

# DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY – ROADS AND BRIDGES

[Compiled and Transcribed by William J. Cummings]

## EARLY ROAD CONSTRUCTION AND IMPROVEMENTS

### COUNTY ROAD PROJECTS

*The Iron Mountain Daily News*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 1, Number 2 [Wednesday, April 13, 1921], page 1, column 2

### COUNTY EMBARKS ON ROAD PROGRAM

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#### Now Expected to Build Four Units of Rand- ville-Felch Branch

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#### Commission Plans Active Season. Construction Costs Are Lower.

It is now expected that at least four miles of the **Randville-Felch branch of the state trunk line system** will be constructed this season.

This new highway will have a total length of six and a half miles. It **extends in an easterly direction from Randville to Felch, following the old grade of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul spur track to the abandoned Groveland mine.**

It will be known as a Class C road, having a stone-bottom and a gravel surface.

It is expected that **State Commissioner Rogers** will issue his advertisement for labor at an early date, and that the contract will be executed as expeditiously as possible. The estimated cost of this highway is about \$166,000.

#### Another Contract In Sight.

Another contract to be let at an early date will be the **macadamized [sic] of south end of Carpenter avenue.** This portion of the avenue was adopted last year as a part of the state highway system. It extends **south from G street about a quarter of a mile to a connection with the state road at a point near the interstate bridge over the Menominee river.** A portion of this road and the approaches to the bridge were built last year. It is expected that the Wisconsin road commission will improve the roads on the south side of the river this season. It is understood that practically a new road will be constructed. Florence county has a road construction fund of about \$100,000 and the building program contemplates the **improvement of the road through Homestead and Aurora in the general direction of Florence.**

It is expected that the necessary steps for the **adoption of Stephenson avenue as a part of the state trunk line system** will be taken at an early date. As we understand the process of adoption, before the final steps can be taken, the city must have in hand the necessary cash to defray its portion of the proposed improvement. Under the law, the state will pave the center twenty feet on each side, making a paved roadway forty feet in width. The cost of **paving the avenue from the Pewabic Spur to a connection with the Milwaukee avenue pavement, [sic]** has been estimated at \$100,000. Under the law, the state would pay fifty per cent of the cost and the city fifty per cent. It is expected that the county road commission will enact the necessary adoption legislation at their

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meeting this afternoon and **State Commissioner Rogers** is on record as stating that he will approve the legislation.

## **Officials Work Counted.**

In this connection it can be stated that the persistency of **President Eisele**, of the board of public works, was largely influential in securing the approval of the project by Commissioner Rogers. Mr. Eisele made several trips to Lansing for the purpose of interviewing Mr. Rogers. In his persistency Mr. Eisele's endeavors were ably seconded by his fellow members of the board of public works and by **Mayor Eslick** and the city councilmen.

It is expected that the county road commission will do considerable work on the roads to the north this season. **Felch and West Branch townships** will also expend \$40,000 each in building new roads. The proposed new roads will open up much new country valuable from an agricultural standpoint.

There has been a pronounced shrinkage in the construction cost of highways – labor and materials being lower, as was evidenced in the letting of the **dirt road contract in Waucedah township** recently.

It is expected that road construction work in the county will afford employment for a considerable number of men who would otherwise be forced to seek employment elsewhere.

## **BREEN TOWNSHIP**

*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 15, Number 7 [Thursday, July 7, 1910], page 1, column 3*

### **New Highways.**

**County Engineer Carpenter** and **Assistant Riddell** made an automobile trip to **Felch and Breen townships** last Tuesday. The trip was made for the purpose of **locating camps for the engineering corps**, who will leave tomorrow [*sic – tomorrow*] to start the work of making surveys for several important additions to the county road system. Several weeks will be spent in the work. The corps is in charge of Engineer Riddell, of the College of Mines, who was recently engaged to assist County Engineer Carpenter. Mr. Carpenter is devoting much time at present to the new **Twin Falls bridge** and the **highway north to the Michigamme river**.

## **BREITUNG TOWNSHIP**

### **RANDVILLE-GRANITE BLUFF ROAD**

*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 9, Number 19 [Thursday, October 6, 1904], page 5, column 2*

### **RANDVILLE REPORTS.**

**The county road, between Randville and Granite Bluff, is nearly completed. Gus Fredeen**, who has the contract, has the right of way cut out, and all of the cordoroy [*sic – corduroy*] laid, and will finish the grading by October 15th. There will then be a **good team road from Iron Mountain to Sawyer Lake**, four miles north of Channing.

### **HOMESTEAD ROAD**

# DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY – ROADS AND BRIDGES

[Compiled and Transcribed by William J. Cummings]

*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 14, Number 44 [Thursday, March 24, 1910], page 1, column 2*

## Homestead Road.

It is probable that at the next meeting of the **county road commissioners** the contract will be let for the improvement of the **Iron Mountain-Menominee river highway**. This road extends from the **city limits to the Homestead bridge** and it is the intention of the board to macadamize it. The plan of building a new highway through the hill, making a straight highway to the river, has been abandoned. It was discovered that the large hill was of rock composition and the proposed cut would prove an expensive proposition. The board is figuring upon securing the necessary rock for the improvement from the city crusher plant, the board of public works agreeing to supply the same at cost price.

*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 15, Number 1 [Thursday, May 26, 1910], page 1, column 4*

## Road Work.

In another column the board of county road commissioners invites proposals for grading and macadamizing the **Iron Mountain-Homestead road**. The contracts will be let at a meeting on Saturday, June 4th. The stone for macadamizing the roadway will be secured from the city crusher plant. The plant is now being placed in readiness for crushing rock.

*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 15, Number 4 [Thursday, June 16, 1910], page 1, column 6*

## Homestead Road.

There was no meeting of the **board of county road commissioners** last Saturday and the bids for grading and macadamizing the **Iron Mountain-Homestead road** remain unopened in the hands of **County Engineer Carpenter**. A meeting of the board is announced for next Saturday when the bids will be opened and the contracts awarded.

*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 15, Number 17 [Thursday, September 15, 1910], page 1, column 5*

**Contractor Blomgren** commenced the work of macadamizing the **Homestead road** yesterday.

## SPREAD EAGLE ROAD TO THE TWIN FALLS BRIDGE

*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 12, Number 49 [Thursday, April 23, 1908], page 1, column 5*

## Good Roads.

A meeting of the **board of county road commissioners** [*sic – commissioners*] was held at the court-house last Saturday afternoon with **Members Kelly, Kingsford and Flanagan** in attendance. It was decided to extend the stone road from the present **terminus to Loretto** and the **Spread Eagle road to the Twin Falls bridge**. It is also expected to construct practically a **new highway to Granite Bluff**. **Engineer Carpenter** was instructed to arrange for the letting of contracts.

## HIGHWAY TO GRANITE BLUFF

# DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY – ROADS AND BRIDGES

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*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 12, Number 49 [Thursday, April 23, 1908], page 1, column 5*

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## FELCH TOWNSHIP

*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 15, Number 7 [Thursday, July 7, 1910], page 1, column 3*

## New Highways.

**County Engineer Carpenter** and **Assistant Riddell** made an automobile trip to **Felch and Breen townships** last Tuesday. The trip was made for the purpose of **locating camps for the engineering corps**, who will leave tomorrow *[sic – tomorrow]* to start the work of making surveys for several important additions to the county road system. Several weeks will be spent in the work. The corps is in charge of **Engineer Riddell**, of the College of Mines, who was recently engaged to assist **County Engineer Carpenter**. Mr. Carpenter is devoting much

time at present to the new **Twin Falls bridge** and the **highway north to the Michigamme river**.

## NORWAY TOWNSHIP

### VULCAN-LORETTO SECTION OF COUNTY ROAD SYSTEM

*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 12, Number 49 [Thursday, April 23, 1908], page 1, column 5*

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A meeting of the **board of county road commisioners [sic – commissioners]** was held at the court-house last Saturday afternoon with **Members Kelly, Kingsford and Flanagan** in attendance. It was decided to extend the stone road from the present **terminus to Loretto** and the **Spread Eagle road to the Twin Falls bridge**. It is also expected to construct practically a **new highway to Granite Bluff**. **Engineer Carpenter** was instructed to arrange for the letting of contracts.

*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 13, Number 5 [Thursday, June 25, 1908], page 1, column 3*

## Contracts Let.

At the adjourned meeting of the **board of county road commissioners** held last Saturday the contract for macadamizing the **Vulcan-Loretto section of the county road** was awarded to **Hoose & Person**, of this city, for \$2,463.32. The contract for the **bridge across the Sturgeon river near the O.C. Lumber company's dam** was

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awarded to the **Wisconsin Bridge & Iron company, of Milwaukee**, for \$6,370. The bids were considerably lower than anticipated.

## SAGOLA TOWNSHIP

### SAGOLA-MANSFIELD ROAD

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 9, Number 19 [Thursday, October 6, 1904], page 5, column 3

#### NEWS GOSSIP FROM SAGOLA.

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**John Shannon** has completed the **township road towards Mansfield** as far as the town line and the Mansfield township will have its end of the road completed by October 15th. There will then be a **good wagon road from Sagola to Crystal Falls**.

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 9, Number 22 [Thursday, October 20, 1904], page 5, column 3

#### NEWS GOSSIP FROM SAGOLA.

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The new township road from Sagola to Mansfield was completed yesterday.

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 9, Number 25 [Thursday, November 10, 1904], page 5, column 5

#### NEWS GOSSIP FROM SAGOLA.

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The **township road work for this season is finished** and the officials of the township may well be proud of the work accomplished, which comprises a good **turnpiked road from Randville to Sawyer Lake**, a distance of twelve miles, and from **Sagola west to the township line on the Mansfield road**, two miles.

### CHANNING-SAWYER LAKE ROAD

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 9, Number 19 [Thursday, October 6, 1904], page 5, column 1

#### CHIPS FROM CHANNING.

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**Robert Nowack**, who has the **contract to build a road from Channing to Sawyer Lake**, has the right of way cut out and cordoroy [*sic – corduroy*] laid, and will finish the grading next week.

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 9, Number 19 [Thursday, October 6, 1904], page 5, column 2

#### RANDVILLE REPORTS.

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The county road, between **Randville and Granite Bluff**, is nearly completed. **Gus Fredeen**, who has the contract, has the right of way cut out, and all of the cordoroy [*sic – corduroy*] laid, and will finish the grading by October 15th. There will then be a **good team road from Iron Mountain to Sawyer Lake**, four miles north of Channing.

# DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY – ROADS AND BRIDGES

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## IMPROVEMENTS TO RANDVILLE ROAD

*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 14, Number 11 [Thursday, August 5, 1909], page 1, column 3*

### County Road Matters.

At a meeting of the **board of county road commissioners** held last Saturday it was decided to expend \$100 on the **Merriman culvert** and \$500 on the **Wilbur hill, south of Randville**. The balance of the money remaining in the county road fund will be expended in the eastern portion of the **Waucedah-County Line road**. The bids for the construction of the **Sawyer Lake-Floodwood road** were not acted upon and will be held over until the Marquette county authorities reach a decision relative to the **Michigamme river bridge**.

## SAWYER LAKE-FLOODWOOD ROAD

*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 14, Number 11 [Thursday, August 5, 1909], page 1, column 3*

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At a meeting of the **board of county road commissioners** held last Saturday it was decided to expend \$100 on the **Merriman culvert** and \$500 on the **Wilbur hill, south of Randville**. The balance of the money remaining in the county road fund will be expended in the eastern portion of the **Waucedah-County Line road**. The bids for the construction of the **Sawyer Lake-Floodwood road** were not acted

upon and will be held over until the Marquette county authorities reach a decision relative to the **Michigamme river bridge**.

## ROAD TO THE NORTH CONNECTING MENOMINEE AND MARQUETTE RANGES

*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 14, Number 10 [Thursday, July 29, 1909], page 1, column 5*

## A ROAD TO NORTH

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### THE MENOMINEE AND MARQUETTE RANGES TO BE CONNECTED.

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### Contract for the Dickinson County End Will Be Let on Saturday; Parallels St. Paul Road.

The **highway connecting the Menominee and Marquette ranges** – agitated in The Press for several years – is to be constructed forthwith.

The contract for the Dickinson county end of the highway will be let at a meeting of the **county road commission** to be held at the court-house [*sic – courthouse*] next Saturday, and it is understood that work on the Marquette end will commence at an early date.

The contract to be let next Saturday by the Dickinson county commission calls for the **construction of a highway from a point at Sawyer Lake, a short distance north of Channing, to Floodwood**.

It will be known as the **Sawyer Lake-Floodwood highway**. It will be six miles in

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length. The roadbed will be eighteen feet wide and no grade will exceed five per cent.

The contract for the construction of the remaining link in the highway – **from Floodwood to the Marquette county line** – a distance of two miles – will be let as soon as the Marquette authorities decide definitely on the location of the **steel bridge across the Michigamme river**.

**Engineer Carpenter** has received assurances that the Marquette county commission will let the bridge contract on or about October 15th. The bridge will be constructed of steel with concrete abutments. The span is about ninety feet. Unless present plans are changed the bridge will be built across the **Michigamme river** at a point about **three hundred feet east of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul railway bridge**.

The highway from Sawyer Lake north to the county line follows the St. Paul road on the east side, a short distance from the right of way. In Marquette county the highway continues on the east side of the railroad until it meets a small stream known as the **Witch Lake outlet**, where it will cross to the west side of the track and continue on the west side to **Witbeck**, where it again crosses to the east of the railroad and continues north to **Republic**.

This highway will open up a country now without a roadway worthy of the name. There are quite a number of excellent farms along the route. The settlers in the past have been badly handicapped in reaching a market with their products, the railway accommodations being poor and expensive, and the construction of the highway will add very materially to their prosperity. Much of the soil is excellent for farming purposes, yielding large crops wherever cultivated, and the new road will no doubt result in the settlers increasing their acreage and the opening of many new farms.

While in the city recently **Deputy State Highway Commissioner Rogers** inspected the recently completed **Pine Creek road** and was so well pleased with the work that he will recommend the usual state bonus for stone roads.

The contractor expects to finish the **Sturgeon Mill-Loretto highway** about the tenth of August. This link in the trunk system is about one and a quarter miles in length and of stone construction.

It is not known when the contract will be let for the **extension of the Dickinson county system to a connection with the Menominee county system**. This work depends in a measure, *[sic]* on the future action of the Menominee authorities. The extension of the **Menominee river road** in a direct line to the river from the south end of **Carpenter avenue** will also be undertaken at an early date.

The **Wisconsin Bridge & Iron company** has commenced work on the **steel bridge across the Sturgeon river at the New York Farm**. The piles for the concrete abutments *[sic – abutments]* are now being driven and it is expected to commence the concrete work and the steel erection as soon as this work has been finished. The spans of this bridge are 160 feet in length.

The **Central States Bridge company**, in a communication with **County Clerk Quarnstrom**, state *[sic – states]* that the work of erecting the steel for the inter-state **bridge at Twin Falls** will start within sixty days. This means an early start on the concrete abutments *[sic – abutments]*.

*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 14, Number 22 [Thursday, October 21, 1909], page 1, column 2*

## Witch Lake Road.

# DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY – ROADS AND BRIDGES

*[Compiled and Transcribed by William J. Cummings]*

The Press learns that the **Marquette board of county road commissioners** has appropriated the sum of \$5,500 for the construction of the so-called **Witch Lake [road]**; also \$2,500 for one-half the cost of the **bridge across the Michigamme river** on the highway named between Dickinson and Marquette counties. The Press also learns that the contract for the Dickinson county *[sic]* and of the road will be let at an early date.

*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 14, Number 23 [Thursday, October 28, 1909], page 1, column 5*

## WITCH LAKE ROAD

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### BIDS INVITED FOR BUILDING THE MICHIGAMME RIVER BRIDGE.

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### Dickinson and Marquette Counties Will Expend \$5000.00 Each on Highway Next Season.

In another column of to-day's *[sic – today's]* Press the **board of county road commissioners**, in conjunction with the **Marquette county board**, invites proposals for the **construction of a bridge across the Michigamme river about two miles north of Floodwood**, the structure forming a part of the proposed highway connecting Dickinson and Marquette counties.

The bids must be in the hands of the commission by Nov. 10th. Each bidder must furnish complete detailed drawings and specifications, covering the design of the proposed bridge, and materials to be used. The latter must conform to "Cooper's Specifications" of highway bridges and to the general specifications on file at the

offices of the county clerks in **Marquette** and **Iron Mountain**.

The successful bidder will be required to enter into a joint contract with the commissioners of the two counties and to give satisfactory bonds, aggregating \$3,500, for the faithful performance of the contract and of the payment of all material and labor claims. The bridge is to be completed not later than July 1st next year. The board reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to accept any bid they may deem to be to the interest of the two counties.

The estimated cost of the bridge is \$5,000. The specifications call for a high-class structure. The bridge span will not be less than eighty feet between piers and the bottom chord not less than eight feet above the water line. The roadway will be sixteen feet in the clear with a reinforced concrete floor not less than six inches thick with a concrete curb not less than twelve inches high and six inches thick. The bridge must be of sufficient strength to carry a live load of 100 pounds per square foot, also for the passage of a 20-ton steam road roller having 7 ½ tons on each rear wheel. The foundations, piers and wing walls will be constructed of concrete.

The contracts for building the highway will also be let at an early date. The counties will expend \$5,00 each during the coming season.

*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 14, Number 34 [Thursday, January 13, 1910], page 1, column 5*

## GUST FREDIN *[sic]* GETS A LARGE CONTRACT

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# DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY – ROADS AND BRIDGES

[Compiled and Transcribed by William J. Cummings]

## Marquette Road Commission Awarded Contract to Norway Man.

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The **Marquette county road commission** met last Thursday and awarded a contract for the construction of a little less than two miles of road **north from the Michigamme river to the county line near Witch lake to Gust Fredin [sic – Fredeen], of Norway.** The contract price is \$4,240, and it calls for the removal of 6,900 yards of earth.

The territory through which the road will be constructed is hilly in places. It is not expected that it will be necessary to do any blasting, however, as from the appearance of the surface the ledge will not be encountered. In the event if it is necessary to cut through rock the contractor will receive extra compensation at a rate per yard that has been agreed upon by himself and the commission. Mr. Fredin's [sic - Fredeen's] contract includes the removal of the timber and the grading to a certain width.

The road is to be completed by July 15th, and it is Mr. Fredin's [sic – Fredeen's] intention to begin operations just as soon as the weather will permit. All bridges and culverts that will be necessary will be charged for extra. One good-sized bridge will have to be put in, but this will probably be let under a special contract, as the commission will likely have it constructed of reinforced concrete.

The **Illinois Bridge company**, which was a short time ago awarded the contract for the **construction of the Michigamme bridge**, at a point form where Mr. Fredin [sic – Fredeen] will start his work, is also under contract to have the bridge completed by July 15th. It will be a concrete structure, reinforced with steel, and will have concrete abutments.

The **road commission of Dickinson county** will meet next Saturday to award a contract for the construction of **six miles of highway to connect with the Marquette county road at the county line.** This will be a big contract as the territory through which the road will pass is very rough in places. The Dickinson county commission will endeavor to have its end of the road completed by the time the Marquette county road is finished, so that the highway will probably be passable by Aug. 1st. At the same session the contract will be awarded for macadamizing the Vulcan-Norway road.

**[need to finish copying this article]**

*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 14, Number 52 [Thursday, May 19, 1910], page 1, column 6*

## MARQUETTE DISAPPOINTS.

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### Will Build Inter-County Highway Only As Far As Witch Lake.

Marquette range papers seem to think that when the new county highway connecting Marquette and Dickinson counties is completed next August, that the trip between Marquette and Duluth can be made in automobile, using "the excellent roads from Iron Mountain to Ironwood, and the good roads between Ironwood and Duluth." Your guess is about five or six years too early, neighbor. At the present time there are **no highways between Wakefield and Watersmeet**, and none worth mentioning between **Watersmeet and Iron River.** Gogebic county adopted the county road system last fall, and is building the first section of the **Ironwood-Watersmeet trunk road** at the present time. – Ironwood News Record.

# DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY – ROADS AND BRIDGES

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And by the same token it will not be possible to make an “automobile trip” from Iron Mountain to the Marquette range towns. It develops that Marquette county has “fallen down” badly on the **Dickinson-Marquette highway**, for some unknown reason. The Press “regrets to learn” that the Marquette road commissioners instead of building a **highway from the Michigamme river to Republic**, as was generally understood at this end of the route, will only build the **link from the river to Witch Lake**, a distance of about four miles. The **Dickinson county section, from Sawyer Lake to the Michigamme river** – and the concrete bridge across the stream named – will be built according to the original agreement. The contractors are rushing the work and have the right of way chopped out and stumped to a point near **Dead Man’s Lake**.

*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 15, Number 4 [Thursday, June 16, 1910], page 1, column 6*

## FREDEEN GETS CONTRACT.

### Work on Ishpeming and Witch Lake Roads to Cost \$6,300.

The bids submitted to the **Marquette county road commission** for the improving of two miles of the main thoroughfare in **Ishpeming township** and three quarters of a mile road in the **Witch Lake district** were considered too high, and both were rejected. **Gust Fredeen**, who is now constructing two miles of road in the **Witch Lake district** for the commission, was the lowest bidder. The commission made Mr. Fredin [*sic* – *Fredeen*] a proposition on both jobs and he accepted it. He is to receive \$6,300 for the

work, to be done according to the specifications prepared by the board.

The repairs on the Ishpeming township road are to be completed by Sept. 1st, and the additional work on the Witch Lake road is to be finished by July 15th. The present Witch Lake job, on which Mr. Fredeen is now working is also to be completed by July 15th.

The work on the road in Ishpeming township will begin at the city line, a short distance west of the Carp river bridge. The grubbing and clearing will be for a width at any point equal to the cut or fill and gutters at that point. The grading will consist of approximately 5,292 cubic yards of embankment and 51,188 yards of earth excavation.

The work on the Witch Lake road will begin at what is known as station 104 and end at station 140. Grubbing and clearing will be done in a manner similar to the work on the Ishpeming township road and the grading will consist of approximately 3,749 cubic yards of embankment and 4,018 yard of earth excavation.

The city’s end of the road leading west is in good condition, it having been graded and rolled a few years ago. Mr. Fredeen’s contract does not call for macadamizing. A dirt road will be built and it will be left in good condition for macadamizing. Mr. Fredeen has a complete outfit for road building.

*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 15, Number 15 [Thursday, September 1, 1910], page 8, column 3*

## Road Finished.

**Contractor Blomgren**, who had the contract to build the **new highway to the Marquette county line at the Michigamme river**, has completed the work. The new highway is about six miles

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in length, extending **north from a point near Sawyer Lake. Engineer Carpenter** and assistants left for the north yesterday morning to check up the work. A contract has been let to **Charles Doane**, of **Floodwood**, to gravel a portion of the north end and ultimately the entire highway will receive a gravel dressing.

## SAGOLA-CHANNING LINK OF THE STATE TRUNK ROAD

*The Iron Mountain News*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 2, Number 136 [Thursday, September 21, 1922], page 1, column 5

## PLANS RECEIVED FOR SAGOLA ROAD

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### Preliminaries of Construction Will Be Completed This Fall

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This morning, the county road engineer received from the state highway department the plans and specifications of the **Sagola-Channing link of the state trunk road extending north to the Marquette county line at the Michigamme river.** The road will be gravel construction and the length of the link is about four miles.

All the preliminaries for the building of the road will be made this fall so that the contract may be let early in the spring. When this job is finished this **inter-county highway will have been rebuilt from a point south of Randville to the Michigamme river bridge.**

**M.J. Bacco**, who had the contract for graveling the section from **Dead Man's Lake [Silver Lake] to the Michigamme river**, finished the job about ten days ago.

The contract taken over by the county commission will be finished during the fall and winter when traffic is light. A third contract is now in progress under the supervision of **Matt Blomquist.** The total length of the road included in the two contracts is about nine miles.

## WAUCEDAH TOWNSHIP

### VULCAN-LORETTO SECTION OF COUNTY ROAD SYSTEM

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 12, Number 49 [Thursday, April 23, 1908], page 1, column 5

### Good Roads.

A meeting of the **board of county road commissioners [sic – commissioners]** was held at the court-house last Saturday afternoon with **Members Kelly, Kingsford and Flanagan** in attendance. It was decided to extend the stone road from the present **terminus to Loretto** and the **Spread Eagle road to the Twin Falls bridge.** It is also expected to construct practically a **new highway to Granite Bluff.** **Engineer Carpenter** was instructed to arrange for the letting of contracts.

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 13, Number 5 [Thursday, June 25, 1908], page 1, column 3

### Contracts Let.

At the adjourned meeting of the **board of county road commissioners** held last Saturday the contract for macadamizing the **Vulcan-Loretto section of the county**

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road was awarded to **Hoose & Person**, of this city, for \$2,463.32. The contract for the **bridge across the Sturgeon river near the O.C. Lumber company's dam** was awarded to the **Wisconsin Bridge & Iron company, of Milwaukee**, for \$6,370. The bids were considerably lower than anticipated.

## WAUCEDAH-COUNTY LINE ROAD

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### County Road Matters.

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## WEST BRANCH TOWNSHIP

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 24, Number 44 [Thursday, March 25, 1920], page 1, column 6

### A ROAD TO RALPH

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### Citizens Petition Road Commission for a Needed Improvement

For a number of years The Press has been advocating **better highway connections with West Branch township**. This township contains a great wealth of **good farming lands**. Within the past few years **several cattle and sheep ranches have been located in the vicinity of Ralph** and the settlers are desirous of forming business connections with **Iron Mountain** and **other parts of Dickinson county**. The residents are now petitioning the county road commission for the improvement of the **highway between Ralph and Felch**. This roadway could be placed in good condition at a comparatively small expense and the improvement would not only be a great convenience to the people of the whole county and result in the early development of much good farming land, but a present day business asset. Trade that now goes to **EsCANaba** would come to Iron Mountain. The road should be improved without unnecessary delay. The reasons advanced by the West Branch citizens for the improvement are worthy of the favorable consideration of the road commission. They are as follows:

“Because we are without a passable highway to any point in the county or elsewhere.

“Because we are unable to transact business with the banking, business and professional men of the county of which [we] are a part.

“Because our only means of travel is by rail, one train a day service, causing great inconvenience, loss of time and great expense.

“Because the **present highway between Ralph and the East Branch of the Sturgeon River is not a safe road to travel**.

# DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY – ROADS AND BRIDGES

[Compiled and Transcribed by William J. Cummings]

“Because the above mentioned road, a distance of about eight miles, we think can be placed in a safe condition without the expenditure of any large amount, such as is required for the establishment of a trunk highway.

“Because this part of the county is being rapidly developed as a farming and stock and sheep raising community, population and business thereby increasing.

“Because we have paid about \$12,000 in county road taxes and have had no road work done in this township.

“Because we are a part of Dickinson county and would like to have and need some means of communication with the other inhabitants of the county.

“Because we think it would be nothing but a square deal to us to fix the road above mentioned.”

a careful inspection **selected a site for the new bridge across the Menominee river about three quarters of a mile above the horse race.** At this point the river is narrower than at any other point opposite this city, and the banks present an easier approach, besides being located at a point convenient to the settlers on the other side of the river.

*The Menominee Range*, Iron Mountain, Menominee County, Michigan, Volume XI, Number 13 [Thursday, June 20, 1889], page 1, column 3

The **bridge committee of Menominee and Florence counties** have progressed with the business of their appointment so far as to advertise for bids for the construction of the bridge, and bids by contractors are now in order. Bids will be received at the **Commercial house** in this city up to 2 p.m. June 20 – to-day [*sic* – today] – and the **bridge, built of iron with masonry abutments**, must be complete by October 15. This is an important improvement for our city, and our readers will be gratified to learn of the satisfactory condition the business is in. We shall expect to see our **Popple Creek neighbors hauling their farm produce into this city** this fall.

*The Menominee Range*, Iron Mountain, Menominee County, Michigan, Volume XI, Number 16 [Thursday, July 11, 1889], page 1, column 3

**PIXLEY**, one of the Wisconsin settlers, declares that the **bridge** about to be built across the **Menominee river**, [*sic*] will accommodation [*sic* – accommodate] no one but **Alderman O’Connell**, who has a farm in the badger state, but other competent witnesses appear to be of a different mind. Mr. O’Connell had nothing to do with locating the bridge, that business

## BRIDGES

### UNIDENTIFIED BRIDGE THREE-FOURTHS OF A MILE ABOVE THE HORSE RACE – MENOMINEE RIVER

*The Menominee Range*, Iron Mountain, Menominee County, Michigan, Volume XI, Number 11 [Thursday, June 6, 1889], page 1, column 2

#### The Bridge is Located.

Messrs. **John L. Buell, E.C. Place** and **C.F. Fowler**, of **Menominee county**, and **Chas. Loughrey, O.C. Davidson** and **Parmenter**, of **Florence county**, were in this city last Sunday and Monday, and after

# DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY – ROADS AND BRIDGES

[Compiled and Transcribed by William J. Cummings]

was done by **Mr. Chas. Loughrey**, of **Florence**, and **Capt. Davidson**, of **Commonwealth**, and these gentlemen say they will have a road to that point before the bridge is completed, notwithstanding [what] Pixley thinks, or pretends to think, that it is impossible to open a road to it. It is hardly likely that any committee of sensible men would locate a bridge at a point in accessible [sic – inaccessible] to the very people the bridge is designed to accommodate.

## CUNDY BRIDGE

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 9, Number 19 [Thursday, October 6, 1904], page 5, column 2

### QUINNESEC ITEMS.

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The **two main spans of the new bridge are completed**, and the bridge men will celebrate the event by giving a dance at **Buell's Opera House** to-morrow [sic – tomorrow] night. Two hundred invitations have been issued and a good time is anticipated.

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 9, Number 21 [sic] [Thursday, October 13, 1904], page 1, column 4

### Cundy Bridge.

The **inter-state bridge, uniting Michigan and Wisconsin at Quinnesec and Norway**, is completed and was accepted yesterday at a joint meeting of the bridge committees of Dickinson and Marinette county [sic – counties]. It was decided to name the structure the "**Cundy**

**Bridge**" in honor of **Supervisor Cundy**, of Breitung, who has been a consistent and persistent advocate of the improvement.

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 9, Number 27 [Thursday, November 24, 1904], page 5, column 1

### QUINNESEC ITEMS.

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**Gus Freeden** commenced work on the **approach to the new bridge** last Thursday. He expects to be through with the job in about two weeks.

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

### QUINNESEC ITEMS.

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There is a crack two inches in width in the retaining wall of the **Cundy bridge**[.] Repairs must be made at once.

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 9, Number 29 [Thursday, December 8, 1904], page 5, column 2

### QUINNESEC ITEMS.

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The **approach to the Cundy bridge on the Michigan side of the river is completed** and the rails for the train cars have been laid across the bridge to the Wisconsin side. **Contractor Fredeen** has ordered ten new cars and expects them this week. As soon as they arrive he will proceed to fill the approach on that side of the river.

# DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY – ROADS AND BRIDGES

[Compiled and Transcribed by William J. Cummings]

...

The work of **repairing the break in the retaining wall at the Cundy bridge** is in progress this week. Holes have been drilled through the wall and eye-bolts inserted which will be anchored to piles driven in the ground on the land side of the wall. This, it is thought, will prevent the wall from giving away under the pressure of the dirt used in filling the approach.

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 9, Number 30 [Thursday, December 15, 1904], page 9, column 4

## QUINNESEC ITEMS.

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The work of filling the **approach on the Wisconsin side of the Quinnesec-Niagara bridge** was brought to a standstill last Monday, when it was discovered that the piling was giving away and had crowded the pier over toward the river about six inches. A message [sic – message] was sent to **J.B. Wood**, of **Amberg**, chairman of the town board, to come at once and determine what is to be done to prevent further damage to the bridge and to repair the damage already done.

## UNIDENTIFIED BRIDGE NORTH OF RANDVILLE ON STURGEON RIVER

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 9, Number 23 [Thursday, October 27, 1904], page 5, column 4

## RANDVILLE REPORTS.

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The bridge crew is still at work on the **bridge north of here** and more men are employed than before. They keep adding to the number daily.

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 9, Number 25 [Thursday, November 10, 1904], page 5, column 4

## RANDVILLE REPORTS.

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The concrete crew working on the **bridge over the Sturgeon river**, [sic] has received orders to quit work for this winter, as they have been unsuccessful in finding solid bottom enough to build on. Almost the entire crew will go, first, to Pembine and thence to Iron Ridge, near Milwaukee. **Edwin L. Scott**, of Iron Mountain, who has been employed with the concrete crew[,] will go with them.

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 9, Number 27 [Thursday, November 24, 1904], page 5, column 4

## RANDVILLE REPORTS.

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A crew of men is at work driving piles and putting in a sixty-foot girder to support the **track across the Sturgeon river while the new bridge is being constructed.**

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 9, Number 28 [Thursday, December 1, 1904], page 5, column 3

## RANDVILLE REPORTS.

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# DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY – ROADS AND BRIDGES

[Compiled and Transcribed by William J. Cummings]

The superstructure for the **new railroad bridge across the Sturgeon river** was completed last Saturday, and the pile-driving crew went to Escanaba to do some work on the ore docks.

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 9, Number 29 [Thursday, December 8, 1904], page 5, column 5

## RANDVILLE REPORTS.

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The pile-driver crew arrived last Tuesday morning to drive the piles for the support of the **abutments for the new railroad bridge across the Sturgeon river**.

## UNIDENTIFIED BRIDGE ACROSS MENOMINEE RIVER AT HOLMES' HEADQUARTERS

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 9, Number 27 [Thursday, November 24, 1904], page 5, column 1

## STATE ROAD READING.

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**Anton J. Brackett**, of **Norway**, has a position as inspector on the **new Wisconsin & Michigan bridge, across the Menominee river at Holmes' Headquarters**.

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

## HOLMES' LANDING ITEMS.

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**Lorimer & Gallagher**, the contractors who are building the **Nathan extension of the Wisconsin & Michigan road**, are rushing the work as fast as possible and now expect to finish operations in about two weeks. The work is under the supervision of **P.H. Kilboy** [*sic – Kilroy – ?*], who is a hustler. The bridge work is about finished and the structures will be ready for trains to run over in a week or ten days. **The crew of negroes employed on the bridges had some misunderstanding with the forman** [*sic – foreman*] and left for Chicago, which resulted in a suspension of operations for several days. A new crew of twenty-five men arrived last Sunday morning and work is now being rushed.

## TWIN FALLS BRIDGE

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 15, Number 7 [Thursday, July 7, 1910], page 1, column 3

## New Highways.

**County Engineer Carpenter** and **Assistant Riddell** made an automobile trip to **Felch and Breen townships** last Tuesday. The trip was made for the purpose of **locating camps for the engineering corps**, who will leave tomorrow [*sic – tomorrow*] to start the work of making surveys for several important additions to the county road system. Several weeks will be spent in the work. The corps is in charge of **Engineer Riddell**, of the College of Mines, who was recently engaged to assist **County Engineer Carpenter**. Mr. Carpenter is devoting much

# DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY – ROADS AND BRIDGES

*[Compiled and Transcribed by William J. Cummings]*

time at present to the new **Twin Falls bridge** and the **highway north to the Michigamme river**.

*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 15, Number 42 [Thursday, March 9, 1911], page 1, columns 2-4 [three-column photograph taken by Nelson]*

The above is an excellent picture of the **new Twin Falls bridge**, taken by Nelson, the photographer. The new bridge lies **four and a half miles north of Iron Mountain on the new road to Spread Eagle and Florence**, spanning the **Menominee river** at the crest of the old Twin *[sic]* of Twin Falls.

The design is by **M.W. Torkelson, bridge engineer of the Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey**, and is being built by the **Central States Bridge Co.**, of Indianapolis, **Edison B. Parmelee** having direction of erection.

The total cost of the bridge will be about \$6,500.

The bridge is a steel struss *[sic – truss]* structure with a concrete floor, having a span of 140 feet and rests on concrete abutments *[sic – abutments]*.

Last week **County Engineer Carpenter** let the contract for the approaches at the Michigan and Wisconsin ends of the bridge to **B.W. Hicks**, of **Vulcan**, for \$7,500. Mr. Hicks is now getting his material together and expects to commence the work at once.

*The Daily News, Iron Mountain-Kingsford, Michigan, Thursday, May 17, 2012, page 1, columns 2-5; page 3, columns 1-4*

## **Twin Falls bridge nominated**

## **Breitung, road commission support preservation of historic bridge**

By LISA M. HOFFMANN – Staff Writer, The Daily News

IRON MOUNTAIN - Dickinson County officials are in support of placing the **Upper Twin Falls Bridge, Causeways and Carpenter Memorial** on the **National Register of Historic Places**.

Located four miles north of Iron Mountain, the Upper Twin Falls Bridge and road over the Menominee River in Breitung Township and the town of Florence, Wis. will be considered for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places by the Michigan Historic Preservation Review Board on Friday and by Wisconsin officials on Aug. 18.

If recommended by both states, it will be sent to the National Register for consideration.

**Breitung Township Supervisor Denny Olson** said the few complaints he heard about this bridge is from pontoon boat owners and operators.

“Pontoon boats can't get under it and they want it out of there,” he said.

**Township Clerk Samantha Coron** commented, “I think it is a neat thing.”

**Breitung Township Board of Trustees** has approved writing a letter and/or calling to voice the township's support of placing the bridge on the National Historic Register.

The **Dickinson County Road Commission** has also voted in favor of making a phone call with Breitung Township in support of the historical listing.

In addition, **Jim Harris Jr., superintendent of operations for the Dickinson County Road Commission**, will search for funding sources for

# DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY – ROADS AND BRIDGES

*[Compiled and Transcribed by William J. Cummings]*

improvement and/or restoration of the bridge and approaches.

“There are very few bridges like it left in the state,” he said.

Harris commented that within the last 10 years, the road commission considered removing the bridge and/or restoring it.

“We can't afford to take it out,” he said. “Structurally, it is in good condition and it could potentially have a restoration.”

Harris said if the bridge is placed on the National Register of Historic Places, the hope is that some type of grant may be attainable in the future.

“We are just beginning researching this and it could be some time before any funding becomes available for any work at the location,” Harris added.

Harris added that once the bridge is on the National Register, if the county and the other three landowners decide to have the bridge taken out, they still can.

The National Register of Historic Places is the federal government's official list of properties deemed worthy of preservation because of their importance in American history and culture.

A listing in the register provides recognition and assists in preserving the country's national heritage.

Benefits to historic properties listed on the register are:

- Recognition that a property is significant to the nation, state or the community.

- Consideration in the planning for federal and federally assisted projects.

- Eligibility for federal tax incentives and other preservation assistance.

## **Built in 1910-11**

The bridge was built in response to **Peninsula Power Company's plans to build the Twin Falls Power Dam**, which made it necessary to replace the existing bridge crossing the Menominee River.

The 101-year-old bridge spans the Menominee River and served horse

wagon, buggy and auto traffic to and from Florence, Spread Eagle and Iron Mountain.

It closed to all truck and auto use in September 1971.

The bridge and road was then turned over to the Dickinson County Road Commission and the town of Florence. Dickinson and Florence counties each initially paid half of the construction costs of the iron bridge, and the **Twin Falls Land Association** paid for the construction of the causeways.

A new bridge located a mile downstream was completed in 1934.

Designed by **M.W. Torkelson**, a Wisconsin bridge engineer, the iron bridge was built in 1910-11 by the **Central States Bridge Company** at a cost of \$5,106.

The contract to build the earthen approaches from the Wisconsin and Michigan sides was let and supervised by **Gilbert "Bert" Carpenter**, **Dickinson County engineer**, at a cost of \$7,500.

The earthen approach on the Wisconsin side was constructed by using narrow gauge railroad tracks with a small steam locomotive to pull side dumping flatcars that were filled at a borrow pit on the Wisconsin side.

**The period between 1914 and 1920 was a busy time for saloons which sprang up a mile from the Twin Falls Bridge because Michigan was “dry” and Wisconsin was “wet.” This led to liquor being run across the border from Wisconsin to Michigan.**

**To control the rum running, Michigan assigned constables to check all autos, buggies and wagons for liquor at the Twin Falls Bridge.**

Known as a historic bridge in the region, it is the **only known example of a highway pin-connected, camelback, through-truss bridge in Michigan.**

# DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY – ROADS AND BRIDGES

*[Compiled and Transcribed by William J. Cummings]*

In Wisconsin, it is one of only two known to exist and the only one still in its original location.

Little has changed around the bridge since it was constructed with the exception of the erection of the **Carpenter Memorial** and the construction of the **Twin Falls Power Dam**, which created the **Twin Falls Flowage** that the bridge and causeways now span.

## **Memorial honors bridge engineer**

The Carpenter Monument at the north end of the bridge was erected and dedicated on Memorial Day 1923 in honor of **Gilbert Vilas Carpenter** who lost his life during World War I when the steamer on which he was returning from Cuba was sunk by an enemy submarine.

He survived the torpedo attack, but lost his life when his life raft overturned. His body was never recovered.

The monument was unveiled by **Leonora Carpenter**, his daughter. Included in the program was **William Kelly**, chairman of the county board of road commissioners.

In a short address, he eulogized the life of Dickinson County's beloved road engineer by saying, "The boulders in this monument are firm and solid and honest as he was."

Kelly added, "Bert Carpenter did not graduate from any college and had no degree as an engineer. Yet he had all the qualities of an engineer. He was acquainted with the laws of nature, he was an observer of what was to be seen and he was able to make the proper deductions from what he saw and he was able to apply his knowledge."

A high tribute was paid to Carpenter by **Frank E. Rogers**, state highway commissioner, who was present at the service. Carpenter was a "natural born engineer, and the highway construction in Dickinson County was a testimonial to his ability."

Carpenter was born in 1873 and died in 1918. From 1906 to 1918, he served as engineer of Dickinson County.

Carpenter also served during the Spanish-American War, being attached to the Hospital Corps. Although he was not a surgeon, he was promoted to the rank of captain because of his ability.

The cost of the monument was defrayed by the road commission of Dickinson County and the tablet in bronze with the inscription was furnished by the Michigan State Highway Department.

Carpenter supervised the construction of the Twin Falls Bridge and Causeways.

## **Causeway connects two states**

On the Michigan side, it has easy access from M-95, three miles from Iron Mountain with access to interconnecting bike path, proposed development of a new boat landing and hiking trails along **Badwater** by Wisconsin Electric.

On the Wisconsin side, it has easy access from U.S. 2, access to interconnecting bike path, close proximity to Florence and Spread Eagle Chain of Lakes, large boat landing with ample parking, Vagabond Park picnic and swimming area, Ski-ters performances, miniature golf, go-cart track and many businesses along the U.S. 2 corridor.

The decision by the Michigan Historic Preservation Review Board to recommend will be decided by its merits and objections by land owners.

The three land owners are WE Energies, the town of Florence and the Dickinson County Road Commission.

Each land owner has one vote to object to the bridge being considered.

If preserved, the bridge, causeways and monument could act as a hub for future tourism and recreational opportunities in both Michigan and Wisconsin, along with saving the historical value.

# DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY – ROADS AND BRIDGES

*[Compiled and Transcribed by William J. Cummings]*

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## NOMINATION FORM FOR THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

by Robert O. Christensen

### Summary Paragraph

The Upper Twin Falls Bridge is a 1910-11 camelback steel through truss structure built by the Central States Bridge Company of Indiana. It spans the channel of the Menominee River on the Michigan-Wisconsin border. The truss structure has a length of 145 feet and width of sixteen feet. The nominated property includes the metal truss structure itself and a causeway system that, crossing the rest of the river, includes a causeway leading to the bridge from the Michigan shore of the river, a second causeway between the truss and an island in the Wisconsin part of the river, and another causeway connecting the island with the Wisconsin side of the river. The bridge and causeways cross a wide stretch of the river that, known as Badwater Lake, backs up behind the dam associated with the Twin Falls Hydroelectric Facility. The overall length of the nominated bridge, causeways, and roadway crossing the island is about 1850 feet, with about 1160 feet of that comprised of causeways and about 450 feet the island crossing. The nomination also includes a 1922 monument to Dickinson County road engineer Gilbert Vilas Carpenter, killed in World War I, and a short section of road located at the east end of the east (Michigan) causeway.

### Narrative Description

The bridge and causeway system span the Menominee River about one-half mile upstream (northwest) from the Twin Falls Dam and Hydroelectric Facility. The heavily wooded location is about four miles north of Iron Mountain, Michigan. The bridge and causeways resulted from the construction of the Upper Twin Falls Dam and Hydroelectric Plant. The structures span a part of the river whose level was raised about twenty-five feet when the dam and hydroelectric plant was built. Upper Twin Falls, located almost directly below the current bridge site, was covered by the river's rising waters. The abandoned roadway angles off Dickinson County Road 607, which runs along the present Michigan shore of the river/Badwater Lake. The earthen causeways are about twenty-four feet across at their tops and rise an average of six to eight feet above water level. The maximum height of the fill for the causeways appears to be about twenty-five feet. The deteriorated asphalt-surfaced roadway remains in place, except for several washouts, across the entire structure. A segment of old cable guardrail, constructed using heavy cedar posts and thick steel cables, is located along the north side of the road up to the bridge. Parts of the guardrail are still visible, though they have collapsed and lay along the roadside.

From the Michigan (east) end, the nominated bridge and causeway system is comprised of the following:

A short piece of road (about one hundred foot length) at the Michigan end of the causeway that divides to form two sides of a small triangle of land between them containing the Carpenter Monument (the triangular plot and monument are included in the nominated property);

An earthen causeway 232 feet in length from the Michigan shore to the east abutment of the truss bridge structure;

The 145-foot long camelback truss bridge, which spans the Menominee River

# DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY – ROADS AND BRIDGES

*[Compiled and Transcribed by William J. Cummings]*

channel. The Michigan-Wisconsin border runs down the center of the river at this point, so that one-half of the span is in each state.

A second 252-foot long earthen causeway from the bridge's west end to the east side of an island in the Wisconsin part of the river;

The 451-foot long segment of the road crossing the island in an east-west direction;

A final earthen causeway 675 feet long connecting the island to the west (Wisconsin) shore of the river.

The bridge itself is a single-span eight-panel steel camelback through truss bridge with pin-connected members and is attached to concrete abutments by roller nesting bearings. The main vertical members are built-up L-channels, pin-connected to the top and bottom chords. Riveted V-lacing provides additional support between the L-channels. Built-up L-channels with riveted cover plates and some V-lacing make up the top chord of the bridge. The bottom chords consist of punched eyebars that are pin-connected to the vertical members. The floor beams are heavy steel I-beams with single-member cross-bracing between each set of stringers.

The portal and sway bracing are comprised of single-channel members. These are connected to the top chord and vertical members by riveted gusset plates. The majority of the diagonals of the bridge are paired loop-welded eyebars that provide the tensile strength for the bottom chords, as well as for the cross members. Within the center panel, however, steel rods with turnbuckles create the diagonal and counter members. Dimensions of the eybar diagonals increase at the outer panels.

The deck is of poured concrete with steel reinforcement bars and concrete curbing – the concrete deck and curbs

show in early photographs. Drainage holes, evenly spaced along the curbs, and steel railings with lattice supports are original. The deck was repaired several times over the years with a surface of asphalt, but the original concrete and steel reinforcement bars are visible where the asphalt surface has disappeared.

Left without maintenance since the bridge was closed in 1971, the bridge is in deteriorated condition, with large holes in the deck and portions of the curb missing. Along the bridge's north side, one section of the lattice railing is missing. The Wisconsin bridge approach has a large washout. The steel members appear in good condition, with the only damage being on the western portal that was bent, presumably from a large vehicle. In the past, attempts have been made to close off access to the bridge, including the construction of a large barricade at the end of the road and the addition of a wire fence at each approach to the bridge.

A small grassy plot in the triangular intersection of Upper Twin Falls Road with County Road 607 at the east (Michigan) edge of the nominated property contains a granite boulder monument, with rectangular bronze plaque, in memory of Gilbert Vilas Carpenter, Dickinson County Road Engineer at the time the bridge was built. The plaque contains the following text:

IN MEMORY OF  
GILBERT VILAS CARPENTER  
BORN 1873 DIED 1918  
ROAD ENGINEER FOR DICKINSON  
COUNTY, MICHIGAN, 1906 TO 1918  
DURING THE SPANISH AMERICAN WAR  
HE WAS ASSISTANT SURGEON WITH  
RANK OF CAPTAIN  
ATTACHED TO THE 34TH MICHIGAN  
VOLUNTEER INFANTRY  
WITH ACTIVE SERVICE IN THE  
SANTIAGO CAMPAIGN.  
HE WAS A BUILDER OF ROADS

# DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY – ROADS AND BRIDGES

*[Compiled and Transcribed by William J. Cummings]*

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE  
UNITED STATES AT CAMP GRANT,  
ILLINOIS,  
AND IN PORTO RICO IN 1917 AND 1918.  
RETURNING FROM SAN JUAN ON THE  
STEAMSHIP CAROLINA,  
HE WAS LOST BY THE OVERTURNING  
OF A LIFE BOAT  
AFTER THE SHIP HAD BEEN SUNK BY A  
HOSTILE SUBMARINE.  
HIS DEATH IN THE PATH OF DUTY WAS  
IN KEEPING WITH HIS LIFE.  
THE ROADS OF DICKINSON COUNTY  
THAT HE BUILT  
ARE EVIDENCE OF HIS SKILL AS AN  
ENGINEER,  
BUT HIS UPRIGHTNESS AND HIS  
GENIAL PERSONALITY  
ARE RECORDED ONLY IN THE HEARTS  
OF THOSE WHO KNEW HIM.  
THIS MONUMENT WAS ERECTED IN  
THE YEAR A.D. 1922  
BY THE ROAD COMMISSION OF  
DICKINSON COUNTY  
AND THE MEMBERS OF THE STATE  
HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN.

The 1910-11 Upper Twin Falls Bridge meets national register criterion C under Engineering at the state level of significance as one of very few metal camelback truss bridges surviving in the states of Michigan and Wisconsin. The nominated property includes an earth-fill causeway system that, extending for a quarter mile across Badwater Lake, a wide stretch of the Menominee River impounded by a hydroelectric project dam, possesses local historic significance as a substantial highway engineering project at its time of construction.

The Upper Twin Falls Bridge resulted from plans to construct a new highway bridge crossing the Menominee River on the county road connecting Iron Mountain, Michigan, to Florence, Wisconsin. The new bridge was to be located at a point about 250 feet upstream (north) of the old one

near Lower Twin Falls. In 1909 the Dickinson County (MI) Board of Road Commissioners and the Bridge Committee of Florence County (WI) created a Joint Committee to direct the project. The 145-foot long bridge was designed by engineer M. W. Torkelson of the Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey's Highway Division, with the plans dated July 7, 1909. The Central States Bridge Company of Indianapolis, Indiana, was awarded the contract on July 17 for the price of \$5016, with construction to be completed by October 31st.<sup>1</sup>

Before the new bridge was built at the designated site, the Wisconsin-Michigan Power Company proposed to build a new Twin Falls Hydroelectric Project on the Menominee River to generate electric power for the area's iron mines, which were switching to electricity as the primary power source. Wisconsin-Michigan established a Twin Falls Land Company to purchase the needed property and the Peninsula Power Company to construct and operate the plant. The plant's dam was to be built just downstream from the new bridge's site, so that the reservoir to be impounded behind it would rise nearly twelve feet above the proposed level of the new bridge's deck. The hydroelectric project was completed and placed in operation late in December 1912.

As a result of the planned hydroelectric power development, the location for the bridge was moved a short distance north to the Upper Twin Falls. The Central States Bridge Company constructed the planned bridge at the new location in 1910-11, with the Twin Falls Land Company agreeing "to pay the difference of cost of erecting the bridge at a new site (the Upper Twin), to rebuild as much road as the water may overflow and to deed to the counties such right of way as may be required in rebuilding. At a November 29, 1911, meeting of the Dickinson County Board of

# DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY – ROADS AND BRIDGES

*[Compiled and Transcribed by William J. Cummings]*

County Road Commissioners, it was reported that the new bridge and the roads being built by the Twin Falls Land Company under county direction were all finished.

Though not a massive project by today's standards, the construction of the quarter-mile long causeway system, which required earth fill embankments about twenty-five feet across at the top and up to about twenty-five feet in height to span the broadened river that would back up behind the dam would seem to constitute a locally significant piece of civil engineering for the day. Construction photographs in possession of the Dickinson County Road Commission show that the long earthen approach on the Wisconsin side was constructed by using a narrow-gauge railroad line with a small steam locomotive to pull side-dumping flatcars that were filled from a borrow pit.

## **Engineering Significance of the Truss Bridge**

The 145-foot long steel camelback through truss bridge structure gives the nominated property its primary significance. The camelback is a form of the Parker truss, with both types derived from the Pratt truss, a flat-topped through truss with vertical compression members. The Pratt was patented by Thomas and Caleb Pratt in 1844. Though based on the Pratt truss, the Parker provides greater strength through a polygonal top chord, thus permitting longer spans than the standard Pratt design. The Camelback truss is a late nineteenth-century variation of the Parker truss distinguished by its specifically five-slope top chord. The five-slope design – in the Parkers the top chords between each pair of verticals tended to have a different slope – allowed for greater standardization and better stress distribution, while being more economical to construct. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the camelback truss was most commonly used for highway bridge spans less than 200 feet

but greater than the 100-125-foot lengths for which Pratts were commonly used.

Camelback through truss bridges probably never formed more than a very small percentage of through truss highway bridges in Michigan or Wisconsin. Michigan's first statewide historic highway bridge inventory, completed for the Michigan Department of Transportation in 1985, listed only one camelback through truss, the 180-foot long Washington Road Bridge at Hubbardston, Ionia County, with construction date of 1900. A 1984 survey of metal truss highway bridges in Wisconsin carried out for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation identified six examples. These included the 1884 Manchester Street Bridges in Baraboo; 1901 Longwood Bridge over the Black River in Clark County; 1914 Kennedy Bridge over the Trappe River in Marathon County; 1922 Prescott Bridge in Prescott; 1922 CTH "A" Bridge in St. Croix County; and 1924 Kennan-Jump River Bridge in Price County. All of these Michigan and Wisconsin bridges have been demolished. Neither state's studies noticed the Upper Twin Falls Bridge because that structure had been abandoned as a highway bridge for many years by the time the surveys were done. The Upper Twin Falls Bridge today survives as the only example of a camelback through truss highway bridge in the two states.

A collaborative project involving the road agencies of the two counties, the bridge was designed by M. W. Torkelson, an engineer in the Highway Division of the Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey, the predecessor of the Wisconsin State Highway Commission (now the Department of Transportation). The bridge's design does not reflect a standard bridge design provided by the state. The Wisconsin State Highway Commission was established in 1911, as the bridge was being completed. Prior to the department's establishment, the state did not have

# DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY – ROADS AND BRIDGES

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standardized designs for highway bridges. The Michigan State Highway Department was established earlier, in 1905, but had little role in the design of bridges prior to the 1913 passage of the State Trunkline Act that made the department responsible for building and maintaining trunkline bridges throughout the state. Thus, while Wisconsin's Highway Division was equipped to provide plans, Michigan's highway department may not have been.

## **Central States Bridge Company**

The Central States Bridge Company<sup>8</sup> that fabricated and built the bridge was formed in 1895 as the New Castle Steel Sewer Pipe Company in New Castle, Indiana. Beginning as a steel pipe manufacturing company, the firm soon expanded into small bridges. By 1897 the company began to place a larger emphasis on bridge manufacturing and adopted the name New Castle Bridge Company. The operation transferred to Indianapolis in 1902 and the name changed five years later to the Central States Bridge Company. The New Castle Bridge Company built large truss bridges throughout the Midwest. The 1977 Upper Peninsula Historic American Engineering Record survey identified three of their Parker truss bridges, built in 1900, spanning the Michigan Lake Superior Power Company power canal at Sault Ste. Marie (only one of them survives, disassembled, today at Sault Ste. Marie). But, while Central States worked throughout the Midwest, the majority of their bridges seem to have been built in Indiana. Although Central States did construct truss bridges, functional beam bridges seem to have made up the majority of their production. The 1977 HAER Upper Peninsula survey did document one highway truss bridge built by the Central States Bridge Company, the Rutledge Road Bridge over the Munuscong River in Mackinac County, an eighty-one-foot long Warren pony truss structure built in 1914.

This bridge is still standing. In Wisconsin the only highway truss bridge identified in the 1984 Wisconsin bridge survey as constructed by Central States was a now replaced 1912 Warren through truss structure over the Kickapoo River in Vernon County.

## **Subsequent History**

In 1921 the roads leading to the bridge were designated by the states of Wisconsin and Michigan as state routes 69 and 12, respectively. When the federal aid highway system was created in the late 1920s the road and crossing became part of US-2/141. In 1934 a new section of US-2/141 bypassing this area and the bridge a short distance to the south was completed. The Upper Twin Falls Bridge was closed to traffic in September 1971.

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