

## MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 72: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN – 101-123 WEST LUDINGTON STREET

By William J. Cummings, Menominee Range Historical Foundation Historian



**Rundle's Opera House** was located on the second story of **A.J. Rundle's Hardware Store**, located at **105-107 West Ludington Street**, where the **Iron Mountain U.S. Post Office** now stands. The raised area on the roof would have been used as "fly" space for scenery for theater productions. Entrance to the opera house was on **Merritt Avenue** at the south end of the building, visible behind the telephone pole at the extreme left of this photograph which probably dates **between 1900 and 1910**. [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 72nd 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 – 101-123 West Ludington Street."

**History (Rundle's Opera House):** The earliest mention of an **opera house in Iron Mountain** found to date appeared in the **February 28, 1885** edition of Norway's newspaper *The Current* under the heading "Iron Mountain Melange" as follows:

*At last we are to have an **opera house**. A force of men are at work breaking ground preparatory to the laying of the foundation. The dimensions are as follows: Foundation*

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56x116 feet, with a 20 foot ceiling below and a 12 foot ceiling above. The building will be two stories high. The upper story will be used as offices, etc., and the lower story as an opera house, furnished with all the modern improvements. The building alone when completed will cost \$9,000. **Parmelee & Parmelee** have the contract and will push the work forward as fast as possible.

Nine months later the following item appeared in the **November 28, 1885** edition of the *Menominee Democrat*.

*The new opera house at Iron Mountain can be bought at a very reasonable price. The Wisconsin [Land] and Lumber Co. will take one-half for their claim. Apply to Mr. Ebert, superintendent, for further information.*

There are conflicting reports regarding the new opera house building mentioned above.

When the **Rundle Hardware Company**, owned by Arthur John "Stub" Rundle, went out of business in **June 1930**, an article in the **June 19, 1930** edition of *The Iron Mountain News* noted that **Rundle Brothers Hardware** moved from their original store at **331 South Stephenson Avenue** to the building at **105-107 West Ludington Street** in **1890**.

However, another paragraph in the same article stated:

*It is interesting to note that, covering two full lots, the building was purchased in 1881 by Mr. Rundle from the Wisconsin Land and Lumber company for the modest sum of \$350.*

The **Rundle Brothers** began their hardware business in **1881** at **331 South Stephenson Avenue**.

Another paragraph from the same article stated:

*Pioneer residents remember well the old Rundle theatre which once occupied what*

*was the second floor of the present building. Started in 1886 and equipped for stage plays and later moving pictures, the Rundle Opera House was operated until September 5 [sic – September 12], 1915, when fire destroyed the second floor and the theatre. Today a low, slanting roof covers what was once the most popular play-house in the immediate district.*

The information below came from the *History of Iron Mountain* by the **Iron Mountain Women's Club** presented on **February 20, 1914**:

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

**Rundle's Opera House** was well-covered by *The Menominee Range*, Iron Mountain's weekly newspaper, following the acquisition of the theater by the **Rundle Brothers**, as it was the venue for most entertainment activities in the community. The following numerous items from **1889**, the earliest surviving volume of *The Menominee Range*, provide insight into the social life of residents at that time.

In the **April 4, 1889** edition of *The Menominee Range*, the following item appeared:

*WE are informed that Mr. Thomas Rundle contemplates making great improvements around his property, which is now occupied by the opera house and John Saving, the merchant tailor. The*

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*sidewalk on Ludington street will be raised several feet and carried right around to the entrance of the hall, while convenient steps from the main level of the street to the new side walk will make all parts of the building easy of access, at the same time considerably enhancing the value of the whole property.*

One week later the following item appeared in the **April 11, 1889** edition of *The Menominee Range*:

QUITE a crowd of men and children were attracted to **Rundle's opera house** last Tuesday afternoon, when **Hosking's little dray horse** was led up the steps to be on hand to play his part in **Kerry Gow** in the evening. It was proposed to stable the horse for the time being over **John Saving's [sic – Savings'] tailor shop**, but when it was suggested that John might object to have stable extract dripping down on to his clothing, the animal was moved to a position where less harm was likely to follow.

In the same edition of *The Menominee Range* the following article appeared, providing some valuable history regarding the business changes in early Iron Mountain by careful examination of the business advertisers appearing on the stage drop curtain at **Rundle's Opera House**:

*Sitting in Rundle's opera house* last Monday evening we noticed the number of business cards on the stage drop that are already out of date. It is not two years we think since this curtain was painted, yet ten of the advertisements already represent business houses that no longer exist, either having suspended entirely or changed hands. For instance: **McLaughlin & Devere** are no longer insurance agents, having been succeeded by the **Menominee Range Insurance agency**; **T.B. Catlin** sells groceries, fruits, candies, cigars, etc.,

instead of furniture; **Laing Bros.** are succeeded by **Hoose & Waters**; **L.M. Hansen**, not **John Minnis**, is proprietor of the Iron Mountain livery stable; **Verhalen Bros.** left Iron Mountain a year ago or more; instead of **Rundle's Bros.** it is now **Thos. Rundle**; instead of **Robbins & Blackney**, it is **Blackney & Son**; instead of **Schuldes & Carriere** it is **C. Schuldes**, and **Lieberthal & Co.** have no further use for an advertisement on Rundle's drop curtain, nor have **Hathaway & Flatt**.

In the columns of the **May 2, 1889** edition of *The Menominee Range* the readers learned:

**THOMAS RUNDLE** has two bill boards put up, one on the corner opposite his store and the other opposite the **Chapin shops**, which will be used to advertise troupes that are to appear in his opera house.

Under the headline "**Beach and Bowers Minstrels**" the following article appeared in the same edition of *The Menominee Range*:

*The reputation this excellent troupe had already won in this city insured them a large house at Rundle's opera house* last Monday evening. It is undoubtedly the best minstrel troupe that ever came to this city, and although it may be said, possibly, that Iron mountain is a little slow on classic music, its citizens are always ready to attest their appreciation of negro minstrels.

Another article in the same edition of *The Menominee Range* under the headline "**Richards' Musical Tourists**" provided a review of another entertainment, as follows:

*We feel justified in saying that the above named company furnished last Saturday evening, in Rundle's opera house, the most thoroughly enjoyable entertainment ever witnessed in this city.* Unfortunately they came here while the **Catholic fair** was on, and as the latter presented so many features in which a large portion of our

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people were deeply interested, the **Tourists** suffered in consequence. They played to a small house, but a more appreciative audience was never assembled in Iron Mountain. Every number on the programme received hearty applause, and the soloists, **F.W. Walters**, tenor; **C. Laroy Millard**, 1st bass; and **Charles Noble**, 2d [sic – 2nd] bass, were encored after each appearance. It is unnecessary to particularize; they were all first class. Miss **Grace Holingsworth** appeared in a duet with F.W. Walters, and also as **Tresa Allcash**, in a burlesque of *Misererie in III* [sic – II] *Trovatore*. Millard was the comedian of the troupe and created mirth with every action. His representation of *Le Barron Tei Monteig* was simply immense. The second part of the programme, comprising dissolving views, several of the scenes accompanied by singing by the quartet, was an appropriate ending to a strictly first class musical entertainment. THE RANGE regrets that the troupe was not more liberally patronized. Too much encouragement cannot be given to this class of entertainments.

In the **May 30, 1889** edition of *The Menominee Range* notification of a talk on “**Law and Crime**” by **Judge C.B. Grant** was published as follows:

**Judge C.B. Grant** will address the people of this city on the above subject in **Rundle's opera house** next Sunday evening, and a cordial invitation is extended to every body [sic – everybody] to hear him. What the judge will have to say will be of interest to every citizen of this city, and the writer, having heard the judge talk before, can assure our readers that he will say it in an entertaining and pleasing manner. Turn out, and pack Rundle's opera house to its utmost capacity. Very likely this will be the

last opportunity our people will have to hear Mr. Grant speak.

Under the headline “**Judge Grant's Talk**” in the **June 6, 1889** edition of *The Menominee Range* the following review was provided:

**Judge Grant**, some two weeks ago, informed the writer hereof that he desired to talk to the people of this city upon the subject of **Law and Crime**, and with the assistance of several of our prominent citizens arrangements were made for him to address them in **Rundle's opera house** last Sunday evening. At the appointed time the hall was packed to its utmost capacity, both on the main floor and in the gallery, and probably 1,000 people assembled to hear what the learned judge had to say. A choir under the leadership of **K.S. Buck** sang the familiar hymn “Coronation,” in which the audience was invited to join, followed by reading of the Scripture and prayer by **Rev. Mr. Whitney**, after which Portuguese Hymn was sung. The judge was then introduced to the audience, and for over an hour he addressed them in a clear, logical, unimpassioned manner upon the causes and effects of crime, and the duties of officers and citizens in the enforcement of law. Mr. Grant does not believe that the world is all bad but on the contrary that it is better today than it ever was before, and will continue to grow better until the millennium. But the most lamentable fact of the present day is the indifference manifested in many communities to the commission of what is termed the lesser crimes, such as keeping of houses of ill fame, drunkenness, disorderly conduct, violations of certain statutes, etc. It is not necessary, said the judge, to refer to the graver crimes of murder, arson, rape, burglary, etc., the public will never countenance them, but by familiarity with the lesser crimes “we first

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*learn to endure, then pity, then embrace.” He pointed out clearly and forcibly the duty of the officers in regard to these minor offenses. It is not the business of private citizens, says the judge, to make complaint against a person committing any of these minor offenses, but it is the duty of the officer to make the complaint; he is paid for doing it, and the offender to arrest him, and will have less reason to complain if the officer does his duty than if a private citizen takes it upon himself to make the complaint. The judge is sound on this question and sets our marshal right on certain points he was in doubt about. Mr. Grant is not a prohibitionist, and what he had to say on that point was not of course satisfactory to the prohibitionists of this city. He believes in the most effective method of suppressing the evil of intemperance, and that in his judgment is high license and strict enforcement [of] the laws regulating the liquor traffic. He told his audience and dared any saloon keeper to controvert his statement, that intoxicating liquor was the cause of at least four fifths of all the crimes committed; that no saloon keeper ever yet voluntarily fulfilled the requirements of the law, and that because of their unwillingness to live up to the law the kind of prohibition that he believed would yet receive the sanction of the people would be the prohibition of the saloon – let a man buy his beer or stronger drink as he does his groceries and take it and use it, but forbid his drink where it is sold. There is a practicability about such a law that we should think would command the support of all who are really in earnest in this matter. The W.C.T.U. [Women’s Christian Temperance Union] has been fighting the liquor traffic for years with very poor results. Let the battle ground be transferred from the saloon to a hand to hand contest and they might meet with much better results.*

*Judging from comments we have heard Judge Grant’s talk pleased everybody but extreme prohibitionists, and we believe will have a good effect upon the people of our city.*

Misconduct by boys in the gallery during Judge Grant’s talk was also reported in the **June 6, 1889** edition of *The Menominee Range* as follows:

**JUDGE GRANT** found it necessary to stop twice during his discourse in **Rundle’s** hall last Sunday evening, and tell the boys in the gallery to keep still. The second time some shameless hoodlum was trying to talk louder and faster than the judge himself. We suppose the time will never come when all boys will understand that it is an evidence of good breeding to maintain a respectful silence on such occasions.

In the same edition of *The Menominee Range* an article labeled “**Coming Attractions**” provided readers with information on future programs at **Rundle’s Opera House** and beyond, as follows:

*Next Thursday evening the popular actor, **Newton Beers**, who has already appeared before an Iron Mountain audience, will be at **Rundle’s opera house**.*

*The attraction of the season for our Swedish citizens will be the **Swedish octette** [sic – octet] which will appear in **Rundle’s opera house** July 2. This will probably be one of the finest entertainments ever given in this city, and will be enjoyed by our English and American born citizens as well [as] by the fair haired sons and daughters of the land of the midnight sun.*

**King & Franklin’s colossal shows and wild west** will hold forth in this city in a canvas tent Friday, June 21. Their advertisement appears elsewhere.

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**Forepaugh's "best show on earth"** [circus] will spread its tents in this city July 17.

**Bristol's horse show** will exhibit in **Rundle's opera house** the 17th and 18th of this month.

The following four items appeared in the **June 20, 1889** edition of *The Menominee Range*, promoting **Rundle's Opera House** entertainments, as follows:

## THE CITY.

A very neat and attractive **Opera House** programme has been issued from the **Journal** office, with **O.F. Spencer** as publisher. [*The Iron Mountain Journal* was another local newspaper.]

## Another Good One Coming.

From the notices of them that we see in our exchanges, we feel safe in assuring our readers that the **Swedish octet**, which are [sic – is] to appear in **Rundle's opera house** July 2, will be one of the most classic and pleasing musical entertainments ever given in this city. Certainly if they compare with the **Swedish Lady Quartet** that traveled through the upper peninsula some years ago they are grand, and they have the reputation of being even superior to this first class troupe. Our Swedish citizens will undoubtedly appreciate this entertainment.

## Two Good Entertainments.

The comic opera, **Erminie**, was presented at **Rundle's opera house** last Friday evening by the **Andrews opera company**. This is one of that class of entertainments that we like to see encouraged, and they were deserving of the crowded house that greeted them. The company is a strong one, and every character was well portrayed. The music was excellent and the songs sung by the Misses **Nannie Wilkinson**, **Florence Clayton** and **Laura Rhodes** provoked hearty applause, as did also the duets and

choruses of the company. **Manager Rundle** has reason to feel gratified that he was able to give the people of our city such an excellent entertainment, and that in this case at least his efforts were appreciated.

Monday and Tuesday evenings **Prof. D.M. Bristol's educated horses, mules and ponies** appeared in **Rundle's opera house** and entertained the large audience with their wonderful and comical performances. It seems that these dumb animals can be educated to display such evidence of intelligence and to be under such complete control. The novelty of the performance naturally drew large and enthusiastic audiences and the animals received applause that would be flattering to any company of human actors.

That favorite actress, **Nellie Walters**, will appear at **Rundle's Opera House** on Saturday evening, **June 22 [1889]**, in a particularly strong play entitled "**Criss Cross.**" Miss Waters has played in this city a number of times, and needs no introduction to an Iron Mountain audience. Larger crowds have greeted her on each successive appearance. Her present support is said to be very strong, and we look for an immense audience Saturday evening.

In the columns of the **June 27, 1889** edition of *The Menominee Range* the following two related items appeared regarding the popular actress **Nellie Walters** and a competing attraction.

## Criss Cross.

Miss **Nellie Walters**, supported by an excellent company, entertained a large audience at **Rundle's opera house** last Saturday evening, in her characteristically pleasing manner. This charming actress has lost none of her vivacity since she entranced an Iron Mountain audience at this same opera house about a year ago. She labored under the disadvantage of a

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severe cold, which, however, did not apparently mar the excellence of her performance. *Criss Cross* is a play written especially for her, and affords an opportunity for the display of her talents in different character roles. The comments of the audience, when the curtain dropped on the last scene of the play, were such as indicated by their perfect enjoyment of the play.

**THE Capt. Thomas Comedy Company**, which was advertised to show in **Polka Dot hall** last Saturday, Monday and Tuesday evenings, had the funniest time on record. When they opened up the first evening they found that the **Nellie Walters troupe** had monopolized the amusement loving people of this city, so they closed up and went over to **Rundle's opera house** and bought six tickets for the entertainment themselves. Between the second and third acts the young ladies of the comedy company were introduced and gave an exhibition of their skill as performers on the cornet and trombone, and they played very well; however, it only served to draw a six dollar house Monday evening. Capt. Thomas concluded to make it a free show, and gave the tickets back to the audience, and invited them to come again the next evening, but the next evening nobody came. Capt. Thomas comedy seemingly does not strike the people as being so awfully comical.

The **Polka Dot Club** had purchased Bordeau's Hall at **104-106 West Ludington Street**, later the site of the **Bijou Theatre**, at 104-106 West Ludington Street, around **April 25, 1889**, which they improved by "tearing out the galleries, repainting the whole of the interior and making the floor just the kind that the good dancer loves." At that time they had 106 members. This was directly across the street from **Rundle's Opera House**.

The following four news items pertaining to **Rundle's Opera House** appeared in the **August 1, 1889** edition of *The Menominee Range*, as follows:

**TOM. RUNDLE**, while digging a trench in front of his store during the storm last Saturday, had the misfortune to lose a diamond pin from his necktie.

**THOS. RUNDLE** has had a new sidewalk laid in front of his **opera house**, which is about four feet above the level of the street. The street, it is claimed, has been cut down below grade, but isn't Tommy's sidewalk a little above grade?

### **The Georgia Minstrels.**

This famous troupe of course drew a crowded house at **Rundle's opera house** last Friday evening. The music was exceptionally fine, and there appeared to be nothing the matter with **Billy Kersand's** mouth. **Will G. Huff** gave a remarkable exhibition of his skill in playing the harmonica, extracting some of the sweetest music from it we ever heard from that instrument. **Will Gauze** in his impersonation of the Black Patti was immense. He possesses a soprano voice and acts the part of a black prima donna with wonderful fidelity to the character. The vestibule car porters and drum majors made a fine spectacle in their peculiar drill, and altogether the show was first class in every respect.

In the **August 8, 1889** edition of *The Menominee Range* the following article regarding entertainment at **Rundle's Opera House** appeared:

### **Schofield's Quintette Banjo Club**

Gave a very pleasing entertainment in **Rundle's opera house** last Monday evening. All the vocalists were enthusiastically encored and **Mr. Sisson**, the funny man of the troupe, was called back in the second part, half a dozen times or more – in fact until he stepped on to the

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stage, pulled off his wig, bowed and shook his head, to give the audience to understand that he proposed to give the other excellent artists in the troupe a chance. **Mr. and Mrs. Schofield**, in their banjo duets, were very pleasing and responded to encores after each appearance.

In the **August 15, 1889** edition of *The Menominee Range* the following article regarding entertainment at **Rundle's Opera House** appeared:

**Duncan Clark's Female Minstrels.**

**Duncan Clark's Monster Combination** opened to a big house at the **Palace**

**Family Theater** last night, considering the very cold weather, and everyone was well paid for turning out. The show is out of the common rut of female minstrels, being organized to cater to lady audiences. Nothing was said or done to offend the most fastidious. Any one [sic – Anyone] who can attend the opera or the Kiralfy productions need not hesitate to see this company, and they are sure of large audiences during their short engagement here. —**Sentinel, Milwaukee, March 2.**

They appear in **Rundle's opera house**, this city, tomorrow evening.



**Pitcher Walter Weber** and two unidentified teammates posed in their Iron Mountain uniforms at a photographer's studio in about **1884**. Note the "I.M." on their jerseys and the catcher's mitt and chest protector. In **late May 1894** *The Range Tribune* noted Weber had

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been offered a position with a Chicago baseball team. The caption for this photograph in the Diamond Jubilee edition (**July 2, 1954**) of *The Iron Mountain News* stated Weber played for the **Chicago White Sox**. Weber was the pitcher in the baseball game documented in the following article between the **Negaunee Fire Company** and the **Iron Mountain Fire Company** on Saturday, **August 10, 1889**. [Gene Derwinski]

The following article also appeared in the **August 15, 1889** edition of *The Menominee Range* detailing the firemen's tournament which culminated in a firemen's ball at **Rundle's Opera House**:

### *The Visiting Firemen.*

Last Saturday was a beautiful day for the firemen's tournament, as it has been called, in this city. The **Negaunee Fire Company**, accompanied by the **Negaunee City Band**, were met at the M. & N. depot on the arrival of the 6:45 train, by companies No. 1 and 2, of this city, led by the **Iron Mountain City Band**. Parade was formed as soon as the visitors alighted, and the procession, conducted by **Chief Hancock**, marched up Stephenson avenue to **fire engine house No. 1**, where the visiting firemen were greeted by the firemen of this city and citizens with a round of hearty cheers. During the evening the visitors were shown the sights of the city by their entertainers, who spared no pains to make them feel thoroughly at home and welcome. Saturday a large number of our business men [sic] joined with the firemen to make the occasion a grand holiday. Late in the forenoon our home companies turned out with their machines handsomely decorated with flags and flowers, and accompanied by the Negaunee firemen, paraded the principal streets of our city. The line was halted in front of **Hansen & Mortensen's photograph gallery**, where two excellent photographs were taken, which were afterwards presented by **John J. Saving**, with the mayor's compliments, to the Negaunee Fire Company and the Negaunee City Band. After the

photographs had been taken the line of march was resumed, taking in a part of the **Chapin location [North Side]** and then returning to engine house No. 1, where the procession disbanded.

The ball game, which was the feature of the afternoon, drew quite a crowd to the base ball park, and the game was called about 3 o'clock. **Mr. Fisher**, of **Republic**, was chosen umpire, and performed those arduous duties to the entire satisfaction of all concerned. The Iron Mountain boys won the toss and went to bat first, scoring one run, the Negaunee's scoring 3 runs. **Foster** was pitcher and **Williams** was catcher in the first inning and it needed only one inning to demonstrate that **Williams** can't catch ball. The second inning **Weber** pitched and **Hill** caught, resulting in a score of 8 for Iron Mountain and 0 for Negaunee. With this battery it was evident that the visiting firemen stood no show whatever, so in the third inning another change was made in the battery, **Foster** going back into the pitcher's box with **Hill** to catch. **Foster** pitched easy balls, that were knocked out into the field, where our boys did some excellent fielding in capturing them. In several instances the Iron Mountain players purposely fanned wind, and in other ways gave the visitors every possible advantage, while keeping up an appearance of playing ball. The trouble was that as the Negaunee company had asked for a game of ball the Iron Mountain companies supposed they would come down here with a strong team, so they got ready for them, and as the result shows they got too good a [sic – and] ready. Then, probably, the visiting firemen,

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seeing themselves so much overmatched, got somewhat rattled, and did not do as well as they should have done. Besides, the members of the regular nine in this city are all firemen. Still, if the Negaunee men had had a good catcher, they would doubtless have made it very interesting for the Iron Mountaineers. The following is the score by innings.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	R. O.
Iron Mt.	1	8	6	2	1	3	1	22
Negaunee	3	0	2	0	2	3	0	10

In the evening a **firemen's ball** was given in **Rundle's hall** at which about 50 couples were present. The Negaunee band played excellent music while in this city and is one of the finest bands on the upper peninsula. The Negaunee firemen showed themselves individually and collectively, to be a nice lot of men, and we hope to see them here again in the near future.

The **Methodists** and the **Presbyterians** rang in the New Year with a four-hour service and at **Rundle's Opera House** a dance was held, as described in the following article which appeared in the **January 2, 1890** edition of *The Menominee Range*:

### *The Old Year Out and the New Year In.*

The two **Methodist** churches united with the **Presbyterian** church last evening in a watch service lasting from 8 till past 12 o'clock, thus praying the old year out and the new year in. At **Rundle's opera house** a more youthful and joyous assemblage were engaged in "Chasing the glowing hours with flying feet" in the merry dance. Probably the police court record will show that others passed from the old year to the new in a state of howling inebriety and thus we have illustrated the different tastes of different persons. But the "dusky hour friendliest to sleep and silence" found the

writer hereof, and probably the large majority of the denizens of this city

"As fast lock'd up in sleep, as guiltless labor,

When it lies starkly in the traveler's bones."

On **June 13, 1891** a **grand ball** was held in Rundle's Opera House honoring the newly-formed **Dickinson County**. The **Hon. Don M. Dickinson** for whom the new county was named and several members of the Legislature arrived to help celebrate the occasion.



**Hon. Donald McDonald Dickinson** (**January 17, 1846–October 15, 1917**) graduated from the University of Michigan Law School in **1867** and built a very successful practice in Detroit, frequently arguing cases before the Supreme Court of the United States. In **1872**, Dickinson established himself in state politics by working to effectively organize the Democratic Party in what at the time was a heavily Republican state. In **1887**, Dickinson accepted the appointment as United States Postmaster General,

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serving from **January 6, 1888** until the end of **President Grover Cleveland's** first term in **1889**. **Dickinson County, Michigan** is named for him.

A large audience at **Rundle's Opera House** was left in the dark during a performance on Friday, **July 26, 1891** according to *The Menominee Range*, reported as follows:

*ELECTRIC light is very nice, but it is also very annoying when it flickers out as it did last Friday night and leaves a large audience sitting in the dark. Manager Rundle was forced to rush over to his store and get a dozen oil lamps, make tin reflectors, etc., all of which exercise served to make him somewhat hot under the collar. The Electric Light Company [Iron Mountain Electric Light & Power Company] appears to be unfortunate in the matter of furnishing a steady reliable light at all times, but we hope they will succeed in overcoming all difficulties in the future.*

Another power failure occurred during a performance of **Vreeland's Operatic Minstrels** on Saturday evening, **August 22, 1891**, leaving the audience in **Rundle's Opera House** "in darkness until oil lamps were procured. The electric lights started up again in about fifteen minutes." *The Iron Range*, the new name for *The Menominee Range* newspaper after **Dickinson County** was formed, reported that **Vreeland's Operatic Minstrels** was first class for this type of entertainment.

Also reported in the **August 27, 1891** edition of *The Iron Range* was the following item:

*A.J. RUNDLE is now the manager of the opera house and one of the improvements he has made is to put out the arc lamps that heretofore hung from the center of the ceiling and substitute a circle of incandescent lamps in its place. A row of*

*lights also surrounds the proscenium, and the hall is now much more brilliantly lighted than heretofore.*

**Thomas Rundle (1857-1891)**, owner of **Rundle's Opera House**, died of consumption [tuberculosis] on **September 22, 1891**. His brother **Alfred John "Stub" Rundle (1862-1935)** was manager of Rundle's Opera House at the time of Thomas Rundle's death.

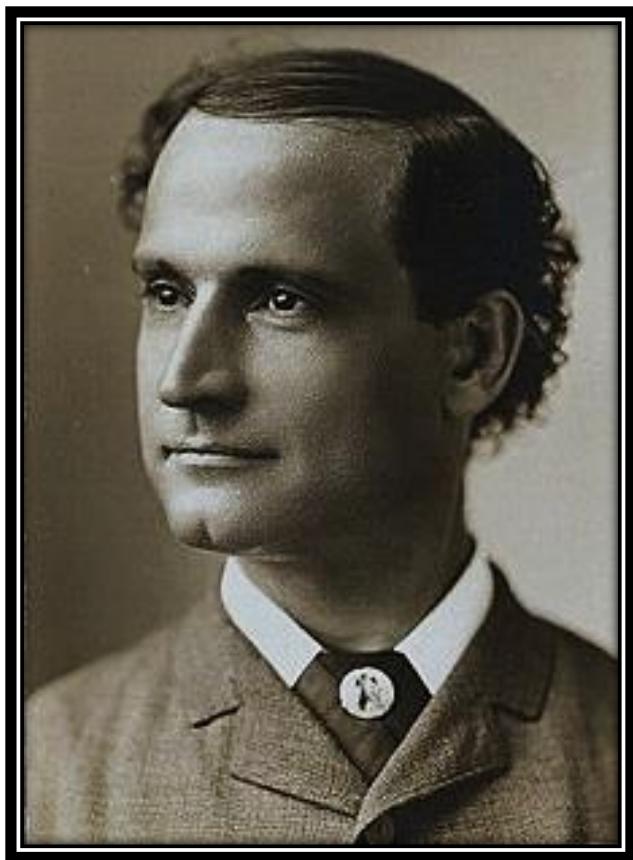
An item in the **December 24, 1891** edition of *The Iron Range* noted that **Alfred John "Stub" Rundle** had purchased the **Rundle's Opera House block** and had plans for some improvements as follows:

*JOHN RUNDLE has purchased of the heirs of Thos. Rundle, deceased, the opera house block, and thereby becomes the possessor of a valuable piece of property on the street destined to become one of the best business streets in the city. John has in contemplation several improvements that will add much to the comfort of the public on occasions of public gatherings. He will lower the building to its proper grade, put in steam heat, and put the stage at the south end of the hall. The stage will also be enlarged.*

According to the *History of Iron Mountain* by the **Iron Mountain Women's Club** dated **February 20, 1914**, sometime around **1892** the second story of **Rundle's Opera House** was completed. From then on, the good theatrical companies never forgot to stop in Iron Mountain. Among the great actors and actresses of the period who played on Rundle's stage were **Thomas Keene** in "Richard III"; **John S. Murphy** in "Sham Rhine and Kerry Glow" and **Ada Rehan** in "Nell Gwynne." Social clubs and dancing clubs met here, and **Five O'Clock Teas** were very fashionable.

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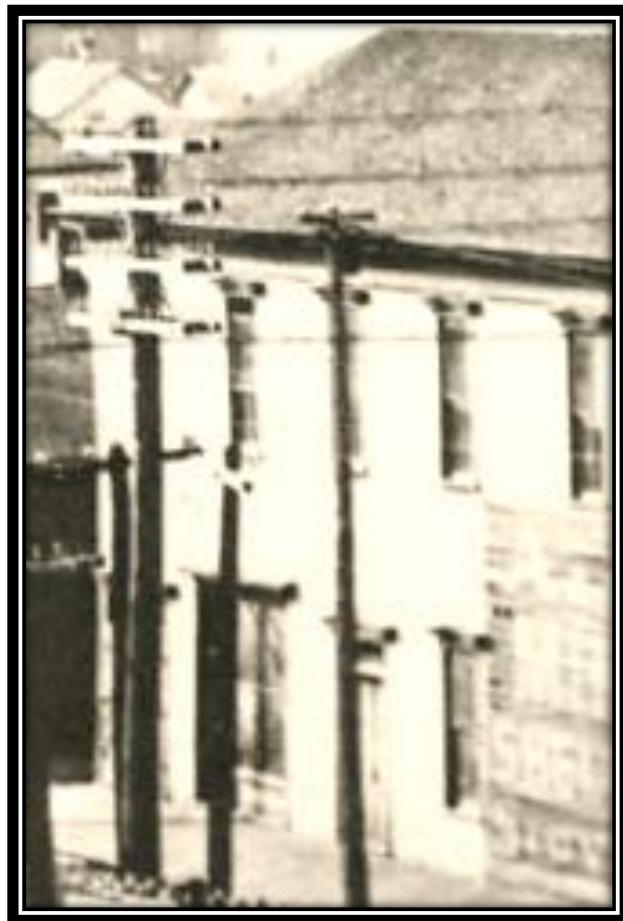


Thomas R. Eagleson (**October 26, 1840 – June 1, 1898**), better known by the stage name **Thomas Wallace Keene**, was an American theatre actor known for his Shakespearean roles which he performed throughout the United States. He performed on the stage at **Rundle's Opera House**.

Access to the second story, known as **Rundle's Opera House** for several decades, was gained through a wide door facing **Merritt Avenue** and the railroad tracks. The business entry for the hardware store was located on **West Ludington Street**.

Upon entering from Merritt Avenue, there was no foyer, but just a broad stairway leading to the second floor. After presenting their tickets at the door upstairs, patrons entered a large room and faced the

stage with its ornate curtain. Traveling companies provided the theater with one-night stands and stock companies brought a repertoire of several plays, mostly romances, for a week of entertainment. Vaudeville-type variety shows were also popular.



This detail of the photograph at the beginning of this article shows the south end of **Rundle's Opera House** facing **Merritt Avenue**. The entrance door to the second-story opera house is visible behind the telephone pole. [*Menominee Range Historical Museum*]

**Rundle's Opera House** was the site of numerous locally-sponsored balls and parties. The **Washington's Birthday**

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Party held on Friday evening, **February 21, 1896** by the **Drawing Room Club** received extensive press coverage.



Ada Rehan (born Bridget Crehan, **April 22, c. 1857 – January 8, 1916**) was an American actress and comedian who typified the "personality" style of acting in the nineteenth century. She performed on the stage at **Rundle's Opera House**.

The first item below appeared in the **February 8, 1896** edition of *The Range-Tribune*. The second brief announcement appeared in the same newspaper on **February 15, 1896**. The third extensive article reported the success of the party in

the **February 29, 1896** issue of *The Range-Tribune*.

*The ladies of the Drawing Room club propose to give a fancy dress party on Friday evening, February 21st, the eve of Washington's birthday. The costumes will represent colonial times, and all the distinguished ladies and gentlemen of that period will be represented. The party will be held at Rundle's opera house, and each member of the club is privileged to invite six couples to be present. Some of the old-fashioned dances will be indulged in, and a musical and literary program will also be a feature of the evening. A supper will be served. Mrs. Ingram will preside at the piano. Undoubtedly this will be the most brilliant and enjoyable party ever given in this city, and counterfeit Geo. Washington and his counterfeit compatriots will be amply rewarded in enjoyment for the temporary loss of moustache and beard.*

## SHORT LOCALGRAPHS.

*Those desiring costumes for the Washington's birthday party are requested to leave their names with A. Flatt at once.*

## A BRILLIANT SUCCESS.

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### **Colonial Party Given by the Ladies of the Drawing Room Club.**

*"The finest party ever given in Iron Mountain or on the Menominee range," was the unanimous verdict of those who attended the Washington's Birthday party given by the ladies of the Drawing Room club at [the] opera house last Friday evening – and the verdict was a just one.*

*The large auditorium had been tastefully [sic – tastefully] decorated with flags, with here and there a portrait of Washington,*

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and presented a handsome appearance. The guests were received by the members of the club, nine of whom were becomingly arrayed in red, white and blue costumes to represent the national flag.

The grand promenade took place about nine o'clock and was lead [sic – led] by **Prof. Paton** and **Mrs. Dr. Jones**, with **Mrs. K.H. Ingram** presiding at the piano. There were fully seventy couples in line and the spectacle was a most brilliant one.

After the promenade a half hour was spent in social intercourse and in singing patriotic songs. **Miss Jennie Cooke** also favored the gathering with a recitation appropriate to the occasion and was accorded hearty applause for the same.

Dainty refreshments were then served, after which dancing was indulged in for a few hours.

Following is a partial list of the characters represented: **T.W. Paton**, as Washington, was handsomely costumed, as becoming his high station, in a rich plush coat trimmed with gold, flowered vest, small clothes and stockings of white silk and silver-buckled shoes. **Mrs. R.P. Tuten**, as Martha Washington, wore a grey silk court train with white canton crepe petticoat, modeled after Daniel Huntington's picture of Lady Washington's Reception.

**Mrs. Corning** represented Mrs. John Adams; **Mrs. Eaton**, Mrs. Alexander Hamilton, and the rest of the club in dresses of red, white or blue (three each) represented the flag. The club badge was red and white carnations tied with blue ribbons.

**Sol Scott** represented Uncle Sam, in red and white striped [sic – striped] pants, blue coat and fancy vest, all cut in the peculiar fashion which has been adopted as the proper style for this much revered personage. **Mrs. Catlin** and **Mrs. Dr. Menistrina** each represented Columbia,

the first with dress of red and white stripes, and with scarf of blue starred with white, and gilt crown; the other with a dress of white draped with a very handsome silk flag, and she also wore a gilt crown.

**Miss Smith**, in a quaint pink silk dress striped and flowered in an old-fashion, recently again become new, and one worn by an ancestress of **Mrs. Sterling**, representing Abigail Adams. **Miss Mowrey** wore a blue silk, **Miss Briggs** a purple silk, and **Miss Stebbens** a black silk and real antiques. The latter represented Priscilla, the Puritan maiden, in search of John Alden. **Miss Jensen** wore a white silk and represented Prudence.

**Mr. Plowman** had the courage to come to a colonial party as a British red-coat. Messrs. **Lee Jensen** and **Will Cudlip** were also in military attire, and **J.W. Burbank**, as a Continental soldier, brought his gun along. **E.G. Bush** wore a Washingtonian costume, **H.M. Levy** represented Gen. Lafayette, and **R.P. Tuten** Baron [von] Steuben; **Prof Fohrman**, Mozart; **Mrs. Fohrman**, a colonial lady, and **Dr. Menistrina**, John Adams.

**August Brauns**, **Will Munroe**, **Albert Levy**, **I. Unger**, **B.L. Sutton**, **Joseph Bitterly** and **Mrs. Wagner** all appeared in very handsome costumes of the colonial period, but represented no particular character.

**Miss Sturgis** and **Miss Wicks**, in white dresses trimmed profusely with smilax and flowers, represented Florida; also **Miss Cooke** in orange crepe, trimmed with orange blossoms, represented the same state. **Miss Bolan**, in blue crepe trimmed with cotton bolls, represented Mississippi; **Miss Crummie** and **Miss Owens**, in white costumes with red and blue sashes, tied arm to arm, the United States; **Miss Dickey**, in white, trimmed with coal strung on baby ribbon, Pennsylvania; **Mrs.**

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**Plowman**, in green crepe, trimmed beautifully with wheat and flowers, made a most attractive Dakota; **Mrs. Bitterly**, in white with a single star in her hair, Texas; **Mrs. Woodward**, in a dark costume with a string of buckeyes around her waist, Ohio. **Miss Geiger** wore a handsome court dress. Utah, the baby state, was represented by **E.C. Coe**, who had his dress suit covered with baby pictures, principally girl babies.

**Miss Lillibridge** also appeared as Columbia. **Mrs. Geo. Polkinghorn**, as an Indian squaw, represented to perfection the Indian territory. **Miss Ogden** in lemon color, **Dr. Jones** in ordinary evening dress, and **Mrs. Jones** in red empire dress, represented the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. **Miss Sundstrom** was in the style of 1820, **Miss Ellen Sundstrom** in style of 1880, and **Miss Harper** in Puritan dress.

**Mrs. Samuel Cudlip**, in [a] light dress trimmed with pine branches and cones, represented the pine tree state, Maine.

**Miss McLellan** wore old rose satin with green brocade panniers and train, with pink and white ostrich tips in her hair, and rejoiced in the old-time name of Mehitable Spencer. **Miss Parent**, in her becoming empire dress and plumed hat, all white, looked as if she had stepped out of an old picture. **Mrs. John J. Cole**, in a quaint dress of red, represented a fashionable lady in colonial days.

**Messrs. MacEnaney, Sterling and Crocker** also wore costumes of the colonial days but represented no particular character.

**Miss Anna Cole**, dressed in white, trimmed with sunflowers, represented Kansas. **Miss Annie Mitchell**, pink dress trimmed with golden horseshoes and sprays of blue grass, Kentucky. **Mrs. Drummond**, a young lady of forty years ago, **Miss Leiseuring** a puritan [sic –

Puritan] maiden, **Miss Conklin** and **Miss Mead** "just two little girls." **Miss Annie Parmelee**, in an appropriate costume, represented Arkansas.

There were many other costumes, of both ladies and gentlemen, worthy of mention, but our space forbids further enumeration.

The ladies of the Drawing Room club are to be congratulated upon the complete success of their first Washington's Birthday party, the entire management of which fell upon ten of their number – **Mesdames Carpenter, Corning, Barron, Paton, Eaton, Lieberthal, Beveridge and Evans** – **Mrs. Cook** being sick, and **Mrs. Tuten** unable to do more than be present at the party.

The Range-Tribune has been requested by the ladies of the club to thank those who contributed to the success of the party and assure them that the favors extended were appreciated.

**Myrtle (Thompson) Bartholomew**, recalling **Rundle's Opera House** in Iron Mountain's centennial book *Born From Iron*, remembered attending her first matinee on **December 24, 1897**, when she heard new songs to banjo music and saw a little girl dance. She also recalled occasional home talent productions, the most elaborate of which was the annual **Elks' Minstrel Show**, always done in black face. "This was the night when the local young blades had an opportunity to exhibit singing and dancing talents and a chance to try their wit in the humor of the day, 'roasting' prominent citizens to the delight of everyone except, of course, the victims," Myrtle wrote.

In addition to theatrical performances, the opera house was the site of occasional concerts and lectures to stimulate local cultural life, and politicians "hired the hall" to announce and defend their platforms.

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Seniors from the **Hulst High School** were graduated from Rundle's stage until the new **Iron Mountain High School**, built in **1911-1912**, featured a large auditorium suitable for graduation exercises.

The opera house was also the site of the year's big social events, like the **Easter Dance** and the **Elks' Ball**, as well as big private parties.

For dances, according to Myrtle, "the seats were moved to the side walls, the floors cleaned and waxed, plants and other color brought in to add glamour and the big hall became a ballroom ready for the arrival of society, young and old."

Myrtle recalled that her sister carried her dancing slippers in a silk bag and also had a beautiful white fan Myrtle wasn't supposed to touch. Myrtle's sister's escort would arrive to pick her up in a hired hack.

On **April 22, 1897** the **cinematescope** was exhibited at **Rundle's Opera House**, showing animated pictures that actually seemed to move!

**Motion pictures** were gaining in popularity when the following article appeared in the **May 26, 1898** edition of Iron Mountain's *The Daily Tribune* under the headline "**Cineograph Pictures**":

*The blowing up of the battleship Maine will be vividly illustrated at Rundle's opera house Saturday night by the cineograph motion pictures. The pictures will illustrate several scenes on United States battleships and will be both wonderful and instructive. There will be in addition, several scenes of the Klondike country, and the fourteenth round of the Corbett & Fitzsimmons fight will be shown. The prices will be 10, 20 and 30 cents.*

These presentations were forerunners of the newsreels which later preceded the featured presentation in movie theaters. Those listed above were quite timely.



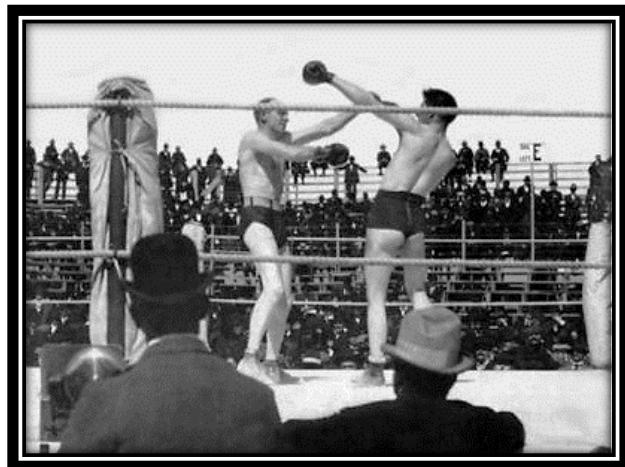
The **Klondike Gold Rush** was a migration by an estimated 100,000 prospectors to the Klondike region of the Yukon, in north-western Canada, **between 1896 and 1899**. Gold was discovered there by local miners on **August 16, 1896**. When news reached Seattle and San Francisco the following year, it triggered a stampede of prospectors estimated to number over 100,000. Some became wealthy, but the majority went in vain. The Klondike Gold Rush slowed by the **end of 1898** as word got out there was little gold left to be had. Countless miners had already left Yukon Territory penniless, leaving gold-mining cities such as **Dawson** and **Skagway** in rapid decline. The Klondike Gold Rush ended in **1899** with the discovery of gold in **Nome, Alaska**. Some residents of Iron Mountain and the surrounding area left to search for gold in the Yukon.

The **Corbett-Fitzsimmons Fight** occurred on **St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 1897** in an open-air arena in Carson City, Nevada. **Wyatt Earp** and four other men with revolvers were in Corbett's corner, and

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an equal number of gunmen were in Fitzsimmons's corner to ensure "fair play."



Fitzsimmons, weighing in at 167 pounds, was the 10 to 6 underdog. Corbett tipped the scales at 184 pounds.

The fight appeared to be Corbett's right up to the 14th and last round. He dealt Fitz terrific punishment. In the sixth round, Fitz, groggy from body blows, dropped to the floor. Crouching, he wrapped his arms around Corbett's legs.

A long swing caught Jim in the pit of the stomach in the 14th round. Corbett, still conscious, went down. He reached vainly for the ropes and fell on his face. Bob Fitzsimmons was the winner and the new champion.

A filmed record of the entire 14 rounds of the boxing match between **James John "Gentleman Jim" Corbett (September 1, 1866–February 18, 1933)** and **Robert Prometheus "Bob" Fitzsimmons (May 26, 1863–October 22, 1917)** was made and is considered the world's first feature film. A crowd of 4,000 produced a gate of \$22,000.

The film of the fight was a tremendous commercial success for the producers and fighters. Corbett and Fitzsimmons each received 15 percent of the profits, and promoter Dan Stuart received 25 percent.

It generated an estimated \$750,000 in income during the several years that it remained in distribution.



On **April 25, 1898** the United States declared war on Spain following the sinking of the **Battleship Maine** in Havana Harbor on **February 15, 1898**. The **Spanish-American War** ended with the signing of the **Treaty of Paris** on **December 10, 1898**. As a result Spain lost control over the remains of its overseas empire – Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippine Islands, Guam and other islands.

Patriotic events were also held at **Rundle's Opera House**, as exemplified by the following item which appeared in the **May 28, 1898** issue of *The Daily Tribune*:

*All the old soldiers are cordially invited to the **Memorial Day exercises** at the **opera house** Monday morning.*

"**A Breezy Time**," a new musical farce, received quite a bit of press in the columns of *The Daily Tribune* prior to the presentation on **June 9, 1898**, and following the performance on **June 10, 1898**, as follows:

### *At the Opera House Tonight.*

*"A Breezy Time," the new musical farce comedy which will be at **Rundle's opera house** tonight has one of the best casts now traveling. It has been the purpose of those interested in the production to make everyone that sees it glad that he has been there, and will not be ashamed to advise his*

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friends to follow suit. In following out this purpose the very best talent that could be secured, the very best music that has been composed recently for the American and English variety and concert hall stage and the very best costumes and scenery that can be made by theatrical firms have been secured.

## CITY NEWS ITEMS.

One of the many amusing incidents in "*A Breezy Time*" which will be at the opera house tonight is that of a blind man singing "All Coons Look Alike to Me."

The above item exemplifies the lack of sensitivity toward African Americans – as well as most ethnic groups – which was prevalent throughout the country at the time.

## "A BREEZY TIME."

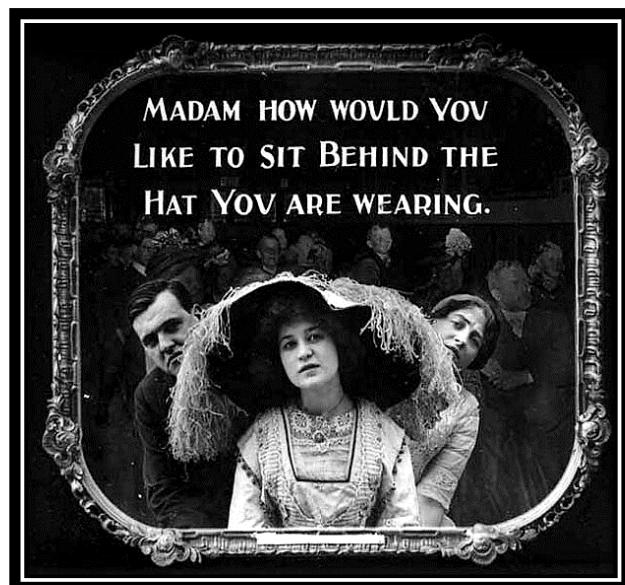
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### Excellent Performance at the Opera House last Night.

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Those who failed to see *Fitz & Webster's "A Breezy Time"* at the opera house last night missed one of the very best performances that has been seen in Iron Mountain for many years. It was not intended that there should be a deep plot in the play, it being written to introduce the specialty features of the company, which were first-class. The "three-legged sailor" was a great hit, and was very amusing. The act of the contortionist was exceedingly clever, and was loudly applauded. There wasn't a poor actor with the company, and the play which was bright, clean and funny, went along smoothly from the time the curtain went up. The singing and dancing was first-class all, the songs being new. The work of **John G. McDowell, W.J. Madden, Eddie Bowers and Phil Rado**, the male members of the company, was

excellent. Of the lady members, **Jessie Bertman** deserves particular mention, while the acting of **Luella Morey, Georgia Kelcey and Edith Bowers**, [sic] was all that could be asked. The grand cake walk at the close of the performance was a big hit. A good-sized audience was present, but we predict that when it returns next fall[,] the reputation it left in this city especially, will insure a packed house.



Silent movies had slides such as the one above which appeared on the screen, requesting the audience to be considerate of other patrons.

The following two items appeared in the **June 10, 1898** edition of *The Daily News*:

## CITY NEWS ITEMS.

Most of the ladies at the **opera house** last night removed their hats, for which the public is very grateful. The minute a lady removes her hat in the opera house a dozen men sitting behind her inaudibly express the belief that she is an angel. We dare not publish what they say when a lady keeps her hat on.

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## CITY NEWS ITEMS.

**Chief Harvey** gave his personal attention to the boys in the gallery at the **opera house** last night, and the consequence was that less noise was made. Hereafter boys who are disorderly or who "bust pop-corn bags," are going to be put out by the police. It is a good move.

Minstrel shows were popular throughout the country toward the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. The following two items regarding "Darkest America" were published in the **June 10, 1898** and the **June 17, 1898** issues of *The Daily Tribune*, providing insight into this form of live entertainment which was extremely popular locally.

### "DARKEST AMERICA."

A Genuine Colored Minstrel Show at the Opera House Next Thursday.

The attraction at the **opera house** Thursday the 16th will be **John W. Vogel's Darkest America**, a combination of

genuine colored minstrel performers which is made up of popular features and features that please the masses.

Mr. Vogel, with his usual good judgment, has not only selected first class talent, but has introduced a great variety of material of a novel and original character and arranged the program in an admirable manner. There is plenty of good dancing, much popular music, both vocal and instrumental, and many other features calculated to please, high class specialties, beautiful marches, etc. The company, numbering eighty people, travel in their own train of palace cars. This is positively their only appearance in this city, and all lovers of good shows should take advantage of the opportunity and see it.

### FUN AT THE OPERA HOUSE.

One of The Largest Audiences of the Season Greets "Darkest America."

"**Darkest America**" was greeted by a large audience last night, the **opera house** being completely filled so far as the seats were concerned, many standing during the whole performance. "**Darkest America**" is really a reproduction of "**The South before the War**," which was very popular and drew immense crowds all through the middle western states last winter.

The singing and dancing last night by the company was excellent, the orchestra music being especially enjoyed. Several very fine voices were heard, especially in the singing by the colored quartette. The fun started as soon as the curtain went up and continued throughout the entire evening. The audience laughed until they sank back in their seats exhausted. Taken it all in all it was a good show, as the term

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goes now, and everyone present seems to have gotten more than their money's worth.

The musical farce comedy "**Greased Lightning**" was presented on Monday, **July 11, 1898**, as advertised in that day's edition of *The Daily Tribune*. The following article appeared on **July 12, 1898**:

## *Tonight.*

Judging from the advance sale, the "Standing Room only" sign will be displayed early at the **opera house** tonight when **Ferris' Comedians** make their bow to the amusement of lovers of Iron Mountain in their musical farce comedy, "**Greased Lightning**," written for laughing purposes only and admirable filling the bill; it is also the vehicle for their many musical numbers and specialties. Go and take your family, they will enjoy it as well as yourself. Tonight only, every lady accompanied by the holder of a paid 30 cent ticket will be admitted free. If you cannot get tickets for tonight, reserve them early for tomorrow night. Prices 10, 20 and 30 cents.

## *A GOOD COMPANY.*

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**Ferris' Comedians Gave a Satisfactory Performance Last Night.**

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**Ferris Comedians** played "**Greased Lightning**" last night to a good-sized house. The play has no plot and it is not intended that there should be any, but it abounds in fun, the specialties introduced being especially good.

Tonight "**Over the Garden Wall**" will be given with an entire change of specialties.

"**A Wise Woman**" was performed at **Rundle's Opera House** on **August 10, 1899**, as announced in the *Iron Mountain Press* issue for that day as follows:

**A Wise Woman.**

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**A Great Attraction to Be Seen at the Rundle Opera House This Evening.**

**Manager Rundle** announces that **Wilfred Clarke's** great London comedy success, "**A Wise Woman**," presented by **Marie Lamour** and a well selected company of players, the leading man of which is **Frederick J. Murphy**, has been secured as the attraction at the **opera house** this evening.



**Marie Lamour**

*This announcement will undoubtedly attract widespread attention among the theatre-goers as much of a highly complimentary manner has been written and said about this attraction. The*

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remarkable run of 238 nights which Mr. Clarke's comedy had on its initial presentation at the **Strand Theatre, London**, is conclusive evidence of the popularity of the play with the public, and added to this the fact that Miss Lamour's support embraces the best available talent is sufficient assurance that the engagement in this city, without question of doubt, will be the event of its kind during the present season. Miss Lamour's talent, which the press declare to be of a very high standard, has been carefully developed for several seasons under the guiding hand of **Augustin Daly**.

A reprise of "A Breezy Time" was announced in the **August 17, 1899** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*, having been performed on the stage of **Rundle's Opera House** on **June 9, 1898**.

## A BREEZY TIME.

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### A First Class Comedy Attraction That is Deserving of Much Praise.

**Manager Rundle** should be congratulated on securing so good an attraction for next Saturday evening, [sic] as "**A Breezy Time.**" If he always books an attraction like this the amusement loving people of Iron Mountain will have no cause to complain. Wherever this company has appeared this season the press and public have been unanimous in pronouncing their performance the very best ever seen.

"A Breezy Time" is in three acts, the plot of which is so light that it is hardly worth mentioning, although each set has been happily impregnated with everything that is new and up to date, including music, songs, dances and clever specialties, all of which are introduced in an easy and perfectly legitimate manner.

The cast of "A Breezy Time" company consists of the pick of some of the foremost artists now appearing on the farce comedy stage, who have the ability to depict in a fine and artistic manner the finely drawn characters in this, the funniest of all comedies.

Another minstrel attraction, this time blackface, meaning white performers posing as blacks, was announced as follows in the **September 21, 1899** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*:

## MINSTREL ATTRACTION.

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### Booked for the Opera House For Thursday of Next Week.

**Manager Rundle** takes pleasure in announcing to his patrons that he has secured **Shepard's Great Minstrel Jubilee** for next Thursday evening, Sept. 29th [sic – Sept. 28th]. This popular aggregation of blackface talent has not toured the west for several years until this season. They travel in their own special train of Pullman cars. Thirty-five artists all told are in the company, and a genuine treat in old minstrelsy is promised.

Among the many features are **Ogawa's Troupe of Royal Japanese**; **Lieut. Walter Allen**, America's premier ventriloquist; **Donna & Weaver**, blackface travesty artists; **Draper**, the king of swinging wire; the **Living Music Sheet**, and the **Poster Girls' Cake Walk**. A magnificent free street parade will be given at 2:30 p.m., and an open-air concert of the most popular overtures in the evening.

The following item appeared in the column "Brief Local Mention" in the **September 13, 1900** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*:

## BRIEF LOCAL MENTION.

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**A.J. Rundle** contemplates making some important improvements to the interior of his **opera house**.

Iron Mountain had its own minstrel performers, as noted in the announcement for their third annual ball in the **October 18, 1900** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press* as follows:

## IRON MOUNTAIN MINSTRELS.

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**Invitations Will Soon Be Issued for the Third Annual Ball – Nov. 2nd is the Date.**

The **Iron Mountain Minstrel** company has selected Friday evening, **November 2nd**, as the date for their **third annual ball** and the invitations will be issued in a few days. The ball will be held in the **opera house** and **Wallace's famous orchestra** has been engaged for the occasion. The functions of this organization have been among the most successful of our social events and this season's will be no exception to the general rule. Following are a list of the committees in charge:

Arrangements – **Gilbert V. Carpenter, Robert H. Sherman, Max Kurz, Merton A. Sturgis, William J. Clark.**

Invitation – **Art Connelly, William G. Sundstrom, Harry Soady, J.C. Chamberlain.**

Floor – **Herb Little, John Simmons, John Harris, Burr Catlin, Jr.**

Decorations – **Joseph Miller, Joseph Pascoe, Edward Lundin, Master Kahn.**

The reopening of **Rundle's Opera House** following the completion of improvements was announced in the same edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*:

## TOLD IN A PARAGRAPH.

**A.J. Rundle** is arranging for a **grand re-opening of his opera house** as soon as the improvements are completed. He has

secured "Tennessee's Pardner" as a special attraction. Announcement later.

The **Iron Mountain Minstrel Company's** third annual ball was reviewed in the **November 8, 1900** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press* as follows:

## Iron Mountain Minstrels.

The third performance of the **Iron Mountain Minstrels** was greeted by a large and appreciative audience at the **opera house** last evening. Every number was well rendered and enthusiastically received. The vocal selections were very much superior to those usually given by traveling companies and the voices of the soloists in excellent condition. Several good-natured local hits were made, and **Catlin's political speech** was one of the specially good features of the evening. Where all were so excellent in their several parts, it is difficult to select any one or two for special mention, but we cannot refrain from speaking of little **Willie Kahn**, who was a host in himself, and displayed wonderful talent. He has a high, clear soprano, strong, full and round, which is capable of great things in the future.

The music was furnished by **Wallace's orchestra**, and, as usual, was of a high order.

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Like its predecessors, the annual ball of the **Iron Mountain Minstrels**, which took place last Friday evening, was an unqualified social success. The arrangements for a good time were excellently planned, and about one hundred and fifty guests participated in the pleasures of the evening. The condition of the floor was perfect, and the music, furnished by **Wallace's orchestra**, of Marinette, was of a most delightful quality and left nothing to be desired. The

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By William J. Cummings, Menominee Range Historical Foundation Historian

refreshments were served by **Mrs. Colburn** in her usual dainty style.

The following announcement of an upcoming attraction at **Rundle's Opera House** appeared in the **November 10, 1904** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*:

### **Repertoire Company.**

**The Powell Portello company**, which comes to the **opera house** for three nights, commencing this evening, will present that popular drama "**East Lynne**," as their opening bill. A special feature is made of vaudeville between the acts, consisting of illustrated songs, moving pictures, new dances, etc. The above company is well spoken of by the press in every city where it has played, and in fact is said to be one of the strongest popular priced attractions on the road. The prices will be 15, 25 and 35 cents, with one lady free this evening with each paid 35 cent ticket.

At item in the **August 5, 1905** edition of Norway's *The Current* announced the closing of Rundle's Opera House, as follows:

**A.J. RUNDLE, PROPRIETOR OF THE Rundle opera house** at Iron Mountain has closed the place and is using the auditorium for an exhibition room for stoves. He is advertising for sale all his opera chairs and scenery. This move leaves Iron Mountain without an opera house or place in which to hold social functions.

In the **September 5, 1907** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press* the reopening of Rundle's Opera House was announced as follows:

### **Opera House Opening.**

The **Rundle opera house**, which has been in darkness for nearly two years, will be re-opened the night of **October 2nd**. **Manager Rundle** is now engaged in giving the house a thorough overhauling making everything as neat and tidy as a new gold piece. The opening attraction is the **Irish**

**Pawnbroker**, a strong card. This will be followed on the **7th** by **Nobody's Claim**. The other bookings for fall dates are the **Edwards Stock company**, **Billy Barry's minstrels** and the **Devil's Auction**.

In the **October 3, 1907** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press* the following item appeared:

### **PARAGRAPHIC CITY NEWS.**

The **re-opening of the opera house** last evening attracted a very large audience, standing room being at a premium. **The Irish Pawnbrokers** was the attraction and gave good satisfaction.

Two items pertaining to **Rundle's Opera House** appeared in the **February 17, 1910** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*, as follows:

### **PERSONAL MENTION.**

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**Manager Rundle** has completed arrangements to give **moving picture shows** at the **opera house** each evening, commencing to-night, with a Saturday matinee. He has secured a first-class up-to-date machine and the pictures are the latest and best.

---

### **Splendid Attraction.**

**Managers Wm. A. Brady and Jos. R. Grismer's** big production of **George Boradhurst's** great play, "**The Man of the Hour**," with a special company, will appear at **Rundle's Opera House** next Wednesday evening. "**The Man of the Hour**" is conceded by critics everywhere to be the best American play ever written. There is not a discordant note in it, every character moves and breathes and lives — lives a natural life. It is a play for the people who like their heart strings played upon and who cling to the old beliefs about rugged honesty and love for women and home. A

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mere recital of the story conveys little idea of the sparkling charm there is in the play; it is full of surprises, heart interest, apt comedy and a round-up in which everybody rejoices.

Local talent was to be featured at **Rundle's Opera House** under the auspices of the **Holy Trinity Episcopal Church Women's Guild**, as announced in the **September 15, 1910** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*:

### *Colonial Vaudeville.*

**Martha Washington's Daughters' Colonial Vaudeville at the Rundle Opera house** next Thursday, **Sept. 22nd**, under the auspices of the **Women's Guild of Holy Trinity church**. One hundred and twenty-five talented dames of Iron Mountain in attractive colonial costumes. A chorus of one hundred dames, assisted by the best soloists to sing the old plantation melodies and catchy tunes from the popular operas. The whole will make one of the most attractive and entertaining entertainments ever given in Iron Mountain. You must not miss it.

A follow-up announcement of the colonial vaudeville program appeared in the **September 22, 1910** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*, as did the announcement of the musical comedy "Managing Mildred":

### *Colonial Vaudeville.*

**Martha Washington's Daughters' Colonial Vaudeville at the opera house** this evening. It will be one of the most attractive and unique entertainments ever given in the city. The musical numbers are snappy and popular. Don't miss this treat.

### *Musical Comedy.*

The sparkling musical comedy "Managing Mildred" is announced as the attraction at the opera house for to-morrow evening. The famous **English Opera Singers**, who made such an impression

through the west last season, are featured in this comedy and will introduce the last two scenes of Verdi's "Il Trovatore" in costume. The remarkable duet, "The Miserreri" as sung by **Juanita Rush** and **C. Picquet**, has invariably been encored five or six times. "Managing Mildred" is by **Walter Lockwood**, a young Chicago author, and contains some twenty song hits.

The following brief review of the **Martha Washington's Daughters' Colonial Vaudeville** appeared in the **September 29, 1910** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*:

### *Colonial Vaudeville.*

The **Colonial Vaudeville at the opera house** last Thursday evening attracted a large audience and gave splendid satisfaction. It can be said that it was one of the most pleasing entertainments ever given in the city. Many of the "acts" were worthy of special mention, but space will not permit the extended notice the entertainment richly deserves.

The following two articles announced upcoming presentations at **Rundle's Opera House** in the **December 1, 1910** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*:

### *Uncle Tom's Cabin.*

Speaking the universal language of the heart and reflecting, like a mirror, the innermost emotions of the mind, **Stetson's "Uncle Tom's Cabin"** is more than a stage play – it is [a] wonderful moral classic. It argues for the two really great themes that can enrage the mind of man – human liberty and the immortality of the soul. It is a play that has long been a popular favorite with the infrequent theatergoers and regular patrons alike, and wherever the Stetson company appears, it is greeted with a crowded house. There is just enough pathos during the performance to show that life is not all sunshine and then comes floods of laughter which brings one away

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from sorrow's pall. Specialties are interspersed throughout the major number of scenes, so that the lover of high-class vaudeville is well repaid for his time and money by attending the Stetson show, which will be seen at **Rundle's Opera House** to-morrow evening.

**CHICAGO OPERATIC CO.**

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### **Coming to the Opera House Soon in Star Entertainment Course.**

There are few musicians more generally or more favorably known through the country than the numbers of the **Chicago Operatic company**, which comes to this city the evening of **December 16th**. The individual and collective merits of the artists are unquestionable and no company now in this country has gained such notable comment from critics of music. Aside from the brilliance of the ensemble, each of the artists has achieved no small degree of personal prominence on the concert stage.

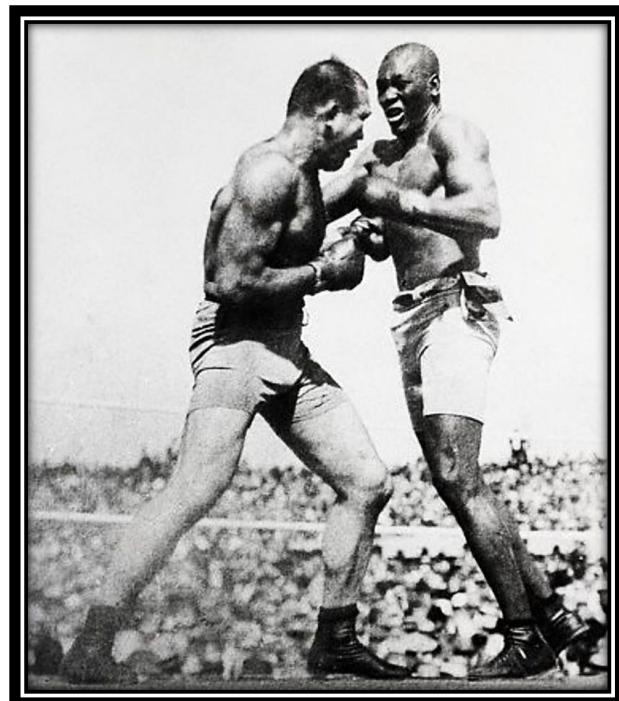
The company is prepared to give for the coming seasons, scenes in costume from **Romeo and Juliet**, **Faust**, **Martha** and other operas, also selections from the great oratorios, as well as grand concerts.

The eminence of this company of musical artists is such that it is unnecessary to comment more fully on the exceptional character of the work it presents. Every engagement filled by it is a red-letter event in the life of the community in which it occurs.

Michigan actor-author **Delia M. Clark** wrote "**The White Squaw**" which was to be presented at **Rundle's Opera House** on Monday, **April 3, 1911**, according to the following article which appeared in the **March 30, 1911** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*:

**"The White Squaw."**

A play that is said to have valid claim upon the admiration and patronage of votaries of the stage is "**The White Squaw**," the romantic American drama, to be seen at the **Rundle Opera House** next Monday evening. The play is by the actor-author, **Delia M. Clark**, and the scenes are laid in Michigan about 100 years ago. "**The White Squaw**" is a story of primitive folk of simple costumes and straightforward living, and, like strings that vibrate in musical harmony, the elements of love, romance, laughter and heart interests are employed [sic – employed] in the making of a spoken and acted melody. There is not the slightest vestige of vice, villainy or sensation to the play, but it has already been declared to be one of the big, strong volumes in the theatrical library of America.



The **heavyweight boxing match** which took place in Reno, Nevada on **July 4, 1910** was dubbed "The Fight of the Century." Reigning heavyweight champion (**1908-1915**) John Arthur "Jack" Johnson

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(March 31, 1878-June 10, 1946), an African American nicknamed “the Galveston Giant,” knocked out former champion James Jackson “Jim” Jeffries (April 15, 1875-March 3, 1953), nicknamed “the Great White Hope,” in the fifteenth round of a very one-sided fight. The fight was already a media sensation weeks before it happened, sparking motivation to film the event as it was thought to be a guaranteed money-maker. The fight's promoter, George "Tex" Rickard, who also refereed the bout, sold exclusive film rights. The film was recorded by nine cameramen and was two hours long. Novelist Jack London was also present in the crowd, reporting the event. [Internet]

The announcement of the motion picture of the Johnson-Jeffries championship heavyweight fight to be shown the same evening at Rundle's Opera House was published in the March 30, 1911 edition of the Iron Mountain Press under the headline “Fight Pictures”:

## Fight Pictures.

The real, original and only genuine motion pictures of the Johnson-Jeffries championship contest taken at Reno, Nev., last 4th of July, will be exhibited at the Rundle this evening. The pictures include 6,000 feet of film, showing all the present and past champions and sporting celebrities whom you have read of but never have had a chance to see. Performance lasts two hours. Admission 10 and 15 cents.

The May 4, 1911 edition of the Iron Mountain Press announced the presentation of “Indiana Folks” for Saturday, May 7, as follows:

## Indiana Folks.

Manager Rundle takes great pleasure in announcing the engagement of the new

Perry production, “Indiana Folks,” which comes to our city next Saturday evening. The play deals with the rural life in Indiana in an entire [sic – entirely] different manner than any play of the rural order yet produced. There are no overdrawn types of characters, but each and every one is taken true to life from the inhabitants of the section. Mrs. Adaline Perry, the star for the Perry attractions, spent three months in the little village of Rossville, and, making a study of the characters portrayed in the play. There is no company or any cheap melo-dramatic situations in the entire play to mar the beauty of the story or comedy. Excellent musical numbers will be introduced between acts and during the play. Prices – 50c, 35c, 25c. Seats on sale at the usual place.

Eleven attractions which had been booked for Rundle's Opera House were announced in the August 31, 1911 edition of the Iron Mountain Press, as follows:

## Opera House Bookings.

Manager Rundle has booked the following excellent attractions for an early appearance at his play-house: *The County Sheriff, Fire and Flame, Messenger Boy, Lion and the Mouse, When Knighthood Was in Flower, Right of Way, the Aviator, the Traveling Salesman, Uncle Josh, Gay Morning Glories and the Girl and the Tramp.*

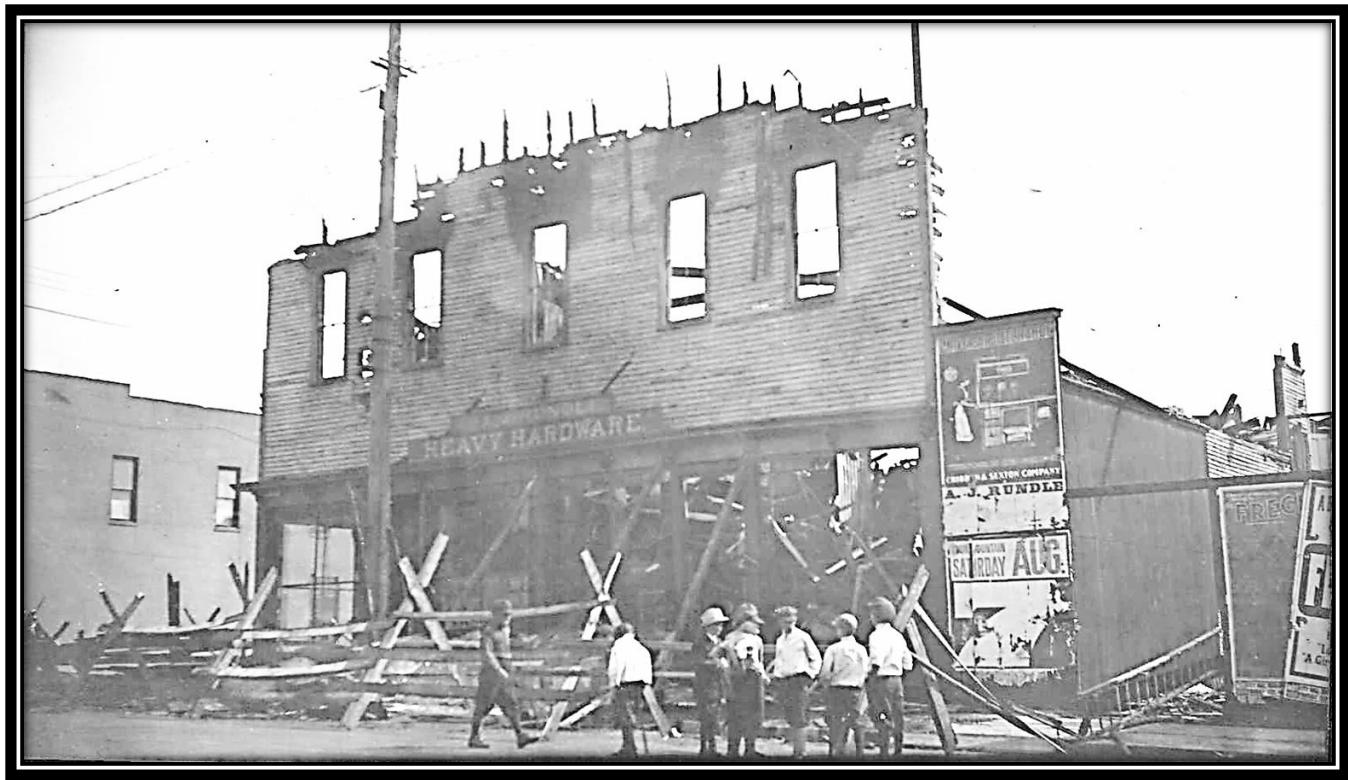
An item in the February 18, 1915 edition of the Iron Mountain Press noted the purchase of a new fireproof drop curtain, as follows:

## New Drop Curtain.

A.J. Rundle has provided his opera house with a handsome new drop curtain. It is of the latest designs and fire proof complying with all the known laws in the premises. The Press understands that the curtain costs about \$400.

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On Sunday morning, **September 12, 1915** the **A.J. Rundle Hardware Store and Rundle's Opera House** burned. The second floor which housed the opera house was totally destroyed. [Menominee Range Historical Museum]

Disaster struck on Sunday morning, **September 12, 1915** when fire destroyed much of the **Rundle's Opera House** building. The following report appeared in the **September 16, 1915** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*:

### **A DISASTEROUS FIRE.**

---

#### **Rundle Opera House Burns and the Loss is Largest in Years.**

The well-known **Rundle Opera House** building was the scene last Sunday morning of the most costly fire that has occurred in Iron Mountain in over twenty years. The origin of the fire is unknown. The fire was first discovered in the southwest corner of the building at about

*4:30 o'clock last Sunday morning and in a short time the entire upper floor was a mass of flames. That portion of the building in which the fire is supposed to have originated is used as a work-shop.*

*The fire department quickly responded to the alarm and soon had seven streams of water pouring into the upper floor. Chief LaLonde, ably seconded by Capt. John Carollo of the north end company, directed the work of checking the flames and the fire ladies [sic – laddies] received valuable assistance from many volunteers. That the fight was well directed is best evidenced by the condition of the building, the lower floor standing intact. Our city has a fire department worthy of the name. In less skillful hands the loss would have been much greater and the fire spread to other*

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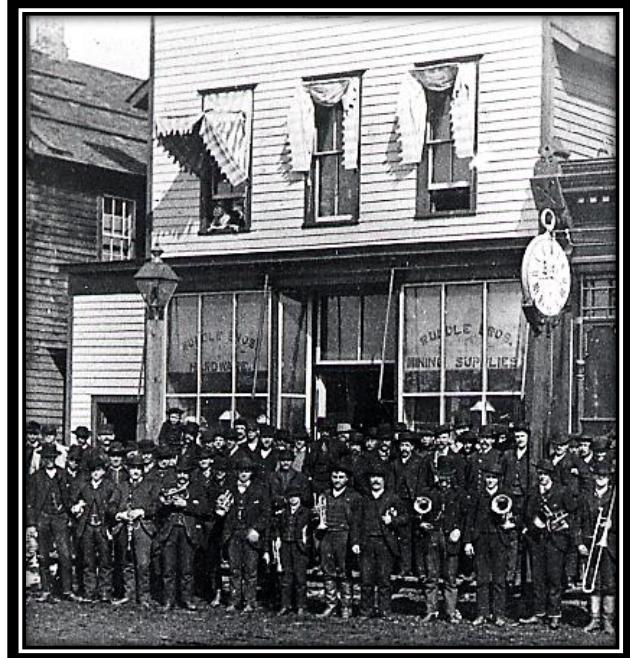
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*buildings in the district. It was an exceedingly hard fire to combat and had gained tremendous headway when discovered.*

*In combatting [sic – combating] the flames **Chief LaLonde** had three fingers on his left hand badly lacerated; **Capt. John Carollo** had his right ankle sprained, and **Fireman Clemo** was bruised about the body and left leg and had his right arm and hand cut.*

*At this writing it is not possible to give an estimate of the loss, but it will be between \$25,000 and \$35,000 and the insurance is small in comparison.*

*Mr. Rundle has the sympathy of the entire city in his great financial loss. He is keeping a “stiff upper lip” and preparing to resume business as soon as a settlement is reached with the insurance companies.*



In 1880 the Rundle Brothers Hardware Store was located at 331 South Stephenson Avenue, selling hardware and mining supplies, as seen advertised in the window to the right of the doorway. In 1888

they moved to their new store and opera house at 105-107 West Ludington Street. This is a detail of a larger photograph dating from about 1885 which appears on page 13 of Menominee Range Memories 47. [Gene Derwinski/Dick Ferris Photo – Menominee Range Historical Museum]

**History (Rundle's Hardware):** In 1880 Rundle Brothers (Thomas Rundle and Alfred John Rundle) bought out the Kern Brothers Hardware Store at 331 South Stephenson Avenue, conducting a successful business there for several years.

An item in the August 15, 1889 edition of *The Menominee Range* noted:

WM. MITCHELL has moved his grocery and fruit store to Rundle's opera house building, and will keep a larger stock of goods than heretofore.

Another item in the December 19, 1889 edition of *The Menominee Range* reported:

Thos. Rundle will soon branch out as a dealer in general mining supplies, and in order to have the room necessary for such a business, will occupy the room to be vacated by John L. Saving, in the opera house block. The need of such an establishment in Iron Mountain is apparent, and Mr. Rundle's enterprise in being the first to occupy the field will doubtless be rewarded by a large and prosperous business.

In the April 9, 1891 edition of *The Menominee Range* the following item appeared:

John Rundle has added a plumbing establishment to his hardware store and J.F. Jennings, formerly of the firm of Jennings & Coats, is in charge.

In 1892-1894, Alfred J. Rundle was listed as “manager and proprietor of the Opera House”, as well as a “dealer in hardware, stoves, tinware and mining

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supplies. Jobbing in tin and sheet iron." The address was **105-107 West Ludington Street.**

In the **April 22, 1898** edition of Iron Mountain's newspaper *The Daily Tribune*, just as the Spanish-American War was about to commence, the following article appeared:

### A PATRIOTIC SHOW WINDOW.

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#### *Display in Rundle's Hardware Store Attracts Much Attention.*

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*The show window in Rundle's hardware store in the Opera House block is attracting a great deal of attention just now. In the background is a grand and imposing display of "Old Glory," while the foreground is converted into a bicycle emporium. Perched astride a Hibbard wheel is a dummy dressed in a unique bicycle costume. An attachment to the wheel keeps the pedals in constant motion and Mr. Scorcher delights the spectators by rolling off a few centuries every day. The scheme is a novel one and as an advertisement ranks next to an ad. in the Daily Tribune.*

The business was simply listed as **A.J. Rundle, 101-103 West Ludington Street**, handling "hardware, stoves, mining supplies, and plumbing" in the **1902-1903** city directory.

At item in the **August 5, 1905** edition of Norway's *The Current* announced the **closing of Rundle's Opera House**, as follows:

**A.J. RUNDLE, PROPRIETOR OF THE Rundle opera house at Iron Mountain has closed the place and is using the auditorium for an exhibition room for stoves. He is advertising for sale all his opera chairs and scenery. This move leaves Iron Mountain**

*without an opera house or place in which to hold social functions.*

The entry for **1907-1908** merely listed **A.J. Rundle, 105-107 West Ludington Street**, "hardware and mining supplies." In the **1913** city directory the listing was A.J. Rundle, 105-107 West Ludington Street, "general hardware and mining supplies." the same listing appearing in **1913**.

The following item appeared in the **April 27, 1911** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*:

**A.J. Rundle** has purchased the **Laing building on Ludington street** adjoining the opera house. The building contains four store-rooms. A number of improvements will be made. Mr. Rundle will occupy the building with a portion of his stock, his present quarters having become too small to properly display his varied line of hardware.



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This detail of the snapshot photograph found at the beginning of Menominee Range Memories 70, probably dating **between 1925 to 1935**, shows the **south side of the 100 block of East Ludington Street**. The Rundle Hardware Company apparently rebuilt, was located, at the **southwest corner of Merritt Avenue and West Ludington Street.** [Eugene DeGayner/Hazel Dault]

Following the disastrous fire on Sunday, **September 12, 1915**, the account of which appears above, the following report was published in the **November 18, 1915** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*:

### Rundle At Home.

**A.J. Rundle** is nearly "at home" again in his former place of business, which was badly wrecked by fire a few weeks ago. Repairs of a temporary nature, but substantial, have been made, and the place of business is now much the same as before the fire in general interior appearance. However, the stock is new and up-to-date and complete in all departments. Mr. Rundle will be pleased to welcome the old friends.

**Alfred J. Rundle** rebuilt his hardware store, as it is listed in Polk's Michigan State directories until **1919**, and **from 1921 to 1927** as **Rundle Hardware Company**, with **Alfred J. Rundle** and **Howard E. Rundle** listed as proprietors.

The city directory entry for **1925** for the **Rundle Hardware Company**, noted "wholesale and retail hardware, distributors of Maytag Washing Machines, Corbin Hardware and Universal Stoves." **Alfred J. Rundle** and **Howard E. Rundle** were the proprietors at **101-103 West Ludington Street** at that time.

The following article appeared in the **June 19, 1930** edition of *The Iron Mountain News* and provides an excellent history of **Rundle's Hardware Store** and **Rundle's**

**Opera House** obtained from an interview with Arthur John "Stub" Rundle himself:

### Old Established Hardware Store Will Be Closed

### Rundle Company Goes Out Of Business; Started In 1881

Forty-nine years of business in the city of Iron Mountain will be concluded by **Arthur J. Rundle**, pioneer citizen and veteran hardware dealer, when the present merchandise of the **Rundle Hardware company, Merritt avenue and West Ludington street**, is disposed of.

Mr. Rundle, now more than 70 years old, is one of Iron Mountain's best known men.

Because "just hanging around" would be too irksome for comfort, he said, he will retain only enough of the establishment to keep him busy — the tin shop west of the hardware store. Part of his time will be devoted to that end, and part to a full enjoyment of well-earned leisure.

### Started in 1881

One of the first business establishments in Iron Mountain — the first hardware store in the district, in fact — the **Rundle Hardware** has long been a familiar landmark. Started in **1881**, on part of the site now occupied by the **A. Sackim company**, the firm, then known as **Rundle Brothers**, prospered and, in **1890**, moved into the structure it has since occupied.

It is interesting to note that, covering two full lots, the building was purchased in **1881** by Mr. Rundle from the **Wisconsin Land and Lumber company** for the modest sum of \$350. During Iron Mountain's "boom

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days," in **1923-24**, its assessed valuation was \$20,000, but it has since been reduced, with other business property in the city, to \$15,000.

The original firm of Rundle Brothers consisted of the present proprietor and his brother, **Tom**. Tom retired some years ago and has since died.

### **Conducted Theatre.**

Pioneer residents remember well the old **Rundle theatre** which once occupied what was the second floor of the present building. Started in **1886** and equipped for stage plays and later moving pictures, the **Rundle Opera House** was operated until **September 5 [sic – September 12], 1915**, when fire destroyed the second floor and the theatre. Today a low, slanting roof covers what was once the most popular play-house in the immediate district.

A battered old organ that still groans mournfully with the pressure of the foot pedal, a few dusty "props," packed away in dusty corners of the attic, are all that is left of the **Rundle Opera House**.

"Most of our movies in the old days were **Pathe comedies**," Mr. Rundle reminisced. "They were funny then, but I'd hate to pawn them off on the picture-wise public today."

### **Stage Plays Popular.**

"It was our stage plays, however, that brought in the money and built up the patronage. Those were the days of 'The Wizard of Oz,' 'The Chocolate Soldier,' 'Merry Widow,' 'The Lion and the Mouse,' and the old-time minstrels – **Beach and Bauer, Al. G. Fields and the Georgia Minstrels**. Then, too, we had the other legitimate companies, including the **Wilbur Opera company** and the **Disson troupe**.

"I can recall the first time we were approached for a showing of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin.' That show meant nothing to me then. In fact, I hadn't even heard of it

before their advance man came to call on me.

"It's funny, when I think of it now. They wanted me to take the show on a percentage basis. Knowing nothing about the play, I couldn't see it. I insisted on renting the theatre outright. They finally agreed – and they packed the house. I lost about \$150 on that night's work.

"But believe me after that I stuck to my percentage, and I always got about five per cent more from the annual Uncle Tom Cabin shows than from any other show on the road. It was a great money-maker and never failed to pack the house."

### **Double Trick.**

**James Palmer**, now a partner in the **Quality Hardware**, was a bookkeeper at the Rundle store for 25 years, during which time, also, the theatre was in operation. Leaving the store early in the evening, Mr. Rundle would turn over his management to Mr. Palmer, and settle himself in the ticket booth at the **Rundle Opera House** for the rest of the night.

Another interesting event in Mr. Rundle's career was his invention of a **powder-thawing apparatus** which, for a time, netted considerable money. It was a can-like affair, with holes bored in it, in which were inserted the frozen sticks of dynamite for thawing. A common miner's lamp was the fuel. Manufactured in various sizes for different grades of powder, that simple device was sold by the thousands through every mining region in the country.

So great was the demand for the product at one time that a small [----] in Denver, Colo., to save the cost of shipping the finished jobs from the Iron Mountain shop, which had then grown to considerable proportions.

### **Used In Tunnel.**

Hundreds of the thawing-machines, Mr. Rundle said, were shipped to New York for

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use on the **Hudson River tunnel**, from New York city to the Jersey shore, where, according to the engineers of that time, they solved a serious technical problem in the handling of dynamite during extremely cold weather.

"But like everything else," the hardware man said, "the device outgrew its usefulness and our production finally fell away. It was good while it lasted, though."

The **Rundle Hardware store** has been unique in that for years it has been the only establishment of its kind in the district which handled certain types of heavy hardware needed on structural jobs. Building contractors were seldom disappointed when they called on Rundle for some unusual piece of material or equipment. If he didn't have it he got [it] – quick.

It was that reputation which brought the Rundle Hardware store a gross business of \$270,000 during the latter part of **1923** and the first few months of **1924**, or during the first 12 months of the **Ford boom** in this city. One of the first big contracts given the tin-smithing department was that of building and installing the ventilation system in the **Ford dry kilns**. Other and similar work followed so that at one time 18 Rundle-men were at work on various good-sized contracts in the city, most of them at the Ford plant.

### Another Activity

If Mr. Rundle's activity in the hardware and theatre business were all that he has done in his half-century of residence here, that would be enough, but there was more. Almost at the same time that he established his first hardware store here, the name of the "**Rundle Fuel and Lumber company**" also flashed from the top of a small frame structure located where the **Service and Supply company**'s office and warehouse now stands on West A street [107 East A Street].

Started in **1881** that business, the first, also, if its kind to be established in the city, was later sold out to **Ed Harvey**, father of **Martin Harvey**, who still conducts a coal and wood business in the city, but not on the same site.

For some years, **Howard Rundle**, a son, was manager of the **Rundle Hardware company** here. He left Iron Mountain about a year ago and is now associated with the **Curtiss Flying service**, in Detroit. He visited his parents here a week ago.

### Born in Ontonagon

**A.J. Rundle** was born in Ontonagon county, Michigan, the family residing there only one year thereafter. They moved to Marquette, where he lived for 19 years. At the age of 20 he moved to Republic, working in a mining company machine shop, and two years later came to Iron Mountain as a machinist for the company then operating what is now the **Chapin mine**. He was here only a few months when he decided to enter business for himself. The **Rundle Hardware company**, oldest, largest and probably the most complete in the district, was the result.

Mr. Rundle has no immediate plans for the use of the store building that will be vacated.

Shortly after the business was abandoned the property, including the buildings and premises, was sold to the United States government as the site for the new Iron Mountain post office.

### History of 105 – Iron Mountain United

**States Post Office:** The Iron Mountain United States Post Office, located at 105 West Ludington Street (listed at 101 West Ludington Street in the **1939** and **1941-1942** city directories) on the site of **Rundle Hardware Store** and **Rundle's Opera House**, was dedicated Sunday, **November 3, 1935**. The contract price, together with lock box equipment and lighting fixtures,

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amounted to \$55,176.88 as of **October 16, 1935**. The entire post office plant, including the site, cost approximately \$100,000.

According to an article in the Saturday, **November 2, 1935**, edition of *The Iron Mountain News*, the construction of the post office culminated an effort dating back to **1920**, when petitions were first circulated asking the government for the structure. Nothing was done until several years before construction began, when the project was first listed on the treasury department's list of proposed appropriations.

A long time elapsed without further action, but finally the site on West Ludington Street between Merritt Avenue and Carpenter Avenue was purchased.

According to **James J. Doheney**, superintendent of rural mails in Chicago, "on **November 18, 1933**, the public works administration allotted \$78,700 for the building. **J. Ivan Dise** and his associates, **W.A. Stewart** and **L.R. Hoffman**, were selected as the architects. The construction contract was awarded by the treasury department **January 18, 1935**, to **McGough Brothers**, of St. Paul, in the amount of \$48,100, the building to be completed in 300 calendar days from notice to proceed."

The **November 2, 1935** article noted that the new post office building was "in marked contrast to the quarters occupied in the city hall building for 40 years." Apparently "the plain appearance of the

exterior of the building" had caused criticism, but the article added that the interior was "modern in every respect" and the furnishings were attractive.

Originally, the building covered a ground area of 5,980 square feet, the cubical content being 149,285 feet. The work room contained 3,700 square feet plus 400 square feet for the financial section.

At that time of construction, building design had moved toward a streamlined, Art Deco or Modern look with less ornamentation, but still influenced by classical proportions. Notice the brick and stone detailing across the tops of the windows and at the top of the walls – that subtle line echoes the ornate cornices that topped off turn-of-the-century commercial buildings.

The design of the building was modernistic. A heated entrance vestibule prevented the 14 by 60-foot lobby from being chilled when the doors opened. The lobby floors and wainscots were of variegated tile. The east end of the lobby contained windows for money orders, postal savings and C.O.D., while the west end contained general delivery, stamp and parcel post windows, and letter and package drops. The mailboxes were on the south side. This building was put up for sale in the fall of 2010 by the United States government but was taken off the market when placed in a different postal district.

## MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 72: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN – 101-123 WEST LUDINGTON STREET

By William J. Cummings, Menominee Range Historical Foundation Historian



The Iron Mountain United States Post Office, 105 West Ludington Street, was dedicated on Sunday, **November 3, 1935**. This postcard view probably dates **between 1936 and 1940**. It was the first post office built for that purpose to serve Iron Mountain residents. Petitions asking the government for a post office began fifteen years earlier. The building, built by the **McGough Brothers Company**, of St. Paul, Minnesota, was constructed in about three months for \$56,000. [William J. Cummings]

**W.P.A. Murals in Iron Mountain's U.S. Post Office Lobby:** During Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal administration, several programs existed to include artwork in public buildings, such as the well-known **Works Progress Administration's Federal Arts Project**. The U.S. Treasury's Treasury Relief Art Project and the Section of Fine Arts funded forty-eight works of art in Michigan's Post Offices, including this one. Most of these

projects consisted of a single mural or sculpture. The **Iron Mountain Post Office** is very unusual because it contains five large, well-preserved murals.

The murals in the lobby were painted by Bulgarian-born artist **Vladimir Rousseff** in **1935-36**, and the overall theme of the images is Pioneering and Westward Expansion: Historical Treatment of Mail Transportation in the West. The oil painted murals were installed on **January 1, 1936**.

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*Washing and Carrying Gold – East End of Lobby*

Vladimir Rousseff was born **May 24, 1890** in Siliстра, a town in northeastern Bulgaria on the southern bank of the lower Danube River.

Rousseff spent his childhood creating art and excelled in geography and history. He roamed the country, fished and read poetry. He later noted his parents' disappointment "for they expected mathematics, bookkeeping, commercial transactions, etc.; instead they got Greek ornaments, water lilies, ocean steamers, childish poetry and 'notre pere' (rudimentary French)."

He described himself as an "obstreperous" child, who once tried to use oil paints stolen from his uncle.

Rousseff persuaded his father to give him 1,000 francs when he was 15 for the voyage to America, arriving here **April 2, 1911** on the Steamship *Maruka* at the port of Vancouver, British Columbia, from Sydney, Australia, and listed as **Walter**, an Anglicized name, on the manifest.

His desire upon his arrival in the U.S. was to become an artist, but he found himself mired in numerous menial jobs such as a "dishwasher, waiter, carpenter, store clerk, lawyer's investigator, restaurant

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manager, peddler, factory hand, cigar store clerk, soda fountain clerk, guard and what not. Such were the steps by which I climbed to the Art Institute Chicago."

Rousseff saved \$60 to enroll at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) sometime after **1916**, and was happy at school, walking home every evening "to save carfare for charcoal."

Studying with **Albert H. Krehbiel** and **Randall Davey** at the art institute Rousseff recalled how, "There I found things which we did not have in our native land, at least I did not see them there. The attraction was stronger than magnet and I climbed, slowly, patiently, carefully."



***Watching an Early Train – South Wall over Counter Window***

He met **Minnie Elizabeth Hansen** at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and they married **April 10, 1922**. He also attended the Art Students League in **1919** or **1920**. Rousseff won the prestigious Logan Prize in **1929**.

Tragedy struck in **1935**, when Minnie died in childbirth.

Rousseff retreated to Fish Creek, Door County, Wisconsin. During this time he painted WPA murals in post-offices.

While he lived in Chicago, Rousseff also maintained a studio in Iron Mountain, in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. He

completed five western-themed murals for the Iron Mountain post office in **1935–36**.

Rousseff also painted murals for the Works Progress Administration in post offices in Kaukauna, Wisconsin (*A. Grignon Trading with the Indians, 1938*) and Edgerton, Wisconsin (*Tobacco Harvest, 1941*).

In the **mid-1940s**, Rousseff was a professor of art at Monticello College in Alton, Illinois.

He died in Boston, Suffolk County, Massachusetts in **August 1979**.

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*Fight With the Indians* – South Wall Over the Door with the Mail Slot and Mailboxes



*Moving West* – South Wall Over West Bank of Mailboxes

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By William J. Cummings, Menominee Range Historical Foundation Historian



**Stage Coach and Ferry Boat – West Wall of Lobby Over Mailboxes**

Postmasters serving the Iron Mountain United States Post Office recorded in city directories included: **Frank D. Borla, 1959-1972; Eugene F. Formolo, 1973-1977; Alan E. Richter, 1978-1986; Ronald E. Wilinski, 1987-1998.** There was no postmaster listed in the city directories for **1999 and 2000.**

**History of 109:** Miss Hattie Riendeau operated a millinery shop and lived here in **1892-1894.** Charles Wong ran the **City Laundry** here in **1902-1903**, as well as another laundry at **104 East Ludington Street.** In **1907-1908** the **City Laundry**, referred to as a Chinese laundry, was owned by **Yep Sing**, and in **1913** the **City Laundry** had **Sam Sing**, possibly the same man, listed as the proprietor.

In **1925** the **Rundle Sheet Metal Works** was located at **109-113 West Ludington Street.**

Aside from the new **Iron Mountain United States Post Office**, there were no addresses listed at this address from **1935 through 2000.**

**History of 111:** *The Daily Tribune* and *The Weekly Tribune* were published by **Walter P. Hosking**, proprietor, with **George**

**F. Stoney** serving as managing editor and **Joseph Doran** working as city editor in **1902-1903** at this address.

There was no listing for this address in **1907-1908.**

In **1913** the **A.J. Rundle Hardware Company** used **111-113 West Ludington Street** as a warehouse. In **1925** the **Rundle Sheet Metal Works** was located at **109-113 West Ludington Street.**

Aside from the new **Iron Mountain United States Post Office**, there were no addresses listed at this address from **1935 through 2000.**

**History of 113:** In **1892-1894** the **Salvation Army Barracks** was located here. This was the only listing for this address.

In **1925** the **Rundle Sheet Metal Works** was located at **109-113 West Ludington Street.**

Aside from the new **Iron Mountain United States Post Office**, there were no addresses listed at this address from **1935 through 2000.**

**History of 115:** **William Jeffery**, a member of the special police force, resided here in **1892-1894.** **August Johnson** lived

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here in **1902-1903**. August Anderson, a miner, was at this address in **1907-1908**, and again in **1913**, when he was listed as a powder man. In **1925** Victor Forsberg, a shoemaker, lived here.

Aside from the new **Iron Mountain United States Post Office**, there were no addresses listed at this address from **1935 through 2000**.

**History of 117:** James Coleman, a teamster for Edward Harvey, lived here in **1892-1894**. John Fredericks, referred to as a “mining man,” resided here in **1902-1903**. Another teamster, Joseph Tauschek, was at this address in **1907-1908**, and Adolph Blahnik, a cement worker, lived here in **1913**. In **1925** Benjamin H. Drumheller, a carpenter, and Lafayette Hemphill, a mill hand, resided at this address.

Aside from the new **Iron Mountain United States Post Office**, there were no addresses listed at this address from **1935 through 2000**.

**History of 119:** In **1902-1903** Fred Trepanier, a laborer, lived at this address. Joseph Trepanier, who worked at a meat market, resided here in **1907-1908**. By **1913** Fred Trepanier, now a carpenter, was back at this address, and was still listed as a resident in **1925**, along with William J. Young, a barber with the firm of Young & Miniat (Joseph A. Miniat), whose shop was located at **203 East Hughitt Street**.

Aside from the new **Iron Mountain United States Post Office**, there were no addresses listed at this address from **1935 through 2000**.

**History of 123:** In **1892-1894** Dr. J.S. Gareau, physician and surgeon, was residing here, keeping office hours at this corner address from 8 to 9 a.m., 1 to 3 p.m. and 7 to 8 p.m. L.M. Hansen, who ran a livery at **411-413 Stephenson Avenue** and

also had an undertaking establishment in the **Robbins Block** at **217 East Hughitt Street**, lived here in **1902-1903**. John Garvey, a railroad yardmaster, resided here in **1907-1908**. John F. Martin, manager of the **Michigan State Telephone Company**, was here in **1913**. Medio J. Bacco, a contractor, lived at this address in **1925**.

Aside from the new **Iron Mountain United States Post Office**, there were no addresses listed at this address from **1935 through 2000**.

## THE RUNDLE FAMILY



Capt. Thomas Bunney Rundle  
(1836-1886)

**THOMAS B. RUNDLE**, captain[,] Chapin Iron Mine, was born in Cornwall, Eng. [England], January 10, 1836; began mining at the age of nine years, and came to the United States in 1856; located in Ontonagon County; engaged in mining, and remained ten years; then went to Marquette County, and remained twelve years in mining; then came to Iron Mountain, Mich., in 1880, when he took charge of the Chapin Mine; has had charge of Victoria, Fremont and other copper mines in Ontonagon County, Mich.

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Is Director of Schools in Iron Mountain.  
Is a Freemason and an Odd Fellow. [Iron Mountain, page 500]

Thomas Bunney Rundle, son of Thomas and Jane Rundle, was born **July 22, 1836** in St. Blazey, Cornwall, England. He began working in the mines when he was nine years old.

Thomas B. and Louisa (Harris) Rundle came to the United States in **1856** **1857** with their infant son Thomas, locating near Rockland in Ontonagon County, Michigan where he mined for 12 years.

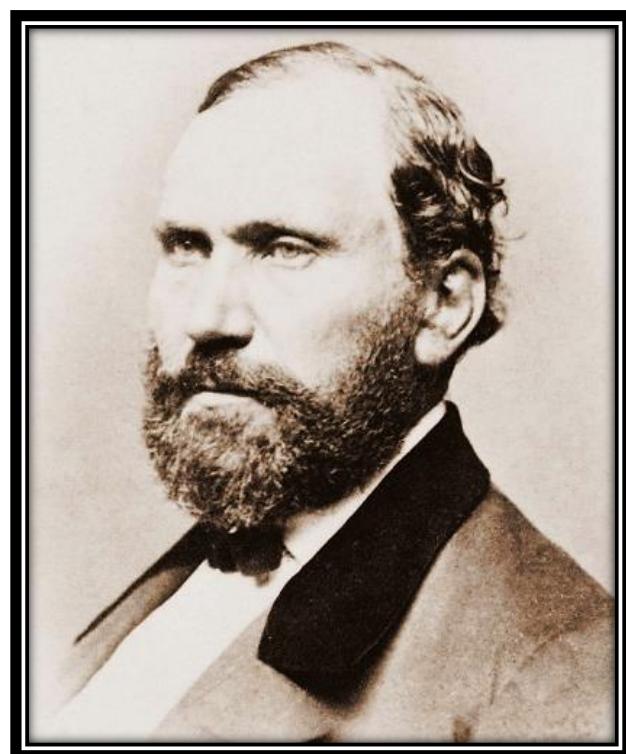
In the **1870 U.S. Federal Census** the Thomas B. Rundle family was living in Marquette, Marquette County, Michigan, and was listed as follows: **Thomas B. Rundle**, 35 years old, born in England in about **1835**; **Louisa Rundle**, 35 years old, born in England in about **1835**; **Thomas Rundle**, 13 years old, born in England in about **1857**; **Celia Rundle**, 9 years old, born in Michigan in about **1861**; **John Rundle**, 7 years old, born in Michigan in about **1863**; and **Cora Rundle**, 2 years old, born in Michigan in about **1868**.

In the **1880 U.S. Federal Census** the Thomas B. Rundle family was living in Marquette, Marquette County, Michigan, and was listed as follows: **Thomas B. Rundle**, head of household, 44 years old, miner, born in England in about **1836**; **Louisa Rundle**, wife, 45 years old, keeping house, born in England in about **1835**; **Thomas Rundle**, son, 22 years old, miner, born in England in about **1858**; **Celia J. Rundle**, daughter, 19 years old, at home, born in Michigan in about **1861**; **Alfred J. Rundle**, son, 17 years old, engineer, born in Michigan in about **1863**; and **Cora E. Rundle**, daughter, 11 years old, at home, born in Michigan in about **1869**.

Capt. Thomas Bunney Rundle came to Iron Mountain in **1880**, assuming a leadership role at the Chapin Mine.

A strike by the miners at the **Chapin Mine** and the **Ludington Mine** began on Thursday, **November 15, 1883**, when management posted notices requiring men to work the number of hours, each day that they were paid for. The men had been in the habit of coming out of the mine long enough before the whistle blew at noon to change their clothes, and not coming back to prepare for going into the mine until 1 o'clock, thus using an hour or more of time belonging to the company for purposes of their own. This order required them to work from 6 till 11 o'clock p.m. Saturdays. The men refused to comply with the order, and by their action closed the mine.

On Saturday, **November 17**, over 1,000 miners paraded through the streets with bands and banners, threatening to stop the pumps and burn the mining buildings.

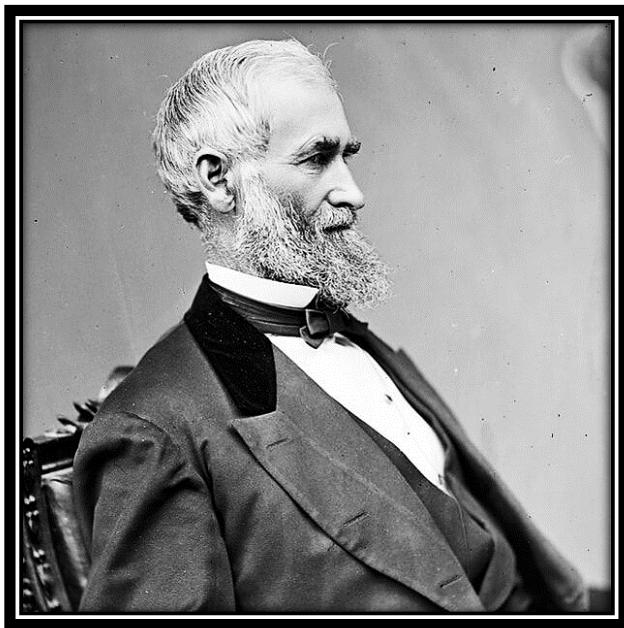


Alan J. Pinkerton (1819-1884)

# MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 72: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN – 101-123 WEST LUDINGTON STREET

By William J. Cummings, Menominee Range Historical Foundation Historian

Conditions escalated, and on Tuesday, **November 20**, a special train arrived just before noon with two officials of the **Menominee Mining Company** and 51 **Pinkerton special policemen** from Chicago, armed with Winchester repeating rifles and a sheriff's posse of 15 citizens from Menominee, the county seat. The men were immediately stationed around the **Chapin Mine** and the **Ludington Mine**. The miners had succeeded in stopping the pumps which would do significant damage to the workings. **Captain Thomas B. Rundle** was threatened and his son, **Thomas Rundle**, a miner, was expelled from a meeting of the miners that afternoon.



**Governor Josiah Williams Begole  
(1815-1896)**

The pumps were again working on Wednesday, **November 21**. On Thursday, **November 22**, an additional force of 50 **Pinkerton special policemen** armed with Winchesters arrived and on Friday, **November 23**, another squad of thirteen armed Pinkerton special policemen were

added. **Governor Josiah Williams Begole (1815-1896)** sent the **Marquette militia** to Iron Mountain, returning home prior to the end of November, embarrassed by reports of bad conduct.

By the **end of November** the company was paying off and discharging all single men. Leaders of the strike were reported to have left "for parts unknown."

**Captain Thomas B. Rundle** resigned as mining captain of the **Chapin Mine** in **early December 1883**, supposedly due to some complications arising from the strike. He was paid six months' salary in appreciation for his past services and was replaced by **Captain William Oliver**.

**Captain Rundle** was the Iron Mountain Director of Schools and a member of the Freemasons and the Odd Fellows.

**Captain Rundle** died **July 27, 1886** due to sunstroke, having just turned 50 years old.



**Louise (Harris) Rundle** was born in **1835** in England and died in **1917**. She is buried with her husband, **Capt. Thomas Bunney Harris**, in Iron Mountain Cemetery Park.

**Cecilia Jane Rundle**, daughter of **Capt. Thomas Bunney and Louisa (Harris) Rundle**, was born in **September 1860** in Michigan. She married **Thomas Henry Wallace** on **January 10, 1883**, in Iron

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By William J. Cummings, Menominee Range Historical Foundation Historian

Mountain, Menominee County, Michigan. Thomas Henry Wallace was born in **1860** in Champion, Marquette County, Michigan. Cecilia's birthplace was listed as Michigan Center, Jackson County, Michigan on the marriage license. Cecilia Jane (Rundle) Wallace died **March 3, 1935** in Los Angeles County, California.

**Cora E. Rundle**, daughter of Capt. Thomas Bunney and Louisa (Harris) Rundle, married Samuel F. Miller, son of Josiah A. and Elizabeth (Hamilton) Miller, on **September 12, 1888** in Iron Mountain. The groom was born in Werrona, Illinois, in about **1866** and the bride was born in Republic, Marquette County, Michigan, in about **1868**.



**Thomas Rundle (1857-1891)**

The following biographical sketch appeared on page 500 of the *History of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan*, published by the Western Historical Company, of Chicago, in **1883**:

**THOMAS RUNDLE**, of the firm of **Rundle Bros., hardware merchants**, was born in England October 13, 1857; came to the United States in infancy. At the age of seventeen, he began **teaching school at Marquette**, where he remained for two years, and then went to **Republic** five years

as **time-keeper** [sic – timekeeper]; then to **Iron Mountain** with **Menominee Mining Company** in 1880 for one year, and then went into business for himself in **hardware, iron and stoves**, and also keeps constantly on hand a full supply of all kinds of **lumber for building purposes**. He was married to Miss **Jennie M. Warner** of Muskegon, Mich., in 1882.

**Thomas Rundle**, son of Captain Thomas Bunney and Louisa (Harris) Rundle, was born **October 13, 1857** in St. Blazey, Cornwall, England. He was christened there on **December 25, 1857**.

He came to the United States as an infant with his parents, who initially located near Rockland in Ontonagon County, Michigan.

**Thomas Rundle** died of consumption [*tuberculosis*] **September 22, 1891** in Iron Mountain.

His obituary, published in the **September 24, 1891** edition of Iron Mountain's weekly newspaper *The Iron Range*, follows:

## **Obituary.**

*Died, in this city last Tuesday evening, of consumption, Thos. Rundle, aged nearly 34 years.*

*Mr. Rundle, though a young man in years, was one of the oldest residents of this city, and for years one of its most prominent business men. Mr. Rundle was born in England and came to this country with his parents when he was about one year old, his father, the late Capt. Thos. Rundle, settling first in Ontonagon county. In 1879, when the Chapin mine had been opened up sufficiently to show that it was a valuable property, Capt. Rundle was appointed superintendent and Tom was given a place in the office as bookkeeper. In 1880 Rundle Bros. – Thomas and A.J.*

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*[Albert John] – bought out the hardware store of **Kern Bros.**, and conducted the business successfully for several years. John retired from the firm about three years ago and Thomas continued it alone until failing health compelled him to retire and John again returned to this city and bought his brother's interest in the business. The deceased has been one of our most energetic, enterprising and public spirited citizens and by hard work and strict integrity had acquired considerable competency. He made Iron Mountain real estate his bank and all his earnings were judiciously invested in good city property. At the time of his death he was the owner of the opera house block, and other store buildings and residences, the income of which will leave his family in comfortable circumstances. In **May 1882**, he married Miss **Jennie Warner**, of Muskegon, and two children, a boy and [a] girl, have blessed their union. Mr. Rundle was for a number of years captain of the fire company, and was always the hardest worker at a fire. It is likely that he contracted the fatal disease that terminated his life so untimely from exposures thus endured. The funeral took place this afternoon, under the auspices of the Iron Mountain Lodge, F. & A.M., and was attended by an immense crowd of sorrowing friends.*



**Jennie M. (Warner) Rundle**, daughter of Wilks W. and Sarah Warner, was born in **1863**. From Muskegon, Michigan, she married Thomas Rundle in **May 1882**. On **November 6, 1895**, Jennie (Warner) Rundle married **Edward N. Lepper**, a cashier and son of D.C. and Jane (**Brower**) Lepper, with D. Morrison, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church officiating. **Mr. and Mrs. W.E. Tyler**, residents of Green Bay, Brown County, Wisconsin, were witnesses. Edward N. Lepper died in **1904**. Jennie died in **1922**.



Edward N. Lepper was born **1861** in Wisconsin and died in **1904**, probably in Iron Mountain.



**Alfred John "Stub" Rundle**, son of Capt. Thomas Bunney and Louisa (**Harris**) Rundle was born **August 19, 1862**, in Rockland, Ontonagon County,

## MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 72: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN – 101-123 WEST LUDINGTON STREET

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Michigan. He married **Emma Hook**, daughter of **John Hook (1815-1890)** and **Matilda Chadwick (Berry) Hook (1820-1910)**, on **July 17, 1889**. Emma Hook was born **February 12, 1864** in Amboy, Lee County, Illinois. Alfred John "Stub" Rundle died **August 29, 1935**, in Iron Mountain. **Emma (Hook) Rundle** died **December 6, 1939** at her home at 611 Iron Mountain Street, Iron Mountain, following a lingering illness..

**Alfred John "Stub" and Emma (Hook) Rundle** had one son, **Howard Edward Rundle**, who was born **May 27, 1891** in Iron Mountain and died **September 26, 1950** in Marquette, Marquette County, Michigan.

In the **July 25, 1889** edition of Iron Mountain's weekly newspaper *The Menominee Range* the following wedding announcement appeared:

*A neatly printed announcement conveys to us the information that Alfred J. Rundle and Emma E. Hook were married Wednesday, July 17, last at Amboy, Ill., and that they will be at home at Stevens Point, Wis. after July 27. This will be an interesting bit of news to Johnny's many friends in this city. Miss Hook was formerly a dressmaker here, and made many friends during her residence in this city. THE RANGE extends congratulations to the newly wedded couple, and hopes they have a long and happy wedded career.*

The following news item appeared in the **December 24, 1891** edition of Iron Mountain's weekly newspaper *The Iron Range*:

**JOHN RUNDLE** has purchased of the heirs of **Thos. Rundle**, deceased, the **opera house block**, and thereby becomes the possessor of a valuable piece of property on the street destined to become one of the best business streets in the city. John has in contemplation several

*improvements that will add much to the comfort of the public on occasions of public gatherings. He will lower the building to its proper grade, put in steam heat, and put the stage at the south end of the hall. The stage will also be enlarged.*

The following biographical sketch appeared on pages 212-213 of the *Memorial Record of the Northern Peninsula of Michigan*, published by the Lewis Publishing Company, of Chicago, in **1895**:

**ALFRED J. RUNDLE**, dealer in hardware and miners' supplies, **Iron Mountain, Michigan**, is one of the most enterprising young business men of the town.

*Mr. Rundle was born at Rockland, Michigan, August 19, 1862, and is a son of L.B. Rundle [sic – Captain Thomas B. Rundle], a native of England. He attended the public schools until he was seventeen years of age, when he entered upon his apprenticeship to the trade of machinist, and served two years. After that he came to Iron Mountain and secured a position as machinist in the shops of the Chapin mine. A year later he engaged in the hardware business with an elder brother. Subsequently he purchased his brother's interest, and has since conducted the business in his own name, having an extensive and increasing trade. His establishment is the largest of its kind in Iron Mountain. Mr. Rundle is also owner of the Rundle Opera House, which has a seating capacity of 900 people. He is public-spirited and enterprising, gives his support to all measures intended to advance the interests of the city, and is regarded as one of its most worthy citizens.*

*Socially, Mr. Rundle is identified with the Masonic order and the Knights of Pythias. He was married July 17, 1889, to Miss Emma Hook, of Amboy, Illinois, and they have one son.*

# MENOMINEE RANGE MEMORIES 72: DOWNTOWN IRON MOUNTAIN – 101-123 WEST LUDINGTON STREET

By William J. Cummings, Menominee Range Historical Foundation Historian

The following article appeared in the **October 12, 1905** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press*, noting A.J. Rundle's Pope automobile was Iron Mountain's first automobile:

### First "Bubble"

**A.J. Rundle**, the hardware merchant, is the owner of **Iron Mountain's first automobile**. It is a **Pope** and a very comfortable looking car. Accompanied by his son **Howard**, Mr. Rundle made the run from Milwaukee to Iron Mountain in the car, arriving here last Tuesday afternoon. A.J. says he didn't kill anyone on the way up.

POPE  
AUTOMOBILES

1906 1906

You cannot hear the sands of time dropping into space,  
Nor the quiet Pope-Toledo pass at a mile a minute pace.

More Power, More Speed, More Room, More Style, More Strength, Less Weight

Our 1906, Type XII, 35-40 H. P. "Quiet mile-a-minute Pope-Toledo," the latest and greatest achievement of the world's largest automobile plant.  
Motor consists of four individual Twin-head Cylinders, 4-cycle Copper jacketed, developing under brake test 43-44 H. P. All gears encased. The very remarkable result of securing one H. P. for every ten and eight-tenths pounds of weight has been attained, and this, too, without in any sense sacrificing the strength or wearing parts.

Control is simple, flexible and positive. The car can be driven on *high speed behind a team walking*, or up to its maximum speed, simply by the use of *throttle and spark*, both located on the steering wheel.

Transmission is of the sliding gear type, having three speeds forward and reverse. Ball bearings at all important points.

Body Design entirely new and of distinctive appearance.

ORDER NOW FOR EARLY DELIVERY. Price \$3,500.00.

In the meantime we have Our New Type X, Four-Cylinder, 20 H. P. Car for immediate delivery.

One of the most efficient cars on the market. It is specially designed to meet the demand for a light, wieldy car of great power, which can be easily controlled. Price \$2,800.00.

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SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., 261 Mission St.  
A. L. A. M.

Type X. Price \$2,800.00.

In the **June 21, 1906** edition of the *Iron Mountain Press* A.J. Rundle's new Pope-Toledo automobile made the news, as follows:

### A New Car.

**A.J. Rundle** has received direct from the factory a **1906 Pope-Toledo automobile**. It is a four-cylinder, the first on the range, and is guaranteed to develop a speed of over fifty miles an hour. It is beautifully finished. His old model Toledo has been returned to the factory.

**Alfred John "Stub" Rundle**'s obituary appeared in the **August 30, 1935** edition of *The Iron Mountain News* as follows:

### ONCE PROMINENT HARDWARE MEN TAKEN BY DEATH

#### A.J. "Stub" Rundle Succumbed at Home Here Last Night

**Alfred J. Rundle**, aged 73 years, former prominent hardware merchant here and a resident of Iron Mountain for the past 54 years – with the exception of a few months spent in business at Steven's Point, Wis., and at Ishpeming, Mich. – died at 9:25 o'clock last night [**August 29, 1935**] at his home, corner of East O [sic – East C] and Iron Mountain streets [611 Iron Mountain Street], following a lingering illness from heart trouble. He had been confined to his bed for the past three weeks.

Mr. Rundle, or "Stub," was he was more familiarly known to his many friends in the city and district, was born **August 19, 1862**, at Rockland, Mich. When a small boy he moved with his family to Marquette, Mich., where he attended school. Later the family went to Republic, where Mr. Rundle lived until **1881**, when he came to Iron Mountain to enter business with his brother, **Tom**. At that time the **Rundle Hardware store** was located at the site on

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Stephenson avenue now occupied by the **A. Sackim company's store.**

A few years thereafter the Rundle brothers moved to the **corner of Merritt avenue and East Ludington street.** Subsequently the partnership was dissolved, and Mr. Rundle went to Stevens Point, Wis., where he bought a small business. Becoming dissatisfied there after only a few months he moved to Ishpeming, Mich., where he also entered business.

### **Returned Here**

The Ishpeming store had been operating only a month or two when **Tom Rundle**, then in sole charge of the hardware [store] here, failed in health and urged his brother to return and take over the management. The Rundle Hardware store was operated by A.J. Rundle from that time until four years ago, when business conditions forced its abandonment. Thereafter, however, Mr. Rundle operated the tin-shop adjoining, formerly a separate department of the store, and an assistant was employed to take care of the work.

Shortly after the business was abandoned the property, including the buildings and premises, was sold to the United States government as the site for the new **Iron Mountain postoffice**, now nearing completion.

During the peak of the **Ford Motor company's** activity in Iron Mountain, the Rundle Hardware [Store] was one of the largest establishments of its kind in the district, carrying an extensive line of hardware and construction materials, as well as household utensils and equipment of all kinds.

### **Pioneer Mason**

Mr. Rundle was one of the first members of the Masonic lodge at Norway, retaining a life membership there through the years. He was also a former member of

the Iron Mountain lodge of Elks, and was active in both organizations for many years. Although interested in civic affairs, he never sought public office and purposely avoided politics.

Since abandoning his business, and until his critical illness of three weeks ago, "Stub" Rundle had made daily trips downtown [sic – downtown], that effort, however, having become increasingly difficult in recent months.

The death of Mr. Rundle recalls, also, the establishment of Iron Mountain's first "stage theater," or **opera house**, on the second floor of the Rundle hardware. Practically every old-time musical show, stock company and vaudeville company which toured the upper Michigan district in the early years "made" the Rundle Theater along the circuit. The theater, too, was the locale for most of the early home-talent productions, indoor athletics and other public events in Iron Mountain. It was closed several years before the hardware store, and after a fire at the Rundle building some time later, was removed and a new roof built.

Besides the widow, one son, **Howard**, survives. He resides with his family at Grass Valley, California. A sister, **Mrs. S.F. Miller**, lives in Evanston, Ill. Notified by wire today the son expected to leave tonight for Iron Mountain. Funeral arrangements were withheld pending his arrival.