

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 29: THE ROARING TWENTIES – THE PROHIBITION ERA BEGINS (1918-1920)

By William J. Cummings, Menominee Range Historical Foundation Historian



The Henze-Tollen Brewing Company, located at 1106 Norway Street on Iron Mountain's North Side, was established in 1899. Officers from 1901 through 1909 were Louis A. Henze, president and manager; Gus Tollen, vice-president; and George J. Eisele, secretary and treasurer. Between 1911 and 1913, O.R. Henze served as secretary and treasurer. From 1917-1919 Louis A. Henze was president and general manager and O.R. Henze was secretary and treasurer. On Saturday, October 5, 1918 the Henze-Tollen Brewing Company, which had been manufacturing two brands of near beer, suspended operations. Sometime in early 1918, the owners organized the Arbutus Beverage Company, a subsidiary, to manufacture a high-grade line of soft drinks, anticipating the implementation of Michigan's prohibition law on May 1. The manufacture of ciders and other soft drinks continued following the closure of the brewery on a reduced rate. The Arbutus Beverage Company operated until about 1921-1922. [Menominee Range Historical Museum]

[NOTE: Dates, placed chronologically, are highlighted in boldface red letters for easier reading, and names of individuals and places are highlighted in boldface black letters to facilitate finding information.]

The 29th installment of Menominee Range Memories, a series of articles by William J. Cummings, Menominee Range

Historical Foundation historian, now available on the Dickinson County Library's website, is titled "The Roaring Twenties – The Prohibition Era Begins (1918-1920)."

Michigan passed a law for full prohibition which went into effect on **May 1, 1918**. However, on **February 18, 1919**, the Michigan Supreme Court ruled that law to be unenforceable.

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A resolution calling for a Constitutional amendment to accomplish nationwide Prohibition was introduced in Congress and passed by both houses in **December, 1917**. By **January 16, 1919**, the Amendment had been ratified by 36 of the 48 states, making it law. Eventually, only two states – Connecticut and Rhode Island – opted out of ratifying it.

On **October 28, 1919**, Congress passed enabling legislation, known as the Volstead Act, to enforce the Eighteenth Amendment when it went into effect on **January 16, 1920**. The Eighteenth Amendment banned the production, importation, transportation and sale of alcoholic beverages.

The **Iron Mountain Press** noted the following in its **May 2, 1918** edition:

Under “Norway News Nuggets” – *The drug stores of Paul Jacobsen and W.H. Weber will not handle booze in any form.*

Under the headline “The Cost of Soft Drinks: Sugar Regulations Compel Makers to Advance the Prices” **Walter A. Henze’s** trip to **Negaunee** to meet with other upper peninsula manufacturers of soft drinks noted the shortage of sugar which would result in increased prices. Henze operated the **Arbutus Beverage Company** in **Iron Mountain**.

The increase would average only five cents per case on cases of two dozen bottles. An advance deposit would also be required to guarantee the safe return of bottles and cases. The money would be returned to the consumer when the bottles and cases were again in possession of the dealer.

The law restricted soft drink bottlers to 80 per cent the amount of sugar they used in 1917 during 1918. When 80 per cent of the quantity of sugar used in 1917 was reached, dealers would be obliged to cease manufacturing until 1919.

Since Michigan’s prohibition law was in effect, the limited supply of sugar would limit the bottlers’ production which would probably not allow them to meet the demand.

The *Iron Mountain Press* noted the following in its **May 9, 1918** edition:

Under the headline “**License No Saloons**,” authorities at Florence had informed interested parties that licenses for the two saloons at **Spread Eagle** would not be renewed when they expired in July. The action would “please the dwellers at this pretty and popular resort.”

Under the headline “Only Eight Ounces,” **Prosecuting Attorney Kelly**, of **Marquette**, reminded the public that if the prohibition law was strictly enforced by local, county and state officers, practically all liquor purchased before the saloons went out of business could be confiscated. No person could legally keep liquor in his home in excess of eight ounces, and that had to be prescribed by a physician.

Under the headline “**News in Paragraphs**” an item noted that the **Spread Eagle** saloons in **Florence County** were open the previous Sunday and had many patrons.

Another item noted: *The matter of building a large gate on the Michigan side of the **Brule bridge between Iron and Florence counties** and placing officers in charge to prevent smuggling any liquor into the county was discussed by the **Iron county board**, but no conclusion was reached.*

Under “**Norway News Nuggets**” in the **May 23, 1918** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*, the following items were reported:

*A number of boozers were caught by state constabulary near the **Niagara-Norway bridge**, on the Michigan side, and pulled for being drunk and disorderly. **Justice Brown** fined them \$10.00 each*

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and costs. **Prosecutor Brackett** and **Sheriff Lundgren** wish *The Press* to state that for a second offense of this nature the maximum fine will be imposed and a sentence up to ninety days in the county jail will be given for good measure.

The places of business of **Batti Stevens** and **Carlo Calcaterra**, two former saloonkeepers, were raided by deputy sheriffs last Wednesday and a quantity of liquors, beer, etc., found and confiscated. Later a second visit was made to Stevens' place and another lot of booze found. All of the contraband goods were taken to the court-house at Iron Mountain. Stevens and Calcaterra were examined and bound over to the circuit court.

Under the headline "**Confiscated Wet Goods**" in the same issue, the following article appeared:

Sheriff Lundgren and **Deputy Larkin** visited the premises of **Thomas Carney**, at **Randville**, yesterday. In the hotel building they found no contraband goods, but in a building at the rear of the premises located a miscellaneous lot of whiskey, rum, wine, brandy, etc., in bottles, kegs and barrels. Mr. Carney admitted that he had the goods in this building, but told the officers that he understood he had a right to keep the same there as it was not in a building used before as a saloon. The goods were brought here and locked up at the court-house with the balance of the contraband wet goods.

The following item also appeared in the **May 23, 1918** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press* under the headline "**An Arrest in Channing**":

At Channing recently a young man named **Raymond Shay**, in an intoxicated condition, made free with two bottles of whiskey, endeavoring to dispose of it by treating his friends at a dancing party. He was induced to tell where he got the "booze." It transpired that, on the last wet

day in Michigan, an auction sale of the remaining stock of **John Cuculi** was held, and the auctioneer sold some of the whiskey to Shay, who from all accounts looks to be over twenty-one, though it is said he is under age. Mr. Cuculi is held for selling liquor to a minor person.

Under "**Norway News Nuggets**" in the **June 6, 1918** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*, the following report appeared:

Members of the state constabulary and deputy sheriffs, working under instructions from **Prosecuting Attorney Brackett**, stopped an auto load of people returning from **Niagara** last Saturday night and found four persons bringing intoxicants into the state. One individual, very much intoxicated and disorderly, and the driver of the auto were held for resisting an officer in that he refused to stop his machine when commanded to do so. The six violators were haled into **Justice Brown's** court last Monday morning. Three of those bringing liquor across the border were assessed \$25.00 and costs each, and the fourth \$30.00 and costs. The plain drunk and disorderly was fined \$15 and costs, and the man who resisted an officer was given \$25.00 and costs. This leniency was shown on account of it being their first offense, but a second offense will subject them to the maximum fine and costs, and imprisonment. Parties crossing the border with liquor will do so at their own risk.

Under the headline "**Liquor Smugglers Fined**" in the **July 4, 1918** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*, the following item appeared:

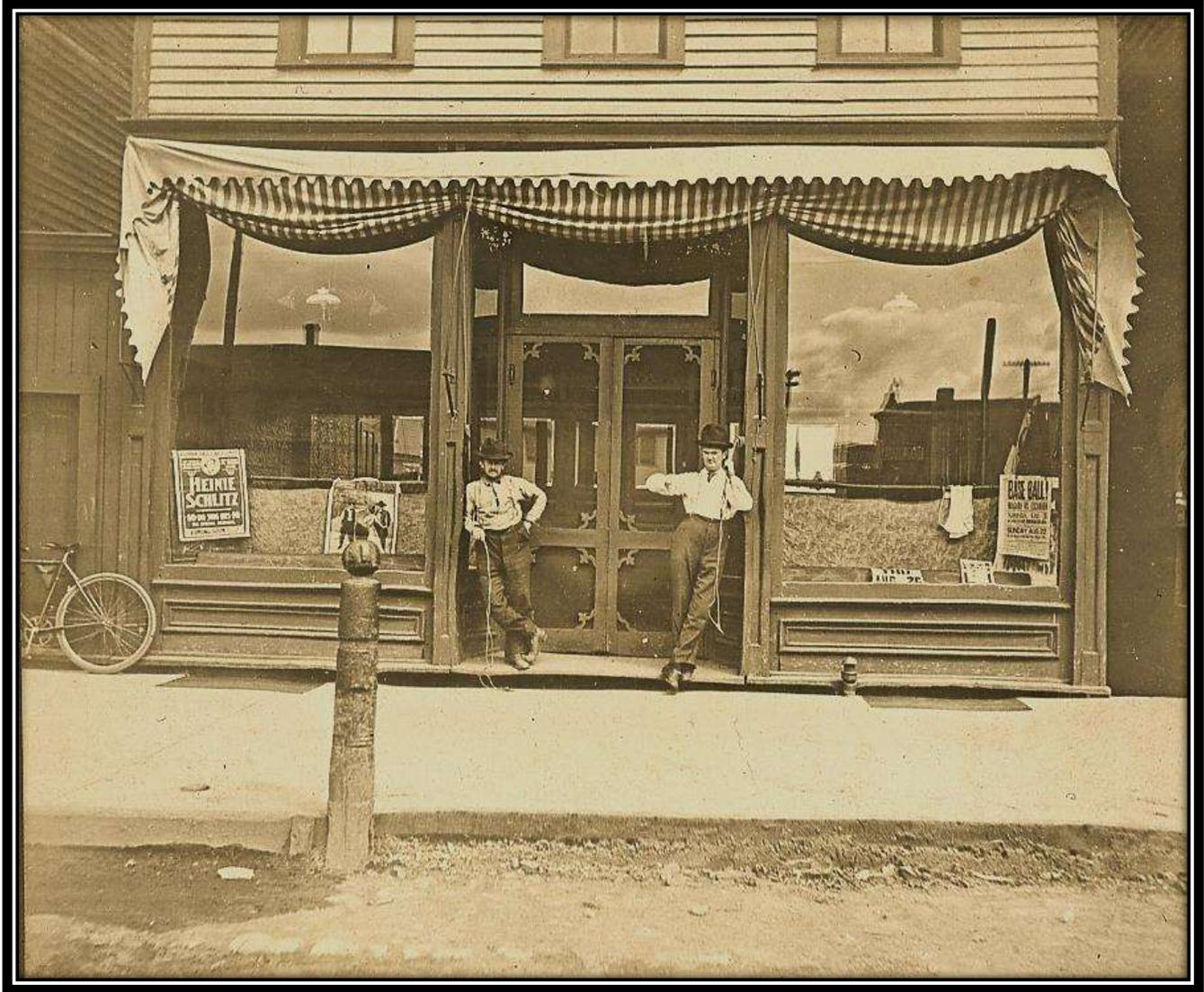
During the brief session of the circuit court last Monday, **Judge Flannigan** collected over \$900 from joy-riders who endeavored to smuggle intoxicants into the state from **Wisconsin**. Seven offenders were assessed \$100 each with \$6.00 costs, one paid a fine of \$25.00 and \$6.00 costs,

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and a ninth was fined \$75.00 with \$6.50 costs. Judge Flannigan read the riot act to the offenders and intimated that a second offense would lead to a jail sentence. That

the prohibition law will be rigidly enforced in Judge Flannigan's circuit was made manifest.



*In the 1892 in Iron Mountain's first city directory **Peter (Mary) Calvi** was listed as the proprietor of the **Palace sample rooms** [saloon], located at **531 South Stephenson Avenue, Iron Mountain**, which boasted "A fine bar of imported and domestic wines, liquors and cigars. Fresh beer always on tap." Calvi also lived here. Calvi's saloon was listed in the 1902, 1905, 1907 and 1913 city directories. By 1905 the Calvis resided at 304 West C Street. By 1925, during the Prohibition era, **Keeler L. Calvi** and **James P. Palmer** were the proprietors of **The Quality Hardware Store**, featuring a "General and Complete Line of Hardware." **William (Frances) Rauhut**, an autoworker, resided upstairs. Calvi and Palmer were still operating The*

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Quality Hardware Store in 1935, but in the 1939 and 1946 city directories Keeler L. Calvi was listed as the owner and proprietor. The two men are unidentified in this photograph which dates between 1902 and 1905. Note the hitching post in the foreground and the bicycle at the far left. [Menominee Range Historical Museum]

The *Iron Mountain Press* noted the following in its **July 11, 1918** edition:

Under “**Norway News Nuggets**” readers learned: *Thirteen arrests were made last Saturday night by the state constabulary and local officers for bringing liquor into Michigan and the culprits were booked for trial before Justice Brown.*

Under “**Niagara News Notes**” it was announced that **Robert Burden** had “formed a partnership with **Charles Morisini** in the saloon business at the Niagara-Norway bridge.” Also “saloons of Niagara passed out of existence with little or no extra excitement” when the village went “dry.”

The following article appeared in the **July 18, 1918** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*:

The Florence authorities refused to grant **William Dennis** a license to operate a saloon at **Spread Eagle**, but this fact has not lessened the sale of beer at the resort. The place is operated openly on Sunday disguised as a “club” and has visitors from all ends on the range. Drunks are numerous and the resort is gaining an unsavory reputation. In organizing his ‘club’ Dennis says he is acting in accordance with the advice of a **Green Bay attorney**.”

The *Iron Mountain Press* noted in its **July 25, 1918** edition: *The state constabulary is searching ladies who come across the border. And they say that they have found some booze.* Under “**Norway News Nuggets**” readers learned: *The Michigan constabulary, operating out of this city, to stop the importing of booze into*

Michigan from Niagara, has moved to Iron Mountain.

Under the headline “**Constables Active**” in the **August 1, 1918** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*, the following article appeared:

*The state constabulary held up five persons at **Twin Falls bridge** last Sunday night. In the first auto were two **Iron Mountain** drunks, and they paid \$17.50 each. In the second auto two **Norway** men were found with liquor in their possession, and, they, with the chauffeur, paid about \$50.00 each in justice court last Monday. Constables are now stationed at both bridges and all automobiles crossing the state line are searched.*

In the **October 10, 1918** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*, under the headline “**Brewery Suspended**” reported:

*The **Henze-Tollen Brewing company**, which, since the enactment of the prohibitory law, has been manufacturing two brands of near beer, suspended operations last Saturday, in compliance with the proclamation of **President Wilson**. The plant of machinery is now being painted and oiled for a period of idleness. The **Arbutus Beverage company**, a subsidiary concern, will continue to manufacture ciders and other soft drinks on a reduced scale.*

No issues of the *Iron Mountain Press* for 1919 have been found to date.

The following article appeared under the headline “**Capture Still Near Ralph: Federal Official Arrests Andrew Frank in West Branch Township**” in the **April 1, 1920** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*:

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The latest victim to be taken into the toils by federal prohibition agents is **Andrew Frank**, who was arrested last Saturday in **West Branch township** by **Federal Agent John Saul**.

March 26th, Saul learned that a still was in operation in West Branch township. He also learned that the owners of the still, said to be **Andrew Frank** and a **John Miller**, who was not arrested, intended to move the still and manufactured products out of that community early last Saturday morning.

Mr. Saul got in touch with **Sheriff O'Dess**, of **Delta county**, and, with a deputy sheriff, proceeded to the scene of operations. A special train was provided by the **Escanaba & Lake Superior road** to transport the officers. It took them to a place called **Camp A**, near **Ralph**. The men then drove six miles with horse and sleigh, reaching the shack at about daylight Saturday morning.

They found about ten gallons of moonshine whiskey and forty gallons of raisin mash. In an out-house they found two stills of ten gallon capacity each. The stills were not in operation, but are said to have shown every indication of having been used recently.

Two guns, a rifle and shotgun, both loaded, were found near Frank's bed.

Miller was not on the premises, but was said to have been at **Escanaba**. Upon the return of the officers to Escanaba, search for Miller proved fruitless, and it is thought he has left the country.

Frank was arrested upon a warrant served by **United States Marshal T.T. Hurley**, of **Marquette**, and placed on bonds of \$2,000. Upon failure to furnish bail he was committed to jail at Escanaba, where he will be held pending the opening of federal court at Marquette **April 13th**.

Frank is alleged to have said that he and Miller purchased the two stills from a man named **Keppler** for \$35. It is the supposition that whiskey made by these stills caused the death of two men at **Watson** a few weeks ago.

Frank is charged with manufacturing, transporting, selling and keeping for sale alcoholic liquor of more than one-half of one per cent alcoholic content.

An article in the **April 15, 1920** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press* under the headline "**Federal Agents Busy**" stated:

Federal agents made a raid on the restaurant and soft drink parlor of **Gregoire Desplains**, on **East Hughitt** last Thursday and placed Desplains and his assistant, **Chris Taylor**, under arrest. Two quarts of moonshine liquor were found in the place and it is stated convincing evidence was secured to show that the liquor had been sold for fifty cents a drink. It is also said that Desplains purchased the two quarts for \$7. Desplains and Taylor were arrested under federal warrants and taken to **Escanaba**, where they were arraigned before **U.S. Commissioner James Frost** and bound over to the United States district court for trial. The Desplains place had been under suspicion for a long time and, it is said, one of the federal representatives purchased a drink openly in the place.

An exciting account under the headline "**Running of Booze: Clinton W. Turner and Escanaba Associates Face Uncle Sam**" appeared as follows in the **June 3, 1920** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*:

Clinton W. Turner, a well-known resident of **Vulcan**, is wanted by the federal prohibition officers to answer to the charge of "running" whiskey between his home town and **Escanaba**. Turner, when he saw that escape was impossible, abandoned his Buick sedan, containing thirty cases of "moonshine" and two cases of bottled

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whiskey on a leading business at Escanaba and made his escape in the darkness. His three Escanaba associates were captured and their Studebaker found to contain thirty gallons of “moonshine” in kegs and fifteen gallons of bonded whiskey. They were jailed at Escanaba and the two cars confiscated.

The story of the capture, as printed in the Mining Journal last Monday follows:

“What four alleged “booze runners” thought was a “safe” frame-up, under which they were to transport about eighty-five gallons of “moonshine” liquor and bonded Kentucky whiskey in two automobiles from Vulcan to Escanaba, ended in the capture of three of the four men and the seizure of the liquor as well as the two cars.

*“The haul was made about midnight Sunday night in Escanaba by **Leo J. Grove**, prohibition enforcement chief, and two of his agents. Mr. Grove said yesterday, upon his arrival here with the confiscated liquor and the two automobiles, that he had rounded up two of the most notorious “booze runners” in the upper peninsula.*

*“Four warrants were sworn out following the seizure and **Deputy U.S. Marshal Hurley** left for Escanaba yesterday to serve them. Three are for **Christ Hansen, Peter Waskie** and **Carl Holos**, of **Escanaba**, who are being held in the **Delta county** jail. The other is for **C.W. Turner**, of **Vulcan**, who escaped when the officer seized his car. Hansen owns the other car.*

*“Grove had his “ropes” out to get Hansen and Turner for some time, it having been reported that they were operating a regular liquor transportation service between **Vulcan** and **Escanaba**. Last Friday Grove, with **Arthur Scully**, one of his agents, left Marquette in Mr. Grove’s automobile when they learned that Hansen and Turner were en route to Escanaba with*

a cargo of liquor. They went armed, having been told that the two cars were guarded by men with guns.

*“In the meantime **J.E. Fillion**, another member of Grove’s staff, was working on the case in Escanaba. After two weeks “on the trail” he had managed to get acquainted with the two men. He said yesterday that they told him of their scheme for transporting liquor and had offered to “frame things up” with him so that he would receive \$1,000 for helping them get their goods safely into Escanaba.*

“Grove and Scully drove to a point a few miles from Escanaba on the Menominee road and hid in the woods Friday night waiting for the “booze runners” to appear. They did not show up that night, so the two officials again took up their position Saturday night.

*“About midnight the two cars appeared. Fillion, the federal agent, who Turner and Hansen thought was “framed,” was in Hansen’s car, a six-cylinder Studebaker. The cars were headed toward Escanaba and as they passed, Grove and Scully jumped into their car and began a wild chase after their prey. They overtook the Hansen car on **Eighteenth street in Escanaba**. As Hansen came to a stop he jumped out of the car, and, according to Grove, made an attempt to get away. Grove pulled his gun, fired one shot, and Hansen and his companions put up their hands and were arrested.*

*“Thirty gallons of “moonshine” in kegs, fifteen gallons of bonded whiskey and three revolvers were taken from Hansen’s car. Hansen and his companions were taken to jail, and Grove, directed by Fillion, started out to overtake Turner’s car, a Buick sedan. They caught up with it on **Stephenson avenue**, but as they drew near Turner jumped out and disappeared in the darkness. Thirty gallons of “moonshine”*

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and two cases of bottled whiskey were taken from Turner's car.

"The whiskey is bottled in pints bearing federal 1920 tax stamps, and the cases are

labeled "for medicinal purposes only." All of the liquor and the two confiscated cars were brought to Marquette Monday afternoon."



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A follow-up article providing additional details appeared in the **June 10, 1920** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press* under the headline “**Plans His Betrayal: Hansen Had Planned to Betray His Vulcan Aid in Booze Runner**”:

*The old saying that “there is honor even among thieves,” may be true of thieves, but it isn’t true of booze toters,” says the **Escanaba Journal**. The federal officers might never have known that two automobiles loaded with booze were scheduled to pass the “dumping ground hill” four miles west of Escanaba at midnight if **Chris Hanson [sic – Hansen]**, who, so the federal officers assert, is one of the biggest wholesale bootleggers in the upper peninsula, had not, it is alleged, plotted to rob the other “biggest wholesale booze toter,” who is **W.C. Turner**, of **Vulcan**.*

The federal men say that Hanson [sic – Hansen] and Turner have been bringing booze into Escanaba by the load for a long while, but it has heretofore been impossible to catch them “with the goods.” It was Hanson’s [sic – Hansen’s] greed for quick riches that led to the undoing of both of them.

*Hanson [sic – Hansen], so the story told the Journal goes, first had the man **Wasaki** “feel out” **Federal Agent Fillion** to see if he would be susceptible to the influence of money. Fillion was willing, and in due time he and Hanson [sic – Hansen] “got together.” Hanson [sic – Hansen] told Fillion that he was to go to Vulcan Sunday night and return with Turner. Each of them would be driving an automobile loaded with booze. Hanson [sic – Hansen] was to pay approximately \$3,000 for this booze when he and Turner got it to Escanaba. Hanson [sic – Hansen] fixed it with Agent Fillion so that Fillion [sic – Fillion] was to be at the “dumping ground hill” at midnight, and when he (Hanson) [sic – Hansen] approached the*

hill he was to give a certain signal with his headlights; Fillion was to place a log across the road and Hanson [sic – Hansen], whose car was to lead, would stop; thus compelling Turner to stop; that Fillion was to let Turner slip through his hands; that Fillion was then to turn the booze all over to Hanson [sic – Hansen] and was to receive \$1,000 from him. If the plan had worked Hanson [sic – Hansen] would have got a load of booze, for which he had promised to pay \$3,000, for only \$1,000. Agent Fillion states that he and Hanson [sic – Hansen] agreed to pull off the same kind of a job once or twice a week. Hanson [sic – Hansen] was known as a king among the booze toters and held the confidence of all the bootleggers, and would thus be in a position to know of all the movements and when the big “hauls” could be made.

*“But agent Fillion didn’t stay “fixed.” It required some time for him to get into the confidence of Hanson [sic – Hansen], but as soon as the deal was made for Sunday night Fillion reported the whole matter to his superior, **Mr. Grove**. Mr. Grove and **Agent Scully** came to **Escanaba** on Friday and went into hiding until Sunday night. While awaiting the time for action plans were made for catching Hansen and Turner and their confederates.*

*“Mr. Fillion arranged with Mr. Grove and Mr. Scully to be in hiding at the “dumping ground hill,” while he (Fillion) was to go to the hill with the man **Waski**, who is an understrapper for Hansan [sic – Hansen], and who was to assist Fillion in capturing the cars driven by Hanson [sic – Hansen] and Turner.*

The stage is all set; the men are placed; the automobiles are speeding towards Escanaba with the speed of a hurricane.

“It was a hidden road that spelled “Waterloo” for Napoleon, and it was an unseen tack or nail or piece of glass that

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nearly spelled Waterloo for Mr. Fillion and his fellow prohibition agents.

“An automobile passes through the cut at “dumping ground hill” at the rate of 60 miles an hour; Fillion and Waski await the signal agreed upon by Hanson [sic – Hansen]; the log is in position to be thrown across the road.

“A moment passes, and the expected signal is flashed by the headlights from a rapidly approaching car. The log is quickly thrown across the road, and a moment later the big Studebaker car driven by Hansen stops. Fillion and Waski spring from their hiding place and Fillion stages his arrest. The Buick Sedan [sic – sedan] does not appear, and then Fillion asked for an explanation. Hanson [sic – Hansen] explains that he had a punctured tire which compelled him to stop and that while he was changing tires Turner had got ahead of him, and that the car that had just passed was the one wanted. Fillion and Waski then jumped into the Studebaker and the race after the other car started.

*“Officers Grove and Scully, concealed in the bushes, heard all the talk, and as soon as the Studebaker started for Escanaba they got their car from its place of concealment and started after both of the booze cars. The Studebaker was overtaken and captured on **Oak street** near the **Jefferson school** building. Officers Grove and Scully, assisted by Officer Fillion, searched the men for firearms, which they confiscated. They then took their prisoners to the city jail. Mr. Grove then took charge of the Studebaker car while Officers Fillion and Scully started out in Mr. Grove’s Dodge car to look for Turner and the Buick sedan. They found the car on **Sinclair street**, but Turner had escaped.”*

Under the headline **“Case of Bootlegging”** the following article

appeared in the **June 24, 1920** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*:

Joseph Mercala will board with **Sheriff Farrell** until the next term of the circuit court. Joseph was arrested last Monday night on **East Hughitt street** by **Policemen Corey and Constantini**. He had in his possession a partially filled quart bottle of moonshine and an exceedingly small quantity of whiskey. It is alleged that Joseph was “bootlegging” – selling his fire-water at fifty cents the drink. The policemen, however, were unable to prove the selling – their witness being too drunk – but succeeded in having Joseph bound over to the circuit court on a charge of intoxicating liquor in his possession.

Perhaps the most bizarre account involving moonshine manufacturing was the following story published in the in the **August 12, 1920** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press* under the headline **“Murder Mystery: Frank Kiel Found Dead from Bullet Wound Near Sawyer Lake”**:

Channing has a murder mystery.

Frank [sic - William] Kiel, a Belgian, aged about sixty years, was found dead with a bullet wound at the farm of **Henry Boll**, at **Sawyer Lake**, last Tuesday.

When found the lower part of the body was partly covered by a load of hay, which had capsized, and it was at first thought that he was the victim of a runaway accident.

An investigation established that he had been murdered. It was found that a bullet of large caliber had entered the body at the left shoulder and came out at the throat. The throat was badly lacerated by the outgoing bullet, which is thought to have been of the soft-nose variety.

Fred Hansel and **R.B. Edmunds** are being detained as witnesses. They alleged that they witnessed the murder and were

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threatened with death by the men who committed it.

According to their story, Kiel was standing on the load of hay at the time he was shot. When he fell the team ran away, smashed down a fence and capsized the load. There is no blood on the ground where the body was found.

***Frank Shields [sic – Shells]** is the last man seen with Kiel and he will be detained as a witness.*

Kiel was a tenant on the Boll farm. He was, as near as can be learned, a bachelor, and had no relatives in this vicinity. He was a kindly old man and without enemies, it was thought. The reason for the heartless murder is thus surrounded with mystery.

***Sheriff Farrell** and **Coroner MacDonald** were at Sawyer Lake yesterday investigating the murder.*

The body of Kiel was brought to this city and a coroner's inquest will be held today.

The next week another article under the headline "**Channing Murder: Frank Shells, the Perpetrator of the Crime, is Still at Large**" explained the crime in the **August 19, 1920** edition of the *Iron Mountain News* as follows:

*"He came to his death by a gunshot wound" was the verdict returned last Monday by **Coroner MacDonald's** jury in the case of **William Kiel**, who was found dead under a load of hay at the **H.M. Boll** farm at **Sawyer Lake** the evening of **August 10th**.*

*The jury was composed of **Holton Knisely, Ed. Vermulen, Henry M. Boll, Louis Kempen, George Cuculi** and **Leo Duford**, all residents of **Channing**.*

*The witnesses examined were **Fred Hamel, R.B. Edmunds** and **William Johnson**, otherwise known as "**Billy, the Finn**."*

*Hamel testified that he witnessed the shooting of Kiel by **Frank Shells** or **Shields**. The latter is also known as **Frank Armstrong** and at one time made his headquarters at Channing. According to Hamel, Shells, **Curtis Pringle** and Kiel were operating a still in the swamp a short distance from the Boll farm, where Kiel and the witness were employed. On the day of the shooting, Hamel had spent some time at the still and all the men, Kiel included, had drunk considerable moonshine. All became intoxicated with the exception of Kiel. It had been agreed to abandon the still and the outfit had been dismantled, several jugs of the moonshine had been divided and the mash destroyed. Shells, according to Hamel, had gone to sleep in the hay field near where Kiel was working. In the late afternoon, Shells and Pringle were seen approaching Kiel, who was on a load of hay. Shells accused Kiel of robbing him while he was sleeping off the effects of his moonshine drunk, and yelled that he would kill him unless he returned the money. Kiel made denial of the charge. Shells at once fired at Kiel, who was in a stooping position on the load of hay. The shotgun with which Shells was armed was loaded with buckshot, seven to the shell. The load of shot struck Kiel in the throat and passed out under the right shoulder. Hamel stated that at the time Shells shot Kiel, he was standing on one side of the hay wagon and that Curtis Pringle, armed with a rifle, was on the other side. However, he only heard one shot. After the shooting, Shells threatened to kill Hamel if he told anyone of the murder. Shells and Pringle then disappeared. Hamel admits that he was intoxicated and feared that Shells would make good his threat, and did not tell of the murder until some hours later, when he informed R.B. Edmunds. Edmunds assisted Hamel in uncovering the*

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body of Kiel, which was under the load of hay, the wagon having capsized when the team ran away after the shooting. The two men then informed a number of people at Channing that Kiel had been Edmunds [sic – murdered]. Edmunds assisted Hamel. Hamel told of the shooting and **Sheriff Farrell** and Coroner MacDonald were informed of the crime.

R.B. Edmunds, the second witness, testified that he had met Shells on the road the evening of the shooting. Shells was intoxicated and was waving his arms and shouting. With-gilled [sic] in a runaway accident. Later the _____ _____ Dutchman.” He robbed me of \$85.00 while I was sleeping in the hay field. I demanded that he return the money. I gave him a chance to do so. I counted three before I shot the _____!” Later he met Hamel and assisted in uncovering the body of Kiel, which was buried under the load of hay. On Thursday, Edmunds stated, he told H.M. Boll and **Louis Kempen**, a deputy sheriff, of meeting Shells on the road.

William Johnson, known as “Billy, the Finn,” testified that the evening after the shooting, between five and six o’clock, Shells came to his shack, about three miles from the Boll farm. Shells told him that he had killed Kiel. That Kiel had robbed him of all his money and that he was penniless. He wanted to sell his overcoat and a watch, but Johnson had no money. However, he gave him some bread. After making some inquiries regarding the road to **Crystal Falls**, Shells left the shack. Johnson says that he watched Shells until he disappeared in the woods. Johnson did not inform the authorities of Shells’ visit until last Thursday.

Sheriff Farrell and his assistants are making an energetic search for Shells and Curtis Pringle. Pringle has been seen in **Green Bay** and **Milwaukee** and he can be

arrested when wanted. Shells is admittedly a “bad actor.” He has been in the vicinity of Channing for more than a year and is supposed to have been engaged in trapping. From developments it would appear that the making of moonshine whiskey was his chief occupation. The authorities are hopeful of having him under arrest in the near future.

A new ruling regarding searching of private homes for liquor was explained under the headline “**Home Not Man’s Castle: New Ruling Provides Revenue Officers May Enter and Search Homes**” in the **August 19, 1920** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press* as follows:

The claws of the prohibition enforcement act have been sharpened and the privacy of the home endangered by a recent ruling of the department of justice that revenue agents may be called upon by prohibition agents for assistance in searching a house and making an arrest.

Under a law a prohibition agent’s power is limited. He can enter a house only when armed with a search warrant and when given permission or consent by the owner or tenant of the property. He has no right to break or enter the premises by force.

A revenue officer, however, is hampered by no such restrictions. He has the right forcibly to enter a house in making an arrest or conducting a search of the premises. The new ruling therefore has given reinforcement to the prohibition agents, whose powers have been brought in question in the courts of several large cities, the court invariably deciding against the “dry” agent.

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In 1892 in Iron Mountain's first city directory there was no listing for **127 South Stephenson Avenue**, but at **125 South Stephenson Avenue** sample rooms were operated by the **Merritt Brothers (Samuel and Matthew Merritt)**, "Dealers in fine wines, liquors, cigars and fresh beer. Gentlemanly treatment at all times." This could be the same establishment as those listed below as early addresses sometimes changed. By 1902 **Louis Zaio** ran a saloon at **127 South Stephenson Avenue**, and **P.A. Tremontin**, agent of the **Pabst Brewing Company**, also resided here. By 1907 **Basilio (J. Carlotta) Fedrizzi** sold "wines, liquors and cigars" at his saloon, and also lived on the premises. **Charles W. Johnson's** saloon was here by 1913, at about the time this photograph was taken, and he also resided on the premises. On **February 6, 1917**, **Edward G. Kingsford** purchased lots 125, 127 and 129 on the northeast corner of South Stephenson Avenue and East Brown Street to build a garage for his Ford dealership. At that time **Fornetti & Aimone (James Fornetti and Peter Aimone)** operated a barbershop at the corner (129), **Frank Caviani** ran a saloon at 127 and **Louis Sjostrom** ran a saloon at 125. The saloon licenses of the two tenants expired at the end of April, 1917. In

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1925 the **Kingsford Motor Car Company**, owned by **Edward G. Kingsford** and his son **Edward S. Kingsford**, operated an automobile dealership selling “Ford and Lincoln Motor Cars, Trucks and Tractors” at **127-129 South Stephenson Avenue**. Everything remained the same in 1935 and 1939, but by 1946 Edward S. “Ted” Kingsford was running the business as his father, Edward G. Kingsford, died July 29, 1943. [Menominee Range Historical Museum]

Under the headline “**Raid Norway Resorts: Federal Agents Capture Several Violators in Neighboring City**” the **September 18, 1920** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press* reported:

Leo J. Grove, of **Marquette**, federal prohibition chief for this district, accompanied by several of his assistants, spent a few hours in **Norway** and vicinity the other day and as a result of their visit **John Bertoldi**, keeper of a soft drink parlor, was arrested when a nearly empty bottle of moonshine was found on the premises. **Henry Vermulen**, also of **Norway**, and keeper of another soft drink parlor, was arrested upon discovery of a two-gallon jug of moonshine.

A raid upon the home of **Julius Rossi**, of **Vulcan**, brought to light two one-gallon jugs of liquor, which were confiscated. Rossi denies knowledge of the liquor, claiming that “someone must have put it there.” He was arrested for illegal possession of liquor.

The raid was made because of reports that Rossi was operating a still, but, according to Mr. Grove, if so, he used a great deal of caution. The agents found a condenser and several empty barrels, but no still.

Seizure of the liquor from a private home brought up the question of what constitutes legal ownership. Ownership of any moonshine is illegal, Mr. Grove points out, inasmuch as its manufacture is illegal. Ownership of liquor legally manufactured is not barred in a private home.

In the **December 2, 1920** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press* the following detailed account of an **Iron Mountain** raid appeared under the headline “**Police and Sheriff Raid: Police and Sheriff Make Raid at American Hotel**”:

The police and sheriff departments worked hand in hand late yesterday afternoon and made a raid at the **American Hotel** on **Merritt avenue**, formerly known as the **German Hotel**, and confiscated three cases of bitters and six quart bottles of some kind of wine. The seals on the bottles of bitters were broken when found by the authorities, this, in itself, constituting a violation of the liquor law. The liquor was placed in a sleigh and taken to the county jail. The raid was made by **Sheriff Farrell**, **Undersheriff Frank Cleveland**, **Chief of Police Gilbeault** and **Officers Corey, Constantini and Warne**. Besides placing the proprietor, **Anton Lavorich**, under arrest on a charge of violation of the liquor law, the officers took three men in custody on a charge of gambling, namely, **George Meyers, Louis Osborn and Louis Mellis**.

Meyers was arrested a few days ago on a charge of gambling at the time the raid was made by the police at **Robert Wasevich’s** place, **East Brown street**.

All the men arrested in the raid yesterday afternoon were taken before **Justice MacDonald**. Lavorich was bound over to circuit court for trial, under a cash bond of \$500, which he furnished. Osborn and Mellis were fined \$10 and costs and Meyers was fined \$25 and costs, owing to it

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being his second offense. All the men paid their fines.

Lavorich purchased the American Hotel a few days ago from **Reinhart Goethe**, the consideration, it is said, being \$8,500. He took possession at one o'clock yesterday afternoon, and within three hours afterward was in the toils of the law. The police and sheriff departments knowing of the deal and also knowing that he conducts two places of business in **Gladstone** and one at **Escanaba**, suspicioned that he would probably have some liquor at the place, so the two departments heartily co-operated and made it their business to find out. The

place was filled with men when the officers entered like thieves in the night, some engaged in playing cards, and immediately looks of surprise crept all over their countenances. Those charged with gambling were placed under arrest at once while some of the officers proceeded to look around for liquor. Every nook and corner in the place was carefully searched and all the time that the raid was going on the doors of the place were kept locked and no person was allowed to leave it until the authorities had completed what they came there for.



The **German Hotel**, operated by **Marsch & Gothe (John Marsch and Fred Gothe)** in 1892 at **407 Merritt Avenue, Iron Mountain**, boasted "Good accommodations by the day or week. A fine bar of wines and liquors in connection." The man in the white shirt and long white apron is **William Gothe**. His wife, **Margaret Gothe**, is the woman standing second from the right at the corner of the building, together with their children and dog. The **American Hotel**, **Anthony Baraga**, proprietor, operated at Merritt Avenue on the southeast corner of Hughitt Street in 1925. In 1935 the **American Hotel** was listed at 407 South Merritt with **Anton Loverich**, proprietor. [Menominee Range Historical Museum]