

HISTORY OF IRON MOUNTAIN

by the Iron Mountain Women's Club, February 20, 1914

1878-1888

Mrs. A.D. Stiles

Read by the authors at a meeting of the Woman's Club – February 20, 1914.

Iron Mountain can date its conception back to 1878, when **John Friedrichs**, with a crew of men, discovered what is now known as the **Millie** or old **Hughitt [sic – Hewitt] Mine**, located on the north side of the bluff known as Iron Mountain, from which the village afterwards took its name. This find of ore afterwards proved to be a branch of the main **Chapin** vein, which was explored in the year 1879 by **Captain John Wicks**, who, with seven men employed by the **Menominee Iron Mining Company**, came from **Quinnesec**, then the terminus of the railroad, with a team consisting of four mules to a wagon, bringing tents, tools and provisions, and a few boards with which to build a kitchen and a roof over a table, which was built of rough boards, in the open. They pitched their tents on **Sec. 30**.

Joseph Sandercock arrived on the fifteenth day of September 1879, and set up his anvil, the first in Iron Mountain, on a stump, and hung his bellows between two trees. He now holds the position of foreman of the blacksmith shop at the **Chapin Mine**.

The old **Ludington Mine** was discovered in 1878 and a shaft was sunk on the side hill, north of the present workings of the mine.

In 1880 the **Chapin Mine** shipped 34,352 tons and the old **Ludington** shipped 8,816 tons of ore. In 1881 the

Hughitt [sic – Hewitt] Mine made its first shipment of 4,352 tons.

In the winter and spring of 1882, a diamond drill, in charge of **Harry McDermott**, operated on the **Ludington** property, on **Section 25**, and the main vein of ore, an extension of the **Chapin Mine**, was discovered.

In 1883, the first and only strike that ever occurred in Iron Mountain was amongst the **Chapin** and **Ludington** miners, when all the men of both mines were out for two weeks. The men had been working only till six o'clock Saturday nights, and the companies wanted them to work until eleven o'clock, making a night shift. One hundred **Pinkerton** detectives and constables from **Chicago** and a company of **State Militia from Marquette** were called into service to protect the property of the mining companies. The ringleaders of the strike were later arrested on a charge of threatening the life of **Mr. Stockbridge**, of the **Ludington Mine**, and sent to state prison.

In the fall of 1879 the **Menominee River Railroad**, now a branch of the **Chicago and Northwestern Railroad**, was extended from **Quinnesec** to Iron Mountain. This date might be considered the birth of the city, Iron Mountain, now having a population of ten thousand inhabitants. Shortly after a station was established with **John Merriman** as the first agent, who was succeeded by **L.A. Laughlin** and he by **Oliver Evans** in October, 1881.

In 1886, the **Milwaukee and Northern Railroad** was built to Iron

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Mountain; a station was established with **J.M. Clifford** as agent.

David Majo was the first to have a building ready for boarders and soon after the mining company completed a house. Those buildings were located on the ground that has since caved in.

The forces at the mine were rapidly increased and the boarding houses were filled to over-flowing.

The town site was platted in 1879. **Hon. Isaac Stephenson** of **Marinette**, **Hon. Samuel Stephenson** and **Joseph Flesheim** of **Menominee**, were the proprietors. The original plat contained fifteen blocks. The plat was recorded December 15, 1879. **Stephenson Avenue**, which was laid parallel with the railroad track, was designated as the business street of the town.

Frank Ayers, a bachelor from the state of Maine, who had been exploring in this vicinity, with a churn drill, was the first to have a building ready for occupancy. It was located on the southeast corner of **Stephenson Avenue** and **Ludington Street**, where the hardware store of **G.F. Gensch** now stands. Ayers procured lumber from **Marinette** and cut cedar in a nearby swamp for studding and floor stills. After the building was completed he put in a small stock of "Lumber-Jack" furnishings, including mittens, over-alls, stockings, shoepacks, tobacco, liquors, etc. Later he started a restaurant, the first in the place, **Thomas Hayes** being hired as cook. He next added groceries and meats. In the spring of 1880, he sold a half interest to **William Doucette**. About two months later Mr. Doucette became

sole proprietor and Mr. Ayers left for parts unknown.

Charles E. Parent, Sr., should have the credit of having been the first general merchant in the town, as he came here in November of 1879, bringing a stock of general merchandise and commenced business in a tent. His family still remained in **Menominee**. He soon had a building in readiness located on **Stephenson Avenue**, between **Ludington** and **Brown Streets**.

R.O. Philbrook, of **Peshtigo**, commenced building about the same time as **Mr. Parent**. He put in a stock of general merchandise, which at that time included liquors. Mr. Philbrook was the first postmaster and was afterwards succeeded by Mr. Parent.

In January, 1880, **Andrew Boyington** and family came, **Mrs. Boyington** being the first white woman in Iron Mountain. Shortly after **Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Hayes** arrived. Mr. Boyington bought two lots near the corner of **Stephenson Avenue** and **Brown Street**. He erected a two-story building and engaged in business, remaining there but two or three years and then removed to **Iron River**, where he still resides.

The first birth was in the **Chapin Location** on January 8, 1880, and was **Lillian Rayome**. The first birth in the village proper was **William P. Hayes**, son of **Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Hayes**. This birth was on July 27, 1880.

Iron Mountain was at first a part of **Breitung Township**. A sub-school district was organized in 1880. **John Wicks**, **Andrew Boyington**, and **John H. Kern** were chosen directors. The first

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school house [*Brown Street School*], a two-room building, was erected in the summer and fall of 1880. It was located on the northeast corner of **Brown and Iron Mountain Streets**, one block north of the present **Carnegie Library**. The building was not ready for occupancy until January, 1881. **Will H. Shepherd** was the first teacher and taught eight months, closing the term the first of September. The next year a two-room addition was made to the Brown Street building.

In the fall of 1883 the **school building** at **Keelridge** [*Keel Ridge*] was moved to the **Chapin Location**. In October of the year, the **Central School** was ordered built, at a cost of \$7,500.00. It was completed in the spring of 1884.

The **first hotel** proper was the **Jenkins House**, built in the fall of 1881, located on the northeast corner of **Stephenson Avenue and Ludington Street**. **Henry W. Jenkins** was the owner and proprietor of the hotel.

The **first big fire** in Iron Mountain occurred the winter of 1884, when **W.L. Laing's meat market**, **William Parent's saloon**, and **William Penglaze's saloon** burned. The buildings were located on **Stephenson Avenue**, near **Brown Street**, where **Asp and Olson's store**, **Oscar Sand's saloon** and **Wills and Carbis' meat market** now stand. At that time there was no fire protection, so a bucket brigade was formed across the street to a creek, and passed the water in pails across to the fire. **Steve Nick** [*Nichols*], an **Indian**, laid on top of **R.O. Philbrook's** building and kept wet blankets on it until the fire was out, and that was what

stopped the fire, and saved the balance of the block. A number of people thought they would help themselves to what they wanted, especially at such a time as that, so one man filled the inside of his clothes with Peerless [*chewing tobacco*] and when he tried to button his coat, the buttons all came off. A lady asked him if he didn't think he had enough.

For a time the **gospel** was preached by a **Cornish miner**, in the dining room of the **Chapin boarding house**. This volunteer evangelist was shortly afterwards killed. **The first fatality in the Chapin Mine.**

The **first church** built in Iron Mountain was the **M.E. [*Methodist Episcopal*] Church**, which was erected in 1881. It was located near the north side of what is now the **Chapin cave in**, and has since been removed one block north, to its present site.

In 1884, the **first Episcopal service** was held in the **Brown Street School House** by the **Rev. E.J. Nichbaum**, a missionary from **Escanaba**.

To the labors of **Father Faust** the Catholics of Iron Mountain owe their existence as a congregation. The **first Catholic church** [*St. Joseph's Catholic Church*] was built in 1884, located on the corner of **Prospect Avenue and "A" Street**.

The **first Presbyterian church** [*First Presbyterian Church*] was completed in 1884, previous to that meetings were held in **Gospel Hall**. The first pastor was **Rev. Melvin Fraser**.

The **Swedish Mission** began worship in the **Brown Street school house**.

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Afterwards, they built a church on **East Brown Street**, which they later sold to the **Swedish Lutheran Methodist** congregation. The **Swedish Lutheran church** was built in 1882 and was located at what is now the corner of **Vulcan and Second Streets**, in the **Chapin location**. At the time the church was built that part of the city was dense forest.

In 1881 the **first drug store** was started by **Seibert and Schaller** on the northwest corner of **Stephenson Avenue and Brown Street**, with **George F. Seibert**, junior member of the firm, in charge. Mr. Seibert is still in the drug business as senior member of the **Seibert Drug Company**.

In 1881 the **first doctors** that located in Iron Mountain were **Doctors J.D. Cameron and J.A. Crowell**. At that time there were three hundred miners on the roll, under their charge. The number increased to 3,400 in 1890. In 1882 the **first hospital** was built at the **Chapin Mine**.

The **first newspaper** published in Iron Mountain was the **Iron Range**, a Republican paper, edited by **R.P. Tuten**. The first issue appeared in January 1884. The **Dickinson County Journal**, a Democratic paper, was established in 1886 by **Berry and Larson**.

Iron Mountain was **incorporated as a village in 1887**. The following officers were elected:

President W.S. Laing
Clerk F.E. Crocker
Treasurer Oliver Evans
Trustees Edmund Kent, P.G. Larson, John Blackney, Emil

Carrier [sic – Carriere], Patrick O'Connell, J.T. Jones

In conversation with Mr. **C.E. Parent** as to the growth of Iron Mountain, he was heard to say, "Well, I can't complain. I think things are coming out fine. Rather different now from the days when I pitched my tent among the trees on this identical location. Why, when I came here there were not a hundred persons here, **Indians** and all, and now (January, 1886) the population is nearly 8,000 which would show that the population has increased nearly 1,000 persons per year."

The fall of 1887 Iron Mountain was incorporated, and April 2, 1888, was **reincorporated [sic – reincorporated]** a city with **Dr. A.E. Anderson** for mayor. The **Council Chamber** was then upstairs in the **fire engine building** (which building was recently used by **E. Laugier** as a piano store); later these offices were removed over the **First National Bank Building** on **Ludington Street**, which rooms now the **Elks Club**.

On December 18, 1888, **fire** broke out in the **E.J. Ingram** building, **North Stephenson Avenue**, and thirteen buildings were completely destroyed at a loss of \$50,000.00 with little insurance. These buildings were later all rebuilt of brick and it was at this time that the council proposed and passed an ordinance establishing a **fire limit** and a **building ordinance**.

At that time there was no thought of **sanitary conditions**. Consequently, an **epidemic of typhoid** soon broke out, which continued many months unchecked. There was much talk of

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improved sanitation and poor water works with the result that in March, 1889, an ordinance was made and passed declaring that pigs must no longer be permitted to roam at pleasure through the streets of the city.

In 1890 Mr. **Edmund Kent**, promising **water works, sewers and equal taxation**, opposed **Mayor Anderson's** third term and was elected. In July of that year a franchise was granted to **Coats and Phillips of Ypsilanti** for a thirty year contract to furnish water to the city at \$9,000.00 per year for 165 hydrants. However, I believe the council neglected to specify that pure water be furnished, for typhoid germs and fish were still dealt out with the water.

The beginning of the year 1888, we find **Rundle's Opera House** under construction, only the lower floor being completed and fitted up with a few chairs and benches made from beer kegs with planks for seats. The presentation "Monte Cristo" opened the city's new play house. Rundle's Opera was formerly the property of **Thomas Spencer**, who undertook to build for Iron Mountain a model opera house. A mortgage, held by the **Wisconsin Land and Lumber Company of Hermansville**, was foreclosed and the property later sold to **Rundle Brothers**.

In April, 1888, **John R. Wood** bought what was known as the **Jenkins' hotel** property, corner of **Stephenson Avenue** and **Ludington Street**, and had the building moved to **East Hughitt Street**, east of the present **Robbins block**, and rented it for hotel purposes, but the building was mysteriously burned the night of July 4. April 2, Mr. Wood let the

contract for the building of the **First National Bank Block** and the end of the year saw the bank in its new quarters, and the store rooms and offices well filled.

Under construction during this period (1888) were the **Central M.E. Church**, the **Episcopal Church**, **Odd Fellow's Building** and **C.E. Parent's and D.H. Leiberthal's brick store buildings** in this block (200 block of Stephenson Avenue near the **First National Bank Block**). The latter is now occupied by **Rusky Brothers**, making the buildings in this block with three exceptions built of brick.

An event long to be remembered by many people in the city was the opening of the **Commercial Hotel** (built and owned by **V.C. Chellev**) on the 17th of January, 1888. On the eve of the 17th a grand ball was given for the aristocracy of Iron Mountain, and on the eve of the 18th for the less fortunate brothers.

1888-1896

Mrs. Isaac Unger

In the year 1889 we saw the construction of many new business places and improvements which go to make up the history of our city. In May of this year (1889), work was begun on the **pulp mill** at the **lower Quinnesec Falls** and in July operations were begun. In this month also (May, 1889), work of installing the **Bell Telephone** into the business places was begun and in September **Mr. T.B. Catlin** took charge of the exchange with 57 subscribers.

Doctors Crowell and Cameron, both doctors at the **Chapin Hospital**, built the **St. George Hospital** with room

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for ten patients, admitting such patients as were not acceptable at the Chapin Hospital and employed as assistants **Doctors Hutchison and Krohn.**

In conversation with a stranger (this stranger, as it happens, was a **Chicago and Northwestern Railroad Official**) as to the whereabouts of Iron Mountain, he was heard to say: "Iron Mountain! Why, friend, where is Iron Mountain?" and received the following answer from a resident of the city who had been plugging for the depot: "Oh, its [*sic - it's*] a small flag station between here and "42" without a depot." [*Powers is located 42 miles from Menominee and was often called "42".*] This conversation, I think, hastened the building of the **Chicago and Northwestern Station**, for on December 22, 1889, the city was given a most acceptable Christmas present, a new station house, the old depot being used for a freight warehouse.

Mr. Spencer began the erection of the **Spencer block** next to the **Central M.E. Church** and unfortunately this adventure fell into the hands of the **Marquette Saving Bank** and finally sold to the **Iron Mountain Co-Operative Society.**

In September, 1888, **Professor E.F. Abernathy** succeeded **O.H. Chamberlain** as **Superintendent of Schools**, and, with a corps of fourteen teachers, began the new school year enrolling 944 children and graduating in June, 1889, the first class consisting of **Ella Harper, Ellen Sundstrom, and Emma Andrews.** There were then but two school buildings, **Brown Street School** and the new **Central School.** The **Chapin School** was built during the

summer of 1889. In 1890 a class of four received diplomas and from that time on our high school has graduated a class each year.

For the use and advancement of the school, a fairly good **school library** of one thousand volumes was kept in **Mr. Abdernathy's office in the Central School** and later moved to the small building, corner of **Carpenter Avenue** and **Ludington Street**, now used as the **3rd ward polling place.**

It gave the city great pleasure in 1888 to re-elect our **Hon. W.S. Laing** to the **Senate.**

The first **Electric Light Company**, consisting of **A.A. Carpenter** of Menominee, **Robert Banks, Mr. McDermitt** [*sic - McDermott*], and **C. Everett** of Iron Mountain, was organized April 16, 1891, with **engine house** at the corner of "**A**" **Street** and **Carpenter Avenue**, and later moved to its present location.

In 1888 we find our mines (the **Chapin** under the management of **Superintendent C.H. Cady**; the **Pewabic** and the **N.P. Hulst prospect** under **Superintendent E.F. Brown**; the **Hamilton** under **J.T. Jones** and the **Ludington** under **Superintendent Banks** and the **Millie** under **C.W. Kennedy**) all working full force and employing in the neighborhood of 3,525 men. Times were good and the city prosperous and spreading out in all directions and the people spending money like water. Expense was no object and where a good was to be gained, the price was not considered.

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In February, 1889, **Ferdinand Schlesenger** [*sic* - *Schlesinger*] of **Milwaukee** bought and re-organized the **Chapin Mining Company** and in July he struck the range full force, buying up everything in sight and much not in sight in mining properties.

Besides the **Chapin** and **Ludington Mines**, he bought the mines at **Norway**, **Crystal Falls**, **Iron River**, and **Florence**, and proceeded to revolutionize the iron industry and to carry out many of the plans which the **Steel Trust** have [*sic* - *has*] since accomplished.

Not satisfied with the mines he had succeeded in controlling, he began the purchasing of large freight boats and the building of railroads to carry the ore to the smelters. Consequently, the year of 1890 opened up with such prospects as were never before (or since) even dreamed of. Mr. Schlesenger [*sic* - *Schlesinger*], with apparently unlimited capital, began in April, 1890, with a force of 2,000 men, the construction of the **Schlesenger** [*sic* - *Schlesinger*] **Syndicate Railroad** between **Florence** and **Escanaba**, via **Iron Mountain**. The railroad, when completed, was to cost \$1,000,000.00. Finding that he was in need of money to work his various mining industries, and the **Chicago and Northwestern Railroad Company** being anxious to cut out the competition, a deal was made and closed February 15, 1891, for the sale of the Schlesenger [*sic* - *Schlesinger*] **Syndicate Railroad**.

Other indications of the growth and expansion of the city: **Hamilton and Merryman Company**, owners of much property in the southwest end of the city, decided to plat an additional twenty acres

into **resident lots** and to extend **Carpenter Avenue** to the river.

Hamlin and Fordyce, a real estate firm from **Detroit**, bought up a tract of land in the **Kimberly addition** and proceeded to boom the North end of town, advertising to build 150 houses for rent or sale on easy terms. They at once built the **Upper Michigan Brewery**, which, when ready for business, was under the management of **Thomas N. Fordyce**. (This is now the **Henze-Tollen Brewing Company**.) The **North-Western Hotel**, which was later converted into the **Emergency Hospital** under the supervision of **Doctors S.E. Cruse and Peter McNaughton** [*sic* - *MacNaughton*] and **Sisters of St. Joseph's Academy of Menominee**, is now owned by **Mr. J.W. Corin**.

F.W. McKinney of **Manistique**, Michigan, who saw in Iron Mountain wonderful possibilities during the building boom, purchased a piece of land laying [*sic* - *lying*] west of the **Kimberly and Armstrong additions**, known as "**Lawndale**." It was Mr. McKinney's idea to change the original platting of Iron Mountain and make **Hughitt Street** the principal business street instead of **Stephenson Avenue** for he saw no way for the city to spread out but to the river, and by making "Lawndale" a beautiful residence section, would in time call the business interests in that direction. Miles of sidewalks were laid, and many lots sold, and some buildings put up, but the business district of the city remained unchanged. Hughitt Street had cast its die long before Mr. McKinney undertook its conversion.

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Mr. McKinney was far sighted enough to see a waning of the city's boom and negotiated for the sale of "Lawndale." Among the prospective buyers **A.B. Geilfuss** of the **Commercial Bank of Milwaukee** was landed and beautiful "Lawndale" transferred to him for a goodly consideration, but his good fortune was of short duration. Much of this property reverted back to the State for taxes and the "**McKinney Flats**," corner of **Carpenter Avenue** and "**B**" **Street** was taken up by the **Marquette Savings Bank**.

John B. Weimer also had many good bargains to offer in the north (?) end of town along the **Florence Road**.

It was during this building boom that the **Iron Mountain Building and Loan Association** was formed in September and included most of the city's business men [*sic - businessmen*] as share holders [*sic - shareholders*], making in all three investment associations in the city, and, with money so easy, was it any wonder that so many reckless and unwise investments were made and left unfinished? Principal among these were the **Iron Mountain Brewing Company**, and **C.T. McElroy** of **Norway** and **James Dickie** of the city as financiers. The partly built walls of this building stood on the shores of **Lake Antoine** for many years; the **Catholic Academy and Hospital** as planned by **Father Bounian** and for which property adjoining the **St. Joseph's Church** was purchased; the **Mead Memorial Hall** for which insufficient money was collected; the **Tulgren building**, corner of **Stephenson Avenue** and **Brown Street**, was torn down to make room for the **Schlesenger** [*sic - Schlesinger*]

Bank of which the building, formerly used by **Miss Morgan**, millinery, is all that represents the grand structure that was intended for that corner.

It was during these booming times that **John Marsch** drifted into Iron Mountain, but in very different circumstances from those in which he left the city.

In December 1890 a meeting was called for the purpose of taking steps for the making of a **new county** and a committee was appointed to draft a bill to be presented to the legislature asking for the division of **Menominee County** and the making of a new county, with the county seat in Iron Mountain. A mass meeting was called to make arrangements for a celebration befitting such a victory and on Saturday, June 13, **Hon. Don M. Dickinson** and several members of the legislature arrived to help make merry so fitting an occasion. In the evening the ladies gave a grand ball in **Rundle's hall** and felt that they too had a share in the celebration.

July 10 (1891), **John T. Jones** discovered the western extension of the **Chapin Mine vein**, and the **Pewabic Mine** struck a new vein of very rich ore.

To **John T. Jones** and **Thomas J. Spencer** is given credit for much of the **exploratory mining work**, for through them many valuable properties have been opened up.

It was through the efforts of **Mr. Trudell** that the **Michigan State Board of Health** decided to hold a sanitary convention in the city on October 30 (1891) and as a result advised **better water** and **cleaner streets**, and in

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February, 1892, Mr. Trudell reaped the reward of his works when the **Water Works Company** decided to deal out pure water and help cut down **typhoid**.

September 1, 1891, **Ludington School** was opened.

In September, 1891, our **first perfect fire alarm system** was installed.

In October the **first sewerage** was laid, **C.M.Wells and Company** of **Appleton** having the contract to lay three miles of sewerage.

In October (1891) **Mr. C.H. Cady** resigned as **Superintendent of the Chapin Mine** and **Thomas F. Cole**, then manager of the **Schlesenger [sic - Schlesinger] group of mines**, assumed the duties until April, 1892, when **James McNaughton [sic - MacNaughton]** was made superintendent.

This seems a fitting place to make mention of some of the most prominent mining men of today who have begun their career in Iron Mountain. **Mr. Thomas F. Cole**, now [a] member of the **Cole-Ryan Syndicate**, formerly bookkeeper at the **Chapin Mine**; **John H. McLain**, now General Manager of the **Oliver Mining Company**, was bookkeeper at the **Chapin warehouse**; **W.J. Olcott**, President of **Oliver Mining Company (Oliver Iron Mining Company)**, was engineer; and **James McNaughton [sic - MacNaughton]**, Superintendent of the **Calumet and Hecla**, where he was at one time water-boy, came here directly from school.

When it became known that the upper story of **Rundle's Opera House** had been completed, the good theatrical

companies never forgot to stop at Iron Mountain and we had the pleasure of seeing such excellent players as **Thomas Keen** in **Richard III**; **John S. Murphy** in "Sham Rhine and Kerry Glow"; and **Ada Rhaen** in "Nell Gynne [sic - Gwenn]" and many others equally good. The High School had a charge of an excellent entertainment course. There were Social Clubs and Dancing Clubs and "Five O'Clock Teas" galore; and last but not least the best baseball team Iron Mountain ever had.

I must mention the "**Colonial Ball**" given by the ladies of the **Drawing Room Club** February 22, 1896, which function was unquestionably the most pleasing affair ever given in the city.

The year 1892 did not open as bright for the city as had some previous years for on the first day of the New Year, while everyone was enjoying their New Year's dinner, water broke out into the **Hamilton Mine** and flooded the Hamilton and disabled working conditions, both at the **Hamilton and Ludington mines**, throwing five hundred men out of employment and causing a loss of \$30,000.00 work of machinery. The large **Cornish pumps** were at once put in action, but were not large enough to cope with the water and both mines were closed in March.

Following the closing of the above mines (**Hamilton and Ludington**, January, 1892), the **Chapin** laid off 800 men, in spite of the assurance of **Mr. Schlesenger [sic - Schlesinger]** that the market was as safe and sound as ever, conditions certainly did not look very encouraging.

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February 11, 1892, articles of incorporation were drawn up and filed and the **Commercial Bank** opened its doors March 1st for business with **Oliver Evans** as cashier.

In May of the same year the contract was let for the **N.P. Hulst High School Building**, to be built of Amberg granite at a cost of \$65,000.00. In November it gave the teachers great pleasure to take possession of so fine a building. The school year, however, was broken into by a most **disastrous epidemic of diphtheria** and the schools were closed for weeks.

Prior to the winter of 1892 very little **logging** had been done in this part of the country; but, with the coming of the **Quinnesec Logging Company of Marinette**, logging interests were awakened and greatly developed.

During the winter of 1892 a set of monstrous boilers [*sic* – **bailers**] had been put in readiness at the **Hamilton Mine** and the work of unwatering the mines began. Water was bailed out at the rate of 9,000 gallons per minute and as a result water was soon under control and the mine put in working condition once more.

For some time the **Schlesenger** [*sic* – **Schlesinger**] **pay days** had been very irregular and there were unkind rumors afloat. In July 1893 the **Millie Mine** closed, explorations at the **Pewabic** stopped and a general shut down of ten per cent in wages went into effect, followed by word in August that Mr. Schlesenger [*sic* – **Schlesinger**] had retired from the management of the **Chapin Mine** and had turned the

property over to the largest creditors. The mine was closed and the men paid off with fifty per cent cash and the balance in six months bonds drawing interest at six per cent. In October the **Upper Peninsula Brewing Company** made an assignment, and a strike was threatened on the **C.M. & St. P. [Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul] Railroad**. During the winter there was much need of help from the **County Poor Commissioner** and the **Ladies' Benevolent Society**.

The road from the **City Limits** to the bridge leading to **Homestead** was opened up and called by unanimous consent "**Cleveland Avenue**" and the road around **Lake Antoine** was called "**Free Trade Boulevard**." It was, while work was being done on this boulevard, several hundred men working eight hours per day under **Mr. Sweet** and receiving pay for their work at the **Relief Store**, that some one [*sic* – **someone**] passed along the remark Mr. Sweet was to receive \$4.00 per day for his services. Every man threw down his tools and marched in a body to town, carrying at the head of the procession a black flag – the color bearer, I have been told, was **Mr. Frank Peterson**, at present in the employ of the **City Water Works Company**. It was their intention to sack the Relief Store, and I remember with what fear and trembling we stood guard over our store, expecting any minute to step aside and let the angry mob take possession. The line of procession stopped at the crossing of **Brown Street** and **Stephenson Avenue**, and, while speeches were being made, **Mr. T.B. Catlin**, then **Chief of Police**, marched very bravely to the front and took possession of the black flag, saying that if they wished to carry a flag

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it must be the "Stars and Stripes." After much wrangling the men were given some good sound advice and were finally persuaded to disband and return to work. It was during these times that whole families moved out of town, apparently in the night as if they had dropped off the face of the earth. The businessmen never recovered from the losses sustained during this period of hardship.

In May, 1894, the **Hon. Mark Al. Hanna** and **Mr. Chapin** came to our rescue by taking over the **Chapin Mine** and putting 500 men to work. In November[,] the mine was purchased by **Hanna and Company** and from that time on conditions were better and brighter. The Chapin Mine alone employed 800 men.

In September, 1893, the **Pewabic hospital** was completed and **Dr. Bangs** put in charge to care for the sick and wounded.

In May, 1894, our **schools** were put on the **State University list**.

It was during the summer (of 1894) that **Stephenson Avenue** was macadamized.

September, 1894, a **census of the city** shows a **rapid growth** in spite of adversity.

In December (of 1894), **John R. Wood's sandstone block** on **Ludington Street** was made into a **hotel** and opened to the public in April.

The retiring of **Mr. Schlesenger** [*sic* – *Schlesinger*] from the **Chapin Mining Company** did not by any means retire him from the mining world, for in March,

1894, we hear of him in Mexico as netting \$110,000.00 per month in gold mines and in April he was again in the land of his first adventures. Today he owns and manages the **Newport Mine** at **Ironwood**, one of the richest, if not the very richest iron mine in Michigan.

In 1895 the work of building the **paper mill at Niagara** caused a demand for carpenters and better pay.

The **Home Telephone** was extended to **Norway**, calling for extra workers.

The summer of 1896 saw our second great **building boom** among which were the **County buildings** and the **Lincoln School**.

A committee was appointed by the **County Board** to look for a suitable location for the **new county buildings** and property was purchased on the corner of **Stephenson Avenue** and "**C**" **Street** and the contract let for erection of the **Court House and Jail**. January 1, 1897, finds the county officers moving into their handsome new headquarters.

1896-1906

Mrs. O.C. Davidson

The period from January 1, 1897, to December 31, 1906, did not offer many items of permanent interest that could be regarded as history.

The **business depression** throughout the country during 1896 and 1897 affected the iron region severely, and Iron Mountain suffered with the rest.

January 16, 1897 the furniture for the **court room** in the new **Court House** was placed in position.

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by the Iron Mountain Women's Club, February 20, 1914

On January 18 (1897) the **Evening Dispatch**, Iron Mountain's third **daily paper**[,] appeared, but only lasted about six weeks.

In February 1897 the **mines reduced wages of employees** materially, and some of the smaller properties closed altogether, and within two months it was estimated that between two hundred and three hundred miners left town in search of employment.

On April 22 (1897), a novel and remarkable exhibition was given at **Rundle's Opera House**, the **cinematoscope**, showing pictures that actually seemed to move.

In July (1897) the grounds around the **Lincoln School** were graded and improved, and a **grand stand with seats for 400** was erected at the **baseball grounds** in Lawndale.

The **Artesian well** for the **water works** was completed at the depth of 580 feet.

In August (1897) the **City Council** passed resolutions to direct property owners to **build sidewalks** "of sound 2 inch plank" on parts of **Hughitt, Brown, and Flesheim Streets**[,] **Armstrong's first addition**.

In September the **schools opened with thirty-six teachers**. During October the schools were closed for one week, owing to an **epidemic of diphtheria** existing in a rather mild form.

Late in the year (1897) **working forces at the mine were increased and wages raised**.

In January, 1898, the building known as the **Montgomery Block** was **destroyed by fire** with a loss estimated at first as \$33,000.00, but later much reduced. As a result of this fire the **ordinance regulating fire limits was amended**; only solid brick or stone buildings were to be erected in the business district, and a fire warden was appointed, and the Council was petitioned to **lay watermains** [*sic* - **water mains**] **along the surface of Stephenson Avenue across the Chapin Pit**, to give increased efficiency.

One year previous, in 1897, the **Water Company** had 15 ½ miles of pipe and 172 fire hydrants.

In April (1898), **Company "E" of the Michigan National Guard** expected summons for active service in the threatened war with Spain.

On the 23 of April the citizens gave them a **farewell banquet**, and the women of the town presented them with a silk flag.

Many additional men desired to enlist, but the Company was up to its required strength of 84 men.

On April 25 they **left on a special train** for the mobilization of State troops at **Island Lake**, together with companies from **Ironwood, Calumet and Houghton**.

At Island Lake they were enrolled in the **34th Michigan**, a regiment that received great praise for its good appearance, and on June 27 they **sailed for Cuba**.

In July, 27 recruits left to join the Navy.

On August 17, **Company "E" sailed for Long Island** with all members accounted for. A subscription was taken

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up in town to purchase comforts for the many ill, and **Dr. Crowell** left August 24 for the Camp at **Montauk Point**.

Ten members of the company returned on September 4 and the rest two days later. Crowds of people were at the trains to meet them, but no demonstration was made on account of their weak condition.

Four members of the company died in Cuba, and four soon after reaching home. The company was **mustered out** December 2.

On August 22, 1898, a **destructive storm of wind and rain** caused several thousand dollars damage to the town.

In November, 1898, the **M. Levy Company** moved into their **new building** on **Stephenson Avenue**. In 1899 business conditions improved in general.

During the year (1899) the **Chapin Mine** was bought by the **National Steel Company** from **M.A. Hanna and Company**.

The **Farragut School** was built in 1899.

In February, 1900, the **first long distance telephone wire** was put through.

The **Iron Mountain Co-Operative Society** incorporated with a capital of \$50,000.00 in 1900.

In August (1900) the Council voted to establish a **fire department in the north part of the city** with two paid men and volunteers.

In July (1900), the building known as the **Hotel Wood** was bought and remodeled for a **City Hall**, at a cost of

\$9,200.00, and in the autumn the **Iron Mountain Club** leased rooms in the building to be used as club rooms.

Plans for the **Manual Training School** and the **Washington School** were decided on.

The **Manual Training (Fulton) and Washington Schools** were built in 1900-1901.

In July, 1901, the Protestant section of the **new cemetery park** was dedicated and appropriate ceremonies were held, the dedication of the Catholic section being unavoidably postponed until a few days later.

September 19 services were held as a **memorial to President McKinley**. All places of business were closed in the afternoon, a parade of various societies and citizens, about 2,000 in all, marched to **Cemetery Park** where memorial addresses and music were given.

On June 4, 1901, one of the most serious accidents at the mines in the town occurred, **eight men being suffocated by powder fumes in the Chapin Mine**.

March 20, 1902, the **Pine Grove Club** was organized.

April 15, 1902, the **Carnegie Public Library** was opened. The building cost \$17,500.00 exclusive of the land on which it stands, and was built of Bedford stone, with oak furnishings and steel book stacks. About 4,000 volumes were in the library when it was opened, and in 1913 it contained about 12,044.

In February, 1903, the **Holy Rosary Catholic Church**, located at the corner

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of **Blaine and Millie Streets**, was dedicated.

During the summer of 1903 the **German Lutheran Church**, on **West "D" Street**, was built.

In July, 1903, **Company "L" of the Michigan National Guard** (organized after the mustering out of **Company "E"**) was mustered out.

Some effort was made to secure a **new company** for the city, and a **new armory** was pledged, but the attempt was unsuccessful.

July 14, 1903, a **portrait of Hon. Don. M. Dickinson**, for whom the County was named, was presented to the County by the **Hon. Peter White of Marquette**, and hung in the court room of the **Dickinson County Court House**.

Interesting speeches were made regarding Mr. Dickinson and his place in the affairs of the nation.

February 25, 1904, the **Flanagan Block**, corner of **Stephenson Avenue** and **East "A" Street**, was totally destroyed by fire, with a loss of about \$9,000.00. It was **one of the first large buildings** in the town and was for many years **used as a theater**.

On May 2, 1904, the **first rural mail delivery** was started from the **Iron Mountain Post Office** with one route to **Homestead**.

In May, 1904, an **athletic association** was organized and grounds enclosed west of town, which were opened May 22.

The High School was placed on the accredited list of the **North Central Association of Colleges** in 1904.

During 1904 the **working force at most of the mines** were [*sic - was*] **reduced**, but conditions improved early in 1905.

In the summer of that year (1905) part of **Carpenter, River and Cedar Avenues** were paved with rock, a sidewalk built to **Cemetery Park**.

The **Lowell School** was built in 1905.

Early in 1906 the **First National Bank** bought the **Wood Block**, corner of **Stephenson Avenue** and **Ludington Street**, and remodeled the interior of the building.

August 2, 1906, the **Michigan State Telephone Company** purchased the stock and equipment of the **Menominee Range Telephone Company**, and a local organization which had given good service for a number of years.

December 31 (1906) the **Pine Grove Club** opened their **new Club House** with a party for its members.

1906-1914

Mrs. L.E. Amidon

It is said that an event must be well passed before it can be dealt with in the light of history. But, so many things have happened in Iron Mountain within these last few years that are the making of real progress, it seems fitting that we should mention some of them in connection with its history.

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Others have told you about the building of the **Chicago and Northwestern and Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul railroads** and the opening up of this part of the country in its relation with other parts of the world. During this last period the **Wisconsin and Michigan railroad** entertained, also, but I believe this is now in use for freight purposes only.

But it is our "**County Roads**" that I would speak for we have become so accustomed to our good roads that we sometimes forget we have not always had them. It is hard to realize that within eight years the road to **Quinnesec** has been graded and rocked; that within this time we have had the road to **Spread Eagle** improved to be in passable condition by private subscription – and that now this last is a fine public highway and leads not only to Spread Eagle but on through the country and connects with other good roads. Within five years the bridge across the **Michigamme River** and the grading of the roads on either side have put us within easy reach of **Marquette County**. The roads out into the country regions, not on these direct lines, have also been so improved that we can expect farmers to invest in land and make this a **farming community**. I speak of this because it materially affects a city to be located in a thriving, prosperous community, and to know that this is becoming such we need only to inquire of our merchants how many vegetables and fruits they can now buy at their door instead of sending outside for. It materially affects a place, also, to be able to reach with comfort its resorts and neighboring towns.

Then, too, the development of the water power, so plentiful around Iron Mountain, is having its share in making the history of the city. The development at **Twin Falls** of the Hydro-electric plant and the improvements at the **Hydraulic Falls** by the **Oliver Iron Mining Company** have especially influenced the city.

But we have many improvements within the city limits as well as without. Within these few years have been built miles of **cement sidewalks and crossings** (more than five miles of walks, not including crossings, in 1908 alone); miles of our **streets** have been graded and rocked. Some adequate **sewers** have been laid out and the health conditions very much improved. In this connection I would mention our **garbage collection system** (a recent innovation) which means more to the health, as well as the appearance of Iron Mountain, than we are apt to realize. Within this time several streets have had **railroad crossings** opened up and a system of gates and other adequate protective measures have been adopted. A **gas plant** has been established and we have been given **day current in electricity** – thus adding greatly to the comfort and convenience of the people.

A saw mill (lumber, lath, etc.) [**Von Platen Lumber Company**] has also been added, bringing many substantial citizens with it and giving employment to many others. The **mining companies** have made many improvements and are adding every year to their "Safety Equipment" and have added "First-Aid-To-The-Injured" instructions to their men. A **new high school** has been built, modern in its appointments, and

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adequate in size for a continued growth of the schools. The **post office** has been materially improved in size and arrangement and there has been a "postal savings bank" which is doing thriving business.

And we have not forgotten recreation and civic beauty. We have a beautiful spot set aside for golf and tennis with a suitable and pretty club house. [**Pine Grove Country Club**] Adjoining the golf grounds lies the **new city park**, equally noted for its natural beauty. Then we must not forget the **parking along Stephenson Avenue**, adding more if anything, to the civic improvement of Iron Mountain than the more pretentious golf grounds and city park; and I believe you will bear me out in the statement that the general tone of our appearance of houses, and their immediate surroundings, has improved greatly within the last few years. At this stage of its purposes, I believe we may anticipate the completion of the **new St. Paul depot** as a much needed improvement.

We find in Iron Mountain today a **Commercial Club** that is wide awake and leading in the boosting; and an **Agricultural Association** that is trying to show the possibilities of this region and to interest farmers in developing them. We find **churches for all** – **three Roman Catholic, two English speaking Methodist, a Baptist, and Episcopalian, a Presbyterian, a Jewish, and four Swedish churches (a Baptist, a Methodist, a Mission and a Lutheran)**. Of these the English Baptist, the Swedish M.E. and the Jewish have been built during the past few years.

We find the people so loyal to their **schools** and supporting them so well that I think we can with pardonable pride compare them favorably with other good schools of the country. We find our **library [Carnegie Public Library]** well balanced and suitable for general circulation. The "**Catholic Young Men's club [sic – Club]**" and the "**Algonquin Club**", both recently organized, promise to do good work among the boys, and several of the churches are reaching out to some of the phases of social work to meet the needs of the changing conditions of today.

We have two hospitals to which we can point with pride – The **St. George's [Hospital]** and the Swedish [**Scandinavian Hospital**] (the latter built within this last period). We have **two stable banks [First National Bank and Commercial Bank]** to safeguard the financial interest of the community and a **paid fire department** always on duty.

Iron Mountain has a **Woman's Club** trying to help the men boost for the welfare of the city and it is blessed with many organizations of a literary, social or fraternal order.

CHRONOLOGY OF UPPER PENINSULA

With Special Reference to Dickinson County; Presented Before Woman's Club by Mrs. O.C. Davidson, Regent of the D.A.R.

The following summarized history of the Upper Peninsula with special reference to Dickinson County was given by Mrs. O.C. Davidson, regent of the Chippewa Chapter, Daughters of the

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American Revolution, at a meeting of the Woman's Club. It is carefully prepared and in a concise manner presents the development of the Upper Peninsula. It should be of interest to all residents of the county. The history is given in years.

1636 La Garde, in a book published in Paris, reported copper was found near Lake Superior.

1771 English Company started mining copper near **Ontonagon**, but abandoned work until the country could be settled.

1798 Louis Chappean [*sic* – *Chappeau*] opened a trading post for the **American Fur Company** on **Peshtigo River**, the stockade standing until 1860.

1805 Chappean [*sic* – *Chappeau*] moved to **Marinette**.

1822 He [*Chappeau*] moved to the **Menominee River**, at the rapids which now bears his name.

1832 The first sawmill was built at the mouth of the **Menominee River**.

1832 (Exact date not known) – **John Kittson**, an Englishman, started two farms at **Chappeans** [*Chappeau's*] **Rapids** and **Wausaukee Bend**.

STARTS SURVEY OF LANDS

1840 A survey of the lands of the Upper Peninsula was started and **Captain Thomas A. Cram**, of the **U.S. Army**, made a survey of the northeast boundary of **Wisconsin**. He found many camp grounds but

no **Indians** until he reached the **Bad Water village**.

1844 William Burt found iron at site of **Jackson Mine, Negaunee**.

1844–45 Burt and Douglas [*sic* – *Douglass*] **Houghton** made a geological survey. Burt invented **solar compass**, as mineral attraction was so strong as to make magnetic compass useless.

1846 Three hundred pounds ore taken from **Jackson Mine** and smelted.

1857 An overland trail was opened to **Ontonagon**.

1861 The **Military Road** was opened.

1863–64 The **Chicago and Northwestern** started railway between **Negaunee** and **Escanaba** for an ore port to avoid ice in **St. Mary's River**. There was a gap between **Green Bay** and **Escanaba**.

1866 Thomas and Bartley Breen, of **Menominee**, located ore on property belonging to them near the site of the present station at **Waucedah**.

1870 Exploring work started on the **Breen** lands, and other exploring parties directed by **Dr. N.P. Hulst**, **John Buell** and others were exploring through the forests, searching for iron.

1871 The outcrop of the **Quinnesec Mine** was found. The excitement over the new iron field was great. The **Northwestern railway**, starting to build from **Menominee**

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to **Escanaba**, diverted its route from the lake shore to **Powers** to approach the newly opened section [iron ore explorations].

- 1872 A railroad called the **Menominee River Railway** was started from **Powers** toward **Breen Mine**, but construction was delayed for want of funds as capitalists doubted whether this range as far as **Quinnesec** would sustain a railroad costing \$500,000.00.
- 1873 The first practical explorations at **Quinnesec** were started. Mines and the railway were stopped because of a depression [Panic of 1873].
- 1874 Fifty-five tons of ore were hauled to **Menominee** by teams from the **Quinnesec Mine**.
- 1876 **John Lane Buell** platted **Village of Quinnesec**.
- 1877 The first real mines were opened at **Waucedah** [**Breen Mine**] and **Quinnesec** [**Quinnesec Mine**]. The railway company resumed construction.
- 1878 Ore was located at what became the **Chapin Mine** and the **Ludington Mine** in **Iron Mountain**.
- 1879 **Captain John Wicks** and seven men arrived in what became **Iron Mountain** to start careful exploration for the **Menominee Mining Company**. On September 15, **J. Sandercock** arrived and set up a forge. He is still employed at the **Chapin Mine**. In October a

shaft was sunk 60 feet in good ore. **David Majo** and **Joseph Rayome** started boarding houses. In the fall the **Village of Iron Mountain** was platted with six streets. The streets were **Stephenson, Merritt, Fleshem, Brown, Ludington** and **Hughitt**. **Frank Ayers** had first building in plat on southeast corner of **Stephenson** and **Ludington**, now occupied by **Olaf Rian** [**Rian's Hardware Store**]. **Charles Parent** arrived in November and built and opened the first real store.

FIRST LOCOMOTIVE ARRIVED

- 1880 The first locomotive steamed into **Iron Mountain** and the railway extended to **Florence**, Wisconsin.
- 1881 The first school opened in January with **W.H. Sheppard** as teacher. It was located on the northeast corner of **Brown** and **Iron Mountain** streets, one block north of the present library [**Carnegie Public Library**]. The next year a two-room addition was built. The first real hotel was the **Jenkins House**, located on the northeast corner of **Stephenson** and **Ludington**. The first church built, the **First Methodist Episcopal**, which stood one block south of the present location. The first drug store started, owned by **Seibert and Schalter** [*sic - Schaller*].
- 1887 **Iron Mountain** was incorporated as a village.
- 1888 **Iron Mountain** was incorporated as a city. The first theater, **Rundle's Opera House**, was

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opened, the first floor being complete. The opening play was "Monte Cristo".

1897 The City Council passed resolutions directing property owners to build sidewalks "of sound two-inch plank" on parts of Hughitt, Brown and Fleshiem Streets.

[Transcribed and edited by William John Cummings.]