Then a dropping off was noticed. The Ford development, for one thing, was gradual and sure. Instead of a sudden and over night [*sic – overnight*] expansion, the company went ahead with its plans in a rather slow but sure-footed manner. Consequently, the heat of the boom subsided into a luke warm proposition. The expected growth would take place as predicted, but it was to be in an orderly way.

The reduction in real estate sales was the natural reaction of this. For a period things came almost to a standstill, then a slight improvement was noted and now sales are steadily going up.

The predominating feature of this change has been that service has replaced salesmanship. In the early days it was a question of making a prospect but a lot – today the prospect knows what he wants and goes after it. Salesmanship isn't needed to sell him, only service.

Real estate prices are becoming stabilized. Good residential lots have been placed at a comparatively high figure and will not drop back. Poorer lots, requiring filling, retaining walls, extra basement construction and other things, have fallen off in price and for the time being, at least, will not stage a comeback.

In the city the price range of lots is about \$400 to \$1,500. Outside of the city it is \$200 to \$400. However, it must be

remembered that city property is, to large extent, improved. With it goes light, water, gas, fire and police protection and such other services as the municipality renders. All of these features are not yet available to the lot outside of the city.

Iron Mountain now has about 30 platted forties. Ten of these are on the north side and six are well populated, two thinly populated and two not at all. On the south side most of the forties are well populated. There is one 15-acre stretch that is not developing but with this exception, it can be said that generally, the various districts are being built up.

There are nine forties platted outside of the city. Property sales in these have been good, but not exceptionally high.

500 Good Lots Left.

It is estimated that in Iron Mountain there are about 500 good lots left. Prices on these will not go down, regardless of whether or not they are believed to be too high. Some city lots that sold two years ago at \$1,000 have since been resold for \$2,300. The new owners have not changed their minds about the value of the land – as far as reduction is concerned. Water and sewer facilities are being extended and this has no tendency to bring down prices.

Business property on Stephenson avenue, which now gets a price of about \$500 a front foot, has reached its peak, it is believed. This, however, depends upon the direction in which the business district grows. If, for instance, the Chicago & Northwestern railroad tracks were moved and the west side of the street opened to development, property would probably go up in value after all of that available by changing the tracks had been purchased. This change is the strongest influence that can be brought to bear to retain the

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business district practically intact on Stephenson avenue.

With a one-sided street as at present, however, the business district is forced to stretch out instead of being allowed to condense. The probabilities are that it will extend down B street to Carpenter avenue and follow the avenue southward to meet the Ford plant trade. With this prospect, property prices on Stephenson are not apt to change much.

He Made Money.

Stephenson avenue enjoyed the same inflation as other property during the 30-day period. The following story is an example of the tendency to sky-rocket prices:

Mr. A owned a piece of Stephenson avenue property. On it was located a ramshackle building. Taxes, depreciation and upkeep made it a poor investment as he was drawing only \$25 a month rental. He sold it to the tenant on the easy payment plan and the reported price was between \$500 and \$1,000. Two weeks after the Ford announcement the tenant who, by the way, had just completed his last payment a few days before, sold out for \$13,000.

The person who is in the market for a piece of property will very often object to the price. This is only natural knowing as we do what the price was three years ago. But whether new prices are justified or not, the fact remains that good residence property will not depreciate. If it is bad medicine, we have to swallow it if we want to buy. There has been a reduction from the over-inflation period but prices now are firmly established. Location and topography of a lot determined the scale of reduction following the over-inflation. A man who purchased a house for about \$2,500 was offered approximately \$8,000

during this period. He declined to sell. Today the house will go for about \$4,500.

The real estate situation in Iron Mountain two years and a half ago was not uncommon. In fact, it is the customary occurrence in a community suddenly confronted with the possibilities and the earmarks of a boom.

The outstanding characteristic of our boom is its absence of hurry and confusion and its sureness. The city is growing – in two years and a half it has advanced from a population of 8,500 to approximately 12,000.

And it's a good town.

The Iron Mountain News, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 3, Number 8 [Thursday, April 19, 1923], page 1, columns 2-3; page 2, columns 1-2

400 Homes Required; Believe 300 Will Be Put Up This Season

Many Would-be Builders Must Change Ideas To Conform With Incomes; Can't Buy \$5,000 House For \$100

(This is the fourth of a series of articles dealing with the housing situation in Iron Mountain. – Editor's Note.)

BY THE INVESTIGATOR

Little Chicago!

That's what they say when they see a Stephenson avenue crowd on a busy night.

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[Compiled and Transcribed by William John Cummings]

Part of this impression is due to the fact that the street is one-sided and the crowd travels the store front side. Most of it is the result of the great industrial expansion under way here and the increase in population.

Industrial expansion and increase in population are terms heard so frequently that they almost get tiresome because of the monotonous repetition but they really should be as sweet music on our ears and as popular as the age strengthened melody, "Home Sweet Home." For the purpose of these articles, industrial expansion and population increase are the keynotes and used they must be.

How to Get Some Good Information.

Getting back to Little Chicago, it would be interesting to stand at a street corner and ask every person passing by a few pertinent questions concerning the conditions under which they live. Such an interrogation would give the inquisitor a much more accurate check-up on the housing situation than these articles. The information received would provide food for thought.

It would probably be learned that the majority of the renters have a real problem on their hand [*sic – hands*] and eagerly anticipate the time when they can move into their own homes. The "why pay rent" idea has been drilled into them so thoroughly that they are sold on the proposition of don't put it in the landlord's pocket, put it in your own.

It would probably be learned that there are scores of persons who are not thinking so much about having their own homes, as they are over the problem of finding any shelter at all.

Moving Day First of Month

It is estimated that there are 100 families that will be forced to move May 1.

Increased rents that they refuse to pay, trouble with landlords, relative coming back to the home town now that it is enjoying an era of prosperity and replacing tenants compelled to get out to make room for the returning prodigals – all these factors and others are responsible for the condition that in a town of 12,000 persons at least 100 families are undergoing the eviction penalties of a metropolis.

Men come into The News advertising office and offer a bribe of \$5 if the business staff will tip them off to a "room for rent" want ad before the paper appears on the streets. They will gladly offer a bonus to the one who secures for them a place to live.

On the other hand, instances can be found of where home owners are so eager to take advantage of the opportunity to rent that they are neglecting their own families. In this community we have today one case that is especially poignant. This particular husband is an employe [*sic – employee*] at the Ford plant. He is receiving better than the \$6 a day minimum. His family consists of his wife and five children and they live in a six or seven room house. That house is just large enough for the family but, in addition, there are 11 boarders who receive their meals and beds for \$40 a month. The boarders get the right of way, the five children are forced to sleep in the basement on the bare, ground floor.

400 New Homes Are Needed

Iron Mountain needs 400 new homes this year, a most conservative estimate. Some idea of the magnitude of this may be obtained from the fact that on the average it requires 250 working days for one man to build a house. Multiply 250 by 400 and we have the impressive total of 100,000 – in other words it means that in order to give some relief from the housing shortage,

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1,000 men would have to work more than three months.

Last year it was roughly estimated that between 150 and 250 homes were built. One guess is as good as another on this as the builder is not obliged to get a permit from the city and there is no accurate method of checking up on new construction.

It is believed that at least 300 houses will be built here during the next few months. This will give some relief, but it must be remembered that as fast as new homes are occupied, the rented quarters vacated will be taken over by newcomers. There is practically no doubt that the Ford expansion will easily keep pace with the housing facilities of the city.

To accomplish a large building program, however, it will be necessary for many persons to revise their ideas of the kind of homes they want. There are too many with comparatively small incomes who will not be satisfied with anything less than something commensurate only with a large revenue. A person who can afford or finance a \$3,000 home, *[sic]* demands a \$6,000 house and expects some agency or organization to loan or risk 90 per cent of the investment.

This may sound ludicrous, but there have come forward during the last several weeks men who want to purchase a \$5,000 house and list their total assets at \$100, which they offer as the first payment on the lot and home.

Such financing isn't being done and will not be done. A proposition like this has about the same value as the man who wants to buy an automobile on the instalment *[sic – installment]* plan *[sic – plan]* and offers to pay, as his first instalment *[sic – installment]*, the cost of the

oil and gasoline put into the machine when it is delivered by the dealer.

Instead of six or seven room houses, the average person who has little money must be content with a modest, four room dwelling. Such frills as built in book cases, fire places, colonnades, expensive plumbing and lighting fixtures and other unnecessary, although desirable features will run up the cost of a house so fast that the difference between \$4,000 and \$8,000 is easily consumed by them.

Costs Cheaper Here

Building costs are much cheaper in Iron Mountain than in Chicago, despite claims to the contrary. Between 40 and 50 per cent of the cost of a house is the labor, and carpenters, bricklayers and other workers do much more for their money here than their fellow tradesmen in a big city.

Persons who are planning to build should get into *[sic – in]* touch with contractors and dealers now. The price of building materials is on the upgrade and a shortage is in sight. Unless dealers are given some idea now of what to expect in the way of demand, there will be an acute shortage of materials within a short time. Iron Mountain is not the only community needing homes. Statistics show that the country is growing faster than the supply of building materials. Someone must be disappointed and it will be the late comer.

Do Own Work

Many men are reducing the labor cost of their homes by performing some of the work themselves. And to escape the landlord, many are putting up garages in which they intend to live until such a time as they can afford a home. Neighbors have been of invaluable help in assisting them.

Almost every plan or method is being employed to escape the rent question. And the men who are employed here but whose

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[Compiled and Transcribed by William John Cummings]

families are living in other cities must find a place to live – some place to which they can bring their families.

The man who possesses a good flat or dwelling at a fair price in Iron Mountain can count himself fortunate, indeed. He is faring much better than, for instance, an individual living on the north side. This man occupies two or three rooms on the second story of a so-called house. He was paying \$25 a month. During the winter he has carried eight cords of wood upstairs and to do it he had to climb what might be classified as Jacob's ladder. His living conditions were nothing to boast about but he had to be satisfied.

However, his landlord wasn't satisfied. There was [*sic – were*] one or two unfinished cubby holes in the attic. The landlord thought he ought to get rent for them. He forced the tenant to take them over at \$10 a month additional.

Man requires three things – food, clothing and shelter. Stores provide him with the first two but when it comes to shelter it is a case of pot luck.

The Iron Mountain News, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 3, Number 9 [Friday, April 20, 1923], page 1, columns 2-3; page 2, columns 1-2

Banks Willing To Lend Money For Building Of Houses; Deposits Grow

People Are Saving Money and This is Good Indication for Future; Housing Problem Will Be

Solved, But When?

(This is the fifth and last of the series relating to housing and real estate conditions in Iron Mountain – Editor's Note.)

BY THE INVESTIGATOR

Two plus two equals four.

Ford motor [*sic – Motor*] company business plus necessary expansion to accommodate it means more labor.

This series of articles, which closes today, has stressed the following points:

Mr. Kingsford's declaration that development of the Ford industry here depends largely upon the facilities of the community to house the required labor.

Rents are very high for the value received, living quarters are at a premium and many families exist under conditions that usually obtain [*sic – are obtained*] only in the squalid, tenement districts of a metropolis.

Real estate prices, while considered high, will probably remain where they are or go up. No reductions are looked for except on poor property. Prices are becoming stabilized.

Iron Mountain needs at the very least 400 new homes. Three hundred will be built this year. May 1 is moving day for about 100 families and there is an acute housing shortage.

Having reached this stage in these discussions, there is little left to talk about, except a general survey of conditions and the present attitude towards relieving the housing shortage.

Bankers Willing to Help

In my conversations with local bankers I find that they are very willing to loan money for the construction of homes providing, of course, they are given a safe margin of

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[Compiled and Transcribed by William John Cummings]

security. But there are limitations to the size of their operations in this line. Statutes provide that they dare not venture beyond a certain point. A bank with all its deposit money tied up in real estate would find that it had an excellent aggregation of frozen loans. A sudden demand for liquidation would place it in a precarious position.

Two years ago it is true that banks here were not regarded as being very generous in making loans to the home builder. Since then there has been a noticeable change and they are now rapidly approaching the safety limit. Of course, as their deposits grow, the safety percentage increases, so that at all times there will be a certain amount of money available for this type of investment.

On the other hand, in order to protect their depositors banks must demand that they be given a certain amount of security. It certainly would be bad business to loan \$3,000 to a man who could only produce \$100 to guarantee its return. In fact, it appears that the ordinary person would not attempt to make a heavy loan on so small an amount, but such proportions are being put forth.

People Are Saving Money

In reply to the question of whether or not people here are saving their money, the bankers said that deposits were steadily showing very substantial increases. This is an excellent indication as to the future stability and progress of the community. The majority of the men who came here with no money are not "salting away" a certain sum each week. Eventually they will invest in homes – once they have a home they can be considered permanent residents.

Banks are also in close touch with the housing situation. Because so much of their business concerns real estate,

persons call on them for information regarding the sale of homes and similar things. Bankers can tell you that they answer scores of inquiries about houses for sale and houses for rent. "Where can I find a place to live?" is becoming a popular refrain in the city's financial institutions. Incidentally, "I don't know," is just about as popular a reply.

Building and Loan Associations

The financing of homes, however, does not start and end with a bank as far as the individual is concerned. There are in Iron Mountain two building and loan associations and one of them, during the fiscal year just ended, financed and built homes valued at approximately a quarter of a million dollars. These associations require a certain amount down and the rest in monthly instalments [*sic – installments*].

Home owners who desire to sell will also very often make terms "to suit the purchaser." There are comparatively few men who can afford to put down the full purchase price of a house. The only way they can ever hope to own one is by the instalment [*sic – installment*] plan. Many of them have failed to absorb the thrift habit and couldn't save up enough in a life time to buy a house. The instalment [*sic – installment*] plan, however, provides an easy, well defined course for them to travel. When it becomes necessary for them to put by a certain amount of money each month they can do it.

Busy Summer in Sight

The busiest summer in the history of Iron Mountain is expected this year. Merchants report their volume sales are showing big and in many cases tremendous increases. Investment prospects are at high tide and opportunity has not stopped to knock, it opened the door and walked in.

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[Compiled and Transcribed by William John Cummings]

If you think that money isn't being spent watch the stream of automobiles on Stephenson avenue in about two or three weeks.

The country generally is enjoying great prosperity and the state of Michigan looks forward to a year in which building activities will establish new records.

Under the title, "Building Boom Sweeps Michigan," the Michigan Manufacturer and Financial Record declares this week:

"Detroit and other Michigan cities, this spring, are spending millions of dollars in new construction work in a volume which is expected to surpass all previous records, unless advancing costs of material and labor interfere. The activity, so far this season, is more pronounced in the industrial centers of the state with Detroit setting the pace not only for the state but the nation as well. Since the beginning of 1923 permits have been issued in Detroit for buildings to cost \$30,500,000 and through which 5,500 families are being provided with homes.

"This building boom which appeared to be sweeping onward in the industrial centers of the state is due, primarily, to efforts being made to more adequately house the increasing population brought about by the prosperity of the state's industries.

Prices Below 1920 Peak

"Building supply dealers assert that while prices are showing a tendency to advance as a result of the undeniable law of supply and demand, building costs still are far below the peak period of 1920 and, in the case of lumber, the basic material for building, prices are shown to be 33 ½ per cent less than in 1920. Transportation, fuel and labor costs in the building supply field are high due to the intensive demands throughout the country for these elements

of production and are also instrumental in forcing building supply prices higher, it is said."

Iron Mountain's housing problem will eventually be solved. This city's plight is no different from that in which practically all boomtowns have found themselves. However, an important factor to consider is the speed with which it is solved for on that hinges the rapidity with which development goes forward. We can rest on our oars and allow the slow current to drift us into the port or we can pull together and get there much sooner.

Time is money and we ought to pull!

The Iron Mountain News, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 3, Number 125 [Thursday, September 6, 1923], page 6, column 2

Ford Motor Company To Start Building Houses

Program to Be Continued Indefinitely If Experiment Proves Successful

A house building program experiment that, if successful, will be continued indefinitely, will be undertaken immediately here by the Ford Motor company, it was announced today by E.G. Kingsford, chief of the company's operations in the upper peninsula.

The company will take charge of the work itself, awarding contracts only for individual jobs, such as plumbing and lighting, Mr. Kingsford said, and it is planned to start with from 25 to 50 homes.

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These houses will be constructed outside the city limits just south of the Ford store on the street running west. They will be two stories in height and have from five to seven rooms, basement and furnace. Various styles of architecture will be employed in their design and the houses will be modern in every respect. Although the cost has not yet been determined, the houses have already been sold to employes *[sic – employees]* of the company, Mr. Kingsford said.

Merely Experimental

“This program,” he declared, “is merely in the nature of an experiment on the part of our company. If it proves successful we intend to continue building houses indefinitely or until there is no longer a demand.”

The property will be improved in every way. Sewer water facilities are already available and electric light wires are to be extended. In addition, next spring shade trees will be planted along the lots and the property beautified through landscape architecture. Sidewalks have already been laid.

Construction work is to start at once and will be continued until the houses now being planned have been built. In the event the experiment has favorable results, there will probably be no interruption in construction except that occasioned by weather conditions, and the program will be continued indefinitely. The houses are to be sold only to employes *[sic – employees]* of the company and will be disposed of on the time payment plan.

This is the second time that the company has engaged in house construction here, having built a number of homes on Detroit avenue to take care of employes *[sic – employees]* when the

company first located in Iron Mountain and was building the saw mill *[sic – sawmill]*.

The Iron Mountain News, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 3, Number 191 [Thursday, November 23, 1923], page 2, column 1

Four Hundred Houses Built Here This Year, Estimate

Represent Investment of \$1,600,000; Population of City and Village Believed to Be About 14,000.

Four hundred houses representing an investment of \$1,600,000 were constructed in Iron Mountain and the village of Kingsford during the last year, according to estimates by real estate men, and the possibilities are that this number will be greatly exceeded next year.

This makes a total of 700 houses built *[sic – built]* here in the last two years, or about one house a day. In addition every available flat and two and three room suite is rented and still the demand is far from being satisfied.

Population Now 14,000.

The population of Iron Mountain and the village is now roughly estimated at 14,000 with a large number of men employed here whose families are living in other cities because of the housing shortage. With the Ford payroll in excess of 3,000 persons and due to be heavily increased with the opening of the chemical plant the prospects are that the housing situation will become

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extremely acute during the next few months.

In 1924 the combined populations of Iron Mountain and the village of Kingsford will approach and probably pass that of the largest city in the peninsula, which is Ironwood, credited with 15,700 in the United States census of 1920.

Of the 400 houses built in the last year, 100 were erected in Breitung and West Breitung and an equal number in Kingsford Heights. The school enrollment of the village is already 15 per cent of the total in Iron Mountain.

The Iron Mountain News, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 5, Number 80 [Wednesday, July 15, 1925], page 3, column 1

TOWNSHIP SCHOOL PROBLEMS SOLVED

Rapid Growth of System Has Given Board Hard Task

The growth of the Breitung township school system has been tremendous during the last year and the board has been confronted with many complex problems most of which have been satisfactory [*sic – satisfactorily*] solved, a survey reveals.

The enrollment of school children at the end of the last term was 1,750 as compared with 1,250 at the beginning. The enrollment in June, 1924, was slightly more than 800, showing an increase of more than 100 per cent in a year's time. And, in addition, there will be a heavy gain when sessions are resumed August 31, when the new junior

high school will be opened in the village and Quinnesec.

The growth in the Kingsford area first made itself keenly felt in the fall of 1924 when children were requested to report to classes in "shifts." This presented the board of education with a problem of great proportions that demanded quick action and sound judgment. But with the assistance of the state department of education, which it called on for advice, the board took care of the situation in the best manner possible. Temporary buildings and school facilities were immediately provided.

1,400 In Village Area.

Of the 1,750 pupils enrolled in the township schools last month, 1,400 were in the Kingsford area. Probably no school district in the state has shown such proportionate rapid growth.

The board and Superintendent Sweeney are still confronted with many problems but they are confident of being able to take care of them. During the past year, new high school buildings were erected at Kingsford and Quinnesec. The final cost of the structures will be included in a report of the secretary to be submitted soon.

Construction work has been started on a new 14-room grade school at Garden Village and erection of another grade school will be started soon in Kingsford Heights. It will be a 10-room building with all modern equipment and will be located on Mayfair street.

The building program will be continued until such a time as there is ample room for the entire enrollment. At the completion of the present plans, the system in the township will compare favorably with any of its size in the state.

Rural Schools Grow.

The rural schools in the township have also been increased in enrollment. It was

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necessary during the past year to build an addition to the Twin Falls school house.

Beginning next September, Breitung township high school students[,] who heretofore have been compelled to enroll at the Iron Mountain and Norway schools, will be given regular senior high school courses at the new buildings in Kingsford and Quinnesec.

Schools in the village and Quinnesec will be conducted on a six-six plan, that is, six grades in the grammar school division and six grades in the junior and senior high school division.

The new high school organization, both in courses and objectives, will be somewhat different than in most places in the district. The plan will soon be outlined by Mr. Sweeney, the new superintendent.

Davidson Is Principal.

Dean Davidson, of Kalamazoo, has been selected as principal of the new high school in Kingsford. He comes to the village highly recommended and with a good record. He was principal of the Dowagiac and Marcellus high schools and was formerly an instructor and principal of the high school at Vulcan. He left there about 10 years ago.

Mr. Davidson, who is expected to arrive here soon, and Mr. Sweeney will arrange a course of study and program for the new high school in the near future.

John Possi, who for the last three years, had been manual training instructor in the Iron Mountain schools, has accepted a similar position with the Breitung board while John Schwei, of Iron Mountain, will have charge of athletics and physical training in the township schools. He will also teach science.

The Iron Mountain News, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 5,

Number 89 [Saturday, July 25, 1925], page 2, columns 1-2

New North Side School Modern in Every Detail

Building Will Be Ready For Occupancy When Fall Term Opens.

The 4100,000 North Side school now nearing completion will be ready for occupancy at the opening of the school term in September.

Built on spacious lines, with modern features of heating, ventilation, and convenience, the school is adequate to more than take care of the overflow from the many grades.

Last year, owing to crowded conditions, it was necessary to report [*sic – resort*] to half day attendance, in spite of which most of the lower grade classes were large enough to be unwieldy.

Turned Over To Board.

The construction of the building is the work of the Phelps Drake company. It was started toward the latter part of September. The general contract was completed early in June, when the building was turned over to the school board.

Heating, plumbing and wiring have proceeded simultaneously with the construction of the school, where necessary, and since then the finishing touches have been added.

The school is situated on the same property with the Farragut and Chapin schools, this location having been [*sic – been*] chosen because of the possibility that

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the street on which it faces may be condemned, and the property spreading before the school used as a playground and school park for the three buildings.

The school is 135 feet long, 89 feet high [sic – wide], and two stories in height, and is faced with tangerine colored brick with Bedford stone trim.

Its construction is semi-fire proof. That is to say, the construction of its corridors throughout is such that the pupils may at all times have access to safety, though the remainder of the building be burning.

Ornamental plastering, terrazzo [sic – terrazzo] floors and red oak woodwork, [sic] combine to form an interesting interior.

Social Center Room.

The building is equipped with a large social center room, which combines as an entertainment place, with a large an [sic – and] attractive stage, and gymnasium.

There is a kitchen back of the stage provided so that banquets and lesser affairs in which refreshments are part of the entertainment may be held in the building.

A clinic room for the school examining physician, and dentist, and a public waiting room off the principal's office are two new features incorporated in its construction.

A large room to be used at present as a library may be converted if desired into an additional class room.

There are seven grade rooms, very large and well and scientifically lighted.

The ventilation is very modern and highly endorsed by health authorities.

The Iron Mountain News, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 5, Number 153 [Friday, October 9, 1925], page 1, columns 4-5

More Than 7,000 Now

On Ford Plant Payroll

New High Mark Reached; Company is Far Behind In Deliveries

The public's response to the new model Ford cars is reflected here in the employment of more than 7,000 men in the Ford plant.

This is an increase of approximately 1,300 men in the last six weeks and establishes a new high mark for the Iron Mountain division.

It is estimated that the Ford payroll in Iron Mountain is now approximately \$1,000,000 a month.

The flood of orders that came in following [the] announcement of the new models has placed the Ford company weeks behind in deliveries. Production has been speeded up all along the line in an effort to make deliveries as soon as possible but orders have been far exceeding the daily production capacity, which is now in the neighborhood of 8,000 cars per day.

Although the new cars have been announced as all-steel, it has resulted in the cancellation of but few operations here. It has also meant the establishment of new operations, as where steel meets steel wood fillers are used to act as a cushion and eliminate squeaking.

In addition, several weeks ago more operations were moved here from the River Rouge plant.

Important Part In Wheel.

The Iron Mountain plant is now an important cog in the gigantic Ford industrial

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wheel. The parent plant in Detroit is dependent upon the Iron Mountain division for the major share of the wooden parts used in the cars.

The Iron Mountain plant is running well up with the Detroit plant, keeping abreast and even exceeding it in production. The rapid rise in employment figures from 5,700 six weeks ago to 7,027 this morning is indicative of the manner in which production is being pushed for all it is worth.

Hiring of men is still going on and a new high employment peak is in prospect. All employing is done through a card system, interviews with the employment agent being set on cards sent out after applications are received.

Production in the chemical plant is also said to have gained during the last few months. Because it is a new type of plant, handling all wood refuse, it has been a laborious and slow job working it into production. The various problems that have come up in connection with its operation, however, are being solved and the output increased.

Total employment by the Ford company in the upper peninsula is now 8,700.

The Iron Mountain News, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 5, Number 220 [Tuesday, December 29, 1925], page 3, column 1

Outline \$600,000 School Program in Breitung Area

Unusual Increase In Enrollment Again Taxes Buildings to Capacity.

The erection of two grade schools and a large addition to the present high school building are included in a proposed expansion program outlined by the board of education of Breitung township, it was stated today. Cost of the program is estimated at \$600,000, which includes purchase of the sites, erection of buildings and installation of equipment.

Because of the unexpected increase in enrollment throughout the entire village of Kingsford area, the erection of a grade school in the Ferndale district and another in the Skidmore is considered inevitable. Many of the children from those districts are now compelled to go to the Breitung grade and portable schools, which are taxed to capacity.

The completion of the Garden village school, now under construction, will remedy conditions considerably but will not give relief in the Skidmore and Ferndale area. Conditions in Kingsford Heights will be relieved when the new school in that district is brought to completion.

Use Double Shift

Under the present system of conducting classes in the village area, 22 rooms are on double shift, a condition that is unprecedented in the entire state. The arrangement necessitates giving instructions to many pupils in a hurried manner in order to accommodate [*sic* – accommodate] both shifts.

In many cases there are as many as 55 students in one room. This is not in accord with the policy of the state department of education, which recommends not more than 40 pupils be assigned to one class. Adequate facilities, however, are not available as the increase in enrollment has

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gone far beyond the expectations of the school board.

The enrollment in the village of Kingsford area last September was about 2,200 students. During the last four months it has passed the 2,600 mark, on an increase of approximately 400.

Rooms Needed

To accomodate [*sic – accommodate*] the pupils living on the south side of the Ford plant, F.C. Sweeney, superintendent of schools of Breitung township, declared today that this is a conservative estimate based on careful survey with the assistance of a member of the state educational department.

On the north side of the Ford plant, 17 rooms will be necessary to take care of the pupils. These will be available in the near future when the new Kingsford Heights grade school is ready for occupancy.

After the new Garden village building is completed, there will be at least 250 pupils who will have to attend classes in temporary one-room schools. There are six of these buildings now used in the village of Kingsford area.

In order to give an idea of the growth of the school system in Ferndale, Mr. Sweeney said that a year ago only 45 students were registered from that district. Today the enrollment is 180.

Since last September there has been an increase of 300 children from the kindergarten to the sixth grade, inclusive, in the incorporated limits of the village alone.

New Building Crowded

Conditions in the new junior high school building on Hamilton avenue are also crowded. Because of the all-around increases throughout the village, grade classes are conducted in this building in order that children from that part of the

village known as central Kingsford need not walk to Kingsford Heights.

When the new high school building was formally opened last September the enrollment was 330. A check-up recently showed that it is now 500.

The problem is made more intricate by the fact that only 25 seniors will be graduated next June and at least 200 sixth grade pupils will pass into the seventh grade, which is part of the junior high school. With rooms now taxed to capacity, additional facilities must be provided for next September, Mr. Sweeney said.

According to the tentative plans for the addition to the high school building, the structure will be enlarged to almost double its size. It is planned to include in the new addition a library, study hall, manual training rooms, domestic science rooms, auditorium, gymnasium annex, recitation rooms and cafeteria.

The need of a cafeteria is apparent, Mr. Sweeney said. At the present time there are fully 300 students who are compelled to bring lunch baskets to school.

Just what method the board of education will employ to finance the project has not yet been decided but it was stated that another bond issue will be the logical step. Members of the board and Mr. Sweeney have been studying the situation for the last three months and it is expected that a complete report will be forthcoming within the near future.

The subject was discussed at the regular meeting of the board last night, but definite action was deferred.

The Iron Mountain News, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 5, Number 222 [Thursday, December 31, 1925], page 1, columns 6-7; page 2, columns 1-2

DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY -- FORD MOTOR COMPANY – IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

[Compiled and Transcribed by William John Cummings]

BUILDING PROGRAM \$4,500,000

Phenomenal Growth Shown Past Year in Iron Mountain Area

Big Projects Included In Construction Record; Village And City Are Tied For Honors

BY LAWRENCE D. TUCKER

With approximately four million and a half dollars spent in public improvements and construction in Iron Mountain, the village of Kingsford and the districts immediately adjacent, the year 1925 stands out as the most remarkable in the history of the region, and far surpasses all previous records.

The figures are approximate for the most part, with the exception of Iron Mountain proper, where building permits, contract prices and other accurate data were available for computation.

In the case of the village of Kingsford and the various additions immediately adjacent to both Kingsford and Iron Mountain, building permits were not available and the estimates are made up from the reports of the village officials, real estate men and others in direct contact with the situation.

It's About 50-50

It's almost a "fifty-fifty" split as far as the residential and commercial construction in both the village of Kingsford and the city of Iron Mountain is shown in the estimates as leading by some \$23,000, the village estimates does *[sic - do]* not include construction at the Ford plant.

No report is available of the extent of that construction, and it is not likely that definite figures will be forthcoming from the Ford company until after the first of the year.

Iron Mountain's commercial and residential construction during the year is placed at \$1,823,272, and that in the village of Kingsford at \$1,800,000.

Included in the total valuation of construction in Kingsford are about 400 new houses, built at an aggregate of \$750,000; three new school buildings, aggregating

(Continued on Page Two, Column One)

MORE THAN FOUR MILLION COST OF 1925 EXPANSION

Phenomenal Record Is Made in Area During Past Year

(Continued from page 1.)

\$280,000, and business houses valued at more than \$200,000.

Construction In Addition.

Construction in the adjacent districts of East Kingsford, Skidmore, Ferndale, Ardmore and East Breitung is placed at

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\$835,000, Skidmore leading with about 300 new houses averaging \$1800 each.

In establishing an approximate valuation of the residences and business houses constructed in the village of Kingsford this year there was taken into consideration the number of new water main connections, most of the houses and other buildings served being new structures. It was found that 375 water connections were established this year.

Kingsford village officials declare, however, that there were more homes built in the community this year than there were water connections established, and on that basis 400 new houses is believed to be a safe estimate for the year.

New Type of Construction.

Real estate men, on the other hand, declare that while during 1924 the ratio of small inexpensive structures with the larger and more modern homes was about 75 to 25 in favor of the smaller places, that order is reversed this year, and, taking all of the buildings, both large and small, \$1,800 was thought to be a conservative average figure.

The expenditures for public improvements, noted in the accompanying table, are actual for both Kingsford and Iron Mountain, up to the cents column.

In the third item under "Kingsford and Adjoining Districts" the "small frame structures" indicate two and three room homes, built on cedar posts, which some of the Ford workers have provided for their families. Real estate men declare that there is a gradual swinging away from that type of home.

The figure for the adjacent districts mentioned heretofore were based on the observation of real estate men who are in daily touch with these districts and who reported on the approximate number and

style of residences which have been built there. A conservative average cost for each residence was established in every case.

The largest single building construction project in the village of Kingsford this year is the new Kingsford high school, valued at \$275,000 and completed early last fall.

Iron Mountain's Record

Building permits totalling [*sic – totaling*] \$811,200 were granted in the city of Iron Mountain during 1925, according to the record of permits up to December 1, now on file with the city engineer. This is an increase of approximately \$250,000 over 1924.

The figures are based only on the amounts specified in the application for permit, and do not include additional outlay entailed in equipping the structures throughout.

For instance, the actual cost of construction for the new Michigan Bell Telephone company's building here would not exceed \$50,000 but the full equipment and expansion program would bring the total cost to approximately \$200,000, making this building the largest individual construction project for the year.

In addition, a check-up of construction throughout the city during the year shows an additional expenditure of \$520,000 for public improvement, of which \$250,000 was for schools, one the new North side school, and the other two additions to both the Lincoln and Washington schools. The school additions and improvements for the year were covered by a special bond issue and the amount of the issue is given as the cost of the combined improvement.

Practically all of the municipal improvement program was also made possible through bond issue.

Braumart Would Boost It

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[Compiled and Transcribed by William John Cummings]

does not include the construction *[sic]*

The report for Iron Mountain *[sic – does not include the construction]* of the Braumart theatre, which, although completed this year, appears under the permit application lists of 1924. If that item were included in the construction program for this year, which might rightfully be done, the Braumart would appear second in the list for individual construction projects, and the cost of approximately \$200,000 would bring the grand total for the district in excess of the four and one-half million mark.

Since the estimate includes certain residential additions located in outlying districts, it seems fair, for this purpose, to include also the investment of the Parmelee brothers in the new Nightingale dancing pavilion. This project can safely be estimated at \$50,000.

April Banner Month

April was the banner month for resident and commercial construction in the city, with permits aggregating \$149,200, and March was second with \$141,555. November was the light month included on the record, with \$9,765, although the total for December, which will likely be somewhat lower than that, will not be available until after January 1, 1926.

The record for each month is as follows: January, \$11,000; February, \$29,150; March, \$48,000; March, \$141,555 *[sic – March appears twice]*; April, \$149,200; May, \$87,550; June, \$86,825; July, \$49,375; August, \$51,860; September, \$77,700; October, \$69,220; November, \$9,765.

Garages Head List

Garages head the list in the kind of buildings mentioned in the permits, 202 of them being included in the year's report. Other structures are listed as follows:

dwellings, 193; alterations *[sic – alterations]* and additions, 96; stores, 31; woodsheds, 19; stormsheds *[sic – storm sheds]*, 10; warehouses, eight; filling stations, four; office buildings, three; workshops, two; blacksmith shop, dry cleaning plant, tool house, display room, frame for packing ice, furnace room, telephone central office, real state office, coal and gravel dock.

The new offices of the Michigan Belle *[sic – Bell]* Telephone company, located on East Ludington street and now in the process of completion, was the largest single construction project included in the permit list for 1925. The valuation in the application for the permit for the building alone was given as \$47,000, although it is believed that final improvements and additions will increase that figure.

Assessed Valuations

Another startling indication of the rapid progress of the region is contained in the marked increase in assessed valuations for both Kingsford and Iron Mountain during the past two years. It is revealed that the assessed valuation of Kingsford fixed by the state in June, 1924, was \$6,245,000, and one year later, or June, 1925, the valuation appears as \$100,832,547 *[sic – probably \$10,832,547]*.

In Iron Mountain the assessed valuation was \$7,918,235 in 1923; \$12,207,923 in 1924, and this year it was \$12,844,931.

The Iron Mountain News, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 5, Number 222 [Thursday, December 31, 1925], page 2, columns 2-3

Building Program in City And Environs for 1925

DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY -- FORD MOTOR COMPANY – IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

[Compiled and Transcribed by William John Cummings]

IRON MOUNTAIN

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Building Permits..... | \$811,200 |
| Other construction costs not Included in permits..... | 490,000 |
| New North Side School, and Additions to Lincoln and Washington schools (bond Issues)..... | 250,000 |
| Filtration Plant..... | 120,000 |
| Intake Work now in progress..... | 45,000 |
| Six-inch Water Mains..... | 27,946 |
| Chapin Water Line, 6-in. main..... | 24,567 |
| Incinerator Plant..... | 16,500 |
| Side-Walk Construction..... | 11,186 |
| Street Construction..... | 6,873 |
| Installation and Cost, Street Lights (approximate)..... | 10,000 |
| Comfort Station..... | 8,000 |
| Sewer Construction..... | <u>2,000</u> |
| | \$1,823,272 |

| | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| East Kingsford..... | 150,000 |
| Lincoln..... | 50,000 |
| Ferndale..... | 40,000 |
| Ardmore..... | 30,000 |
| E. Breitung..... | <u>25,000</u> |
| | \$845,000 |

THE VILLAGE OF KINGSFORD

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Business Buildings, including the Capitol Theatre, Eisele Building, Gas Plant and other structures..... | \$200,000 |
| 400 Homes, average \$1800..... | 750,000 |
| 100 Small Frame Structures, Sheds, Etc., average \$500..... | 50,000 |
| Three Schools..... | 485,000 |
| Kingsford High..... | \$275,000 |
| Garden Village..... | 110,000 |
| Kingsford Hts..... | 100,000 |
| Sewers..... | 280,000 |
| Roads..... | 40,000 |
| Water Mains..... | <u>30,000</u> |
| | \$1,835,000 |

ADJACENT DISTRICTS

| | |
|---------------|-----------|
| Skidmore..... | \$550,000 |
|---------------|-----------|