

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

By William J. Cummings, Menominee Range Historical Foundation Historian



This colored halftone postcard view of the front and west side of the **National Bank Block**, **427-431 South Stephenson Avenue**, located on the northeast corner of South Stephenson Avenue and East A Street, is postmarked **October 9, 1922** and was published by the **E.C. Kropp Company, Milwaukee, Wisconsin**. Excavation for the new building began on Wednesday, **April 20, 1921**. Scratch face brick, chocolate in color, with Bedford stone trim were the materials used for the building with 62 feet of frontage on Stephenson Avenue, extending back 122 feet to the alley. The two-story building contained three stores, a bowling alley and billiard room in the basement and 17 two-room office suites upstairs in addition to the bank which was located in the southwest corner of the first floor. Across the front of the building were four pilasters of brick with Doric caps and bases of Bedford stone, as well as a Bedford stone cornice across the top, and a pediment of the same material above the cornice bearing the name of the building. The Bedford stone doorway had the motto "The Bank of the People" in a panel above it. Bedford stone also was used for inset panels between the first and second floors. From Stephenson Avenue, the four brick pilasters on the façade with the stone entablature above suggest that this handsome building was designed in the Classical Revival style. In the early twentieth century, this building style – portrayed here in chocolate-colored brick and Bedford stone – was often used for banks and institutional buildings to give the impression of stability and solidity. The building itself conveys the message "your money will be safe here – this bank is here to stay." The north wall of the **National Bank Block** was actually the brick south wall of the **International Order of Odd Fellows Hall [I.O.O.F.]**, constructed in about **1888** at **421 South Stephenson Avenue**. The **United States National Bank** closed on **May 23, 1932**. The building, occupied by the **Montgomery Ward &**

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

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Company for many years, beginning prior to **1939**, is currently known as the **Downtown Plaza**. [William J. Cummings]



The **northeast corner of the intersection of South Stephenson Avenue and East A Street** was vacant for many years following the fire which burned the **Flanagan Block** to the ground **February 25, 1904**. There was an ice rink at this corner at times prior to the construction of the **United States National Bank** in **1921**. The building with the triangular peak was the **Odd Fellows Block**, erected in about **1888**. This detail of a postcard view was postmarked in **Iron Mountain** on **July 23, 1909**. [William J. Cummings]

[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 52nd 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 "Downtown Iron Mountain – 425-431 South Stephenson Avenue."

Simon Goldman sold "notions" at **423 South Stephenson Avenue** by **1892**. By **1902 H.E. Smith** ran a clothing store here. There was no listing for this address in 1907-1908 or 1913. By 1925 this lot had been incorporated into the United States National Bank.

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

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The northeast corner of the intersection of South Stephenson Avenue and East A Street has been the site of two business blocks – the **Flanagan Block** from **before 1892 until 1904** and the **United States National Bank Block** from **1920 to the present**.

Owned by **Patrick Flanagan**, of **Norway** and **Sagola**, the **Flanagan Block**, located at **425-431 South Stephenson Avenue** on the northeast corner of South Stephenson Avenue and East A Street, was one of the first large buildings constructed in Iron Mountain, housing a number of businesses.

According to the account in the *Iron Mountain Press* about the fire which destroyed the building on **February 25, 1904**, “The building was one of the first erected in Iron Mountain and was for many years used as a **variety theatre**.”

The frame structure was probably built in the **1880s**. Unfortunately, no photograph of the Flanagan Block has been found to date.

The building at **425 South Stephenson Avenue** listed in the **1892** city directory in which **Engberg & Flannigan** (**Peter Engberg** and **John W. Flannigan**), “Dealers in Wines, Liquors, Cigars and fresh Beer,” was located was probably the building known as the Flanagan Block. Their advertisement in the 1892 city directory read: “Mixed drinks and bottled goods served, and good treatment assured.” John W. Flannigan also resided at this address at that time.

By **1902** **L.N. Richards** operated a barbershop at this address. His advertisement on page 12 of the 1902-1903 city directory claimed him to be “The Up-to-Date Barber and Hair Dresser,” offering “Face Massage, Newbro’s Herbicide! The Dandruff Cure!, and Face Tonics.”

By **1892** **Hormidas Boisvert** had a barbershop at **427 South Stephenson Avenue**, probably a part of the Flanagan Block.

There was no listing for this address in **1902**. Perhaps the numbering had been altered, and L.N. Richards had his barbershop here instead of at 425 South Stephenson Avenue in 1902, since Hormidas Boisvert ran a barbershop here in 1892.

In the **June 2, 1898** edition of *The Daily Tribune*, the following appeared in the “City News Items” column:

*Hartman & Schaffenuer is the firm name of a new plumbing concern opened in this city. The proprietors are young men and are practical and experienced workmen, and are located in the **Flanagan block**. Their advertisement appears in another column.*

Mrs. W.E. Richard was the proprietor of the **Crystal Restaurant and Ice Cream Parlors** at **429 South Stephenson Avenue** by **1892**, advertising: “First-class in every particular. Meals served at all hours. Dealer in confectionery, cigars, fruits, etc.” **Mrs. Myra Richard** worked for Mrs. W.E. Richard and both women resided at this address. This business establishment was also probably a part of the Flanagan Block.

Kurz Brothers (**Max Kurz**) sold “buggies, wagons, harness, etc.” at **429 South Stephenson Avenue** by **1902**, and also operated a sales stable at **225 East A Street**. **Rudolph Kurz** worked as a clerk. The firm’s advertisement on page 41 of the 1902 directory noted they offered “A Large Assortment (of) Draft and Driving Horses” and had business locations in “Iron Mountain, Escanaba, Iron River, Crystal Falls, and Powers, Mich.”

Thomas W. Grenfell ran a confectionery shop at **431 South**

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

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Stephenson Avenue, probably a part of the Flanagan Block, by **1892**. **Khoury & Company (John I. Khoury)** had a confectionery shop here by **1902**.

On Saturday, **October 3, 1896**, the **Flanagan Block** suffered **severe fire damage**, but the building was repaired, repapered and repainted.

The following account appeared in the **October 10, 1896** edition of *The Range-Tribune* under the stacked headline "Cigarette Did It: Some Careless Fellow Threw a Lighted Stump Under the Sidewalk on East A Street: Flanagan's Block Burned: Loss Is a Heavy One. No insurance. Grocery Store, Restaurant, Saloon and Plumbing Shop Were All Cleaned Out."

*Shortly after one o'clock this afternoon [October 3, 1896] a policeman discovered smoke issuing from the building situated on the corner of Stephenson Ave. and A street, and owned by **Pat Flanagan** of **Norway**. The alarm was turned in and the department responded promptly, only to find that they had an extremely treacherous blaze to fight. Every nook and crevice seemed to be ablaze, yet nowhere could the flames be reached. The tin roof was torn off and boards were ripped from their fastenings, and every time and no matter [in] what portion of the building an opening was made the red flames and black smoke would pour forth and engulf the heroic fire boys and the citizens who were assisting. Four streams of water were playing on the building at one time, and each moment it appeared as though the fire could not be gotten under control, and in that event the whole block would be endangered. For one whole hour the fire chief and his men worked diligently tearing up the tin roof and ripping the boards and planks in an endeavor to reach the blaze. It was a hard fire to fight but the department was equal to*

the occasion, and their efficiency for most any emergency was demonstrated on this occasion.

HOW IT STARTED.

Nothing definite could be gained as to the origin of the fire, but the man who first discovered the blaze gave his theory that a lighted cigarette had been carelessly thrown between the sidewalk and the building and had ignited the dry timbers between the outer and inner walls. This burned rapidly and ran the full length of the building and up to the roof before it succeeded in breaking out.

This appears quite plausible, for each time an opening was made that very spot was found to be on fire.

NO INSURANCE.

*The building was owned by **Patrick Flanagan**, of **Norway**, and not one cent's worth of insurance was carried, as Mr. Flanagan has no faith in insurance companies, and always figures what he saves by reason of not paying premiums.*

*The building had four occupants, **Frank Danielson** owned a small stock of groceries, **Wade Leek**, a restaurant, **Jno. [John] Flanagan**, a saloon, and **Geo. Monroe**, a plumbing shop.*

***Patrick Flanagan** came up from **Norway** Monday to prosecute the work of repairing his building, which was damaged by fire Saturday afternoon. Mr. Flanagan will repaper and repaint the structure throughout. He estimates his loss at \$450. **Jno. [John] Flanagan**, who conducted a saloon in one of the store rooms, places his loss at \$75, due principally to the quantity of goods stolen during the progress of the fire. **W. Leek**, the restaurateur, is out a cool \$100, besides his profits during the time he will be out of business. **Geo. Munroe**, the plumber, places his loss at \$25.*

None of the occupants carried one cent's worth of insurance which may prove

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

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a lesson to many people who “never have a fire.”

On Thursday, **February 25, 1904**, the **Flanagan Block** was **totally destroyed by fire**. The following account appeared in the **February 25, 1904** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press* under the headline “Big Blaze Last Night: Flanagan Building Totally Destroyed – Heavy Losses.”

*At an early hour this morning the **Flanagan building** at the corner of Stephenson avenue and East A street was almost completely destroyed by fire.*

*The building was occupied by **Kurz Brothers**, the well-known horse dealers, as a carriage, cutter and harness depot; **L.N. Richard**, barber shop, and **A.I. [sic – J.I. – John I.] Khoury**, confectionery dealers.*

*The total loss is in the neighborhood of \$9,000. The loss of **Kurz Brothers** is between \$3,500 and \$4,000, with \$2,000 insurance; **L.N. Richard**, loss \$400, no insurance; **A.I. [sic – J.I. – John I.] Khoury**, loss unknown, insurance estimated at \$900; loss on building, owned by **Judge Flanagan**, of **Sagola**, estimated at \$4,000, no insurance.*

*The building was one of the first erected in Iron Mountain and was for many years used as a **variety theatre**.*

Plans to erect a new brick building were announced in the **March 31, 1904** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*, as follows, under the headline “The Flanagan Building: Plans Being Prepared for a Twenty Thousand Dollar Block”:

*In a recent interview with **Patrick Flanagan** relative to the new brick building which he will build this season at the corner of Stephenson avenue and A street, the gentleman said that the building would be modern in every detail. There will be three stores fronting Stephenson avenue, and one on A street, where **Quist’s meat market** is now. The rear end of the second*

floor will be made into a large and commodious lodge-room with ante-rooms and banquet room in connection. The balance of the second floor will be divided into offices with a large and well-lighted court in the center, which will be a great improvement over the old-time long, narrow and dark halls. There will be two wide stairways leading from the street to the second floor, one from Stephenson avenue direct to the main court and one from A street to the lodge-room. There will also be a basement under the entire building, the floors of which will be of cement, and the building is to be heated throughout with steam.

Mr. Flanagan will visit several neighboring cities and inspect their modern office buildings and then secure the services of a first-class architect to draw the plans for him. The estimated cost of the building is \$20,000.

This building was never constructed. In the **1907-1908** and **1913** directories there were no listings for **425, 427, 429 or 431 South Stephenson Avenue**, as the site stood vacant.

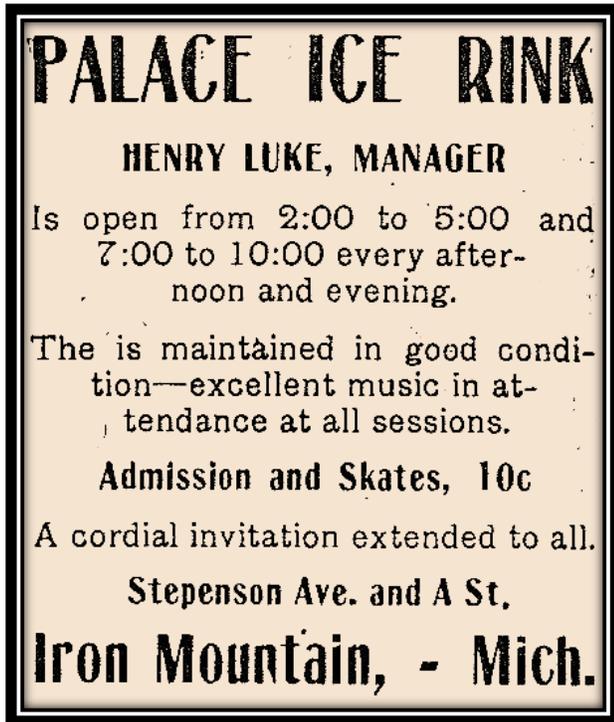
An item under “Brief News Notes” appearing in the **December 26, 1912** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press* announced:

*The **ice skating rink** conducted by **Henry Luke** at the **corner of Stephenson avenue and A street** is becoming a popular resort. The ice is maintained in fine condition and good deportment is insisted upon.*

On **October 21, 1920**, the *Iron Mountain Press* noted that application was about to be made for a charter for another bank in Iron Mountain – the fourth. The three existing banks at the time were the **First National Bank**, the **Commercial Bank** and the newly-formed **American Security Bank**.

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

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Henry Luke advertised his **Palace Ice Rink** in the **January 2, 1913** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*, announcing times and rates for admission and skate rental.

A week later the newspaper announced that Iron Mountain's newest bank, organized under and in accordance with the laws of the federal government, would be known as the **Iron Mountain National Bank**. An application for a charter was to be filed within a few days.

On **November 18, 1920**, a charter was issued for the **Iron Mountain National Bank**, and the organization was completed on **December 22, 1920**. The **Flanagan business property** at the **corner of South Stephenson Avenue and East A Street** was purchased for \$34,500.

Excavation for the new building began on Wednesday, **April 20, 1921**, to determine the depth of the remaining foundation of the old **Flanagan Block** and

the extent to which it would have to be reinforced. Local architects **F.E. Parmelee & Son** were in charge of the plan. Parmelee estimated construction would begin within two weeks and it would take six months to complete the building. Excavation was in progress for the basement of the **National Bank Block** on **May 19, 1921**.

Scratch face brick, chocolate in color, with Bedford stone trim, was used for the two-story building which was 62 feet by 122 feet. Five brick pilasters with Doric caps and bases of Bedford stone spanned the front. There was a Bedford stone cornice across the top, and a pediment of the same material above the cornice, bearing the name of the building. The doorway was of Bedford stone, and in a panel above it contained the motto of the institution – “The Bank of the People.” Bedford stone was also used for inset panels between the first and second floors.

By Friday, **August 12, 1921**, the *Iron Mountain Daily News* reported: *The brick and stone masons have about completed the basement and division walls of the new building of the **National Bank of Iron Mountain**. Some of the cut stones for the handsome front are being put in place. It is expected that the work will now progress rapidly as it will be possible to employ more men than heretofore. The contract for the masonry has been sublet to **G.A. Gustafson**, the well-known Norway contractor, who is doing the work under the direction of **Fred E. Parmelee & Son**, the contracting architects and superintendents. The work now completed evidences the fact that the home of the National Bank of Iron Mountain will be the largest and finest business block on the Menominee range.*

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

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This postcard view, taken in **about 1925**, shows: **401**, Liberty Candy Kitchen (George Villenette); **403** – no listing; **405**, Charles E. Parent Clothing Store in the Taylor Building (S.S. Kresge Co. opened at 405 on November 17, 1926); **407-409**, the Stern & Field (Herbert Field and Noe Bertrand); **411**, no listing; **413** – no listing; **415-417**, Levy-Unger Company, Ltd. (Henry M. Levy, Albert Levy, Isaac Unger); **421**, Erickson & Johnson Grocery Store (Sol E. Erickson and Gust P. Johnson); The Hub Clothing Company (David J. Confeld and Meyer Rosenblum) opened at **421** in late March, 1925; **427-431**, The National Bank Block. Most of the listings are from the 1925 directory. There were no buildings on the west side of the 400 block of Stephenson Avenue at this time. [William J. Cummings]

On **December 14, 1921**, an article in the *Iron Mountain Daily News* announced that the **J.C. Penny Company** had signed a lease for the Stephenson Avenue store in the new National Bank Block. The store was to have a plate glass front and would be 122 by 26 feet in size.

At that time plasterers were at work on the interior of the new block, applying the second layer on the walls of the second

story. The woodwork was ready to be shipped as soon as the plaster was dry enough to permit its installation. The vault and safety deposit equipment were to be shipped by the York Safe Company on December 15.

Despite the non-arrival of furniture, the officials of the **United States National Bank of Iron Mountain** moved into the new bank block on Saturday afternoon,

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

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March 18, 1922. The first business to be transacted in the new building was conducted Saturday night.

The delay in the receipt of the builders' hardware which had held up the opening of the offices of the second floor had arrived and was being installed. Several of the occupants of these new offices were already moving in.

The official opening of the United States National Bank of Iron Mountain was held on Saturday, May 27, 1922. Children were received by bank officials in the afternoon from 3:00 to 4:30 and adults were received in the evening from 7 to 10. Souvenirs – airplanes for boys and girls and useful household articles for adults – were distributed. The Syncopated Five orchestra furnished music.

The main entrance was in the center of the building and provided access to a vestibule. To the right of this vestibule was the entrance into the bank lobby, and to the rear was the stairway leading to the basement and to the upper floor.

The bank lobby was 44 feet 7 inches by 15 feet 5 inches. The floor was of polished marble. Imported Italian marble, furnished by the St. Louis Bank Equipment & Fixture Company, was used for counters and wainscoting. The Green Bay Planing Mill Company of Green Bay, Wisconsin, furnished the interior woodwork. Painting, staining and varnishing were done by **Ernest Bond**, of Iron Mountain.

Directly opposite the bank's entrance door was the combined consultation room and cashier's office. Four well-appointed teller's cages to the left were occupied by **Miss Viola L. Blixt**, assistant cashier, and **Frank Stefani**, teller, when the bank opened.

At the rear of the lobby was the door into the banking house proper. Along the north wall were the check desks, the

entrance to the ladies' "retiring room" and to the men's toilet. Bank officials were proud of the comfortable and inviting women's rest room which contained lavatories, writing tables, chairs and a settee for tired patrons.

A large clock with a face nearly three feet in diameter was located directly over the vault door and was illuminated at night.

The vault door, manufactured by the York Safe & Lock Co., York, Pennsylvania, consisted of six inches of solid steel and weighed about six tons. Twenty-two bolts held the door shut, and when the pressure bars were applied the vault was hermetically sealed. Access was controlled by three time locks which locked automatically, regardless of the combination. In case of a break in one or two of the locks, the third would remain operative. There was also a combination lock.

Inside the vault, back of the steel day-gate, was the safety-deposit room, which initially contained one block of 132 boxes. In the rear of this compartment and separated from it by a steel grill was the currency vault with a capacity of seven cubic feet sealed by a screw-door safe. It was protected by two manganese steel doors, one five inches thick and the other two inches thick. According to **Bank President Cleo Meilleur**, it was the only vault of its kind in northern Michigan.

The vault walls were of 20-inch reinforced concrete and extended up from the cellar, where a record vault was located. The space above the top of the vault was utilized for a small office.

There were two store rooms in the rear of the National Bank Block on **East A Street**, one measuring 27 feet in width and the other 21 feet 8 inches. Both were 47 feet long. A storage room was located in the rear of the wider store. **Andrew Rian**,

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

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who conducted a large general store at **Felch**, had leased the west store facing on East A Street. **Olaf Rian** would have charge of this store, selling clothing and gents' furnishing goods. **Jerry Thibert**, of Ishpeming, had leased the east store facing on East A Street, conducting a "cash and carry" grocery store.

On the second floor, in addition to the 17 office suites of two rooms each, lavatories for men and women were provided. The office suites were so arranged that, while they connected, either could be entered or left without passing through the other. In addition to the main stairway back of the front entrance, a second stairway was constructed on East A Street, giving access to the second floor and the basement.

Occupants of the offices and suites on the second floor when the bank opened included three attorneys: **Chester A. Knight**, **Ray A. MacAllister** and **Daniel J. O'Hara**; four physicians: **Dr. S. Edwin Cruse** and **Dr. Joseph Addison Crowell**, **Dr. Leslie E. Coffin** and **Dr. George Belheumer**; one dentist, **Dr. Dona J. Cote**; an eye, ear, nose and throat specialist, **Dr. C.W. Walker**; a real estate dealer, **M.E. Richards**; and a manicurist, **Miss Mary Harvey**.

In the basement, an Ideal steam heating plant was installed together with equipment for furnishing running hot water.

A ladies' bowling alley was located next to the furnace room and another room twice as large for the men's alley was adjacent. The billiard room and barber shop were located in the front portion of the basement.

By **mid-March, 1922**, equipment for the bowling alley and billiard parlor which was operated by **The Recreation Company of Iron Mountain**, **Ric** was being installed. The basement floor, measuring 60 by 120 feet, was covered by a cork carpet flooring.

Six tournament alleys were installed, four being laid in the north part of the building and two in the south, separated by a partition. The two alleys in the south part were used for private bowling parties and ladies' groups. The alleys were equipped with new improved pin setting machines and had noiseless returns in the centers. Instead of the usual sectional alleys commonly used in the area, the bowling alleys were built piece by piece of select tongue and grooved yellow pine, making one continuous bowling surface.

Leather settees were located at the end of the runways to accommodate the bowlers. All balls were molded mineralite of assorted weights except those intended for the ladies which were black in order to be more easily distinguished. Folding opera style mahogany-finished seats were located behind the alleys, each row elevated 4 inches above the preceding one to assure a clear view of the alleys.

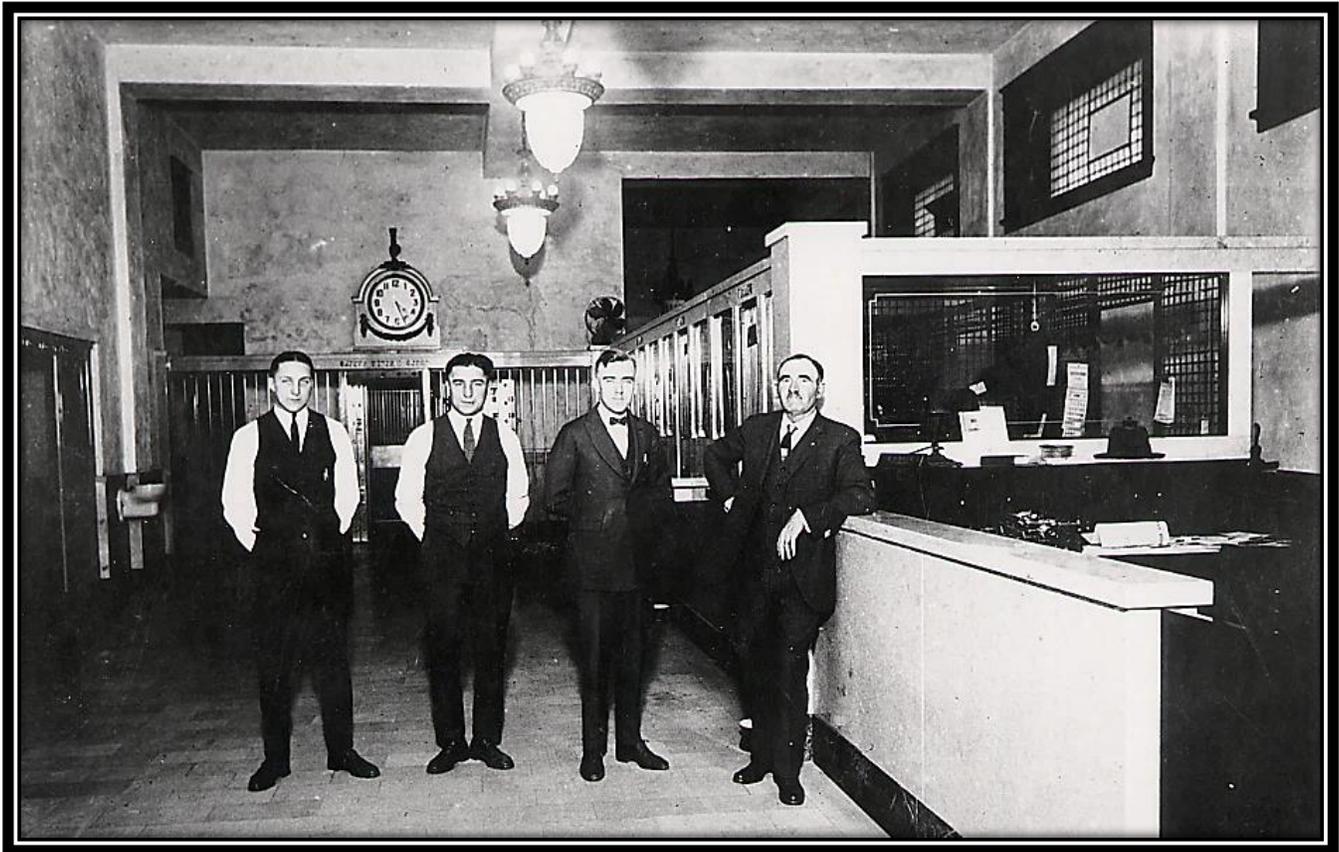
The front part of the room contained candy and cigar cases as well as refreshment counters and ice cream cases. Tables with white sanitary tops with matching chairs were also located in this area. The southwest part of the basement housed the billiard room, with a barber shop at the southeast end, separated from the billiard room by a partition. There were three pocket billiard tables and one carom billiard table, all finished in mahogany, purchased from the Brunswick-Balke-Company.

E.L. "Hans" Danielson was in charge with **Frank "Pinky" Pollard** serving as his assistant. A lady attendant was in charge of the candy and ice cream cases. By **1925** **Richard P. James** was the manager of **The Recreation Company**.

By **1939** **Peter Tomassoni** managed the **Recreation Bowling Alley** at **104 West Ludington Street**.

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

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Officials standing near the tellers' cages in the **United States National Bank** in **about 1923**, from left to right, were **Helmer Freeman**, **Frank Stefani**, assistant cashier; **Russell J. Bath**, cashier; and **Cleo Meilleur**, bank president. *[Gene Derwinski/Dick Ferris]*

According to the **1925** city directory, the following individuals, businesses and organizations were located in **National Bank Block**: **United States National Bank** (**Charles Meilleur**, president; **Charles Parent** and **O.H. Milliman**, vice-presidents; **Russell J. Bath**, cashier; **Frank Stefani**, assistant cashier); **J.C. Penny Company**, men's furnishing goods and ready-to-wear, **Fred S. Harmon**, manager; **James C. Knight**, lawyer; **Daniel J. O'Hara**, lawyer; **John S. O'Hara**, dentist; **Harold V. Malin**, dentist; **Leo O. Finch**, dentist; **Dora J. Cote**, dentist; **Ray E. MacAllister**, lawyer; **Elizabeth M. Twombly**, dressmaker; **Dr. J. Addison Crowell**, **Dr. George W. Belhumeur** and

Dr. Leslie E. Coffin, physicians; **Dr. S. Edwin Cruse**, physician; **Dr. C.W. Walker**, physician, eye, ears, nose and throat, glasses fitted; **Dr. Lloyd J. Straub**, dentist; **Derham & Derham** (**Ray Derham**, **Roy R. Derham**), lawyers; **The Recreation Company**, billiards, **Richard P. James**, basement.

The **United States National Bank** closed on **May 23, 1932**, passing into receivership during the Depression.

According to the **1935** city directory, the following individuals, businesses and organizations were located in **National Bank Building**: Room 1, **MacAllister & Brown** (**Ray E. MacAllister** and **Ernest W. Brown**), lawyers; Room 2, **John V.**

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

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Zanardi, lawyer; Room 3, **Vanity Beauty Shop (Patty Pasquantonio, Celia Manci)**, "Permanent Waving, Manicuring, All Branches of Beauty Culture"; Room 4, "vacant"; Room 5, **Dr. Ivar C. Johnson**, dentist; Room 6, "vacant"; Rooms 7-8, "vacant"; Room 9, **Dr. Dona J. Cote**, dentist; Room 10, **Dundon's Actual Business College (Richard F. Dundon and Ruth F. Dundon, proprietors)**,

"Established in 1908, Individual Instruction, Every Graduate Is Successful"; Rooms 11-12, **Frank G. Logic**, chiropractor; Room 13, "vacant"; Room 14, **The National Insurance Agency, Thompson Ross & Company**, stocks and bonds, **Russell J. Bath**, real estate and insurance; Room 15, **Derham & Derham (Ray Derham and Roy E. Derham)**, lawyers, **Metropolitan Life Insurance Company**.



This interior view of the **United States National Bank** dates from the **late 1920s to the early 1930s**. The bank proper was located in the southwest corner of the **National Bank Building, 425-431 South Stephenson Avenue**. Note the tellers' cages and general office area, as well as the elaborate ceiling decoration with applied plaster work and ornate lighting fixtures. The bank closed on **May 23, 1932**, passing into receivership during the Depression. *[Menominee Range Historical Museum]*

In **September 1937** the **National Bank Block** was sold at auction to **Christ Rigoni**

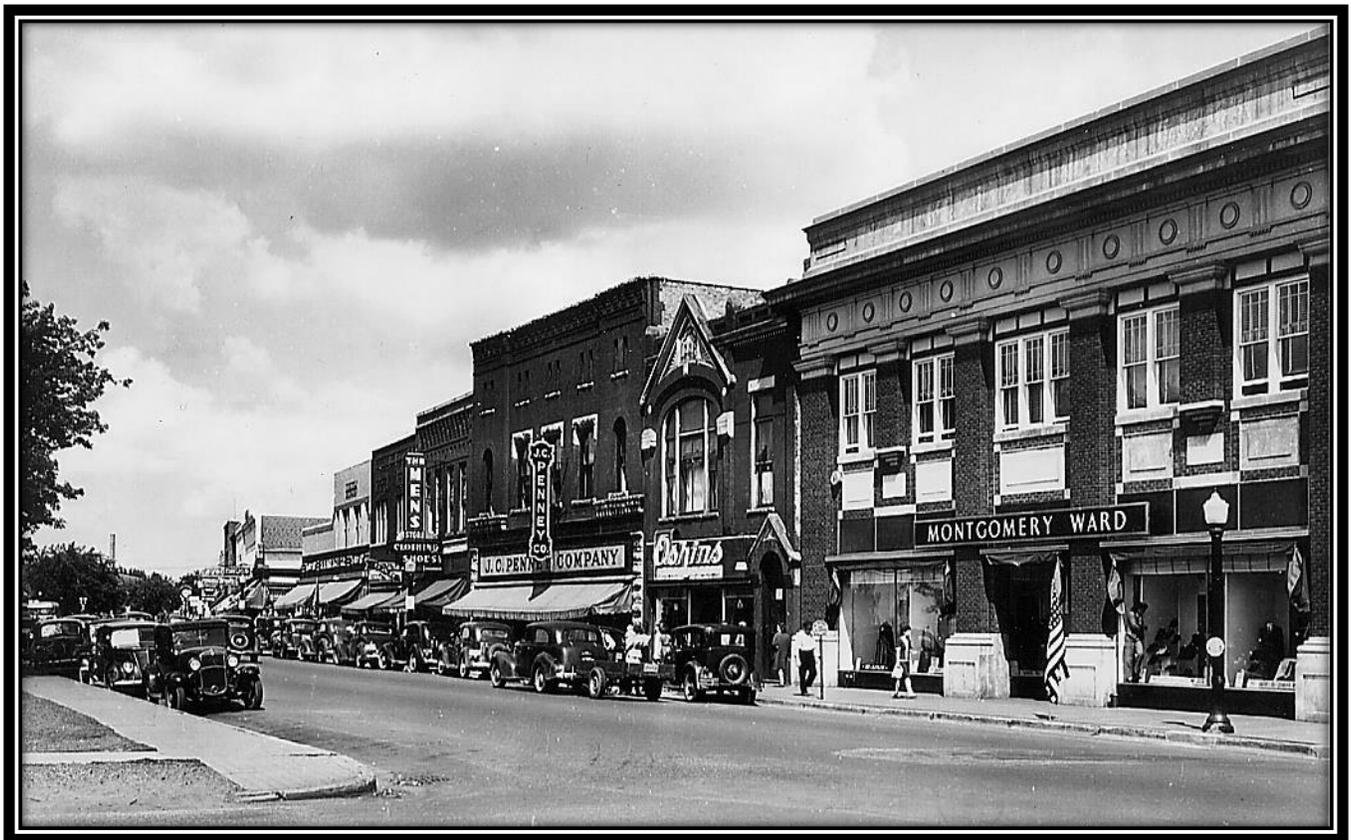
of the **Service & Supply Company**. When Rigoni retired from the firm, **F. Albie Flodin**

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

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became the owner. Flodin granted the **Montgomery Ward Company** a 20-year lease on the building by **mid-September 1938**. The building was remodeled and was the largest Montgomery Ward store in the Upper Peninsula and northern Wisconsin, serving as a territorial branch.

Montgomery Ward operated a store at **421 South Stephenson Avenue**, owned by the **Crescent Lodge of the Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.)** prior to occupying the former bank building.



This postcard view, postmarked July 22, 1946, included: 401-403, the **S.S. Kresge Co. Department Store**; 407-409, the **Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Co.**; 411, **The Men's Store (Max Dworsky and Paul Dworsky)**; 415-417, **J.C. Penny Co., Inc.**; 421, **Oshin's Ladies' Apparel (Isaac H. Oshin)**; 427, **Montgomery Ward Co.** Business references are from the 1941 city directory. There were no buildings on the west side of this block at this time. [William J. Cummings]

The building became the **Downtown Plaza** in about **1980**.

An article in the **September 19, 1938** edition of *The Iron Mountain News* under the headline "Ward Company Takes Lease On Bank Building: Branch Distribution

Center Is Expected To be Established" reported:

Remodeling of the United States National bank building, corner of Stephenson avenue and A street, may begin about October 1, as the result of a

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

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20-year lease granted by F. Albie Flodin, of the Service and Supply company, to Montgomery Ward and company, of Chicago, it was learned today.

Tentative plans, although not yet officially announced, provide for the largest Montgomery Ward store in the upper Michigan and Wisconsin area, to be established probably as a territorial branch, serving other stores in the district.

Indications are that the establishment of the store will be one of the largest single business developments occurring in this city in many years and the news was received by many as an encouraging sign for the community.

More Room Needed

Cramped quarters at the present place, 421 Stephenson avenue, and a consistent increase in business were said to have combined in the decision to lease the bank building.

Ward engineers have already visited the premises and, according to reports, are contemplating the building plans. Preliminary negotiations for the lease, it is understood, were made by Russell J. Bath, Iron Mountain real estate broker, who likewise arranged for the tenancy of the present Ward store, owned by the Crescent Lodge of Odd Fellows, of this city. Bath is agent and trustee for the lodge.

All tenants of the U.S. National bank buildings have been advised to vacate at the earliest possible date, so that remodeling may start without delay, when the engineers arrive.

Built in 1922

Constructed in 1922, the U.S. National bank was opened in the early fall of that year, and continued in operation until May 23, 1932, when it passed into receivership. A year ago, in September, the building was sold at auction on a bid submitted by Christ Rigoni, 511 West Hughitt, then of the

Service and Supply company. Rigoni has since retired from the firm. Ownership later passed to Flodin.

An announcement as to the building plan and other details of the new branch is expected in the near future from Earl D. Young, director of the Montgomery-Ward promotion department at Chicago.

By 1939 **Montgomery Ward & Company** was listed at 427-431 South Stephenson Avenue with **A.R. Rosier** serving as manager. There was no listing of occupants on the second floor in the 1939 city directory. In the 1941-1942 city directory Montgomery Ward & Company, then managed by **Dale M. Hurlbutt**, was listed at 427 South Stephenson Avenue, and also at the corner of South Stephenson Avenue and East A Street. Again, there was no listing of occupants on the second floor.

The following individuals worked as managers for the Montgomery Ward Company: **D.M. Hurlbutt** (1941); **V.R. Scanlon** (1959-1967) and **M.L. Best** (1968-1973); **William Wiesjahn**, assistant manager (1971-1973); **John M. Lutz** (1974-1976); **Gary A. Bell**, assistant manager (1974); **James McIntire**, assistant manager (1976); **W.J. Sigsbee** (1977-1978).

In **1969** and **1970** **The Brass Knocker**, owned by **Mrs. Carolyn L. Tomasi**, occupied a portion of this building.

The building at 425 South Stephenson Avenue was listed as vacant in **1979-1980**.

Don and Donna Christy first became downtown merchants in **1971** when they acquired the **Western Auto**, then located at **215 East Hughitt Street**. Christy worked for the **J.C. Penny Company** for 9½ years before going into business on his own. The Christys expanded the store on East Hughitt Street and then moved into the

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

By William J. Cummings, Menominee Range Historical Foundation Historian

former J.C. Penny Company store at 415 South Stephenson Avenue in **1979**.

The couple also acquired the former **Montgomery Ward Company store** at

423-431 South Carpenter Avenue, turning it into a minimall known as the **Downtown Plaza**. **Mike Nicometo** acquired this property in about **1981-1982**.



The **U.S. National Bank Block** was located on the **northeast corner of South Stephenson Avenue and East A Street**. The bank closed on **May 23, 1932**. By the **fall of 1938** the **Montgomery Ward & Company** store occupied the building at **427-431 South Stephenson Avenue** with **A.R. Rosier** serving as manager. In **1941 Dale M. Hurlbutt** was manager. The automobile parked at the far right was a 1952 Buick Special Sedan. This building, called the **Downtown Plaza**, still stood in 2020. *[Menominee Range Historical Museum]*

Undoubtedly **Wishing Well Gifts**, owned by **Don and Sharon Khoury**, has been the longest tenant in the Downtown Plaza, having occupied the same space since **early September 1980**.

In **1981**, **Accent Village**, **Judy Haupt**, wholesale and retail ceramic and plaster ware; **Ace Drugs**, **Rene R. Savoie**; **Babe's Dinner Bell**, **Kathleen Gardipy**, restaurant; **Merle Norman & Hair Designers**, **Peter and Carol Schlitt**; **Roush's Physical Improvement Center**; **Tavonatti's**, **Ted A. Tavonatti**, frame and art supplies; and

Wishing Well Gifts, **Don and Sharon Khoury** were located in the **Downtown Plaza**.

In **1982**, the **Downtown Plaza**, owned by **Mike Nicometo**, contained **Ace Drugs**, **Rene R. Savoie**; **Count Your Blessings Stitchery Shop**, **Carol S. Mitchell**; **Liberty Cafe**, **Theresa L. and Michael S. Nokes**; **Merle Norman & Hair Designers**, **Peter and Carol Schlitt**; **The Music Shoppe**, **Stan W. Gill**; **Northern Furniture Discounters**, **Michael Nicometo**; **Tavonatti's**, **Ted A. Tavonatti**; and

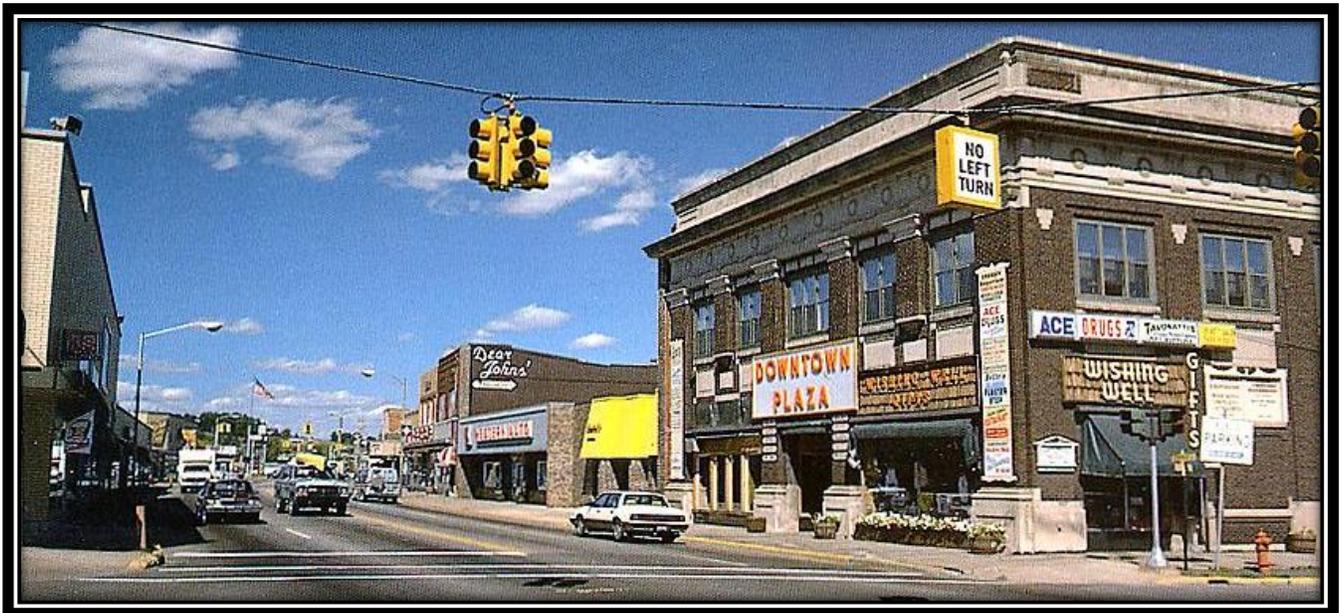
MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

By William J. Cummings, Menominee Range Historical Foundation Historian

Wishing Well Gifts, Don and Sharon Khoury.

By 1984, the Downtown Plaza was home to Ace Drugs, Rene R. Savoie; The Computer Shoppe, Michael Nicometo and James M. Riverside; Count Your Blessings Stitchery Shop, Carol S. Mitchell; Energy Emporium, Michael Nicometo; The Frameworks, Thomas J.

and Mary K. Bugni; Knit & Knot Yarns, Diane H. Sparapani; Liberty Cafe, Theresa L. and Michael S. Nokes; Merle Norman & Hair Design, Janise Bilski and Susan Martin; The Music Shoppe, Stan W. Gill; Northern Furniture Discounters, Michael Nicometo; and Wishing Well Gifts, Don and Sharon Khoury.



This postcard view, taken sometime after the fire of February 28, 1982, when the center portion of the block was destroyed, shows: **403-405**, S.S. Kresge Co. Variety Store; **407**, Kresge-Khoury Building, Dear John's Tavern (John Jacobs); **411**, Western Auto (Don Christy); **421**, Isabel's (Mose Pasten and Isabel K. Pasten), women's clothing; **425-427**, Downtown Plaza, containing Wishing Well Gifts (Don Khoury and Sharon Khoury), Ace Drug Store (Rene Savoie). On the west side of the street were: **400**, Wright's Men's Wear (William J. Wright and Laura L. Wright); **408**, Kushner's (David Kushner and Eleanor Kushner), children's clothing, and Pix Shoe Store (Emmabelle Retherford, manager); 414, Colenso's, Inc., department store (John R. Colenso, Irving C. Hoffman). *[William J. Cummings]*

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

By William J. Cummings, Menominee Range Historical Foundation Historian



This photograph shows the Downtown Plaza in August of 2010 with Sweet Repeats on the left and Wishing Well Gifts on the right.. [William J. Cummings]

PATRICK FLANAGAN

The Current, Norway, Menominee County, Michigan, Volume VI, Number 27 [Saturday, August 9, 1890], page 8, columns 1-2

Patrick Flanagan is now occupying the seat on his delivery wagon and holding the ribbons over a pair of broncos. One of them he bought from **Jos. Rowe** and it has a reputation for making matchwood of every rig it was ever hitched to but Patrick has it partially under control as it has runaway but once, since he had it. Pat., if the animal kills you the people will give you a decent burial but it is asking considerable of them when you take such chances.

[Biographical sketch of Patrick Flanagan taken from *A History of the Northern Peninsula of Michigan and Its People* by Alvah L. Sawyer, Lewis Publishing Company, Chicago, Illinois, 1911, pages 709-710 with portrait tipped in before page 709]

Patrick Flanagan – Prominent among the more prosperous and enterprising business men of Dickinson county is Patrick Flanagan, who has been identified with different lines of industry, and as president of the **Sagola Lumber Company** is carrying on a substantial business in **Sagola**. He was bom, **March 17, 1849**, in **county Westmeath, Ireland**, which was likewise the birthplace of his parents, **John and Margaret (Cleary) Flanagan**.

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

By William J. Cummings, Menominee Range Historical Foundation Historian

In **1849**, accompanied by his wife and two children, **John Flanagan** came in a sailing vessel to America, being six weeks on the ocean. Landing in New York, he was for a time employed on the **New York Central railroad**. In **1856** he removed with his family to **Wisconsin**, becoming a pioneer of **Freedom township, Outagamie county**. Securing a tract of timbered land, he erected a log cabin and a log barn, and then began the arduous task of redeeming a farm from the forest. Each winter for a number of years he was employed in lumbering, the remainder of the time being employed in clearing the land and tilling the soil. Successful in his undertakings, he bought adjoining farms, one of which, located just across the road from his homestead, had a good set of frame buildings on it. He continued his agricultural labors until his death, in **1885**, at the age of sixty-seven years. His wife survived him ten years, passing away in **1895**. They were the parents of nine children, as follows: **Mary**, who died in Ohio, at the age of six years ; **Patrick**, the subject of this sketch; **Michael**, ex-judge of probate of Langlade county, Wisconsin; **John**, deceased; **Thomas**, of **Iron River**; **Bernard M.**, owning and occupying the old homestead in Wisconsin; **James**, residing in the state of Washington; **Catherine**, wife of **James Murphy**, of Seymour township; and **Margaret**, a teacher, who died at the age of nineteen years.

Patrick Flanagan, the only member of the parental household now living that was born in Ireland, was but a few months old when brought to this country. He acquired his youthful knowledge in the district schools of **Freedom township**, living with his parents until sixteen years old.

Coming then to **Michigan**, he spent that summer at **Negaunee**, and in the fall, with two companions started westward, going by

rail from Chicago to Saint Louis, and from there by boat up the Missouri river to **Leavenworth, Kansas**, where the three boys entered the service of the government as teamsters. On **September 1, 1865**, they left Leavenworth, each boy driving a team consisting of five yoke of oxen attached to a wagon loaded with provisions, their point of destination being **Fort Union, New Mexico**. On reaching the Cimarron river they were snow bound, and had to spend the winter there, with nothing to do excepting to look after their teams. Pushing on to the Fort in the spring, they were paid off, and Mr. Flanagan found employment in the quartermaster's office. Building was going on at the Fort, and he assisted in laying brick, and learned the trade, which he followed a year.

Going then to **Black Hawk, Colorado**, he worked at his trade a year, his companions in the meantime prospecting and discovering gold. Mr. Flanagan acquired a third interest in the mine, and was successfully engaged in mining for a year, when the supply of gold failed and he and his companions mined for a while at a loss. Going into the mine one day to make examinations, Mr. Flanagan was so seriously injured by a cave-in that he was confined to his bed in **Central City** for about nine months.

Returning then to **Wisconsin**, he taught school in **Sagola** until the **fall of 1872**, when he entered **Lawrence University**, at **Appleton, Wisconsin**, where he continued his studies three years.

Accepting then the position of superintendent of the schools of **Outagamie county**, he devoted his attention to the duties of his office until **1880**. In that year, having previously become interested with his father in stock raising, Mr. Flanagan came to the **Upper Peninsula** with a drove of cattle, and

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

By William J. Cummings, Menominee Range Historical Foundation Historian

visited **Ishpeming, Vulcan, Norway, Iron Mountain** and **Quinnesec**, the terminus of the railroad.

Being induced to establish a meat market in **Norway**, he operated it successfully for twenty years, during which time he had organized the **Sagola Lumber Company**, of which he was elected vice-president. Not until **1898**, however, did Mr. Flanagan take an active part in the affairs of the Company. Removing to **Sagola** in that year, he has since devoted his time and energy to advancing the interests of this company, and, in **1905**, having purchased the interests of one of the partners, was made president of the Company.

Mr. Flanagan married, in 1876, **Margaret Hayes**, who was born in **Cleveland, Ohio**, of Irish ancestry. Her father, **John Hayes**, was for many years a well-to-do farmer of **East Holland, Brown county, Ohio**. Mr. and Mrs. Flanagan have two children, **John J.** and **Mary**.

John J., vice-president of the **Sagola Lumber Company**, has inherited in a marked degree the business ability of his father, but not his politics, as he is a true-blue Republican, while Mr. Flanagan is an uncompromising Democrat. He married **Rachel Thomas**, of **Spokane, Washington**, and they have one child, **Hortense**.

Mary is the wife of **Henry Newkirk, M. D.**, of **Iron Mountain**.

Mr. Flanagan served two terms as coroner while in **Menominee county**, and for fourteen years was justice of the peace in **Norway**, while on the organization of **Dickinson county** he was appointed as the first judge of probate and was six years chairman of the county board and finally had to refuse to again become a candidate. He is a member of the **Catholic Order of Foresters** at **Norway**. The family are members of the Catholic church.

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 23, Number 18 [Thursday, September 19, 1918], page 1, column 3

DEATH OF PIONEER

Patrick Flanagan, Veteran Business Man, Died on Friday Last

Patrick Flanagan, a resident of the range for more than thirty-eight years, died at three o'clock last Friday afternoon at the family home at **Sagola**, after an illness of nearly two years.

Mr. Flanagan was a native of Ireland and was seventy-one years of age on March 17th last. He came to this country with his parents when an infant. The family located at **Sagola, Wis.**, where he reached manhood. Mr. Flanagan taught school in his early manhood and held the position of county superintendent. He also followed mining for a short time in a Colorado camp and while so engaged met with an accident that crippled him for life.

In **1880**, Mr. Flanagan removed from Wisconsin to **Norway**, where he conducted a **meat market and general store** until his removal to **Sagola**.

Associated with **William S. Laing, John O'Callaghan, Richard Wittenberg, Jr., J.M. Atley**, and **Thomas J. Hughes**, Mr. Flanagan organized the **Sagola Lumber Company** about thirty years ago. Messrs. Laing, O'Callaghan and Hughes are now dead. Mr. Wittenberg retired from the company some fifteen years ago and is now engaged in business in Milwaukee. Mr. Atley, of Chicago, the remaining partner, is still associated, [*sic*] with the company as secretary and treasurer, a position he has held for many years. Prior to the death of Mr. O'Callaghan, Mr.

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

By William J. Cummings, Menominee Range Historical Foundation Historian

Flanagan was vice-president and identified with the management of the mill and other interests. Upon the death of Mr. O'Callaghan, he became president and manager of the company.

Mr. Flanagan was closely identified with the history of Dickinson county. He was very active in the strenuous campaign which resulted in the organization of the county after one of the hottest contests ever staged in Lansing.

Following the organization of the county Mr. Flanagan was appointed judge of probate by the late **Gov. Winans**, which position he held for several years. He had held other positions of trust including the offices of supervisor, treasurer and clerk of **Sagola township**. While holding the office of supervisor he was repeatedly elected chairman of the county board.

In national and state politics, Mr. Flanagan was an intense Democrat. He represented his party in several national and many state conventions. In county politics, however, it had been his practice to vote for the best qualified men regardless of party lines.

As a business man [*sic – businessman*] Mr. Flanagan was most thorough in his methods. He had engaged in many branches of industry – merchandising, lumbering and mining. Until poor health necessitated his retirement he was a director of the **Commercial Bank**. Mr. Flanagan was an enthusiastic believer in the agricultural possibilities of Dickinson county and the upper peninsula and was vice-president of the Upper Peninsula Development Bureau. He could always be depended upon to participate in any movement having for its object the upbuilding [*sic*] of the county and the peninsula. Mr. Flanagan was one of the largest taxpayers in the county, owning

considerable real property in this city and Norway in addition to his acreage holdings.

Mr. Flanagan is survived by his wife, one daughter, **Mrs. Henry A. Newkirk**, and son, **John J. Flanagan**, who is now active in the management of the Sagola Lumber company; also two brothers – **Thomas**, of **Iron River**, and **Bernard**, of Green Bay.

The funeral was held last Monday at the Catholic church at Sagola with **Rev. Father Stahl**, of Republic, in charge of the services. The remains were brought to this city on the ten o'clock St. Paul train and interred at Cemetery Park. The funeral was a large one, many business men [*sic – businessmen*] of Iron Mountain and Norway attending.

The above, in brief, is the story of the busy life of a citizen who will be greatly missed in our councils. Exact in his methods, it can be said that Mr. Flanagan never did any person an injustice and that he had helped many over the rough places. May he rest in peace.

[Biographical sketch of Patrick Flanagan, *Sagola's Early Years, A History of Sagola, Michigan* by Darryl Ertel, The Gregath Company, Cullman, Alabama, 1986, pages 64-67]

Patrick Flanagan was born in **Westmeath, Ireland**, son of **John (1822) & Margaret (1825) (Cleary) Flanagan**. Shortly after Patrick's birth the family joined the 1 1/2 million Irishmen who immigrated to the United States during the potato famine that had claimed approximately 1 million lives in Ireland. Settling first in **New York**, then in **Freedom, Wisconsin**, father John was a successful farmer until his death in **1885**. Mother **Margaret** died in **1895**. They were the parents of 9 children: **Mary** (died young), **Patrick**, **Michael**,

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

By William J. Cummings, Menominee Range Historical Foundation Historian

John, Thomas, Bernard, James, Catherine & Margaret.

Patrick, 16, moved to Negaunee, Michigan to work in the Jackson Mine. He later moved to Missouri & Kansas acquiring an interest in gold mining. After being seriously injured in the cave-in, he returned to Wisconsin, where he taught school in Sagole, Wis. until 1872.

Patrick & Margaret married in 1876 & were the parents of 2 children: John & Mary.

Patrick acquired a Butchers Shop in Norway, Michigan, where he moved his family in 1880. Patrick was instrumental in forming a lumber company & changing the name of the village, Sagola, after his home village in Wisconsin. Patrick did not take an active part in the company until 1898. He became president of the company in 1905 & continued to operate the company until his death.

[More details about this family can be found in *Sagola's Early Years, A History of Sagola, Michigan.*]



PATRICK FLANAGAN

Born: March 7, 1848, Westmeath, Ireland
Died: September 13, 1918, Sagola, Dickinson County, Michigan
Buried: Minnewawa, Lot 1, Iron Mountain Cemetery Park, Iron Mountain, Michigan



MARGARET (HAYES) FLANAGAN

Born: February 18, 1856, Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Ohio
Died: April 14, 1935, Sagola, Dickinson County, Michigan
Buried: Minnewawa, Lot 1, Iron Mountain Cemetery Park, Iron Mountain, Michigan



MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

By William J. Cummings, Menominee Range Historical Foundation Historian



JOHN J. FLANAGAN

Born: March 18, 1877, Freedom, Outagamie County, Wisconsin
Died: 1960, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan
Buried: Minnewawa, Lot 1, Iron Mountain Cemetery Park, Iron Mountain, Michigan

John spent 2 years at Green Bay Business College, then went west to Spokane, Washington, to manage a sawmill for his father. It was here that he met & married Rachel Thomas in June 1905. After the birth of their daughter Hortense in 1906, he brought his family to Sagola, to help his father run the Sagola Lumber Mill. John became vice-president of the company until the company sold. John was appointed Sagola postmaster on May 3, 1909. The family moved to Iron Mountain, where their daughter died at the age of 17. John established a scholarship in her memory which is still being awarded each year. [*Sagola's Early Years, A History of Sagola, Michigan*]



RACHEL (THOMAS) FLANAGAN

Born: 1879
Died: 1964, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan
Buried: Minnewawa, Lot 1, Iron Mountain Cemetery Park, Iron Mountain, Michigan



C. HORTENSE (BERRY) THOMAS

Born: March 18, 1877, Freedom, Outagamie County, Wisconsin
Died: July 10, 1944, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan
Buried: Minnewawa, Lot 1, Iron Mountain Cemetery Park, Iron Mountain, Michigan

MRS. THOMAS DIES AT HOME OF DAUGHTER

Mrs. C. Hortense Thomas, 89, mother of Mrs. John Flanagan, 214 West F Street, died at 3:20 this morning at her daughter's

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

By William J. Cummings, Menominee Range Historical Foundation Historian

home, where she had resided for the past year. She had been ailing since last fall. The daughter of A.L. Berry [sic – daughter of Joseph and Anna Louisa (White) Berry], she spent her girlhood in Hallowell & was married there on October 1, 1878 to E.A. Thomas. Later they moved to Mechanic Falls, Maine & in 1888 to Spokane, Wash, where she resided until she moved here. Mrs. Flanagan is an only daughter. Burial will be in Cemetery Park. (July 10, 1944, Daily News, Iron Mountain, Dickinson, Michigan.)

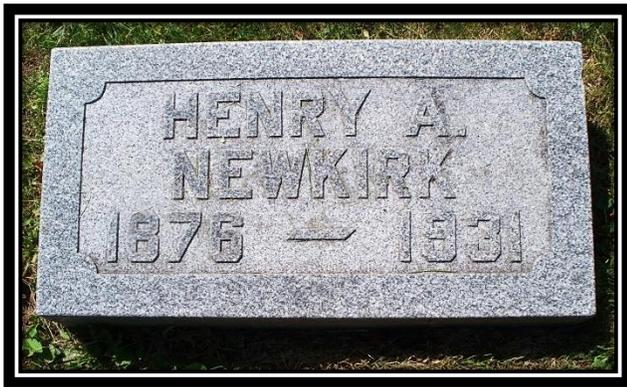


MARY F. (FLANAGAN) NEWKIRK

Born: May, 1880, Sagola, Marquette County, Michigan

Died: 1961, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan

Buried: Minnewawa, Lot 2, Iron Mountain Cemetery Park, Iron Mountain, Michigan



HENRY A. NEWKIRK

Born: July, 1876, Bay City, Bay County, Michigan

Died: April 24, 1931, Tucson, Pima County, Arizona

Buried: Minnewawa, Lot 2, Iron Mountain Cemetery Park, Iron Mountain, Michigan

Henry & Mary were married on Oct. 8, 1908. [*Sagola's Early Years, A History of Sagola, Michigan*]

Dr. Henry A Newkirk, Norway, former Iron Mountain resident, died Friday morning. Articles state that he is buried in Norway Cemetery but they are wrong. He is interred in Cemetery Park. (April 25, 1931, Iron Mountain News, Dickinson, Michigan.)



MARGARET HORTENSE FLANAGAN

Born: April 26, 1906, Spangle, Spokane County, Washington

Died: August 2, 1923, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan

Buried: Minnewawa, Lot 1, Iron Mountain Cemetery Park, Iron Mountain, Michigan

Hortense died at the age of 17. Father John established a scholarship in her memory which is still being awarded each year. [*Sagola's Early Years, A History of Sagola, Michigan*]

MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 52: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN 425-431 SOUTH STEPHENSON AVENUE

By William J. Cummings, Menominee Range Historical Foundation Historian

ILLNESS FATAL TO SCHOOL GIRL
Hortense Margaret, only child of Mr. & Mrs. John J. Flanagan, died yesterday afternoon at the home 214 West F street. She was 17 & had been seriously ill for over 2 months. Besides her parents, she is survived by 2 grandmothers, Mrs. Patrick Flanagan & Mrs. Thomas. (Friday, August 3, 1923, Iron

Mountain Daily News & Saturday, August 4, 1923, Norway Current, Dickinson, Michigan.)