

DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY – FELCH TOWNSHIP

[Compiled and Transcribed by William J. Cummings]

FELCH TOWNSHIP

General History of Felch Township

FELCH TOWNSHIP: Organized October 9, 1882, embracing T42N – T43N of R29W – R30W – R31W (set off from Ely township, Marquette County); boundary changes: (1) T44N of R28W – R29W – R30W attached May 21, 1891, to Dickinson County as organized; (2) T44N of R29W and T42N – T43N – T44N of R30W set off March 9, 1892, and organized as Sagola Township; (3) E ½ of T43N – T44N of R28W detached October 19, 1908, and included in West Branch Township as organized; named for Felch Mountain Range, a belt of iron ore named for Alpheus Felch (1806-1896), governor of Michigan (1845-1847).

Cleveland Homestead

Cleveland Homestead: Actually located in Felch Township, just over the border, most residents of Cleveland Homestead used Ralph as their address and place to purchase supplies. They were considered part of the community. [West Branch Township History 1844-2001/Ralph, Michigan 1901-2001, page 4; page 17]

Farmertown

Farmer Town: Many residents of Milltown moved to Farmer Town after the Metropolitan Lumber Company ceased operations and moved some families to California in about 1900 to work in a mill there. The old Metropolitan School grounds were located in Farmertown.

Felch

FELCH: Settlement established in Felch Township in early 1880's; **See FELCH MOUNTAIN and METROPOLITAN;** name comes from Felch Mountain Range, a belt of iron ore named for Alpheus Felch, governor of Michigan (1845-1847); post office established March 13, 1906, with Andrew Rian, postmaster.

Felch: Originally platted as Metropolitan by the Metropolitan Iron and Land Company on October 20, 1882.

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 14, Number 8 [Thursday, July 15, 1909], page 4, column 1

ENTERPRISING CITIZENS

Business Men in Felch Will Build a Creamery – A Good Industry.

The enterprising residents of the township of Felch – business men [*sic – businessmen*] and farmers – are engaged in organizing a stock company for the building of a modern creamery. The company will have a capital stock of about \$5,000, and The Press hears that the stock has all been subscribed. The creamery will be sufficiently large to handle the milk of four hundred cows. This means large additions to the number of cows now owned in the township and will add materially to the wealth of the district. Andrew Rian, Swan Anderson, John Ovist and Charles Solberg are leaders in the enterprise. Felch is developing rapidly from an agricultural standpoint and it behooves the Iron Mountain people to get busy in the matter of building a direct highway through the district. There is need of a flouring and custom mill, and this need will be supplied at an early date it is now anticipated.

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Agriculturalists have for a long time argued that the upper peninsula was better adapted for dairying than almost any other kind of farming, but the farmers of this section have been slow to take it up, in spite of the success of creamery projects in Northern Wisconsin. At last, however, they are realizing that the land is rapidly losing its fertility under present methods of farming, and that more stock must be kept or it will soon become worthless for agricultural purposes.

In order to successfully operate a creamery, the milk from between 400 and 500 cows is needed, and it is calimed [*sic – claimed*] that nearly that amount is already in sight. The installation of the plant will doubtless result in other farmers adding to their herds and farming in that locality should take [*a*] decided boom

Scientific farmers have in the past criticised [*sic - criticized*] the rural population of this locality, and declared that they were simply a band of wood choppers. The method of tilling the soil has frequently been to cut off the timber, sell it for lumber and firewood, then to raise hay and potatoes on the cleared tracts, which products were sold off the farm. No more stock has been kept than absolutely necessary, and, in short[,] every thing [*sic – everything*] has been taken off the land, while nothing was put back. It is declared that no land will long stand this kind of treatment, which fact is now being realized in this vicinity. Nothing will keep up the fertility of soil more effectually than a large dairy and, properly conducted, is a paying investment besides.

If the creamery project goes through, as seems altogether likely, it should mean the rapid development of the farming interests of the northern part of the county, and that this community will soon take the prominence in agricultural persuits [*sic – pursuits*] that the climate, soil and other natural conditions have made possible.

The development of agricultural pursuits, and especially dairying, in the vicinity will be of considerable importance to this city, as a prosperous farming community is one of the most valuable assets of any city. The farmer differs from all other persons in that he deals with his market, both as a buyer and a seller, and the merchant thereby makes two profits. Besides, country people are usually a most stable and trustworthy class of people with whom to have dealings.

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 14, Number 8 [Thursday, July 15, 1909], page 4, column 1

Menominee Range

FELCH HAVING A BOOM

Company Has Been Formed to Build a Creamery of a Large Size.

A stock company, with a capital of \$4,600, has been organized here for the purpose of building a creamery, work on which will be started at once. It will be located in the Felch end, just east of the residence [*of*] Swan Anderson. What is the matter with Felch?

Andrew Rian has started work of excavating the cellar for the new store, which he proposes to erect next year. The building will be forty by ninety feet on the foundations, two stories and a basement and constructed of brick. A fine monument to the enterprise of Mr. Rian. Who said Felch was dead?

The Chicago & North-Western R.R. Co. sprung a great surprise on the people of this township last Friday, when entirely

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unexpected, the bridge crew came in at noon on the local train and began the work of moving the depot at the Metropolitan end to the Felch end of the town. The people of Felch have been kicking for the change for the past seven years and not until it was taken up with President Hughitt did anything result therefrom, so here goes three hurrahs from the people of Felch to the officials of the company.

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 14, Number 11 [Thursday, August 5, 1909], page 1, column 6

FELCH CREAMERY CO.

Organization Perfected With Andrew Rian Elected President.

The organization of a stock company in Felch township for the erection of a first-class creamery has been completed. The company will be incorporated under the laws of the state with a capital of \$4,800. It will be designated as the Felch Creamery company. At a recent meeting of the stockholders the following officers were elected:

President – Andrew Rian.

Vice-President – William Leeman.

Secretary – Alfred Johnson.

Treasurer – John J. Ovist.

Directors – The above named officers and Herman Gustafson, John Blomquist, Matt Willman.

The stock was all subscribed for, nearly all the farmers investing and agreeing to give the enterprise their hearty support. Fifteen per cent of the capital stock has been paid in and the balance is payable when the creamery is in operation. It is estimated that the plant will cost about \$3,900. The building in course of erection is 24x44 feet in size, but it is certain that the

creamery will soon outgrow the plant. There are many hundreds of acres of grazing lands in the township and if the farmers will only take advantage of their opportunities, Felch will soon become noted for its fine herds of cattle.

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 14, Number 14 [Thursday, August 26, 1909], page 5, column 2

FACTS FROM FELCH.

The Felch creamery is now completed and in shape to turn over to the stockholders. It was given a trial run last Saturday and the machinery was found to work admirable [*sic – admirably*]. It is now up to the local farmers to make it a success.

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 14, Number 47 [Thursday, April 14, 1910], page 1, column 2

New Creamery.

The new creamery in Felch township will commence operations the first of May, it is now expected. The creamery is owned by a stock company composed almost entirely of farmers in the vicinity. It is assured a goodly supply of milk, as the farmers are pledged to increase their herds. The plant is an excellent one, and the venture is certain to be a successful enterprise.

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 15, Number 5 [Thursday, June 23, 1910], page 6, column 2

FACTS FROM FELCH.

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The local creamery shipped its first consignment of butter to the Chicago market last Monday. The consignment weighed about 700 pounds.

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 15, Number 12 [Thursday, August 11, 1910], page 4, column 1

FACTS FROM FELCH.

The Felch creamery has closed for the season after a run of two months' [*sic – months*] which was quite satisfactory to the stockholders considering the adverse season.

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 15, Number 14 [Thursday, August 25, 1910], page 6, column 3

FACTS FROM FELCH.

The Felch Township Hall is no more. On last Wednesday, about midnight, fire was discovered issuing from the annex, which is known as the library, and in less than one hour the entire structure was in ashes. The loss is about \$1,000 with no insurance.

Doctor Whiteshield, of Detroit, has decided to locate in this village and has leased the Rian building for a residence. The Doctor also contemplates installing a drug store in the basement of the building. Dr. Whiteshield is a dentist as well as an M.D. and any one [*sic – anyone*] in need of his services will find him at the Rian residence, where he is staying for the present.

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 15, Number 18 [Thursday, September 22, 1910], page 5, column 4

FACTS FROM FELCH.

A. Rian has begun the erection of a building 30x70 feet in size. The lower floor will be used as a store room while the second floor will be fitted out as a hall.

The local grange, through the efforts of A. Rian, has made arrangements for a special train to leave here on Friday morning for Norway, returning the same evening, for the accommodation of county fair visitors from this side of the county, and Felch, Foster City and Hardwood will be well represented at the big show on that day.

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 15, Number 45 [Thursday, March 30, 1911], page 1, column 4

Scrap in Felch.

Felch township has a sultry political fight this spring with two complete tickets in the field and three candidates for supervisor. The Straight Republican ticket is headed by Carl A. Carlson for supervisor, Chas. J.A. Forell is a candidate for the same office on the Labor ticket and John E. Wickman is an independent candidate. John V. Sundstrom is the Republican candidate for clerk and Alfred Anderson for treasurer and they are being opposed by Jacob E. Wickman and Wallace Hill. Matt Blomquist and Fred Dixon, Sr., are opponents for highway commissioner.

Felch Mountain/Metropolitan

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FELCH MOUNTAIN: Platted June 10, 1881, by Jonathan Hickox, John A. Caughley and John A. Glidden on the SE ¼ of Section 29, T42N of R28W; named for Alpheus Felch, governor of Michigan (1845-1847); **see METROPOLITAN.**

Felch Mountain: Platted on July 14, 1881, by owners Jonathan Warner, Charles Hickox, John A. Coughey and John N. Glidden.

The Iron Port, Escanaba, Delta County, Michigan, Volume XII, Number 32 [Saturday, July 9, 1881], page 8, columns 1-2

RANGE ITEMS.

...
—Three town sites have been laid out in the Felch mountain neighborhood and named, respectively, Felch Mountain, Metropolitan and Theodore. Felch Mountain is near the Warner location, occupying the s1/2 se1/4 29, 42, 28; Metropolitan adjoins the Metropolitan mine property, on 32, 42, 28, and is the property of that company; and Theodore is the property of the canal company and adjoins the Northwestern mine on 29, 42, 28. Two of them, we cannot say which, will doubtless be fizzles.

Graysville

Groveland

GROVELAND: Mining location east of Randville in southwestern corner of Felch Township named for the Groveland Mining Company.

Henderson

HENDERSON: Established in northern Felch Township; believed to have been named for R.C. Henderson, former Dickinson County prosecuting attorney.

Johnson's Spur

JOHNSON SPUR: See **HENDERSON.** Station on the Escanaba & Lake Superior Railroad located in Felch Township west of Ralph.

Lehman's

LEHMAN'S: Located in Felch Township.

Metropolitan

METROPOLITAN: Platted as Felch Mountain by the Metropolitan Mining Company in Ely Township, Marquette County; post office established August 31, 1881, with Louis A. Friederichs, postmaster; discontinued December 30, 1963.

Metropolitan: Platted on October 20, 1882, by the Metropolitan Iron and Land Company, this settlement is known today as Felch, and was also known as 'Milltown' by early residents.

The Iron Port, Escanaba, Delta County, Michigan, Volume XII, Number 22 [Saturday, April 30, 1881], page 1, column 4

MR. POWERS, with an engineer party, left here on Wednesday to run the lines for the mine sidings at the Metropolitan and Northwestern locations, and we are informed that work on the Felch Mountain branch will be commenced at once and pushed as rapidly as possible. It is intended to complete the branch in time to allow of [*sic – for*] the shipment of some 50,000 tons from the two

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mines mentioned during the present season.

The Florence Mining News, Florence, Marinette County, Wisconsin, Volume I, Number 18 [Saturday, April 30, 1881], page 3, column 4

THE Canal Co., are preparing to lay out a town site on the Felch Mountain Range. It will be located on the south half of the south west quarter of section 29, 40 28. The town will adjoin the Metropolitan and Northwestern mines location, and lies on a level piece of hard wood land, high and dry, and there is an abundance of excellent water. We understand that a good many persons are preparing to purchase building lots.

The Iron Port, Escanaba, Delta County, Michigan, Volume XII, Number 24 [Saturday, May 14, 1881], page 8, column 1

RANGE ITEMS.

...

—Felch [ran the Commercial Hotel in Quinnesec and proposed building a hotel at Felch Mountain in mid-April, 1881] will run a tri-weekly stage from Norway to Felch mountain, leaving on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, at 9:45 a.m. —Iron Chronicle, 7th.

The Iron Port, Escanaba, Delta County, Michigan, Volume XII, Number 25 [Saturday, May 21, 1881], page 8, columns 1-2

RANGE ITEMS.

—The extensions of the Northwestern railway to the Felch mountain, Paint river and Iron river districts are progressing with all possible speed. It is

not probable that that company can hold its monopoly of the ore-carrying on the range, but the company that comes in to compete with it will find the **Northwestern** every where [sic – everywhere] there is a mine and pretty well fixed to stand competition.

The Iron Port, Escanaba, Delta County, Michigan, Volume XII, Number 28 [Saturday, June 11, 1881], page 8, columns 1-2

RANGE ITEMS.

...

—Work upon the railway extensions, towards Felch mountain and Crystal falls, is pushed with all possible vigor, but it is almost impossible to keep men in the woods at laborers [sic – laborers'] wages, on account of the flies and mosquitos [sic – mosquitos].

The Iron Port, Escanaba, Delta County, Michigan, Volume XII, Number 30 [Saturday, June 25, 1881], page 8, columns 1-2

RANGE ITEMS.

...

—"A real, live mail-agent" now accompanies the branch train. The Metropolitan is laying out a town near its mine and will have a newspaper. — Chronicle, 18th.

The Iron Port, Escanaba, Delta County, Michigan, Volume XII, Number 32 [Saturday, July 9, 1881], page 8, columns 1-2

RANGE ITEMS.

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Metropolitan and Theodore. Felch Mountain is near the Warner location, occupying the **s1/2 se1/4 29, 42, 28;** **Metropolitan** adjoins the **Metropolitan mine property**, on **32, 42, 28**, and is the property of that company; and **Theodore** is the property of the canal company and adjoins the **Northwestern mine** on **29, 42, 28**. Two of them, we cannot say which, will doubtless be fizzles.

The Iron Port, Escanaba, Delta County, Michigan, Volume XII, Number 33 [Saturday, July 16, 1881], page 8, columns 1-2

RANGE ITEMS.

...

--The prospect is now that the **railroad will not be completed to Felch mountain before the close of the season** for shipments. --Range, 7th.

The Iron Port, Escanaba, Delta County, Michigan, Volume XII, Number 45 [Saturday, October 8, 1881], page 8, columns 1-2

RANGE ITEMS.

...

—A postoffice [*sic – post office*] has been established at Felch mountain. Name "**Metropolitan**" and **L.A. Friedrichs** is postmaster.

--The rains have made the roads to and through the **Felch mountain district** almost impassable, nevertheless [*sic*], **O'Callaghan** has succeeded in transporting a **saw-mill** thither and will soon have it at work. A court has been established **L.D. Fleming**, magistrate, and **John Madden**, constable, and a **school district is to be organized**. All which we learn from the Range.

History of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan Containing a Full Account of Its Early Settlement; Its Growth, Development and Resources; An Extended Description of Its Iron and Copper Mines: Also Accurate Sketches of the Counties, Cities, Towns and Villages, Their Improvements, Industries, Manufactories; Biographical Sketches, Portraits of Prominent Men and Early Settlers; Views of County Seats, Etc., Chicago, Illinois: The Western Historical Company, A.T. Andreas, Proprietor, 1883, page 472

The village of **Metropolitan** was platted in July, 1881, for the **Metropolitan Mining Company**.

The Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 9, Number 17 [Thursday, September 15, 1904], page 8, column 5

Farmers in the northern part of the county are prospering. This is evidenced by the fact that the following named settlers near **Metropolitan** have **built new homes this summer**: **E.J. Johnson**, **Jonas Blomquist**, **John Silund**, **Matt Ovist**, **Jacob Blomquist**, **Andrew Gustafson** and **Eric Johnson**.

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 14, Number 11 [Thursday, August 5, 1909], page 1, column 2

Mining Yellow Ochre.

In Felch township, near **Metropolitan**, there is a considerable deposit of yellow ochre. It is of an excellent grade and a large market will ultimately be found for it. Recently Supervisor Forell called the attention of a number of paint manufacturing concerns to the superior

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quality of the mineral and as a direct result he received an order for four hundred tons from the Rickelson Mineral Paint co., of Milwaukee. The mineral is now being mined and shipped.

The Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 21, Number 23 [Thursday, October 19, 1916], page 1, column 1

FELCH NEWS BUDGET.

A new general merchandise store was opened at **Metropolitan** under the firm name of "**The Farmers' Co-Operative Store**" with **Alfred Anderson** as manager. **Mr. Anderson** has been in the general store business for the past few years, and discontinued same to accept management of the new firm.

Milltown

Milltown: Metropolitan was referred to as "Mill Town" by early residents.

Old Town

Old Town: Felch is sometimes referred to as "Old Town" because the village originally platted as Metropolitan is now known as Felch.

Park City

Park City: An area near the Erik Skog home early in the twentieth century.

Princeton

Spruce

SPRUCE: Station on the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad three miles east of Metropolitan.

Theodore

THEODORE: Platted May 16, 1881, by the Lake Superior Ship Canal, Railway and Iron Company on the S ½ of SW ¼ of Section 29, T42N of R28W, in Felch Township, Marquette County; named for Theodore M. Davis, company president.

Theodore: Platted June 21, 1881, by the Lake Superior Ship Canal, Railway and Iron Company.

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The Florence Mining News, Florence, Marinette County, Wisconsin, Volume I, Number 28 [Saturday, July 9, 1881], page 3, column 2

"**THEODORE**" is the name of the Canal Co's new town at Felch Mountain.

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Theodore M. Davis, the president of the company, is named after it.

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The village of Theodore was platted for the Lake Superior Ship Canal, Railway and Iron Company, by J.A. Van Clive, in June, 1881.

Turner

TURNER: Station on the Escanaba and Lake Superior Railway in Felch Township.

Turner: Actually located in Felch Township, just over the border, the residents of Turner were very much included in West Branch Township life in every way except registering to vote. During World War II the soldiers and sailors from Turner were listed on the Honors Plaque in the West Branch Township Hall. [West Branch Township History 1844-2001/Ralph, Michigan 1901-2001, page 4; page 17]

Turner Junction

Turner Junction: There were buildings from an old logging camp at Turner, and at one time there were seven homes there. The siding at Turner Junction was pulled

out in 1972 and passenger service had been discontinued in the 1950's. [Felch Township Centennial 1878-1978, page 102] Although located in Felch Township, the residents were very much a part of West Branch Township life. [West Branch Township History 1844-2001/Ralph, Michigan 1901-2001, page 4]

Felch Township Cemeteries