

# DICKINSON COUNTY HISTORY – COUNTY GOVERNMENT – DICKINSON COUNTY COURT HOUSE AND JAIL

[Compiled and Transcribed by William J. Cummings]

*The Menominee Range*, Iron Mountain, Menominee County, Michigan, Volume XI, Number 21 [Thursday, August 15, 1889], page 1, column 1

**JUSTICE BERGERON** has had a **platform erected in his court room** and now presides over the court with increased dignity.

*The Florence Mining News*, Florence, Florence County, Wisconsin, Volume XI, Number 38 [Saturday, September 12, 1891], page 5, column 5

“WHERE will the new Dickinson County offices be located?” is a questions that is being frequently asked now a days [*sic – nowadays*]. The Iron Mountain Journal believes either **John R. Wood** or **H.D. Fisher** will capture the prize. Both gentlemen are erecting elegant business blocks at the new county seat. ‘Twould be pretty safe to bet on H.D.

*The Florence Mining News*, Florence, Florence County, Wisconsin, Volume XI, Number 40 [Saturday, September 26, 1891], page 5, column 1

THE postmaster of Iron Mountain has received official notice that the **county of Dickinson has been formed** and that it contains the postoffices [*sic – post offices*] of **Floodwood, Foster City, Granite Bluff, Hardwood, Iron Mountain, Metropolitan, Norway, Quinnesec, Randville, Sagola, Vulcan and Waucedah.**

*The Iron Range*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume XIII, Number 35 [Thursday, November 19, 1891], page 1, column 4

THE board of supervisors met last Monday pursuant to adjournment and adjourned Tuesday night to the 21st of December. The principal business of importance was the equalization of the tax rolls. Another effort was made to appoint a **mine inspector**, but without success, neither **Capt. Wicks**, nor **J.B. Knight** being able to secure the necessary majority. So we will have no mine inspector until the 21st of December, at all events. It is reported that the **committee on county offices have [*sic – has*] arranged with John R. Wood for the necessary offices in his new block**, though the committee did not report.

*The Iron Range*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume XIII, Number 38 [Thursday, December 10, 1891], page 1, column 2

IT is a settled fact that the **county offices are to be in Wood’s new block until the county builds a court house**, and the necessary vaults and other appurtenances are now being put in.

*The Iron Range*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume XIII, Number 40 [Thursday, December 24, 1891], page 4, column 3

## Board of Supervisors.

The board of supervisors met last Monday pursuant to adjournment, and after auditing [*sic – auditing*] and allowing several claims, approved a **lease made by a special committee with John R. Wood for five office rooms, hall for court purposes, and ground on which to build a county jail**, for an annual rental of \$1200 [*sic – \$1,200*], with privilege of renewal for five years; made another stab an appointing

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a **mine inspector** but had to pass it – vote, **Wicks 6, Knight 5**; authorized the county clerk to issue county orders in payment of officers' salaries on the 3d *[sic – 3rd]* of each month without further action of the board, and then adjourned. This is the work accomplished, briefly told *[sic – told]*; the official report will appear in these columns next week.

*The Florence Mining News*, Florence, Florence County, Wisconsin, Volume XII, Number 3 [Saturday, January 9, 1892], page 5, columns 1-2

**H.D. Fisher's elegant new brick block**, at Iron Mountain, is rapidly filling up. The Range says **Cook & Pelham** have three very large and pleasant office rooms on the second floor front, and the water works company has equally pleasant ones across the hall. The register of deeds and county clerk also have their offices on the second floor. The offices of **Hamlin & Fordyce**, the **Upper Michigan Brewing Company** and **Detroit Building and Loan Association** are rooms 2 and 3, on the first floor, entrance from the east side of the building. **Jos. Lemeiux** *[sic – Lemieux]* also has his office in the building. The new building is generally known as the "**Florence Block.**"

*The Iron Range*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume XIV, Number 15 [Thursday, April 14, 1892], page 1, column 5

**THE county clerk, register of deeds and county treasurer have moved their offices into the rooms provided by the county board in Wood's stone block.**

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 15,

Number 10 [Thursday, July 28, 1910], page 1, column 2

## **Enlarge the Jail.**

**Architect Parmelee** is at work on plans for an addition to the county jail and his sketch will be submitted to the supervisors at their next meeting. This does not mean an increase in the crime market. **The Dickinson county jail is without a padded cell or a section for female prisoners and the addition will provide the necessary quarters in accordance with the recommendation of the state board of corrections and charities.**

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 15, Number 12 [Thursday, August 11, 1910], page 1, column 3

## **Jail Improvements.**

The board of supervisors in session yesterday voted to accept the plans of **Architect Parmelee** for the enlargement of the county jail and the committee was instructed to advertise for bids. **The plan calls for two additions, one forty by forty-five feet on the foundations and two full stories in height and the other sixteen by seventeen feet. The larger addition will contain two padded cells for insane prisoners and a large cage and the smaller addition will be used exclusively for female prisoners.** The plans were submitted to the state board of corrections and charities and were highly endorsed.

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 15, Number 19 [Thursday, September 29, 1910], page 1, column 4

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## County Jail.

The board of supervisors is now receiving proposals for the proposed enlargement and improvements of the county jail. **The enlargement will consist of two additions to the present building. One addition will be forty by forty-five [feet] in size and two stories in height and the other sixteen by seventeen feet. The larger addition will contain two padded cells for insane persons and the smaller addition will be used exclusively for female prisoners. A number of changes are also planned in the arrangement of the present prison. Bids will also be received for the heating, plumbing and steel work. The plans for the improvements and enlargements were made by Architect Parmelee. They were submitted to the state board of corrections and charities and were heartily approved by the members.**

*Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 15, Number 23 [Thursday, October 27, 1910], page 1, column 4*

## POSTPONE IMPROVEMENTS.

### County Board Rejects Bids for Jail Enlargement – County News.

The proposed enlargement and improvement of the county jail, in accordance with the plans of Architect Parmelee, has been postponed until spring owing to the lateness of the season. Some sentiment was expressed in favor of erecting an entire new building. The expenditure is larger than anticipated,

the lowest bid exceeding \$11,000. It may be necessary to submit the proposed expenditure to a vote of the people at the spring election.

Dr. M.F. Dockery, of Sagola, was named as **superintendent of the poor for District No. 3** to succeed Dr. Geo. W. Moll, of Foster City, who desired to retire. J.R. Holfeltz, superintendent for District No. 1, tendered his resignation, the same to take effect January 1st. His successor will be named at the December session.

The report of the **soldiers' relief commission** recorded a balance on hand of \$478.59 with expenditures during the year of \$130.26. The commission considered the amount in hand ample to mee [*sic – meet*] all expenses for the next two years.

The report of the **Dickinson County-Menominee Range Agricultural society** received favorable comment. The receipts named totaled \$10,154.65 with a disbursement of \$10,384.84.

The **bridge committee** asked for and was granted additional time in which to investigate the needs of the **proposed bridge across the Menominee river at a point due west from Hughitt street.**

Ole Anderson, James Reynolds and Thomas Hayes were **appointed county game and fish wardens** and will be active during the deer hunting season.

Gordon Murray, Hugh McLaughlin and Capt. James H. Cundy were **re-appointed [*sic – reappointed*] members of the board of county election canvassers.**

L.E. Amidon, of Iron Mountain, was **re-elected [*sic – reelected*] a member of the board of county school examiners.**

Thomas Byrnes was **re-appointed [*sic – reappointed*] janitor of the court-house [*sic – court house*] for the term of two years.**

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The **Press** and **Norway Current** were designated the official papers.

The board adjourned until the 22nd of December.

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 15, Number 40 [Thursday, February 23, 1911], page 1, column 4

## Portrait of Judge Stone.

The **Ives portrait of John W. Stone** was unveiled at the court-house [*sic – courthouse*] last Tuesday. It is a splendid portrait of the **former circuit judge** who is held in high esteem by every last soul in the community. Some day [*sic – Someday*], when we catch him over here in his fishing clothes, we are going to introduce him to this portrait and open a nice banquet and tell right to his face what we think of him.

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 15, Number 50 [Thursday, May 4, 1911], page 1, column 4

## COUNTY OUT OF DEBT.

### Last of Court-House and Jail Bonds Liquidated Last Friday.

Dickinson county now enjoys the distinction of having **no bonded indebtedness and has a snug cash balance in the banks**. It is probable that Dickinson is the only county in Michigan having no bonds outstanding.

**The last one of the court-house [*sic – courthouse*] and jail bonds, issued some fifteen years ago, was paid at the Commercial Bank by County Clerk**

**Quarnstrom last Friday.** The bond, with interest, amounted to \$2,133.33.

The total issue of bonds was \$32,000 and that sum represents the original cost of the court-house [*sic – courthouse*] and jail, including the site. The bonds were issued during the panic and were sold to the First National Bank of Chicago.

The court-house [*sic – courthouse*] and jail were erected under the supervision of **Messrs. Kelly, Cook and MacNaughton**, who were members of the county board at the time, and who devoted a great deal of time to the duties. Labor and materials were cheap, due to a tight money market, and the county received every advantage of the conditions. It can be said, too, that the buildings were completed well within the appropriation. It would undoubtedly cost more than twice the bond issue to duplicate the buildings to-day [*sic – today*]. No county in the peninsula, excepting Marquette, where more than \$250,000 was expended, has better buildings than Dickinson.

*Iron Mountain Press*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 20, Number 10 [Thursday, July 22, 1915], page 1, column 3

### Suicide in Jail.

**Robert Cullen**, said to be a resident of **West Chester, Kentucky**, committed suicide at the county jail at an early hour last Sunday morning. The deed was committed with a common pocket-knife [*sic – pocketknife*]. The windpipe was severed completely and several blood vessels lacerated. Cullen was arrested last Thursday. He was **charged with a crime against a female child, a resident of Niagara**. Cullen had been employed in the paper-mill [*sic – paper mill*] at that place,

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but the crime was committed on the Michigan side of the river. The man was of a drunken disposition. He was about fifty years of age. No information is obtainable regarding his relatives. It is the general opinion that Cullen met a fitting death.

*Iron Mountain News*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, \_\_\_\_\_ Year, Number \_\_\_\_\_ [Monday, February 25, 1924], page 2, column 3

## DECORATING JOB BEING FINISHED

### Expect to Complete Work At Court House With- in Week

About one week will be required to complete the decorating of the county building which has been in progress for the last five weeks, it was stated today by representatives of the **Bond Decorating company** of Iron Mountain, in charge of the work. The contract price for the work was \$4,000.

The decorating of the second floor rooms has already been completed. Included among these are the circuit court room, jury room, court chambers and the prosecutor's chamber. In each, as in all other offices, the stencil designs are different.

Work in the offices of the county treasurer, register of deeds, judge of probate and clerk is practically completed. The offices of the county engineer and school commissioner remain untouched.

*Iron Mountain News*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, \_\_\_\_\_ Year, Number \_\_\_\_\_ [Saturday, March 15, 1924], page 8, column 1

## COURT HOUSE IS NOW 'DRESSED UP'

### Redecorating Job Is Com- pleted By Bond Company

Final touches were put on and the redecorating of the county building completed the latter part of this week. The work, which required several weeks, was done by the **Bond Decorating company**, of Iron Mountain, under the direction of **Ernest Bond**.

The job was awarded the Bond company in competitive bidding. Its offer was \$4,000. Fifteen years had passed since the building was last decorated.

The background work done on the walls is what is termed an opaque glaze. Different shades of gray were used on the walls of each of the rooms.

**The design of the borders in each room is largely free hand work done by William Wurtz, member of the Bond company, and a recognized artist in this capacity.** Wurtz travels from coast to coast doing work of the nature.

About 200 gallons of paint were used in the re-decorating.

*Iron Mountain News*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 5, Number 39 [Tuesday, May 26, 1925], page 3, column 3

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## “DAREDEVIL” TO SHOW HIS STUFF

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### Plans Difficult Feat While Hanging From Court House Tower

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“Daredevil” Jack O’Day, disabled World war veteran who is making a tour from his home in Los Angeles, Calif., across the United States, will give an exhibition downtown this evening, imitating the great Houdini.

O’Day[,] performing a difficult act, having six men tie him with chains and locks, stopping the circulation of the blood, and then frees himself. The exhibition will take place on some side street off of Stephenson avenue in the main shopping district.

Tomorrow evening he will perform a real thrill, hanging by his feet from the fourth story window of the court house in a straight jacket. He will release himself from the straight jacket while suspended head first above the cement sidewalk, four stories below. O’Day’s wife and child are accompanying him on the trip.

*The Iron Mountain News*, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 15, Number 205 [Monday, December 9, 1935], page 3, column 1

## WORK ON POLICE POST BARRACKS IS BEGUN TODAY

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## Supervisors Have Been Assigned to WPA Projects

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Work on two new WPA projects in Dickinson county – the **pike hatchery at Twin Falls** and the **state police barracks** near the north city limits of Iron Mountain – was begun this morning.

**James Estabrook**, of Kingsford, was named **supervisor for the state conservation department on the hatchery project**, and **Louis Posti**, of this city, **supervisor for the WPA on both the hatchery and police barracks**.

Explaining the hatchery supervision, officials pointed out that while the project was sought by Dickinson county some time ago it was sponsored, technically, by the state conservation department.

### Have Experience

Estabrook was foreman for the recently completed **ERA work-relief project at the court house and jail**, which included the **construction of a wing connecting the two buildings, redecoration throughout, building new vaults in the basement of the county building, improvements to the heating system, building of an inside, underground coal bin and other construction**.

Until recently **Posti** was a **contractor foreman on the new Iron Mountain postoffice [sic – post office]**.

WPA officials today were unable to state just how many men the two projects will accommodate, depending largely on how many are still available through the national reemployment service. Maximum crews will be carried, however, to speed up the work.

**A.T. Sweet**, sixth district director, returned yesterday from a conference with

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state officials at Lansing. Favorable reports have been received of the progress of the work through the state, he said.

**Today all but a few of the 1,140 men who quit their WPA jobs at Delta county, had returned, it was said, and it is believed the strike movement there is permanently broken.**